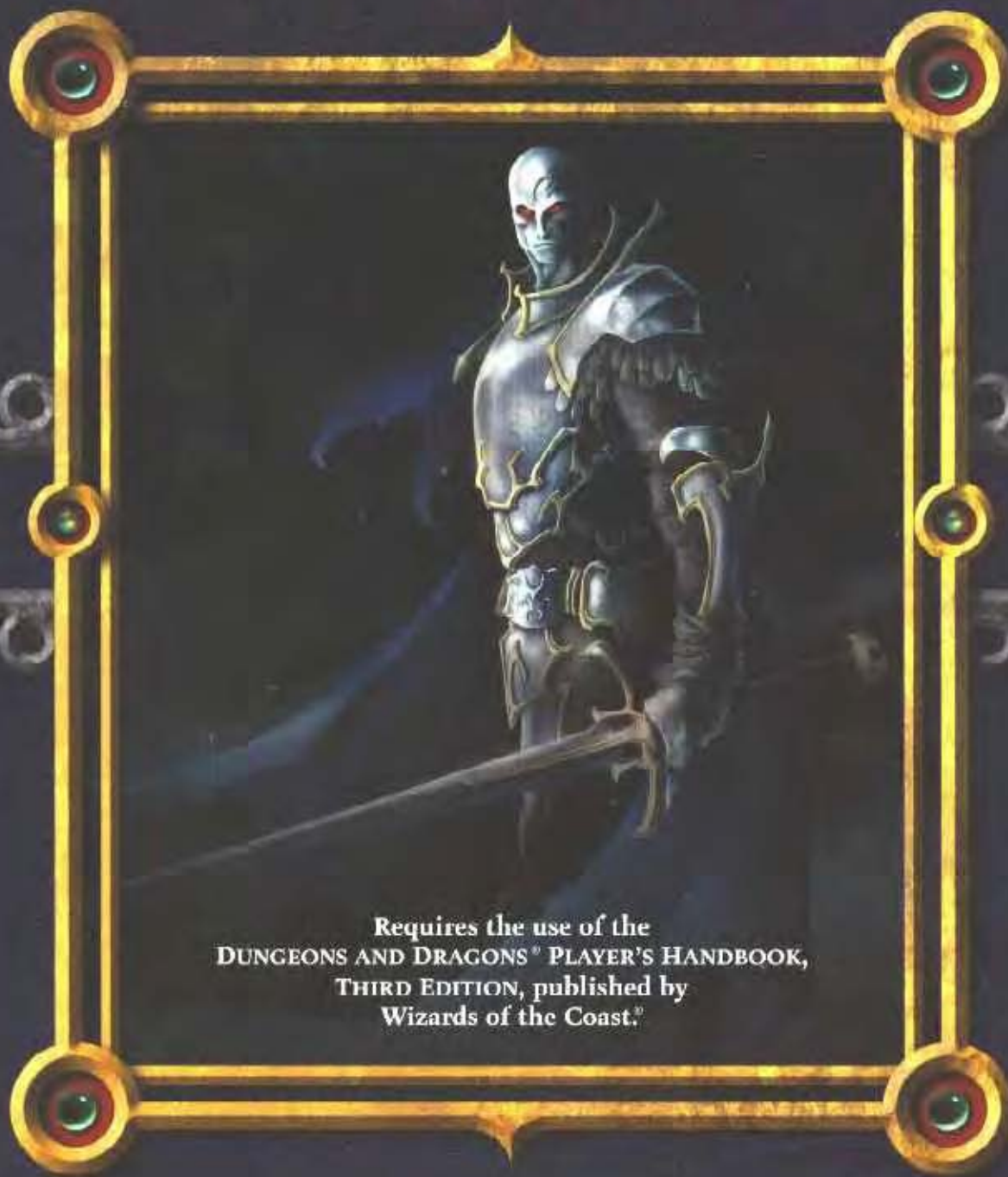


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EVIL



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SPECIAL THANKS

jim pinto would like to thank the writers and artists that made this book possible. Thanks to all of the writers, you went beyond the call of duty to make this book so good. Baker, Phillippi, Sellers, and Slayton deserve giant thanks for their work. Extra special thanks for Mike Leader for the long hours and Peter for making me laugh so hard.

DEDICATION

This one is for all of us. For every GM that ever wanted to do a little more with his fantasy campaign than merely open up a tomb and cut down a monster or two. Thanks to Arneson and Gygax for opening all of our eyes.

THIS BOOK'S EVIL LITTLE SECRET

Back in 1980, before I started running the campaign in the world that the Warlord CCG is now set, playing evil characters was all the rage in our D&D group. These characters grew in power as they bounced from game master to game master. It got to a point where there was no obstacle great enough to challenge them.

One afternoon, I prepared a session and told everyone to bring their 'bad guys'. When they showed up, I grabbed all the characters to *check their stats* (a habit I developed when "surprises" from other GM's ruined adventures). I sat down behind the screen and worked on my notes for the evening's session. I looked up after a few minutes, seeing that my players were waiting patiently for their characters back. I smiled, handed them my Player's Handbook and told them to roll up new first level *good* characters.

The plan had changed.

They would no longer be playing Evil at my table.

Their evil characters formed an alliance, conquering the world one country at a time. An event called the Assassin's Strike recently lead to the death of most of this world's heroes. With no one left to defend the people of my newly created game world, the PCs were the only hope left. After surprisingly few complaints, the guys rolled up new characters and we spent the next four years chasing down and foiling the plots of *their villains*. I even included background information for all them to justify their hatred of each of the 'Inner Circle' members.

So take a break, enjoy your time on the dark side, and break the rules. That's what this book is for. But, in the end, remember that somewhere someone is rolling up a first level Paladin and their only mission in life is to right the wrongs this book has unleashed on the world.

Good (relatively speaking) gaming,
- John Zinser

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome.

I am glad that you have decided to join our small, but elite club. No, the word cabal is fine. It's what everyone uses anyway, but we have so many more creative names for what we do. Never feel that a single word defines who or what you are. That is for your enemies. Purity and idealism are for weak-minded heroes, desperate to make a name for themselves at any charge. I would never say that we are victims, but it's truly amazing how murder can be justified in the minds of those who value life.

But let me show you around and introduce you to everyone.

Many of our members are well-known in various circles. You'll no doubt recognize them, but please show some respect and never criticize or judge. Others are a little more private and require that you not speak of them outside these walls. Bad things happen to those that speak ill of the dead.

What's that? You want to get started already? Ha. Good. We appreciate your enthusiasm. But we have years to teach you what you need to know and the magic necessary to keep you alive a little longer than would be expected. How else do you intend to learn everything about ruling the world?

Greed, conquest, power.

We realize that your uneducated mind sets these tenets above all others. But, we hope to teach you that there is more to your rule than personal achievement. Of course, I'm kidding. There is nothing more important than personal achievement.

But please. Today, you are our guest. There are servants about. Anything you wish can be had here. Anything. Do not cloud your mind with the limits of material gain. As you will soon learn, there is more to this reality than silver and gold. Sometimes, the greatest treasures lie beyond the veil of imagination.

Tomorrow, everything will make sense. But, for now, I want you to know that we are here as mentors — guides if you will. When things seem hopeless or when the weight of the world seems too much to bear, our house

is your sanctuary and our books, your bibles. As I said, we are a small, elite club and our members are more like family.

Eventually, the day will come when you no longer need us. And I look forward to that day with a father's proud eyes.

— Janus Verenül of the House of Whims



DISCLAIMER

This book contains mature themes, and reader discretion is strongly advised. It is intended to enhance the drama and fun of a fantasy role-playing campaign, not as a guide to living. Alderac Entertainment Group does not condone or encourage arson, kidnapping, the occult, the practice of magic, or violence.

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SECTION ONE:

THE EVIL THAT MEN DO

Yes, yes. I know who you are. Janus told me what I needed to know. Sit down and listen, and you might just learn something.

DEFINING EVIL

It may not seem like there is a great deal difference from one type of evil to another, but the subtleties are there and deserve investigation.

Any time you get a group together, politics kick in. Some people are popular, some aren't. The same thing goes for orcs, and kobolds, and gnolls. Some people have the power or knowledge to get things done, and can get valuable goods or services through exchange (or extortion). If you've got a tough group of PCs, you need to give them a challenge worthy of their powers. The most obvious way to do this is to throw bigger monsters and more potent spells at them, which works well enough some of the time. But the other way to challenge them is with smarter monsters - monsters who are organized and have enough sense to properly employ their numbers.

CHAOTIC EVIL

With chaotic evil, the unifying factor is "fear of the big guy" (just as with chaotic good, the unifying social factor is "desire to look out for the little guy"). Chaotic evil has a reputation as "the eeeeevildest evil" because the big booty-trouncing red dragons and Unspeakable Demons from Hell were chaotic evil. Maybe there's a connection, but it works in the other direction. Big Red isn't powerful because he's chaotic evil. He's chaotic evil because he's powerful. When you can win any argument by saying "Hey,

talk to the 14-die breath weapon," there's not a lot of incentive to be organized or reasonable.

Chaotic evil is lazy evil: It gets things done in the simplest possible way. Chaotic evil can also be considered "efficient evil." Coveting your neighbor's house? Conk him over the head and move in! Don't like the adventurers creeping into your dungeon? Waste 'em! Nothing troubling you at the moment? Take a nap! Like every other alignment, chaotic evil types tend to hang out together because they understand one another. These groups don't have a lot of rules or formal structures. The boss is the boss because he gets things done and is strong enough to bend others to his will. The underlings want to be in charge, and one of them will probably get ambitious enough to attack the leader eventually... assuming the leader doesn't crush him first.

A society based on violence and poor impulse control has some built-in limits to its size. No matter how powerful a leader is, his number of followers is limited to those he can personally awe or bully. If the followers eat to live (as opposed to demons, who only eat for the fun of it), the number is far more limited, because chaotic evil types don't have the patience to farm or the organizational skills to make slaves do it. Basically, chaotic evil groups are like biker gangs in those old 1950s scare flicks. They're tough, they're mean, they're unpredictable, they ride in and seize what they want, but they don't stick around because they really can't. Once they've stolen whatever they can carry, there's no reason to stay. They're off to the next town ripe for the picking.

Individually, chaotic evil beings tend to be the toughest because they're more likely to do crazy

stuff like fight to the death or meet a massed charge with a massed charge. Their tactics tend to be built around mobility, surprise, and overwhelming offense. But because they burn twice as bright, they only last half as long.

These problems only get amplified in a society where everyone's looking out for number one, and there's no stated or implied punishment if you successfully kill the boss. Chaotic evil gangs tend to scatter when the leader dies, and if you negotiate with the underlings it doesn't take long to find someone who'd love to slit the chief's throat — if he thought he could get away with it. As individually tough as they are, chaotic evil societies are among the easiest to take apart. Methodical patience and a willingness to play the inevitable factions off against each other can be the party's greatest allies when dealing with such groups.

LAWFUL EVIL

All the problems chaotic evil societies have are not problems for lawful evil. Chaotic evil is the cycle gang who kicks down your door, steals your stuff, burns your house and deep-fries your puppy dog — then leaves. Lawful evil is a faceless bureaucracy that seizes your house through eminent domain laws, confiscates your property with a court-ordered foreclosure, puts your puppy dog to sleep because he wasn't registered, and then offers to rent your old house back to you at a reasonable rate. Lawful evil is organized. Violence is the last resort, after it's tried blackmail, bribery, threats and devious backroom political maneuvering. Chaotic evil hates to back down from an open fight. Lawful evil hates open fights: it would much rather sneak into your bedroom, cast a sleep spell on you to make sure you're really out, then put a pillow over your face. So much tidier.



Lawful evil societies have far, far greater potential for longevity and growth because they're based on obedience, order and deferring gratification. Where chaotic evil wants it now, lawful evil wants it all, and if it has to wait ten years to wear you down, it's got a clear calendar. It's simple to take down a chaotic evil society: you just kill the boss. (This may not be easy, but it's simple.) Rarely is it that straightforward in a lawful evil society, because the structures of the society are what make it evil. Cut down one corporal in the army and another comes straight out of the military academy to take his place. Lawful evil might have a few noteworthy individuals who serve as champions and leaders, but they don't rely on them the way chaotic evil does. You can hack a few branches off, but the tree is still there.

For instance, imagine a society that holds that "Only old male humans are worthy of respect." If you fall outside those three categories it's okay for any old male human to rob, enslave or imprison you. If you've got one of those traits, you're better off than those with none, and if you've got two you're almost a citizen — but not quite. The old male humans have got a good thing going, so they support the system. The old male elves and dwarves are second class citizens, but they're still better off than young women, so they can't complain too much. But if you're a young halfling woman, you better not show your face in public because you have no legal recourse for anything anyone wants to do with you.

Conquering a lawful evil society is no picnic because they plan, organize and obey their superiors. Lawful evil societies are built on the idea that individuals are tools. There is nothing unique or special about any particular hobgoblin in the army, so the strategies and tactics of the lawful evil mob are based on the idea that any individual can do it. They tend towards fortifications, siege engines, phalanxes and defensive technologies like shields and armor.

NEUTRAL EVIL

Unlike either chaotic or lawful evil, the neutral evil organization both respects laws, and tries to find a way around them. There is structure, but it is loosely created and even less adhered to. The ideal situation for a neutral evil 'person' is one in which he can convince the opponent to abide by the rules — all the while, breaking them himself. They are hypocrites, two-faced dealers that provide a backdrop for their gains, and then destroy their own rules whenever it becomes troublesome to deal with them.

In many games, the neutral evil character is rightfully described as 'Neutral Me.' Their number one goal is not simply to acquire power, or riches, but to grasp anything that they desire. After they have gained it, they may well forget about it and move on — once its usefulness is finished, or the thrill of the acquisition is gone. Chaotic evil wants it now. Lawful evil wants it all. Neutral evil simply wants it, and will go to any lengths, including patience, outright bartering, or even working with a good party to get it. The neutral evil villains do occasionally keep their word and stick to contracts — when it is in their best interest.

Where you can trust chaotic evil to rampage, and lawful evil to tyrannize, you just can't trust neutral evil will do anything. They even break their own rules. Unlike chaotic evil, they have no problem with impulse control — they can machinate with the best of them. Unlike lawful evil, on the other hand, they have no desire to organize or conform, and can adapt their plan and their nature as suits the situation.

While this can make for an extremely powerful individual, neutral evil societies are rare and short-lived. People with neutral evil tendencies rarely care enough to gather in groups, unless the payoff is rich. They almost never create established communities, or form organized and structured government systems — what would be the point? They would all ignore it, machinate the rules, and eventually destroy the society they had created. A neutral evil individual prefers to find an existing

society, and abuse its laws and systems for their own gain, all the while pretending to adhere to their structure. This allows the neutral evil to have an advantage over the indigent residents, who actually do follow the laws and rules, and won't see the neutral evil's plan coming until it is too late.

Then, after the neutral evil individual has taken everything he wanted, he moves on and finds another society to exploit. Good, evil, beneficent or malevolent — it doesn't matter, so long as the neutral evil gets whatever he was searching for.

The occasional small neutral evil society that does form must have some other reason to stay together. Family units, parasitic creatures, or other systems where the group is more powerful than the individual can work, but only so long as all parties know that they would not be better off alone (or if they cannot exist apart). In such circumstances, the leader is often the individual who can manipulate the others into supporting him, or whose personal ability outshines the others. Even so, he should always be aware that the rest of the society is looking for ways around his command, and to "slip the bonds" of his control.

Conquering a neutral evil society is a laughable prospect. First, they aren't organized enough to "conquer." If you march in and claim the area, they will certainly agree with you — and then quietly assassinate your generals, commanders, and whoever else needs to be removed in order for you to leave them alone. Ordering tithe or obeisance from a neutral evil group will bring you a great deal of polite lip service, at least until such time as you realize their shipments of grain were poisoned, and now your peasants are dying by the score. Neutral Evil doesn't need pride, and it doesn't need to be "respected." It isn't going to fight you face-to-face, and it won't burst into a rampage of chaotic slaughter when you trigger its anger. It will smile politely, bow, and then stab you in the back when you least expect it. It will find your weak link, and exploit it. The dagger in your back might be held by your dear wife, convinced that you are a shapechanger, or even from your closest friend. The worst part is that

the neutral evil individual has most likely convinced these people that they are doing it "for your own good." All behind the scenes, of course, and carefully ignoring only the rules that would constrict his actions.

WHY EVIL?

This is an important question. Town guards are a silver piece a dozen. Noble kings are just doing their job. Heroes, when you get right down to it, don't seem to need any more justification than me good, you bad. But if you're going to be more than just another forgettable cutpurse, you need to know how you ended up enjoying the cries of your victims and the crunch of your enemies' bones beneath your steel.

Three basic ways of understanding *evil* can be followed from the three evil alignments. While not all evil characters will stem from one of these three paths, some element of them is in the vast majority of villains.

Most people are ignorant fools, and I know what's better for them than they do.

Look at the world, and what do you see? Chaos. Hatred. Stupidity. Millions of people willing to kill over shades of skin color, or a few inches of boundary on a map, while greed kills millions more through hunger and disease. If someone with the will and the power crushes those who allow this in the name of some absurd concept called *freedom*, it may be evil, but which evil is greater?

The seductive path of the lesser evil leads to Lawful Evil regimes, which are perhaps the most powerful form of evil. Good people may cringe in their homes while jackbooted sadists march triumphantly in the streets, but everyone has food on the table and the carriages run on time. Villains with a superiority complex can easily imagine running the world better than their lessers.

There are two types of people in this world. Those who inflict pain, and those who suffer it. I know which I want to be.

Why are people so fascinated by powerful monsters? Dinosaurs, sharks, badgers, and lions all mesmerize us with their strength and viciousness. Who hasn't wished to be ferocious and invincible? Is there anyone who hasn't been hurt and wished that they could avenge themselves without fear? Of course not. All it takes for Chaotic Evil to take hold is the understanding that either you're a hunter or you're prey. And who's to say it's wrong to enjoy the fear in your prey's eyes as you prepare to strike them down?

In the end, everyone finds a way to take what they want. I'm just honest about it.

Lawful Evil and Chaotic Evil find excuses for what they do. Not these villains. Neutral Evil is all about you, you, you. Who cares about some starving peasants? What kind of fool worries about looking tough? It's a dog-eat-dog world out there, friend, and if you're not looking out for Number One, you're wearing bone underclothes. The world doesn't care, and neither do people, no matter what

they say. This sort of evil is convinced that no one really cares about anything except themselves, usually through painful experience. The only smart choice is to do the same.

So how smart are you?

MAKING EVIL LOOK GOOD

There's a thin line between having heroes staring in fear at you and grimly planning to cut you down. That line is called *style* and all of the best villains have it. The thing is, style is hard to define, doubly so for a villain. In most cases, what will mark you as a stylish villain differs from culture to culture. Desert nomads whose heroes show no mercy won't be impressed if you let them go, no matter your reasons — they'll just re-equip and come after you again, noting your stupidity. On the other hand, heroes from an empire steeped in honor will be struck by your devotion to your methods and will treat you with respect at the very least.

A few things will always stand out, however. Even the most heartless villain cultivates a valuable social resource — flair. Going about your business with a certain *panache* impresses even those who





hate you: if you're wealthy, for example, know all the best wines, or have an artistically designed prison instead of the stereotypical blocks of stone with chains hanging out of them; if you're stealing the crown jewels, leave a chilling calling card, like putting the heads of the guards you decapitated in a certain pattern; and a stunning wardrobe is an absolute must for the would-be conqueror of the world. Even if you're doing your plotting in secret, you can always have a special mark or signature to let your victims know that they faced an unbeatable foe. When the prince walks into a room and sees the spider drawn in blood, or your nemesis barges into your recently-abandoned warehouse and finds only a dagger thrust through a rat — again — they will know that you are one step ahead of them.

Another way to leave an impression is subtlety. Anyone can beat a prisoner bloody, after all. If all you're going to do is pound on things, you might as well be a hero and cut your way through an army of

orcs or some such drivel. But it can be so much more satisfying to watch that legendary paladin go pale as you hold up the ring his beloved never takes off. And think about how the wizard will react when her mighty spell fizzles around her, and you smile as you point out the edges of the anti-magic field she walked in to.

Mere viciousness may shock adventurers for a moment, but the unknown will throw a chill into the most stalwart hero's heart. So when the courageous band of wanderers bursts down your door and demands that you show them the haughty princess, sure, you can have your guards drag out her semi-conscious, brutalized form. But think of the looks on their faces when, instead, you ask their indulgence, and have your latest dancing girl entertain them. Then, when their patience runs out, smile, and have the girl lift the veil covering her face. Of course, it's the broken once-haughty princess. Of course, they'll be horrified and furious. But they *won't know how you did it*, and one moment of confused terror is worth a thousand executions.

The difference between the epic master villain and the small-time hood is the ability to *think big*. Anyone can aspire to become leader of the local Thieves' Guild. It takes something more to plot the control of an entire kingdom's underworld. Gangs of brutish thugs can control city blocks, but only a warlord with the charisma and vision to put a mighty army together can sweep across continents. The least apprentice can conjure a bit of air or flesh to slash at a wandering do-gooder, while only a master wizard can patiently put together legions of undead to bring darkness and despair to a green and pleasant realm. Heroes may rail against the horror you've unleashed, but even they'll be impressed with the dedication and thought you've put into your plans. More to the point, big plans are harder to disrupt, simply due to the inertia that drives them. If you're clever, you can even compartmentalize your schemes, so that dispersing one legion in your army or stopping one assassin will only be a minor annoyance. The rest of your army or killers will be able to proceed unchecked, since the heroes

can only be in one place at one time. Of course, this will force them to come to you, but at least it will make your enemies more predictable.

Finally, let's face it, even heroes are disgusted with villains who fold as soon as something goes wrong. The dedication to working evil in a big way can also include the resolve to keep fighting when a scheme fails. This doesn't mean clinging stupidly to a ruined plan, of course. You didn't put that escape tube into your main chamber just to fight to the death, now did you?

You *didn't* build an escape tube? That was foolish.

Regardless, a truly epic villain always comes back for more. Even if you're in one of those annoying planes where good always triumphs over evil, you can always get your own in. The hero may stop you from conquering the world, but she never ousts you from your own keep for long, and you can always kill her boyfriend in revenge. Fight for victory until a plan is no longer tenable, and if it comes to that, be certain to have numerous escape plans. The heroes may have foiled your plan, but at least you'll have the comforting echo of a hero's frustrated cries to remember as you build anew.

And, of course, in most planes it *is* possible for evil to triumph. Live life with panache, make your plans great, keep the heroes guessing, and never give them the satisfaction of seeing you give up. Even if you feel the urge to go over to good, do it in a big way. No one is impressed with wishy-washy evil.

WHO SAYS WE'RE EVIL?

There are, on occasion, those who truly believe themselves evil, accept it, and even revel in it. But most villains don't consider themselves *evil*. After all, good and evil are usually defined by the means used to reach the ends. Consider this: these definitions change over time. If a group of well-armed strangers arrived in a modern city, found the local mob headquarters, and cut down everyone inside, how would society react? Would they be given rewards, accolades, perhaps the key to the

city... or would the police hunt them down at least as avidly as the criminals they killed? Would the public call them good or evil?

Here's another example. Imagine you could bring back all of the greatest geniuses and heroes of the past... for a price. You could resurrect King Arthur, Leonardo Da Vinci, George Washington, Confucius, Joan of Arc, Einstein, and a thousand others like them, all given a common language and a full understanding of current events. All you have to do to bring them back is kill one person for every person you restore. The only limits are that the victim has to be biologically human and functioning independently. Whoever asks this shows incontrovertible proof of the offer.

Would *you* do it? Remember, you can choose anyone as your victims, possibly hunting down the most vicious murderers in the world or finding those in misery and ending their lives. In exchange, the greatest of all those who have changed the world for the better would be brought back to do it again as a team. Is that *evil*?

In the d20 system, evil is defined as being harmful to others. But good characters routinely slaughter others in their homes for being evil. If the long-term goal is benevolent, is a conqueror really more evil than such so-called "heroes?" Even in the highly mechanistic fantasy worlds that form the system's origins, most evil forces have some sort of justification for their actions.

For that matter, it's even possible to have a mixed party — members who are both good or neutral and evil — without having the members turn on each other. The important point is the motivation of the group. If the king is greedy and vicious, and killed the families of two different party members, one could have dedicated herself to protecting others, while a second may have sworn to live his life for revenge. There are shades of good and evil, and groups with the right shades and desires can get along without too much friction. Avoiding antagonism entirely between good and evil is impossible, but a common cause can keep the party members focused and away from each others' throats.

The biggest problem with an adventuring party that includes good and evil members is that the methods of the evil characters will, by definition, appall the good ones. If the heroes freely turn a blind eye to the activities of their evil colleagues, they're not only hypocrites, they're cowards as well. (This, of course, makes them prime recruiting material.) On the other hand, if an evil character is adventuring with more typically self-righteous heroes, she'll either have to suppress her desire to deal with the common threat more expediently, or carefully hide any activities that her traveling companions would disapprove of.

Another matter is that, as previously mentioned, what is permissible in the name of good changes over time. If a hero from the distant past stealthily slits the throats of those he deems guilty, and this was part of accepted justice in his time, does his alignment change from good to evil?

What it comes down to is, people almost never do something unless they feel that they have some sort of right to do so. As discussed previously, that justification may be anything from claiming that the world will be a paradise when the villain is done (and the suffering of a few people is a comparative drop in the bucket) to the strong prey on the weak, no matter what anyone says, but few people readily accept the idea of hurting, enslaving, or killing others simply for enjoyment.

So what does all of this mean to the budding warlord or mastermind? An easy question that has no easy answers. How do you sleep at night when you burned entire villages to the ground, or keep nobles chained in your dungeon of horrors, or crush a helpless enemy's throat in your fist? This isn't as simple a matter as motivation. Anyone can *want* to throttle someone for being amazingly annoying or terminally stupid, but not many actually give in to that desire. It is evil's very definition to be able to cause suffering with little remorse. Most villains can justify the suffering they cause in one way or another. Knowing how your character can accept the things he does in achieving his goals is a big step in understanding what makes him evil.

EVIL AND PROUD OF IT

On the other hand, there are those rare few villains who are actively evil as a philosophy. In many ways, these are the most dangerous villains, since convincing them that what they're doing is wrong is effectively impossible. They *know* that what they're doing is *wrong*. They don't care. If such a villain were to explain his point of view to a hero, it might sound something like this:

"Yes, I am evil. Why shouldn't I be? Certainly, someone so dedicated to maintaining the status quo must be shocked by my philosophy. Allow me to enlighten you, if you can survive my dire wolves for long enough.

"Since the gods first emerged from the primordial dark, there has been someone to ponder *why*? And ever since they came up with more than one answer, opposing ideals and philosophies have struggled with each other. The majority supports this absurd idea of justice, fair play, and equality under a code of conduct. This is called *good*. Those with strength, wit, and power are supposed to protect this majority, despite their inability to do so themselves. Meanwhile, anyone who uses their strength as nature intended is branded *evil*. I, for one, find this laughable. You would no doubt disagree, if you weren't too busy keeping a dire wolf from chewing your leg off.

"For that matter, why am I *evil*, while the dire wolf you are so callously skewering is not? Choice? My wolves don't *have* to kill you. They aren't stupid, you know. They just recognize the basic laws of nature — prey exist to feed predators, and the strong rule while the weak bare their throats. True. I have trained them. No easy task, mind you, with such magnificent beasts. But I got them to bare their throats to *me*. They recognize me as their alpha.

"Aha! You are impressed, despite yourself. It is easy to reject a man like myself for being evil, but much harder to ignore my power or my words, isn't it? You see, only humanoids live in a society where sheep rule and wolves serve. It is our world that has turned the natural order upside-down. Yes, I kill my

enemies with little remorse. My only regret is the loss of a fellow wolf or lion. Yes, I take what I want. Might *does* make right, and a thousand trite sayings won't make it otherwise.

"Intellect? You think yourself smarter than the wolves still circling you, harrying you, tiring you out? Would you have any better luck against lions or hydras? The capacity for thought only makes us better beasts. It's just another form of strength. Men are simply bald animals, madam. When a crisis threatens all, they work together as a good pack should. When a crisis threatens some, the looters and brigands come out in force.

"I see you've dispatched the last of my dire wolves. Pity. But you were the stronger, weren't you? I noticed that you didn't bare your throat to them. Well then, my beautiful champion of good. Let us see who is the victor... and who is the prisoner."

The ideas of good and evil are based on means. Two men can be utterly dedicated to healing their nations and freeing them from the power held over them by other countries. One uses peace, charisma and sheer will, and now the name Gandhi is all but synonymous with love for one's fellow man. Another uses hate, rhetoric, and force, and now stomachs around the world churn when people hear the name Stalin.

When someone rejects the idea that there are unacceptable means, they are in effect embracing evil. They may not call it that (see *Who Says We're Evil?* for some of the many possible justifications), but a few villains are honest about what they are. They tend to define epic evil. For example, unless you've been under a rock for the last twenty-odd years, you're familiar with a villain who wears all black and wields a glowing red sword. He casually chokes those who fail him with a gesture, he serves an evil emperor while scheming to supplant him (well, until the final act anyway) and he scares the living daylights out of most of us. He is, for all intents and purposes, the anti-paladin, the knight dedicated to darkness. He makes no excuses and no

apologies in the course of his duty. He even takes a perverse pleasure in going about his work. Sure, he 'redeemed' himself in the end, but until that point, he fought to crush all hope and freedom. Why?

Because he could.

It's all about perspective. Someone who is capable of being evil without being deluded about it can do things that no one else can. Such people might be honorable, but it is specifically so that others are able to trust them. The only limits they impose on themselves are ones that serve them. While a villain who feels the need to justify his actions to himself might balk at some things, because then he'd be 'just as bad as the monsters who hurt me', the honest one can smile as she holds her victim's head under the water. Is someone in your way? Kill him. Did that beautiful countess laugh at your proposal? Capture her. Should the Wand of Power be yours? Steal it. When you're evil and you accept it, you are truly free. All things are possible.

And ignore that empty sensation you think you feel growing in your heart. That's just a lifetime of ingrained platitudes trying to interfere with your destiny. The truly evil have no friends, no love, and no real companionship, but they can literally have anything else. Is it worth the price? Only someone capable of true evil can say.



FALLEN HEROES

Heroes can make the best villains.

Well, okay, being a hero and a villain at the same time is impossible for a sane character. But few things are as chilling as a villain who used to be a hero.

And fear can be a villain's best friend.

There are a number of ways to use the fall in a campaign. For starters, there's the now-classic bit where the epic adversary is revealed to be a former hero in his own right. How do the heroes react? Can they redeem him, or must they destroy this former champion of good to save all that they love? Or, if you're playing villains, can you trust this former hero? Will he turn on you? Is he even really a villain now? Unlike a lot of people, this character has every excuse to have an *undetected alignment* spell on at all times. Sure, it's hard to trust a lot of villains, but at least you know they won't be selling you out to the heroes without some serious guarantees. And even if he's really as evil as he claims, that just means you *know* you can't trust him. After all, this is a guy who betrayed the *heroes*.

Here's another possibility. If something has gone tragically wrong, and the heroic alliance has given in to the master villain, instead of the end, it could be the beginning of a *new* campaign. What do the former heroes do now, in the service of their dark master? Or, for that matter, do they decide that reigning in Hell is better than serving it?

The most obvious way to use this in a campaign, however, is by starting with villains who used to be heroes. The evil prestige classes in the DMG can be especially helpful in this case. This offers some of the unusual flavor of the evil campaign while maintaining more traditional adventuring elements. While the characters are now evil and have their own plans for power, conquest, immortality or what have you, they are also adventurers. You may well want to fall back on your old skills to gain gold, magic and power. You might also be able to work with old contacts for as long as you can hide your change of heart.

However the idea of the Fallen Hero comes into the campaign, the most important question to ask is *why*. What has convinced a hero that all the nonsense she was fed by the forces of good was a lie? Villains can be terribly persuasive, but the vast majority of heroes ignore their sensible explanations and wade in, swords or spells flying. Why did she listen, when most other heroes wouldn't?

SOME POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

Betrayal: If someone abandoned the hero at a critical moment, the experience may have shattered his faith in good might be shattered. This is especially true of heroes who place great stock in trust between friends. A villain who recruits such a former hero might find him short on loyalty and honor, but long on rage and pain. Fallen heroes of this type make good throwaway weapons, but rarely have staying power. The few that manage to give endurance to their bitterness are utter terrors as enemies, as they have given up hope for hate. They tend to be chaotic evil, driven as they are by fury and madness, but can be a clever villain can coax them into any evil alignment.

Broken: Even heroes have their limits. If a villain has enough time, patience, and sheer ruthlessness, he can simply torture the hero into submission. This is a very risky scheme, of course. Even if the hero doesn't escape, other heroes are likely to come charging to the rescue. On the other hand, a broken hero is highly unlikely to turn against the villain for a long time, if ever, without help from other heroes. Broken heroes tend heavily towards lawful evil, serving the master without question. On the other hand, somewhere beneath the fear and subservience is likely to be a lot of hatred, and if the enslaved former hero can kill the villain, there may be a new warlord (of any evil alignment) in charge.

Cowardice: While this isn't a likely fate for a true *hero*, some more neutrally-aligned adventurers aren't as brave as their comrades. All it can take is one moment of failed courage to push someone teetering on the edge into evil. Such a 'villain' probably isn't very villainous, having decided to be

worthless rather than aspire to anything, but is both dangerous and unpredictable. A Fallen 'hero' of this variety is likely to be neutral evil, only looking out for themselves.

Love: Love isn't just for heroes. Opposites attract, and a great hero and an epic villain are as opposite as it's possible to get. While many such affairs end in tragedy, sometimes one character decides to make the leap and join the beloved on the 'other side.' While, annoyingly, this usually results in a villain's conversion to good, occasionally a hero will make the 'sacrifice' of becoming a villain. Fallen heroes of this type tend to be the same alignment as their beloved, but both villains tend towards lawful evil. Villains *can* love, but even evil characters require trust to love.

Magic: There are plenty of ways that evil can be forced on a hero in a magical world. The infamous *helm of opposite alignment* is the best-known method to turn a hero into a villain, but there are plenty of other ways of literally changing a hero's mind. The problem with this sort of 'Fall' is that it's artificial. Heroes and deities tend to be very forgiving of this sort of thing, so long as the forms are followed when the 'victim' recovers. In the meantime, however, the new villain tends to embrace evil as completely as a hero cherishes the ideals of good. Alignment is usually the exact opposite of the former hero's, though a powerful villain can theoretically force any alignment on a hero.

Revenge: Revenge can create heroes, but the powerful emotions engendered by wanting to destroy one's enemies are so easily nudged into more thoroughly evil impulses... at the right moment. A hero driven to kill 'the enemy' might find that other villains don't sound as misguided as they used to. In fact, a villain who can deliver the murderer of a hero's family might find that the most trusted ally possible is a Fallen hero. Such heroes tend to be lawful evil, never quite accepting the idea that they've crossed the line. They maintain fragments of the old code of honor but are willing to do things that would make 'real' heroes ill.

Welcome to the dark side.



SISTERS OF DUST

The Sisters of Dust are a necromantic society comprised entirely of women. The name stems from their quest for knowledge — sometimes from ancient sources — lost in the dusts of time. They believe that only women — bearers of life — can truly understand the meaning of death. Their goal is to study the dead in order to gain a greater knowledge of healing the living. Their numbers are comprised almost entirely of wizards, clerics, and sorcerers, but they will not close the door on any woman seeking the truth.

Initiates must show a working knowledge of anatomy and general medicine, as well as a genuine desire to learn. If they meet these criteria, they will gain all the privileges of membership: arcane training, access to texts and scrolls, tutelage, and financial resources continue training. In exchange, the initiate must keep the society's existence a secret and pledge to learn all she can of medicine, healing, and surgery.

Members meet in secret for lectures or conventions in secluded libraries, classrooms, inns or even abandoned dungeons or ruins. They maintain frequent contact through encoded messages and numerous contacts — booksellers, exotic dealers, innkeepers, sages, scribes, midwives and the like. They strive to keep the society hidden from the outside world, afraid that their studies of necromancy would be mistaken for dark deeds and villainy.

During times of great need the society may reveal itself to persons outside of the society in order to combat a disaster. Plagues, wars, earthquakes and the like will draw these healers out in numbers as they strive to use their gifts to save lives and end suffering. Occasionally, if the need is great, the Sisters will consult a male practitioner of the arts. The man will be treated as a novice or a new initiate might be treated, unless he proves himself of great knowledge and ability. There has never been a male member.

COMMON CAUSE

Okay, so now you've got a group of evil schemers plotting to take over the world. You've created a powerful warlord ready to crush all foes, the guy on your left is a backstabbing skulker who murders anyone who gets in his way, the gal on your right is a sadistic priestess who's undermining those pesky religious orders inspiring your enemies, and down near the DM is your buddy Bob — the evil wizard with the sneaky smile and every nasty spell in the book. Literally. You're ready to make the world tremble.

All you have to do is avoid killing each other first.

Honestly, why are four people with limitless ambition and no scruples working together? Sure, it's convenient for now, but only one of you can be wearing the crown when the dust settles. Okay, sure, little Miss Sadist can be someone's Queen, but which one of you is going to be the final authority? It may not be a *real* problem until the dust settles, but unless one of you is playing an idiot, all the characters will know that it's only a matter of time. Why not strike first, as soon as the plans of conquest are in motion? Better them than you, right?

Wrong.

It's important to remember when to put the characters away. These are still your friends sitting around the table with you, and unless you've all agreed in advance that you're playing *against* each other, this sort of campaign can have tensions running high. And if you actually succeed in killing off the others, it either becomes a much smaller group or the new characters come in knowing that the last person standing wins.

Even evil characters can work together. Sure, the likelihood is that everyone will be looking out for themselves most of all, but villains don't come out of cookie-cutters any more than heroes do. Some are actually capable of friendship, and even a twisted form of love. More to the point, they can see how mutually beneficial agreements are best left intact. Enlightened self-interest isn't just for the good guys.

Let's look at our four schemers again. Let's assume for the moment that our warlord wants to

be king. The other three aren't really suited for that job anyway, when you think about it. Only the thief could realistically take over the underworld, or he could be the court assassin when they win, with all the women and wealth he could want. The sadistic cleric could become High Priestess of the kingdom's only legal religion, giving her almost as much power as the king (and more, in some areas). The wizard? He gets unlimited resources to pursue all the usual perks of being a powerful evil spellcaster — immortality, vast magical power and knowledge, and the same perks as the others. So they all have their niches to look forward to if and when they conquer the world. Sure, *after* they win (if ever), they may start plotting against each other, but that's then. For now, they either work together or the heroes chop them into ground villain.

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

"Okay, so one of your spies stumbles into your secret lair," the DM begins.

"Is it about my plot to corrupt the priests of the Sun God?"

"It's probably one of my informants with the skinny on where Mr. Hot-Shot Paladin is."

"Did he find out who has the Wand of Power?"

"Those idiots on the border had better not give away my Legions of Doom."

"Sigh..."

Getting heroes involved in a pre-planned adventure is easy. Heroes don't have to do anything except make a living when there isn't a crisis. Then, when monsters, villains or disasters threaten the innocent, they take action to save lives or oppose tyranny.

Villains are another story.

Heroes react to problems as they arise. Villains are the ones whose schemes force the heroes to do heroic things. In other words, villains create adventures.

As one might expect, this can be hell on a DM.

Even the most experienced DM is going to have a hard time adjusting to one far reaching scheme, let alone one from each player in the group. In a cam-

paign where the players are evil conquerors, the DM reacts to their plans. This requires a great deal of cooperation between the players and the DM.

The most obvious way to deal with the situation is for the players to give the DM their plans in between adventures. They explain what their forces are trying to do and what they intend to handle themselves. Then the DM decides how the larger plans are going, and devises an adventure revolving around what the party itself is doing. This is the most straightforward way to handle the situation. It's also the most demanding. The players have to come up with complete, intricate plans, and the DM has to create adventures to order. If the group is meeting regularly, this is going to be a lot of work for everyone involved.

Another way to deal with it is for the players to give the DM a general idea of what they want to do, but leave many of the specifics to the DM. This requires a fair amount of trust between the players and the DM, but allows the DM to customize more standard adventures to fit in with the players' plans. The drawbacks here are that a lot of the flavor of the evil campaign is lost, and the players aren't really in control. Villains who aren't in control of their plans aren't very impressive or villainous. And if you're just going to clean out dungeons, why aren't you either playing heroes or having your flunkies do it?

Of course, there's always the possibility of taking a dungeon and reversing the roles, forcing the villains to react to heroes. This allows the DM to craft an adventure where the players can act in character while the DM is still in control. The biggest problem here is that a campaign based on fighting off parties of heroes can get tiresome quickly. This could easily be fun as a one-shot, but as a campaign, the idea will quickly become more of the same.

Perhaps the best way to run a campaign like this is by mixing the different methods together. The players have their long-term plans, and the DM can work out adventures tailored to it on occasion. Meanwhile, the DM can modify other adventures to fit, and once in a while heroes stumble on to the plan and interfere.

COME, WE MUST PLAN FOR TOMORROW...

You've seen the movie, now live the adventure. Sure, the DM might let you conquer the world and then have fun watching you figure out what to do next. But most likely, after a few sessions of plotting, scheming and conquering, an insignificant group of poorly organized wanderers will mess up your carefully laid plans, almost by accident.

So what?

Honestly, what would you do with the world if you conquered it? It's a big, messy, boring job involving a lot of logistics and drudge work. Sure, you can delegate the work, but you delegate power with it. From there, a palace coup is only an ambition away.

It has been said many times, in many ways, that often the desire for something is more enjoyable than having it. While this certainly isn't always true, the fact is that heroes almost always win and villains almost always lose. Despite this, many legendary villains keep coming back for more. It takes a certain combination of ego and determination to keep plugging away at anything when you always lose, but some villains have what it takes.

That's easy enough for fictional villains, of course. Enjoying constant frustration as a player is another story. Actually running a campaign in which the players are villains and the heroes always win requires a lighter touch than most evil campaigns.

The DM has a few responsibilities here, obviously. First of all, the DM should be up front with the players. They're not going to really win in the end, so they should know that. Otherwise, they might plan a lynching when the Brilliant Master Plan™ they've lovingly pieced together is dismantled by a hero (with more luck than brains) stumbling onto the sacrifice to activate the Wand of Power at the last moment.

Another convention of this sub-genre is that while the villains never win, they never lose their power base, either. Sure, the hero may thwart the

Evil Wizard's plot to replace all the kings of the Knowne Worlde with obedient but otherwise indistinguishable golems. The Evil Wizard, however, always escapes via some clever spell or device, swearing revenge and promising that the next plan will succeed! Attacks on the Evil Wizard's Ebon Tower always fail, and are usually lessons in the balance of good and evil. Sometimes, storming the Ebon Tower will be necessary to thwart some plan of the Evil Wizard's, but by the next issue or episode, the Evil Wizard will be back in control of the Tower, plotting the downfall of all that is good.

Meanwhile, playing a villain like this has its advantages. You're not going to win, but you're going to come close — so enjoy it! Come up with really grandiose schemes! Taunt the heroes with your genius! Kidnap beautiful princesses (or handsome princes)! Threaten entire kingdoms with barely plausible high-level spells! Since your plan will fail at the end, the DM can let you get away with a lot more, so be shameless. You're a villain, after all.

THE OTHER SIDE OF EVIL

DEMONS

The beast roared up from the pit, clawing its way through the screaming sacrifices. Blood dripping from slathering jaws, it eyed me warily, as if testing the strength of my convictions. It was green and black, horned, and covered with death. Its eyes filled with evil... ready to fight, and to feast.

Demons are, by definition, chaotic evil extraplanar entities. Their nature is hideous, foul, and repugnant. Unbound by any law other than that of strength, demons are extraordinarily dangerous. Forging deals with them is primarily a matter of proving strength, and ensuring that the demon gains nothing from betraying you. Contracts or pacts cannot bind their nature; force and fear all that they obey. A summoner who seeks to bind and command a demon should be prepared for a fight, as no demon willingly serves a master that is

not strong enough to completely dominate it. Even when they do serve, demons constantly seek methods to free themselves from servitude, breaking whatever pacts they'd made. This is especially true if they feel that they can gain a greater amount of power elsewhere. Powerful demons will occasionally serve a mortal master if the reward for their time is very high; an artifact or a significant number of souls, for example, or possibly some great slaughter held in the demon's name.

Such creatures, however, are always looking for servants on the planes held by mortal beings. They seek power, information, and self-gratification, and will typically treat a supplicant well as long as they provide the demon what he requests. Someone who serves a demon must be constantly on guard, however, lest the creature spontaneously decide to break the deal and devour the supplicant. Dealing with demons is a matter of positive and negative reinforcement. With enough of either, the demon follows orders.

Demonic society consists of tracts of abyssal territory ruled by powerful Lords. These Lord command anything and everything that comes into their areas, compelling servitude and obedience with an iron fist. Chaos reigns, and war is common between powerful demons as they battle for supremacy of the Abyssal planes. The land is as chaotic as its rulers, shifting forms from hour to hour as it writhes beneath the feet of the powerful demon lords.

A demon, believing that other demons are weak, preys upon them, devouring their servants to feed its own power base. Mortal servitors who choose to visit their master in the Abyss may be safe from

their patron's random wrath; they are certainly not safe from the neighbors. The only law of the Abyss is 'the strongest survive,' and any player characters who choose to align themselves with demonic powers had best be able to protect themselves from such attacks.

DEVILS

It is agreed, then? Excellent. Come, mortal, and set pen to paper. With your blood and mine, we seal a pact that shall last throughout eternity... and beyond.



Lawful evil to the core, devils are rigid, structured, and often quite debonair. Their society consists of exacting law, regimenting order, and maintaining a highly detailed ranking system that defines a devil's power within its infernal planes. When a mortal deals with a devil, it is choosing to step into an intricate dance of evil designed to trap the unwary and destroy the weak.

They work with pacts and bargains, deals and binding contracts. Rarely will you meet a devil that is willing to perform selfless action. Devils first determine the pros and cons, elaborate on the possible clauses of a deal, secretly insert loopholes, and sign the compact to seal the bargain. Only then does a devil pay his charge.

Once you have contracted a devil to work for you, he is as good as his word — no more, no less. The strength of a devil retainer's service is completely based on the bargain used to compel his service. If the negotiator has been wily, the devil makes an excellent servant. A poor contract, however, and the devil could likely be out of control and unmanageable, obeying the letter of the law, but certainly not the spirit.

The same is true for those who choose to serve a devil. A servitor is taken into a devil's infernal household, given tasks upon the mortal plane, and expected to fulfill each and every point of the contract that binds the two together. If the servitor's contract is well stated and carefully phrased, the bargain is a fruitful one. But, a poorly worded contract turns the bargainer into a mindless automaton, his soul removed to sate the devil's pleasures.

Infernal society is very different from the politics — or lack thereof — of the demonic Abyss. Carefully structured, with an elaborately detailed hierarchy, the planes of the Abyss.

Devils have specific codes of conduct and laws of action. There are no random attacks in the infernal planes, only carefully considered political maneuvers. Segregated into territories that are ruled by a powerful prince, the devils clearly delineate their hierarchy from top to bottom, and each cog fits exactly into its place within the structure. Any mortal servants that choose to visit their patron on the Infernal planes should study carefully the law and codes of the territory, the plane,

and each nearby prince — the forces of any and all of these may maneuver to trap him. Loopholes are the life and breath of infernal society, and often provide the only safe passage through an enemy prince's territories.

Still, anyone who makes frequent use of these loopholes had best watch his back — there is always a place for both sides to take advantage of the law, and any political or contractual misstep could play right into an enemy's hands.



DÆMONS: A CODICIL

Your arguments are meaningless. Your power is flawed. You have no purpose upon this realm. Therefore, you will die.

It is said that there is a plane with neutral evil 'dæmons', accessible to rare and powerful mages. If these creatures exist, it would be inadvisable to bargain with them under any circumstances. Neutral evil creatures are completely unpredictable. They use any opportunity (whether a loophole or pure strength) to gain advantage, and have no care for contracts or pacts. A neutral evil dæmon would certainly lie to its advantage, using cleverness and strength to enforce a bargain, while immediately breaking that pact when convenient. Neutral evil creatures are rarely motivated by more than self-absorption, and there is little that could tempt them into giving away any of their power. They are not interested in creating a hierarchy, or even in ruling through strength. They are only interested in themselves, and thus offer little to a PC.

If a PC does attempt to bargain with one of these creatures, it is best that the DM use whatever means necessary to insure that the deal goes sour. The dæmon doesn't mind cheating a deal with a mere mortal in order to return to its own self-absorption and unfathomable schemes.

BARGAINS

Attempting to bargain with creatures such as devils and dæmons is a tricky matter, and not one that should be entered into lightly. Yes, they can be sources of great power, but they can also be ruthless enemies and ferocious predators. Those who seek to gain strength through serving (or contracting the services of) a devil or demon should spend a great deal of time in research and preparation before they begin their invocations.

Negotiating with a demon is much like arguing with a petulant child. Until you prove to them that you are in charge, they will not respect you. Even if a PC has summoned the demon in order to offer service to an Abyssal master, they must first prove that

they are worthy to serve. A demon doesn't enjoy being ripped from their plane at the command of another individual, no matter what they might gain from the bargain. Thus, in order to bargain with these creatures, a PC needs to both pacify and impress his patron. Acts of extreme cruelty satisfy demons, as does the destruction of priceless items and artifacts, and gifts of power or souls. For such offerings, a demon will typically remain and listen to the bargainer's deal rather than simply destroy him.

Summoning and contracting a devil, however, is an entirely different affair. Devils do not mind entering into pacts with mortals, and often see such negotiations as amusing opportunities to test their mettle against an obviously inferior (though occasionally clever) opponent. They will act angered in order to set the stage, as a defensive opponent is a weak opponent, and will often make significant demands on the individual who has summoned them. If the bargaining PC has done a little research, he will undoubtedly have discovered the particular tastes of the devil that he is attempting to summon, and can readily have a bribe on hand that consists of something the devil treasures. With this, the devil and the bargaining PC can enter into serious negotiation as rough equals.

When making a deal with a demon, the PC should keep the terms as clear and simple as possible. The terms are only important in that they create positive or negative reinforcement. Typical bargains with Abyssal creatures are phrased as, 'if you help me seize the Temple of Kalishvar, I will give you the artifact of Isly'rne,' or 'if you do not aid me in seizing the Temple of Kalishvar, I will place you in this bottle for a thousand years.'

Infernal contracts, on the other hand, are elaborate, complex, and highly detailed. Devils enjoy legal debates, and will go to great lengths to create a contract that can be abused as much as possible. A wary PC will realize that the devil is going to create loopholes to be used later, and will be extremely cautious with the preparation of the deal before he signs or agrees to anything. These

contracts could be many pages long, covering possible scenarios, alternate deals and future contract obligations as well as payment and return. They have as many lines and sections as possible, and reading through them can be a PC's worst nightmare. Unfortunately, if the PC doesn't take the time to see exactly what he's agreeing to do, he might foolishly accept receiving nothing at all — while paying the highest cost.

SERVING A DARK MASTER

The PC who decides to serve a demonic or infernal master is played in the same manner as any other priest of a Dark God, with a few exceptions. First, a demonic or infernal master cannot grant spells, although they can offer powerful artifacts for use, or even confer some amount of power through their infernal compacts. Secondly, a devil or demon is likely to be more involved in the immediate events of the PC's life, and much more critical and demanding than a god would be. This is because a demon or devil rarely has many servants on the mortal plane, and it is in their best interest to keep close tabs on every such individual that serves them. This can be both good and bad, as it means the creature is likely to reward or punish their servant for each action performed, where a god might miss the occasional 'indiscretion.'

A devil will be watching their servant to ensure that the compact is not broken, and that each letter of the original bargain is fulfilled. Devils invariably place clauses in their contracts that allow the devil to steal away the soul of their servant immediately if the pact is broken. Thus, they watch their mortal servants carefully, eager to find the loophole or indiscretion that will allow them to nullify the contract and claim their eternal reward. A devil will often place a servitor imp with the mortal subject, to report on everything that the PC says and does. This imp is not always a material companion — it may disguise itself as an item of clothing, a decoration on a PC's scabbard, or it may even kill a mortal retainer and take their place in order to spy upon the PC.

Demons, on the other hand, watch their mortal retainers for any sign of weakness or distraction, hoping to find the moment when they can shove a knife in the PCs back and escape the deal. If the PC no longer has the capacity to place them in eternal torment, the demon will seize the opportunity, kill or kidnap the PC, and return to the Abyssal planes to torture the soul brazen enough to think itself worthy of such power.

Where dark gods often wish to increase their servitor base upon the plane, demons and devils rarely intend to create a cult, or increase the number of mortal servants upon the plane. For a demon, the idea of organizing such a cult would be a nightmare and not worth the demon's time. To a devil, the contractual obligations of maintaining the hierarchy of mortal servants, and the trouble needed to maintain surveillance of each one, would be a difficulty not worth the gain. In rare instances both demons and devils will encourage cults to form in their names, but those are typically short-lived and very specific to the surrounding circumstances.

Serving a demon or devil does not mean that the PC is randomly slaughtering peasants in order to 'serve their master.' Most extraplanar creatures prefer to keep a low profile, lest the gods of the plane decide to remove their influence entirely. A PC servitor is expected to fulfill their obligations and repay the creature's time and energy, all while keeping themselves out of the spotlight; their Infernal or Abyssal contract hidden. This way, the demon or devil can continue to use the PC, and the PC can continue to gain power from his master without interference from other, higher beings. The PC who screams a demon's name while in combat, or who gives lectures as to the nature of his infernal master, will likely find himself the target of assassination attempts from multiple churches of holy powers. He may also become the focus of his master's wrath as punishment for drawing the attention of more powerful entities. In most cases, the demon or devil will simply 'cut the cord,' and allow the good powers to destroy the PC in order to preserve the demon or devil's own immortal life.

Talismans

One of the most dangerous means of controlling and summoning devils and demons is to control their talisman. For devils, this is typically an artifact of great power that contains the devil's physical essence — that devil's heart, eye, or other physical piece. To demons, a talisman is more of a fetter, connected to the demon through a psychic or emotional link rather than a physical one. Such an object could be a ritual knife, a location of great evil power, or some object used to open the demon's path onto the mortal planes. No matter what the item is, it commands respect and can force the creature into servitude, if the summoner is powerful enough to use the item. Such a path, however, is an extremely dangerous one.

No creature like to be forced into service through direct threat. Bargaining with a devil or demon once you have its talisman is rather like negotiating with a knife to someone's throat. Although the creature will act more subservient, in reality they are already planning the summoner's horrible demise. The demon or devil will never deal forthrightly when they feel that their talisman is in danger; their only purpose is to free the talisman, and exact revenge. Although holding such an object is certain to bring you respect, if you are not powerful enough to command it, the demon or devil may be able to break free of the summoner's control by using the very talisman that summoned it.

It is, however, considered good form to seize a demon or devil's talisman and then use it to make a trade with a *different* creature. Devils are always eager to gain power over each other, and demons use such talismans in order to destroy their demonic enemies and to prove their own superiority. Of course, this method always leads to enemies. The talisman's creature will almost certainly come to exact revenge, so a summoner using this tactic is best served if he ensures that his new 'patron' can completely destroy the entity whose talisman he is bargaining away.



ENTERING INTO THE DARKNESS

Those who choose to make pacts with darker powers do so at great risk. What reasons would someone have to turn away from the light, and offer their services to the darkness beyond? Who believes that they are powerful enough to command devils and demons, with no consequence? Infernal pacts are inviolate — once entered into, they stand until broken or fulfilled. This can leave a party member open to DM manipulation as the devils and demons exercise their will on their hapless 'supplicant.'

However, there are some appreciable benefits to working in tandem with a devil or demon, whether the PC is acting as a minion or commanding their power. Infernal pacts are sources of great power, and if the PC is desperate or greedy enough, he can get strength, magic items, and riches quite easily. By signing a single document, and all your dreams come true.

Well, not all, of course. Even the most powerful demons and devils have limits, and no being can promise a PC everything. While the power that

comes with such a bargain is obvious, these pacts leave permanent markings of their existence. A PC who has signed such a commitment may find himself growing small horns on his forehead, or discover that his skin has a peculiar stench of sulfur. They may find that although the PC can now shoot lightning from his fingertips, he is condemned to flee from the sight of any boldly-presented holy symbol.

There are few easier means of power, and those who choose to risk themselves in a bargain with such creatures should make certain that they know what they are doing. A properly executed contract can leave the PC with great power — and very little drawback. On the other hand, a poorly-worded or badly-executed contract can destroy the PC with very little gain. Those who turn to this method in order to grow stronger are relying on the power of their wit and logic in order to achieve power and riches. A fragile mage could ask for a new body — one with strength, fortitude and stamina. By completing the bargain, he could be the physical equal of any fighter rather than being captive to the sickly and delicate shell he was born possessing.

INFERNAL PACTS

The benefit of your demonic pact, is that the demon or devil is offering you power. More power than you could get normally. Faster too. What does this mean for you?

Beginning characters that create a demonic pact are able to do things that a normal 1st level character couldn't do. Flight, poison blood, immortality, increased strength... these are just a portion of the powers available to those willing to cross the threshold into ultimate power.

THE FIRST STAGE OF POWER

The first thing you must do is bargain with the demon. In game terms this could be as simple as saying the demon's name three times to finding a sacred, rare spell. It is up to your DM whether or not you have the resources to summon the demon to you, after that you'll be able to draw upon the powers listed below. Any character class (with the exception of Paladins) may create an Infernal Pact. Every time the PC is granted a general feat, he may instead choose an Infernal feat once the pact has been made. Spellcasters can do more, as you'll see later.

CLAWS/FANGS [INFERNAL]

You have sharp claws for fingers or sharp fangs for eyeteeth.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You deal 1d8 points of damage in unarmed combat. This damage is not subdual.

Special: You may take this feat twice: once for claws and once for fangs.



Drawback: The fangs and claws are quite noticeable. You suffer a one rank penalty to all attitude results for each feature to those that would notice or care. For example a PC with fangs that earns a friendly attitude from an NPC immediately turns that attitude to indifferent. A PC with fangs and claws turns it unfriendly. Dragons, demons, and creatures that care little about human society are likely not to notice.

DARKVISION [INFERNAL]

You have darkvision.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You gain the benefits of darkvision (60 feet), as though you were of a race born with it.

Drawback: The irises of your eyes have slits, like a cat's, and they glow under even the smallest light flashed in your direction.

ELEMENT RESISTANCE [INFERNAL]

You resist damage from one energy source.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You ignore the first 25 points of damage from one element source.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, choose another source of energy that you are immune to.

Drawback: Depending upon the element, your skin takes on inhuman composition. Someone resistant to sound has soft skin, while someone resistant to electricity has rubber-like skin. Cold resistance grows fur on your arms and fire resistance brings about the appearance of scales. Acid resistance causes your skin to take on a light green tint.

FLIGHT [INFERNAL]

You are capable of flight per the spell *fly*.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You can *fly* at will once per day as a spellcaster equal to your level.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you may fly one more time per day.

Drawback: Your bones become hollow and you lose weight. Your Strength is considered 6 less for the purposes of bull rush attacks.

IMMORTALITY [INFERNAL]

You stop aging and will never die. Only acts of violence against you can end your eternal existence.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Unholy Blessing, 5,000 xp cost.

Benefit: You are immortal. You will never age, or die from aging effects. Any magic attempts to age you, automatically fail.

Drawback: The demon is counting on someone to eventually kill you, even going as far as providing the weapon to do it. When you do finally die, your soul will be his to torment.

IMMUNITY [INFERNAL]

You are immune to all diseases, including supernatural ones, such as mummy rot and lycanthropy.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, 250 xp cost.

Benefit: You are immune to diseases of all kinds and never need to save against any contagion.

Drawback: You suffer from a nagging throaty cough that afflicts you on the average once per day. The DM is encouraged to have this cough erupt at all the wrong times.

IMP [INFERNAL]

You gain an Imp familiar.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, arcane or divine spell caster.

Benefit: You gain an imp as a familiar (if this pact was made with a demon, you gain a quasit). It works for you, but still serves its master in every way. Its powers can be used to aid you if necessary,

but it is unreliable and will only respect promises it makes to you in the spirit of the law. Imps are Lawful Evil and likely to make loose pacts to avoid being held to the 'word' of the law.

Drawback: If you already have a familiar, the Imp slays it and consumes its soul. You do not suffer an xp loss per the rules for losing a familiar, however any benefits that were gained from the familiar are lost.

IMPROVED FLIGHT [INFERNAL]

You are capable of flight per the spell *fly* at will.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Flight, 200 xp cost.

Benefit: You can *fly* at will as a spell caster equal to your level. There is no limit to the amount of times you can use the ability per day, and you no longer have to spend an action to cast *fly*.

Drawback: Small demon-like wings protrude from your back. Although they are not necessary for flight, they do move on their own, involuntarily when you fly and sometimes at a rest. Covering them with clothing requires special tailoring and wearing armor is not possible without serious modifications.

IMPROVED REGENERATION [INFERNAL]

You are now capable of regenerating damage as a supernatural creature.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Immunity, Regeneration, 500 xp cost.

Benefit: You *regenerate* as per the supernatural power. All damage dealt to you is considered subdual damage, and you heal damage at a fixed rate of 3 points per round.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, increase your regeneration rate by 2.

Drawback: Your skin pales and you are cannot tan. You always appear sickly and sweaty, even in cold conditions. Every second time this feat is taken, reduce your Charisma by 1.

LADY CHISA

Lady Chisa was born to wealth and privilege. Her father was a member of the king's court, a trusted advisor and important diplomat. She tutored with the king's own children as she grew up, and was one of the queen's handmaidens during her adolescent years. Nobody could have guessed the path she would eventually choose for herself.

Chisa grew up with a secret fascination with death. She longed to understand the connection between the living and the dead — between this life and the afterlife. Chisa sought to gain knowledge about life through death and became a secret student of the necromantic arts. She studied any texts she could find and practiced those arts when possible, seeing the effects of sunlight on plants, lack of water on animals, etc. Eventually, the old bookseller who she purchased her texts from discovered her secret love for the arts. The bookseller found the young woman intriguing, and introduced Chisa to a woman that would change her life.

Donella belonged to the Sisters of Dust. She was astounded by the amount of knowledge Chisa was able to learn on her own, and quickly initiated the young noblewoman into the ranks of the society. Together, they have unearthed many useful secrets from times long past.

Lady Chisa Human Wiz 3; SZ M (humanoid); HD 3d4; hp 15; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atks Dagger +1melee (1d4+1); SA Spells, summon familiar; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 11, Cha 16; AL NG; Skills: Concentration +7, Diplomacy +5, Heal +3, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Spellcraft +9. Feats: Dodge, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy). Spells: (4) 0: *arcane mark, detect magic, disrupt undead, read magic* (3) 1st: *chill touch, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement* (2) 2nd: *darkness, spectral hand*

INCREASED MOVEMENT [INFERNAL]

You are faster than normal.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You gain +20 feet to your base movement.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each additional time you take the feat, you gain a +10 to your base movement.

Drawback: You develop cloven hooves. Your Dexterity is unaffected by this; however, good luck finding boots that fit.

INFERNAL PACT [INFERNAL]

This is the first feat you must take in order to begin your path of power.

Prerequisite: Bargain with a demon, devil or daemon, alignment shift (*see drawback below*).

Benefit: You must permanently offer something up to the demon. Some hit points, a point of Constitution or Wisdom, the life of a loved one, or something else that the DM finds equally twisted and deranged.

Normal: There's nothing normal about it. In fact, it is recommended that you don't tell your that friends you've done this, unless of course they were all in on it with you.

Special: Taking this feat allows you access to any of the feats below.

Drawback: You have just taken your first steps towards damnation. You are forever evil from this point on, and no magic short of a *wish, miracle*, or major holy artifact can change that.

INFERNAL SOUL [INFERNAL]

You are tougher than normal.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Immunity.

Benefit: You gain +10 hit points.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times.

Drawback: You radiate evil. Anyone able to detect evil can sense your aura up to 100 feet away. In addition, your master's kin look upon you with a touch more respect, as though you were one of their own.

INVISIBILITY [INFERNAL]

You are capable of turning yourself invisible.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You can become invisible at will once per day as a spell caster equal to your level as per the spell *invisibility*.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you may become invisible one more time per day.

Drawback: People notice you less and your voice becomes softer and less aggressive. Your Charisma is considered 3 less for all skill checks.

SHAPECHANGE [INFERNAL]

You can change shape at will.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Infernal Soul.

Benefit: You may change shape once per day, per the spell, *shapechange*.

Drawback: Your Intelligence score drops by 1, each time you take this feat.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you may shape change one more time per day.

MAGIC ITEM [INFERNAL]

You are given a single magic item.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Wealth.

Benefit: You have one roll in the DMG for a magic item. The item rolled is all you receive, and no bargaining can change what magic the demon bestows upon you. The magic item is permanent and is yours to keep.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you may roll again another item.

Drawback: The item stands a greater chance of being cursed and was more than likely owned by someone before you.

MULTIPLE LIMBS [INFERNAL]

Your bargainer grants you additional limbs.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Shape Change.

Benefit: You grow two additional arms, two additional legs, or a prehensile tail.

Special: With extra arms come extra attacks. You may make two additional off-hand attacks with your additional limbs. Two-weapon fighting and ambidexterity do not affect these arms. The feat *Multidexterity* is useful with these additional arms, however, should you choose to take it. Two additional legs makes it more difficult to knock someone over. You gain the *Special Quality* cannot be tripped and you receive a +1 circumstance bonus to all *Bull Rush* attacks.

A prehensile tail has the same Strength as you. You may lift as much with your tail as you could with any part of your body. This tail may attack as you could with your arms, gaining the feat *Improved Trip* for use with your tail only.

Drawback: Besides the obvious? Extra limbs mean ordering specially custom made garments. The limbs are difficult to hide as well. People look upon you with fear and trepidation. Your Charisma score is effectively -8 if the extra limbs are noticeable. Paladins and Clerics are likely to treat you as evil, as well, and attack you on the spot.



POISON BLOOD [INFERNAL]

Your blood is poisonous and is unsafe to touch by others.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Immunity, 100 xp cost.

Benefit: When hit, the blood in your body becomes toxic to others. Anyone touching you with a melee touch attack risks your poison. The PC may also use their own blood to coat weapons (*see Blood Archer pg. 68*), or by cutting themselves before combat starts. *Poison Type:* Contact *DC:* varies. *Initial damage:* choose from the chart below. *Secondary damage:* determined by chart. In addition, you are immune to all poisons.

DC	Initial Damage	Secondary Effect
10	0	Death
11	2d12 hp	2d12 hp
12	1d3 Con + 1 Wis	1d3 Con + 1d3 Wis
13	0	Unconsciousness
14	1 hp	2d6 Cha
15	1 hp	<i>ghoul touch</i>
16	2d12 hp	1 Con
17	1d6 Str	1d6 Str
18	1d6 Con	2d6 hp
19	1d6 Dex	1d6 Wis
22	1d6 Int	1d4 hp
25	1d6 hp	1d6 hp

Drawback: You are a cold-blooded creature, your eye-slits are now vertical and you are slowly becoming nocturnal. You cannot wear heavier than leather armor and use this feat.

ROT [INFERNAL]

Your skin has a malignant contagion and everything you touch suffers from your festering rot.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Immunity.

Benefit: You can inflict mummy rot, as per the supernatural mummy disease.

Drawback: You stink like a rotting corpse.

REGENERATION [INFERNAL]

You recover faster than others, and can even regrow severed limbs.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Immunity, 300 xp cost.

Benefit: You regenerate as per the spell. Spell effects are determined as if you were a divine caster of level equal to your own.

Drawback: You are cold-blooded. In addition, fire damage deals double damage without a successful saving throw.

UNDETECTABLE LIE [INFERNAL]

You can lie without fault, negating all effects to penetrate your words.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You can lie without detection. All spells that attempt to discern that you are lying fail, and powerful magic cast by anyone other than an Outsider finds what your words truthful. Should the DM find that a powerful artifact should be able to detect your lies, there is a 50% chance of failure.

Drawback: Your tongue is forked. Anyone looking closely while you are talking (Spot check against opposed Bluff) can see that there is something wrong with your tongue.

UNHOLY BLESSING [INFERNAL]

Having been blessed by a demon, you radiate powerful evil and are rewarded with an *unholy aura*.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, Immunity, 500 xp cost.

Benefit: You are blessed with the permanent effects of *unholy aura* as if cast by a 20th level cleric.

Drawback: Small horns sprout from your skull. These horns will grow into full demonic horns over time.

UNHOLY STRENGTH [INFERNAL]

You have higher Strength than normal.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You permanently gain a +2 to your Strength score.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you gain an additional +2 to your Strength score.

Drawback: Your muscle growth is not normal and your body looks deformed and abused. Taken repeatedly, your flexibility diminishes and your ability to manipulate small objects fades. Every second time this feat is taken, reduce your Dexterity by 1.

WEALTH [INFERNAL]

You are given a great deal of money and/or valuables.

Prerequisite:
Infernal Pact.

Benefit: You gain 15,000 gp or equivalent in gems, goods and magic items.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times. Each additional time you take the feat, you gain an additional 10,000 gp or the equivalent.

Drawback: Nothing directly. This is perhaps the easiest desire for a demon to fulfill, although he's likely to merely take the goods from someone close-by rather than forge the items itself.

WISH [INFERNAL]

You earn a one time-wish from your bargainer.

Prerequisite: Infernal Pact, any two Infernal feats, 1,000 xp cost, 3 hit point cost.

Benefit: You may make one wish of the demon you are bargaining with. Consider the demon a 20th level spellcaster for determining the effects of the wish.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times.

Drawback: Each time you make a wish from a demon, you lock yourself in further with your pact. Asking a favor from a demon is likely to get a demon to ask a favor of you.

PRESTIGE CLASS: DEMON SUMMONER



Be aware that in all instances, you may wish to make the demon summoner, a devil or daemon summoner, depending on alignment, details of your campaign or level of power. For the ease of nomenclature, the term demon is used exclusively. The demon summoner is a spellcaster who specializes in the summoning and control of demons. Because summoning demons is considered anathema by most civilized societies, the demon summoner typically lives far away from his fellow men, conversing only with the foul beings who serve him, pouring over ancient tomes, and emerging only to acquire more grimoires of his black art and additional victims for his demonic servitors.

Since casting spells of summoning is intrinsic to the role of the demon summoner, only spellcasters are capable of entering into this profession. It is mostly followed by sorcerers and wizards, but there are a number of evil clerics who have become involved in summoning as a way of furthering the interests of their gods.

Hit Dice: d4

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a demon summoner, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Alignment: Any evil.

Spellcasting: Cleric 7th level or higher, Sorcerer 6th level or higher, or Wizard 5th level or higher.

Skills: Knowledge (demonology): 6 ranks, Spellcraft: 6 ranks.

Special: The demon summoner must be able to speak either the Abyssal or Infernal tongues, as appropriate.

CLASS SKILLS

The demon summoner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (demonology) (Int), Knowledge (planes) (Int) and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the demon summoner prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Summoners gain no proficiency in any weapon or armor. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble.

Spells: A demon summoner continues training in magic as well as her previous field of research. Thus, when a new demon summoner level is gained the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spell casting class she belonged to before becoming a demon summoner.

If a character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a demon summoner, she must decide to which class she adds each level of demon summoner for the purposes of determining spells per day.

As a demon summoner, she can only learn the spell *summon/dismiss* (race of demon), although he can learn any version of that spell which she can cast (with the DM's permission). Wizards and other spellcasters interested in learning other spells, are advised to take a level in their chosen class, rather than gain a level as a demon summoner. Sorcerers that become demon summoners no longer choose their known spells as they go up in demon summoner levels. Rather, the DM determines which version of *summon/dismiss* is added to her repertoire of spells as the otherworldly powers they tap into twist their inherent magical being.

Feats: Part of growing (and surviving) as a demon summoner is growing more proficient at casting spells, so when a demon summoner reaches the levels listed in the chart above, they may choose from any of the following Metamagic Feats and apply (if appropriate) apply it to either their

DEMON SUMMONER ADVANCEMENT TABLE

Level	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Metamagic Feat
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Metamagic Feat
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Apprentice
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Metamagic Feat
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Servitor
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Apprentice
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Metamagic Feat
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Apprentice
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Metamagic Feat
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Metamagic Feat



belarosh's law spell or any one of their summon/dismiss demon spells: *scribe scroll*, *combat casting*, *extend spell*, *heighten spell*, *spell focus*, *spell penetration*. If the demon summoner has taken Infernal Pact as a general feat, she may choose an Infernal Feat in place of a Metamagic Feat at each of these levels, with the DM's permission. (*For more on Infernal Feats, see page 24*).

Apprentice: The demon summoner gains an apprentice at 3rd level (another at 6th and another at 8th). This is a novice who has learned of the summoner's prowess and is offering her services in exchange for learning the art. She starts off as a 0 level (Apprentice) wizard and gains experience at half the rate of the demon summoner, learning whatever spells the summoner deems appropriate. Although fairly weak in power, she can perform menial tasks for the demon summoner and, when she reaches sufficient level, can not only prepare the magic circle but also can help her master cast the spells of summoning.

Servitor: At 5th level the reputation of the demon summoner has grown to a state where beings from the abyss take notice. The Summoner gains a quasit (or imp as appropriate) as a servitor. The servitor attaches itself to the summoner as a permanent follower, so long as the summoner continues to grow in power. If, in the judgment of the demon (the DM) the summoner experiences a major loss of temporal power, the servitor abandons her and returns to the Abyss.

SUMMONING A DEMON

Summoning demons is a difficult, terrifying and lonely business. We practitioners have committed ourselves to a (probably short) life apart from the rest of mankind, remaining in the shadows with our books, our magic circles and our unholy companions.

The main reason for this is that since demons often escape from their bonds and go on rampages, killing good upstanding citizens, most societies place demon summoners like me right up there, just above necromancers.

Summoning a creature from another dimension, particularly one as powerful, intelligent and malevolent as a demon, is dangerous business. Before you do anything, learn about your target.

DEMONS

There are a vast number of different races of demons living in the Abyss, and humanity knows of only a few. Almost all of the races are part of one of the many groups of demons that continually hattle for control of the Abyss, although there are also a number of "independent" demons who know loyalty to no group. Each group of demons divides into eight circles of power, with a different race occupying each circle. In each group, the demons of one circle lord it over the demons of the circle below and grovel before the demons of the circle above.

While each race of demons differs widely from all the others, there are certain ways in which each race of a given circle is similar to other races of the

DEMON KNOWLEDGE TABLE

Circle	Area of Knowledge	Name DC	Base Mood
First Circle	The Earth	10	5
Second Circle	Man & Woman	15	7
Third Circle	Combat	17	3
Fourth Circle	Tactics	20	2
Fifth Circle	Power	25	0
Sixth Circle	Magic	30	-2
Seventh Circle	Strategy	35	-5
Eighth Circle	The Abyss	40	-10



same circle. No matter what group they are in, demons of the same circle are likely to be the same in terms of the demonic feats they can grant a supplicant, the types of secrets they are likely to possess, how difficult it is to find the name of an individual demon, and how much they are likely to resent being summoned to this plane. These factors are summed up in the *Demon Knowledge* table.

Area of Knowledge

This is the demon's area of expertise and the one in which it is the most learned. While its knowledge in the area is extensive, it is not complete. There may be some obtuse facts it does not know. For example, a demon of the second circle would probably know who a given baron was having an affair with, but not necessarily how he actually felt about his paramour. Facts are one thing. Circumstances are outside of a demon's realm. And even if it did know, it might not want to say.

There is a 25% chance that a demon of the eighth circle knows the true name of a demon of a lesser circle, although whether he can be convinced to share that knowledge is a different question.

Name DC

This is how difficult it is to discover the true name of a demon of this circle (see *Names* below). Knowledge (demonology) is the requisite skill for checks.

Base Mood

This is the modifier for determining the demon's attitude when it arrives on this plane. The lower the number, the worse it is (see *Bargaining* below).

DM's Note

While the above information can be layered on to the races of demons which have already been published, it is expected that the DM may wish to create his own races of demons, so that the players can have the fun of discovering the powers and abilities of the demons through role-playing, rather than through looking in a book. If this is the case, feel free to change the types of Infernal Feats and Secrets to suit your campaign.

SUMMONING

The summoning of a demon is a four-step process involving preparation, summoning, bargaining, and dismissing.

Preparation

The first thing you must do for a summoning is to find the appropriate site for the ritual. The requirements for the location are actually quite specific. The site must be:

Private

It must be far away from any prying citizens who might choose exactly the wrong moment to interrupt the ceremony with their torches and hangman's nooses.

Still Air

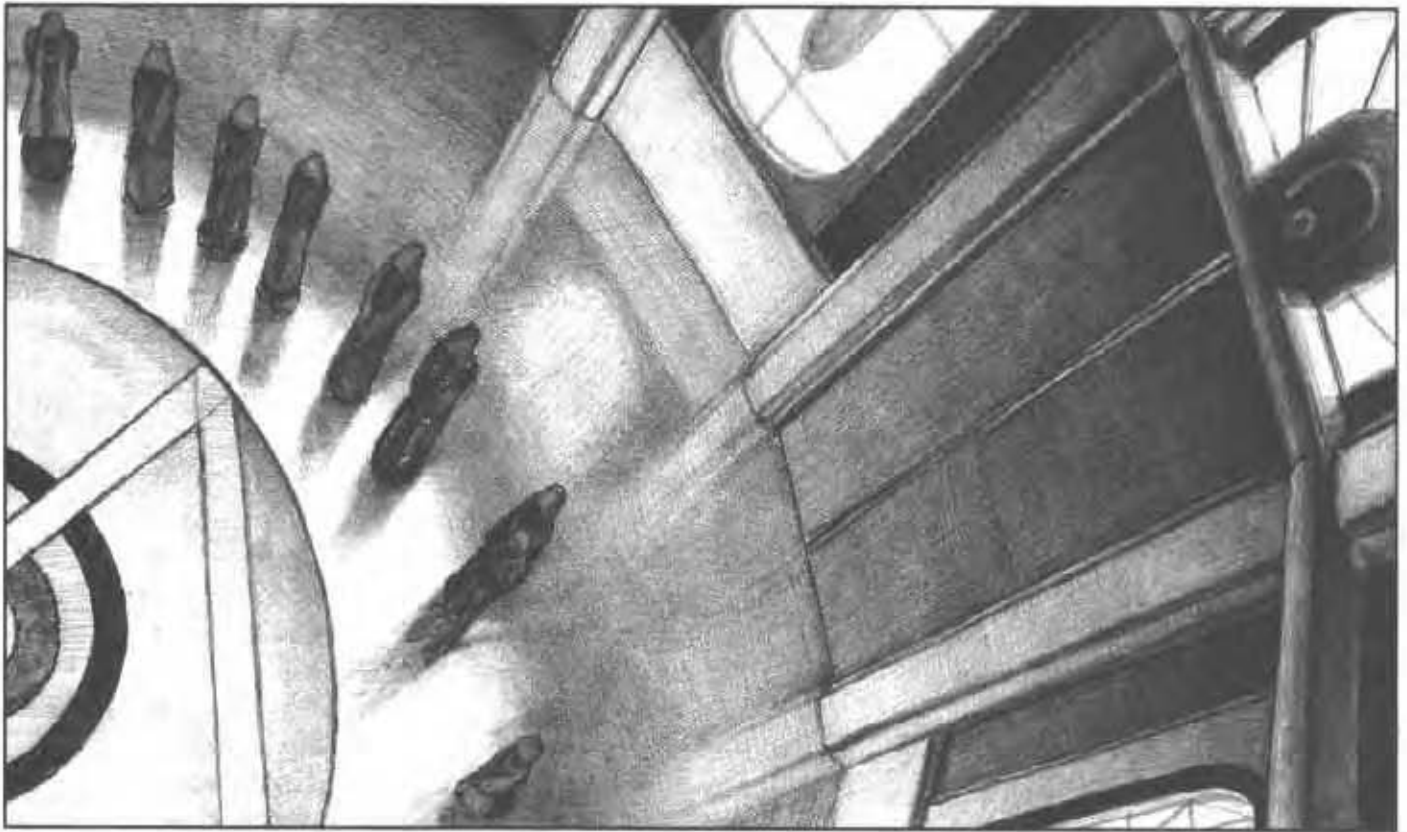
The air around the site must be completely still, so that no breeze accidentally snuffs out a candle, or disturbs the magic circle. This is particularly true if the magic circle was created using chalk, silver dust or some other temporary component.

Quiet

Even the simplest summoning spell is long and complex, and nothing must disturb the caster's concentration once the ceremony has started. Kaelet Dhu'ur of Lesingstaat was utterly destroyed by the backlash from a spell that suddenly aborted when an owl hooted in a nearby tree and Kaelet Dhu'ur dropped a syllable in the Spell of Summoning. Don't let this happen to you!

Expansion

The area needs to be large enough to both fit the magic circle and still provide the demon summoner a place to stand at a comfortable distance from the incoming demon. Also be aware that the magic circle needs to be large enough to contain the entity which is being summoned. A six-foot wide magic circle may be fine for a demonette, but a Demon Prince may need a space fifteen feet or more across. If a demon won't fit in the magic circle into which it is summoned, it will automatically return to its plane.



Level

It is nearly impossible to draw a complete magic circle on an uneven surface. Don't try.

Clean

This is a detail many summoners forget about, often at their peril. First of all, it's vital that no objects hang over the magic circle. This can cause a break in the walls of the magic circle which the demon can exploit. Secondly, it is vital that nothing be in the area that can fall or blow or in any other way cross the wall of the circle, as this can cause a break as well.

All of these requirements explain why most summoners prefer to do their work in tall towers far away from other human habitations, in spite of the inconvenience of having to transport supplies, food, sacrifices, etc.

The Magic Circle

This is the most important and easily botched part of the summoning procedure. There are two

ways to create a magic circle, depending on how much time you have for preparation. The first is to draw the magic circle with some sort of temporary medium such as chalk, charcoal, blood, etc. This has the advantage of being fairly quick. It only takes about ten minutes for an experienced demon summoner to draw an average-sized magic circle, assuming that the surface is smooth and he isn't interrupted. The disadvantage is that it is temporary, which makes it less than ideal for the containment of entities who ask no more from the gods than the opportunity to tear your our your gizzard and eat it. If any line of the magic circle is broken in even the slightest fashion, the entire magic circle is voided and the entity within it is free. While no entity within a magic circle can take any action that effects the lines of the magic circle, fate has a funny way of intervening, and if a mouse crawls across your chalk line, disturbing it, you are a feast for the slaving appetite of your newly summoned predator. Note that while the entity itself is confined to



the geometric pattern you've drawn into the center of the circle, all of the lines of the magic circle must remain intact for the spell to hold. Walk very carefully when you're close to the magic circle!

The second approach to drawing a magic circle is to engrave it into a hard substance, such as wood or stone. This is a slow process, requiring many days, but it creates a far more permanent magic circle, one that cannot be erased accidentally. It also leaves a huge magic circle engraved on the floor, which can be difficult to explain when the local cleric drops by for tea. The amount of time it takes to carve the circle permanently is dependent on the material chosen. Wood is quickest, while stone can take weeks to chisel the right shape. It is up to the DM to determine exactly how long it takes to make the perfect magic circle, but it is recommended that it take 1 day for wood, and 5 days for stone for a circle 10 feet in diameter.

In game terms, when a demon summoner wishes to create a magic circle the DM makes a hidden Spellcraft check (DC 25) for the summoner. The summoner may take an additional twenty minutes (if working in chalk) or one day (if working in stone) to create the magic circle to add +10 to this roll. The summoner may take an additional two hours (or three days) to create the magic circle to add +15 to this roll. If the Spellcraft check is successful the summoner creates a perfect magic circle. If not...

Regardless of the outcome of the check, the DM makes a second hidden Spellcraft check (DC 20) to see if the demon summoner is aware of how well he did. Taking additional time does not effect this roll. If the summoner succeeds with the second roll then he knows whether he was successful or not in the creation of the magic circle. A careful summoner keeps redrawing (or re-carving) his magic circle until he is sure that he has it right.

Once the magic circle is complete, the demon summoner must place a candle made of human tallow at each of eight symmetrical points (in homage of the eight circles), and lit in an order specified by the individual summoning spell. The caster must draw the specific sigil in tarnished silver dust and placed one at the base of each candle. The demon summoner activates the magic circle by casting the spell *belarosh's law* described below.

Belarosh's Law

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 3, Clr 4

Components: V, S, M (magic circle)

Casting Time: 30 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: One magic circle of any size

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: Special

This spell creates an invisible barrier to surrounding the magic circle. Note that if the magic circle is not properly prepared the spell succeeds, but to no effect.

The spell has several effects. The first is that no extraplanar entity inside the magic circle will leave it by any means, including dimensional travel. No matter how powerful a demon may be, they all respect and adhere to the laws of the magic circle, fearing the wrath and eternal torment of the ninth circle entities that are beyond binding that uphold and define the Laws of Belarosh.

The creature cannot reach across the barrier, and cannot make melee attacks across it. It can, however make ranged attacks which do not involve its own body parts (i.e. an arrow fired by a bow would pass through the barrier, a quill fired from a demon's back would not). The trapped entity cannot do anything to disturb the magic circle. The magic circle has no effect on non-extraplanar entities.

Spells and spell-like abilities cannot pass into or out of the magic circle. Spells whose effects do not cross the walls of the magic circle may be cast from inside the magic circle, with the exception that spells of summoning may not be cast from within the magic circle. This means that additional creatures can be summoned into a magic circle from the outside, but creatures inside the magic circle may not summon additional creatures.

If a trapped entity has spell resistance it can make one attempt every 8 hours to break through the barrier by making a successful Will saving throw against the DC of the spell. If it succeeds the barrier itself is destroyed and any other entities within the magic circle are freed. They may break from the barrier or return to the Abyss.

The caster may end the spell at any time, but this is not advised unless the caster dismisses the demon as well.

Summoning

Once the magic circle is complete and activated and all other preparations have been made, it is time to summon the demon. Each type of demon has its own spell for summoning it, and it is a rare summoner who has lived long enough to know the spells for summoning all the demons of the pit.

Casting spells of summoning is extremely difficult. Unlike most spells, where a certain amount of variation in the casting procedure is not only acceptable but also considered "artistic", spells of summoning have to be cast very precisely, and the consequences of an error can be disastrous. Fortunately, however, spells of summoning can be cast by several people at once, so many demon summoners choose to have well-trained assistants present at the summoning who chant along with the main summoner and can fill in if he suddenly stumbles.

Summon/Dismiss (Race of Demon)

Conjuration (Calling)

Level: Summoner equal to the half the level of the entity being called (round up).

Components: V, S

Casting Time: Thirty minutes to summon, one action to dismiss

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

Target: One random extraplanar entity of a given race (see text)

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: No

Spell Resistance: Yes

While other spells summon various monsters, this is the only spell which specifically summons a demon from the Abyss. There is a different version of this spell for each race or demon, each of which must be learned separately. The same spell is used to summon and dismiss the demon, but must be learned twice if it is to be used first to summon a demon and then dismiss it.

When used to summon, the spell briefly opens a portal between the this plane and the Abyss and teleports a random representative of the named race to a spot chosen by the caster. If the summoner wishes to summon a specific, individual demon, he must specify the secret name of that individual during the casting of the spell. Demons always resist a summoning with their SR. If the demon successfully resists, the summoning fails.

Because spells of summoning are so precise the summoner must make a Spellcraft check (DC 20) in order to cast the spell without incident. If he fails, and there is another demon summoner (who must also know the spell) assisting, then that summoner may make a Spellcraft check (DC 20) and so on until either someone succeeds at the check or there are no more assistants.

If the roll is failed by all of the summoners present, roll on the following table:

- 1-5 A puff of vile-smelling smoke erupts within the circle. Otherwise, no effect.
- 6-9 The summoner(s) calls upon a demon of the level below the demon he intended to summon (if this results in a 0 level demon, then no summoning takes place).
- 10-12 A demon is successfully summoned (one level lower than that intended), but it appears outside of the magic circle.
- 13-15 A demon is successfully summoned, but it appears outside of the magic circle.
- 16-17 The summoner(s) draws forth a demon of the next level above the demon he intended to summon (if there is no such creature, then consider the roll a 13-15).
- 18-19 The summoner(s) draws forth a demon of the next level above the demon he intended to summon, but it appears outside of the magic circle.
- 20 The spell reverses, and sucks the summoner(s) into the Abyss.

If cast successfully, the spell forces the demon to appear where the caster designates and remains on this plane until it is dismissed or it completes its bargain (see *Bargaining* below).

When used as a spell of dismissal, the caster can use the spell to dismiss any representative of the race, not just one that has been summoned by the caster. If the demon wishes, it may attempt to resist with its SR, but most are eager to return home.

Names

To a demon there is one thing that is more precious than gold, more precious than the screams of its victims, more precious even than its talisman. That is its secret name, the one word that not only defines the demon, but also encompasses it and calls it. He who has knowledge of a demon's name can summon that demon individually, and has a much better chance of controlling the demon when it arrives.

For obvious reasons, demons go to great lengths to keep their secret names secret, including the indescribably messy death of any holders of the name that they can get to. No demon ever voluntarily reveals its name, no matter what it is offered. Nonetheless, a few great summoners of the past have discovered the names of certain demons and recorded them in their great, ironbound grimoires. These grimoires are the objects of countless quests by demon summoners eager to gain the knowledge they contain. They are also the objects of countless quests by demons that wish to destroy them and everyone who has ever had any contact with them. For that reason possession of such a book is considered very dangerous.



DM's Note

Obviously, these grimoires make excellent quest items for summoners, and in fact the name itself, either engraved on a statue in the bottom of a dungeon, or heard from the dying lips of a rescued mage, also works well. DM's who wish to automate this process a bit more can use the summoner's Knowledge (demonology) skill to determine if the summoner derives the name from the resources available to him. Summoners should gain bonuses for a well-equipped library and extra time taken in the research.

WHY SUMMON A DEMON?

As you can see from the previous discussion, summoning a demon is much too dangerous to do unless you have a very good reason to do so. The slightest error can lead to the summoner's gruesome death. So why do people undertake such a risk? Because demons are creatures of enormous power that occasionally assist demon summoners who know how to deal with them... properly.

Demon summoners can be force, request, bribe or cajole demons into performing many services, including:

- **Fighting for the demon summoner.** A demon fights for one battle, no more. They are not guard dogs, bound by chains to bark when trouble comes.

- **Retrieving a treasure for the summoner.** Since the demon almost always requests more payment than the treasure is worth, summoners rarely ask for such a feat.

- **Casting a spell.** Different demons cast different spells and the DM should develop a list of powers for the demons of his world. For ease of play assume a demon is a spell caster equal to his circle level times two.

- **Teaching a spell.** This is usually reserved for demons of the sixth circle, but the DM is the ultimate authority on what a demon will and will not teach.



- **Giving (or getting) the summoner a specific piece of information.** Different demons specialize in different types of information and will not work outside their areas of specialization, so choose your demon and question carefully. A demon never answers more than one question per summoning.

- **Providing infernal powers.** Different types of demons provide different types of powers, so the summoner should choose his demon wisely, as well as be aware that every power comes with a drawback.

Note that in every case these powers are much different than the Infernal Feats. This is purposeful. The above list is a series of role-playing opportunities and PCs should not be handed item after item and spell after spell just because they know how to cast *summon/dismiss*. The Infernal Feats on the other hand, are pacts, contracts, etc., between the PC and the demon and reflect game mechanics. Such benefits are rare (usually every three levels) and the powers gain are commensurate with the detriment they provide your character. In game terms, it is not necessary to be able to cast *summon/dismiss* to make an infernal pact. However, the DM may require that some action take place that encourages the PCs to seek out the demons, and not just mark a few boxes on their character sheets.

BARGAINING

Play out the confrontation between a demon summoner and a demon. No set of rules can ever quantify the twists and turns and promises and betrayals that such negotiations will take. Therefore, it is a slap in the face to good role-playing to undermine demonic negotiations. What follows are a set of guidelines to help DMs and provide insight to the complex relationship that exists between a demon summoner and the demons he masters.

Role-playing a Demon

Have you ever been *really* angry? So angry you just wanted to destroy every stick of furniture in the house? Imagine having felt that way for many, many centuries, and that you have spent those centuries surrounded by creatures who not only feel the same way and glorify feeling that way, but who are sufficiently powerful enough to inflict their rage on you. Daily. In the most excruciating ways possible. Then imagine being suddenly yanked out of that world and confined to a tiny magic circle by a pathetic creature who wouldn't last ten seconds in the Abyss. Now imagine this little pest demanding a favor. Wouldn't your first reaction be to do everything in your power to destroy this upstart? That is the mind-set that most demons have when they enter into a bargain with a demon summoner.

Surprisingly, however, there is historical precedent for a long-term positive relationship between a demon summoner and a demon. There have been several instances of a demon actually befriending a summoner, and voluntarily helping her. Although this is incredibly rare, it could be the basis for some strange and interesting adventures.

Making the Bargain

There are basically two methods a demon summoner can use in dealing with a demon. The summoner can either attempt to force the demon into the deal, or else to its worse nature (demons do not have better natures) by bribing him. Forcing a demon to do your bidding is extremely difficult, since even the demons of the lowest circles can be

tough. Since you cannot cast spells into the magic circle which holds the demon, you can neither be ensorcel nor can you damage them with spells to force it into cooperating, at least as long as they are kept inside the magic circle. Some extremely brave (and usually short-lived) demon summoners have dropped the magic circle spell and attempted to cast spells of binding or enchantment before the demon tore them to bits, but given how resistant demons are to spells even other summoners consider that foolish. Wealthy demon summoners have hired groups of fighters wielding either missile weapons or long spears to attack the demon in an effort to strong-arm him into a deal. This can also be hazardous however, since a powerful demon may grab a probing spear and use it to kill everyone in the room. No one will ever strong-arm a demon into a bargain unless it is utterly convinced that it will perish if it doesn't agree, or that something equally awful (such as being bound in a small glass jar for all eternity) will happen.

Most summoners prefer to bargain with their demonic guests, and with good reason. The more placated a demon is, the less likely it is to rip out the heart of its summoner if it manages to break free from the magic circle, even if it doesn't agree to the boon requested. While again, the bargaining between the summoner and the demon should be role-played, the following equation is a rough means of determining how likely a demon is to react to a specific offer: $(d20 + \text{Charisma Modifier} + \text{Mood} + \text{Goods} + \text{Victims} + \text{Service} + \text{Boon Requested} + \text{Name (if used)} + \text{Knowledge} + \text{Name} + \text{Talisman})$. All payment is up front. Demons *never* offer credit.

Mood

This number is equal to the Base Mood Number of that demon's particular circle, minus 1d10. This reflects not only that type of demon's feelings about people, but how this particular demon happens to be feeling at that moment. The more powerful the demon, the more it will resent being summoned out of the Abyss.

Goods

Demons have no specific need for gold or jewels, although they do appreciate a good magic weapon. They fully appreciate the value that other creatures place on such things, however, and the effect of treasure on a demon is in direct proportion to how much misery it gives the caster. So this number equals the value of the treasure offered in gold pieces divided by the level of the summoner times 5,000. For example, a fourth-level summoner would need to give up 20,000 gp worth of treasure in order to get a one-point bonus. $(20,000/4 \times 5,000)$

Victims

Again, misery loves company, and no creature is more miserable than a demon, except perhaps its victim(s). The summoner gets a one-point bonus for every conscious, unwilling sentient creature offered to the demon.

Service

Demons from all circles enjoy others serving and worshipping them, so an offer of service will often make a good impression on a demon. Because there are so many different types of services a summoner could offer a demon, the DM will need to make a judgment call, but it should be based on how much misery the service will cause the summoner, and how much good it will do the demon. A typical range would be a +1 for a promise to fulfill a specific, short-term request, to +7 for a pledge of lifelong service.

Boon Requested

Here again the DM will have to make a call, based on how onerous the task assigned to demon is, and how foreign it is to the demon's nature. The typical range would be +5 if the request involves causing other creatures (including other demons) misery,



0 if the request is for information in an area in which the demon specializes, -5 if the demon has to actively DO something in order to fulfill the request and -10 if the request is likely to somehow imperil the demon. A boon may include several of these factors, in which case all of the factors should be included in the total.

Knowledge

This reflects the summoner knowing the most appropriate way to address this particular type of demon, whether it prefers male or female victims, etc. A summoner who makes a successful Knowledge: Demonology check gets a +2 bonus.

True Name

A demon's true name not only allows the summoner to specify which demon he wishes to summon, it also helps him to bargain with the demon. Use of a demon's name gives the summoner a +5 bonus in the bargaining.

Talisman

As described elsewhere, the use of a demon's talisman is something of a two-edged sword. A demon holds its talisman second only to its name, and a credible threat to harm or destroy a demon's talisman will give the summoner a +10 bonus to achieving the bargain he is hoping for. It will also ensure the demon's eternal enmity towards the caster, and will absolutely preclude the possibility of there every being any positive relationship between the demon and the caster. The other problem is that a demon is as secretive about the identity of its talisman as it is about its name, and the same quests and penalties can be applied to the process of discovering it.

The total of this roll + modifiers gives the DM some indication of how the demon is going to react to the offer. The higher the roll the better the reaction is likely to be. A suggested metric might be:

- < 10: The demon is furious, and attacks the summoner the first chance it gets. It receives a +2 on its next Will SR to break through the magic circle.
- 10-15 The demon is insulted, and refuses to have any further dealings with the summoner, except to kill him if given the chance.
- 16-20 The demon is neutral to the offer, and may reconsider if the offer is increased in some way. It may or may not attack if given the chance.
- 20-25 The demon, while not convinced, is pleased, and does not attack the summoner.
- 25-30 The demon is willing to grant the summoner's request.
- 30-35 The demon is well-pleased. It grants the summoner's request, and is more favorably inclined towards the summoner next time. (Note that in order for there to be a next time, the summoner will have to know the demon's true name, so that it can be summoned again).

If the two strike a bargain, the summoner lowers the magic circle and the demon emerges, takes its payment, and completes its part of the bargain. Surprisingly, once a demon has made a bargain it will stick to it faithfully. When it has completed all its bargains with demons are presumed to include a clause (which is sometimes circumvented by the specific agreement) that dismisses the demon back to the Abyss once it has finished its part of the bargain, or twenty-four hours have passed, whichever comes first. A clause that is NOT automatically part of a bargain with a demon is a "no harm" clause, which protects the summoner from summary death at the hands of the demon before or during its fulfillment of the bargain. Demons rather expect this to be part of an agreement and take no offense if it is mentioned, but will happily take advantage of its omission.

DISMISSAL

The dismissal of a demon opens a portal to the Abyss and then teleports the demon back to its original location, usually to the amusement of its fellow demons. The demon can, if it wishes, resist the dismissal, but rarely does unless in the middle of something it enjoys, such as tearing the summoner limb from limb.

The most common dismissal is the automatic one, which occurs either when the demon completes its part of the bargain or twenty-four hours pass. Sometimes, however, it becomes clear that there will be no bargain with this particular demon, and it makes more sense to dismiss it immediately rather than risk it escaping the magic circle.

WORSHIPPING EVIL

While demons and devils on the whole don't desire worship by large congregations (they'd probably just eat them), an occasional entity rises in stature to the point where they have power on this plane, and certain small sects have grown up around them. These entities have surpassed the normal limits of their kind, and have reached the point where they can grant spells to their worshippers and in many ways act as the "deity" which they wish they were.

Worshippers of such entities are almost always doing it for their own, selfish reasons. They are usually trading their worship for the power the entity will grant them, although there is the occasional fanatic priest who firmly believes that Menetor (or whichever) is the greatest of all cosmic entities and

should be revered and worshiped by all. These are the dangerous ones.

The entities listed below are merely a sampling of those available for worship, along with their domains. The DM is urged to create more.

SAANEERAA

Saaneeraa (*sa-ah-NEE-rah*), the lady of corruption, is lawful evil. Known as the Shadow Behind, her worshippers include those who desire to control the lives of others through trickery and mental domination, including councilors and ambitious bureaucrats. Her domains are evil, law and corruption. Pictured as a tall, comely erinyes, her favored weapon is the dagger.



MENETOR

Menetor (*MEH-neh-tor*), the lord of pain, is lawful evil. His title is the Painbringer. He delights in the screams and pleas for mercy of his helpless victims. Those who find pleasure in the pain of others often worship Menetor. His domains include evil, law, and pain. He appears as an enormous (12 feet tall) cornugon, carrying his favorite weapon, a whip.

DRAAM

Draam (*DRAHM*), the keeper of the undead, is lawful evil. His title is The Lord of the Undead. His worshippers include necromancers and others who wish to pierce the veil of death without actually stepping through it themselves. He is an enemy of the god of death, who wishes to keep the dead in his own domain. Draam's domains are evil, law and

death. He appears as a large (nine-foot tall) zombie with decaying flesh that continually sloughs off and renews. His favorite weapon is the club.

FENESTRAAL

Fenestraal (*FEH-neh-strahl*), the lady of disease, is chaotic evil. Mortals know her as the Plaguebringer. She delights in the spreading of disease and death throughout the world, and her worshippers share her delight. Those who are threatened by the plague also sometimes worship her, in the hopes that she will spare them. Her domains are evil, chaos and disease. She appears as a once-beautiful woman ravaged with every known disease. Her favorite weapon is a poisoned dagger.

ROLISCH'KAH

Rolisch'kah (*ROH-leesh KAH*), the lord of darkness, is chaotic evil. He is the Lord of the Dark. The lovers of darkness, whose deeds cannot stand the light of day, worship him. His domains are evil, chaos and darkness. He is a man-shaped pool of darkness, with only two glowing eyes. His favorite weapon is the sap.

ELRI'KAH

Elri'kah (*EL-ree KAH*), the lord of destruction, is chaotic evil. He is called the Destroyer. His worshippers are those who glory in destruction, including some evil fighters and many evil barbarians. His domains are evil, chaos and destruction. He is a gigantic Balor carrying a huge greataxe instead of the usual whip. Not surprisingly, the greataxe is his favored weapon.

EVIL DIETY DOMAIN TABLE

Deity	Alignment	Domains	Typical Worshippers
Saaneeraa	Lawful evil	Evil, Law, Corruption, Lust	Devils, Politicians
Menetor	Lawful evil	Evil, Law, Pain	Devils, Torturers
Draam	Lawful evil	Evil, Law, Death	Devils, Necromancers
Fenestraal	Chaotic evil	Evil, Chaos, Disease	Demons
Rolisch'kah	Chaotic evil	Evil, Chaos, Darkness	Demons
Elri'kah	Chaotic evil	Evil, Chaos, Destruction	Demons, some Barbarian cults

DOMAINS

Domains marked with an asterisk (*) are reprinted from the PHG for the player's convenience.

BLOOD DOMAIN

Granted Powers: You may cut yourself while casting domain spells. Each time you do this, you suffer one point of damage per level of the spell. The duration of the spell is doubled per the Metamagic Feat Extend Spell.

Spells:

1. Cause Fear
2. Bull's Strength
3. Magic Vestment
4. Summon Monster IV
5. Scrying
6. Wind Walk
7. Repulsion
8. Unholy Aura
9. Time Stop

CHAOS DOMAIN*

Deity: Fenestraal, Elri'kah, Rolisch'kah.

Granted Powers: You can cast chaos spells at +1 caster level.

Spells:

1. Protection from Law
2. Shatter
3. Magic Circle against Law
4. Chaos Hammer
5. Dispel Law
6. Animate Objects
7. Word of Chaos

- 8. Cloak of Chaos
- 9. Summon Monster IX

CORRUPTION DOMAIN

Deity: Saaneeraa.

Granted Powers: Once per day you may target a single creature and know exactly what that creature wants most in the world.

Spells:

- 1. Charm Person
- 2. Enthrall
- 3. Suggestion
- 4. Dominate Person
- 5. Mind Fog
- 6. Geas/Quest
- 7. Limited Wish
- 8. Demand
- 9. Wish

DARKNESS DOMAIN

Deity: Rolisch'kah.

Granted Powers: Darkvision.

Spells:

- 1. Obscuring Mist
- 2. Darkness
- 3. Deeper Darkness
- 4. Invisibility
- 5. Invisibility Sphere
- 6. Mislead
- 7. Mass Invisibility
- 8. Power Word, Blind
- 9. Gate

DEATH DOMAIN*

Deity: Draam.

Granted Powers: You may use a death touch once per day. Your death touch is a spell-like ability that is a death effect. You must succeed at a melee attack against a living creature (using the rules for touch spells). When you touch, roll 1d6 per your cleric level. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies.

Spells:

- 1. Cause Fear
- 2. Death Knell
- 3. Animate Dead
- 4. Death Ward
- 5. Slay Living
- 6. Create Undead
- 7. Destruction
- 8. Create Greater Undead
- 9. Wail of the Banshee

DESTRUCTION DOMAIN*

Deity: Elri'kah.

Granted Powers: You gain the smite power, the supernatural ability to make a single melee attack with a +4 attack bonus and a damage bonus equal to your cleric level (if you hit). You must declare the smite before making the attack. It is usable once per day.

Spells:

- 1. Inflict Light Wounds
- 2. Shatter
- 3. Contagion
- 4. Inflict Critical Wounds
- 5. Circle of Doom
- 6. Harm
- 7. Disintegrate
- 8. Earthquake
- 9. Implosion

DISEASE DOMAIN

Deity: Fenestraal.

Granted Powers: Immunity to all natural diseases. In addition, you may add your spell-caster level to any saving throw against magical diseases.

Spells:

- 1. Curse Water
- 2. Inflict Moderate Wounds
- 3. Contagion
- 4. Poison
- 5. Slay Living
- 6. Circle of Death
- 7. Destruction

8. Horrid Wilting
9. Energy Drain

EVIL DOMAIN*

Deity: Saaneeraa, Menetor, Fenestraal, Draam, Elri'kah, Rolisch'kah.

Granted Powers: You cast evil spells at +1 caster level.

Spells:

1. Protection from Good
2. Desecrate
3. Magic Circle against Good
4. Unholy Blight
5. Dispel Good
6. Create Undead
7. Blasphemy
8. Unholy Aura
9. Summon Monster IX

LAW DOMAIN*

Deity: Saaneeraa, Menetor, Draam.

Granted Powers: You cast law spells at +1 caster level.

Spells:

1. Protection from Chaos
2. Calm Emotions
3. Magic Circle against Chaos
4. Order's Wrath
5. Dispel Chaos
6. Hold Monster
7. Dictum
8. Shield of Law
9. Summon Monster IX

LUST DOMAIN

Deity: Saaneeraa.

Granted Powers: Your Charisma is considered one higher per level for the purposes of Diplomacy and Bluff rolls involving interaction with humans and humanoids. For instance a 9th Cleric, with a Charisma of 13, is considered to have a 22 Charisma for all Skill checks involving NPC interaction.

Spells

1. Charm Person
2. Enthral
3. Emotion
4. Dominate Person
5. Feeblemind
6. Geas/Quest
7. Refuge
8. Mass Charm
9. Wish

PAIN (TORTURE) DOMAIN

Deity: Menetor.

Granted Powers: You may use the power *excruciate* once per day. This is a spell-like ability. You must succeed at a melee attack against a living creature (using the rules for touch spells). When you touch the creature is stunned by excruciating pain as per the stunning attack rules on page 39 of the *Player's Handbook*. The creature may make a Fortitude saving throw each round to overcome the pain and act normally on the following round (DC 10 + cleric's level + wisdom bonus).

Spells:

1. Inflict Light wounds
2. Inflict Moderate Wounds
3. Inflict Serious Wounds
4. Inflict Critical Wounds
5. Circle of Doom
6. Harm
7. Blasphemy
8. Horrid Wilting
9. Bigby's Crushing Hand



PLAGUE DOMAIN

Granted Powers: You are a living extension of disease and contagions. Wounds caused by your ray attacks fester with disease. Damage from your ray attack spells does not heal properly and requires magical healing. Without magical healing, these points (whether hit points or ability damage) heal at a rate of only 1 per day.

Spells:

1. Inflict Minor Wounds I
2. Summon Swarm
3. Contagion
4. Enervation
5. Insect Plague
6. Harm
7. Creeping Doom
8. Finger of Death
9. Energy Drain

ROT DOMAIN

Granted Powers: Wounds fester with disease and puss from your touch. You are a living extension of disease and contagions. Touch attack spells that deal damage do not heal properly from you and require magical healing only. These points (whether hit points or ability damage) otherwise heal at 1 per day, no matter the level of the target creature.

Spells:

1. Inflict Light Wounds
2. Death Knell
3. Vampiric Touch
4. Poison
5. Slay Living
6. Disintegrate (touch only)
7. Power Word, Stun
8. Horrid Wilting
9. Soul Bind

There are rumors of other domains, such as Blindness, Vermin, Virulence and so on. Their respective powers are unknown, but stories speak of spells from reclusive deities that none have seen before.

EVIL ARCHETYPES

Now that you've established that you want to be evil, you need to determine exactly what sort of evil you are. Granted there are some character classes that dictate the style in which you play that character. In those cases, you have a compulsory brand of evil. But there are those of you that want to be an evil fighter or rogue, with no desire to move into one an evil prestige class. Since you are here, you must want something more than to merely menace the local townsfolk.

This list is by no means exhaustive. Nothing here prohibits you from combine traits from several of the personalities listed below. These are guidelines and the first step in your journey toward true evil.

You may notice there are no evil overlords, megalomaniacs, or tyrannical dictators on this list. This is intentional. For starters, none of these archetypes are 1st level characters. Your career of villainy starts at the bottom, and before you can lead an army, you'd best learn how to organize a small band of brigands. These archetypes are purposely obtuse to leave the room of growing your character in your hands.

Each description begins with a background for how and why evil behaves the way it does. This is meant as an inspirational springboard; look into your own past and decide why you're insecure instead of brutish. The game notes tell you how your personality translates into actual game rules. Remember, these are not hard and fast rules, so just adopt a specific archetype that fits. Finally, there are role-playing tips. You know why you are the way you are. How does that translate during interaction?

These personality archetypes are suitable for nearly all character classes.

THE AVENGER

Background: Long ago, you were wronged. Someone slew your family was slain, wiped out your village, usurped your king, desecrated your temple, or something equally offensive. Regardless

of what happened to you, you took the loss hard. So hard in fact that since that moment, the unquenchable fire of vengeance has driven you. Anything having to do with those that wronged you is now guilty by association and must in the same way you did, or you simply destroy it.

Avengers are the most driven of individuals. They focus all their energy on their one task, never giving a thought to much else, let alone what they will do if they actually accomplish their task.

As befits their situation, avengers tend to be loners, unless they can find (or coerce) others that share a common cause with them, even if it is from a different perspective. Avengers put much of their energy into making sure they are ready for the moment, whenever it may come, to square off with those that wronged them, and extract their final vengeance.

Avengers also take a long view. Though their vengeance is hot, their path toward that final confrontation can be long. Many feel this is done to let those that wronged the Avenger know that their end is coming. It may be a ways off, but it is coming nonetheless.

Game Notes: Avengers suffer socially. Nearly all their energy is devoted to the physical aspect with high Strength, Constitution and Dexterity scores. Skills that allow the Avenger to gain the upper hand are also favored. Hide, Gather Information, Disguise and any appropriate Knowledge skills are good choices. Combat-oriented feats are the best choice for Avengers as they need that physical edge.

Role-playing Tips: Avengers are not necessarily

gruff, unapproachable individuals, but they most certainly are focused. They tend to be loners, as it is unlikely that they can find others who feel as passionately as they do about their cause. Avengers are not stupid however, and easily join up with a party of adventurers. This is especially true if it helps to further their mission and goals. At the very least, an Avenger can tolerate the party. How long the Avenger stays with the group is another matter altogether.

The player and DM should work together before play to determine what happened to the character in his early days.

The player and DM should work out major points in the background. Having every detail laid out might actually take some of the fun out of the gaming. Leave some room for you and the DM to improvise as the campaign progresses.

THE BRUTE

Background:

Physical force, domination, cruelty. This is the language of the Brute.

You enjoy being cruel. You relish in seeing others cower before you, obeying your demands out of fear. Unlike other evil types who enjoy this same type of domination from a distance, you like to make sure you are the ones who is dispensing the cruelty. That personal feedback is hard to capture any other way, and the feeling is intoxicating. You prefer to keep your victims alive, so that they languish in humiliation. Death is sometimes necessary, but humiliation is so much better.

Your past is not pretty. You likely suffered on a personal level while growing up. You may have been the recipient of abuse, or simply witnessed excessive amounts of aggression and hostility. You realized, early on, the only path to survival was being stronger than those around you.



Not the most socially adept, you make up in brawn what you lack in brains. If you do not like something, you destroy or at least dominate it. There is little to fear from something you've ground under your boot.

While violent by nature, you do have a (somewhat distorted) moral compass. There are some things you find repugnant, and refuse to do. While they may not stop it from happening, you won't participate in or instigate the activity. This bent moral compass also provides you (some) respect for others treated similarly.

Game Notes: Brutes are not very smart or quick-witted. Most of their physical attributes, particularly Strength, are high. They choose feats that augment their combat abilities. Skills are usually of the more direct nature. Subtle skills (Innuendo, Animal Empathy, Open Lock etc.) take a back seat. Some skills, such as Sense Motive are important to the Brute, however, who needs to know when someone might be a threat.

Role-playing Tips: Some Brutes may only be one step up from mindless killing machines, but most are a few steps above that. In fact, it would mean a short career in villainy without some restraint from brutish tendencies.

While not social butterflies by any stretch, Brutes know when they are being insulted and when they are outmatched. Some Brutes also like to play dumb, to lull their eventual foes into security or overconfidence.

Brutes do not kill outright. Rather, they prefer the feeling of power they receive from looking down on a subdued, living foe.

As mentioned, Brutes do have some moral compass, or their own sense of honor. While they will most certainly kill, there are some things they simply will not do, or consider too taboo even for them. It is also this compass that allows Brutes to fit reasonably well in a character party with little difficulty.

A Brute may have a problem with hurting kids, or some hang up that stops them from desecrating a banner or church. It's up to the PC to determine his own morality.

THE CHAMELEON

Background: Some people fit into any type of situation; from a seedy bar to an elegant dinner party. You feel at home everywhere. Your social skills are put to sinister uses as a Chameleon, allowing you room to hatch your own fiendish plots without reprisal.

You may have developed these skills in any number of ways. It could be the result of a survival mechanism, which allowed you to avoid trouble and stay sharp. Perhaps you were taken under the wing of another Chameleon. Perhaps you were always confident. Regardless, you have the charm (and quite likely the looks) to not only fit in, but also to get your way.

This social aptitude allows you to initiate any number of evil plans, which generally only you benefit from. Where the Manipulator is someone who has subordinates, and works from behind several layers of protection, you are more of a loner and prefer a more hands-on approach to your work. If the job needs to be done right, you feel you are the only one qualified for the job. This does not mean you must do everything. Quite the opposite. In fact, the effects of your charm can often convince others to perform tasks which they might normally never do, and you, of course, delight in these occurrences.

Game Notes: As expected, Chameleons possess extremely strong social skills. A Chameleon has as much skill in Diplomacy as they do in Intimidation, Innuendo, Bluff or Perform. Characters of this type also have a modicum of skill in Disguise as well. Altering your physical appearance may be just as important your plans as any other social graces. As Chameleons are sometimes loners, they may need strength to back up their silver tongues. However, never showing what you're holding is an important talent that keeps people guessing. Chameleons favor words over swords any day.

Role-playing Tips: Chameleons can be tough to play. It requires the player to alter the mood and personality of his character often. This can be a rewarding character type to play, however. It easily gives the player a memorable role to step into each

session (i.e. "remember when I summoned dire wolves to eat the guards?"). As expected, a chameleon fits into the party easily, by altering his personality to fit (or disrupt) the group dynamic.

Chameleons, often have their own agendas, though, and this can interfere with the rest of the group. Chameleons tend not to be strong fighters, and so may choose to parley at any cost, or flee with the hope getting their revenge later.

THE CRAZED

Background: Unpredictable. Erratic. Irrational. These are the traits of a Crazy character. Behavior without a pattern, or at least, with a pattern known only to you. Your character embodies the stereotypical definition of insane.

You've never been completely stable. Your early friends simply called you temperamental or weird. As the years passed, you likely became obsessed about certain, unusual things. The distance between you and your friends grew further and further. As is usually the case with Crazy (particularly the evil Crazy), your behavior landed you in trouble with normal society and laws. Now you are likely a criminal.

People never seem to know how to read you. One moment, you can be the most kindhearted soul they have ever met. Then suddenly you change into bloodthirsty killer, or erratic psycho. What caused you to become this way is unclear. It could have been a traumatic childhood event, perhaps experiments performed on you went awry, though you have no memory of them. Maybe it is something as simple as a bad temper or a nagging tendency toward bad. Whatever the reasoning behind your behavior, people generally treat you kindly until you snap. If they survive your outburst, they will usually keep their distance.

Game Notes: Crazy characters possess an unusually high Charisma score. This creates a



strong and initially gentle personality, making the shock of the character's eventual snapping that much more jarring. Some Crazy characters possess high Intelligence as well, making them into the insane genius style of character. As expected, these types of characters have high skill levels in many Charisma-based skills.

Role-playing Tips: Crazy characters can fit into a party — for a time anyway. When they do have their outburst, it can cause major disruptions to the group dynamic depending upon the degree of outburst. Crazy characters do not generally act randomly. It takes something to set them off, and triggers their outburst, or change in behavior. Discuss with your DM beforehand to work out this detail and how it may relate to the character's past. How the Crazy character reacts is something else to deal with. For example, a character becomes awed by what he considers excessive beauty, whether it's a piece of art, a fellow person or whatever. This character is so awed by it, that he now feels compelled to destroy or desecrate it. This drive to destroy becomes obsessive to the point where the character may not be able to function until he is either removed from the situation or finishes the deed.

Don't feel that you must play the wacked-out type of Crazy character. As mentioned above, the insane genius fits this category. While not prone to wild outbursts, this type of character is incredibly eccentric and obsessed about what he owns, does, and searches for.

THE INSECURE

Background: Everyone has something about themselves that they feel is inadequate. In your case, you feel as though faults in yourself are known to others as well as yourself. These feelings of inadequacy cause you to react in the extreme, turning to violence and hatred. You feel the need to humiliate and harm those that threaten what little security you do have. Even those not considered a threat are likely targets for your aggression.

This type of behavior is almost always reserved for those growing up in a position of power. You are very sensitive to scrutiny or criticism by those around you. This often causes you to display power and control, however misguided. This power is often displayed in garnering power beyond your means — the root of villainy.

You revel in the humiliation of others. This makes you feel bigger than you really are. You are only a step beyond a bully. You have the ability to back up your threats and taunts. This is usually done by those loyal to you, but since few respect you, the likelihood of having a minion is unlikely. It's more likely that you'll be doing everything for yourself.

You easily suffer wounds to your pride, and if you are forced away from a confrontation, you become a terrible enemy to those you perceive as a threat.

Game Notes: As stated, this kind of character is usually in a position of power, whether it be noble, merchant prince, army commander, or mercenary leader. A player choosing an insecure villain character should nominate one aspect of his character as his hubris. This hubris makes you susceptible to ridicule by others. Whether its your intelligence, height, looks, or personality, something noticeable needs to become the focus of your insecurity.

Since your background infers a relative degree of power, build a loyalist base followers (if you can). Choose Tyrant (q.v.) as a feat, but work out with your DM the flaw to your leadership. A high Charisma score or high levels in social skills assist you in your efforts. Focus on making your character want to puff his chest when he can, but realize that his defect keeps him from attaining true greatness.

Role-playing Tips: Insecure characters are difficult members of the party, as the characters usually have intimate knowledge of each other, or it is far too easy to manipulate someone wearing his heart on his sleeve. If an insecure character has the backing of his friends, however, it can make for some interesting sessions when encountering NPCs (what did you say about my friend's weight?). If a character does reach a position of power or prestige, the DM can watch the PC dance by calling into question some of the character's shortcomings.

The insecure character isn't always itching for a fight though. Most likely, he'll go out of his way to hide his perceived faults. When they are called out, though, an insecure character generally overreacts and goes after those who called them out, making him highly predictable.



THE LETCH

Background: Everyone has a vice. While most keep their vices under control, you are an exception. Not only is your vice uncontrolled, its an obsession for you. It affects almost every aspect of your life and drives you to extreme, depraved levels.

This type of behavior is not uncommon. But for you, the effects have escalated, to what some consider, an unhealthy level. Sex, drugs, money, blood or worse, you must have it and nothing better stand in your way. Your compulsion began innocently enough — likely out of curiosity — but it didn't take long for it grow out of control. As your need continues to grow and level of high you seek also grows. What satisfied you a year ago is only an appetizer now.

To outsiders it seems you are obsessed. But, inside its a constant battle for survival. You understand the need to maintain a normal life, but your lust for that next high pushes you harder and further, as

you seek out the unattainable. For some, this is never an issue. There is no doubt in their mind that the high is it; and that is the way it should be. For others, the path is not as sure.

Game Notes: Lusters do not fit any real criteria. If anything, their focus on their vice detracts from their other abilities, which translates into a lower Spot and Listen skill. Characters that follow this personality style are built to obtain what they lust for easier. A good example would be the rogue who cannot stop stealing rich and rare artifacts. All his skill points would funnel their way into skills such as Climb, Open Lock, Appraise, Hide, Move Silently, Knowledge (artifacts), and so on.

Role-playing Tips: Lusters fit easily into most parties. Though their desires will at times get the best of them (and sometimes get the rest of the party in trouble), they may be able to cope enough to stick with the group.

Lusters can be easily distracted when their vice presents itself. Deciding what vice your character has should be worked out with your DM. Don't feel compelled to have that decision made before play begins, it may develop during gameplay, but have at least a loose idea of what the character cannot do without can help.

Another interesting option when playing a Luster-style character is to have that character struggling constantly to resist his vice, with the full knowledge of its inherent evil and eventual destruction to the character. If your DM has knowledge of this fact, this intense inner battle can create some excellent role-playing sessions.

THE LOYAL

Background: Where the Manipulator is the one who hatches the plans and runs the show, the you are his trusted henchman. You believe in either the leader or the cause. You carry out your master's orders with efficiency; part informant, part enforcer, you are simply loyal.

You have always been a follower, never a leader. Whether it is from a sense of personal insecurity, duty, or simply a desire to stay out of the spotlight

(but yet on the perceived winning side), you don't mind being in the shadow; as long as the man you're following is staying on course with the message you signed on for.

The rewards received for following your master's orders, however brutal they may be, far outweighs the downsides, which run can from a lack of recognition to getting a smaller share of riches gained.

You feel a sense of security in regards to your role in life. By staying out of the spotlight, you avoid the assassination attempts, crusaders, angry mobs, and wanted posters that target your evil mastermind leader. This barrier is not without its faults, however, and you may find yourself the fall guy when the master is looking for a scapegoat when members of the Order of Truth and Honor breach his dungeon labyrinth.

Though not a leader in the same sense as your master, you are good at managing his underlings. You follow his orders to the letter, and make sure that everyone else working for him does, too. You can easily eliminate them if they get too big for their britches. And, if your master is in a sour mood, you are the buffer between him and the men. Often times, they don't know that he's a complete nut-job, which is just fine with you.

You are good at thinking on your feet as well. Many missions you go on go awry, and it's important to improvise.

The relationship you have with your master is often circular or symbiotic. You work hard to please the master, in the hope that he will notice your devotion. When it is, he usually grants you more benefits, which in turn creates the further desire to please.

Game Notes: Loyals generally require a wide range of skills, feats and abilities. Used as enforcers and informants, the tasks for truly Loyal underlings never focus on one specific task. This creates a character that is a jack-of-all-trades, but master of none. While this can cause problems at lower levels, once the character has advanced some, his real power and flexibility arrives. Because they eventually can find leadership roles, a Loyal character should consider

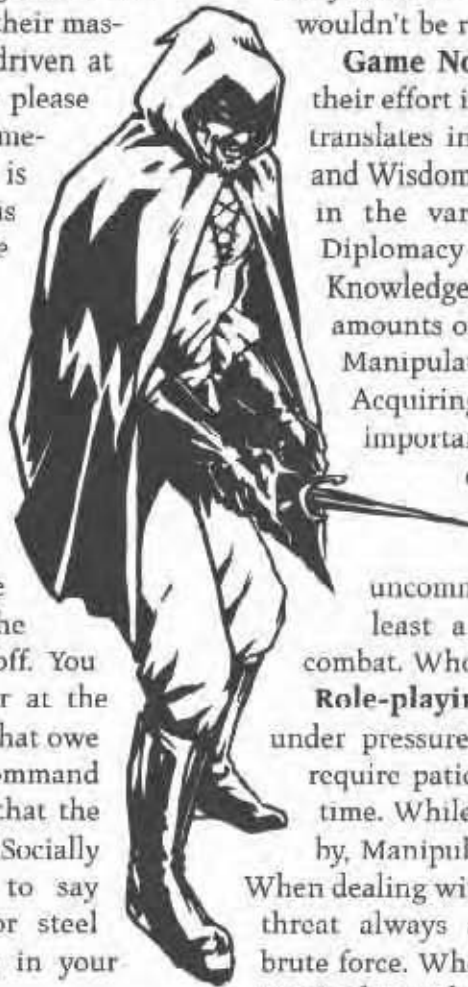
taking skills like as Diplomacy, Intimidation, Sense Motive, Gather Information and Bully to keep other underlings in line.

Role-playing Tips: Loyal characters fit easily into any adventuring party. Whether the character is loyal to someone else in the party, or an outside NPC master, he is not prone to cause problems... unless ordered to do so. Loyal characters are not mindless idiots, however. They have goals of their own, which are usually in line with their masters. Loyal characters can be quite driven at times, too, as their strong desire to please their master can overtake them, sometimes placing them in danger. But it is a zealous Loyal that throws down his life for his master, no matter the cause.

THE MANIPULATOR

Background: The man behind the curtain. The puppetmaster. The true threat. These are terms which describe you, and they bring a smile to your face. Preferring to operate behind the scenes, you are the one with grand schemes, and you know the intricate step necessary to pull it off. You employ many people under you, or at the very least, you know several people that owe you a favor or two. Though you command loyalty, there are only a select few that the you actually place complete trust in. Socially adept, you know exactly what to say (whether with a silver, forked, or steel tongue) to get the wheels moving in your favor.

Power drives you, but you also know that you cannot do it alone. Logically, you seek the aid of others. It has always been this way for you. Whether you began life in the gutters and have been hatching schemes to climb out, or you were born to power and simply seek more, you've always worked to further your lofty goals and care little for those standing in your way.



Your plans are well-thought-out and cautious. They must be, lest the web they weave unravel. For you, the goal may always be in sight, but the path toward that end is seldom direct. This works to hide your eventual goal from those that seek to undermine you. Subtlety requires great care. Though you never enjoy watching persistent do-gooders spoil your plans, you always have a backup plan, especially when it involves escape. If you didn't, you wouldn't be reading this right now.

Game Notes: Manipulators invest most of their effort in social and cerebral pursuits. This translates into higher Intelligence, Charisma, and Wisdom scores. Most skill points are spent in the various social skills (from gentle Diplomacy to rough Intimidation), and Knowledge based skills. Having access to vast amounts of information is very important to Manipulators, who do not like surprises. Acquiring contacts and influence is highly important as well. Preferring to have others do their dirty work, Manipulators lack physical prowess. However, it is not uncommon for a Manipulator to have at least a rudimentary understanding of combat. Who wants to be completely helpless?

Role-playing Notes: Manipulators are grace under pressure. They know that their schemes require patience, and don't mind biding their time. While they may let a few mistakes slide by, Manipulators seldom suffer fools for long. When dealing with others, the soft-spoken or veiled threat always accomplishes more than simple brute force. When that force is required, however, Manipulators do not hesitate to bring in their lieutenants. If forced to deal directly with their enemies, Manipulators are always one step ahead; always knowing one more thing, one last detail their opponent didn't think about. Whether real or imagined, Manipulators play this edge to the hilt, until help arrives, or they can escape. Since they hate surprises, they'll do whatever they can to minimize or eliminate threats to their plans.

Manipulators fit within the party structure, but usually only if they are in charge. If not leading (and using) the group to further his ends, Manipulators generally find the adventuring life distracting. It is not uncommon to find a Manipulator as a second in command, convincing others to act on his behalf.

THE SAVAGE

Background: Where the Brute is cruel, you are horrifying. You may have come from a broken home, or perhaps you were raised without a moral standard. Whatever the circumstances, you are a vile beast who not only delights in the suffering of others, you also delight in the offensive, heinous, and taboo acts in nearly any society. The list of offenses is endless and it makes no difference to you. If it is vile and repugnant to a sane man, it is candy to you. Many believe you delight in your shocking and terrible behavior. They are right.

It's likely that you didn't begin life this way. Perhaps in your early years things were normal. As the years passed, however, something changed inside you, bringing the Savage to the surface. Perhaps it was seeing your first dead body or animal carcass as child, and your morbid curiosity got the better of you. Maybe you witnessed a particularly brutal fight at a young age, jading you to violence. From that starting point, the hunger for depravity grew and you sought more and more dangerous and heinous acts to indulge your palette.

Though just as social as any other being, your hunger to commit more vile acts drives you further away from others.

Game Notes: This depends on where the Savage

character comes from and what direction you wish to take. High physical abilities are important for any brutality the Savage may wish to inflict, but high Charisma and Intelligence are also critical for intimidation, humiliation and devising and executing torture plans.

Role-playing Tips: Playing a Savage character can be a challenge. Not only for you, but for your fellow players and characters. Savage characters may eventually become mentally unstable and group play disintegrates. The line between reality and fantasy blurs in the role of a misanthropic sociopath, but if you and the DM agree play the Savage character as you see fit.

Remember, this book isn't about the details of depravity. That's up to you. Mentioning the aspects of a Savage is as far as this book can take you.

Though you may think that Savages fit only those classes that emphasize combat, this is not true. There are many wizards, clerics and sorcerers who enjoy performing magical experiments on helpless victims. There are many bards who use their talents to spin vile and offensive tales to shock and offend, or seduce a victim to lure them into a compromising position.

THE SELFISH

Background: Everyone suffers bad breaks from time to time, but in your case the string of bad luck (perceived or real) has turned you against the world. Where you may have given aid before, you only looks out for yourself now. If this means stealing from others so that your needs are met, so be it. You feel the world (and pretty much everyone in it) owes you something and you want everyone to suffer they way you have. After all, it's the world's fault you ended up in the situation you did.

Your early days were wrought with unfortunate circumstances and personal setbacks. Unable to cope, you felt the need to fight back violently. This was the only way to get ahead and right your



wrongs. It's also possible you grew up envying those around you, and eventually that envy consumed you.

While your behavior seems antisocial (and it certainly may be), you have a small circle of friends; those you believe feel for your suffering. These people are treated as brothers and sisters. You offer them help, in whatever form and whenever necessary. Deep down, you know they'll take care of you in kind.

Game Notes: Selfish characters have suffered losses of their own, or are consumed by envy. They look to inflict that same pain on others. To reflect this, Selfish characters may start with less gold than others. They are focused on taking from others and are usually skilled at opening locks, picking pockets, and conning people out of their money. Search, Bluff, Listen, Spot, and Appraise are the bread and butter of Selfish characters.

Role-playing Tips: The player should work with the DM to determine what happened to drive the character to this behavior. This creates a rounded background and provides motivation.

The player should also determine to what extent his character would take from others. Is every valuable in sight a target? Does the character target only rich merchants? Does he only steal from those that left him in the state he is now? Is the character targeting a specific church or noble that may have set him or his family on hard times? Is the character out to steal only riches and jewels, or is he after something more sinister? Strong motivations equate to exceptional role-playing opportunities.

THE ZEALOT

Background: Obsessed believers are most anywhere. Ideologies are rampant. Everyone thinks they know what's best. But you are a rare find indeed. You know what is best and nothing matters but the cause. Whether that cause is the destruction of a race or religion, you carry out your beliefs in every aspect of your life.

You may have developed your beliefs in any number of ways. Perhaps you were spoon fed dogma

from birth and now you know only the way. Traumatic experiences can trigger you to take up a cause, as well. Negative relations with another race could also be the turning point that made your enmity. Only the complete elimination of that race will sate your holy quest.

You are not an Avenger, who is merely driven by vengeance. You believe that you serve a much higher cause. While you often present a facade that resembles vengeance, your deeds have more merit than simple revenge. Dedication to a higher cause is not to be taken lightly.

You take your beliefs seriously. So seriously, in fact, even those who share similar beliefs find you extreme. Of course, to you, they are only a few steps away from heresy themselves.

Whether it is god or cause, you are the one who delivers the message, through word or deed.

Game Notes: Zealots tend toward direct action. They often choose one aspect or the other, but rarely both. Zealots who prefer to spread their cause through word have high Charisma, Wisdom and Intelligence scores and possess skills like Diplomacy, Bluff, Intimidation and Innuendo.

Zealots who prefer action over words, concentrate solely on their physique. High Strength and Constitution, along with combat-oriented feats are necessary to achieve their ends.

All Zealots share an affinity for Knowledge, thoroughly studying their beliefs (religion, human superiority, environmental preservation, etc.).

Role-playing Tips: Zealots can work well within a party setting, as long as the goals of the party stay within the boundaries of what the Zealot believes. Tensions arise if the party strays too far from where the Zealot believes they should be. Should the party engage in activities that run contrary to what the Zealot believes, tempers flare. Zealots also sprinkle their speech and conversation with their beliefs, hoping to draw out those who might not be true believers. This is a very common archetype for evil clerics, and those devoted to converting others are found openly converting tavern-goers and wandering townsfolk.

BECOMING EVIL

Comic book evil, where a character is evil simply because he wants to be, can be fun for one-shots and less-than-serious games. However, if you want to make a truly memorable character, you should create compelling reasons why your character has turned to villainy. Remember that in everyone's mind, they are the hero of their own story. No one thinks of themselves as a bad guy or thinks of their actions and goals as repugnant or despicable, unless they're reflecting on them later in life. In the here and now, an evil character has to believe what he's doing is right, or he wouldn't be doing it.

It is important to flesh out both your character's background and history when creating an evil character, even more so than when creating a good one. Evil people can't help but make enemies as they go through life. After all, evil is all about treachery, backstabbing, and selfish behavior. You can't follow that path for long without earning a few enemies. On the other hand, evil tends to congregate together for mutual protection and support. If you're going to go through life burning bridges and making enemies, you need someone to watch your back, even if you can't fully trust him.

Carefully chart out your character's past. Why does he act the way he does now? Perhaps he holds a grudge against someone, and has no qualms about taking that person out. Your character may labor under the weight of some unwanted legacy. His father may have been an evil necromancer who nearly overran a kingdom with undead creatures. This brought abuse and mistreatment upon your character because of his heritage. Faced with such hatred and anger, he takes up his father's cause and vows to finish the job he began.

Your character's goals in life are a good place to start when fleshing him out. The goal may be evil in and of itself. Your character's parents may have been lords of a neighboring realm that was conquered by the current king, whom you wish to overthrow in revenge, despite his evenhanded, just, and prosperous rule. If you start with something that most peo-

ple would consider unjust, it's only logical that your character would apply unjust means to meet that goal. On the other hand, your character may have started out wanting to become the richest wine merchant in town. After seeing his business sucked dry by greedy rivals allied with the thieves' guild, he decides that no action is too extreme in gaining revenge and claiming his place atop the economic ladder. In response to the underhanded actions of his enemies, your character merely decides to beat them at their own game.

NON-HUMAN EVIL

Most of the player character race options are, by default, good. This makes playing an evil non-human PC a little trickier. After all, an evil dwarf should be about as common as a good ogre. Growing up in a lawful good society, a young dwarf would need some rather compelling reasons to turn to evil. Unlike humans, the non-human races are often depicted as clannish, tightly unified societies in the average fantasy world. So just what makes an evil dwarf, elf, gnome, or halfling tick?

General Guidelines: The easiest path to creating an evil non-human is to remember that most fantasy game worlds function within the context of a human society. A non-human may act perfectly reasonable towards his own kind but secretly harbors hatred towards humankind to such a degree that it pushes him down the path of crime or tyranny. A dwarf warrior may hold a grudge against the company of paladins who swore to aid his clan, but never showed up to prevent their massacre at the hands of giants. Elves may hunt down humans whom they feel are wrongly transgressing on their forests. Gnomes and halflings may see humans as little better than ogres, large creatures whose actions are maddeningly impossible to predict. Rather than wait for humans to get them, they may choose to actively strike at human targets.

Some non-humans see humans as little more than stupid, weak, and short-lived animals. As such, they see no problem in exploiting or harming them. After all, humans are always touching off wars

between one another, many of them are greedy and evil, and they often don't know their place. Such savages don't deserve respect or fair treatment in the eyes of longer-lived races.

Of course, the classic motivations for any villain apply to non-humans equally as well. Hatred, a love lost, an slight imagined or quite real, all of these motivations work just as well for non-humans. However, there are some differences that bear highlighting for each race.

Dwarves: Given the premium dwarf society places on the accumulation of material possessions, it's a no-brainer to cast greed as the prime suspect in turning dwarves to evil. A dwarf may lust after gold and riches, but lack the mining skill or craftsmanship to honestly earn wealth and fame amongst his people. Too cowardly to take up adventuring, he may turn to theft to get what he wants. Once discovered, he could be banished from the clan for his crimes, carrying with him hatred towards his ex-clansmen and a burning desire to fulfill his dreams of wealth, glory, and vengeance at any cost.



Elves: The longest lived of the non-human races often commit evil acts merely through apathy. An elf druid might let loose a blight that kills a human kingdom's crops. While the humans starve, the elf might not understand the problem. In his eyes, the over-farming of the region hurt the local ecosystem, and in a century the blight will pass anyway. He might simply not understand the time frame that humans work within. This fundamental difference in perspective often leads elves to view humans as disposable creatures. Twenty years is nothing to an elf, so why should it matter if a human dies at 40 or 60? They've already lived most of their life, in his eyes, and the relative crime of killing a human is minor compared to that of killing an elf. Of all the races, elves are most likely to take evil actions out of ignorance, misunderstanding, or insensitivity.

Gnomes: As tricksters and illusionists, gnomes make some of the most dangerous enemies when they turn to evil. An evil gnome often knowingly operates under the assumption that most people assume he's a small, helpless, and above all good-hearted person. Evil gnomes mercilessly exploit these assumptions, using their cunning to harass, rob, and murder, all the while deflecting suspicion away from themselves. Gnomes can turn to evil when they see other big races, such as humans, as a threat to their existence. A single raid by human bandits on an isolated gnome enclave can turn the entire clan against humanity.

Halflings: Much like gnomes, many halflings turn to evil in an effort to head off any potential threats to their livelihoods. Halflings don't value wealth for its own sake, but they do value the comfort and safety it can buy them. Thus, evil halflings are rarely driven by greed, but can be extremely ruthless in rooting out perceived threats to their security. Halflings have a deeply ingrained awareness of their physical disadvantage against humans, and often do not give outsiders a chance to prove themselves, preferring to assume the worse and head off trouble before it can erupt.

NEW USES FOR OLD SKILLS

Villains have a way of making use of resources in a way that champions of good never think about. Perhaps its that good is stupid. Perhaps its that evil is more creative, more ingenious, and more driven to make something of what they have. In the end, evil has a way of turning a bad situation better by breaking the rules over their need. Below are some new ways to look at your old habits.

BLUFF (CHA)

Normal Use: Bluff allows you to talk your way past a problem by stretching the truth. Usually, you use Bluff in social situations, such as to convince a guard that you're really an agent for the duke, or to quickly create an excuse for your presence in a treasure vault. In combat, Bluff is used to feint against opponents, indicating that Bluff can be used to cover deceptions made without words or outside of social situations. Evil characters often live and die by their ability to tell a lie.

New Use: *Play Dead.* When in combat, you may use Bluff to pretend that a minor injury was actually a fatal blow. When you take damage in combat, you may immediately make a Bluff check to play dead. Any opponents viewing you make Spot checks against your opposed Bluff check. If they succeed, they see through your deception. If not, they believe that you are incapacitated and will move on to other targets. Note that if someone spends an action checking your pulse or breathing, he automatically detects your deception. While playing dead, an attacker may perform a coup de grace attack.



CRAFT (INT)

Normal Use: Craft allows you to pursue a profession that involves the production and creation of worked goods, such as blacksmithing, glassblowing, or leatherworking. This skill covers the proper methods used to produce high quality goods suitable for sale. Of course, taking the time and effort to earn an honest living is beneath most evil characters.

New Use: *Craft Shoddy Goods.* You may use Craft to quickly and cheaply produce items that, upon a brief inspection, look like regular quality finished goods. In truth, they are poorly worked goods liable to break the first time used.

Creating a shoddy knockoff requires only half the time and a quarter of the resources in gold pieces needed to produce an average quality item. When someone inspects your shoddy work, they must make a Spot check opposed by the Craft check you made to produce the item. If the Spot check does not beat your skill check, the buyer does not notice the poor quality of your craftsmanship. Shoddy goods have one quarter the actual gp value of the items they imitate. Shoddy tools cause a -2 circumstance to any skill checks made with them. Shoddy armor has a -2 AC penalty, and shoddy weapons strike at -2 to hit. In addition, a shoddy weapon breaks on an attack roll of 1.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Forgery, you receive a +2 synergy bonus to Craft when using it to create shoddy goods.

GATHER INFORMATION (CHA)

Normal Use: Gather Information allows you to pick up on the rumors, hearsay, and gossip. Often, however, you may want to learn about an area's seamier side, picking up information on fences, hired murderers, and other criminals.

New Use: *Criminal Contacts.* This version of Gather Information allows you to track down the types of people that are useful to those who work on the wrong side of the law: murderers, hired thugs, fences, and smugglers. Note that this skill only finds someone with the skill set you need; if you seek a particular person, the DC is typically 2 higher than the DC you must normally meet. Of course, if a particular type of criminal simply does not reside in a city, then it is impossible to find one there.

DC Contact Made

- 10 Common 1st level thug
- 15 Well-financed fence, low (1-3) level rogue or thug
- 20 Mid (4-6) level rogue or thug
- 25 Low level assassin, rogue or thug level 7-10
- 30 High level assassin, criminal level 10+

KNOWLEDGE (HUMANOID CULTURE) (INT)

You have studied the ways and traditions of a particular humanoid race, such as dwarves, orcs, frost giants, or gnolls. Often, much of your knowledge is trivial in nature, covering such topics as holidays, marriage rituals, and other bits of culture. Sometimes, though, it can give you an important insight into humanoid behavior that proves a tremendous help when dealing with the humanoids you have studied.

Check: You can use this skill when you first encounter a humanoid tribe of the appropriate race.

DC Knowledge Gained

- 10 Nothing of importance.

- 15 You've heard of this tribe, but know nothing that could give you an advantage when dealing with them.
- 20 You know something that gives you an advantage when dealing with this tribe: the legend of the tribe's founder, detailed information on the behavior and actions the tribe respects, and so on. Gain a +2 competence bonus to all Bluff and Diplomacy checks made against tribe members. In addition, if you have the Tyrant feat, you gain a +2 Tyrant Rating bonus when determining how many tribe members you can recruit for your personal horde.

Retry: No retries of this skill are allowed.

Special: You must take this skill once for each humanoid race. Knowledge (orc culture) is a completely different skill from Knowledge (goblin culture). Ranks in one do not give you any bonuses when using the other.

NEW SKILLS

BULLY (STR)

Intimidation covers persuading people through the threat of violence. Bully covers persuasion through the actual use of physical violence. Bullying is the preferred modus operandi for big, burly warrior-types with copious marital skills but limited social ones.

Check: You can force other people to act against their will. The DC to do this is typically 10+ the target's Hit Dice. Add any bonuses that a target may have on saving throws against fear to the DC.

Retry: Bullying tends to follow one of two courses. If you manage to push someone around once, they are apt to knuckle under on subsequent bullying attempts. On the other hand, if someone resists your bullying attempt, he's more likely to steel himself against further tries. Therefore, once you fail to bully someone, increase the DC of any future attempts by +2.

KNOWLEDGE (DEMONOLOGY)

This skill provides the character knowledge of the creatures of the Abyss; their likes, their dislikes, their relations with other demons, etc. Use this to find specific bits of information about a particular demon, such as its name and the location of its talisman. These are, however, extremely difficult to determine and the DC (30) reflects this.

Check: Answering a question within your field of study has a DC of 10 (for really easy questions — i.e. who is Orcus?), 15 (for basic questions — i.e. what's the difference between a Demon and a Daemon?), or 20 to 30 (for really tough questions — i.e. In Times of the Black Circles by Pock the Elder, when Alimshar of the Sixth circle rises against the Waste Beasts, which servitor is struck down first?)

Retry: No. The check represents what you know, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something you never learned in the first place.

Special: An untrained Knowledge check is simply an Intelligence check. Without actual training, a character only knows common knowledge. The DM may decide that demonology is far too esoteric to allow unskilled checks.

NEW FEATS

BOOTLICKER [GENERAL]

You have mastered the fine art of flattery. You can grovel, beg, plead, and put up a pathetic facade with the best of them.

Benefit: When making a Bluff or Diplomacy check, you receive a +3 competence bonus if you choose to grovel, beg, and plead in front of whomever you are interacting with.

Special: If you hold a clear advantage over the person you're speaking with, this bonus does not apply. In general, the DM has final authority to decide if this bonus applies. For example, a greater demon could not use this feat against a peasant, but a peasant could most certainly use it on the demon.

BRIBERY [GENERAL]

You have developed the ability to talk people into taking or participating in actions that normally run counter to their sense of personal or professional morality. You know the ins and outs of the local government, and have a keen sense of who's open to bribes and who's not.

Benefit: When using the Diplomacy skill to convince someone to participate in an illegal action, you gain a +3 competence bonus. If you offer your target a bribe or payment of some kind that is valuable enough to have worth to him, increase this bonus to +5.

The bribe should be enough to equal roughly a week's wage for the target. For each multiple of a week's wage the bribe is worth, add a +1 bonus to the bribe check.

The DM may require an opposed roll of your Diplomacy against the target's Will save when making a bribe.

LIVING SHIELD [GENERAL]

You are adept at using captives, hostages, or anyone else you hold in your grasp as a human shield against attacks.

Benefit: If you hold an opponent helpless in your grasp, you may use him as a living shield. An opponent is considered helpless in your grasp if he is bound with rope or by some other means, under the effect of a paralyzing effect such as poison or a *hold person* spell, or if you pinned your opponent via a grapple check. When someone targets you with any effect that requires an attack roll, including but not limited to spells, melee attacks, and missile fire, you gain an AC bonus depending on the relative size of the person you hold as a shield. In addition, there is a flat chance that any attack that hits you instead strikes the person you hold hostage. In this case, compare the attack roll with a +4 bonus against the hostage's flat-footed AC.

If you must make a Reflex save while holding a hostage in this manner, apply the result of your check to your hostage, if applicable. For example, if

you are caught in the blast radius of a *fireball* spell, your hostage does not get a save. Instead, if you make your save, the hostage is considered to have made his. If you fail the save, the hostage also automatically fails.

Relative Size of Captive	AC Bonus	% Hits to Living Shield
Two Sizes Smaller:	+1	0%
One Size Smaller:	+2	25%
Same Size:	+4	50%
One Size Larger:	+6	75%
Two+ Sizes Larger:	+8	90%

Normal: Typically, attacks hit an object used for cover only if the attack would hit you if you did not get an AC bonus for cover. In that case, if the attack roll is high enough to hit the object used for cover, it hits it.

Special: Using this ability counts as a standard action. If you elect to take some other action besides using your hostage as a shield, anyone attacking you receives no modifiers to hit.

When characters with the *Precise Shot* fire on you while you use this feat, the hostage counts as one size smaller for purposes of resolving their attacks and only their attacks.

IMPROVED FEINT [GENERAL]

You are skilled in misdirecting your opponents with feints and other deceptive combat moves.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +3 or higher, 4+ ranks in Bluff.

Benefit: When making a Bluff check in order to feint in combat, you receive a +3 competence bonus to your skill check. You must still take an action to bluff.

LEAD MISSILE FIRE [GENERAL]

When enemy archers fire upon you while you are in melee combat, you are skilled at tricking them into striking their allies rather than you.

Prerequisite: 4+ ranks in Bluff, Dodge.

Benefit: If someone fires at you while you are

fighting in melee combat, you may make a Bluff check opposed by the attacker's Sense Motive check. If you succeed, the attacker instead fires on someone else. The person must be engaged in melee with you or within your threat range. If more than one opponent is presently engaged, determine the target randomly. Of course, this may result in an ally coming under missile fire meant for you.

Normal: Archers firing into melee combat normally receive a -4 penalty to hit when firing into melee.

Special: Using this ability counts as a move equivalent action. Until your next action in combat, you may use this ability against anyone who fires on you. However, you may not use this ability against attacks that deny you your Dexterity bonus to AC.

Characters with the *Precise Shot* feat gain a +3 bonus to their Sense Motive check when you use this feat.

OFF-HANDED [GENERAL]

You have learned to exploit the use of your off-hand in combat to the disadvantage of your opponents. Warriors are not trained to fight against left-handed people and as a result their tactics are thrown off, thus causing them difficulties in combat.

Prerequisite: 14+ Dex, Ambidexterity.

Benefit: Your opponent suffers a -4 circumstance penalty to his attack rolls while in combat with you while you wield a single weapon in your off-hand. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus for fighting with your off-hand.

Normal: Most warriors fight with their right hand. If you find yourself against people trained with their off-hand this ability has no effect. Remember to calculate your attack modifiers for attacking with your off-hand.

REDIRECT ATTACKS [GENERAL]

You are skilled at making your allies much more appealing targets when engaged in melee. With luck, your "friends" don't realize what you're up to.

Prerequisite: Dodge.

Benefit: While fighting in melee combat, you can hinder your allies' ability to defend themselves, leading your opponents to strike at them rather than you. When someone attacks you and you have an ally within 5 feet of you, you may opt to give your opponent a +2 competence bonus to an attack against your ally and a -2 penalty on his roll to hit you. You accomplish this by "accidentally" bumping into your friend and disrupting his defense, all while maintaining your own. There is no guarantee that your attacker opts to target your friend. For example, a hated rival out for your blood probably just attacks you anyway. A more neutral attacker, though, may opt to strike at your friend.

When you use this ability, make a your ally notices your underhanded actions with a successful Intelligence check (DC 20).

TURN OUTSIDER [SPECIAL]

You may turn or rebuke Outsiders as though they were potent undead.

Prerequisite: Wis 14 or greater.

Benefit: You may turn or rebuke Outsiders as though they were undead with four extra hit dice.

TYRANT [GENERAL]

You are adept at bullying evil creatures into following you. You possess the brutal charisma that evil humanoids seek in leaders, and can recruit a horde of followers from amongst orcs, goblins, giants, and other evil races. Unlike characters with the Leadership feat, you rely on brutal strength, threats, and an iron-fisted rule to maintain a hold over your followers.

Prerequisites: Level 6th+, evil alignment.

Benefits: This feat allows you to attract a sizable horde of evil humanoids. However, you must constantly strive to maintain your command over these followers, as you lead more out of a sense of fear and a promise of loot than any sense of loyalty.

Tyrant Score: A character's Tyrant score is equal to his level plus the higher of his Strength or Charisma modifiers.

Number of Followers by CR: You can control up to a number of creatures of each Challenge Rating listed for your Tyrant Score. It's possible to lead more creatures than this, but doing so has a negative effect on your followers' morale. The creatures attracted to your horde are unclassed monsters native to the region in which you recruit. It takes 1 week and 50 gp in supplies to attract 100 monsters to your banner. At the DM's option, he may require you to role-play negotiations with humanoid tribes or defeat tribal champions in combat to earn the monsters' respect.

Of course, the DM has final say as to whether enough monsters live in a region to create a horde.

Whenever your horde enters combat, each unit under your command that is not within your or a trusted lieutenant's line of sight must make a Will save with a DC equal to your current Tyrant score. If the unit succeeds, it flees from combat or cowers at the edge of the combat zone, seeking a chance to loot but avoiding any direct fighting.

You may attempt to rein in a horde larger than the one you can control given your current Tyrant Score. Look up the highest Tyrant Score you would need to control your horde. Subtract your current Tyrant Score from this value, and use the resulting value as a bonus to your followers' Will save to avoid combat at the beginning of a battle.

Example: Lord Tubilar the Fat has a Tyrant Score of 15. He leads 80 kobolds, 36 orcs, 12 gnolls, and 22 ogres. Normally, a character with a Tyrant Score of 15 could only command 10 ogres. Tubilar would need a Tyrant Score of at least 18 to command the ogres without problem. The minimum score of 18 minus Tubilar's current score gives a result of 3. Whenever Tubilar's horde must enter combat when not under his or one of his officer's direct observation, they receive a +3 bonus to its Will save to avoid combat.

If you command more than your maximum number of more than one creature type, find the Tyrant Score you would need to control the entire horde. Subtract your current score from this score to compute your horde's Will save bonus.

TYRANT FOLLOWER TABLE

Tyrant Score	Number of Followers by CR								
	1/4	1/2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Less than 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	8	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	12	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	16	8	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	20	10	5	1	-	-	-	-	-
11	24	12	6	3	-	-	-	-	-
12	32	16	8	5	1	-	-	-	-
13	40	20	10	6	3	-	-	-	-
14	60	30	15	8	5	1	-	-	-
15	80	40	20	10	6	3	-	-	-
16	100	50	25	15	8	5	1	-	-
17	110	60	30	20	10	6	3	-	-
18	120	70	35	25	15	8	5	1	-
19	130	80	40	30	20	10	6	3	-
20	140	100	50	35	25	15	8	5	1
21	240	120	60	40	30	20	10	6	3
22	300	150	75	45	35	25	15	8	5
23	360	180	90	50	40	30	20	10	6
24	440	220	110	55	45	35	25	15	8
25	540	270	135	60	50	40	30	20	10
+1	+100	+50	+25	+5	+5	+5	+5	+5	+5

TYRANT SCORE MODIFIERS

The Tyrant has a reputation for:	Modifier	Events	Modifier
Cruelty	+2	Victory over enemy army	+4
Success in combat	+1	Tyrant defeated in personal combat	-6
Magical power	+1	Defeated by enemy army	-8
Working with demons or devils	+1	Unsuccessful coup	-2
Losing battles	-1	Village looted	+4
Restraining looting or pillaging	-1	City looted	+6
Mercy	-2	Tyrant defeats tribal leader in combat	+1
		Tyrant's horde actively campaigning	+2
		Tyrant's horde inactive	-4

ULTIMATE FEINT [GENERAL]

You have further refined your ability to misdirect and trick opponents with your deceptive combat moves.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +7 or higher, 7+ ranks in Bluff, Improved Feint.

Benefit: When you use the Bluff skill to feint in combat, you may immediately make an attack against your opponent. If the Bluff skill check succeeds, your opponent is considered flat-footed.

Normal: You normally may not use a skill and attack in the same round.

SPELLS

BONE SPIKES

Necromancy

Level: Clr 2, Death 2

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25feet + 5 feet/caster level)

Target: 1 undead creature

Duration: Permanent

Description: This spell causes jagged bony spikes to grow on the bodies of skeletons and zombies, causing extra damage from each physical attack.

Spell Effect: The spikes that form on these undead deal an additional 1d6 points of damage per strike. Even when wielding a weapon, the bony spikes add to the damage, as if the undead were attacking with its fists.

Material Components: A piece of bone.

BONEWAND

Transmutation

Level: Wiz/Sor 6, Death 7

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Bone touched

Duration: Permanent until discharged (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (object)

Spell Resistance: Yes (object)

Description: The caster creates a single use wand out of a discarded bone.

Spell Effect: This spell allows the caster to store a spell he could normally cast within a normal detached bone. The wand can store one spell, and the caster may not have more than one bonewand per level at any given time. The caster may cast the spell stored within the bone as though it were among those prepared, but it does not count against his spells cast for the day. Any material components required to cast the spell normally are used when the spell is stored in the bonewand.

Focus: The bone that stores the spell.

DIMENSIONAL RUPTURE

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 9

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/caster level)

Duration: See spell effect

Saving Throw: See spell effect

Description: This is potentially a cataclysmic spell and is extremely rare. Those that even contemplate using it either care little for the consequences of their actions, or have no moral anchor. This spell rips open a ragged hole in the dimensional barrier between a parallel dimension and this one. The appearance of the rift is one of a swirling, black vortex. No matter what angle one looks at it, they seem to be staring down the maw of some great, black-throated, invisible beast. All material in close proximity suffer from exposure to the detrimental energies.

Spell Effect: This spell creates a vortex 10 feet in diameter, centered on a point in space chosen by the caster. If centered on a creature, they may make a Reflex saving throw against the spells DC to leap out of the rupture's formation area. If this saving throw fails, the target is thrown into the rift. The only way to return is for that person to cast plane shift or another spell of a similar type. A person or object sucked into this other dimension suffers 10d6 points of damage per round.

All creatures or objects within 100 feet of the vortex suffer 5d6 points of damage every round (Fort save for half damage) until they leave the area or the spell is neutralized. The rift remains as long as the caster concentrates and he is within range. Once the caster stops concentrating (or moves out of range), the vortex becomes unstable. If he makes a Will save (DC 20), he seals the rift. The caster can attempt to seal the rift each round as a standard action. If he cannot, it remains active and the results can be devastating. There is a 5% (non cumulative) chance per round of it closing on its own. However, there is an equal chance of it growing in size by adding 10 feet to its radius. If the caster somehow fails to close the rift, the only option is to cast a *miracle* or *wish* spell.

Material Components: An enchanted onyx dagger of at least +2.

XP Cost: 5,000 xp.

DISRUPT SOUL

Necromancy

Level: Clr 8, Death 8

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Touch

Target: 1 person or creature

Duration: 1 round/level of caster

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: This devastating spell is extremely dangerous for the target. The victim of disrupt soul has his essence scattered like a ash in a hurricane. The body is unharmed, but enters a comatose state. When and if his soul returns, it remains weakened.

Spell Effect: When a cleric uses this spell, he is using the divine or infernal power he wields to blast a target's soul from their body. Most souls return to the body (90% of the time). However, the ones that do not are lost forever, dispersed throughout space and time. Only divine intervention or the use of even more powerful reality-altering spells such as *wish* or *miracle* can restore the soul to the body.





Even if the soul returns to the body, the victim remains in a state of *confusion* (as per the spell) for a number of days equal to the caster's level. DMs may wish to allow for a second saving throw should the soul not return to the body.

ILL OMEN

Divination

Level: Clr 2

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: 0

Target: personal

Duration: Instantaneous

Description: This spell gives the caster insight into his future actions. However, it only reveals whether a decision results in a detrimental effect or not. If this information is ignored, unfortunate things happen.

Spell Effect: This spell draws upon divine knowledge of future events. If the warnings are

ignored the caster and his companions suffer a -1 morale penalty on all rolls related to the ill fated task. This penalty persists until the companions succeed in their task or they abandon this path. The DM may wish to increase the penalty the further the PCs delve into their quest.

IRON FIST

Transmutation

Level: Wiz/Sor 2

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 feet + 5 feet/caster level)

Target: 1 creature's fist

Duration: 2 rounds/caster level

Description: This spell hardens the target's fist with calluses and iron, dealing extra damage from each physical attack.

Spell Effect: When cast the target of the spell receives the benefit of a hardened, powerful fist. The hardened fist deals an additional 1d6 points of

damage per unarmed strike (in addition to the normal 1d3) and none of the damage is considered subdual, dealing damage as a weapon instead. Strength does not augment this damage as if it were a normal unarmed strike, but it does augment the original damage.

Material Components: A scrap of iron.

HIDEOUS APPEARANCE

Illusion (Phantasm)

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Person touched

Duration: 1 day/level of caster

Saving Throw: Negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: The target of this spell takes on a repulsive countenance, only seen by those that can see his face. The recipient himself cannot see the illusion and is completely unaware that something is amiss.

Spell Effect: When this spell is cast on a person, an illusion forms on the target's face, making him appear ugly beyond description. The target is considered to have a Charisma of 3 for the duration of the spell. Those that know the target may make a Will saving throw to see through the illusion. True Seeing and similar spells reveal the illusion for what it is.

Material Components: A bit of fleece and an eyelash.

NECROMANTIC CHANNEL

Necromancy

Level: Death 5, Soc/Wiz 6

Components: V, S, M/DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels of caster)

Target: You

Area of Effect: 10 feet/level of caster

Duration: 1 round/level of caster

Saving Throw: Negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: The caster becomes a magnet for life energies, a conduit to the Negative Plane. When an undead drains a living creature near the caster, the caster and not the undead benefits from the drained energy.

Spell Effect: This spell interrupts the link between the draining undead and the Negative Plane. All benefits normally given to the undead creature instead siphon to the necromancer, including temporary levels and hit points. All rules for victims of the draining attack still apply. The caster can utilize the benefits for the length of the spells duration; the remaining life energy then dissipates. The undead creature knows that this is happening and might be rather upset with the one responsible, if it has emotions or can reason.

Material Components: A drop of vampire blood.

SHADOW CLOAK

Conjuration (Summoning)

Level: Darkness 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 feet + 5 feet/caster level)

Target: Person or creature

Duration: 1 hour/level of caster

Saving Throw: Negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: A thin layer of shadow forms around the target of this spell.

Spell Effect: A shadow is summoned to protect the spell recipient from all harmful effects from any light source. Creatures that are caused pain or suffer detrimental effects from light function normally as if it were dark. The shadows do not impede the target in any way. If someone casts a light-based spell directly at the recipient of *shadow cloak*, or an area effect light spell deals damage, the cloaked character receives a +6 enhancement bonus on his saving throw.

Material Components: A small black veil.

SPIRIT LINK

Necromancy

Level: Death 4, Soc/Wiz 5**Components:** V, S, M**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Close (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels of caster)**Target:** 1 Creature or Person**Duration:** 1 round/level of caster**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Description: The caster can create a temporary link between his spirit and that of another person or creature. Once established, the caster can then draw on the target's spirit to bolster his own.

Spell Effect: This spell allows the caster to temporarily share one of the following traits with another creature or person: hit points, strength, or constitution. The caster gains 1d6 temporary points of the chosen trait or 3d6 hit points, and the target loses a like amount.

Material Components: Something of the chosen target's person — a tuft of hair, nail clippings, or the like.

STRENGTH OF YEENOGHU

Necromancy

Level: special, Sor/Wiz,Clr**Components:** V, S, M (special)**Casting Time:** 1 round**Range:** touch**Target:** one living creature touched**Duration:** 1 hour (special)**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Description: The subject becomes stronger, taking on the powerful strength of a possessed spirit. This spell temporarily binds the target's own life force to Yeenoghu allowing the gnoll demon lord to channel its energy into the target.

Spell Effect: This spell is never memorized, and in order to learn it the caster must sacrifice a bit of his own life force to learn the powers of Yeenoghu. The offering is equal to one permanent hit point per level of the caster at the time of mastering the spell.

If a spell caster wishes to gain mastery at a higher level, they must again complete the ritual as if they has never learned the spell before. Once ready (the ceremony takes two days to prepare and complete), the subject may cast *Strength of Yeenoghu* with a power score of X, where X is the number of hit points sacrificed.

When the spell is cast, the target's Strength is increased by Xd4 and lasts for X hours.

The recipient of the spell undergoes a minor change in appearance while the spell's duration is in effect. Bright, white, pinpoint of light will glow in the center of the subject's eyes. In addition, the forehead will furl and the cheek bones will distend. Targets of the spell radiate evil, even if they did not before.

At the end of the spell's duration, the recipient will experience a terrible backlash from Yeenoghu's unholy touch. When the effects end, the subject makes a Will save against the DC of the spell (noting that the spell level is equal to X). Success means the target only suffers 1d8 points of damage. Failure indicates that the life force of the character was damaged greatly and the character suffers 2d8 points of damage and also loses one hit point permanently.

Material Components: A bit of bone from a gnoll champion and a pinch of dust from the plane of Yeenoghu.

SUMMON SHADOW RAVEN

Conjuration (Summoning)

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3**Components:** V, S, F/DF**Casting Time:** 1 full round**Range:** Close (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels)**Duration:** 1 round/level of caster

Description: This spell summons a shadow raven from the demi-plane of shadow (see new monster: shadow raven sidebar). Once on the spellcaster's plane, he may then attempt to bind it as familiar.

Spell Effect: The caster calls into existence a shadow raven that enters this world through any



shadow within the range of the spell. The only exceptions are in total darkness or total light, either is an absence of shadow. The shadow raven serves faithfully for the spell's duration. If the spellcaster has the proper tribute, the shadow raven may serve as a familiar. The DM is the final arbiter for what tribute is appropriate.

Arcane Focus: A small shiny object and a shadow.

UNDEAD ATTRACTION

Necromancy

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/2 caster levels)

Target: 1 person or creature

Duration: 1 round/caster level

Saving Throw: Negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: The unfortunate individual that becomes the target for this spell draws the wrath of all undead creatures near him. These creatures stop at nothing to get at the target, not even to attack easier prey.

Spell Effect: This spell turns the target into a magnet for the undead, causing all undead creatures within 100 feet to seek out and attack him. All intelligent undead get a Willpower saving throw to ignore the compulsion. The undead pursue the victim until the end of the duration or they are restrained. If the victim travels somewhere that the undead cannot follow, they wait as close as possible

and resume pursuit if the opportunity presents itself. If the target attempts to turn these creatures, treat them as being 4 HD than normal.

Material Components: A small lodestone and a pinch of grave dirt.

WAKING NIGHTMARES

Illusion (Phantasm)

Level: Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level of caster)

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 1 round +

1 round/level of caster

Saving Throw: Negates (*see effect*)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: This spell conjures images in the mind of the target creature of their worst nightmares. Such horrifying visions mentally cripple the victim, making him vulnerable to attacks.

Spell Effect: This spell temporarily paralyzes the target with fear. While under the effect of the spell, he cannot take action under any circumstance, loses his Dexterity modifier (even if he could not normally lose it) and is considered flat-footed. Creatures that have no form (chaos beast, etc.) or that have spell-like or supernatural abilities that cancel flat-footed effects are unaffected, but a Barbarian would be effected.

The spell is only effective against those with a greater-than-animal intelligence. The victim is allowed a saving throw each round, but each round that he fails, he suffers a cumulative -1 circumstance penalty to the roll. Only the target sees the image.



Material Components: The material components for this spell are a piece of fleece and drop of poison.

WOUNDING

Transmutation

Level: Clr 4, Death 4, Pain 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

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

Target: One living target or creature

Duration: 1 round/caster level

Saving Throw: Negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Description: This dangerous spell stops the target's wounds from closing as per the weapon property of the same name.

Spell Effect: If the target of Wounding fails his save, all wounds (any physical attacks that deal 1 or more points of damage) continue to bleed at a rate of 1 hp per round until healed or bandaged. All wounds taken during the duration continue to bleed even after the duration lapses. Those attacks made after the duration of the spell have no additional effect.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

THE BLOOD ARCHER

Throughout the lands, there are few organizations that illicit such a wide variety of sentiments, from fear and hatred to respect and even admiration. One thing is for certain, the Blood Archer is never ignored.

The males and females that join the Blood Archers must pass rigorous training regimens designed to increase their survival skills. The reason the initiates are so driven in their training is to prepare them for the Trials. At a certain point in their training, Blood Archer initiates undergo a physical and spiritual transformation. At the end of the trials, all surviving initiates visit the Blood

Archers' base of operations. There they partake in a ritual unknown to all but the Archers themselves.

It is this secret rite that gives the Blood Archer his power. From the time of the ritual forward, the Archer gains abilities tied to their lifeblood. Worse than that, they carry some sort of living bow, a "blood bow" they call it, its strength and accuracy are unparalleled. Those that walk this path are dangerous indeed, for what they become can no longer be called ordinary.

Hit Die: d10

Requirements

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

Base attack bonus: +6

Alignment: Lawful Evil

Feats: Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Track, Weapon Specialization (longbow).

Craft (Bowyer/Fletcher): 6 ranks

Hide: 4 ranks

Wilderness Lore: 7 ranks

Special: The Blood Archer must partake and survive a ritual of great physical and mental change, after which he may never leave the brotherhood alive. The Archer may advance in his original class, but is always considered a member of the Blood Archer fraternity.

Class Skills

The Blood Archer class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance

(Dex), Climb (Str), Craft: Bowyer/Fletcher (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge: Nature (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Wilderness Lore (Wis). See chapter 4: Skills in the PHG for descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Blood Archer class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Blood Archer is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor (except chainmail). Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor or equipment carried.

Poison Blood: At 1st level, a Blood Archer gains the property of poison blood. Because the ichor flowing through his veins is infernal in origin, it is toxic to those of this plane (except for other Blood Archers, who are immune). If the Blood Archer coats a weapon (piercing or slashing) with his blood, that weapon delivers it on the next damaging hit. It takes 1 hp worth of blood to coat 1 small weapon or 3 arrows, 2 hp will coat a medium weapon, and 3 hp for a large weapon. The blood

BLOOD ARCHER ADVANCEMENT TABLE

Level	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Poison blood
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Acid blood
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Blood bow +1
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Regeneration
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Sneak attack +1d6 (Bow only)
6	+6	+5	+2	+5	Blood bow +2
7	+7	+5	+2	+5	Regeneration
8	+8	+6	+2	+6	Sneak attack +2d6 (Bow only)
9	+9	+6	+3	+6	Blood bow +3
10	+10	+7	+3	+7	Sneak attack +3d6 (Bow only)



remains viable for 2d6 rounds. Only natural healing can heal this damage to the Blood Archer. **Poison Type:** Injury DC 10 + Blood Archer class level. **Initial damage:** 1d6 Con. **Secondary damage:** 1d6 Con.

Acid Blood: At 2nd level, a Blood Archer gains the property of acid blood. When struck in melee with piercing or slashing weapons, the wound sprays blood over all those within 5 feet of the Blood Archer for 1d6 points of acid damage.

This damage incurs only once per round; repeated hits that round are not cumulative. This acid blood does not affect Blood Archers.

Blood Bow: At 3rd level, a Blood Archer can obtain a Blood Bow from the heart of the Crimson Forest. The bow is actually a limb from a devil-possessed Treant. Its properties are as a magical +1 *longbow*. During a Blood Archer's advancement, he can return at 6th and then again at 9th level to further enchant the bow, each time receiving an additional +1 cumulative bonus. For example at 6th level the bonus would be +2 and at 9th it would be +3. Because of the unusual nature of the bow, the user must take the Exotic Weapon (blood bow) feat.

Regeneration: At 4th level, a Blood Archer gains the ability to regenerate wounds because of his half-Infernal physiology. He regenerates at 1 hp per hour. At 7th level, this ability accelerates to 1 hp per minute.

Sneak Attack: At 5th level, a Blood Archer gains the ability to sneak attack their opponents for 1d6 points of additional damage. At 8th level, the extra damage increases to 2d6 points and at 10th level, it increases to 3d6 points. This ability may only work with bows.

THE BARGAINER

There are those who have learned to negotiate and bargain with the Infernal beings of the netherworld; those that can bend a demon to their will without so much as a breaking a sweat. These men and women are spoken of in hushed tones, having

learned the delicate art of negotiations in the demonic tongue. Unlike their demon-summoning cousins (*see page 29*), the Bargainer is lazy and shiftless, paying no heed to the demonic contracts he pledges to and signs.

Nor belonging to a secret sect, most Bargainers instead practice their craft in private, binding demons to their will where possible. Although a Bargainer does not need to know magic, it certainly helps.

Hit Die: d6

Requirements

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

Base attack bonus: +4

Alignment: any-Evil

Feats: Infernal Pact, Iron Will.

Diplomacy: 8 ranks

Knowledge (arcana):
6 ranks

Knowledge (demonology):
8 ranks

Knowledge (religion): 4 ranks

Special: The Bargainer must learn the true name of one demon before he can begin his path to evil and must speak Abyssal or Infernal.

Class Skills

The Bargainer's skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather



Information (Cha), Knowledge (all skills taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Bargainer class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Bargainers gain no proficiency in any weapon or armor. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket, and Tumble.

Agent of Evil: Any and all abilities he gains as a Bargainer (with the exception of Infernal Feats) are lost once the PC becomes any alignment other than evil. Pacts with demons are nearly impossible to break, unless the Bargainer has a death wish or a desire to visit the Abyss. A Bargainer may never gain levels in any class but Bargainer until he reaches 10th level.

+1 Charisma: At 1st level, the Bargainer gains a +1 Bonus to his Charisma, permanently.

Devil's Advocate: At 3rd level, the Bargainer becomes a go-between for his corrupter. He may bring people forward to the demon and offer them power, gaining the favor of his contractor. Each time an NPC or PC is brought forward to the demon (at a specific time and place per the DM), the Bargainer

gains, experience points based on the CR level of the person he is corrupting. The person in question must come willingly and must take an Infernal Pact with the demon, otherwise there is no experience point gain.

Infernal Feat: The PC may choose one Infernal feat.

Infernal Will: At 5th level, the Bargainer learns to word his contracts with demons in such a way, that even the Abyss is impressed with his legal sense. He no longer suffers drawbacks from Infernal feats (unless he wishes). Previous feats are unaffected by this ability, but beyond this point, all Infernal feats have no drawbacks when gained.

Craft Wondrous Item: At 7th level, even if the Bargainer cannot cast spells, he may create wondrous items per the item creation feat of the same name. All items created in this manner radiate powerful evil and are only usable by the bargainer. If the Bargainer cannot cast spells, he can imbue the item with an Infernal power that he himself has. In so doing, when the item is created, it suffers the same drawback it would, if a PC took that Infernal Feat himself. The Infernal Will ability does not extend to the created item.

Wild Shape: At 9th level the Bargainer has fully developed his inhuman persona, shrugging off his mortal shape and taking form in anything he wishes. He may shape change per the wild shape ability per the Druid ability of the same name once per day.

BARGAINER ADVANCEMENT TABLE

Level	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+3	+1 Charisma, Agent of Evil
2	+0	+0	+0	+3	Infernal Feat
3	+1	+0	+1	+4	Devil's Advocate
4	+1	+0	+1	+4	Infernal Feat
5	+2	+0	+1	+5	Infernal Will
6	+2	+0	+1	+5	Infernal Feat
7	+3	+0	+2	+6	Craft Wondrous Item
8	+3	+0	+2	+6	Infernal Feat
9	+4	+1	+2	+7	Wild Shape
10	+4	+1	+2	+8	Infernal Feat



SECTION TWO:

MERCY IS FOR THE WEAK

THE EVIL CAMPAIGN

This chapter illustrates the process of creating and running an evil campaign, and offers some advice for making your game as enjoyable as possible for you and your players. An evil campaign, moreso than any other, requires balance, direction, discretion, and planning. Note: this is a book for thinking gamers. While covering evil, players should rise above simple, despicable evil actions and make themselves formidable masterminds. If you want to plunder helpless villages, you don't need our help. When you want to exploit the populace to make toys that can be used to smuggle contraband in the capital of the White Kingdom, give us a call.

GETTING STARTED

Creating an evil campaign, much like any other, begins with input from your players. You need to determine the style of role-playing your group uses. As the DM, it is your job to create the adventures and provide a world for the characters to interact with. In order to do this properly, you need to know what type of story your players want. There are two extremes when considering styles of role-playing — hack & slash and deep-immersion. Most games fall somewhere in between these two, it's your job to speak with your players before beginning to establish the campaign style.

Hack & Slash

The PCs hack down the door, kill everyone in sight and steal all the treasure.

While this style can be action-packed and straightforward, it isn't as well-suited for an evil campaign as it is for an heroic one. It is our intent

for you to use this book to create mastermind villains of an epic scale, not simple-minded thugs. Don't take the action out of your story, just add some motivation and plot behind the combat. The PCs should be fighting for political power, glory, wealth and to further their evil schemes, not just to get into the next room. Picture an action movie; it would be pretty dull without a plot wouldn't it? Pure hack and slash games tend to be the same. Most likely, your players will get tired of fighting session after session. Plot is your tool to spice the game up and make it more interesting.

In an evil campaign, this style of play quickly degenerates into killing innocent villagers and honest merchants. Hack & slash doesn't require any additional work on the DM's part, and any published adventurer converts easily to include evil PCs instead of the typical goodly adventurers.

Deep-Immersion

One of the PCs has been arrested for treason; using your political ties, you bribe the local constabulary to release him. Something goes wrong, though, when the pick-up man is found, murdered, with deep red lashes across his throat.

Deep-immersion adventuring promotes character interaction and in-depth persona development. The PCs spend more time talking with NPCs than fighting them. Entire sessions may go by without a single die roll. These sessions can be rich and rewarding storytelling experiences, but, eventually, your players are itching for a bit of combat.

PCs in an evil, deep-immersion campaign have a different way of handling downtime in your campaigns. Building their cartels, recruiting legions of minions, plotting political upheavals, and hiring

assassins are involved processes, taking more time and thought than a simple note to the DM.

Combining Styles

Most likely, your campaign combines aspects of both styles. Encourage the players to create characters that work well as a group, focusing not only on a well-rounded combat group, but also on personas that help advance their evil careers. Earlier is the list of the various evil archetypes that exist. Have each player choose one, without duplication. Compare the archetypes and make sure to avoid obvious conflicts that will arise in the early sessions.

Remember, just because the players have less than honest characters, that doesn't mean they should practice evil deeds on each other. It's your job to stay focused on keeping the game moving forward. If the PCs are at each other's throats, it won't take long for the players themselves to follow suit. If the characters work well together, the game will be more cohesive and you'll have an easier time adjudicating and developing your story.

Does this mean there should be no player competition?

Absolutely not. There is definitely room for player competition. Monitor the competition and make sure it remains friendly. Don't let it interfere with game play. Make sure each PC has a niche. For example, you may have two rouges in the party, both specializing in burglary. These characters may try to out do each other, both attempting more and more difficult burglaries. This sort of healthy rivalry is fine; the characters are still on the same side. When they start stealing from each other, it's a different story. Players get mad when bad things happen to their characters. They get even madder when they find out it was a member of their party that got them drunk and sold them into slavery. Keep this in mind when you start your campaign. More importantly, make sure your players understand this before they create their characters. If the party works together, play balance is much easier to maintain, and the game is more enjoyable.

Here are several in-character ways for you to ensure the PCs work together, keep these in mind when you begin the character creation process.

- The PCs are evil henchmen who work for a Despotic Overlord. They work together because they are terrified of what their boss would do to them if they didn't.
- The PCs belong to a vast minority — good surrounds them — they need each other to keep the good guys from vanquishing them.
- More powerful evildoers surround the PCs. They must work together in order to keep from being overwhelmed.
- Your campaign is set in a world filled with clerics, holy orders, paladins, and those looking to spread good everywhere. The PCs are the last vestige of evil left in the work. If they want to survive, cooperation is their lifeblood and planning their oxygen.

CAMPAIGN THEME

Now that you have decided on a style of role-playing, it is time for you to discuss what kind of story you would like to tell. Again, involve your players heavily in this process. Together, you'll establish the theme of your game. This stage of development can be time consuming, but in the end the work is worth it. An evil campaign, more than any other, requires planning and structure. If you don't have the patience for evil, you'll never make it.

The theme of your campaign is the key idea that describes the plotline of your story. You'll want something distinct and easily identified by your players. It starts with an idea. Maybe you flipped through the book, and a particular idea struck your fancy. Maybe you were inspired by a novel or film. Whatever the case, you need to ask yourself one question: how do I turn this idea into the theme for my campaign?

Start with your players. Before you can truly flesh out the campaign theme, you must have a good understanding of the characters they want to play,

and how these concepts with fit with your ideas. Suppose you're considering a campaign revolving around the demise of an important ruler and the subsequent bid for his throne. You can picture scenes within the high court, filled with backstabbing politics, mystery and intrigue. But what if your players want to create a band of dark mercenaries bent on earning their fortune on the field of battle? The ideas don't gel very well, and while you may be able to maneuver the story around to squeeze the concepts together, it won't really work. So what do you do? Compromise. Don't try to force your idea on them, and don't throw it away altogether. Perhaps you can keep the political maneuvering theme, but focus on the mercenary companies hired by those bidding for power. This compromise combines the two ideas, provides the players with a sense of investment in the campaign and a gives them a personal claim on the sort of story being told.



For example, here are some themes suitable for an evil campaign:

- **Mean Streets:** Your campaign is set in the crime-ridden streets of a vast city. The PCs must claw their way through the ranks of the under-city — they must rise up from being two-bit thugs to become kingpins of crime.
- **No Heroes:** Your campaign is set in a dismal, war-ravaged land. There are no heroes left to speak of. The PCs must be resourceful, cruel, and merciless to rule this desolate wasteland.
- **Too Many Heroes:** The good guys are everywhere and the PCs must struggle to simply survive.
- **No Hope:** Evil permeates every aspect of society, and the characters are a product of their environment. Cynicism, despair, greed, and hate have eaten away at the innocence of the realm, leaving only dejected adolescents and immoral elders, ready to betray their people for a few coins. The characters must strive — with no hope of succeeding — to rise above the others of their kind and dominate the world in which they find themselves. Who more fit to rule this place than they?
- **Freedom:** The characters fight against the conservative and weak rulers of their society. They want the freedom to act, to fight, and to conquer the weak, yet laws prohibiting most any action of this kind are strictly enforced, usually ending in death. The characters believe that might makes right, and must use extreme measure to prove their point.
- **Corruption:** The characters are courtiers and courtesans maneuvering their way through the political and social circles of the kingdom. Intrigue and betrayal lie behind every door. The limits of love, trust, friendship, and loyalty are tested by opportunity, greed, and those too weak to rule. What would you do for ultimate power?

GAME DIRECTION

Another key focus when planning to run an evil campaign is game direction. Many games play freeform around the table, each player creates a character and the DM provides a setting with no obvious objectives or goals. The PCs simply interact with their environment and the game master reacts to their action. This is a viable method of play, and many groups enjoy this sort of game. In an evil campaign, however, this can lead to a disastrous end.

Once you have a campaign theme, make preparations for the game with this theme in mind. While everyone is responsible for contributing to the overall tale, it falls upon the DM to provide direction to the campaign and to keep the plot moving. Be careful not to plot the campaign too tightly, however, as players resent following scripts. Leave them room to effect the world. Create an outline of key plot points and keep detailed notes about NPCs motivations and goals. This provides you with direction but allows enough maneuvering room should the PCs head off in an unexpected direction.

Don't be afraid to make changes to the story.

Sometimes the best adventure threads come from the players themselves. Listen to them while they talk to each other. Use their fears against them. If their hypothesis is better than what you came up with... change the story! Use their ideas to fuel your own. Is this cheating? No. It's your responsibility to provide the players with the best game possible. You're just doing your job!

What good is being evil if you no one knows about it?

Remember to share the spotlight. Every PC should be an integral part of the story, so give each character a chance to shine. Be wary of letting any one PC take up too much screen time. It's okay for a session or two, but if it lasts any longer than that the other players will feel neglected. This causes in-character problems as well. Evil characters don't get mad, they get even! A character hogging all of the attention finds himself the new focus of the party's evil schemes.

These guys are important.

Sharing the spotlight is important, but so are the PCs themselves. The story should ultimately revolve around them. You all work together to tell the best story you can. Don't let NPCs overshadow the PCs. Make sure they have a direct effect on the setting and the direction of the game. You're obligated to make them significant. Your job isn't to thwart the PCs' evil plans; it's to give them a setting in which to enact them. The PCs need to trust you. If you are fair and impartial you'll set the players at ease. If the players are at ease, they'll spend less time second-guessing you and more time enjoying themselves.

And that's the point isn't it?

CHARACTER CREATION

Once you've established the campaign theme and direction, your players can create their characters and you can flesh out the setting that they'll be playing in. You've taken some notes, and now it's time for details. It is a good idea to work on these items simultaneously, because it gives you a chance to play off of character backgrounds and add depth to the story.

Character creation is arguably the most important part of the game. If they players are not happy with the characters they've created, then they won't have fun. As discussed, it is important, especially in an evil campaign, to establish the goals and motivations of the characters well in advance of actually sitting down to play the game. This information is handy when it's time to detail your NPCs and the campaign setting. The character creation phase is critical to the success of your campaign, so give it the attention it deserves. If necessary, take a session or two to do it. After all, you're going to be playing for a while. Invest the energy now so it pays off down the road.

As the players make their characters, figure out where the holes are in the team. Write down what specialties the group needs and fill these requirements. Don't force anyone to play a character just because it would balance out the party. Encourage them to create a balanced, well-rounded

adventuring group that works well together. And in the end, fill the gap with one NPC.

Gather your players together for a regular gaming session. At this time, everyone works on character creation together. Ask them what roles their characters fill, and base this on the theme and direction you've decided upon. A handout ahead of time helps the players to percolate ideas and provides the framework for the campaign.

As they are brainstorming ideas, use their character concepts to detail the setting. For example, if one person plays an evil monk, include details about the temple he comes from. Either of you can do this. In the end, the answers to your questions flesh out the world and detail portions you may not have considered.

Are all monks from the temple evil, or just the PC? Use player backgrounds to add layers of depth to the campaign. Perhaps the PC monk is a renegade, banished from his brotherhood for attempting to steal a sacred tome. Why did he try to steal the tome? Was he directed by his abbot (secretly evil)? Is the power of the tome corrupting him? Maybe it holds the secrets to becoming a master and his impatience took hold. Add more depth — suppose the character was successful in his attempt to steal the tome, and he used the mysterious knowledge to create a temple of his own. Encourage the player to write details about his temple and its inhabitants. Have him draw a map of the temple and its surroundings. This provides the opportunity to flesh out his character, allowing him a direct contribution to the game, and giving you resource material to use in planning your adventures. Ask questions and establish character motivation and background. Why are they evil? What caused their descent into darkness? Did they have a choice? What drives them to stay this way? Are they running from the law? Are their true goals secret from society at large? These sorts of questions develop the character's ideal and the setting of your campaign. Every idea fleshes out your world and makes your job easier. Ask questions and encourage the players to participate in developing the answers. You'll end

up with a host of useful resource material — NPCs, locations, situations — and the players feel a deeper connection to the campaign.

SETTING

All right, you've discussed style, theme, direction, character creation, and background with your players. They've even written some material for you, made some maps and lent to the creative process. Now you have some juicy material to work with. It's time to illustrate the concepts you've developed with your group and bring your campaign to life. There are no limitations to the setting of your evil campaign. Start small and work your way steadily outward. With each successive play session, reveal a little more information about the region. Begin with a town, city, or small kingdom. Starting small allows you to begin play with a basic setting and then build upon it as your players develop their careers. This is the easiest way to get started quickly and lets the PCs start small before tackling the big game.

Here are a few things to keep in mind while you are detailing the setting:

Geography

Are the players in a coastal city or in the plains? Are they in a mountain town or forest settlement? Be sure the lands that your players are traveling in are stocked with opportunities, but the land itself can be an obstacle. It's hard to sneak around when there is no place to hide, just as it is easy to escape when there are ships entering and exiting a harbor all day and night.

Demographics

Is the town populated with old or young, rich or poor? Do the older ones have control now or do they want some peace of mind, a place to retire? Do they long for the way things used to be? Do the younger ones dream of getting out from under their conservative elders and cutting loose?

Pitting generations against one another is entertaining and profitable if the opportunity presents itself. A generally younger town is probably newer

and the townsfolk more uninformed of a character's villainy. Older towns may be dying out but still retain some of the lessons of youth. Characters should also be aware of the gender count: men can be counted on to keep things they've seen shamefully quiet, while there's no faster way to spread lies than through the women's circle.

Economics

Are the characters in a poor town? There must be someone around willing to part with what little they make to acquire things they normally can't afford. How about a rich town? People with big money usually want big things, and the characters are just the greedy opportunists to carry out such deeds. A king may want a noble to pay for his insolence but cannot rightly be seen doing so, while a commoner may want the king dead for making assumptions about how desperate she is. A clever group may even find a way to collect both heads by pretending to be working independently in the favor of both!

Do the rich want more? Is their wealth inherited or earned? Do the poor secretly harbor feelings of ill-will toward the nobility or are there actual demonstrations in the city streets? Disparate social classes are the easiest to manipulate. The poor always wish they had money and the rich can never get enough. Imagine what your PCs could

do in the fair city of Guilderspar where the merchant's guild is the most powerful force.

Politics

Is this town poorer than the last one? Are there whispers of anger between groups just because of who they are or what they do? Starting a war between peaceful neighbors and nations is a glorious profession with a long tradition of cruel acts and accusation against the innocent and wealthy churches. Sometimes there's a great deal of work in being a rabble-rouser, but other times it only takes one tiny spark to ignite the flames of rebellion. Race is a good place to start, but creative characters will discover the one thing that holds every community together and cause it to come crashing down around them. But they also need to keep a low profile, unless they want to be hunted for the rest of their lives. If the characters aren't careful, toying with the web of politics can lead to wealth, power... and death.





Religion

Big churches and temples mean big money and treasure. Characters starting their own religions gain respect from the unsuspecting and help relieve them of their blasphemous worldly possessions. For the right price, any sin is forgiven in the eyes of a god (or whoever), especially with a corrupt priest accepting land and titles from those who repent. Need a little rain? Want to say a proper good-bye to a departed loved one? No fee is too large for these services, and, most of the time, they don't work if the mark doesn't have enough faith. It's also nice to have an army of mindless worshippers for those storming the castle kinds of days.

Magic

Big magic means big competition. Money, rank, and nobility may sound powerful, but anyone relying on any of these things when fire and lightning are being hurled down at them had better keep a magic-wielder of their own on the payroll. Keep the characters guessing with new and unique magic that they have never seen. Unknown magic can spoil an otherwise well thought-out plan, and the party should avoid or circumvent — or master — such magic as soon as they discover it. This provides a number of interesting subplots for you to develop, where a cabal of arcane mages wants to thwart them PCs or take over their organization.

Sites of Interest

Are there any special landmarks? Are there any statues of gods or heroes encrusted with gemstones and gold? Any common tomb raider can delve into places unknown, but a true villain finds someone else to do it for him. Better yet, a player that does his homework and investigates local sites can supply false information to headstrong upstarts. Wary locals getting themselves killed allows the PCs to walk in at the last moment and collect the spoils. The would-be heroes might still have a few coppers left in their pockets too.

NPCS

NPCs should be complex and detailed, with distinct personalities and mannerisms. Make them real people and make sure that they are recognizable and familiar. Provide NPCs with ambitions and motivations, just like the PCs. They are adversaries, contacts, allies and friends to your PCs. The more detailed you make the NPCs, the richer your story becomes.

One easy trick to making memorable NPCs is to picture a famous actor or actress while describing them. If the local High Priest has impressive presence and great oratory skills — tell your players to picture Sir Anthony Hopkins. This trick gives them a frame of reference they can easily imagine and makes your job as DM much easier. Additional, you can cut or photocopy images from magazines and books of people that look the way you want them to. This book has many images of characters that fit the role of your NPCs nicely.

Don't focus your attention only on adversarial situations or characters. You're responsible for all of the NPCs, not just the antagonists. Balance your campaign, by using an equal amount of allies and adversaries. Spend as much time developing the PC's personal contacts — friends, family, rivals — as you do their enemies. This adds depth to your story and makes it more rewarding.

The Good

Villainy loses its appeal if everyone is evil. Therefore, there should be a multitude of innocent, wholesome individuals that have enjoyed a good life free of suffering and want. Adolescent ladies with adventure in their eyes, breadwinners instilled with rigid work ethics, and people of the land (hermits, druids, rangers) living in reclusive regions, far from civilization and material greed. The common folk have the most to lose and suffer the most from the player's intrusions on their safe lives.

This isn't to say that good equals stupid. There must be someone strong enough to keep darker elements out of the lives of these good souls, and chances are that those same individuals have had

some prior dealings with the likes of the players. NPC leaders and politicians are likely one-time do-gooders that have seen their share of darkness. Now, they strive to keep the innocent, innocent. Paladins, clerics, and crusaders of good are everywhere, fighting against the forces of evil. This book is filled with sample characters on both sides of the tracks. Use them to keep your players guessing.

Of course, no good deed goes unpunished, and these NPCs should make tempting targets for players to get one up on as well.

The Bad

Then again, maybe the good guys aren't in charge, and instead there are villains already firmly in leadership roles. Perhaps they keep this dark side secret, or perhaps not. In either case, such manipulation is never an accident, meaning that the NPC villain has more than a few tricks up his sleeve. Ensure that established villains are not only capable of earning their positions, but are prepared to keep them in the face of competition. This doesn't mean that innocent bystanders are any less innocent because a tyrant is in charge, just that there should be plenty of corrupting to do.

THE FIRST SESSION

It's taken a long time to get to this point. After all the planning, plots, and preparation, there still remains the hardest part of any campaign: *the first session*. Unfortunately, this is even harder when the characters are all greedy, lecherous scums that hate competition worse than their own existence. But all is not lost; there are ways to ease the pain.

First, let the players figure out how they know each other. Take a firm hand in it, however; don't let them get too crazy with their backgrounds. Perhaps they all share the same pain that made them choose evil in the first place, or perhaps they share a common goal to sow corruption and bring a nation down. Did they all study under the same teacher, or did they belong to the same rotary club? It's always better to have cooperation instilled from the beginning rather than referee the characters first meeting

and sorting out alliances, especially in an evil campaign, where you have enough challenges ahead of you.

If the players aren't up to this, then you're back to the typical scenario; the players expect you to figure out why they're together. This is where a villainous NPC can make themselves known to put the fear of him or her into these pathetic upstarts. After all, intimidation, fear, and hate, are all the tools of the master villain, and what better way to start an evil campaign than leading by example? Additionally, the PCs could just work for an evil overlord and do his bidding, working their way up through the cabal, trying to become made men.

MAINTAINING THE CAMPAIGN

Once you've started playing, maintaining the campaign can be nearly as much work as preparing it. You'll need to organize your thoughts and maintain the continuity of the game. Assemble a DM's notebook. Use a folder, binder, notebook or if you're feeling motivated, a palm pilot or PC. You'll want to keep detailed information on the following subjects:

Maps

A visual reference is always better than descriptive text, especially when plotting distances or planning an assault. You won't need a map of everything, but you should have an idea of where things are and be prepared to sketch out a hasty drawing. Keep these extra materials and flesh them out between sessions if there are chances to return to the same locations. A map of the party's stronghold may be essential as well, but you can work on this together, vetoing ridiculous amounts of traps (remind them how long it takes to build a lair in the first place without having to resort to trap design).

NPC Character Sheets

Everything that is important to running an NPC should be here, with special attention paid to distinguishing information that the players recognize. Leave room for notes and any discoveries that the NPC makes about the player characters, because the NPC will most likely form opinions and act on

such information. This will make it easier to determine how the NPC interacts and reacts to the PCs later on.

PC Character Sheets

Not that players can't be trusted, but they ARE playing unscrupulous characters that will stop at nothing to achieve their goals. It doesn't hurt to have ready statistics to base secret rolls on instead of asking players to reveal such information every time... or hint to them why you needed the information to begin with.

Event Calendar

Continuity is paramount for planning out a campaign. Keep a list of past events and future plans, recording new ones as they are learned or plotted. Include seasons and celestial factors as well, if nothing else, to add detail and flavor to your campaign. It can't be winter all year round, unless, of course, there's a sinister reason for it, right?

Plot Notes

An outline is good for starters. But anything can happen and the best-laid plans can go astray. Don't throw out those old plots, though, as you may be able to work them in later.

Keep every note you've prepared — everything. Even if it's in an old shoe box, keep it where you can get to it during planning or playing. You never know when going through old scratchings will spawn inspiration or remind you of something you'd forgotten.

A well-organized notebook keeps all campaign information in one place. You want to stay on your toes and you don't want to slow the game down while hunting for an idea or two. These are evil PCs after all; they are constantly scheming, and you don't want them catching you unprepared.

MAKING IT MEMORABLE

Use Their Fears

Listening to what concerns the players have for their characters may be better than the ideas you've cooked up. A DM who considerably pre-plans can



run an entire adventure off the cuff, using little more than a good ear and a little imagination. Don't hesitate to steal a good idea and use it against your players. Saying out loud, "I bet it was the count" is a sure fire way for you to make it NOT be the count. And comments like, "I hope there aren't more of these guys waiting for us back in the room" are certainly fuel for another encounter.

They DID ask for it, didn't they?

Recurring Characters

If you think heroes hate it when the villain gets away, imagine how the villain feels when the heroes show up and foil his plans every time. A recurring do-gooder is always a factor that evil PCs should be worrying about, and getting information to that do-gooder should be a goal for the DM to make the PCs' lives entertainingly miserable. Informants and other dependable rogues are nice when they turn up again and again.

Nobody is Indispensable

If a PC does something so foolish that they'll likely die or be killed doing it, don't pull punches; kill them. Being a villain is a hard life, and evil is much less forgiving than those life-loving heroes that think your PCs have any chance of being rehabilitated during life in prison. And don't let them try any of that "death wish" stuff unless they're taking the hero down with them.

Subplots

An evil PC isn't evil all the time. In fact, it may be interesting to see what the PC is up when not doing terrible things. Perhaps an innocent refuses to see the villain for what they are, and a truly evil PC resists the opportunity to prove he is indeed above redemption and beyond remorse.

Foreshadowing

The forces of darkness do a lot of waiting for the perfect time to unleash their powers. Moons in



PALM OF ZADEH

We are the Orb of Light, a religious group opposed to everything evil. We are a devout, pious group. We believe in our cause more than money or power. Many of our members are above corruption. Some call us the fanatical type, willing to throw ourselves into danger rather than let an innocent suffer. Call us what you will, we will not stand by while the Palm of Zadeh destroys the world.

This story is about our enemy and you would do well to listen.

In a seemingly abandoned pile of stones, once known as Narias' Keep, lies a great threat to the denizens of your world. The members of the Palm of Zadeh are preparing to bring ruin and a thousand years of despair down upon all of the races. This small, yet powerful group of spellcasters have pooled their talents and information to free the demon Zadeh from his prison, and through him, control the world.

The five wizards, Skaur, Madrinor, Alain the Red, Tericus the Mad, and Calim-Kal formed the cabal in a sacred ritual four years ago. They have grown in power exponentially since their pact and their quest is nearing an end.

From the beginning, their goal was to acquire the Fire Daggers of Sal-Cheyn. When brought together these daggers release a powerful demon named Zadeh. Trapped in an extraplanar prison realm, the daggers pierce through the shadow veil and rip Zadeh from his oubliette. Skaur leads the group. He is the most intelligent, and knows much about Zadeh's plan for the world. It is our fear that they have some of these daggers. They are one step from destroying everything.

(Continued)

alignment, prophecies, whatever. All of these things keep the villain waiting for the right moment. Fortunately, they tend to amuse themselves by letting hints of impending doom slip from time to time. Unfortunately, being the unforgiving types that they are, evil PCs should take note of such happenings. That way, they can avoid their own destruction while finding ways to take advantage of such events in the future.

RECURRING VILLAINS

No one remembers the incompetent cutthroat that bumbles into the room one night, only to be completely manhandled by one of the PCs, prompting the other characters to snigger before turning over for a nap.

The shadowy figure that lurks behind the scenes throwing obstacle after obstacle in the PC's way begins to catch their interest. This is a character you would like to have in your campaign. Let's face it, a string of meaningless thugs and reprobates doesn't strike fear into the hearts of your PCs. Your desire is to have a villain your players talk about constantly, even during other games. I'm going to give you a few pointers for making the ultimate villain.

Make Him Despicable

If he's supposed to be a villain, let him be evil with a big E. He should be cruel, merciless, and completely abhorrent. Now with that said, don't have him run cackling through the streets setting little children and furry animals on fire. Evil doesn't have to be vulgar, just evil. Give him a little bit of style and subtlety.

Don't Be Afraid to Kill

If none of the PCs ever end up in a grave after tangling with your baddie, their respect goes out the window. Take the kid gloves off and come out swinging. Wait till you see the looks on their faces when their characters saunter into "just another bad guy's lair" and get their heads handed to them, scrambling to recover some of their friend's remains.

Make it Personal

Do you want to see the ugly head of vengeance reared in your campaign, have your villain kidnap and murder one of the PC's love ones. Watch the sparks fly as the party faces off with him next. Let him meddle in the PC's affairs in almost every conceivable way. Your players will long for the day they can shove their blades deep into his vile corpse. And that includes the spellcasters.

Let Him Escape

Don't make the villain with a "last man standing complex". He loses encounters every once in awhile. If he always fought to the last, he wouldn't be a recurring villain, now, would he? You choose the time and manner of his demise, not the PCs. His death should be the culmination of a well-planned strategy by the PCs, ending in a glorious final encounter, your players' high-five and toast to his extermination. Now that is a villain. And then there's undeath...

REWARDING EVIL

You might say this is a loaded subject. Many times in your campaigns over the years, the question was how to punish the transgressors of the heroic ideal. Now the time is upon you to throw away your silly values and morality judgments. Crime does pay; how well is up to you.

There are as many DMing styles as there are DMs. Ultimately, no matter what I advise on awarding experience, yours is the final decision as to how it's done. Two of the traditional award methods are "by the book" and "free form."

By the Book

The strictest form of awarding experience, by-the-book offers little room for customizing encounter rewards. However, beginning DMs should use this method specifically for facilitating that balance desperately striven to foster in earlier passages. In time, you'll understand the roll of encounters, treasure, role-playing and problem solving in your campaign. The evil campaign differs greatly from the standard fare of saving the damsel

in distress. The motivation of a PC becomes one of a selfish nature. How then, do you award those not fettered with the chains of morals and codes?

Most experience is unaffected by alignment. If a PC hacks down a dozen town guardsmen or so many orcs, it is still roughly the same difficulty. What makes the difference is the motivation behind the action. In an evil campaign, style and ingenuity should be encouraged because death, destruction and mayhem are easy. The object of the player is to become that memorable villain himself.

Free-Form

Free form rewards have much to do with accomplishments in the eyes of the DM. In other words, the final judgment is up to you. Challenge rating comes in only when deciding if a party can handle the encounter physically. If you feel the encounter has no bearing on your plot, don't reward much experience. If the entire campaign hinges on the negotiations with one person, the reward should be equivalent. In fact, a true free-form DM doesn't even assign experience points at all. He awards levels when he feels the PCs have reached milestones or goals in their continuing adventures. Maintaining appropriate balance becomes more difficult if the party members have highly disparate contributions to the role-playing experience itself.

Most DMs are a hybrid of these two styles, picking and choosing where and when to be structured or throw away the rulebook. Sometimes DMs need a little help and guidance when rewarding their players.

EVIL IS AS EVIL DOES

What is evil? Do you really know as a DM? Sure, society tells us what is and is not acceptable, but what is the core of it? It may be really about the denial of the personal rights of others. Just because you follow the laws of one land or group doesn't mean it's just. To tell the truth, good and evil are judgments from certain points of view. In the end, you the DM represent the deities and societies of your campaign world. So when you start your evil

PALM OF ZADEH (CONTINUED)

Each of the wizards of the cabal has his own specialty, and Skaur hand-chose them all. Originally Skaur and Madrinor were the founders, using Madrinor's base of loyal followers to extort, influence, and control. Alain the Red was recruited for his powers of scrying and divining. This has allowed the Cabal unlimited access to information which they would normally have spent years pursuing.

The inclusion of Calim-Kal, a known master trapmaker and abjurist, means they are afraid of intruders and their sinister acts grow more depraved and reviled. In their secret keep they can accomplish anything, remaining unchecked. We are unsure why Tericus the Mad joined the cabal. He is unhinged and violent, but he wields fantastic power and fearsome on every level.

Currently we know that the Palm of Zadeh has nearly 100 followers, agents, collaborators and allied creatures, working for them on a regular basis. These people all serve a purpose to Palm, whether it is information gathering, protection, or the day-to-day operations of a simple servant. The most numerous of these sections are, of course, the information gatherers. This is followed by closely by the guardians and the servants. A breakdown of their organization would be immense, boring, and would take hours to explain. It only further verifies that Skaur and Madrinor are highly intelligent and should never be underestimated.

It is known that Madrinor sent his agents out in search of clues that would lead them to the Fire Daggers of Sal-Cheyn. They are wily and roguish men, completely loyal to Madrinor and the Palm of Zadeh. We have heard rumors that the agents have acquired the second of the Fire Daggers of Sal-Cheyn, and are well on the way to acquiring yet another of the five. If they are succeed, all hope is lost.

(Continued)

campaign, open a dialogue with your players. Let them know what your opinions are from the start. Take their suggestions to heart, but remember you are the final arbitrator.

MASS DESTRUCTION

Of course many players feel the label of evil is defined by three words. kill, maim and destroy. Show them that running forward hacking and slaying everything in sight gains nothing but many enemies and a short life span. If you're trying to run a more subtle style of campaign, you have to set the precedence by reigning in those power gamers. However, if you're reading this tome in order to crank up the mayhem level, so you can spice up your adventure, let the hacking begin!

SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHAOS

Perhaps the truest form of evil is the manipulator, a being that takes pure joy from the slow corruption of those that consider them good. If an evil PC flies into a rage and kills the town constable, the locals can point and say, "Did you just see that man kill the constable, that's evil!" However, if the same character takes his time tempting the constable with bribes and planting damaging evidence, isn't his downfall that much sweeter? Then those same towns folk shake their collective head and click their tongues exclaiming, "What a shame, we always thought the constable was such an honorable man!" The second case deserves a greater experience reward, doesn't it?

STYLE AND FLAIR

Here is the part where the evil PC tends to fail miserably. The cackling megalomaniac is cliché. The ruthless killer is, too. What needs rewarding is style. The ability to walk in the room and inspire evil acts, not just perform them. You want your players to make heroes say, "that's cool." Reward the subtle and inventive, not the vulgar. You'll start to understand that being evil is more complex than you thought.

LACKEYS

He counted at least twenty of them. Sammoth eyed the dull-witted mixture of humans, orcs, and half-breeds crowding in around him. The experienced Blood Archer knew he was in a precarious spot. If he tried to be cocky with the warlord's men, they would take offense and kill him. If he relinquished his bow, he would be defenseless, weakening his commander's bargaining position. Sammoth finally heard the sound of multiple bowstrings pulling taught. With a tension relieving sigh and a grin, he spoke.

"So who's heard the one about the beholder and the milkmaid?"

What would an evil overlord do without his slaving minions? Certainly not take over the world. To solidify the PCs' positions of power in an area, whether it's on a continent or in an alleyway, you as the DM must give them lackeys to do all the dirty deeds they are unable or unwilling to do (let's face it, why be evil if you can't be lazy).

Before you scream about letting the PCs get away with subcontracting out their own adventures, think of the wondrous possibilities. Sure, the party would gladly pass on your carefully planned adventure to the paladin's keep by pulling a few strings. Who wouldn't? Your job as DM (M meaning "Master") is to make them think twice about sending an NPC to do a PC's work. Have the lackeys fail miserably. Make the consequences for their bungling so harsh that the party dare not trust the hired help to succeed. If cleaning up loose ends is the goal, the lackey is well-suited for that job. If securing the fabled Rod of Majestic Royalty is the goal, the PCs had best do it themselves.

Early in their career, a few thugs and henchmen are all that are needed to even the playing field. Quality is hard to find. If you were smart or powerful, would you be some low-level character's lackey? Clearly not. To paraphrase a famous saying, quantity has its own quality. The docks and inns of most fantasy settings are rife with lowlifes looking for a few coppers to finance their next draught of ale.

The Thug

Hired muscle is a desirable commodity for the would-be villain. These minions make up for lack of skill by intimidating those with skill. It's much easier to pay some bruising sell-sword to threaten the craftsman than to actually hire him.

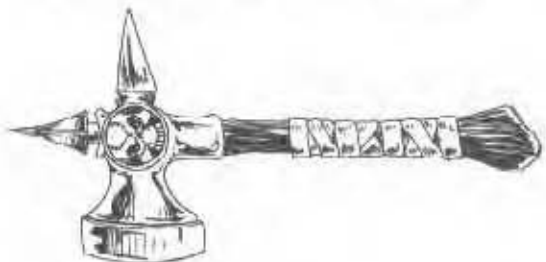
There are several shortcomings of the common thug, the first being they are usually highly unreliable. This means you have an excuse for the failures the PCs must deal with. Never let them shortcut your plot by becoming too dependent on hired muscle. Secondly, they are rarely, if ever, pillars in the community. Thugs are rude, crude, unwashed, and socially inept, but that's why they're so cheap. Finally, if there are any jobs requiring intelligence, forget it.

As the DM, you can and should exploit any to all of these weaknesses. After all, if it's not part of the plot, why have it in the adventure?

The Duelist

A PC has a constable dogging his every move, looking for that one mistake to bring down the headman's axe. Before sending out the hit squad, convince him to use a duelist. Why get in more trouble and perhaps bring more attention to his operation by having someone assassinated? Kill him legally. In most ancient cultures, dueling to the death was an acceptable way of ending disputes. Even if the target manages to avoid accepting the duel, it can result in public humiliation. By itself, that can damage a do-gooder enough to give the PC some breathing room.

The benefits of having a duelist "on call" can solve many niggling problems without calling in the heavy artillery. Also, the PC can keep his hands clean by not arousing too much suspicion.



The Spy

The spy is the ultimate tool to abuse for a DM. In all aspects of espionage, you have ways of adding difficulty or alleviating it. When a PC or party recruits a spy (remember, rogues aren't the only class that can sell secrets), you are in complete control of whomever responds. You should always make the PCs ill at ease with the agent they deal with.

The most common need for a spy is to recover information vital to a PC's needs. A rogue is best suited to this task because of his access to many and varied skills; however, for more specialized missions, other classes can be more suited. For example, if the party needed to recover a magical tomb from within the local wizards guild, a mage would be desirable. If they were trying to discover the contents of a military document, sending a fighter makes more sense.

What if the party needs only an area or person observed? Interaction with the target is not needed. Observation skills are more important than non-detection ones. Such missions are far less dangerous because the chance of discovery is far less.

The ultimate use of a spy is planting an undercover agent called a "mole." A mole is someone that must completely blend with those around him. The advantage of such a plant is that information is con-

tinuous. Of course, the details he observes are related to the position he holds. The duke's personal guard has access to better information than say, a gate guard. The higher the placing in a group, the more peril he faces. Moles should be the most rare lackeys in your campaign for many obvious reasons.

Don't let the PCs get off cheap. Information is extremely valuable. The Espionage Costs Table can be used as a guideline for the cost of different types of espionage services.

When your NPC spy accepts a task, take into account the type of security he is going to face. Breaking into the office of a small merchant is far different than sneaking into the royal palace.

The Spellcaster

Disciplined individuals such as wizards and priests are less apt to sell their services. Most have achieved their success through the love of their art or deity. Even if they can be bought, the price is usually exorbitant. Bards and sorcerers however, are much more likely to put their abilities on the auction block.

The better tact for recruiting spellcasters is appealing to their sense of purpose. If the party wishes to secure the services of a wizard, have the NPC barter for things of particular interest to him,

ESPIONAGE COSTS TABLE

Service	Cost*
Retrieval of written information (copy)	2d4 x 100gp per level of spy
Retrieval of written information (original)	1d4 x 100gp per level of spy
Insertion of false information (verbal)	1d4 x 100gp per level of spy
Insertion of false information (written)	2d4 x 100gp per level of spy
Observation and report (per week, minimum one week)	2d6 x 10gp per level of spy
Place mole (per month, minimum one month)	1d4 x 1000gp per level of spy

* All service costs above are modified by the following security ratings.

Security Rating	Cost Modifier
Low (small village, minor official)	normal rate
Moderate (walled city, unorganized military unit)	normal rate x2
High (palace, guild HQ, standard military facility)	normal rate x3
Maximum (royal vault, elite military stronghold)	normal rate x4

such as magic items or favors to be assigned in the future. A priest would most likely require the task to be furthering the goals of his religion; for example, the PCs build a shrine to his deity in an area not currently influenced by his faith. Obviously, evil priests have far less compunction about who they partner with.

Spellcasters are more likely to follow the PCs because of reasons other than coin. A charismatic leader whose goals coincide with those of the mage or priest may be able to convince the NPCs to join his cause. Be careful of giving characters the ability to attract potent NPCs (i.e. spellcasters) without paying for them one way or another. The availability of spellcasters waiting to sign up with the PCs is completely up to you, the DM.

The Right-Hand Man

This form of lackey is best utilized in a solo campaign. The careful thought and consideration going into an NPC such as this is lost in a group of PCs. A Right-Hand Man is a specialized form of NPC, one who requires a great deal more effort on your part to create. He not only combines several desirable attributes of other types of lackeys, but also has the unenviable position of advisor to a particular PC. It is through this guidance that you can steer the campaign in directions convenient to your plans.

If a player desires someone to take on the more mundane tasks of building an evil empire, this is when you should start brewing up a choice candidate. The NPC need not be exactly what the PC is looking for, but should have a majority of the skills and attributes required.

The Right-Hand Man wears many hats. He is a confidant, servant, bodyguard, and advisor rolled into one. Most likely he is the same class as his PC master, but that's not necessary. The most important aspect of the Right-Hand Man is not his skills or power, but his personality. A strongly developed character is a boon to role-playing that your players should always appreciate. Focus on one aspect of his personality, giving him an unmistakable identity.

PALM OF ZADEH (CONTINUED)

The Fire Daggers of Sal-Cheyn are powerful magical items, not to be mistaken for simple fighting weapons. Each holds within powerful magic and guarded secrets of the prison realm of Balak. The daggers vary in ability, making them unique and dangerous. We know of the fourth dagger, "wicked". It was the first dagger the cabal found. Our research shows it drains the blood from the body, slowly and painfully, reducing a victim to a desiccated husk.

Guarding the outlying lands of the Keep is a small tribe of goblins, the Fingernawers, who are wholly loyal to the order. They act as scouts, as well as an early warning in case of attack. Several agents were sent into the area in an attempt to disperse the goblins, or find ways around them to the keep, but all our excursions met with failure. It seems that the shaman who leads the goblins wields powerful magic. Alone, he was able to drive off six agents.

The actual guards of the Keep are lead by a powerful mercenary named Ka'alan. He and his men patrol the immediate mile around the keep. The guards number 20 to 25. It is presumed that they are good fighters based on reports of their dress and equipment. They are mostly rangers and fighters, with a few rogues in their midst.

Since getting to the Keep is a trying task, we have resorted to sending in a spy. Presently, one agent is inside, Nyssalyn of Ursuun. What she found there was quite a frightening sight.

There are close to 20 servants living there simply to attend to the wizards needs. They are made to attend chapel, where Skaur or a priest of Zadeh leads them in worship. Nyssalyn claims the services are terrifying to watch. She could not repeat what she saw, and we did not ask.

The Orb of Light is grateful for knowledge you ascertain about the Keep. All of our blessings go with you. Be steadfast and wary of the evil that lies ahead of you.

MADRINOR THE ENCHANTER

Trained by the famed enchanter, Dominique of Travois, Madrinor grew to fame through his exotic potions and amulets. He sold his services in many kingdoms and lands, gathering followers and assistants easily. His coffers quickly filled with varied items and gold. This exorbitant wealth would help fund what was to come later in his life.

Many years later, Skaur approached Madrinor and the two struck a bargain to free the demon, Zadeh, to usurp his power for themselves. Madrinor proved invaluable to the Palm, and provided magical items and elixirs as the need arose. His aloof nature buffered him from the true repercussions of the Palm's actions and direction, leaving him free to indulge his nefarious and reckless plots.

Madrinor is charming when he wants to be, and he uses this to his advantage when negotiating with Skaur or the rest of the cabal. He knows many of his followers would willingly die for him; the cabal members have their own motives, however, so he keeps his men's loyalty quiet and bides his time. His ultimate goal is to use the cabal to free Zadeh and capture the demon's power for himself.

Madrinor the Enchanter: Human Wiz 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d4+18; hp 36; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (-1 Dex, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *bracers of armor* +2); Atks +2 dagger +4 melee (1d4+2); SA Spells; SQ *iron bands of billaro*, *cube of force*, *wand of burning hands* (20 charges), *potion of fire breath*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 13, Cha 16; AL NE; Skills: Alchemy +17, Concentration +14, Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +15, Sery +17, Search +8, Spellcraft +17. Feats: Brew Potion (bonus), Craft Wondrous Item, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Mastery (5), Tyrant.

Here are several archetypal personalities you can use for your favorite lackey:

Assertive

The Assertive is a lackey that always speaks his mind. His ideas are important and must be heard. If his master punishes him for his outbursts, his tendencies only subside, temporarily. He is not foolish and silences his tongue if it means his death, but he can't stay hushed for long.

Conniver

The Conniver is always looking to gain in some way; he schemes and schemes, positioning himself to make that next jump in power. If someone has something he wants, he'll get it eventually.

Creator

Nothing pleases the Creator more than invention. This form of lackey is constantly finding new, more efficient ways to do things. His creativity interferes in his day-to-day duties because he does not deem them important.

Fanatic

The Fanatic is a dangerous tool. If he believes in the cause, there is nothing he wouldn't do for his beliefs. He'd go as far as committing suicide, if that's was necessary. Beware, for these types are not entirely stable and can turn on their master if he doesn't maintain the lackey's level of fervor.

Flamboyant

Every day is a show for this one. The Flamboyant has style... a lot of style... too much style. If he is not the center of attention in every encounter, something is wrong. Difficult to reign in, the Flamboyant is annoying to some, comical to others, but always enjoyable to role-play.

Fool

Similar to the flamboyant, the fool draws attention to himself with comical results. His idiom is to release his master's tension and worries through comic relief. Many times a fool has deformities that add to his countenance, but the PC should not underestimate him. Even Fools have ambition.

Manipulator

The Manipulator is driven to take control of those around him. He is constantly striving to convince others to do his bidding. The manipulator doesn't overtly ask or tell people to do things, he gets them to volunteer. Subtlety is his game and he plays it well.

Masochist

Emotional or physical pain, it matters little to this lackey. He revels in it. For a PC master, he can be difficult to deal with, because of his need for punishment. In fact he may even fail assigned tasks on purpose, desiring the PC's wrath.

Perfectionist

To the Perfectionist, no result is satisfactory. Time and again, he needs to redo his projects. For the master requiring rapid task completion, the perfectionist is maddening. Not only does he slow his own projects down, but micromanages others as well, stalemating entire schemes. The Perfectionist is rarely a worldly thinker, never being able to see beyond his own present environment.

Sadist

Cruelty is the Sadist's lifeblood. To be kind is to die. The sadist is a great asset to an evil overlord. As a Right-Hand Man, he metes out his master's decrees with merciless brutality. However, he can quickly reduce the master's stable of lackeys to broken husks if the PC doesn't reign him in.

Sycophant

Complements and praises spew voluminously from the Sycophant's lips. He adores the PC master and all his accomplishments. Never has his master uttered an unintelligent word or banal phrase. The Sycophant quickly becomes excruciatingly annoying. Yet there are some that enjoy being showered with adoration and praise.

Right-Hand Man as PC

Welcome to my master's abode. I hope you've enjoyed your visit thus far. What's that, the manacles are uncomfortable? Let me take care of that... There we go, now that broken leg will take your mind off those pesky manacles.

Why keep you alive? I thought you would be far more perceptive than that. You disappoint me.

Heroes... Heh! You've fallen like wheat before my master's might.

We keep you for the festivities. Yes, the ritual.

Why am I here and not him? Because I am the machine behind the man. He points, I pull the lever.

Don't you simpletons understand his majesty?!

He should not have to worry about this stronghold, his lackeys, or anything else for that matter. That is my providence and mine alone. His is only to

bring glory to our cause and I mean to get him there. I do not covet his infamy, or his riches! Have you not been listening? I only crave to be at his side when our plan comes to fruition.



The Assassin

Many people argue that there are certain situations where killing is not an evil act, and they may even be right. However, ending a being's existence simply for remuneration is a giant bound across that thin line. Assassination remains a hotly contested point in many gaming circles. In an evil campaign, this argument is moot. No one cares how the job is completed, but whether or not it was completed. In fact, in many fantasy settings, there are infernal beings that exist to cultivate murder and reprehensible acts.

The question for you as the DM is not whether to allow assassins, but how to adjudicate them. First of all, your storyline comes first; above the players' own wishes. If they feel that they can keep their hands clean and walk through all adversity by eliminating their competition one by one, it disrupts the play balance you've so diligently maintained. There are several ways, however, to limit the use of the assassin in your campaign.

Cost: You know how much gold your players have, don't you? When the talk of assassination rears its ugly head, decide if that sort of action is detrimental to your plot. If it isn't, make the option cost prohibitive. The PCs might just decide the risk of getting caught is not as devastating as the damage hiring someone would be to their coin-purse.

Inconvenience: PCs are inherently lazy. Make locating your assassins problematic. If the PCs can simply walk down to the local assassins' guild and order up one dead merchant after another, your game is in trouble. However, when arranging someone's demise becomes a Herculean effort, minds change.

Availability: Sometimes you just want the PCs to get their hands dirty. Who says they should ever be able to find an assassin? Even if you're allowing assassins in your game, the PCs shouldn't come across them every time. "Sorry, all booked up." No matter what, maintain control of your campaign.

Competence: The party found a killer-for-hire, paid him, and now they're going to sit back and enjoy the show. To their chagrin, he not only fails, but also implicates the PC in the dastardly scheme. They lose their coin, gain an enemy, and most likely become hunted at the same time.

Now, once you've dealt with the semantics of bringing an assassin into your game, you need some guidelines for cost. The Assassination Cost Table is just a suggestion; feel free to change it to suit your own campaign.

The assassin always has a chance of failing, no matter how much gold is on the line. However, the more experienced your hired killer is, the greater the chance of success. The base percentage chance of an NPC assassin eliminating his target is 75% +/- 5% for every level different between him and his target (total levels for both). For example if an assassin is a ftr 10/asn 6 and his target is ftr 7/wiz 6, the % chance of success would be 90%. The chance of success can never be greater than 95% or worse than 1%.

The Sage

Sages are of significant value as lackeys although they would never call themselves that. To quote an old axiom, knowledge is power. If this is true, the PCs can gain massive power from just one sage under their control. Fortunately, those questing for lore through the dust-covered tombs of the past don't usually require much upkeep.

ASSASSINATION COST TABLE

Target	Cost/Level of Assassin	Min. Time Required to Complete
Commoner/lesser merchant	100gp	1 week
Wealthy merchant/lesser politician	500gp	2 weeks
Religious leader/famous entertainer	1000gp	1 month
Regent/top military leader	10,000gp	varies

If the PCs supply the sage with the resources he desires, he is content. Depending on the party's needs, they might wish to secure several sages of varying areas of knowledge. Fortunately, these NPCs don't offer much resistance if the party coerces them into work.

ENSURING LOYALTY

Good-aligned PCs really have only two options open to them. Pay their followers well, or treat them even better. If not, their disciples tend to go scampering off in the middle of the night.

Fortunately, for your more unscrupulous PCs, there are many more strategies available other than the aforementioned ones.

Blackmail

For the more skilled lackeys such as sages or spies, blackmail is the preferred method of obtaining loyal services. For a sage, a little research into his past might reveal some unsavory bit of information, embarrassing or damaging to his reputation. If the PCs go this route, make sure they continually add more 'dirt' to keep the sage from bolting. The spy is actually easier, once the PCs find out about his past missions and his true identity. With this information, the spy is securely in their pouch. Ensure the difficulty of gaining such secrets.

Extortion

Like blackmail, extortion is best used on highly skilled lackeys. Extortion, whoever, is threatening bodily harm unto the lackey or someone he cares about. Again, a little research uncovers locations of parents, wives, husbands, sons, and daughters. If this type of tactic is abhorrent to you, maybe you shouldn't run an evil campaign.

Fanaticism

It's hard to find a more motivated person than one flooded with religious or political zeal. A priestly PC has the least work to do, being motivated to do his god's will. He will undoubtedly gain religious followers as a result of his actions. As seen throughout history, religion is the impetus of much that is

SKAUR

Skaur was once a good man, and a carefree dungeoneer. He explored many old locations with his friends in search of magic and treasure, until he acquired a magical headband. It granted him great intellectual power, but soon he began to hear voices and turned away from his friends to research demonology. The devil known as Zadeh influenced his thoughts, pushing him into pursuing evil acts. His life goal quickly became freeing Zadeh, and attaining the magical power needed to do so. With Zadeh's help, Skaur picked each member of the cabal with his goal in mind, and has created quite the magical team. He has all the firepower, magical items, security, and information needed to seek out and acquire the Fire Daggers of Sal-Cheyn (*see sidebar pg. 87*).

On the outside, Skaur seems a very simple and focused man. Every fiber of his being is devoted to bringing Zadeh into the world, and he'll do anything, and lie to anyone to complete that act. On the inside however, he is struggling. When his body becomes exhausted, his original traits surface and fight the control placed over him. Sadly, his original personality is too weak, and Skaur has no ally within 100 miles. All he can do is watch the evil unfold before his eyes.

Skaur: Human Wiz 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d4+9; hp 32; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (*ring of protection* +4); Atks *unholy dagger* +6 melee (1d4+2, +2d6 to good), or *light crossbow of shack* +4 (1d8+1d6); SA Spells; SQ *cloak of resistance* +3, *cursed headband of intelligence* +6; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 26*, Wis 14, Cha 16; AL LE (originally LG); Skills: Alchemy +13, Bluff +9, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +9, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (Planes) +20, Knowledge (demonology) +20, Search +14, Spellcraft +20, Spot +8. Feats: Combat Casting, Empower spell, Extend Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjunction), Spell Mastery (7), Toughness.

TERICUS THE MAD

Tericus is a complete mystery to the cabal. He simply appeared one day and pledged his services to Skaur. None of the other Cabal members know the details, but Skaur swears that he is loyal to the cause. Alain learned that his past was mired with violence and his tactics were swift and merciless. Most everyone keeps an eye on him just to be safe.

Tericus is completely mad. His actions are unexplainable, and he apparently speaks to someone called "the Serpent." Whether it's a voice in his head or a real power is as yet unknown. He acts like a child with great power, almost as if he were spoiled by unseen parents. When placed in dangerous situations, however, Tericus reacts with terrible violence, leaving a wake of destruction. He was "accidentally" locked in the Keep's dungeons once. Out of frustration, he blew the ceiling off the keep and into the courtyard. Now, all of the cabal's followers, and some of the wizards, give him a wide berth when he passes. When not working, he spends his time locked away in his room. Screams of pleasure or pain constantly emerge from behind the doors, always followed by distinct whimpering and a hushed voice.

Tericus the Mad: Human Wiz 9;

SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d4+18; hp 49; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (Dex +2, *amulet of natural armor* +3); Atks +1 *quarterstaff of flaming burst* +7 melee (1d6, +1d10 on a critical), or light crossbow +7 ranged (1d8); SA Spells; SQ *rod of wonder*, *wand of fireballs*; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 14; AL CE;
Skills: Alchemy +14, Climb +6, Concentration +14, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Search +7, Spellcraft +14, Swim +5. Feats: Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Expertise, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration.

considered evil. Religious fanatics only need inspired guidance to set them on their appointed task. Political fanatics also rely on their own brand of faith; faith in the leadership of the organization, country, or region they belong to. Propaganda is the key to motivating them. As long as the PCs can maintain control of the information flow, the fanatic remains loyal.

Fear

Not much in this world is more effective (not to mention cheaper) for motivation than fear. Many are driven to succeed by the sheer terror of failure, but it helps to have a strong sword-arm or destructive spell backing up that threat. Lackeys are unreliable beasts, sometimes failing even the most facile of tasks. However, if it was explained to them how deadly or painful things are for them should they fail, even the most irresponsible minion takes care to do their best. Loyalty is bought with the currency of fear. That currency must continue to flow or loyalty wanes.

Status

The promise of status amongst ones peers is always an option for those who don't respond to the more vulgar displays of violence. Those lackeys of low station in society often wish to shake off the class they were so cruelly born into, and rise in the eyes of their peers. This tact often works with the Right-Hand Man lackey. Remuneration is wonderful, but what lowborn wouldn't want to mingle with the lords and ladies at one time or another? If the PC can facilitate this class jump and legitimize it, the socially-conscious lackey remains loyal.

Magic

Do not reward NPC minions with magical items. Instead, use magical spells to keep them in line. The various charm spells are best when dealing with the hard-of-thinking type. There is a long time period between checks, and the odds they will succeed is nearly nonexistent. Also, there are numerous arcane and infernal spells with which to facilitate the other tactics discussed in this section. Sometimes

just the fact of having an imposing wizard in the PC's party is enough to maintain control.

Wealth

Greed is good. Sometimes the promise of plundered gold is the sole motivating factor for some minions.

LAIRS

Eyeing the secluded alleyway, Sammoth crept cat-like across the roof of the dilapidated warehouse. The order to send him on this assignment galled him to the extreme. He was a Blood Archer, damn them! He had earned his fletching time and time again. His place was in the wilderness, not in the city. Someone would pay. A glint of metal caught Sammoth's eye as two crouching figures pushed their way past a hulking pile of debris blocking the alley entrance. It had taken him two weeks and nearly his entire pouch of golden coin, but he had finally uncovered their blasted den. He didn't know why his superiors targeted this group, nor did he particularly care. He and his brothers would murder them all. That was the path Sammoth chose, and he was good at it.



Out of Sight, Out of Mind

While an in-town lair may be a convenient location to launch nefarious plans against society, a remote refuge may be a wiser choice for the prudent. As with any establishment the three most important factors are...

Location, Location, location

Have the PCs look at a map of your world, looking for inaccessible and inhospitable destinations. Some premier locations for their lair could be swamps, high mountain ranges, remote islands, volcanic regions, deserts, and deep caverns. Any one of these areas could make an adequate den. The idea is for the PCs to cause as much difficulty as possible for the heroic NPCs. Not just to detect them, but make travel nearly impossible to reach them. The purpose for the harsh environs is to take a toll on the attacker before they even reach the lair.

Secure the area

Once the location is established, the PCs must travel to and secure the area they wish to have as their sanctuary. This itself can be an adventure, as all manner of creatures and natural pitfalls could await the party. They must make examples of those that oppose their expansion. Most likely, the area the PCs chose is not inhabited. However, primitive societies or nomadic cultures could have eked out a minimal existence even in the most inhospitable environment. If approached correctly, these savages may be easily swayed into serving the PCs. Many primitive or uneducated groups are superstitious. A little bit of magic can send the natives into a frenzy. Another approach to an indigenous population is the symbiotic approach. If the PCs take a more diplomatic approach (they're evil not stupid), you can have the elders, council, or chief negotiate a mutually beneficial agreement where the tribe defends the lair in exchange for food, money, or something else of use to them. The party can escape a major confrontation and actually gain allies in the bargain. The PCs can slowly improve the deal for themselves later. Sometimes it is easier to rule by deceit than by brute force.

ALAIN THE RED

Alain joined the group when he scried on Madrinor and Skaur and learned of their plans to summon Zadeh. He knew the devil's power could be exploited, crafted powerful magical rods, rings, and wands to warn him of treachery, proving to the two his usefulness to the cabal. They both recognized his worth and offered him a stake in their claim.

Madrinor is Alain's closest friend in the group, but he distances himself from people in general and mostly keeps himself. His fear of others has driven him to isolation, even from his friends. In seclusion, he keeps close tabs on the world, using his magic to spy on others.

Alain is completely paranoid. He spends his life fearful of others, expecting that anyone may want to kill him. His fear is irrational. He is a powerful wizard, after all. Alain knows that the other members of the Cabal don't trust him, justifying his need to spy on them. Every day presents new threat, and he spends most of his time scrying the Keep and the surrounding area. He sees Zadeh's freedom as freedom for himself, but he's not sure why...

Alain the Red: Human Wiz 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d4+18; hp 46; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (Dex +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1, +2 *defending dagger*); Atks +2 *defending dagger* +2 melee (1d4-2), or light crossbow +7 ranged (1d8); SA Spells; SQ *potion of aid*, *potion of lesser restoration*, *potions of cure moderate wounds*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *headband of intellect* +2, *crystal ball of detect thoughts*; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 7, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 22, Wis 16, Cha 12; AL NE; Skills: Alchemy +12, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (religion) +14, Knowledge (history) +15, Scry +17, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +17, Spot +9. Feats: Craft Wondrous Item, Expertise, Maximize Spell, Run, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (scry), Spell Focus (divination).

Constructing the lair

The most monumental task confronting the PCs is the actual construction of the lair. Since they have chosen such a remote and harsh location to establish a den, the material and labor are difficult to acquire. If the party secured lackeys or negotiated with the locals, the labor problem is solved. However, building materials will always be a hurdle. If the party has a high level wizard, it reduces the difficulty. Because the PCs very likely decide on non-traditional layouts and fantastical structures for their lair, you must decide on the cost and duration of the party's plan. Efficient guidelines for construction would be to base the cost on a similar traditional structure, then adjust for variations. For example, the PCs decide they wish to build a citadel in the middle of an active volcano surrounded by lava — an effective defense, but horribly difficult to manufacture. The cost should be based on the size of the lair. If it is approximately the same size as a keep, start the value there. For a castle complex, increase accordingly. The table below shows some loose guidelines with which to adjust your cost.

There are many types of defenses for the PC's lair. Three significant ones are minions (previously covered), monsters and magic. The PCs can handle monsters in a few ways. The first is negotiation. Monsters can be intelligent as well. Perhaps one already resides in the area the party deemed suitable for their lair. In that case, the PCs can strike a deal with the creature. The more powerful the beast, the more the party relinquishes in negotiations. In the example of the volcano lair, there could be a red dragon inhabiting a nearby crater. The PCs would have to be powerful indeed to strike a deal with a dragon, but it's not out of the realm of possibilities. Make the party pay dearly for such a powerful ally. Don't forget the options of constructs. A high level wizard can create golems for the lair's defense.

That leads into the magic option. Many wards have long or permanent durations. However, other more minor spells combined with permanency

and/or triggering magic adequately fulfill the charge. Illusions can reinforce even the most minimal of defenses. They are excellent tools with which to protect the newly created sanctuary. However, real dangers as well as imaginary ones make for an effective defense. Interspersing a few pits and programmed spells along with bunches of flashy illusions can keep the enemy off guard.

Establish Escape Routes

The final piece in the construction puzzle is creating avenues of escape. The PCs need to establish multiple routes for themselves and any loyal minions they deem important enough to save. There are myriad ways for the PCs to make a good their escape. For high-level characters, contingency spells linked with teleport are the quick-n-easy solution. However, a few well placed dispel magic spells shut that strategy down in an instant.

Your PCs can go the conventional route and establish secret tunnels, known only to them and their trusted lackeys. Fortunately for you, NPC heroes can utilize the same passages to gain access to the lair. Surprise!!!

The party could go the classical evil mastermind way and construct a magical escape vehicle ready to whisk them to safety. Whatever the method, encourage them to prepare several options.

Furnishings and Inhabitants

Surely the PCs have already amassed enough loot to fill their lair. If they don't, perhaps they only have small personal caches of items, but an abundance of coin and wish to fill their lair with fineries befitting a monarch. You as The DM can either spend long hours browsing through or creating lists and prices for every piece of art, furniture, and equipment, or you can follow the simple guidelines in the Lair Furnishing Cost Table. Using these suggestions can save time, but will be less precise.

Individual fancies of the PCs should be handled on a case-by-case basis. Invariably there is one greedy character that wants an entire room decked out with solid gold furnishings and cut gem accessories. You know how to deal with PCs like this don't you?

Hopefully the party put plans for lackey's quarters in their lair design. If not, they may lose

LAIR CONSTRUCTION COST MODIFIERS

Environment	Cost multiplier
Normal (temperate climate)	x1
Harsh (swamp, deep forest, mountains)	x1.5
Inhospitable (desert, arctic)	x2
Uninhabitable (inside volcano, underwater)	x5
Modifications	Cost multiplier
Climate controlled	x1.25
Teleportation modules	x1.5
Dimensional access	x1.5

LAIR FURNISHINGS COST TABLE

Quality of furnishing	*Average cost per room
Low (cheap wood, sparse decoration)	25 gp
Adequate (fine wood, attractive art, small amount of precious metal accessories)	250 gp
Fine (Expensive wood, well decorated, a few high-quality art pieces)	1,000 gp
Exquisite (Antique furniture, masterpieces of art, precious metal accessories)	10,000 gp

* This covers just general rooms (bedrooms, dining rooms, etc.) not labs, vaults and other "specialty" rooms.

CALIM-KAL

Best known for his skills as a master trapmaker, his reputation in the hot desert lands traveled north, alerting the cabal of the powerful abjurist's activities. His tutor was a prisoner locked in a caliph's dungeons. The two were both incarcerated and Calim-Kal learned much from his mentor. It was his skill at navigating and eventually escaping the dungeon that curiously brought Calim-Kal where he is now. Vowing to never be caught again, he trained with his mysterious master until there was nothing else to learn.

Taking what he knew, he built dungeons of his own, filling them with traps and monsters. His reputation precedes him, and when Skaur approached him for work, he readily accepted. Calim-Kal is a brooding man, concerned more about possessions and wealth than anything else. He takes pride in his traps, but takes refuge in his vast hoard of gold. As Skaur becomes more and more obsessed with the freedom of Zadeh, Calim-Kal questions his need to be with this cabal. Wealth and power have seduced him, however.

He wants to leave now, but sadly, he can't. It is his greatest creation and he feels a bond with its stone walls. Secretly, he hopes someone will find it and navigate its traps either to destroy the cabal (or themselves). He's gone so far as to leak information on the location of the keep.

Calim-Kal: Human Wiz 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d4+18; hp 40; Init +7; Spl 30 ft.; AC 15 (Dex +3, bracers of armor +2); Atks *unholy dagger* +6 (1d4+2, +2d6 to good); AL NE; SA Spells; SQ *ring of the chameleon, portable hole*; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 12; Skills: Alchemy +15, Concentration +12, Craft (trapmaking) +17, Diplomacy +3, Escape Artist +8, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (religion) +11, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +17. Feats: Alertness, Craft Wondrous Item, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (abjuration), Spell Mastery (5)

control over their once loyal minions. Also, who will defend them in case a group of heroes penetrate the interior of the sanctuary? Barracks or similar compartments should be kept away from the masters' area, but close enough to offer quick response time for lair defense. Don't forget about checkpoints and guard-posts. The last thing on the evil overlord's mind is lair defense. If not, why have lackeys?

Finally, there is the unfortunate fact that outsiders gain knowledge of the location and the secrets of the PC's lair. What do the PCs do about it? They will have to be thorough and ruthless to make sure their lair stays a well-kept secret. This situation gives you loads of fodder for future adventures. One of the engineers that worked on the PC's stronghold can begin to blackmail them, threatening to reveal the location of the lair, demanding large amounts of treasure. Of course, the PCs most likely try to assassinate the offender, but you don't have to make things easy for them now do you?

Hide in Plain Sight

The unfortunate fact of operating in the close proximity of heroes tends to make for unwanted guests. Knights and the like always meddling in ones affairs. But, where else should one put a lair? Amongst the moral and just is one choice. What better place to stir the kettle than from within?

Most gatherings of humanoids tend to have ample nooks and crannies to practice one's arts freely. Staying unnoticed is the key to housing your base of operations inside the confines of a city. There are several steps to establishing a lair within the confines of a city or other gathering of peoples.

Evaluation of Real Estate

The optimum facility is in a place that has large amounts of space and is relatively devoid of humanity, such as a burned out building or crypts. Time and care should be taken in creating an in-town lair. If the proper preparation is not used, heroes come crashing through doors, making life difficult for the PCs. The PCs can do research into ownership of buildings and local laws concerning

property. They don't need to be giving heroes more reasons to harass them.

Make sure the party has difficulty discovering a location. Perhaps one person or group owns the majority of the desirable buildings. The PCs can take several varied actions to resolve this problem. First of all they can buy it outright, but where would the enjoyment be in that? Most likely, they threaten the owner into relinquishing his hold on the property. This is when you can have some fun. Who said the owner can't have powerful friends?

Another option is to use the facility without the knowledge of the owner or operator. An abandoned warehouse in a run-down section of the city can't have too much traffic. If anyone gets suspicious... well, the PCs are evil.

Finally, they can come to an understanding, perhaps strike a deal with the owner. A bit of *quid pro quo*. The PCs can do favors for the owner in exchange for access to their lair. Of course this means there is an outsider privy to the party's machinations, a readily exploitable subplot...

Establishing a Front

Once a location is found, the PCs must establish a front for their den of iniquity. If an area already has an aura that keeps the general public at bay, the party won't have to work as diligently setting up their lair. The PCs have to decide on the type of front they wish to portray. One that shuns passers-by such as "haunted" crypts, or a legitimate business like an antiques shop.

Most likely in either situation, local organized crime comes into play, if there is any. As the DM, you represent any opposition the PCs have in establishing their lair. Don't allow an overly smooth transition for them. An evil overlord cannot become too overconfident. Have the thieves' guild challenge the party's right to move into "their territory." The PCs can handle it in one of two ways. Either they pay a "tribute" to the guild or make enough show of force that the guild must recoil.

Constructing the Lair

After entrenching the front into the local landscape, the party must secure and stock their lair. As opposed to the remote lairs already discussed, the cost is not as high due to the availability of materials. A much larger concern is the secrecy needed to complete a monumental task such as this. How is the party going to shuttle workers or their lackeys in and out of their new lair, lugging construction materials about? If the PCs have not thought of answers to these types of questions, they will have to face the local constabulary with a lot of explaining to do.

In order to build in secrecy, a great deal of time must be spent covering up the operation. The following are guidelines for a timetable for in-town construction, based on premise that the smaller the settlement the harder it would be to cover up. In a small village, the locals would be far more wary of goings on in their area.

Size of settlement	Time multiplier
Tiny (hamlet)	x5
Small (village)	x4
Medium (town)	x3
Large (city)	x2
Huge (metropolis)	x1.5

ORGANIZATIONS

Sammoth swaggered into the weathered border outpost, a smile stretched across his pockmarked face. His confidence swelled as warriors and trappers alike stepped aside, mindful of his passing. Each one to a man eyed the patch crudely sewn on to his boiled leather breastplate and regarded him with a combination of admiration and suspicion. The crossed black arrows on a crimson field told them he was of The Blood Archers. "What, or who is he here for?" They would be thinking. "And where were the others?" Sammoth liked this feeling and relished each time he could walk into a place like this one. It almost made the trials worth it... almost.

To be organized evil in a non-evil world is a difficult prospect in and of itself. Many forces are at work to keep such bands at bay. What makes an

organization evil is the fact that its purpose is to further the cause of its members to the detriment of all who would oppose them.

To construct a memorable villainous cartel, the DM must observe a few guidelines.

Do Your Research

Study notable organizations of history and fiction. Nazi Germany and secret societies are best for historical examples. The Galactic Empire in the Star Wars movies is one of many others. Look at the structure of such institutions. What gives them power are their ability to operate on a large scale? Whether you as DM decide to use a militaristic rank structure or a corporate one is up to the you. It helps to have a template before beginning.

Decide On the Hierarchy

Is an evil character going to work his way up from private to general or from mailroom to CEO? These are some of the things you have to decide upon when building your organization. Come up with the levels of hierarchy in your brotherhood.

The most common and easiest structure is a military one. You can look to the many eras and genres for the exact ranks or just make up your own terms.

Let's look to the Blood Archers, for example. They are a coterie of rangers with a decidedly cruel and secretive bent. The terms for ranks should reflect the overall theme of the organization you are going for. The lowest ranks should come off sounding less menacing than the leaders of the same group. The beginning Blood Archer is referred to as an Initiate of the Path.

After the design of the organization is to the DM's liking, the next task is the bureaucracy. How do the PCs climb the ladder if there are no rules to do so? Forming the bylaws or code of the group is one of the most important role-playing aspects of setting up a campaign with an evil organization. The PCs must find ways to take the existing rules and bend them to their ends. The table below shows a sample organizational hierarchy from "The Blood Archers" (see example organization pg 102).

PRESENT A MISSION OR OVERALL GOAL

Is your organization bent on the destruction of the world or just the control of a city? These are the things that give the members drive to do the evil that they are wont to do. In our example of the Blood Archers, the founder was a human whose parents were attacked and killed by elven rangers. Therefore, the Blood Archers are to kill elves whenever possible, and to eventually eradicate the elven race completely. It did not matter that his parents were part of an elven slave trading operation, his only thought was for revenge.

Said groups seek out prospective members, looking for similar views or ideals. The PCs need to have a reason to want to join the organization. Maybe it's for prestige, wealth, or resources, but if there is no benefit for members, why bother to sign up. After all that, the goals of the organization are the motivating force behind its people. Here are some possible objectives for your groups:

BLOOD ARCHERS HIERARCHY TABLE

Title (Brothers)	Minimum Levels	Title (Initiates)	Minimum Levels
Father Sanguine*	Blood Archer 10th/overall 20th	Initiate of the 3rd Fletching	6th
Gore Brother	Blood Archer 8th/overall 16th	Initiate of the 2nd Fletching	4th
Clot Brother	Blood Archer 5th/overall 12th	Initiate of the 1st Fletching	2nd
Blood Brother	Blood Archer 1st/overall 7th	Initiate of the Path	1st

* Only one person may hold this title at a time. Each year all Brothers vote on any eligible candidates to hold this office.

Downfall of a Kingdom or Nation

Many times a group is born out of the burning hatred of a country. Its armies may have ravaged a neighboring land. Its government could have set policies against certain people. Whatever the reason, those founders of the organization wished it brought low. All the resources of the organization go to finding new ways of opposing the offending nation. There are no such things as mercy or honor in its bylaws when dealing with their hated foe.

Destruction of an Order

Sometimes the existence and deeds of an order conflicts mightily with those of differing views. For general purposes, these include benevolent orders, such as a gathering of knights or holy priests. Those that established the evil organization, have some axe to grind, be it religious or political. They do not rest until the order of good is crushed beneath their mailed fist.

Bringing of a Particular Race to Power

Some feel that their race is persecuted to the point where they need to band together and strike back. These groups are made up of bigots whose twisted minds feel the way to bring their race to prominence is to bring down all other races. Throughout their existence, they've been told they were the "master race" and the other races are inferior.

Destruction of a Particular Race

Perhaps the organization was founded on reviling only one race. A member of the offending race somehow traumatized the leaders of this group and they now have the means for retribution. The Blood Archers are founded on this principle (see sidebar).

Conquest

The favored goal of evil overlords of all walks of life, ruling the world! This organization's directive is to acquire all they covet, daring others to stand in their way. No deep meaning with this one, just strait forward appropriation.

MIAHLYN

Born into a destitute family, Miahlyn wanted more for herself, and the life of a thief beckoned. She welcomed every challenge that came her way, succeeding where others failed. Eventually, her thieving ways brought her into conflict with the law, forcing her to move from city to city. She amassed great wealth, even teaming up with a party of adventurers now and again to plunder dungeons and tombs. Her charm entranced her partners, and she quickly relieved them of their treasure. A woman of such esteem does not go unnoticed, and soon enough the wizard Madrinor approached her. He offered her large sums of gold to find some special magical daggers. So far, he's pleased with her results.

She doesn't care what the dagger are for, just that Madrinor pays on time.

Miahlyn's main goal in life is to amass the wealth denied her and her family when she was young. She doesn't have any friends; by her surmise, anyone would betray her for some gold. She's adventured with many people, but most fell by the wayside, by their inability or her hand. She considers Madrinor a good partner though, reveling in their business relationship. After all, he pays more in gems than most small nations have in their coffers.

Miahlyn: Human Rog 5; SZ M (humanoid); HD 5d6 +5; hp 27; Init +4; Spd 30 FT; AC 17 (Dex +4, +1 *leather armor*); Atks +1 *dagger* +4 *melee* (1d6+1), or *comp shortbow* +8 *ranged* (1d6); SA *sneak attack* +3d6, *evasion*, *uncanny dodge*, *traps*; SQ *cloak of elvenkind*, *cube of sending*; SV Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +1; AL NE; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 17; Skills: *Appraise* +5, *Balance* +4, *Bluff* +8, *Climb* +3, *Diplomacy* +4, *Disable Device* +6, *Disguise* +8, *Gather Information* +6, *Hide* +8 (+18), *Listen* +7, *Move Silent* +8, *Search* +8, *Spot* +7, *Use Magic Device* +6. Feats: *Alertness*, *Dodge*, *Mobility*.

Have Reason to be Feared

Sometimes it is better to be feared than respected. There are grounds for your organization to illicit terror at the mere mention of its name or sight of its symbol. Or are there? Is it known for massacres in retaliation for defiance, or do enemies happen to disappear mysteriously? It may only be implied that your *cahal* is a despicable, immoral consortium bent on world domination. Why else haven't do-gooders shut it down yet? Perhaps there is no proof of the allegations against them.

The alternative possibility is that they are so strong, no one but the most foolish ever challenge their might. In this case, the PCs would have no problem being apart of this type of group. However, it may be challenging for you to come up with suitable obstacles for a party in such a dominant organization.

CONFRONT ENTRANTS WITH DIFFICULT TRIALS OR INITIATIONS

If a PC could just saunter up to a group and put on an armband because they can point the correct end of a sword at a target, that group would be weak indeed. Prestige is built upon exclusivity. If anyone can get in, where is the attraction to be one of the chosen few?

It is the job of a recruiter to weed out inferior applicants. Be it one or several, it's their task to see the high standards of their organization are met. They mete out demanding and sometimes fatal tests for the initiate to fulfill. Many initiations are such that failure does mean death. Now, if the PCs all died trying to join a cabal early in the campaign, it would create more problems for you than it's worth. So make sure the fear of failure is there, but you, the DM, should secretly fudge the rules for them to make it. Also, by having someone with ulterior motives give aid in completing their trials, you could have a future plot hook for a benefactor to demand recompense for his help.

Adding role-playing flavor to the initiations gives the PCs a future tale to tell if nothing else. Have their trials result in permanent mental or physical scarring. A bit of stuttering or a brand in the shape of a skull can be a bit of a reminder what they endured to ensure a place in their organization. The following are some possible trials or initiation procedures you can alter or use as is:

Hardship

The organization the PC/PCs join demands great physical endurance and teamwork from their members. The PCs are transported to an unfamiliar inhospitable location (desert, swamp, or the like) and abandoned with no equipment or mode of transportation. All members of the party must return alive to civilization to gain membership.



Murder

Each PC receives an assignment to kill someone to obtain membership. The identity of the target may be assigned or just picked at random.

Offering

The organization demands an offering for membership. This can be as simple as giving up a valuable item, or as devastating as delivering a relative or loved one for sacrifice or slavery.

Theft

In this scenario, the organization gives the PCs an assignment to steal an item. Again as with the murder option, the details are up to you. It can be a specific item from an important person, a random item from a specific place, a number of items from several locations, or any combination of the above.

Torture

Perhaps one of the most difficult initiations to adjudicate, torture is more of a heavy role-playing option. Since no physical or mental damage is actually being done to the player, the only lasting impression you can give the PC is a horrible scar or some sort of deep mental affectation, such as a tic or phobia. There is no real mechanic to enforce such role-playing quirks unless you reward the PC with extra experience points whenever the problem negatively affects him in the game, such as if a character has a nervous tic and he role-plays it during a tense scene, causing an NPC to alter his decision to aid the party.

REVEAL INTERNAL STRIFE

The one common theme with evil is a lack of moral restraint. In an organization with a common goal, there may be less internal conflict, but there are always selfish individuals. Those who need to succeed at their own machinations, regardless the price. Not everyone in a lawful evil institution is lawful.

It is best to have several minor internal squabbles, and at least one major one. Here are a few plot ideas for a campaign based on an evil organization.

Political Rival

Perhaps one of the PC's rivals sabotages their attempt to advance, taking a coveted position. This scenario can be a major plot point if the rival becomes the PC's superior, flaunting his power in their face at every opportunity. You can make it a minor plot device by placing the rival away from the PC, but reminding them how he got there.

Factional Split

Two leaders higher up in the organization have a feud that splits it into two camps. The PCs must choose sides, but which one is going to win? Perhaps the party can help turn the tide.

Abuse By a Superior

In this scenario, their superior is constantly abusing the PCs. He assigns them to the lowest of tasks, belittling them at every turn.

Uncover a Mole

The PCs discover a hero has infiltrated the organization and means to destroy it from within. The hook's importance is determined by how high the mole is and the amount of information the PCs receive about him.

Superior Incriminates the PCs

In order to avoid taking responsibility for a botched operation, the PC's direct superior blames them for the failure and hangs them out to dry as the scapegoat. Variations include the perpetrator being a rival or one of the PC's subordinates.

Any one of these suggestions can be altered to your specifications. They are general plots, needing to be fleshed out.

UNCOVER ENIGMAS

One of the best plot hooks for any role-playing game is the community mystery. Why is it that when someone takes a certain position in the organization, they turn up missing sooner or later? What's the reason nobody travels to the fellowship's northern conclave anymore?

Organizational secrets can be just side interests, or major plot points. It's best to scatter them

throughout the PCs' careers, not all at once. It is not only entertaining, but also desirable to have several disparate riddles leading to an underlying plot. The following are some mysteries for use in your campaign:

Leaders Disappear

Some time after the PCs join the organization, the leader disappears without an obvious cause or explanation. No matter what the PCs ask, there is no reason for the vanishing. Over the next few days/months/years, each person that becomes the leader turns up missing. It seems that the organization has bound a powerful and benevolent entity, but to destroy it, each of the next nine leaders must be sacrificed. However, the PCs must find out what is causing the disappearances on their own. The depth and complexity of the mystery is up to you.



A Recurring Hero

For some reason, every time the party is sent out on a mission, the same crusading paladin shows up and tries to foil their attempt. How does he know where they are going and what their mission is? He could have an informant leaking him information. One of the PCs might have a magical tracking device planted on him. There could be a whole host of possibilities.

An Outpost is Abandoned

The organization had an outpost at the edge of known civilization, but many years ago (you determine) it was abandoned. Some older members tell stories of a curse placed upon the stronghold by a priest of a god of retribution. A curse so horrible, no members that garrisoned the outpost lived more than a year past leaving it's confines. The hierarchy of the organization sends the PCs to reclaim the abandoned outposts. Does a curse remain, or is it just a cover for what really happened there?

Insanity Strikes

Each of the past three post commanders in one of the organization's safe houses in a nearby city has gone mad! The party is sent to keep an eye on the new commander as he settles in to the flow of his new position. Things become interesting as the PCs start to notice the commander acting strangely...

ORGANIZATION EXAMPLES

THE BLOOD ARCHERS

Beyond the Tuskern valley, at the foothills of the massive Galath-Ro mountain range, stands a twisted and shadowy wood — the Crimson Forest. Legends speak of great sentinel oaks that bleed when cut and devour unwary travelers. It is here that the Blood Archers reside, a brotherhood of burgeoning power. It is said through sanguineous rituals and infernal pacts, they wield the power of devils. The legends are true.

Just under two hundred years past, a human by the name Korek Baka-Re founded the warrior band within the confines of the Crimson Forest. His

reasons for choosing such a remote location to start an organization were an enigma to contemporary sages. Korek's reason was in the heart of the forest itself.

When he was a boy, Korek accompanied his parents on their travels throughout the kingdom of Tuskern. His parents were slave traders, specifically dealing in those of elven decent. Korek was raised to view the elven race as beasts of the wilderness, creatures to be kept as pets and servants. One gathering season his parents traveled with their hired press gangs to what was at that time the edge of the Tuskern wilderness. The Crimson Forest stood there, as it had for millennia, the gateway to the elven lands. It was there the ill-fated slaver band ravaged village after village, smashing the unorganized elven resistance.

A fortnight later, as Korek's parents began to turn toward Tuskern, the elves struck back. The local elven monarch, Queen Arianalasyal, ordered her rangers to obliterate the slavers and set right the abominable acts forced on her people. The elves slaughtered the slavers. Unable to bring themselves to murder a child, the rangers allowed Korek to live. They wrenched the grief-stricken child from his parent's corpses and thrust him deep into the heart of the forest, his fate in the hands of the gods.

The hatred that emanated from the boy repulsed the forest spirits. None wished to approach and comfort the seething child. It was then something more infernal took note of the darkness in Korek, a devil of immense power watched with interest. The devil, known on this plane as Rakelus, used the hate Korek had given him to open a gateway into the world. He chose the trunk of a long dead sentinel oak through which to talk to the boy. What sort of pact Korek made that day has never been revealed, but from that point on, the boy remained in the heart of the forest, growing strong and dreaming of retribution.

A decade later, reports from rangers began circulating about a rival group of woodsmen/archers raiding elven villages in the Crimson Forest. The grisly tales of slaughter and torture mobilized the

elven nation again. The Great Purge of the Crimson Forest is whispered about to this very day. Elves found themselves wiped from the wood that had once been theirs, making room for the group calling themselves The Blood Archers. They operate from that forest even now, bringing death to the elves.

The Blood Archers are a highly disciplined army of ruthless rangers armed with bows and supernatural powers. They are trained in the ways of the bow and the wilderness. The Archers are lead by a man called Father Sanguine, more of an office than an individual. The rest of the members are arranged in a military fashion with rank structure as well as uniforms. The symbol of The Blood Archers is crossed ebony arrows on a crimson field worn on a patch sewn to the typical leather armor over the heart. Their rank insignias are worn on the right sleeve of their tunic. Their army is divided into two classes, the initiates and the brothers. There are four ranks of initiates: initiates of the path, initiates of the first fletching, initiates of the second fletching, and the top rank of "enlisted" are the initiates of the third fletching. When the initiate reaches the last rank, he is ready for the trials.

The trials consist of survival games and bizarre arcane rituals culminating with the Trial of Blood. Each initiate surviving the trials must travel to the heart of the Crimson Forest to meet the true power behind Father Sanguine, the devil tree, Rakelus. It is then the moniker of the Blood Archers is understood. All the top initiates exchange their blood for the infernal ichor of Rakelus. It is this foul liquid that gives the brothers their powers. From that time forward, those beings are called blood brothers. The higher ranks are the clot brothers and then the gore brothers. On the anniversary of Korek's empowerment (a date only the brothers know for certain), all brothers vote on the office of Father Sanguine.

The goals of the Blood Archers are known throughout the known world, the extermination of the elven race. To others, they are civil if not polite, aiding the passage of wilderness travelers. Woe to those that display the fey traits of the elven race. Their time grows short.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE SHROUD

The Brotherhood of the Shroud is a secret society among secret societies. It is said that an order of political militarists founded the order long ago on the remote cliffs of the northern coast. This order maintained a strict dogma of control, might and superiority, and believed its members to be the rightful ruling class — not only of the kingdom, but also of the world. It is believed that the Brotherhood of the Shroud is the modern extension of that ancient order. Only the most influential and powerful in the realm even know of their existence, and they are very wary of the order's power and influence.

This Brotherhood is comprised entirely of magic-using agents — wizards, priests and sorcerers skilled in the arts of intrigue, secrecy and death. The order is broken up into three distinct branches: politics, investigation, and assassination. Each of these branches is run independently of the other, with only the leaders holding information about the entire network.

The political branch is made up primarily of court wizards and high-ranking priests. These members are used to sway rulers and establish laws that will benefit the order. They belong to a wide variety of political parties and religions, weaving a web of control behind the entire framework of society.

The investigative branch primarily investigates crimes committed against the order, though at times they work for others. If things are slow or a favor is earned, the investigators can be sent to aid a friend in need. Of the three, the investigative branch uses outside agents the most. An investigator may act as mentor or benefactor of an outside group that does not know of the order's existence.

The assassination branch is the most secret of the branches; anyone who opposes the order should fear the far-reaching power of its assassins. Rumored to be cold, cruel and merciless in their pursuits, it is very rare for one of these assassins to miss his mark.

Acting in unison, the Brotherhood of the Shroud has inserted itself into society at every level. The

men and women of the order are loyal, secretive and subservient, making the Brotherhood a threat to every governing body and ruler in the kingdom.

Morin Demurst, Sorcerer/Assassin

Morin Demurst was the son of a wealthy merchant and a noblewoman of limited magical ability. Unlike the other children his age, Morin spent his time in solitude. He was a very serious boy, pale from lack of sunshine and quiet from lack of companionship. He shunned his parent's affection and encouragement to interact with others, eventually fleeing home altogether for a life on the streets. Morin lived alone, in a small room, above a brothel. He worked cleaning the premise during the day and spent his nights developing the sorcerous talents he inherited from his mother.

It wasn't long before Morin met a wizard named Kulad Zetris, a regular at the brothel. Kulad was quick to recognize the changes in Morin. He convinced the young man to leave the brothel and enter his employ. Morin worked in the wizard's lab for many years, doing whatever tasks needed to be done. These tasks changed over time, from the mundane, into something more sinister.

Eventually, Morin became Kulad's silent, unassuming enforcer. The quiet boy had become a silent man capable of deeds that would frighten the bravest of adventurers. He enacted his master's wishes with cold, calculated efficiency and became an assassin of exceptional ability.

Kulad Zetris, Political Wizard

Kulad Zetris has always lived a life of luxury. Born to a noble family, he lived a pampered childhood at a luxurious family estate learning the secrets of court life. His socialite parents provided him with the best tutors — magic, alchemy, astrology, history, politics — and he learned from them all. His parents enjoyed his quick wit and ability to recite passages from popular texts. When they traveled to court, they took their young prodigy with them.

Kulad was adapted to court life very quickly. His charisma made it easy for him to fit into any of the social circles, and his burgeoning talent for

SECRET SOCIETIES

wizardly magic awed the court. He was popular, wealthy and ambitious — a perfect candidate for the Brotherhood of the Shroud.

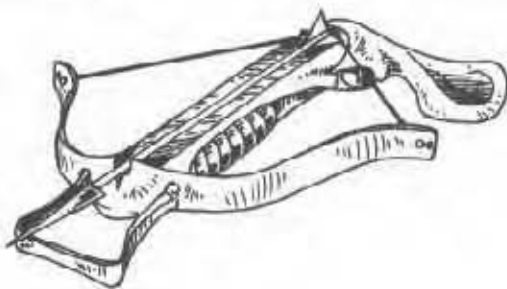
Kulad established a laboratory within the noble quarter soon after joining the Brotherhood. He provided potions for the nobility, accumulating favors and wealth with his talent. He naturally moved into the political arena, bargaining his favors for power and his wealth for influence, establishing a firm hold in the court for his newfound society.

Justic Warred, Cleric Investigator

Justic was an abandoned infant on the doorstep of a remote monastery, and the there monks raised him as one of their own, teaching him of their faith and their purpose. He was a quick study and inquisitive from an early age, he devoured texts and scroll as soon as he was able to read.

Justic left the monastery when he was fifteen, seeking knowledge and truth abroad. His travels took him to many strange locales and paired him with several lively adventuring groups. He delved into tombs, crossed dangerous peaks, wandered vast plains — always with a single purpose - to learn.

After many years of travel and study Justic returned to the monastery that was his home so many years before. He returned to find the monks slain, the library burned, and the buildings fallen to their foundations. Justic was outraged, and his outrage fueled a determination to discover what had happened and who was responsible for the destruction. His years of study and research served him well — through clever investigation he tracked down the cultists responsible for the atrocity and brought them to justice. So impressive were his skills, that shortly thereafter, he was inducted into an elite society — the Brotherhood of the Shroud.



"Let me look at that scroll!" Sammoth spat. Grabbing the open document from one of his quiver mates, scanned the brief passage. The parchment was written in a language unknown to the tracker. The script crisp and precisely lettered, penned by a dexterous hand. Whatever the content, there was no mistaking the symbol emblazoned at the bottom... the quill in silhouette. The Shadow Quills! "Damn," he hissed under his breath. Sammoth did not know if or to what extent the Blood Archers were involved with that infamous cabal, but that was none of his concern now. He would turn the scroll over to his superiors for their consideration.

Whereas organizations are bound by bureaucracy, secret societies are usually made of a few powerful individuals loyal to one another. A secret society has no buildings, no meeting halls, and no uniforms. To be a member of one is to have power, but not be able to flaunt it.

QUALIFYING FOR MEMBERSHIP

A secret society needs little structure. You need to form the core of the society based on the role it will play in your campaign. If your desire is for a city-based adventure, community leaders and notable politicians, such as the mayor, councilmembers, or guild masters, should hold the top positions. For a wilderness campaign, the core could be made of landowning nobles, well-known trackers, or even a powerful intelligent monster.

The society itself should be made of some of the most influential individuals in the area. Most likely, at lower levels, your PCs won't even be able to attract the attention of these principals, let alone join their cabal. However, it's your task to find a reason to get them involved. You can have one of the core members hire them anonymously for a mission supporting the society. If the party succeeds, the society takes notice and continues to call on their services. Failure may mean enmity or apathy. For your purpose, the former is more desirable.

At some later time in the PCs' career, approach one or all of them for membership in the society.

BACKSTABBING AND TREACHERY BETWEEN PLAYERS

Keeping a party of evil characters together is a difficult task. Evil, by its very nature, is selfish and conniving. Any group of evil characters can expect that at some point in the campaign, they'll have reason to turn against one another. Unless you decide to impose arbitrary reasons on why characters can't engage in intra-party treachery, you need to account for this possibility in your campaign.

At the outset, make it clear to the players that their characters can and will screw each other over. The gnawing suspicion that someone in the party can turn against you can add a lot of tension and fun to a game, but if some of the players aren't clear that it's a possibility, treachery can lead to hurt feelings that spill outside of the game. RPGs are largely founded on teamwork, and when a campaign assumes that this isn't the case, make sure the players are well aware of it before the game begins.

DM notes are incredibly important when the PCs plot against one another. It can be cumbersome, though, to spend an hour passing notes back and forth in silence. Instead, it may be useful to spend a few moments with each player before the session begins going over any contingencies and plans the character may have for dealing with the rest of the party. This method also helps cover a character's tracks and helps keep the tension high. For example, Sir Tibilar may decide to hire some orc thugs to give Arcane Allure a beating. If Tibilar's player passes a note to the DM, and then a minute later the orcs show up to pummel Allure, the players' sense of game and real world separation may be strained. Alliar's player might suspect Tibilar simply because he was the last one to pass a note to the DM. On the other hand, if Tibilar's player makes his plans before the session even begins you can integrate the attack into the scenario as just another encounter. Alliar's player has no idea where the attack came from, and might not even suspect that a fellow party member was behind it. In an evil game, the characters probably have a lot of secrets to keep from one another.

Setting aside some time before the game to deal with those issues helps keep the game moving and provides the players with a lot more depth and options in managing their schemes. Games played on-line do not suffer from this condition, and DMs running games where the players are isolated from one another can take the most advantage of this sort of evil campaign.

Character attrition often wears down even a normal campaign. No one likes to create a new character from scratch, and most people grow attached to their old characters and don't enjoy losing them. In a campaign with evil characters, this can be even more of a problem. With the characters plotting against one another and often facing an entire society that wants them brought to justice, character death or imprisonment is much more common. To get around this problem, you can allow each player to run a group of evil characters or an evil organization. One player may control the thieves' guild, while another may run a cabal of necromancers. Each player creates a roster of characters to use in the campaign and picks one before each adventure, though you may want to put some restrictions on this choice to keep everyone at about the same level. In this game, treachery runs rampant, but the players have an entire organization at their disposal. Thus, losing one character isn't a big deal, as long as the organization continues to strive towards its goals.

The characters could also work for a powerful evil figure who orders them to keep each other alive. This setup allows the characters to plot against one another for the favor of their patron and to jockey for treasure, magic items, and prestige, but it keeps the players from directly eliminating each other's characters. Another way to enforce at least an acceptable level of peace within the party is to create a campaign where the characters need each other to achieve their goals. They may hate each other, but each is well aware that without the group as a whole, the goal they pursue is impossible to reach.

If you have one join, make sure the secrecy is not compromised. The rest of the PCs don't have to know what's going on. However, by cluing them in on their fellow's good fortune, the resulting jealousy should be wonderful for intra-party tension.

A better way of bringing in new members is to appeal to their own ambition. Have a PC discover the identity of a cabal leader, unbeknownst to the NPC. If the PC has any designs on the position, he initiates the subsequent subversion.

You must make sure the character wanted for membership has power or influence in an area not covered by current associates. A secret society needs no duplication of effort. The table below shows the structure of a sample secret society called "The Shadow Quills".

GOALS

More often than not, there are few long-term goals of a secret society, except to further the ambitions of its members. In an overt organization, the success of the ideal outweighs the value of the individual, whereas in a secret society, the opposite holds true.

In this type of campaign, the society is used as a tool for the PC member. The hooks don't have to be related directly to their cabal. Use rather nebulous goals such as "promote the downfall of the followers of the sun god," then literally toss adventure hooks across the party's path.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE SOCIETY

One major problem with communication is that others can intercept or overhear the message in some way. A secret society has to communicate to survive, but how can they maintain their secrecy?

Create Their Own Language

Many societies have used a secret language to mask conversations and correspondences from unwanted eyes and ears, the most recognizable being the thieves' cant. Usually based on the local common tongue, the cant takes words and perverts them into pidgin versions of themselves. If someone listens long enough, they'll begin to figure it out.

One of the first items on the agenda for a new member of a secret society is to learn the language. This is not an enviable task since most secret languages are much more complex than traditional ones. Also, the structure and syntax purposely varies as you converse. Finally, the language is passed on verbally, so there is no source to copy from except the mind of a fluent speaker.

Arrange Covert Meeting Areas

Even if you have your society develop a secret language, it's better not to be observed or magically scried in the first place. The group would have set aside safehouses, places secure from magical scrying as well as direct observation. Each member has the location of one of these safe houses with which to set up meetings with other members. Each new member is must set up their own in case the older ones are compromised.

THE SHADOW QUILLS HIERARCHY TABLE

Inner Circle (always 3 wizards of at least 18th level)

Resnet Tenebrous	wizard 20th
Venath	wizard 19th
Gloom (shadow dragon)	wizard 20th (human guise)

Sample Cell (Resnet's) (always 3 members, reporting to one of the Inner Circle)

Lord Incalagoth	Fighter 8th/Blackguard 6th
Fenton Harcourt	Thief 10th/Assassin 8th
Bishop Malacles	Cleric 15th

Create Magical Communication Devices

Naturally, a powerful group that commands great forces and wields much influence has access to items of wondrous mysticism. They could have had items constructed addressing the communication problem. It is wise to enchant a common enough item such as a piece of jewelry, writing instrument, or even a mirror or lamp. A proficient enough spell-caster could link them so that, with the proper command, the item reaches a specific member, reducing the need for face-to-face communication. But just think what would happen if someone outside the society stumbled upon such an item...

EVIL ADVENTURE HOOKS

Below are a few adventure hooks to help jump-start you. Use them in any manner you wish, in part or in whole, whatever suits your needs. Some of them are specifically suited for high- or low-level gaming. Use them as short plot twists to your adventures, but rarely as the driving goal of the campaign.

LOW-LEVEL EVIL

Blackmail

The mayor has a notion that, if he creates a law that outlaws weapons in the city, he reduces violent crime. This, needless to say, impinges on the lives of the PCs. If the characters can find or fabricate some dirt on the mayor, they can keep him from enacting the new law. However, the mayor has been a politician for years, and is not about to cave in from a simple threat.

Mayor Galstaff: Human Ari 2; SZ M (humanoid); HD 2d8; hp 13; Init +0; Spd 30ft; AC 10; Atks Unarmed +1 Melee (subdual, 1d3); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 16; AL LG; Skills: Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +7, Innuendo +7, Knowledge (politics) +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +4. Feats: Great Fortitude, Iron Will.

The Speaker

The characters learn that an important orator has learned of their plot to blackmail the mayor of Gorias Tyre, the capital city of the kingdom. The speaker and sage, Loras Tobin, plans to reveal their secret to the mayor and city officials during an upcoming festival. They must cover up their involvement in the blackmail scheme or silence him.

Loras Tobin: Human Exp 4/Wiz4; SZ M (humanoid); HD 4d6 + 4d4; hp 28; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30; AC 14 (+4 Dex) Atks Dagger +5 melee (1d4); SA Spells; SQ *wand of illusion* (10 charges); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12; AL LE; Skills: Alchemy +9, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +6, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (arcane) +11, Knowledge (ancient history) +6, Profession (sage) +11, Ride +2, Search +5, Spellcraft +11, Spot +5. Feats: Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll; Spells: (4) 0 level: *arcane mark, daze, flare, light* (3) 1st level: *alarm, comprehend languages, unseen servant* (2) 2nd level: *glitterdust, web*.

Alicorn

The characters are searching for a secluded grove hidden deep within the mysterious Myridor Forest. This grove is the home of an ancient unicorn, Alustria. They have heard rumors that the alicorn of this mythical beast — the creature's horn — is the key ingredient for a potion of immortality. They must discover the unicorn's grove, capture it, and remove the horn while the beast still lives. If they do so, they capture the magical essence of the creature. They must then bring the captured alicorn to an alchemist willing to create the potion of immortality.

Alustria the Unicorn: SZ L (Magical Beast); HD 4d10+20; hp 42; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 60ft; AC 18 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 natural); Atks Horn +11 melee (+3 magic weapon) (1d8+8) or 2 hooves +3 melee (1d4+2); Face/Reach 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft. (10 ft with Horn); SQ *Magic circle against evil*, spell-like

abilities, immunities; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 21, Int 10, Wis 21, Cha 24; AL CG; Skills: Animal Empathy +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +9, Spot +11, Wilderness Lore +9. Feats: Alertness. Spell-like abilities: *teleport without error* (within it's home area) 1/day, *cure light wounds* 5th level 3/day, *cure moderate wounds* 5th level 1/day (with horn), *neutralize poison* 8th level 1/day (with horn).

The Stone Ring

The characters are on a mission to stop Merun Holt, the ranger of Blackmarch from banishing the corruption that grips his domain. He intends to cleanse the Stone Ring, an ancient, mystical site located deep within the Blackmarch by escorting a powerful cleric to the site. The Orc Chieftain, Torusk Mal has hinted that should Merun succeed he will raise his army to drive down into the human lands and destroy everything in his wake.

Torusk Mal: Half Orc Ftr 3; SZ M (humanoid); HD 3d10+3; hp 29; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft; AC 16 (+1 Dex, *Chainmail Armor* +5); Atks Longsword +3 melee (1d8+3); SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 13; AL LE; Skills: Intimidate +7, Jump +1, Profession (chieftain) +5, Spot +1. Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Merun Holt: Human Rgr 8; SZ M (humanoid); HD 8d10+24; hp 74; Init +6; Spd 30ft; AC 18 (+2 Dex, +3 *studded leather armor*); Atks +1 *flaming longsword* +10/+5 melee (1d8+4 +1d6 fire), +1 *short sword* +10/+5 melee (1d6+1); SA favored enemies (aberrations +1, beasts +2); SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 16; AL CG; Skills: Animal Empathy +8, Concentration +9, Handle Animal +6, Heal +5, Hide +8, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +8, Knowledge (Nature) +6, Listen +6, Languages (Elven, Orc), Move Silently +7, Ride +6, Search +7, Spot +6, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +4. Feats: Ambidexterity, Cleave,

Improved Initiative, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Track, Two Weapon Fighting.

Ellis: Human Dru 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d8+27; hp 77; Init +7; Spd 30ft; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +1 *hide armor*, *ring of protection* +1); Atks +1 *sickle* +10/+5 melee (1d6+1), sling +9/+4 ranged (1d4); SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 12; AL NG; SQ Woodland stride, trackless step, +2 vs. fey lures, wild shape (wolf) 3x a day, large shape (large wolf), venom immunity, spells; Skills: Animal Empathy +12, Concentration +7, Craft (weaving) +3, Diplomacy +4, Handle Animal +8, Heal +6, Intuit Direction +7, Knowledge (nature) +10, Spellcraft +7, Search +3, Spot +3, Swim +4, Wilderness Lore +10. Feats: Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse: Sickle, Weapon Focus (sickle).

Spells: (6) 0 level: *create water*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *know direction*, *purify food and drink*, *resistance*; (5) 1st level: *calm animals*, *entangle*, *faerie fire*, *pass without trace*, *shillelagh*; (5) 2nd level: *animal messenger*, *barkskin*, *chill metal*, *summon nature's ally II*, *warp wood*; (4) 3rd level: *call lightning*, *cure moderate wounds*, *meld into stone*, *summon nature's ally III*; (3) 4th level: *cure serious wounds*, *flame strike*, *spike stones*; (1) 5th level: *hallow*.



Courier

Spies have uncovered secret Damarian invasion plans. The Damarian army intends to attack the city of Bremstad in ten days time. The characters have helped Lord Borssek, the head of the Damarian army, in several of his previous campaigns and agree to do so again. Now, they must track down the courier carrying the plans to Bremstad and eliminate him.

Lord Borssek: Human Ftr 10; SZ M (humanoid); HD 10d8+30; hp 94; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+1 *full plate*, +2 *large metal shield*, *ring of protection* +2); Atks +1 *greatsword* +15/+10 melee (2d6+6); SQ 3 *potions of cure moderate wounds*; SV Fort +12, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14; AL LE; Skills: Bully +6, Climb +6, Handle Animal +5, Jump +5, Ride +9; Swim +2. Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride by Attack, Trample, Tyrant, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Jeggun the Courier: Half Orc Rog 5; SZ M (humanoid); HD 5d6; 22 hp; Init +3; Spd 30; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +1 *studded leather armor*); Atks Quarterstaff +3 melee (1d6+1); Face/Reach 5 ft by 5 ft by 5 ft; SA Sneak attack +2d6; SD Evasion, uncanny dodge; SQ *Darkvision* 60 ft.; SQ *cloak of resistance* +2, *potion of endurance*; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL NG. Skills: Balance +3, Climb +5, Disable Device +5, Hide +8, Intuit Direction +5, Listen +2, Move Silently +7, Profession: Guide +3, Search +6, Spot +6, Tumble +6. Feats: Alertness, Run.

MID-LEVEL EVIL**Guild Trouble**

The local thieves' guild double-crossed the party, and now it's time for revenge. The guild master, Falconer Tibbs, acquired the legendary Mask of Shadows, a precious magic relic. The slighted party considers the mask ample payment for their trou-

bles. It is said that the mask allows the wearer to move through shadows undetected by sight or sound. The characters must sneak into the guild master's underground lair and steal this precious possession. Falconer Tibbs no doubt keeps the mask well hidden and heavily protected.

Falconer Tibbs: Human Rog 12; SZ M (humanoid); HD 12d6+12; 62 hp; Init +4; Spd 30; AC 14 (+4 Dex); Atks: 2 *daggers* +7/+7/+2/+2 (1d4); SA sneak attack +5d6, evasion, uncanny dodge, slippery mind; SV Fort +6, Ref +8, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL NE; Skills: Appraise +5, Balance +9, Bluff +7, Climb +9, Disable Device +9, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Escape Artist +11, Forgery +9, Gather Information +5, Hide +5, Innuendo +5, Intimidate +5, Intuit Direction +5, Jump +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +12, Open Locks +12, Pick Pocket +11, Read Lips +5, Search +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5; Use Magic Device +5, Rope Use +9. Feats: Ambidexterity, Dodge, Mobility, Great Fortitude, Two-weapon fighting, Quick Draw.

Mask of Shadows

Caster Level 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *improved invisibility*; *Market Price:* 52,000 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

Description: A finely crafted mask of rich black velvet, the Mask of Shadows resembles an executioner's hood. Supple and soft to the touch, it has fine silvery stitching along the edges.

Powers: While worn, the wearer is rendered invisible, as per the improved invisibility spell.

Framed!

The characters run into trouble with the local church — they're accused of stealing an important and sacred, large stone idol. The religious item has oracular abilities that allow members of the clergy to communicate with their god.

The party was caught attempting to steal the idol by a low-level acolyte. The young man was killed while sounding the alarm. The high priest of the

order plans on reporting the characters involvement to the local constabulary. He must be stopped. In order to steer attention away from their own evil scheme, the party must frame the high priest for a murder he didn't commit.

High Priest Alendril: Elf Clr 13; SZ M (humanoid); HD 13d8-13; 55 hp; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, *amulet of natural armor*+2, *ring of protection* +2) Atks +1 *heavy mace* +11/+6 melee (1d8+2); SA Spells (domains: good and protection), *wand of searing light* - 6th level, *peripart of wisdom* +2; SQ low light vision, immune to sleep, +2 racial bonus to save vs. enchantment; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +12; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 9, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 15; AL CG; Skills: Concentration +8, Diplomacy +12, Heal +8, Knowledge (Religion) +12, Listen +4, Spellcraft +8, Spot +4. Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (heavy mace); Spells: (6) 0 level: *create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *virtue* (7+1) 1st level: *bles*, *bles water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *protection from evil*, *sanctuary*, *shield of faith*; (6+1) 2nd level: *aid*, *consecrate*, *cure moderate wounds*, *hold person*, *shield other*, *silence*, *zone of truth*; (5+1) 3rd level: *cure serious wounds*, *daylight*, *dispel magic*, *magic circle against evil*, *magic vestment*, *protection from elements*; (7+1) 4th level: *cure critical wounds*, *holy smite*, *imbue with spell ability*, *lesser planar ally*, *restoration*, *tongues*; (5+1) 5th level: *dispel evil*, *hallow*, *healing circle*, *spell resistance*, *raise dead*; (2+1) 6th level: *blade barrier*, *geas/quest*, *heal*; (1+1) 7th level: *holy word*, *repulsion*.

Speak with the Dead

The local church of Chulor has an elaborate torque made of gold and jewels. The church is quite proud to have the relic; it allows them to speak with the dead. The characters have a buyer who will pay a tidy sum for the item. The local thieves guild also has interest in the item, for similar reasons. The party must steal the item before the guild does or they lose their sale. If they think of it, they could frame a local guild member for the deed.

Ulru's Torque

Caster Level 13th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *speak with dead*, *limited wish*; *Market Price:* 42,000 gp; *Weight:* 3 lbs.

Description: This golden torque was crafted for the Temple of Ulru nearly five hundred years ago. Its simple golden hoop fits snugly around the neck, while three delicate chains dangle on the shoulders and chest. Each chain has a sparkling gem attached at its base — a diamond, ruby and emerald respectively.

Powers: The torque grants its wearer the ability to *speak with the dead*. The wearer may ask twenty questions before allowing the soul to return to its final resting place. If the target of the spell is of a different alignment than the wearer, it may make a Will save (DC 13) to resist the powers of the torque.



The Bridge

The Zanez River is quite treacherous to cross during the rainy season. There are only three bridges that provide adequate passage during these months, and each is approximately 300 miles away from the next. One of these bridges is near the city of Genkur. An invading army recently attacked Genkur and the city is in desperate need of medical supplies. The characters will receive a handsome reward if they destroy the bridge to stop the medical supplies from reaching the besieged city. There is only one catch — a Stone Golem, created by a Genkur wizard, protects the bridge.

Stone Golem: SZ L (construct); HD 14d10, hp 96; Init -1; Spd 20 (can't run); AC 26 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +18 natural); Atks 2 slams +18 melee (2d10+9); Face/Reach: 5 ft by 5 ft by 10 ft; SA Slow (free action once every 2 rnds) Will save (DC 13); SQ construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 30/+2; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1; AL N.



HIGH-LEVEL EVIL

The Banner of Kul Mak

The wizard Valakis is well-known for his contributions to the community. During the War of Sorrow, he was a pivotal tactician and trainer. He was instrumental in the final battle, and brought the war to a close with a strong and complete victory. There is a rumor, dating back to the final battle, that Valakis led a troupe of seasoned adventures into the enemies stronghold to steal a relic of great power — the Banner of Kul Mar. This relic, it is said, stymied the enemies' hatred and drive to fight, reducing them to simpering fools.

The characters learn that Valakis hid the relic within his tower. Perhaps the enemy would like to have their relic back — for a fair price of course.

Valakis: Human Wiz 14; SZ M (humanoid); HD 14d4; hp 44; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+3 Dex, *cloak of protection* +2) Atks +2 *dagger* +9/+4 melee (1d4+2); SA Spells, familiar; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 10; AL CN; Skills: Alchemy +13, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +8, Craft (brewing) +9, Knowledge (politics) +14, Knowledge (history)+19, Scry +19, Spellcraft +19. Feats: Brew Potion, Create Arms and Armor, Create Rod, Create Staff, Create Wand, Create Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell. Spells: (4) 0 level: *detect magic*,

light, mage hand, read magic; (4) 1st level: *mage armor, magic missile, color spray, identify, charm person*; (4) 2nd level: *melf's acid arrow, flaming sphere, mirror image, cat's grace, hypnotic pattern*; (4) 3rd level: *fireball, haste, hold person, slow, vampiric touch*; (4) 4th level: *dimension door, fire shield, ice storm, polymorph other, stonkskin*; (4) 5th level: *cloudkill, cone of cold, teleport*; (3) 6th level: *acid fog, chain lightning*; (2) 7th level: *Bigby's grasping hand, reverse gravity*.

The Banner of Kul Mar (Artifact)

Caster Level 17th; Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *symbol of fear, wish or miracle*; *Weight:* 20 lbs.

Description: An unknown artisan crafted this magnificent black banner from the finest silks, and used golden thread to weave the flowing runes and ancient characters that form the delicate border. Painted in the center of a black field is a terrifying, bloodied eye.

Powers: When held aloft at the head of an attacking army, the Banner of Kul Mar strikes fear into the hearts of the opposing army. All enemy soldiers viewing the banner must make a Will save (DC 22) or suffer the following penalties as long as the banner is held aloft: -2 morale penalty on saving throws and 50% chance of dropping what they are holding.

The King's Tourney

General Bleghan, Lord of the March, wears many medals, each signifying victory in battle. His record is well-known and his deeds unchallenged. He began his career as a simple mercenary, and over the years grew into a powerful military commander. With peace settling over the land Blehan turns his attention from war toward rounding up criminals of the crown. The characters are among those he seeks to bring to justice.

The king's tourney is coming soon. The characters could slip into his tent and assassinate him or send a competent assassin in instead. Perhaps others on his list would pay or help to see that the deed is done. If they are devious enough, they might be paid for a deed they were already going to perform.

General Bleghan: Human Ftr 14; SZ M (humanoid); HD 14d10+42; 136 hp; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 27 (+1 Dex, +2 field plate mail, +3 large metal shield, ring of protection +1, amulet of nat arm +2); Atks +2 longsword +20/+14/+9 melee (1d8+7), mighty composite longbow +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d6+3); SQ boots of speed, horn of blasting; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16; AL LE; Skills: Climb +7, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +8, Jump +4, Knowledge (warfare) +8, Ride +10; Swim +5. Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Leadership, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Ride by Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Kidnapping

Finding a local cleric to perform *raise dead* on one of your fallen party members isn't easy when you are a known criminal, or when he detects your evil intentions. The characters need to bring a comrade back to life. The local church won't help you, so your only recourse is to kidnap a cleric. Getting into the church might not be easy, though, but even if you get away, coercing a man of the cloth to commit such a vile act will be difficult.

Should the PCs be successful, they may ransom him back to his order, if they think of it.

Father Morigan: Human Clr 10; SZ M (humanoid); HD 10d8; 49 hp; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex) Atks Cudgel +7/+2 melee (1d6+1); SQ Spells (domains: Good and Healing); SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 16; AL LG; Skills: Concentration +9, Diplomacy +11, Heal +10, Knowledge (Religion) +10, Listen +6, Search +4, Spellcraft +6, Spot +4. Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (cudgel). Spells: (6) 0 level: *create water, detect magic, guidance, light, mending, purify food and drink*; (4+1) 1st level: *bless, cure light wounds, divine favor,*

protection from evil, shield of faith; (4+1) 2nd level: *aid, bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, lesser restoration, make whole*; (3+1) 3rd level: *continual flame, cure serious wounds, create food and drink, magic circle against evil*; (3+1) 4th level: *cure critical wounds, holy smite, neutralize poison, sending*; (2+1) 5th level: *atonement, healing circle, raise dead.*

ANY LEVEL EVIL

Flames of Progress

In the large city of Drysdan, a man who owns land is a rich man. It is a bustling city, central to many others, making it a popular resting spot for road-weary travelers. Drysdan rests on the banks of a large river, and the waterfront property is home to many lucrative merchant houses. The characters are offered a tidy sum by a powerful merchant prince from a nearby city to drive these merchants from the waterfront district. The plan is to set the docks on fire, driving merchants from their shops. The merchant prince then attempts to negotiate a lower buying price on the ruined district, and establish a hold on Drysdan business.

Shrine

The characters decide to build a shrine in order to honor their dark deity/demon. Their deity is vain and requires elaborate decorations, furnishings, and offerings to warrant his attention. Since most of the citizenry do not understand or condone the character's choice of religious worship, the PCs must create their shrine in a secret location. The characters find a suitable building from a local merchant who has yet to agree to sell the property.

Raid

A rival merchant caravan has encroached on your territory long enough. The characters decide to raid Sumner's caravan, destroy his wares, and drive him out of business. The party plans to strike at Sumner and his group when they return from a very successful venture in a nearby city. Should Sumner survive, he is financially ruined and his reputation destroyed; powerful motivation for a man to seek vengeance.

Oasis

All merchant caravans know of Sanctum, a large oasis halfway across the Midulun Desert. It is the primary resting place for weary travelers and vital to the current trade route across the desert. The party has discovered an alternate route, with a previously undiscovered oasis. If the party destroys Sanctum, they control desert trade. They must find a way to poison the water supply and choke out the competition.

Nadira's Speckled Lotus Petals

During their travels, the characters pass through the small town of Aldersten — a dark little village of questionable reputation. They heard a rumor about the local witch-woman, a creature called Nadira. It was said that the woman is a worshipper of Slore Tor, the Lord of Anguish — an ancient power all but forgotten in modern times. It is well known in certain circles that the worshippers of Slore Tor know the secret to poisons. One of them causes an incredibly painful death. If the characters contact Nadira she may prove to be a powerful ally, and a source for this potent poison — speckled lotus petals. Because of her evil tendencies, Nadira will no doubt expect something in return from the PCs. Her Neutral Evil tendencies make it difficult to determine just what she might want, when, and how often.

Nadira the Night Hag: SZ M (outsider); HD 8d8+8; 50 hp; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 natural); Atks Bite +12 melee (2d6+6 and disease — Demon Fever Fort save DC 18); SQ Immunities, SR 25, damage reduction 20/+3, spell-like abilities (*detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law, magic, magic missile,*

polymorph self, ray of enfeeblement, sleep at will, dream haunting); SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 12; AL NE; Skills: Bluff +11, Concentration +12, Intimidate +11, Listen +14, Ride +11, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +13, Spot +14. Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting, Mounted Combat.



Reaver

Black Sedron is a great warrior who fought many battles in the name of the character's deity. Captured while battling the Knights of Gracious Morning, the knights hold Black Sedron prisoner in their well-protected tower, Andur Keep, as is Black Sedron's unholy greatsword, Reaver. It is a powerful, evil relic of the PCs' faith. This is a long-term adventure seed that should culminate a long relationship with Black Sedron. Should the PCs be inclined, they may wish to rescue Sedron when they siege the castle to retrieve his blade.

Black Sedron: Human Ftr 7/Blk Grd 6; SZ M (humanoid); HD 7d10+21 + 6d10+18; hp 137; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +8 Plate Mail); Atks +3 *greatsword* +13/+8 melee (2d6+8); SA smite good, sneak attack +1d6, aura of despair, command undead, *detect good*, fiendish servant, poison use, dark blessing; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14; AL LE; Skills: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (warfare) +6, Knowledge (Religion) +4, Ride +8. Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Toughness; Spells: (1) 1st level: *cause fear*; (1) 2nd level: *death knell*; (1) 3rd level: *contagion*.

Olinyx - Fiendish War Horse: SZ L (fiendish animal); HD 8d8+12; hp 56; Init +1; Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural); Atks 2 hooves +6 melee (1d6+5), bite +1 melee (1d4+5); Face/Reach: 5 ft by 10ft by 5 ft; SQ; scent, improved evasion, share spells, share saving throws, empathic link, speak with blackguard; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 13, Cha 6; AL LE; Skills: Listen +7, Spot+7.

Reaver, +3 unholy greatsword of wounding

Caster Level 10th; Prerequisites: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Mordenkainen's sword, unholy blight* (creator must be evil); *Market Price:* 55,050 gp; *Weight:* 15 lbs.

The evil clergy crafted the exceptionally evil and powerful weapon, *Reaver*, specifically for Black Sedron. It is rumored that its blackened blade had hellfire at its forge and blood in its trough. It is feared nearly as much as the man it was created for.

Haunting

The characters arrange to take over a secluded keep in the northlands. The keep is a perfect location for the lair — secluded, easily defensible, and few know of its true location. There is one small catch — it belongs to some else. Lord Baxter of Harren, a bandit lord, claims the keep as his own. He struck a bargain with the keep's ghostly inhabitants, providing them with fresh victims in exchange for their protection. If the PCs wish to take this keep, they must drive Baxter and his bandits out, afterwards destroying its ghostly inhabitants.

Lord Baxter of Harren: Human; Ftr 2; SZ M (humanoid); HD 2d10+20; hp 12; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, +3 Studded Leather, +1 Small Steel Shield); Atks Battleaxe +5 melee (1d8+2); SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 15; AL CG. Skills: Intimidate +7, Search +4, Spot +4. Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (battleaxe).

NEW MONSTERS

PRISMATIC ARCHON

Small Outsider (Good, Lawful)

Hit Dice: 4d8 (18 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, Improved Initiative)

Speed: Fly 60 ft (perfect)

Armor Class: 17 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural)

Attacks: Prismatic burst +5 ranged touch

Damage: See below

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

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+1, celestial qualities

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 1, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 8, Cha 11

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +5

Feats: Improved Initiative

Climate/terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary, pair, or squad (4-7)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful good

Advancement: 4-7 HD (Medium)

Prismatic archons appear as small shimmering balls of light ranging from bright red to glowing violet. Easily confused with Will-o'-Wisps, they are in fact creatures of good and law. Prismatic archons often come to this plane as messengers or to help creatures on noble quests. Their bodies are gaseous globes, with little heft or weight. Each prismatic archon has a musical voice attuned to its color (example: all green prismatic archons sound the same, all red prismatic archons sound the same, like different notes), the human ear cannot tell the difference, but other celestials can.

Combat

Each prismatic archon has a prismatic burst, relative to its color:

Red: 4d8 fire damage (Reflex half)

Orange: 4d8 acid damage (Reflex half)

Yellow: 4d8 electrical damage (Reflex half)

Green: Poison (unconscious 1-6 hours, Fortitude partial, take 2d8 stun damage)

Blue: 2d4 temporary Dex loss (Fortitude partial, 1 point loss, when reach 0 Dex, turned to stone)

Indigo: Insane 1-6 hours, as insanity spell (will negates)

Violet: Teleported 1d10 x 100 feet in a random direction (Reflex negates) 1d8 for direction. If the victim would appear in an object, they are shifted to appear next to the object, and take 4d8 pts damage, no saving throw allowed.

Spell like abilities: At will- *aid, detect evil, true seeing.*

Celestial Qualities: Aura of menace (save DC 13), magic circle against evil, petrification, and electricity immunity, teleport, tongues, +4 save verses poison.

SPRING WOLF

Large Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 5d10 +10 (35 hp)

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 50 ft

Armor Class: 17 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural)

Attacks: Bite +8 melee

Damage: 1d8 +5

Face/Reach: 5 ft by 10 ft by 5 ft

Special Attacks: Trip, Howl

Special Qualities: Scent

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

Abilities: Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12,

Wis 15, Cha 13

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +9,

Spot +10, Wilderness lore +2

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative

Climate/terrain: Ant forest, hill, plains, and mountains

Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (3-6)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: 1/10 coins; 50% goods; 75% items

Alignment: always neutral good

Advancement: 4-7 HD (Medium-size); 8-12 HD (Large-size)

Spring wolves are protectors of nature, defending the land from poachers, despoilers, and all who would destroy it. They appear as large normal wolves with coats ranging from light silver to dark brown. Spring wolves ally themselves with druids and rangers, or protect the land in packs. They despise all humanoid races, especially goblins, who hunt them for their pelts. Although spring wolves understand Sylvan and common, they can only speak their own language.

Combat

Spring wolves hunt their prey in typical wolf fashion. They circle their prey, harassing them, not letting them rest or sleep. They attack in unison, and do not give up the chase until the target is dead.

Howl: Spring wolves can howl at their opponents as a breath weapon attack. This is treated as the 3rd level wizard spell shout.

Trip: A spring wolf that successfully hits with its bite may make a trip attempt as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. No touch attack is needed. If the trip fails the opponent is not able to attempt a trip maneuver back.

Skills: Spring wolves receive a +4 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore when tracking by scent. Spring wolves receive a +2 racial bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks.

TAURIAN

Large Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 7d10+21 (60 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft

Armor Class: 22 (-1 size, +13 natural)

Attacks: Gore +10, 2 hoofs +9

Damage: Gore 2d8+4, hoofs 1d10+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft by 10ft by 5 ft

Special Attacks: Charge

Special Qualities: Immunities, Scent

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +6

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 13

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +9

Feats: Power Attack, Improved Bulls Rush, Cleave

Climate/terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary or pair

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually lawful good

Advancement: 5-8 HD (large)

The Taurian looks like an abnormally large white or gray bull. They are, however, an highly intelligent race of noble creatures. Centuries ago, Taurians and Minotaurs dwelled in the same communities. Although not of the same species, their ancestors may have been similar. For some reason, the two races became bitter enemies and will almost always kill each other on sight now.

If approached openly, a Taurian is courteous, if wary. Poachers have hunted the Taurian for its horns, which are used as spell components for mind shielding spells.

Combat

Taurians are very intelligent, but are formidable foes in melee. If they attack, it is usually with a charge (See below), followed up by destructive hoof attacks.

Charge (Ex): Taurians have a devastating charge attack. If they have at least 30 feet to charge, the attack causes 6d8 +12 to one or two opponents (using cleave).

Immunities: Taurians are immune to all mind affecting spells.

Skills: Taurians receive a +3 racial bonus to Search, Spot, and Listen checks.

Languages: Taurians speak the common tongue, as well as their own.



AHSARIN

Medium Fey

Hit Dice: 6d8 +6 (33 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40ft

Armor Class: 19 (+3 Dex, +2 leather, +4 natural)

Attacks: Long sword +10

Damage: Long sword 1d8+1

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

Special Attacks: Spells

Special Qualities: Spell use, Will save bonus

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +8

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 17, Cha 16

Skills: Hide +2, Listen +6, Search +5, Spot +4, Any three +5

Feats: Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus, Improved Initiative.

Climate/terrain: Any, mostly cities

Organization: Solitary, loosely organized in secret organizations in most large cities.

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Double coins; double goods; standard items.

Alignment: Always good

Advancement: 6-12 HD (medium)

The Ahsarin are an extremely long-lived race, even by fey standards. Ages ago, the Ahsarin moved out of the forests and entered city life. Unbeknownst to humanity, the Ahsarin were the first Fey race to understand and accept man. But the Ahsarin were (and still are) a very secretive race; century upon century, they slowly acclimated to human society. Now all but the most ancient races now believe them dead, if not only a myth to begin with. What is left of Ahsarin society is now a collection of secret groups and organizations. These groups are altruistic; however, and usually help humanity in many unknown ways. Meeting in secret, these societies help steer the most influential of any city or kingdom, using their long lives and wisdom as guides. By now, an Ahsarin is indistin-

guishable from humans; not even a true seeing spell or the like will reveal them. However, one Ahsarin can always identify another of their race. They may have offspring with humans or elves. The children always appear "human" and are 100% Ahsarin for all intents and purposes. In fact, most of them have one non-Ahsarin parent. Many sages have speculated that this is why they are indistinguishable from humans.

There is an rumor that an evil "offshoot" of their race broke off centuries ago, but no good Ahsarin has ever confirmed this.

Combat

Ahsarin generally prefer not to fight. They are not cowardly or inept; they just do like to draw attention to themselves. If necessary, however, they are excellent swordsmen, using their natural grace in combat. Most would still choose to use their spells. All Ahsarin have the abilities of a sorcerer equal to their Hit Die level.

Will Save Bonus: All Ahsarin have a naturally secure mind, and they receive a +4 on all will saves (not included above).

Languages: All Ahsarin know common, Elven, and their own tongue. Most know at least 3-4 more languages.

SHADOWRAVEN

Small Undead Animal (Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: fly 60 ft (good)

Armor Class: 15 (+3 Dex, +1 size, +1deflection)

Attacks: Incorporeal claw +3

Damage: Incorporeal claw 1d2 temporary
Strength

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

Special Attacks: Strength damage

Special Qualities: Undead, Incorporeal.

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +2

Abilities: Str -, Dex 16, Con -, Int 2, Wis 11,
Cha 12

Skills: Hide +10, Listen +5, Spot +5

Feats: Flyby attack

Climate/terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 2-3 HD (small)

Shadowravens are undead birds created to serve as familiars and pets. Most are gifts from evil gods or manufactured by necromancers by some unknown ritual. They have the general size and shape of regular ravens, but are entirely made of shadows. Their eyes glow a dark red and their cries are screeching whispers. They will obey their master, but are willful and sly. They are always looking to feed (*see below*).

Combat

Shadowravens love to attack out of the night sky, dive-bombing the unaware. When indoors, they lie in wait in high, dark corners, always watchful for opportunities.

Strength Damage: On a successful strike, a living creature suffers 1-2 pts of temporary strength damage. A creature reduced to 0 strength in this way dies. This is the only way a shadowraven can feed.

Undead: The shadowraven is undead, and is immune to all mind-affecting spells, disease, stunning attacks, critical hits, poison, paralysis, subdual damage, or death from massive damage.

Incorporeal: The shadowraven is impervious to damage except by enchanted weapons, magic, or other incorporeal creatures. Any damage sustained from a corporeal source has a 50% chance of not affecting the shadowraven. Shadowravens may pass through solid objects at will.

NEW ARTIFACTS

JALENOR'S SHIELD (MAJOR ARTIFACT)

History

The legend of Jalenor began a millennium ago. The powerful warrior grew to might during the Infernal War, the otherworldly invasion that

occurred during the reign of King Malicharian IV. Just a teenager when the war began, Jalenor was the sole survivor of the small southern farming village of his birth, the site of yet another devil attack. The youth recovered and joined the king's army, where he distinguished himself repeatedly as a fearless fighter. He rose in rank quickly to become the youngest general to ever serve in King Malicharian's forces.

The devil lords that began this inter-planar conflict took note of Jalenor's successes and plotted his destruction. Their agents infiltrated the general's forces, sowing fear and dissention. The betrayal came during a nighttime ambush near the kingdom's capital. Jalenor's army fell upon itself as brother turned on brother and devils rained from the skies. Undone, the general rallied his forces in a final stand doomed to fail. Hearing his final cries of defiance, the gods answered his prayers. They infused Jalenor's sword and shield with the irresistible force of divine retribution. Against all odds, the general and his remaining warriors vanquished the devil horde poised on the brink of victory.

In an act of brazen heroism, Jalenor gathered the remaining armies of the king to pursue the fiends into the bowels of their home plane. The exact events that occurred there remain an enigma. The general and his army never returned, but neither did the demonic hoard.

It is rumored that a priest stumbled across a sword and shield covered in a sulfuric ash that was hot to the touch. He brought the implements his religious order, where they remained for three hundred years. A royal sage discovered that the sword and shield matched the description of Jalenor's, and requested the monks relinquish the artifacts of the kingdom's greatest hero. When the monastery refused, the current king, Malicharian XII, sent his forces to retrieve the artifacts. As the king's men arrived at the monastery, they found it in smoldering ruins, the sword and shield missing. Only the shield has resurfaced since, though its current whereabouts are unknown.

Powers

In the hands of a neutral character, the shield is a humble +1 item. Any evil creature that holds the item suffers 6d6 points of damage (Fortitude save for half, DC 20)

In the hands of a good creature, Jalenor's shield is a medium shield +5. The wielder of the shield is totally immune to fire in all its forms, and has damage reduction 15/+2. The following powers are in continual effect: *detect evil*, *protection from elements*, *protection from spells*, *true seeing*, *tongues*, *magic circle against evil*. The following powers are available at will as a free action: *continual light*, *teleport without error*, *fly*. The shield can cast dispel magic twice a day. All spell-like powers at caster level 20.

The lone way to destroy the shield is to melt it down in a forge on the site of Jalenor's dying breath.

Adventure Hook

There are rumors of a pirate captain who plundered a long-sunken vessel. It is said he recovered an ancient shield that protects him from all harm, and he can now understand all languages — even that of the dolphins around his ship!

RING OF THE ELEMENTS (MINOR ARTIFACT)

The Council of Storms created these rings centuries ago. Seven are known to exist; it is possible there are others, though at least two have been destroyed. Each council member wore it as a badge of office, and used it as an effective weapon. The Council dissolved after centuries of dominance, falling prey to power-hungry mages and political schemes. These rings resurface only to disappear soon after. Sadly, the secrets of managing each band's volatile energies perished with the Council.

These powerful rings bind energies from all four elements, granting a wide range of powers. The wearer can survive on any of the elemental planes — he can breathe and does not take damage simply by being there. However, the wearer must find his own means of going to and from the planes.

Powers

The following powers are usable at will: *water walk*, *free fall*, *meld into stone*, and *resist elements-fire*. The following major powers are available once per day: *fireball* 15d6, *lightning bolt* 15d6, *cone of cold* 15d6, *iron body* (twenty minute duration).

A ring of the elements can be destroyed by a retributive strike. The wearer must declare this as an action and strike his fist into the ground. All within 50 feet of the destroyed ring take 5d12 points of damage plus another 5d12 points of damage for each major power not used in the last 24 hours. The damage type taken by each victim is random among the four elements. Each may make a Reflex save (DC 20) for half. The wearer of the ring perishes.

Adventure Hook

A local monarch has ordered an expedition of heroic adventurers to seek out a dungeon where an elemental portal exists. This portal leads to a plane where one of these rings lies, but which plane? It is up to the characters to deal with that noble party, as well as the dungeon inhabitants, before facing the dangers of some unknown elemental plane.

ALIQUA'S FOUNTAIN OF TRUTH

Far to the west, deep in the most treacherous mountains, but near the coast of the Deep Sea, rests one of the most sacred relics of good: Aliqua's Pool of Truth. A crystal-clear fountain made of platinum and jade, it is thirty feet across and half as tall as a man. In the middle of the fountain stands a life size statue of a beautiful smiling maiden, her arms uplifted to the sky. Her whole body shimmers, as she is made of pure platinum, yet her features appear as though molded from supple clay by a master.

Ages ago this fountain was dedicated to a long lost goddess of pure benevolence, holding truth above all else. This caring deity blessed a crafted fountain with miraculous powers in his or her name, imparting healing, divination, and some say the power to give back life to the deceased, all from

the water of this fountain. Good travelers were welcome to drink from the fountain, and they needed no more sustenance for the day. The waters blessed earnest kings and diplomats with vexing problems, and suddenly the men knew the answers to their dilemmas. This goddess' fountain averted wars and helped heal the land.

This Goddess's High-Priestess was named Aliqua. Perhaps she was elven, or granted an extremely long life, for she watched over the pool in her deity's name for centuries, providing the forces of good anything they needed. When the age passed, so did Aliqua's goddess, though so much pure love and caring remained that the fountain remained potent. But with the passing of ages, the stories and location of the fountain were forgotten by almost everyone. The keepers of the pool remained, however, and Aliqua's descendants guard the fountain still. To most, the fountain became myth, but to powerful kings, wizened sages, and high priests of today's gods, it is very real. Some have even made the journey to the Lost Valley of Truth to taste the clear water and find the truth of the ages.

Powers

The Fountain is not sentient, but automatically uses its greater powers when needed. The fountain decides if those powers are necessary, not the user. The following benefits occur with one drink and are available once per day, per individual of good alignment: *protection from evil*, *good berry*, *neutralize poison*, and *cure serious wounds*. The following greater powers are available once per week, per individual of good alignment: *heal*, *resurrect*, and *regeneration*. The fountain's most potent power is Greater Divination. This power is usable once per lifetime (no matter how many times resurrected). If an individual with a dire problem or issue, that affects hundreds or thousands of lives, drinks from the fountain asking for guidance, the following occurs: an ancient but beautiful voice answers, "Look within." The drinker gains an intelligence and wisdom of 25 with respect to that problem only. The effect lasts for two weeks or until someone solves the problem. When the

effect dissipates, all answers remain. This problem must help others and overall must be of goodly nature. A person of good or neutral alignment may use the Greater Divination (with the fountain's approval).

Means of Destruction

Supposedly, pouring the blood of a murdered unicorn, mixed with that of a poisoned virgin descendant of Aliqua and stirred into the blessed waters with an unholy symbol, will crack and destroy the fountain forever.

The Lost Valley of Truth

The valley is in a long mountain range. This mountain range holds mostly humanoids and dwarven clans that occasionally war with each other. The humanoid races, somewhere on a deep sub-conscious level, stay away from the valley. The dwarves of the Iron Orc-splitter Clan know of the valley and respect it, as more than one clan leader has visited there. Many who have gotten lost in the mountains looking for the valley have been lucky enough to run into a dwarven patrol. If they feel the lost travelers are good-minded, they help them to the valley entrance. If they feel the travelers have less than noble intentions, the meeting is hostile. The valley itself is on the coast of the Deep Sea. Through a trick of geography (or, perhaps, godly intervention) the valley is hidden, such that, even to the eyes of an experienced seaman, the entrance looks only like a shallow, narrow cove, of use to no one. One must land by small boats, and travel around a curved cliff to see the valley. Sentries (*see below*) keep an eye out from both land and sea.

In the valley are the temple grounds that hold Aliqua's Fountain of Truth. The temple is simply called Truth. As a resting place of an artifact and after centuries of divine power, the entire valley and all who are in it are immune from scrying, *locate object*, or any other form of detection spells. All magical communication and psionic powers fail to pierce the valley, but they are usable inside the valley.

The valley and temple hold slightly less than two hundred people devoted to the fountain. Most are broken into three groups- assistants, protectors, and disciples.

The assistants are the clerics of the valley. They handle all administration functions, like trading with the dwarves for supplies and dealing with contact from the world outside the mountains. There are usually thirty to fifty clerics from level one to twelve. This number varies due to many clerics who undertake journeys to other good kingdoms to serve as counselors or diplomats. All priests serve the good pantheon and never any one god in particular. The head assistant is Mother Jerra of the Truth. Jerra is a cleric of 14th level.

The protectors are of the warrior, ranger and paladin classes. At any time, there are from fifty to seventy-five protectors in the valley or patrolling the valley entrances. Almost ninety percent are warriors dedicated to protecting the fountain. Staying in one valley deters most rangers, and defending (as opposed to attacking evil) is not the calling of most paladins, but there are exceptions. One such exception is High Protector Tasik Aqulayn, a paladin of 16th level, supposedly the descendant of Aliqua herself.

The disciples are an order of monks who formed about three hundred years ago, well after the assistants and protectors had guarded the fountain for thousands of years. The serenity of the valley had drawn a score or so of wandering monks. They asked the valley administrators to stay and learn there.

The disciples have been in the valley ever since. Many of the clerics and warriors have studied the teachings of the small monastery. Approximately twenty per cent of the warriors and priests have 1-2 levels of monk. Master Emry, a monk of 13th level, teaches this group within a temple monastery.

Emry usually has 20-35 dedicated students, plus those warriors and priests learning.

SURA SANS AND ENVIRONS

- 1 Mistress Inessa's Emporium
- 2 Tavern of Many Delights
- 3 Chroniclers
- 4 Gule of the Witch King



SURA SANS
The City of Dusk

The Mark

AN EVIL CAMPAIGN

The following section is an example of an evil campaign, easily adapted to any fantasy setting.

BEYOND THE VEIL

As discussed throughout this chapter, it is important to create a setting that appeals to both the DM and the players. This campaign combines intrigue, mystery and exploration - the direction and style of play determined by the players and DM. Each player has created a character prepared to meet the challenges this style of play will provide. Although they are playing evil characters, they have chosen to play characters that share a common past and a similar goal.

The characters are initiates of a mysterious cult. This cult seeks to resurrect an ancient power — the Witch-King, Izzat Mahdi, Lord of the Dead — a creature lost for over three hundred years. As newly-initiated acolytes, the characters must join the in search for Tamarat, the Lost City — the last known resting place of Izzat Mahdi. The campaign begins within the cult's headquarters, a temple at the edge of civilization. Here the party will begin their quest, not only to restore their divine master but also to rise within the ranks of the cult and claim the glory of a lost age.

This theme was chosen because it allows the players a chance to develop a story in their chosen direction, incorporating each of the elements they felt were important. Included is not only deep-immersion play — cult politics and intrigue - but also action-adventure — wilderness exploration, and searching for the Lost City. This has allowed the creation of not only a well-balanced game, but an enjoyable one as well.

INTRODUCTION

At the edge of the known world lies a boundary like no other. The Veil of Shadows, as it is known, separates our world from the Land of Shadows; the land of the living is separated from the realm of the dead. Few understand the nature of the veil or the

perverted mirror image of our world beyond — but one city thrives on the curiosity of those who would know more.

SURA SANS, THE CITY OF DUSK

Sura Sans is the blight of society, a festering boil on the heart of decency and goodness. The city preys on the weakness of mortal nature, catering to the immoral lusts and urges of the land beyond the veil. People come to Sura Sans for one reason — to embrace the darkness which they cannot find in the civilized world. The party is no different, for this is the home of the Cult of the Witch-King. Beneath the Fulgor (an immense tower housing a blazing beacon of light) lies the twisted streets and narrow alleys of a decadent, sinful haven for the dregs of civilized society. It is a city of unrest, a realm of greed, deceit, lies and corruption — the perfect home for a dangerous cult and its dark brotherhood.

Geography

Sura Sans rests to the far north, huddled between the Veil and the Kragan Kors — a jagged, inhospitable mountain range. The city itself stretches for nearly a mile along the face of the veil, and extends perhaps a thousand yards away at the furthest point. It is made of many materials — wood, stone, canvas — all bunched together in a maze of dark nooks and narrow alleys. Inhabitants of twenty years still get lost in its twisted confines; newcomers are even worse off. It's best to spend the coin and buy a guide rather than getting lost — a death warrant in Sura Sans, even for a strong party of adventurers.

Beside the city rests an immense lake of unknown depth, called the Murk. The Murk is fed from a narrow river that winds down from the mountain peaks. Numerous docks line the northern shore of the Murk, creating a shantytown called Fishkill. Thousands of fisherman and their families call Fishkill home, as well as a good number of laborers and dock men. It's a noisy, bustling place. Adventurers would do well to keep their heads on a swivel or they might lose their purses.

Off to the west of the Murk, perhaps a mile or so, lays the edge of the Korenraad — a harsh forest of pines and firs that encompasses no less than a hundred miles of trackless waste. The Korenraad is a dreary place teeming with danger. Ferocious beasts hunt within its expanse — lurking behind the trunks of massive, age-blackened trees — hungry for prey. The woodsmen and hunters of the Korenraad are feared predators in their own right, braving the forest for food and supplies on a daily basis.

Leading south, from the Red Gate, is the only road to or from Sura Sans — the Last Highway. The Last Highway meanders past the Murk and through the scrub plains back toward civilization. Primarily, merchants and traders use the Last Highway. Oddly enough, lone travelers arriving by way of the Last Highway rarely leave once they've arrived.

Population

The City of Dusk boasts a population of nearly 25,000 mortals of all races and cultures. It is one of the largest cities in the realm, dwarfed only by the capital, Vol Duar. Sura Sans is a haven for refugees of all creeds, a sanctuary for villains, and a home for the exiled. Its size reflects the darkness inherent to the realm, and the attraction mortals have to decadence. Humans, above all others, dominate the population of the city — over 50% of the inhabitants are of human stock, perhaps demonstrating a lack of moral fortitude in the make-up of their culture.

Economics

While morally bankrupt, Sura Sans has a thriving economy. Access to the Land of Shadows provides merchants with goods unavailable elsewhere. The city itself contains brothels, taverns, gambling houses, slave auctions, gladiatorial pits, exotic weapon smiths, alchemist shops, and a slew of other goods and services that bring an influx of wealth. Sura Sans is a city of sin, and sin generates exorbitant revenue.

Politics

Might makes right in the City of Dusk. Those strong enough to enforce rules, make them. The social hierarchy is a tangled web of power, wealth, and status. Currently, the Nightwatch — specifically their commander — holds the most power within the city and they demonstrate their force on the beggars and degenerates at the bottom of the social ladder.

The Nightwatch is a hodgepodge band of mercenaries, cutthroats, ex-soldiers, and thugs who guard the Fulgor, the Black Gate, and the North Wall. They are the first and last line of defense against forces or creatures attempting to escape the Land of Shadow through the Black Gate. This service — and the risks involved — makes the Nightwatch an invaluable asset and their commander knows it.

Ruland Grimes commands the Nightwatch with an iron fist. Brutally efficient, heartless, and amoral, he is possibly the most feared man in the city, and with good reason — his ruthlessness is legendary. If displeased, he destroys the source of his displeasure. Betrayed, he destroys his betrayers, their families, friends and their associates. If there is one rule to follow while in Sura Sans, it is this — don't cross Ruland Grimes.

Ruland Grimes, Nightwatch Commander:

Human Ftr 10; CR 10; SZ Medium (humanoid); HD 10d10; hp 72; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (+8 plate, +1 Dex); Atks Longsword +10/+5 melee (1d8+3), longbow +10/+5 ranged (1d8); SV Fort +13, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14; AL LE; Skills: Climb +6, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Ride +8; Swim +4; Feats: Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Great Cleave, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Lightning Reflexes, Leadership, Power Attack, Quick Draw.

Less obvious, but nearly as powerful, is the Light-Keeper — the exiled wizard who maintains the Fulgor and lives within the Tower. Krystos the Scourge, as he calls himself, has lived in Sura Sans

for nearly a decade. Exiled from his position as court wizard in Vol Duar for experimenting with the necromantic arts, Krystos fled to the one city where his research continues unhindered. He now has a horde of animated corpses and skeletal creations — evidence of his continued research of necromancy — that protect his tower sanctum.

Krystos the Scourge: Human Wiz 15; SZ M (humanoid); HD 15d4+15; hp 60; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+3 Dex, *ring of protection* +4) Atks +3 *defending quarterstaff* +10/+5 *melee* (1d6+3); SA Spells, *summon familiar*; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 11, Cha 11; AL CN; Skills: Alchemy +17, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +8, Craft (brewing) +11, Knowledge (politics) +14, Knowledge (planes) +19, Scry +19, Spellcraft +19. Feats: Brew Potion, Create Arms and Armor, Create Rod, Create Staff, Create Wand, Create Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Still Spell. Spells: (4) 0: *daze, detect magic, flare, light*; (5) 1st: *color spray, endure elements, enlarge, magic missile, shocking grasp*; (5) 2nd: *continual flame, daylight, flaming sphere, protection from arrows, summon monster II*; (5) 3rd: *blink, dispel magic, flame arrow, gaseous form, haste*; (5) 4th: *dimension door, phantasmal killer, scrying, shout*; (4) 5th: *cloudkill, feeblemind, nightmare*; (3) 6th: *circle of death, disintegrate, repulsion*; (2) 7th: *finger of death, insanity*; (1) 8th: *horrid wilting*.

RELIGION

There are an incredible number of religions within the confines of the city. New cults crop up daily as ancient powers are unearthed within the Land of Shadow and artifacts journey through the Black Gate in reverence. Among the most popular and influential are the Cult of Witch-King and the Chroniclers of Gorrusk.

Cult of the Witch-King

Active in Sura Sans since the city was founded nearly three hundred years ago, the cult remains a driving force in current affairs. The cult centers on

the worship of Izzat Mahdi, Lord of the Dead, and Witch-King of the Lost City, Tamarat. This ancient being once ruled a vast empire that ranged the length and breadth of the known lands. Izzat was betrayed by his chief lieutenants, buried alive in a tomb of ghastly horrors. In the confusion that followed, his empire fell and is now only remembered in legend. The Cult wishes to free their master, and restore him to his rightful place as emperor of the world. They search for the signs of the Lost City, and for the secrets to unlocking Izzat's tomb. The priesthood of the Witch-King is a source for knowledge on necromancy.

Chroniclers of Gorrusk

Gorrusk was a mad prophet who lived nearly a thousand years ago who foretold the Witch-King's fall, and hundreds of other events that have come to pass. His works are maddening to decipher, but full of invaluable information for those who can. The Chroniclers began as a group of scholars studying the prophecies, but eventually grew into an entire religion. They believe that the future of the world is detailed within Gorrusk's works, and it is their duty to decipher the world's fate. The priesthood of Gorrusk specializes in divination and boasts the land's foremost experts in the field.

Magic

Magic is rampant on the streets of Sura Sans. Street magicians perform light shows on busy corners. Alchemists brew arcane mixtures in back alley shops and sorcerers patrol the stand watch at the Black Gate. Strange relics of all shapes and sizes are carried from back from the Land of Shadow — to be sold on merchant caravans or traded for pleasures of the flesh. There are no hard fast rules governing magic with the city limits or without.

SITES OF INTEREST

Previously mentioned are several of the more important sites within and around the city; here is more detail. This is not an exhaustive list of the interesting locales that can be found in Sura Sans or beyond, just a brief list to get you started.

The Black Gate

Arguably the most important site within the city is The Black Gate. This portal stands nearly twenty feet tall, ten feet wide and comprised entirely of obsidian. It is the ancient gateway through the Veil of Shadows — the only passage into the dark, twilight realm beyond. Not even the Chroniclers know how long the portal has existed, or what being created it. It simply stands in defiance of sages and scholars, a testament of an unfathomable ancient power.

At least a score of Nightwatch guards protect the Black Gate at all times. These defenders protect against invasion or attack from the across the Veil. These men are seasoned warriors, accustomed to pitched battle. They come from all walks of life, having but one thing is common — these bastards are tough as nails.

Typical Nightwatchman: Half Orc Ftr 3; SZ M (humanoid); HD 3d10; hp 28; Init +5; Spd 30; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +5 Chainmail Armor, +1 Small Metal Shield); Atks Longsword +6 melee (1d8+3); SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL NE; Skills: Intimidate +7, Jump +3, Profession (guard) +3, Spot +1; Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Great Fortitude, Power Attack.

The Fulgor

The Fulgor is a blazing beacon of light the illuminates the Black Gate and the shimmering wall of the Veil. It rests atop an enormously tall stone tower, just beside the obsidian gate. Like the Gate, nobody knows how long the tower has stood, or how long the Fulgor has burned. Legend says that the Fulgor was set as a warning, long ago, to keep Land of Shadow denizens away from our world. Whether or not this is true is anyone's guess. Not even the Light-Keeper knows the true purpose of the Fulgor (or if he does, he keeps the secret to himself).



The Red Gate

The Red Gate is the primary entrance to the city. The Last Highway ends here, and though the gate is made of stone with a steel portcullis, it has stood open and undefended for at least a century. Anyone may enter Sura Sans — at their own risk, of course.

The Market

The market is an immense square at the center of the city. The tents, booths, stalls, and buildings make up a tangled maze of stores. Here, a person can buy literally anything. If you cannot find what you seek in the Sura Sans market, it will be found for you — for a price, of course. The market never closes; merchants can be found selling their wares day or night. If a stall is closed, the owner is either out of business or dead.

At the very center of the market are the slaver pens and stage. Slaves of all kinds are bought and sold here throughout the day and night. Slavery is very popular among the populace of Sura Sans, as laborers and workers are needed to keep the fields, mines, shops and manors maintained for wealthy owners.

The Fighting Pits

The Fighting Pits are a hotbed of social interaction and intrigue. Nearly all of the important citizens own at least one fighter, many own a dozen or more. Influential patrons throw huge parties with private matches on most evenings.

The pits are located along the south wall of the city, located beneath large warehouses. Most pits have an entrance located in an alley beside the warehouse, where lines of patrons gather, waiting for admittance. The warehouse itself contains slave pens and facilities for the owner's fighters.

Lazaro Javier owns the most popular pit, a monstrous arena able to house a dozen simultaneous bouts. On most nights, there is a line of hundreds waiting for admittance into Lazaro's Pit. His current prizefighter is an Iron Golem called Invictus, whom he won in a bet from a prominent wizard.

Invictus - Iron Golem: SZ L (construct); HD 18d10, hp 99; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 (can't run); AC 30 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +22 natural); Atks: 2 slams +23 melee (2d10+11); Face/Reach 5 ft, by 5 ft, by 10; SA breath weapon (poison gas - lasts 1 round, free action every 1d4+1 rounds, Fort save DC 17 - initial damage 1d4 temp Con, secondary Death; SQ construct, magic immunity (except electricity or rust), damage reduction 50/+3, rust vulnerability; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 33, Dex 9, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1; AL N

Mistress Inessa's Emporium

As any thing can be bought in Sura Sans market, any pleasure can be had at Mistress Inessa's Emporium. Inessa controls her brothel like a queen controls her court. She makes suggestions and polite inquiries — never raising her voice or losing her temper. She is the picture of polite, polished sophistication.

Anyone invoking her ire does so only once, for Inessa is a succubus — a demoness to be reckoned with.

Inessa, Succubus: SZ M (outsider); HD 6d8+6, hp 33; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 50; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +9 natural); Atks: 2 claws +7 melee (1d3+1); SA spell-like abilities (*charm monster, clairaudience/clairvoyance, darkness, desecrate, detect good, detect thoughts, doom, ethereal jaunt, suggestion, and teleport without error at will, unholy blight 1/day at 12th level*), energy drain, summon tanar'ri; SQ damage reduction 20/+2, SR 12, tanar'ri qualities, alternate form, *tongues*; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +7; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 20; AL CE; Skills: Bluff +11, Concentration +7, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Knowledge (Local) +9, Listen +16, Move Silently +7, Ride +7, Search +9, Spot +16. Feats: Dodge, Mobility.

The Tavern of Many Delights

Locals frequently refer to the Tavern of Many Delights as "the Tavern of Many Bar Fights." This rough and tumble tavern lost all pretense of sophistication long ago. The drink is cheap and plentiful, the food is hot, and the regulars are notorious brawlers. Anyone looking for a fight in Sura Sans need look no further, the clientele of this establishment are always happy to oblige.

The Shadowlands

Beyond the Black Gate lies a land of twilight, an alien place steeped in mystery and darkness. Its rugged landscape defies the rules that govern the known world, twisting and turning without rhyme or reason. Many have tried to decipher the myriad secrets of this nightmare realm, but few have succeeded. Those who have lie helpless in their beds, stricken fell madness. To pass through the Black Gate is to risk insanity — to do so regularly ensures it.

Several way stations have been established beyond the Black Gate. These are primarily the work of the Navigators — half crazed guides who venture into the Land of Shadow with newcomers.

Typical Navigator: Human Rgr 9; SZ M (humanoid); HD 9d10; hp 64; Init +7 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft., AC 18 (+3 Dex,

+5 Chainmail); Atks Longsword +9/+4 melee (1d8+2), dagger +9/+4 melee (1d4+2); SA favored enemies (aberrations +1, beasts +2); SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 16; AL CG; Skills: Animal Empathy+8, Concentration +7, Handle Animal +8, Heal +5, Hide +8, Intuit Direction +7, Jump +6, Knowledge (Local) +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +7, Ride +6, Search +7, Spot +6, Swim +5, Wilderness Lore +4. Feats: Ambidexterity, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Track, Two Weapon Fighting,

The Arroyo

The first way station is little more than a dilapidated shack resting precariously beside the Arroyo, a deep gorge that cuts a jagged path across the barren landscape. The Navigators call the small outbuilding the Shrine. Inside, on walls, plaques, and faded pieces of parchment, are the names of every Navigator lost to the Land of Shadow — to madness, death, or worse. Each Navigator pauses for a moment of silence, to remember friends gone or pray for safe return, before setting out across the Sway.

The Sway

The Sway is the rope bridge that spans the Arroyo. Made from thick, corded drider web, this ancient marvel of magic and engineering hails from an age long past. Named for its erratic swinging, the Sway remains the primary access to the land beyond the gorge.

The Flats

Beyond The Arroyo lie the Flats, a barren stretch of land without obstacles or variance that stretches away, seemingly forever. The Flats are an ages-old illusion, an imaginary terrain cast by some long dead magus. Navigators tend to use the illusion as a

joke. They act as if preparing from a long walk, asking newcomers about their water supply, food, and the like. Regardless of their answers, the Navigator will then trudge along until he vanishes from sight, stepping beyond the illusion. Generally he'll wait a few moments — letting the surprise to set in — before poking his head back through the illusion and encouraging the party to follow.

The Guardians

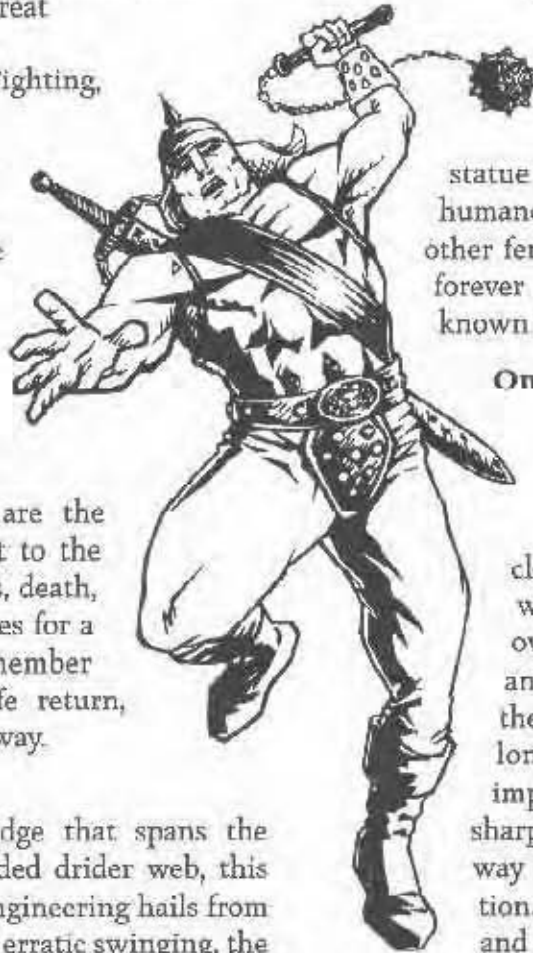
Towering just beyond the illusion are two massive statues, one on either side of a narrow precipice of jagged stone. Each statue depicts a winged lion with a humanoid torso and face, one male the other female. They stand as silent sentries, forever guarding the border between the known world and the Land of Shadow.

On the Brink

Just beyond the guardians is the true Land of Shadow. If one stands upon the brink, looking down into the swirling storm clouds, they will see a mad, alien world. There are similarities to our own — mountains and paths, rivers and roads — but the similarities fade the longer one looks. The peaks are longer and more jagged, almost impossibly so. The rivers twist in sharp, odd angles. The roads wind this way and that, seemingly without direction. Thunder rumbles impossibly loud and lightning flashes to little effect against the dark, looming shadows. On a

sign, painted with a shaky hand are the following words of warning:

Beware, any who enter this place, for madness waits in the land beyond.



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I speak only to those who can understand and appreciate the depths of my work. Please, don't insult either one of us. Step back into your comfortable world and leave this place. Some of us have work to do and you're wasting my time.

What? You're still here? My, you're a persistent whelp, aren't you?

Well, I will say this, you aren't a complete waste like the last fellow. If I weren't such a gentlemen, I may have been forced to run him through. But, he'll serve as a fine victim when the time is right.

What? Oh yes. I do fancy myself quite the master of manipulation. I can get most anyone to do my bidding.

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— Janus Verenül of the House of Whims

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