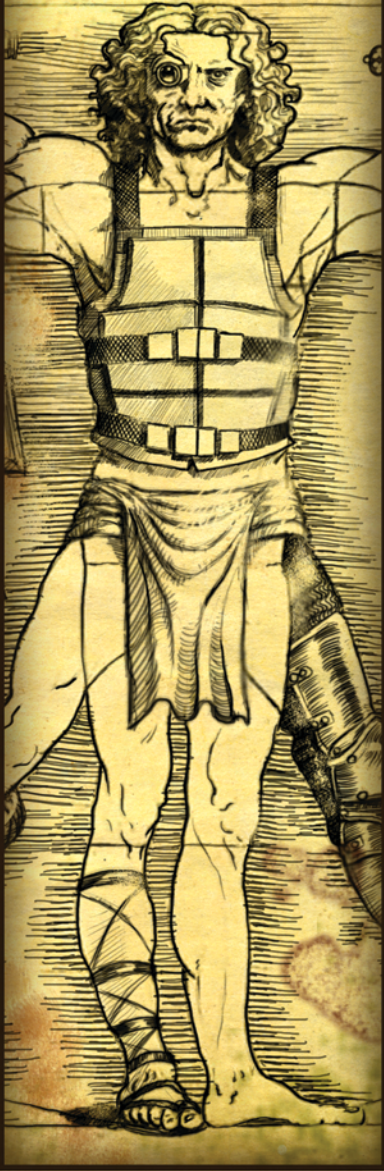


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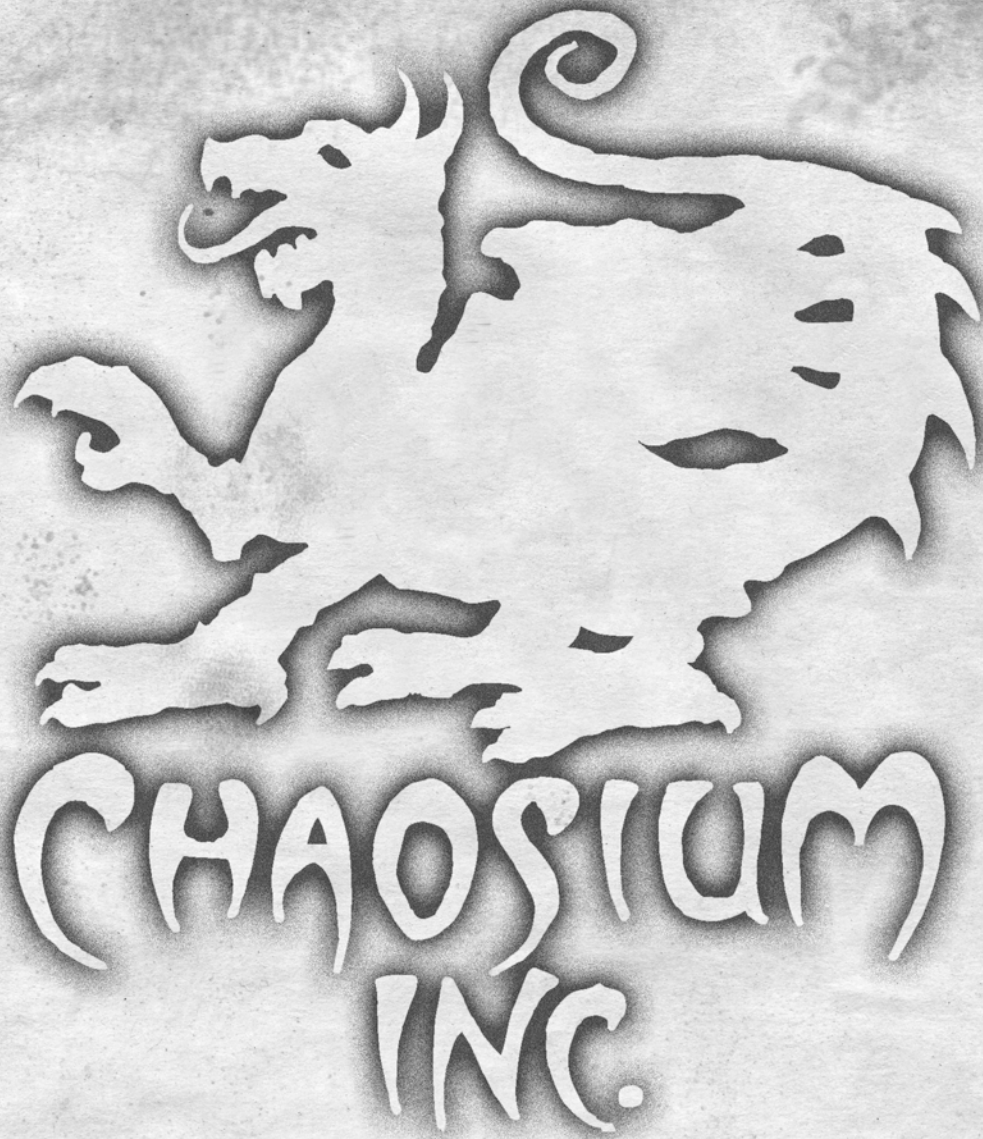
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BRP Witchcraft



Basic Roleplaying Rules for
Witchcraft in Different Settings





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BRP: Witchcraft

By
Byron Alexander

Illustrations by
Seskimo

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Address questions and comments by mail to Chaosium Inc., 22568 Mission Blvd. #423, Hayward, CA 94541-5116 U.S.A.

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Introduction

The village wise-woman creating herbal mixtures to cure her neighbours of the latest plague to curse their homes, the crone who disguises herself as a beautiful young woman to entice men to their doom, the travelling warlock who trades in potions and talismans which may or may not be truly magical. These are all examples of witches; men and women for whom witchcraft is an art and a profession.

Within this monograph you will find new spells common to witches, rules for brewing magic potions and rules for creating talismans - a new kind of one-shot magic item in which the witch invests a portion of their soul for a short time. There are also descriptions of various witches' organisations, and optional allegiance rules for flavouring magic 'black' or 'white'.

Witchcraft is a monograph best suited to Dark Ages, High Medieval, High Fantasy, Arabian Nights and Renaissance settings. However, there is nothing to stop you playing a modern witch selling magic potions under the table at a local diner or an apocalypse survivor rediscovering the old ways.

Witches in Society

Those who practise witchcraft can do so for good or ill, but whether they are considered a boon or a bane by their communities and whether or not they must act in secret is more dependent on the reputation of witches as a whole than the actual pursuits of the individual witch. One view that remains constant is that witches are feared; even those that are healers within their community are considered to have power over life and death and therefore not to be crossed. Sometimes that fear brings them respect, other times it brings a mob with pitchforks and torches but whatever it brings it is inescapable.

Witches in Dark Ages Society

In a dark ages setting witches will often be the only healers a community has; doctors are rare and the kind of magical colleges that teach 'higher' magic simply do not exist. Witches will almost universally be tolerated and protected by common dark age folk. The leaders of dark ages societies are another matter; with the kind of fear and respect witches have comes power and they do not generally appreciate men and women they see as uneducated peasants exercising power in their lands. This mixture of devotion from the poor and persecution from the powerful leads many dark ages witches into a Robin Hood style existence, hiding themselves from the strong while being open about their profession among the peasantry.

Even though the rulers outlaw witchcraft it is not normally punishable by death in this period. Historically a fine or some form of physical, but not fatal, punishment was the more likely penalty for practising witchcraft in the dark ages.

Witches in High Medieval Society

Unlike the dark ages witches are likely to have magical competition from colleges and 'high' magicians in a high magic medieval setting. They remain the primary magic users among the poor, though. The persecution of witches that begins with the nobility in the dark ages has spread through the teachings of the clergy to the common folk. (It is largely irrelevant what religious system the setting employs, the clergy in this period are rulers just as much as the nobility and will approve of witches just as little.) In more rural areas, where people still cling to the 'old ways', witches might enjoy their previous status as saviours of the people but in areas where the grip on power is tight even the common folk hate witches now.

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This is the most dangerous setting to be a practitioner of witchcraft, the punishment for it is often death and many cultures save their grisliest forms of execution for known witches.

Witches in High Fantasy Society

In a high fantasy setting magic is likely to be more common than in a high medieval society. As a consequence of this the rulers - still likely to be the nobility and the priests - do not feel as threatened by the peasantry having their own brand of magic. This means that witches are more likely to be open about their craft and accepted by rich and poor alike as useful local healers, though at the same time people to be wary of crossing. In a high fantasy society the difference between black and white magic is widely understood and there will likely be penalties for casting black magic but none for white magic.

In this setting witchcraft is not in itself illegal in most places, but when performed to harm people or property it is treated like any other crime of that type.

Witches in an Arabian Nights Society

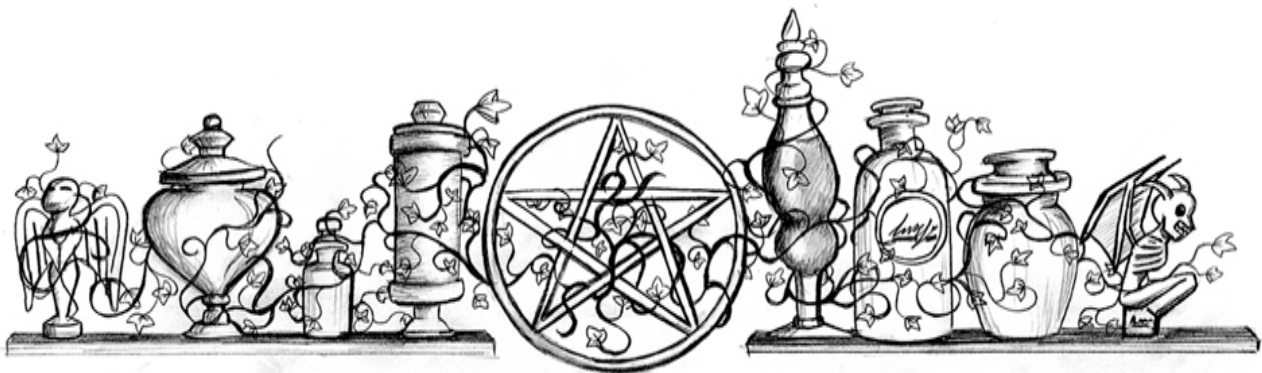
In an Arabian nights setting witches are not generally the local healer living among the people as they are in more European-centric settings. More commonly they are the makers and peddlers of magical potions and talismans, either operating from a static shop or a travelling caravan. As such they are accepted, but the tendency of some of them to con the unwary means they have an unsavoury reputation and few that are not desperate or gullible will deal with them - but what young man has not been desperate for a love potion at some point in his life?

In this setting witchcraft is seen as a low art practised by shysters. It is not illegal but they tend not to have the sympathies of the authorities and may find themselves imprisoned if they attempt to con (or are thought to have attempted to con) the wrong person.

Witches in Renaissance Society

In the renaissance witchcraft is dying. Most of its practitioners were suppressed so much during the middle-ages that they were either executed or they did not dare teach their secrets to the next generation. Those few witches left are still feared by those who understand their power but are unnoticed by, or an object of ridicule to, educated men and women. In low-magic versions of the setting even the common people might have lost their belief in witchcraft. Witches do not have to work in secret in this setting, but many do because they were told to by paranoid tutors or simply because they do not want to be seen as primitives.

In this setting witchcraft is largely forgotten and current witches are ignored. Witchcraft might still be a crime on various statute books but it is extremely rare to see those laws enforced anymore.



Profession: Witch

The witch is a magician of the oral tradition; rare is the witch that uses a grimoire. Witches claim that their tradition is the oldest path of magic, but other paths claim that witches stole their magic from more learned magicians. Whatever the truth witches do have capabilities other magicians do not; brewing potions, crafting talismans and working without a grimoire are all the province of the witch.

Wealth: Destitute to Affluent, usually poor. While it is rare for a witch to actually *want* for anything, it is also rare for them to build up a considerable amount of wealth as they tend to be drawn from, and continue to live among, the poor. Those who are affluent are normally risen up to be advisors to rulers or are particularly successful purveyors of their magical wares.

Skills

Bargain: In some settings witches may have bargained with dark powers for their magic. In any setting witches are rarely wealthy enough to simply give away their potions and spells.

Craft (potion): Potions are simple to make, although collecting the ingredients can be a chore. All that is required is a cauldron or other similar cooking pot, some water and heat to boil it. Most witches have some potion brewing ability, see the section *Eye of Newt and Toe of Frog: Witches' Potions* for further details.

Craft (Talisman): Talismans are charms which contain a spell set to go off when specific conditions are met (a command word, when the wearer is injured, when the king returns to Albion's shores etc.). The witch gifts a portion of their soul to the talisman, which contains it until the spell is released. See the section *A Lucky Rabbit's Foot: Talismans* for further details.

Fast Talk: Witches are powerful, yes, but a part of their repertoire is convincing outsiders that they are even more powerful. Witches who act as peddlers use this skill to convince gullible customers to buy fake potions and talismans.

Insight: Witches looking for a student search for people with good instincts and intuition, hence many of them have a great deal of insight into other people. Often a witch will pretend to have learnt personal secrets by magic when they actually learnt them from studying their target's body-language.

Knowledge (Folklore): A mixture of rural wisdom and occult knowledge, a master of folklore can see the signs that a storm or other dramatic weather change is imminent as well as recall useful pieces of information about things that go bump in the night. What is and is not covered by folklore is up to the discretion of the GM but it should be broadly useful both for rural survival and resisting the supernatural. In settings where witchcraft is linked with unholy power GMs might replace this skill with *Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore)*.

Medicine: Witches are folk healers and in dark ages settings probably the only doctors and midwives the common people have access to. Although they can use magic to heal many of them choose to keep that back as a last resort once less taxing methods have been exhausted. Even witches dedicated to evil study medicine, knowing that when you save a person's life you own that life forever.

Perform (ritual): Though their rituals may not require the expensive trappings of a wizard's ritual most witches look to some kind of divinity and may even act as priests to the poorer folk in some cultures.

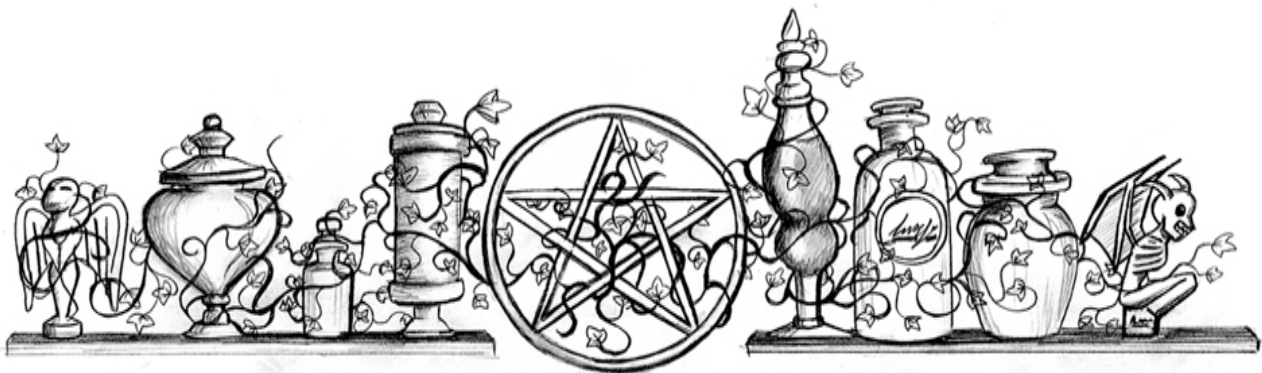
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They know how to perform the rituals that draw and control magical energies and the rituals that will appease their gods.

Sense: Smelling and tasting potions to know when they are ready and moving through the countryside by touch under a new moon mean that witches practice the use of senses ordinary people often neglect.

Spot: Witches need to find hidden ingredients for spells, navigate at night and - in settings where their craft is illegal - see when trouble is coming.

In addition to these skills witches start with the knowledge of four, six, eight or ten spells depending on whether the campaign is Normal, Heroic, Epic or Superhuman respectively. These are at INT x 1 and may be increased with skill points from steps three *and* seven of character creation.



Spirits or Demons: The Source of Witchcraft

Where does witchcraft come from? This is a key question for any campaign setting which involves witchcraft because the source will flavour everything about the magic and the magicians who use it. Essentially the options are that witchcraft has an infernal, pagan or neutral source.



An Infernal Source

Medieval scholars believed that all witchcraft, whether done for good or harm, was powered by the Devil. If you want to run a setting akin to what medieval people thought was true of their world then witches gain their art by making a pact with the Devil. This need not be a pact for the witch's soul upon their death, though that is the most common form; it may be an agreement to sow discord in the mortal realms, to use their powers to corrupt the young or weaken the Church etc. The advantage to making a soul pact is that afterward the witch need not do anything they do not wish to, whereas a witch that makes some other kind of deal might lose their magical powers if they stray from their agreement.

A witch who gains their power from an infernal source is not necessarily evil (although following the allegiance path of white magic is impossible for them). They may take the Luciferian option of sympathy for the Devil, believing that God is in fact the evil force and the Devil may not have been the victor in his struggle for dominance but was the good guy nevertheless (it is up to the GM as to whether or not this

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belief is a delusion). They may have selflessly sold their own soul to evil so that they can heal the sick and protect the weak (and surely any fiend would appreciate possession of a soul with such pure motives).

Mostly, though, witches who get their power from an infernal source are antagonists. They are the witches who lure people to their deaths in dangerous woodland, steal the youth from children, turn people into toads and secretly ruin their neighbours' crops and lives. Only witches with an infernal source for their magic have access to the *Conjure Demon* spell, they are also likely to have intelligent, demon-possessed familiars.

If witchcraft comes from an infernal source it is important to decide whether or not this is true for all magic. If the setting is based heavily on the medieval world view then all magic would come from demons, but high magic would involve the command of those demons in God's name rather than the bargaining away of the magician's soul. It could be that true, neutral, magic can be learnt but witches, having either limited intelligence or education, choose to take the quicker, more dangerous route of demonic pacts. Finally, if there is infernal magic then the truly devout might have access to divine magic.

[Note, throughout this text the source of infernal power is referred to as the Devil and/or demons. This will not necessarily be the case in your setting, it is used here only to give consistency to the text.]

A Pagan Source

Margaret Murray famously claimed that the witchcraft persecuted in the middle-ages was the remnant of the pagan religions of Europe. Her work has since been discredited but the idea of witches as keepers of the old ways has embedded itself in the public's consciousness and it cannot be denied that some country traditions might stem from the pagan past.

If the setting in question is a largely monotheistic one then the perception of witches is still likely to be that their power comes from the Devil, although those who live away from urban centres might remember the old pagan religion as well as the witches do and consider them on a par with priests. If the setting is a polytheistic one then the GM has two choices with regard to pagan witchcraft; it can be an art banned by the priests as a challenge to their authority as channels to the gods or witches can *be* the priests (in which case they would have a higher starting wealth than usual and *Fast Talk* should be replaced with *Status* as a profession skill).

As there are a multitude of pagan gods, both cruel and kind, witches whose power comes from a pagan source might be black, white or neither in their magical allegiance. If their pagan faith is persecuted then black and white witches might work together to protect themselves even while diametrically opposed on other metaphysical and philosophical matters.

Witches who get their powers from a pagan source *might* have an intelligent familiar (it could be possessed by a pagan spirit) but that is entirely at the GM's discretion. They certainly don't have access to the *Conjure Demon* spell but might be able to replace it with the *Conjure Elemental* spell, again this is at the GM's discretion.

A Neutral Source

The classic high fantasy world is one in which magic comes from a magician's innate power, rather than from some external source. In a setting where witchcraft comes from a neutral source there are almost certainly other magicians, probably of a more scholarly bent than most witches. Witches would be the folk magicians looked down on by wizards but looked up to by the peasants that wizards ignore. Probably witchcraft could lay a good claim to being the oldest magical tradition.



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Witches whose power comes from a neutral source may be black, white or neither; though in either case the power comes from the tempering of the witch's own soul involved in following a dedicated path rather than pleasing a pagan or infernal master. In such settings black and white witches may be viewed as totally different kinds of magician, since the only thing that really separates one magician from another is how they use their magic.

This type of source differs from infernal or pagan sources in one other important fashion; there are no spontaneous witches if witchcraft comes from a neutral source. With an infernal source the Devil teaches his magic to any witch who strikes the right bargain and solitary witches who never meet another of their kind are possible. With a pagan source, although solitary practitioners are less common, it is not outside the bounds of possibility that a young person in tune with nature and with the supernatural might spontaneously turn to the old gods (or their own view of them). If the power comes from within the witch, though, the use of it absolutely must be taught to them by another witch; if they cannot find a teacher they cannot learn (unless they find a grimoire but a witch's grimoire is a rare thing indeed - see *A Witch's Magic* below for details).

Note that in a setting where magic comes from a neutral source magicians of all kinds might *believe* that their magic comes from a deity or even from the Devil. What your witch character believes of their powers and what you know to be the truth of the matter might be very different.

Witches who get their power from a neutral source have an ordinary familiar and do not have access to either the *Conjure Demon* or the *Conjure Elemental* spell.



Covens and Sabbats: Witchcraft Organisations

Whether infernal, pagan or neutral in nature witchcraft organisations are normally solitary, familial or supernatural.

Solitary Witches

The solitary witch is the old crone who lives alone in the woods or the young noble girl who is being taught by her little brother's wet-nurse. Solitary witches are not always literally solitary, sometimes a small group of two or three will work together in one area, and during the period one witch is teaching another they are clearly not alone, but in general they work their magic by themselves.

An infernal solitary witch may have never met another witch, they drew upon their own reserves of will to call the Devil to them and it was the Devil that taught them their powers. Most infernal solitary practitioners were taught by another mortal witch, though, even if they only taught the initial rites to summon the Devil in order to make the pact.

A pagan solitary practitioner is normally that way due to a lack of others that share their faith. If they are lucky they will find one protégé before their death in order to keep the old ways alive for one generation more but every year there are less of them as they succumb to persecution, old age and the erosion of the society that spawned witches in the first place. A world in which witchcraft is primarily made up of solitary pagans is a world where witchcraft is fading away.

A solitary witch whose power comes from within themselves is likely part of a tradition which stretches back centuries but which has never been very organised. They teach their magic to students who seem worthy or have the ability to pay; there is no uniform criteria for training and therefore no uniform philosophy among solitary witches of this type. There might have, once, been a universal goal or religion behind such a disparate group but their lack of close ties has likely condemned that to history.

Solitary witches, whether or not they actually work alone, tend to be aware of any other witches in their vicinity. The spell *Whispering Wind* might be used to convey important information, as might their familiars (use of the *Speak with Animals* spell allows a witch to converse with another magician's familiar). In this way they can warn each other of impending trouble or call others to assist them when necessary.

A solitary witchcraft tradition tends to be full of headstrong individuals who rarely concede to working together and - outside of the teacher-pupil relationship - certainly do not submit to anyone else's leadership. Whenever they do feel the need to work together towards a common goal the witch who calls them together is the *de facto* leader but everyone's views are given equal weight. Once the goal is reached they disperse, although sometimes more regular casual friendships grow out of them.

Familial Organisations

Some witchcraft traditions are taught within a family and kept to the family. Witches that travel in gypsy troupes are commonly familial witches, as are the descendants of pagan priests who pretended to forsake their old religion while still teaching it to their children and their grandchildren.

Infernal familial witch organisations are diabolical households of Devil-worshippers. Often the children of such families grow up accepting the Devil as their patron and that their souls were sold for power



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before they were born. Unlike many witchcraft groups families which have managed to survive practising infernal witchcraft for some time tend to have accumulated both wealth and power. Often their vassals or servants suspect that they practise the dark arts but dare not do anything about it.

Pagan familial witch organisations are the most common type of pagan witchcraft organisation. There are some parallels with infernal familial organisations in that the children of such families are brought up from a young age to accept very different beliefs to their peers and to hide them from the general populace. Families who worship the crueller pagan gods have even more similarities to infernal witch families. Families who worship kinder gods, however, tend to be known as healers within their communities and though they do not have the power through fear that infernal or cruel pagan witch families have they are one of the few groups of witches that weave themselves so tightly into a community that the community is likely to defend them whatever the common view of witchcraft is.

Familial witch organisations whose power comes from within themselves keep their knowledge to the family because it is their family that they trust - they do not want others to have access to their magic or even to be sure that they have magic. These families come in three stripes; families akin to the Borgias who plot and scheme together and practise black magic, families that teach their children an innate sense of duty to the weak and helpless, who practise white magic and families that teach it like a blacksmith teaches his sons - it is the family craft and that is the way it has been for generations. This last is the most likely to teach outsiders for a fee or to teach people who marry into their family.

Families of witches tend to suffer from inbreeding; paranoia and secrecy mean that they rarely allow outsiders to join them. Occasionally, of course, love conquers all and a member of such a family does marry a non-witch. When this is a member of an infernal or cruel pagan family this normally means the family member in question has escaped their family's clutches and never deals in witchcraft again. With regard to kinder families the person marrying into them has been told about their art and has accepted it (though is not always subsequently trained in it).

Sometimes families of witches are allied to other families of witches and inter-marry with each other, thus keeping their secret and avoiding the in-breeding which plagues more colloquial types. In settings where witches do not need to keep their art secret there might be some competition for the right to marry into their families among those who seek magical power, though the chances of them marrying outside the family are still slim (in this case because they know that many suitors from outside their family are only after arcane power).

Supernatural Organisations

In the historical settings witches are most suited to it is normally impossible for anyone but governments and the Church to initiate any kind of large, overarching organisation - the logistics are just too much for anyone without their resources. However, witches have magic at their disposal and as a result of their capability to fly at tremendous speeds and send messages on the wind they are capable of forming nation-spanning supernatural organisations (though a global conspiracy is beyond even them, unless they have infernal backing). These organisations are the feared Sabbats of medieval witches, a network of white witches sword to protect a nation or a shadowy conspiracy dedicated to more worldly gains.

Supernatural organisations of infernal witches are the only ones likely to be global in scope (pagan gods tend not to have power over the entire world, as different areas worship different gods). The Devil is always the head of such an organisation and as such keeps witches that would ordinarily be at each other's throats in line. Even so such organisations tend to be riddled with betrayal and plotting which the Devil turns a blind eye to because it is what he expects, or even encourages, among his servants.

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Supernatural organisations of pagan witches may or may not be directly controlled by the god(s) they worship. In polytheistic settings where witches are the priests and priestesses of the gods they probably do not need supernatural means to maintain such a far-reaching organisation, though they will certainly use magic to cement their power. In a setting where pagan witches are not the established priesthood these organisations rarely span more than a single nation (unless the area in which they operate has a number of very small principalities). Sometimes they work for the protection of a nation or people that have abandoned the old gods but have not in turn been abandoned by those gods, sometimes they resent the dominance of the current Church and work to bring it down, sometimes they have lost their original aim entirely and are the dying remnants of a once-great organisation struggling just to keep in touch and pass on their sacred knowledge.

Supernatural organisations of witches who draw on their own innate power are always led by a mortal witch, although in some cases that might be a mortal witch who has used the *Possess Item* spell to exist far beyond their natural life. Depending on the setting these organisations might be dedicated to keeping each other safe, vetting people who wish to learn witchcraft or it might be an organisation similar to a trade guild which protects the interests of its members.

Supernatural organisations tend not to be very water-tight. People leave their ranks and, unless they were crucial to the whole operation, they are not necessarily missed. This means that there may be solitary witches who have broken off from such an organisation, although they tend to stay in hiding because even in the laxest of supernatural organisations they do not take kindly to deserters. However, such organisations have little to fear from their deserters since to implicate the rest is to implicate themselves.

These organisations do not always manage to remain hidden and in settings where witchcraft in persecuted there tends to be a cycle of regrouping, growth, persecution and regrouping. In some ways they are the easiest to learn from as they are always seeking new members but they are also the most difficult as they both tend to remain hidden and have to reach a consensus on whom to teach unlike solitary witches and families who are able to reach quick decisions with regard to teaching.



Curses and Cures: A Witch's Magic

An Oral Tradition

Witches are no different to other magicians in that they can only keep a number of spells equal to their INT/2 uppermost in their memory. Most magicians skirt the limitations of a mortal mind by keeping all the spells they learn in a grimoire but witchcraft is an oral tradition and many witches are illiterate.

Over the centuries witches have learnt a mnemonic trick. Any spell a witch learns they must keep prepared in the forefront of their memory, ready to cast, for at least a week. At the end of that week when they dismiss it from their memory it does not leave it altogether, rather it is stored in the back of their mind. When they want to re-prepare it they enter a trance-like state for an hour and bring it back to the forefront. In order to teach a spell a witch must have the spell readied, they cannot teach magic that is locked away in the deepest recesses of their mind.

This has an advantage over grimoires in that information transcribed into the mind cannot be stolen or lost as easily as a book of spells. It has the disadvantage, though, that spells stored in this way cannot be read from the mind and cast within one round/level as spells from a grimoire can. Spells locked in the back of a witch's mind are totally inaccessible until they spend the necessary hour preparing them.

GMs might want to allow this ability for other oral traditions such as shamans. It should not be allowed for wizards or others that commonly utilize grimoires, however; it takes learning magic through witchcraft, shamanism or similar to be able lock spells in the memory in this way. It is possible to be both a wizard and a witch but few witches will consent to teach wizards, whom they consider arrogant snobs and few wizards would think that witches have anything worth learning anyway.

In renaissance and later settings, when literacy is more commonplace, witches might start writing grimoires and forget this trick but it takes a long time and even then some witches refuse to let go of their oral past.

The Witch's Familiar

Rules for creating a familiar are described in the BRP core book in *Chapter 4: Powers* (pg. 90). Witches are more likely than almost any other magician to have a familiar, as their *Speak with Animals* spell (see below) makes it easier for them to befriend creatures and they often live in rural areas where both wild and domestic animals abound.

It was the medieval view of witches that their familiars were demons trapped in animal form. If a GM wants to represent this within their setting then a witch's familiar gets an INT of 10 (or 2D6+3) as soon as it becomes a familiar because its mind is replaced by that of a lesser demon. If this optional rule is being used then the animal forgets all its time with the witch if it is ever dismissed from being a familiar - the demon leaves and the animal returns to normal. This means that although another magician might be able to make it into a familiar, the witch's secrets are safe.

The Witch's Wand

Although they can choose to do so, it is rare for witches to create a magic staff (as per the rules given on pg. 90 of the core book in *Chapter 4: Powers*). Witches rarely have the wealth to make such an item and often spurn such things out of pride as the trappings of a pompous wizard.

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Instead of staffs, witches have wands. These act as staffs in their POW cost to create and how they may be used by the witch to cast spells instead of using their own power points. They are - in a sense - absolutely free, in that they do not require the expensive manufacture or items that a wizard's staff requires; even a destitute witch may carry a wand. They do, however, still require six months to make; a witch's wand must be torn from a yew tree never before touched by a human being (or something similar depending on the setting) and so it takes six months to find the right wood and then to carve the necessary runes of power onto it.

A witch's wand does not gain hp when it becomes a wand and is of no use as a weapon, they remain physically little more than fragile twigs which may be destroyed by anyone who has a spare minute in which to break it in two. This is the penalty for having access to such a (fiscally) cheap reservoir of power.

Typical Spells

As well as the new spells found in this book witches typically have access to the following spells from the BRP core book *Chapter 4: Powers: Change* (though see below), *Control*, *Countermagic*, *Dark*, *Diminish*, *Dispel*, *Enhance*, *Heal*, *Invisibility*, *Lightning*, *Perception*, *Vision*, *Wounding*.

New Witch's Spells

Aura of Dread

Range: Self (aura extends 10 meters)

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches are feared, and rightly so for even white witches can with-hold healing from those who draw their wrath. This spell draws on that undercurrent of fear and makes it immediate. Those within the fear aura, whether friend or foe, must make a successful POW x 5% roll or suffer a -5% skill penalty per level of the spell as long as they remain within the aura of fear. Extra levels can also increase the duration of the spell by 15 minutes or extend the aura by 10 meters.

Banish Ghost

Range: 30 meters

Duration: Instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Sometimes those witches that see themselves as protectors of their communities must protect their people from more ephemeral threats and sometimes a wicked witch needs to rid themselves of a ghost they created. Overcoming the ghost's POW with your character's own this spell saps 1 POW per level from the ghost, weakening them and - if it takes them to 0 POW - destroying them completely. Powerful ghosts may require several banishment attempts during which the character is in danger from their new supernatural enemy. See *Chapter 11: Creatures* in the core BRP book for more information on ghosts (pg. 342-343).

The GM might rule that in their setting ghosts are either always vengeful and cruel (in which case this is a white magic spell) or that they are always innocent victims in torment (in which case this is a black magic spell). Ordinarily, however, *Banish Ghost* is a neutral, or grey, spell.



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Broomstick Flight

Range: touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 4

The most iconic image of the witch is that of a woman riding in front of a full moon on a broomstick. Although called *Broomstick Flight* this spell can be cast on any object of sufficient size to carry a person (in Arabian Nights settings carpets are common and Baba Yaga - the famous Russian witch - used a large mortar). The object in question begins to hover above the floor and the witch may sit on it and fly wherever she likes. Control comes from the Fly skill which, though not a core skill to witches, many witches do learn as they also use the *Change* spell to transform into flying creatures. For every extra level of this spell the object can carry an additional person (assuming there is space). Additional levels of this spell can also increase duration by 15 minutes per extra level.

Broomstick Flight can be remarkably fast, while flying the object should be treated as a vehicle with a rated speed of 12.

Change: Witch's Variant

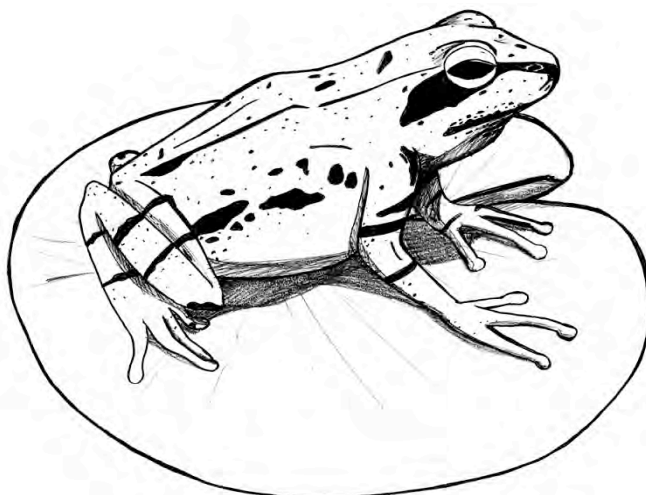
Range: 30 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

From transforming themselves into hares to turning princes into toads, a witch's power over forms is well known. Witches learn a version of the change spell that changes up to 4 SIZ points/level when cast on themselves but only 2 SIZ points/level when casting it on other people, animals or objects. Though it is weaker in this sense, witches can change a target's SIZ with their *Change* spell, raising or lowering SIZ by spending further power points. Once again they can change their own SIZ by 4 per power point spent and another's by 2 per power point spent. When a witch turns into a hare, they are indistinguishable from an ordinary hare.

In addition to this they can spend 1 permanent POW to change someone or something permanently. They must set a condition which will end the spell, however (traditionally it is, "You will be a frog until you are kissed," but as that is so widely known it is rarely used after the dark ages). The target will instinctively know what that condition is, so that they may seek it out if they want to reverse the effect or avoid it if it was a voluntary change. Even if the effect is reversed the POW spent does not return to the witch.



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Conjure Demon

Range: 12 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This spell is only available in settings in which witches gain their power through demonic pacts or similar. A part of those dark pacts is having *lesser* demons come to the caster when called, though the caster must provide the power to bring them from whatever hell they normally reside in. Lesser demons can be found in *Chapter 11: Creatures* in the core book on page 354. (If the witch is conjuring a demon relatively routinely it is probably a good idea to write its usual stats on the back of their character sheet.) For the duration of this spell the caster must maintain full concentration on keeping the demon in the physical world, as it is not a place they can normally exist in without the use of magic circles etc. (therefore the demon can be dismissed simply by breaking concentration).

Contagion

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 1 day

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1+ (see text)

In settings where witches are persecuted even when they are healers they are often accused of creating diseases which they then cure for a price; a supernatural, magic-backed con game that can be very dangerous for the innocent targets. In some cases their accusers could be right, because witches' understanding of disease leads to them being able to contaminate as well as cure. Assuming the witch can overcome their target's POW with their own this spell gives a target the symptoms of a disease. This disease is supernatural in nature; it will end once the spell's duration is over or once a *Dispel* is successfully cast against it - the *Cure Disease* spell does not stop it (though it will cure some of the hp damage and attribute damage it has caused) and the target does not get CON rolls to overcome it as they would an ordinary disease. Witches who do use this spell to con people generally cast it each new day until they are hired to heal it (whereupon they simply stop casting it) whereas witches who use it to kill cast the spell and run. Each extra level extends the duration by one day.

The cost/level varies according to the severity of the disease:

At 1 power point/level the disease is little more than a cold, causing 1hp damage/day.

At 2 power points/level the disease does D3 hp damage/day and 1D2-1 damage to STR, CON, INT, POW or DEX (caster's choice) per day.

At 4 points/level the disease does 1D2-1 hp damage/hour and 1D3 damage to STR, CON, INT, POW or DEX per day.

At 8 points/level the disease does 1D3 hp damage/hour and either 1D6 damage per day to one of STR, CON, INT, POW and DEX *or* 1D3 damage per day to two of STR, CON, INT, POW and DEX.

Rumours exist among the practitioners of black magic of even more powerful magical diseases that truly mighty witches can create. If these rumours are true such diseases would be terrible indeed.

Optional rule: If the witch spends POW they can make it into a natural disease that others exposed to it might catch. The amount of POW depends on the level of contagion:

1 POW makes it a disease spread either by constant close contact (i.e. living in the same house or sleeping in the same bed as the victim) or sexually.

2 POW makes it a disease spread by touch.



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4 POW makes it a disease spread by air, and a person need only come within 20 meters of the target to be infected if they are indoors and 5 meters if they are outdoors.

If a disease is made into a natural disease it will last as long as the spell's duration and *then* the victim will be allowed a CON roll to recover as per the disease rules on pg. 221 of the BRP core book (and the *Cure Disease* spell will stop it). For others who catch it, it is a normal disease and *Cure Disease* or a successful CON roll will end it. It is through this technique that witches who are agents of evil sow discord throughout the mortal realms.

Cure Disease

Range: touch

Duration: instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

As local healers witches can use their magic as well as their medical skill to keep their communities healthy. Every level of this spell has numerous effects. It increases the target's CON by 1 point/level for the purposes of fighting the disease they are suffering from until they recover (if suffering from numerous diseases one of them must be specified - the others would be fought off with the target's ordinary CON unless the spell was cast again) see pg. 221 of the core BRP book, it heals 1D3 damage suffered from the disease and heals 1 point of attribute damage caused by the disease.

Obviously, this spell is not a guarantee that a person will survive a disease but it can massively increase the target's chances. Note that for some diseases the witch is risking contagion if they cast this spell, as it requires that they touch the target.

Curse of ill-fortune

Range: 50 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches who tend towards black magic use their knowledge of fate not to bring luck to others, but to bring misfortune to their enemies. Overcoming the target's POW with your character's own, this spell causes any dice rolled for the target character must be switched around if that would be a worse result for the target (i.e. an 18 rolled against a skill or attribute would instantly become an 81). Every extra level adds an additional 15 minutes duration to the spell.

Foretelling

Range: 30 meters

Duration: Instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 3

Witches have the power to glimpse into the future, using it to advise others or to gain an advantage over them. These visions of the future may sometimes be vague and are only the *likely* future (in game terms, the future as it would happen if the PCs did nothing to change it) but most of the time they are accurate. Witches can read their own future or that of another person within the range of the spell, seeing a number of days forward equal to the spell's level. The witch does not see everything that happens, that would take too long, rather they see either the most important event likely to happen within that time-frame (and have an instinctual knowledge of when that event is most likely to happen) or clues to the themes the near future is likely to involve; love, hate, battle, peace, financial trouble, etc.

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Luck

Range: 50 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches understand fate. In some settings they have consigned their souls to a terrible fate for their power, in some they may be the scion of a family of witches and fated to learn magic from birth. Whatever their background this understanding of fate gives some witches a level of mastery over it. For the duration of this spell the target can choose to switch around any dice rolls made against skills and attributes, making the tens into the units and the units into the tens (i.e. upon rolling a 91 the player may choose to change it to a 19 if they so wish). Every extra level adds an additional 15 minutes duration to this spell.

Neutralise Poison

Range: 50 metres

Duration: instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Healing does not just mean curing disease, sometimes a person may accidentally poison themselves or be maliciously poisoned by a jealous lover. The witch that is dedicated to healing can help even then. This spell is cast either on food or drink that the witch suspects is poisoned or is cast on a person suffering from the effects of poisoning. It instantly neutralises the poison either in the food/drink or the person's body as long the poison's POT is equal to or below the level of the spell. It does not heal any damage already done by the poison, but the target will suffer no further damage. This spell will remove alcohol from ale etc. (essentially, any effective drug - whether recreational or medicinal - counts as a poison for the purpose of this spell) but has no effect on ordinarily harmless foodstuffs that the target is simply allergic to.

Note that this only works on non-magical poisons and will not neutralise potions or similar.

Nightmares

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 12 hours

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches that call on the powers of darkness and practise black magic *are* the things of nightmares and therefore have an intimate understanding of them. Overcoming the target's POW with your character's own, this spell causes the victim to suffer terrible nightmares if they sleep during its duration. Such nightmares wrack the soul and temporarily lower the target's POW by 1 point/level until they get a night's sleep uninterrupted by such horrors. Additional levels can also be used to increase duration by 12 hours.

Alternatively, if the optional sanity rules are being used, 1/1D4 SAN per spell level is lost by the target (assuming that they sleep during the duration of the spell) but they do not suffer a POW penalty.

Possess Item

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1



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From witch-bottles to cursed jewellery, there are rumours that a witch's soul can live on after their death. Occasionally there are witches who can make those rumours true. This is a spell that a witch casts when they think they are going to die, whether through illness, combat or simply old age. They cast it on an item of clothing they are wearing at the time or a tool or weapon they are carrying. As soon as the spell is complete their body disappears, leaving nothing behind.

From then on whenever anyone wears or carries the item in question they must resist the ex-witch's POW score with their own or the witch may possess them as long as they keep the item on their person. Note that they *may* possess the person in question, a white witch who has made use of this spell might choose to leave the original personality in control unless they attempt to do something of which they disapprove or if they need the witch's magic to save their life (or someone else's).

Upon being possessed the victim's skills are all replaced with the witch's skills, as are their INT, POW, DEX and EDU attributes (if EDU is being used). STR, CON, SIZ and APP remain the same. The possession lasts until the victim stops wearing or carrying the item in question - which will probably be a long time since the witch has control of their body and will not want to give it up. The possessor has none of the possessed person's memories, and that combined with their sudden obsession with a particular tool or piece of clothing means that friends and family are likely to be instantly suspicious that something is wrong - especially in a setting where magic is commonly believed in.

If the item in question is destroyed then the witch's soul passes on to wherever souls go to in that setting. The item gains 1HP/level of the spell when it is cast and will no-longer weaken with age once it has the witch's soul within it - it must be physically destroyed however flimsy it may have originally been.

Speak With Animals

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches' rural nature means that they are constantly involved with animals whether wild or domesticated. While this spell allows no supernatural control over the animals in question, sometimes just the opportunity to use your Persuade or Fast Talk skill on an animal is enough. With this spell the witch can converse with an animal and be understood as though they are talking in the animals language, in addition they understand what the animal is 'saying' as though the animal is speaking the witch's language.

This spell normally only targets one animal but each extra level can be used to target one more animal within range or extend the duration by 15 minutes.

Speak with the Dead

Range: 10 meters

Duration: 1 question

Power Point Cost Per Level: 2

Witchcraft has its routes in the ancestor-worshipping priests and priestesses of prehistoric times. Although their nature has changed considerably since then this, one of their oldest spells, is a remnant from those times. White witches use it to solve crimes or settle disputes over a dead person's will, while black witches use it to learn secrets with which they can control their community.

This spell is cast on the skull of a dead person. The rest of them need not be present, but the skull must be at least 95% intact (so if killed by a blow to the head the spell should still work but if the lower jaw is missing it will not). The witch may ask the dead person one question per level of the spell and the dead

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person must answer honestly as far as their knowledge when they were alive led them to believe. The dead are not infallible and any falsehoods they believed in life they will believe in death (some scholars theorise that it is not the true soul of the dead that is recalled but a shade formed from memory, certainly they have no answers about life after death).

This spell can only ever be successfully cast on a skull once, after that it is not possible to commune with the dead person via their skull.

Steal Youth

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 2 as well as 1 POW per level

The most evil of witches seek to live forever by stealing the youth of others. Unlike other spells this spell requires 10 minutes/level to cast, during which time the caster must maintain physical contact with the target (so victims of this spell are normally bound or drugged into unconsciousness). For each level of this spell the victims ages 1 year and the caster gets 1 year younger. The victim suffers all the negative effects of ageing and the caster all the positive effects of getting younger. The only time the victim may gain attributes from ageing is if this spell is cast on a child, in which case they will gain in STR, CON and SIZ. Likewise if the caster for some reason decides to take so many years that they become children they will lose STR, CON and SIZ.

Because of the POW cost of this spell witches rarely age someone to death. However, as they cannot allow knowledge of their use of this spell to escape, having this spell used on you is normally a death sentence. Some orders of black witches engage in a yearly rite in which they kidnap some poor soul who is not likely to be missed and each one of them ages the victim as much as they like. The victim is often aged to death by the end of this process, or changed so much that nobody will believe it is really them, and so there is no need to actually kill them. If they live, sometimes it is crueller to leave them that way.

Weather Control

Range: 1000 meters

Duration: 1 hour

Power Point Cost Per Level: 2

Witches are most often found in rural communities, whether they are their scourge or their protector. In an urban environment a freak rainstorm or drought is an inconvenience but in the countryside it might mean the difference between a year's livelihood or a year of destitution if it comes at the right (or wrong) time. For each level of this spell a witch may increase or decrease one type of weather by one severity level (see below), extra levels may also increase range by 1000 meters or duration by 1 hour. Unlike the Super Power of the same name, this spell affords no control over the temperature - witches may command the wind and the clouds but they have no control over the seasons. The witch's spell is also incapable of causing disastrous weather like tornado-force winds.

Wind

1 None

2 Light or moderate wind

3 Strong wind (-10% skill or movement penalty)

4 Severe wind (-25% skill or movement penalty)

5 Windstorm (-50% skill or movement penalty)

Precipitation

1 None

2 Spots of rain/mists (-5% to spot skill)

3 Rain/fog (-15% to spot skill)

4 Rainstorm/thick fog (-25% to spot skill)

5 Thunderstorm (-25% to spot and listen skills)

Cloud Cover



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- 1 None, totally clear sky
- 2 Light or moderate cloud cover (pre-requisite for spots of rain)
- 3 Heavy cloud cover (pre-requisite for rain)
- 4 Severe cloud cover (pre-requisite for a rainstorm)
- 5 Complete cloud cover (pre-requisite for a thunderstorm)

In addition to this, for one extra spell level the witch can change the direction of the wind (making a witch with this spell very useful on a sailing ship).

For more on weather see *Chapter 7: Spot Rules* in the core book (pg 235-236).

Whispering Wind

Range: 1000 meters

Duration: Instant

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches have control over the wind and the rain; their ability to ‘whistle up a wind’ is well known among the country folk. They can use their control of the wind to make it carry messages to their allies or enemies. This spell makes a message of up to 10 words arrive to a named target (as long as they are within range). Extra levels can be used to add another 10 words or another 1000 meters to the range. The words arrive on a gust of wind beside the ear of the target, quiet but clear.

The words will be heard by the target even in a cacophony because they will be so close to the target’s ear but nobody else is likely to hear unless they are very near the target in a quiet room (a spouse resting in bed with their partner, for example) in which case it is a *difficult* listen roll. The words sound like a generic whisper, nothing in their tone or accent will give the identity of the caster away.



Whispered Words: A Witch's Sorcery

If in your setting the magic system is sorcery rather than magic then the following rules, rather than the ones given above, will apply. With regard to the witch's ability to memorise spells, instead of using a grimoire, the rules given under *An Oral Tradition* still hold. For starting spells, however, the sorcery rules apply meaning that in Normal character creation a witch begins with INT/2 spell levels known, in Heroic character creation they have INT spell levels known, in Epic character creation they have INTx2 spell levels known and in Superhuman character creation they have INTx4 spell levels known.

Typical Sorcery Spells

As well as the new sorcery spells found in this book witches typically have access to the following spells of the BRP core book *Chapter 4: Powers - Cloak of Night, Sorcerer's Sureness, Sorcerer's Beauty, Sorcerer's Soul, Sorcerer's Hammer, Sorcerer's Razor, Sorcerer's Sharp Flame, Sorcerer's Talons, Midnight, Moonrise, Bounty of the Sea*, Flames of the Sun*, Gift of Earth*, Wings of the Sky*, Curse of Sorcery, Liken Shape, Pox, Unbreakable Bonds, Brazier of Power, Chain of Being, Undo Sorcery, Ward, Summon Demon**, Summon Elemental*, Bird's Vision, Heal, Rat's Vision, Refutation, Sorcerer's Ear, Witch Sight*

* These spells are only available if witchcraft comes from a pagan source.

** These spells are only available if witchcraft comes from an infernal source.

New Witch's Sorcery Spells

Broomstick Flight (1-4)

This sorcery spell allows a witch to fly for the duration of the spell. The level 1 version requires an object large enough to sit on (often a broomstick, though it could be anything). The level 2 version allows flight without an object or allows the object to carry an extra person (though there must be space). Each additional level allows the witch to take another (willing) person in flight whether with or without an object (though if travelling without an object the extra people must hold the witch's hand). Unlike the magic spell, control is automatically absolute (treat as Fly 100% for comparative purposes).

Broomstick Flight can be remarkably fast, while flying the object should be treated as a vehicle with a rated speed of 12 (or the witch herself should be, if flying free from an object).

Cure Disease (1-3)

This sorcery spell increases a target's CON by 3 points per level for the purposes of fighting a disease only. In addition it instantly causes a CON roll to shake the disease. Of course, if this roll fails then it might appear that the spell has made the contagion worse and not better; the ignorant often accuse a good witch of being a harbinger of disease because their loved one could not fight it off even with the witch's help. This spell only works against one disease at a time; if the target has multiple diseases that the caster is aware of then the caster must choose which one the spell is going to fight.

Dread (1)

This spell attacks a target's sanity (and is only appropriate if the optional sanity rules are being used in the setting). When this spell is cast your character must overcome the target with a successful power point vs.

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power point resistance roll (current power points, not total). If successful then the target loses 1D6 sanity as they believe disturbing things lurk just beyond their field of vision and are tormented with an unidentifiable but palpable dread.

Luck (4)

For the duration of this sorcery spell the witch can choose to switch around any dice rolls made against skills and attributes, making the tens into the units and the units into the tens (i.e. upon rolling a 91 the player may choose to change it to a 19 if they so wish).

Rodent Transformation (2 or 4)

This sorcery spell allows a witch to transform either themselves (level 2) or another (level 4) into any SIZ 1 creature like a rat, bat, toad etc. for the duration of the spell. In order to cast it on another person your character must overcome the target with a successful power point vs. power point resistance roll (current power points, not total).

The new shape will have all the outward attributes of that shape (including some natural abilities, if any), but the characteristics remain those of the character. Any limitations imposed by the creature's new form are also in effect (such as the inability to speak or write). Whenever applicable, the original being's characteristics and skills are used, or the base skill rating in a skill the character does not possess (such as the Fly skill).

In addition to this the witch can spend 1 permanent POW to change a target permanently. They must set a condition which will end the spell, however (traditionally it is, "You will be a frog until you are kissed," but as that is so widely known it is rarely used after the dark ages). The target will instinctively know what that condition is, so that they may seek it out if they want to reverse the effect or avoid it if it was a voluntary change. Even if the effect is reversed the POW does not return to the witch.

Sap Strength (1-4)

This sorcery spell drains a target of 1 STR per level. In order to cast it your character must overcome the target with a successful power point vs. power point resistance roll (current power points, not total).

Sap Vitality (1-4)

This sorcery spell drains a target of 1 CON per level. In order to cast it your character must overcome the target with a successful power point vs. power point resistance roll (current power points, not total).

Speak with the Dead (2)

This spell is cast on the skull of a dead person. The rest of them need not be present, but the skull must be at least 95% intact (so if killed by a blow to the head the spell should still work but if the lower jaw is missing it will not). The witch may ask the dead person one question and the dead person must answer honestly as far as their knowledge when they were alive will allow. The dead are not infallible and any falsehoods they believed in life they will believe in death (some scholars theorise that it is not the true soul of the dead that is recalled but a shade formed from memory).

Unlike the magic spell, the sorcery spell may be cast numerous times as long as the skull remains intact.

Eye of Newt and Toe of Frog: Witches' Potions

Witches' potions are the stuff of legend in any setting; love potions that cause chaos in mannered courts, healing potions that bring dying warriors back from the brink and sleeping potions that cause princesses to be frozen in time. Potions are part herbalism and part magic, the ingredients have to be right but without the witches' magic all they would be is a strange-tasting (and sometimes poisonous) liquid. For this reason the creation of potions costs power points just as spells do.

The number of potions a witch knows how to make depends on the level of their *Craft (Potion)* skills. For every 20% in *Craft (Potion)* the witch knows how to make one potion (round down, so a witch with 21% in *Craft (Potion)* knows how to make two different potions).



Craft (Potion)

Base Chance: 00%

Category: Manipulation

This skill allows a character to brew some of the potions listed here. It also allows a character to identify by sight and smell a magic potion someone else has brewed (which is an *easy* action with this skill). Although primarily a witch's skill the GM might want to allow it for other magicians or even for characters that only dabble in magic. Potions take about an hour/vial to brew.

Effects: The following are the results for different degrees of success:

Fumble

Your character has spoilt the potion completely and whether or not they notice is entirely at the GM's discretion. Potions spoilt in this way are likely to be a poison of a POT equal to the number of power

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points spent in their creation. The power points your character intended to use are all still used, as are all the ingredients.

Failure

Your character has spoiled the potion and knows it. Only one power point is used no matter how many were going to be invested in the potion but all the ingredients are lost. The potion *might* be poisonous (10% chance of POT equal to half the power points that were to be invested in it) but is most likely just an odd tasting herbal concoction.

Success

Your character has successfully brewed a vial (or more, if they spent more time) of their chosen potion. If it must overcome the POW of the drinker to be effective then it has the equivalent of POW 10 for that purpose only. The entirety of the potion need not be drunk for it to be effective but it will only be effective *once*. The imbiber need only take a gulp to enjoy/suffer the potion's effects but once they do the potion loses all of its magical power and it becomes nothing but tepid water (a person with *Craft (Potion)* can identify a spent potion as such via sight and smell but not what it once did).

Special

Your character has brewed an especially potent elixir. If it must overcome the POW of the drinker to be effective then it has the equivalent of POW 15. The potion has effectively two doses, although if someone gulps the whole thing down it will not double the effect, it just wastes the second dose. Once the effects have been felt twice it becomes tepid water.

Critical

Your character has made a potion of incredible strength. If it must overcome the POW of the drinker to be effective then it has the equivalent of POW 20. The potion has four doses, although if a person drinks too much in one go extra doses might be wasted. Once the effects have been felt four times what little is left becomes tepid water.

Potions

Every one of the potions below is listed with a power point cost and the commonality of its ingredients. What exactly the ingredients are is left to the GM as what is available and what is common, unusual, rare or unique will vary depending on the setting. Common, unusual and rare ingredients are used up on a failed *Craft (Potion)* roll but unique ingredients are only used up on a fumble or a success.

Potion Ingredients

Common

Common ingredients are found everywhere. They tend to be things like sage, beef fat, apple juice etc. They can be bought by any character of *poor* or greater wealth but they can also be harvested or stolen relatively easily. If a witch does not wish to pay for a common ingredient assume it takes a 24 hour period and a successful luck roll to find and harvest the necessary ingredients for 10 potions (this cannot be divided to harvest fewer ingredients in a shorter period - the 24 hours reflects the time taken to find and harvest enough for 1 potion, the fact that a character ends up with enough for 10 reflects the fact that once found the ingredients are likely to be found in quantity and it takes relatively little time to harvest more).

Unusual

Unusual ingredients may be difficult to find (such as a rare but relatively inexpensive gemstone) or relatively difficult to harvest (the classic being eye of newt). They can generally be bought by a character of *average* or greater wealth but the odder types might not be for sale (once again, eye of newt is a good

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example). If a witch wants to find and harvest an unusual ingredient for themselves it normally takes a week and a successful *Difficult* luck roll to yield enough for two potions.

Rare

Rare ingredients are almost impossible to find and/or incredibly difficult to harvest. Rare ingredients might be dragon's scales in high fantasy games or a diamond of at least 20 carats in more down-to-earth settings. Characters with a wealth of *affluent* or better *might* be able to buy a rare ingredient but it is possible that they are so priceless as to make it difficult to find an owner willing to sell. If players and the GM want to make the collection of such ingredients a down-time affair it takes at least six months and a successful roll of POW x 1% to find and harvest enough for a single potion, but if a player wants their witch to get such an ingredient it is an excellent hook for an adventure.

Unique

Only one of the potions listed here requires a unique ingredient but the GM or the witch's player might want to invent more. Unique ingredients are just that - there is one in the setting and once used up that closes the door on making that potion ever again (although optionally it might be possible with a *different* unique ingredient). Examples of unique ingredients are Excaliber, the Holy Grail, an asteroid that fell to earth on a specific day etc. It is remotely possible that *Wealthy* characters could buy such an ingredient but in general only a successful adventure (or series of adventures) should be the route to successful acquisition of a unique item for PCs. There is normally only enough of a unique ingredient for one potion but the GM may change that at their discretion.

Potions and their effects

Anti-Poison

Duration: Instant

Ingredients: Common

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches rarely need to make use of this potion themselves, most that know how to make it also know the *Neutralise Poison* spell and it is a rare witch that trusts another to prepare their food anyway. Rather this is used most often by those rare witches who inveigle themselves into the trust of the nobility. When sprinkled on poisoned food or poured into a poisoned drink it instantly neutralises any and all poisons present as long as the poison's POT is equal to or below the level of the potion. If drank it will instantly stop the effects of any poison the imbiber is suffering from (as long as the poison's POT is not in excess of the potion's level) but will not heal any damage already done. This potion will remove alcohol from ale etc. and remove both the positive and negative effects of most drugs but does nothing to alleviate an allergic reaction to something that is not commonly poisonous.

Note that this only works on non-magical poisons and will not neutralise potions or similar.

Curative Potion

Duration: Varies (ends when the imbiber recovers or dies)

Ingredients: Unusual

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches risk contagion themselves when they cast a *Cure Disease* spell, so witches who are healers sometimes prefer to brew potions which they give to family members of the diseased and thus avoid getting close to the afflicted. The potion is not as effective as the spell, however, it does not heal hit point of attribute damage caused by the disease. Like the *Cure Disease* spell it increases the target's CON by 1 point/level for the purposes of fighting the disease they are suffering from until they recover, unlike the spell it does this for all diseases that the imbiber is suffering from at the time - in this respect only it is



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more effective. This potion has absolutely no effect on diseases caused with the *Contagion* spell unless they have been transformed into natural diseases and have passed through the period of magical illness.

Flying Potion

Duration: 15 minutes

Ingredients: Unusual

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches mostly rely on the spell *Broomstick Flight* to travel to their covens and sabbats but having a potion that enables them to fly has its own utility, especially when a witch with little power left needs to make a quick getaway from an angry mob. This potion allows flight up to 200m into the air, at a maximum speed of the imbiber's running speed (though it uses the imbiber's speed as a basis, no fatigue is caused by flying in this manner). The duration is 15 minutes per level of the potion; very often a witch brews two potions, since the journey back must be made as well.

The creation of flying potions typically requires a hallucinogen. This is absorbed into the potion if it is made successfully and has no additional effect, if the potion is a failure however it will retain its hallucinogenic properties. This has led some ill-informed scholars to conclude that flying potions do not actually exist as such and that the magical flight is entirely in the minds of those who call themselves 'witches'.

Healing Potion

Duration: Instant

Ingredients: Common

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

While not as effective as the *Heal* spell, a healing potion brings the benefit of the magic without the witch having to be near whatever caused the injuries it heals. Healing potions instantly heal 1D3 damage/level. They do not cure disease, neutralise poison or stop the effects of radiation poisoning. Forcing a healing potion down the throat of a person on negative hit points will bring them back from the "dead" if it is done before the end of the round following that in which the victim suffered the mortal wound. Limbs severed are not regrown by this potion but the hit points lost owing to the damage are restored.

Invisibility Potion

Duration: 15 minutes

Ingredients: Unusual

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Along with the *Invisibility* spell, invisibility potions are the reason witches are often suspected of using magic for theft. Sometimes the suspicion is ungrounded, but oftentimes it is not. This potion turns the imbiber totally invisible for the potion's duration (15 minutes per level) but as it works within a person's metabolism *it has no effect on clothing or anything the imbiber carries*. This is an important difficulty with such potions as it means they are most popular in warm climates and not the perfect tool for theft they might be (though they undoubtedly make theft somewhat easier; it is harder to notice a floating necklace than it is a person carrying a necklace).

Love Potion

Duration: 24 hours

Ingredients: Rare

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

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Love potions are a staple in many a romantic or comedic tale. Though they are rarer than their proliferation in such tales would suggest they do exist and some witches earn good money from love-struck young nobles seeking to ensnare the heart of another.

After drinking this potion the imbiber falls head-over-heels in love with the first person they see (it is the GM's decision as to whether this includes genders and/or other humanoid species that the imbiber is not normally attracted to, depending on how much comic potential they want this potion to really have and on the comfort zones of the player of the character in question). Although the duration is 24 hours per level, that is only as long as the supernatural compulsion lasts. Once that effect fades the imbiber remembers how they felt and has no idea that it was due to a magical effect, therefore if the object of their affections is not normally repulsive to them - or out of the question for some other reason - they are likely to assume the feelings were real until proven otherwise, particularly if the other person involved reciprocates. It is, therefore, possible for genuine love to develop out of a use of this potion. It is also possible to make a person absolutely disgusted with themselves so is not to be used lightly, and in more progressive cultures proven use of a love potion is likely to be considered rape.

The effects of love should be roleplayed through and not dictated by rules so there is no direct mechanical benefit to having someone love your character or to your character being in love.

Luck Potion

Duration: 15 minutes

Ingredients: Unusual

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

A lot of people consider the idea of 'luck potions' to be nothing but a con game for gullible fools and, indeed, many witches may sell bogus luck potions but they do have access to the real thing. After drinking this potion the imbiber may choose to switch around the tens and units of any percentile roll made for a better result (i.e. making a 91% roll a 19% roll). This lasts for 15 minutes per level of the potion.

Restoration Potion

Duration: Instant

Ingredients: Rare

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

This rare potion is the ultimate in witches' physical healing capabilities. This will heal *all* damage that an animal, human or not, has taken. Unlike healing potions and the *Heal* spell this will restore lost limbs as well as all lost hp. It will also restore all lowered attributes to their original level (the exception being POW used to create staves, wands, familiars and talismans as that POW is not technically lost but invested elsewhere) including those lowered due to ageing, although the imbiber does not get any younger - their maximum lifespan is not improved by this potion.

This potion effects a being of 2 SIZ per level, if the being drinking it is too large the potion does not lose its effect unless the entirety of it is drunk - in which case the potion is wasted.

Resurrection Potion

Duration: Instant

Ingredients: Unique

Power Point Cost Per Level: 5



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Witches who have both the power to heal and blight lives are considered by the common folk to have power over life and death and for one witch, one day, this potion will make that literally true. Where the knowledge comes from is uncertain (unless witchcraft comes from an infernal source) but some witches learn this potion recipe in case the opportunity to make it presents itself. This potion will raise from the dead, whole and perfectly healthy, anyone as long as it passes through their lips (or where their lips used to be in the cases of skeletons), the only restriction being that they cannot have been dead for longer than 1 year per level of the potion. It even brings back those who died of old age, as it returns the physical body to 17+1D6 years (or whatever default starting age is for their species) thus any damage done in life by the ageing of their body is also removed, though the knowledge acquired throughout their life remains.

Sleeping Potion

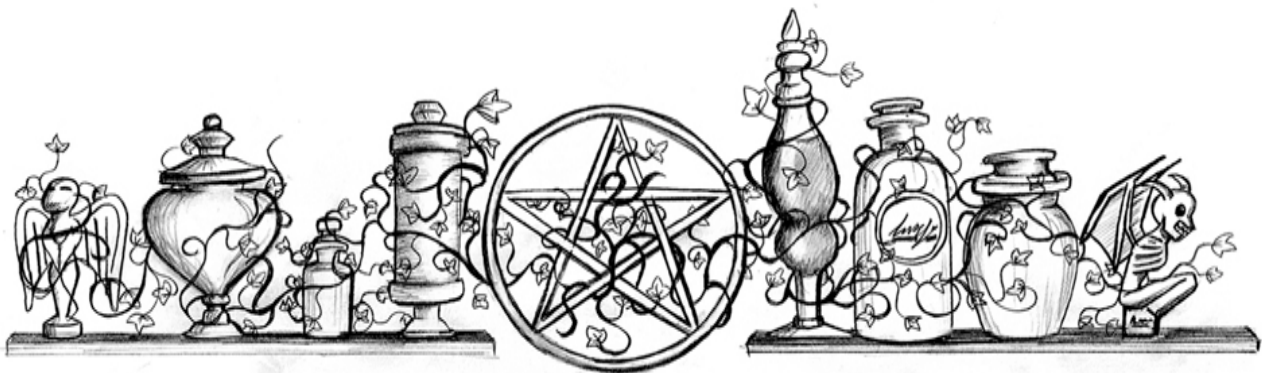
Duration: 15 minutes or 1 year (see below)

Ingredients: Common or rare (see below)

Power Point Cost Per Level: 1

Witches are infamous for putting people into an enchanted sleep, either for a short time to cause mischief or for a long time in revenge for some slight, and this potion is the reason why. It comes in two varieties, one that uses commonly found ingredients and puts the imbiber to sleep for 15 minutes per level and one that uses rare ingredients and puts the imbiber to sleep for 1 year per level. Either way the potion has to beat the imbiber's POW with its own in order to be effective.

During the time the imbiber sleeps they do not age. This is true of both versions of this potion although for the more common version it hardly matters (it takes a lot of power just to make one that lasts a day, and even that would hardly be a noticeable gap in a person's ageing) but for the rarer version it adds an additional utility - some witches, when the authorities are closing in or their enemies have grown too powerful, find a place to hide and brew up a sleeping potion for themselves to drink in the hopes that they will wake up to more favourable conditions.



A Lucky Rabbit's Foot: Talismans

A kind witch might give a friend a talisman that will cure their next disease, an evil witch might find the need to empower their minions with a portion of their magical might and any witch in need of funds might make a talisman to sell.

Talismans are a type of magical item, but unlike other magical items their power is only useable once. They can be any item (ordinarily something worn), although amulets of some kind are most common. The witch need not actually make the item to be enchanted (though they can do so, if they have the capability), rather they add the capacity to contain magic to an item that has already been made.

Unlike potions, which always release their power upon drinking and always affect the imbiber for good or ill, talismans may be prepared to affect someone other than the person wearing or holding them. In addition they release the spell stored within them on a specific trigger decided by the witch upon their creation. This trigger need not be anything near the talisman, so witches *can* use talismans to herald important events the witch would otherwise not know about (with triggers based on political events or similar) however the cost of a talisman in personal power is such that few witches choose to use talismans in this way. It is not normally possible to have more than one trigger, but it is possible to have multiple conditions that need to be fulfilled before a talisman is triggered (as a rule of thumb allow 'and' but not 'or').

Making a talisman costs however many power points the spell would normally cost and 1 POW which returns to the witch once the talisman is triggered. Because of this the witch knows instinctively when the talisman's power has been triggered (though if they have empowered more than one talisman they would not instinctively know which one had been triggered). If a talisman attempts to do something impossible (such as cast an *Invisibility* spell on someone of too great a SIZ for the level of the spell stored in the talisman) then the spell is exhausted and the POW returns to the witch but nothing else happens.

Examples of Talismans and their triggers

A ring with a *Cure Disease* spell which is triggered the moment the wearer catches a serious disease (one which causes attribute loss) and affects the wearer.

A set of manacles with a *Wound* spell which is triggered as soon as the wearer tries to get out of them and affects the wearer.

A bracelet with a *Lightning* spell which is triggered when its wearer says a code word and affects whomever the wearer is pointing at.

A ceremonial crown with a *Dark* spell which is triggered upon the death of the current king and centres on the crown itself.

A suit of armour that casts a *Heal* spell on the wearer once they have suffered significant injury (their hp drops to less than 1/4 of their maximum or they take a major wound).

Craft (Talisman)

Base Chance: 00%

Category: Manipulation

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This skill allows the character to prepare an item to contain a magic spell which will be triggered once conditions set by the talisman's creator are met. It also allows the character to tell if an item is a talisman and, under certain circumstances, what spell the talisman contains. Although primarily a witch's skill the GM might want to allow it for other magicians or even for characters that only dabble in magic. A talisman normally takes a full working day to complete (about eight hours).

The witch can put any spell they know into a talisman. The Craft (Talisman) roll replaces the roll made to cast the spell, which means a witch may be far better at creating a talisman of a spell than at casting it normally (or *vice versa*). In the case of a spell which requires a POW vs. POW contest the POW of the witch *before* the talisman was made is used. If it is sorcery and requires a power point vs. power point contest then the amount of power points put into the spell are used for the talisman.

Effects: The following are the results for different degrees of success:

Fumble

On a fumble, ordinarily, the witch loses all the power points that would have gone into the spell being stored and the talisman is not only not capable of storing the spell it will never be capable of becoming a magic item of any kind - it has been ruined for such things. Optionally the GM could have something else happen; the item might be totally destroyed or it might become a talisman but have its trigger changed in a crucial way the witch is unaware of. Unless a talisman of some kind is created the character does not lose the POW they would have used.

If using the skill to analyse whether or not an item is a talisman the character gets a totally wrong result.

Failure

Your character wastes the day attempting and failing to make the item in question into a talisman. The character loses one power point, but no more than that no matter how many would have gone into the spell. They may try to enchant the talisman again, the item's capability to be magically enchanted is unaffected.

If using the skill to analyse whether or not an item is a talisman the character is simply not sure.

Success

Your character creates the talisman, which will be triggered exactly as specified. The character loses however many power points the spell requires and 1 POW which returns when the talisman is triggered.

If using the skill to analyse whether or not an item is a talisman the character can tell but does not know what spell or trigger is on it.

Special

Your character creates the talisman, which will be triggered exactly as specified. In addition to that the character can choose to add another condition which will trigger the spell (the crown casts the *Dark* spell centred on itself when the king dies *or* is deposed, for example). The character loses however many power points the spell requires and 1 POW which returns when the talisman is triggered.

If using the skill to analyse whether or not an item is a talisman the character can tell and, if it is, knows which spell is on it - the trigger is still a mystery to them though.

Critical

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Your character creates the talisman, which will be triggered exactly as specified. In addition to that the character can choose to add a second condition which will trigger the talisman as per a special success or not have to spend a point of POW, having somehow wrought the item in such a way that the POW comes from within the item itself (though this does have the minor disadvantage that the character does not automatically know when the talisman has been used since the POW does not return to them).

If using the skill to analyse whether or not an item is a talisman the character can tell and knows both the spell and trigger condition(s). They will even learn command words or gestures in a flash of supernatural insight.



That Ol' Black Magic: Witches' Allegiance

This section gives the GM and players optional rules for colouring magic 'black' or 'white' as per the allegiance rules which can be found in *Chapter 10: Settings* in the core BRP book (pg. 315-318).

Black and White Magic

Black and white, in the case of a witch's magic, do not directly equate to evil and good (respectively). Black magic draws its power from anger and hatred but a witch who is angry at injustice and hates tyrants is not evil. Likewise white magic draws its power from empathy with others but there are times when a cruel tyrant should not be healed and the status-quo should not be calmly accepted.

In the case of a setting where witchcraft comes from an infernal source white witchcraft is impossible. In a pagan setting black witchcraft comes from darker, more warlike gods whereas white witchcraft comes from kinder deities. In a setting where witchcraft comes from the witches' own power, black and white witches gain their extra power from following their own particular path of enlightenment. Sometimes in these settings black magic is referred to as "the Left-Hand Path" while white magic is referred to as "the Right-Hand Path".

The ability to colour magic black or white is not necessarily limited to witches. Essentially all a character needs to follow either path of allegiance is the ability to use magic. While not all the actions in alignment with these paths refer to magic, a character without it simply cannot align themselves in the same way (and would not find the benefits of much use either).

The Ethos of Black Magic

Black witches and magicians concentrate on violence and darkness; they channel their anger and hatred into magic and manipulate others with the secrets that they trade. Black magic is so called because it comes from the night, from mortals' fear of what might be lurking in the darkness.

The Ethos of White Magic

White witches and magicians concentrate on healing and light; they channel their empathy into magic and attempt to remain neutral in conflict. Their's is a more passive position but a healer can sometimes have more influence over those they have healed than a black witch who attempts to control by fear. White magic is so called because it brings light to darkness, freeing people from their fear of death and disease.

Black and White Spells

In a setting which uses black and white magic certain spells are allied to either force by their very nature, though most are not tied to either. If witchcraft comes from an infernal source then the GM might wish to disallow white magic spells for witches entirely, though this is not recommended as part of the allure of selling your soul is the chance to some good with the powers gained. Below are lists of spells that are considered white, neutral and black magic. Spells which are not normally available to witches but are in the core book are in [block parentheses].

When deciding whether a new spell is white, neutral or black it is important to look at both the actual effects of the spell and the atmosphere it evokes. Any healing spell is likely to be white magic, unless it heals at the cost of harming another in some way in which case it may be neutral (if it can heal anyone) or

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black magic (if it only heals the caster). Any spell directly linked to light will be white magic, and most protection spells will be white magic (*Wall* is not because it has more utility than simple, direct protection of an individual). Not all harmful spells are black magic (though they can never be white), *Blast* is a neutral spell for example. In order for a harmful spell to be black magic it should have a visceral nature to it, hence the only direct-to-hp damage spell which counts as black magic is *Wounding* - black magic spells which hurt a target tend to be slower and longer-lasting. Magic that causes fear in others is always black magic, as is magic which totally overcomes a human target's free will (something more subtle than *Control*, such as a spell which puts a suggestion into a target's mind but will not force the target to go against their nature/allegiance might be neutral).

White spells

Cure Disease

[Dull]

Enhance

Heal

Luck

[Light]

Neutralise Poison

[Protection]

[Resistance]

Grey/Neutral Spells

Banish Ghost*

[Blast]

Broomstick Flight

Change (either version)

[Conjure Elemental]**

Countermagic

Dispel

[Flame]

Foretelling

[Frost]

[Illusion]

Invisibility

[Lift]

Lightning

Perception

Possess Item

[Seal]

[Speak to Mind]

Speak with Animals

Speak With the Dead

[Teleport]

[Unseal]

Vision

[Wall]

[Ward]

Weather Control

Whispering Wind

Black spells

Aura of Dread

Conjure Demon

Contagion

Control

Curse of Ill Fortune

Dark

Diminish

Nightmares

[Sharpen]

Steal Youth

Wounding

* *Banish Ghost* might be black or white magic depending on the nature of ghosts in the setting. See the spell description for details.

** *Conjure Elemental* might be available to witches whose magic comes from a pagan source. See **Spirits or Demons: The Source of Witchcraft** for details.



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If you are using the sorcery rules instead of the magic rules then the following lists apply:

White Spells

[Breath of Life]
Cure Disease
Heal
Luck
[Make Whole]
Moonrise

Grey/Neutral Spells

Bird's Vision
Bounty of the Sea*
Brazil of Power
Broomstick Flight
Chain of Being
Flames of the Sun*
Gift of the Earth*
Liken Shape
Make Fast
[Muddle]
Rat's Vision
Refutation
Rodent Transformation
[Sorcerer's Armour]
Sorcerer's Beauty
[Sorcerer's Bulwark]
Sorcerer's Ear
[Sorcerer's Eye]
Sorcerer's Hammer
[Sorcerer's Leap]
[Sorcerer's Plasticity]
Sorcerer's Razor
Sorcerer's Sharp Flame
Sorcerer's Soul
[Sorcerer's Speed]
[Sorcerer's Suppleness]
Sorcerer's Sureness
Sorcerer's Talons
[Sorcerer's Vitality]
[Sorcerer's Wisdom]
Speak with the Dead
Summon Elemental*
Unbreakable Bonds
Undo Sorcery
Ward
Wings of the Sky*
Witch Sight

Black Spells

Cloak of night
Curse of Sorcery
Dread
[Fury]
Midnight
Pox
Sap Strength
Sap Vitality
Summon Demon**

* Only available to witches in settings where witchcraft comes from a pagan source.

** Only available to witches in settings where witchcraft comes from an infernal source.

Allegiance to White Magic

The following actions align a character towards white magic. The amount by which the actions increase the allegiance is given in (parentheses).

Learning a white magic spell (1)

Teaching a white magic spell (2)

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- Protecting another at no personal risk (1)
- Putting yourself at risk of injury to help another (2)
- Putting yourself at risk of death to help another (3)
- Saving another's life (2)
- Saving another's soul (3)
- Being open and honest even when it is to your detriment (1)
- Destroying a creature of darkness (1-3 depending on their relative strength)

Benefits

Once a character is aligned to white magic the character can use up to 1/5 (20%) of his or her current allegiance points as an extra reserve of power points for white magic only. These power points may be drawn upon up to three times during the course of a game session and may be mixed with a character's normal power points to make a white magic spell of especially high level.

Apotheosis

Upon apotheosis to the path of white magic the character's APP immediately doubles as all blemishes disappear and they attain an otherworldly serenity. The character will no longer age and does not suffer from disease or other afflictions; though poisoning or physical violence can still damage and even kill the character. In addition to these effects white magic spells cost half their usual power points for the character (though using fractions of a power point is not possible and fractions should be rounded up - if a spell now costs half a power point per level then at level 1 it costs 1 point, as it does at level 2).

If this kind of apotheosis is attained with witchcraft that comes from a pagan source then the character has a POW x 3% chance of initiating direct and immediate communication with their god(s) and the character's god(s) may interfere in their life directly. If witchcraft comes from a neutral source there is no deific intelligence behind witchcraft and so neither of these events will occur.

Allegiance to Black Magic

The following actions align a character towards black magic. The amount by which these actions increase the allegiance is given in (parentheses):

- Learning a black magic spell (1)
- Teaching a black magic spell (2)
- Hurting another physically (1)
- Hurting another emotionally (2)
- Killing another (3)
- Learning a valuable secret (1)
- Destroying a creature of light (1-3 depending on its relative strength)
- Lying to the detriment of another (2)
- Making a deal with an infernal creature (3)*
- Persuading another to make a deal with an infernal creature (3)*

*Only in settings where witchcraft is granted by infernal powers. Obviously, in these settings witches automatically start with at least 3 in allegiance to black magic as they must already have made a deal with the infernal in order to get their powers.

Benefits



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Once a character is aligned to black magic the character can use up to 1/5 (20%) of his or her current allegiance points as an extra reserve of power points for black magic only. These power points may be drawn upon up to three times during the course of a game session and may be mixed with a character's normal power points to make a black magic spell of especially high level.

Apotheosis

Upon apotheosis to the path of black magic the character's APP immediately halves as the darkness within their soul consumes them and their bodies appear aged and twisted. The character will no longer age (despite appearances) and does not suffer from disease or other afflictions; though poisoning or physical violence can still damage and even kill the character. In addition to these effects black magic spells cost half their usual power points for the character (though using fractions of a power point is not possible and fractions should be rounded up - if a spell now costs half a power point per level then at level 1 it costs 1 point, as it does at level 2).

If this kind of apotheosis is attained with witchcraft that comes from a pagan source then the character has a POW x 3% chance of initiating direct and immediate communication with their god(s) and the character's god(s) may interfere in their life directly. If witchcraft comes from an infernal source they have a POW x 5% chance of initiating contact but infernal beings constantly pester the character; with offers of more power in exchange for further corruption of their body and soul or with commands if they have already given themselves over to the infernal completely (which is likely if they have attained apotheosis in black magic). If witchcraft comes from a neutral source there is no deific/infernal intelligence behind witchcraft to communicate with or to interfere with the caster's life.



Mystical Artifacts: Unique Magical Items

There are items associated with witchcraft, either through possession or creation by witches, that can never be replicated - the power in them is truly unique. They are included primarily for the GM to include in their campaigns if they so wish, however a cost in character points is given along with each artifact - if the GM allows then players may use their starting character points to buy possession of such an item. Characters whose profession is witch may spend their profession points on these artifacts but other characters may only spend their personal point pool on an artifact of witchcraft.

The Hand of Glory

Description

The *Hand of Glory* is a preserved severed hand, cut off cleanly just above the wrist where the arm bone has been removed and the skin sewn together. It is holding a candle with a wick that looks like human hairs twisted together. It is said that the hand belonged to a hanged murderer and that the candle is made from the murderer's fat with a wick made from his hair. As a candle-holder it is as inadequate as it is grisly; it does not stand up by itself and must be held upright to keep the candle lit and safe - apart from the likelihood of hot wax dripping on naked flesh one might as well hold the candle oneself.



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Legend

Almost every witch knows what the legendary *Hand of Glory* is made from and a few even know how the hand was preserved but none know how it was made into more than an awkward candlestick - the ritual that empowered it is lost. According to legend it was created by a feckless young man who could not settle on one single profession. He learnt a little of the priest's arts as well as a little witchcraft before he finally settled on thievery, finding it to be the least hard work.

Eventually he was caught and imprisoned with a man condemned for murder. He struck up a friendship with the condemned man and when he complained about the hand he was about to lose for theft his new friend told him, "You can have mine, I don't need it anymore." The young thief waited until both their sentences were carried out and took the murderer at his word.

Cutting the hanging corpse down was difficult with only one hand, as was dragging it back to his hovel. Once there he cut off the hand and used the skills at preservation he had learnt tending the dead as a novice priest to make sure it would not rot. He forced it into such a position that it would hold a candle, most of his work was done at night after all, and strapped it to the stump where his left hand once was. It was poverty that drove him to use the fat of his dead friend as a candle and his hair as the wick, though some say dark gods or the Devil were guiding his hand.

Once it was completed the young man went out stealing again, his course lit by the candle in the dead man's hand. It was not until he went to force a window open that he realised it had magic; the window opened for him immediately and inside the family were all as still as statues in whatever position they had been before his entrance. Knowing the riches his magical hand would give him he named it the *Hand of Glory*.

The young man retired wealthy and passed the *Hand of Glory* on to another thieving witch. Ever since then it has been passed down from successful thief to successful thief, the perfect tool for those who want to take that which does not belong to them.

Powers

The powers of the *Hand of Glory* do not reveal themselves until someone holds it and lights it. Once they do it has two major powers; firstly any lock within its light will unlock automatically (though it does not necessarily disarm any traps unconnected with the lock), secondly *any* person within its light other than the person holding the hand will be frozen in place. Those frozen are in fact frozen in time completely, the person holding the hand cannot injure them or move them and they will not see what occurs during the time they are trapped in place - they are in complete, unknowing stasis (if the effect lasts long enough they may realise once they are out of it that they have lost time).

The *Hand* does have a third, minor power. Although the candle looks half-exhausted and melted it *always* looks like that and will in fact never burn out, though hot wax does drip from it while lit.

Character point cost = 150

Baba Yaga's Hut

Description

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The witch Baba Yaga lived in a hut which moved about on giant chicken legs. It is a rude building made of rough-hewn wood but its unnatural legs are not the only strange thing about it. It has no windows and no door, Baba Yaga herself flew in and out of its chimney on her mortar. For this reason the hut is of no use to anyone who does not have the *Broomstick Flight* spell or some other way to get in and out of a wide chimney. The chicken legs themselves are about five feet tall and, as the hut itself is so small that anyone over SIZ 14 finds its single room too low, it is only about eleven feet tall overall.

Inside the hut is a single room about 10'x15'x6'. It has a fireplace large enough for a cooking pot, straw in one corner for a bed (which need never be replaced, as part of the magic of the hut it is never entirely fresh but never so dirty as to be unbearable for someone used to sleeping on straw, if someone tried to replace it to make it truly fresh it just gets grubby again, as does any bed that is somehow brought in) and a creaky old wooden chair which always seems on the verge of collapse but never does. There is also a large mortar and pestle, a rusty bucket full of water and a tinderbox beside the fire.

Legend

The legend of Baba Yaga's hut is the legend of the witch herself. Her name is whispered in fear and awe even among other witches and it is thought that she reached the apotheosis of black magic as her appearance is that of a hideously old hag. She is rumoured to be a cannibal but also rumoured to be willing to help those who are young, pure of heart and in need of guidance. Perhaps both are true and that she feels it is her right to consume anyone who comes to her and does not fit the criteria for receiving her help. Perhaps one of the rumours is a lie put about to either lure victims or prevent cowards from seeking her wisdom, depending on which is the lie.

It is not known whether or not Baba Yaga created the hut or whether she acquired it by other means but most witches suspect the hut is her own creation - why would another witch have the power to create something so unique and yet be forgotten by history and legend? Baba Yaga herself has not been seen in hundreds of years but her hut can be spotted wandering apparently aimlessly through the forests of Russia or squatting by a lake.

Powers

The hut's most obvious power is that the chicken legs it stands on allow it to move about. It will obey the commands anyone gives to it as long as they speak in Russian (although for more character points a player can have it only obey their character). It cannot move by any means other than walking, meaning it cannot swim - though it is not stopped by water its inhabitants will drown as it walks underwater if the water is deep enough. The floor of the hut is not waterproof and so as soon as the chicken legs are below the waterline it will take on water (if the floor and walls were waterproof the witch inside would have a problem if it ever rained and the rain came down the chimney).

Secondly, though its owner may never discover it, the hut is totally impervious to damage, inside and out. Arrows, bullets, grenades, nuclear explosions... nothing will penetrate or even scratch its hide (in the case of nuclear explosions the fallout can still get in through the chimney, though the mind boggles at the kind of game that involves nuking Baba Yaga's hut). This indestructibility extends to its furniture, though not to any extra furniture introduced to the hut.

Finally, it is unchanging within. There is always an ample supply of wood in the fire, even if you remove some to light a fire with elsewhere (effectively making it a never-ending supply of average quality firewood), the tinderbox never needs replenishing, the rusty bucket refills with water moments after it is used to douse the fire (and the water within is always slightly murky, but not grotesque and drinkable if a character is desperate enough) and the straw that makes up the bed never needs changing. The same



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magic that does all this tries to keep the hut in a certain gloomy medieval-Russian-peasant fashion, though, no matter how its owner may try to brighten it up. Paintings dull, fresh straw becomes instantly musty, a new bucket will rust in the space of an hour etc. etc. - the witch who lives in Baba Yaga's hut lives easily but not well.

Character point cost = 100 (150 if it will only obey the character's commands)

The Bloodthirsty Blade

Description

The bloodthirsty blade is a well-made, rich looking sword of the type that would be wielded by a man of some status - possibly even a king. Its blade has an unusually deep fuller, so deep that any expert on swordsmanship would fear that the blade will break due to the weakness it must cause. The contradiction between the quality of the sword and the apparently shoddy workmanship stands out to anyone with a bit of knowledge.

Upon holding it there is a sense of malicious energy; something about it is foreboding like a run-down old mansion. It is enticing, though - it gives the impression that the energy is the rightful inheritance of its possessor.

Legend

The Bloodthirsty Blade was forged in hell and given to the Inquisition when one of their number, now known as Saint Gustav, decided to use the power of evil against itself and sold his soul to a demonic agent. He was, of course, an unwitting tool against an infernalist who had betrayed the Devil by turning from evil and using his powers for the betterment of others. The sword has since remained in the hands of the Inquisition, corrupting it and driving its best warriors to the slaughter of innocents.

There is more about the Order that possesses the blade in the section *All That's Best of Dark and Bright: Sample Organisations*.

Powers

The Bloodthirsty Blade is a bastard sword but the magic within it gives +10% to its use. Its real power reveals itself in the heat of battle and the hands of a skilled swordsman. Every hit point it takes is absorbed by the blade so that its wielder can use it in one of the following ways:

Hit points stored in the blade can be spent to heal the wielder's injuries on a 1 for 1 basis.

The wielder can increase their STR for the duration of the fight spending 5 of the stored hit points on increasing their STR by 1 (with a commensurate increase in damage bonus, if applicable).

The wielder can increase their percentage skill with the sword for the duration of the fight on a 1 for 1 basis.

The wielder can spend 5 of the stored hp to prevent the effects of a special success against them - i.e. while the damage is still the same the extra effect of bleeding, crushing, entangling, impaling or knockback damage is ignored.

Once the combat is over (the character wielding the sword spends 10 minutes or more not engaged in combat-based activity) the stored hit points drain out of the sword - they cannot be kept in reserve for a really important fight later.

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The *Bloodthirsty Blade* has a further power than is not of benefit to the wielder; it is addictive. After every combat in which the *Blade's* powers have been used the wielder must make a successful luck roll. If they fail then they become addicted to the feeling of power the blade gives them and will go looking for fights in future. This has a number of effects - firstly their charisma roll is reduced by 10% owing to the undercurrent of aggression in everything they do, secondly when anybody acts in a way that could be construed as against the character's interests they must succeed on a luck roll or attempt to resort to violence using the *Blade* and finally if the character wants to use a weapon other than the *Blade* for combat they must make a successful luck roll or they cannot bring themselves to do it.

Note: The *Bloodthirsty Blade* can only take hit points from creatures that actually have blood. A walking tree might have hit points but the *Blade* cannot power itself on sap, for example.

Character point cost = 100

The Ghost Servant

Description

The character possesses something which anchors the spirit of a ghost. This anchor can be anything, but most often it is the skull of the deceased person. There is not normally anything remarkable about an anchor, but if it is not a part of the deceased's body it will be an item that was important to them and such things are often valuable or unusual in and of themselves.

Legend

The reason why a witch or other character has a ghost servant will vary. If ghosts are ordinarily evil, vengeful or hate-fuelled in your setting then the likelihood is that the ghost is bound against its will unless your character is also a force for evil. If ghosts are almost always good then the ghost may help the character out of a sense of duty or kindness.

Most often, though, ghost servants are a personal ancestor - sometimes distant and sometimes recent - whose soul has been preserved in their skull or some other important artifact. Characters come into them as heirlooms if they are ancient spirits or may discover them after a relative's death.

Powers

The *Ghost Servant* is a ghost's anchor and the character may summon the ghost by touching the anchor and willing them to manifest. The character may will them to appear to everybody or only to themselves and remain invisible to everyone else. Its powers are that of an ordinary ghost but it cannot move more than 100' from the anchor. The *Ghost Servant's* main utility is in its experience, intelligence and wisdom. It can help the character with advice and with its ability to secretly spy on anywhere within 100'. It may also attack another sentient being and then possess it as per the rules on pg. 343 of the BRP core book but it will not ordinarily risk driving itself to zero power points for the character.

Character point cost = 20 to 100 depending on the *Ghost Servant's* knowledge. Also add 5 character points per characteristic point above the average which the ghost possesses.

Scrying Mirrors

Scrying mirrors, unlike most of the artifacts listed here, are not unique but the art of making them has been lost and because of that they are extraordinarily rare.



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Description

Scrying mirrors tend to look quite plain as mirrors go, a simple silver frame being the most extravagant decoration they have. Some of them are hand-mirrors, some are mirrors made to hang on a wall. They are instantly recognisable, though, as they are entirely black and despite their shine do not seem to reflect anything - as though they are a portal into a void (they are totally solid, but if a character with a relevant knowledge skill inspects it they will not be able to figure out quite what the surface is made of).

Legend

Scrying mirrors were made in the times when witches had more knowledge and more raw power. They were made by powerful witch-queens and witch-kings in order to spy on their enemies using material drawn from other worlds. The gateways to those worlds are closed now and the method of making scrying mirrors lost, but the power of the mirrors still remains.

Every excellent spy-master and uncannily brilliant (or lucky) general is rumoured to have access to a scrying mirror but most of the time the rumours are nothing more than tall tales. The truth is most scrying mirrors are in the hands of families who were once powerful but are now nothing more than struggling witches in inauspicious towns and villages or are hidden in tombs and forgotten hoards waiting to be unearthed.

Powers

A scrying mirror can, theoretically, offer a view of anywhere in the world (or, if your campaign has that scope, anywhere in the universe). In practise, though, they are difficult to control. Controlling the view a scrying mirror shows requires a new skill 'Scrying'. Until they have practised any character's 'Scrying' is equal to their POW attribute.

Every time a character tries to spy on a new area with the scrying mirror they must spend a power point and roll against their skill in Scrying.

FUMBLE: The scrying mirror briefly shows a vision of something awful. It could be a vision of hell, or a planet full of zombies or the visage of an ancient monster sleeping under the ocean depending on what is appropriate for the setting. Whatever the vision is, it will paralyse the character using the mirror (and anyone else attempting to look into it at the time) for 10 rounds. If the optional sanity rules are being used they will also lose 1/1D6 sanity, if they are not the character will be shaken for the next hour and suffer -5% to all skills during that hour.

FAILURE: The scrying mirror shows only blackness.

SUCCESS: The scrying mirror shows the room, area or person that the character wanted to spy on as though the character is standing there. It will show the area or person for as long as the character keeps looking in the mirror - if the person moves the image will follow them at a distance of about five paces (as it will if the place moves, if it is the deck of a ship for example). There is no audible effect, though characters might be able to lip-read.

SPECIAL: As a success, but the image remains until the character wishes it to be dispelled instead of disappearing as soon as they look away. Owing to this effect very occasionally a mirror might be found that still shows the last thing its previous owner was scrying on (owing to its owner dying or otherwise being unable to will the image away).

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CRITICAL: As a special success except that the mirror also has an audio effect and anyone observing can hear the area it spies on as though they were there.

It is possible to use the mirror to spy on somewhere or someone that is not yet known to its user. They can demand that the mirror show them the fairest beauty in the kingdom, for example, or a person that plans to betray them. Doing this is a *Difficult* Scrying roll and, at the GM's option, a fumble will show the wrong place or person instead of a nightmare vision.

While a witch's player can (with the GM's permission) buy the scrying mirror itself with profession points buying up the Scrying skill always costs personal character points at character creation.

Character point cost = 100



All That's Best of Dark and Bright: Sample Organisations

This section describes organisations of witches in which PCs or NPCs may have membership. Although they are relatively setting-specific many of the tropes found within the organisations could be true of witchcraft organisations in other settings.

The Old Religion

This witchcraft organisation is designed for a medieval-renaissance setting in which witchcraft comes from a pagan source.

A Dying Faith

The organisation that calls itself *The Old Religion* is the remnant of the pagan priests and priestesses that virtually ruled the land before their faith was washed from the minds of ordinary men and women by other faiths which converted by invasion, missionary zeal or both. In many cases they are the distant ancestors of those pagan spiritual leaders but some people are drawn to it from outside, seeking a religion that is more primal and visceral than the faith the majority follow.

The true history of the Old Religion is uncertain; its history, faith and magic are all an oral tradition which even the most fervent believers agree must have changed with time. Roughly, though, the history of the tradition is told as...

In a time before nations and kings, man listened to the wind and looked to the moon and sun for guidance. They heard the words of the gods on that wind and saw divine movements in the motion of the moon and sun. Those who listened and observed most carefully were taught the ways of magic and became the first priests, the first men and women who served as a link between the people and the gods.

The first priests joined the gods, and from beyond the veil of death commanded that their children would carry the torch of faith for all eternity and that as long as they were worshipped the people to whom they had once belonged would be forever protected. For years uncounted the priests and priestesses interpreted the gods' will but slowly they became corrupt, accruing power for themselves and neglecting the will of the gods.

To punish them the gods brought new, false faiths to the land seeking to weed out those priests who were no longer true to them and to bring a new age of enlightenment to the land. However, despite the claims of modern men who claim to know their god, the gods are not infallible. The priests that were still true to their gods were too few and the invaders too numerous. Most of the false priests who sought only power converted to the new ways and the old ways stood on the verge of annihilation.

That was when the most powerful male priest of the Old Religion met with the two most powerful women, one a mistress of black magic and the other a mistress of white magic. Together they decided that if the faith was to survive it would have to be re-organised, brought together as one whole and then sent out in groups of three or seven (both magic numbers) to perform the old rites and ensure that, whatever new god the people followed, the old gods would still protect them.

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That first gathering of all the remaining priests took years to arrange and when it did some proved traitors and informed the new, powerful religion about it. However, despite its temporal power it had nothing to match the magic of the Old Religion's priests and an attempt to eliminate the last vestiges of them turned into a bloodbath after which the priests of the Old Religion danced naked around the funeral pyres as their enemies' corpses burned.

Since that first night we have met in the same place every year for centuries, carrying out our secret rites and revels in an attempt to bring the Old Religion back. We are persecuted, hunted as 'witches', but the memory of that first great victory at the first Sabbat reminds us that the true gods are with us and that one day the false god's followers will be driven from our shores forever.

Some few among the Old Religion do not believe it is truly as old as the organisation's histories say. These heretics believe that the first Sabbat was in fact the first time the organisation discovered its magic, possibly via grisly sacrifices to old, forgotten gods. Those within the organisation who believe this keep it to themselves, mostly, but it is an opinion that gains great weight during the renaissance when modernity usurps antiquity as the basis for authority.

While the Old Religion's over-arching aim is to bring the old gods back into popular favour, it has the more immediate aim of protecting the people whom those old gods pledged to defend forever. To that end they still live among communities, in villages and towns, and either work to spite the men and women whose obedience to the new god is most fervent (and so follow the path of black magic and warrior gods) or to heal those who need it and, hopefully, spread faith in the old gods by their good works (and so follow the path of white magic). Some, of course, do both.

Meeting times and rites: Sabbats and Covens

The Old Religion is traditionally led by three people; one man and two women. The man is a channel for all the gods, both cruel and kind, and is referred to as the High Priest. One of the women is a white witch and the other a black witch. (These women are normally paragons of that path and have reached apotheosis, though if one should die without another female paragon of the appropriate colour magic to replace her a woman deemed to be *near* apotheosis is chosen.) The black witch is known as 'The Crone' and the white witch as 'The Lady'; since they can only be killed by violence or poison it is rare for them to need replacing. The High Priest, on the other hand, is replaced about every ten years as it is a position earned by seniority and the High Priest is never a paragon. Indeed, it is considered good that the High Priest is always mortal as it means that he may join the gods and increase the Old Religion's power upon his death.

The High Priest, Crone and Lady maintain constant communication throughout the year, via various magical means, but only ever meet physically at the yearly Sabbat. It would be an exaggeration to say that *every* witch in the Old Religion gets to the Sabbat but not to go is to lose face and to miss two or three in a row is considered very bad form. Certainly, anyone who misses more than one in succession is unlikely to rise the ranks any further unless they do something spectacular. To that end, every witch that can get to the Sabbat does get to the Sabbat - even if it is at some personal inconvenience.

The Sabbat has three stages: rites, announcements and revels. The rites are the oldest and most powerful of the Old Religion's rituals and are led by the High Priest, Crone and Lady. They do involve one human sacrifice (which is the only human sacrifice the Old Religion makes in a year), normally of an unnamed and unwanted child. This sacrifice is made by the Crone, of course. This raising of power allows the witches present to put one power point each into a single ritual's effects. This could be the creation of a permanent magical item or to cause the death of a particularly despised and nigh-invulnerable enemy but most often the power is simply channelled to the old gods to increase their power.



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Once the rites are completed the announcements follow. The announcements are declarations with regard to plans for the coming year - which the High Priest, Crone and Lady have decided on long before the actual night - and promotions. Promotions of acolytes to practising witch are announced in groups, much like a school's graduation process. Promotions within Coven (normally to Priest or Priestess) are announced individually and then finally any major promotions are announced - most commonly to High Priest of a coven.

After the announcements are passed the revels follow. These revels last all night and, as Sabbats are held in late October or early November (the exact date varies as the Old Religion follows a lunar rather than a solar calendar), all night covers several hours. Drugs of all kinds are taken and inhibitions are put aside as the gods are worshipped in a frenzy of joy. It is at these revels that young witches meet members of their age group who are not immediate family. Often friendships and romantic relationships will spring from the Sabbat revels and in this way the Old Religion propagates itself and maintains a sense of comradery despite great distances.

Locally the Old Religion is organised into covens of three or seven members (in later time periods the Old Religion becomes influenced by new superstition and begins to aim for thirteen members in a coven but that number is rarely reached as it is impractical for such a small and widely dispersed organisation). The reasons for the numbers three and seven are both spiritual and practical: they are considered magical and holy numbers by the Old Religion but as they are odd numbers they allow for any disagreements to be settled by a clear majority.

The covens of seven are always arranged in the same way; three women one of which is Priestess and three men one of which is Priest and these six members may be Black, White or Grey witches. The seventh is a master of ceremonies, though their actual title varies from coven to coven (Huntsman or Huntswoman is common but the reason for that is lost to time). This master of ceremonies may be male or female but must never be a Black or White witch, they must remain neutral with regard to the gods they obey as in rituals they act as a mouthpiece for whichever god is being contacted.

The covens of three are arranged in a variety of different ways. A single-gender coven will generally have a Priestess/Priest (the most senior member), an Acolyte (the second-most senior) and an Apprentice (the most junior). This last title can be very deceptive, in an experienced coven the 'Apprentice' might have twenty years as a practising witch under their belt. Some covens of three base themselves on the three leaders of the Old Religion - two women, one Black, one White, with one man acting as a fulcrum between them. These covens tend to go on to produce witches who eventually ascend to the top of the organisation as they are already used to that system. Still more are small family units; a father, mother and eldest child. These are just the most common forms of three-witch covens, the local variations are endless. Scholars among the Old Religion have used this both to claim that the three-witch coven is of greater antiquity to the seven-witch coven and *vice versa*, no-one is entirely sure.

Covens of thirteen are rare even when they are considered be the ideal. When they do exist their hierarchy normally consists of a Priest and Priestess at the top with the other members fulfilling various ritual roles as necessary. Sometimes there is still the title Acolyte and Apprentice with 'Acolyte' referring to a member with magical skill (the majority) and 'Apprentice' referring to those still learning the craft. These covens attempt to maintain equanimity between the sexes with the Priest or Priestess making up the odd number but often that is not practical.

Although the night of the Sabbat is their main celebration, the Old Religion does have other important celebrations throughout the year which are kept as strictly local affairs (though they may involve more than one local coven).

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Their second most important celebration happens in mid-Spring; the Beltane revels, occurring about six months after the Sabbat, are a time for marriages - the confirmation in the faith of those relationships that began at the Sabbat. Generally these marriages precede the public marriages in the false faith that they have to go through for appearance's sake and often members of the Old Religion cause a minor scandal by living together before they are married in the eyes of the rest of their community. Unlike the Sabbat, which is a serious occasion despite the revels, these ceremonies are often frivolous occasions and even when nobody is to be married Beltane is celebrated happily because it is, after all, every married couple's wedding anniversary. Ordinarily it is a White witch who presides over the ceremony no matter what their position within the coven as marriages are always presented before gods of love.

There are two other important yearly ceremonies; Lughnasadh and Imbolc which happen at the mid-summer and mid-winter full moons respectively. Lughnasadh is a celebration of the harvest and a time for fertility rites. As it is held at a time when there is not much night to cover the activity most of it goes on indoors, as the witches involved prepare aphrodisiacs while chanting the words that will make sure the gods grant their friends and family a good harvest next year. At midnight, though, they leave their homes to make love in the fields (generally fields owned by a witch or at least by someone friendly towards the Old Religion).

Imbolc is a celebration of the lengthening days and the renewal of life. Despite this it is the most lacklustre celebration of the Old Religion, the night is always cold and large fires (such as they are told their ancestors had at Imbolc) are impossible if the witches involved are to remain inconspicuous. It is little more than a time of storytelling and reflection on the previous twelve months. Inevitably, this leads to planning for the next year in the more ambitious covens.

Beyond the main four ceremonies - Sabbat, Beltane, Imbolc and Lughnasadh - covens may have their own traditional times of celebration. Often these mean something personal to the coven; the day it was founded or its Priest's birthday for example. Whether there is a celebration or not every coven tries to meet on the full moon, and around active covens the unenlightened tend to stay indoors and tell stories of werewolves and other nightmares that come with the full moon. By spreading these rumours (and sometimes making them true) covens can be sure that their midnight meetings will not be interrupted.

An emergency meeting of a coven may be called by any member at any time if the coven is threatened, though if that member does not have the magic to do so the practicalities can be problematic even if they theoretically have the right. In theory the whole of the Old Religion could be called to an emergency faux-Sabbat but this has never happened.

The Power of the Old Religion

The Old Religion's power is most subtle than the 'false' faith that replaced it. The witches do have secret support within the communities where they reside but the more those people know the more any witch linked to them risks discovery and execution. Therefore those supporters of the Old Religion often only see the witches in masks or under the cover of a moonless night. They will never be able to match their enemies in terms of sheer manpower.

They do, though, have the power of their magic. This power has two main effects; firstly it allows them to bring their enemies low and secondly it means they can force unusual events and drive superstition. Without superstition the Old Religion would fast be discovered by lovers walking under the full moon and burned out of their houses by folk no longer afraid of their power. For all their magic, potions and talismans they are tricksters and deceivers just as much as any roadside 'magician' performing conjuring tricks.



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Can They Succeed?

Ultimately, that is up to the GM (and the players if their characters get heavily involved with or against the organisation) but they are not written as a successful organisation - they are too small, too fragile. By the end of the Renaissance the new wave of reason and enlightenment means that many scions of witch families turn their back on the craft, considering it a throwback to darker times. The organisation struggles on and those remaining begin to create written grimoires - partly because they are not sure they will find a student in their lifetime and partly because the persecution against them is lessened so the risk of transcribing such information is not as great.

It is conceivable that grimoires from the last days would be found and the tradition revived in a Victorian setting. Maybe in the face of a pagan revival the Old Religion could return to the land after all...



The Folklore Revivalist's Society

This witchcraft organisation is designed primarily for a Victorian setting, though could last up to the modern day and beyond, and mostly assumes that witchcraft comes from a neutral source (though it may not). It is also written to splice into the real world as an organisation founded in Britain during the days of empire. It need not be, of course, and most of its core would transfer very easily to settings with alternate histories or fantasy worlds with the same technological and social state.

Anthropologists and Adventurers: The Founding of the Society

The Victorian era was, among other things, a period in which Britain became more tolerant of faiths beyond the traditional state Church of England. The return of the Catholic hierarchy in 1850 as well as frequent travel to other nations with markedly different religious ideas and ceremonies meant that, though a practising Sikh would be the centre of gossip in any country village, Britain's courts no longer persecuted a person for practising an unofficial faith. Though the last statute against witchcraft would not be repealed until the 1950s, nobody was tried for it anymore.

Against this backdrop of the relaxing of spiritual authority the rising middle-classes and the more adventurous among the upper-classes were travelling the world. Some travelled seeking business opportunities but just as many were treasure-hunters, adventurers and academics. The new disciplines of anthropology and antiquarianism were developed. People scoured the world for the unusual and evocative, seeking to make a name for themselves.

One of those people was Alexander Thatcher. Alexander's grandfather was one of the new middle-class factory owners that drew fortunes to themselves at the beginning of the 19th century. By the time he was educated his family was well established and he took the route of Eton to Oxford as his father had before him. At Oxford he acquired an interest in ancient religions and a fascination with the old belief in magic which was so widespread until about a hundred years previously.

He talked of seeking out an old book of magic, believing some of those pagan secrets must have been written down somewhere. He talked well and his enthusiasm was contagious; by the end of his final year he had a small circle of friends who were all as keen on finding a clue to the old magic as he was. His excellence at history brought him funding for a study of Britain's pagan past which was to be the beginning of a glittering academic career.

He never finished his study. Instead he claimed to have found an old book, titled *Grimoire of the Shadow Path*, which revealed forgotten methods of casting spells, brewing potions and the creation of magical artifacts. To the horror of his colleagues he claimed that he had tried some of the spells within and found that they worked. To their equal consternation he refused to show the book to any other academic.

Instead of using the book as a central source to his now-abandoned studies he contacted a young lord who was in his circle at Oxford; his father had died young and left the young man with access to a great deal of money. In exchange for secrets from the *Grimoire of the Shadow Path* Alexander wanted funding to found a society dedicated to studying the ancient magic within it. That friend, Lord Avebury, became the second founder member of the *Folklore Revivalist's Society*.

Most of the others in that circle at Oxford joined the society although one, a civil servant, feared for his reputation if he was found to be a member and so declined *official* membership. Each of the members is constantly on the lookout for potential new recruits and through these the society is steadily growing. It does have access to apparent magical powers, and its members are taught true witchcraft, but Alexander

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Thatcher refuses to show any of them the book itself. There are growing rumours among the society that the book is a myth invented by Alexander but, if it is, from where did he learn his magic?

An Occult Agenda

The society has at least two, and potentially three, agendas. Most people not on the inside only know of the public agenda. Most of its members believe the private agenda. The secret agenda may not even exist, if it does only Alexander and possibly a few members of that first inner circle are aware of it.

The Public Agenda

Publically the *Folklore Revivalist's Society* says that its aims are to, "bring the folklore of the British isles, that is being tragically neglected in an age of industry, back to the forefront of spiritual life." Its members publish articles on folklore in various academic periodicals and the society produces its own periodical entitled *Folklore Revivalism*. The latter generally publishes the less academic papers that the society's members have written - polemic about the need for a return to old ways, possible explanations as to *why* the old magic might work, poetry inspired by their studies etc.

This public agenda makes them appear eccentric but benign, as so many esoteric Victorian societies were. They are well respected in folkloric circles (which is, itself, a field that gains greater acceptance throughout the latter half of the 19th century) and some of their members are well thought of in academic circles, though just as many are considered cranks.

The Private Agenda

Privately the society is a school. It teaches its members magic, all of which trickles down from Alexander himself. The public side of things, writing articles and seeking out forgotten elements of folklore, is just a sideline (although it is hoped that some more working magic will be discovered this way, so far Alexander's unseen book is the only source from which they have drawn any real power).

Some within the society do believe in the spreading of old folklore, either because they prefer the world that way or because they think more people returning to the old ways will give them more power (so far it has produced no quantifiable results). Most, however, are content with the way things are and with magic in their hands alone. Every member has personal goals in which they see magic as a useful tool but few, if any, are aware of an overall aim beyond the teaching of magic.

The Secret Agenda

The secret agenda is either Alexander's alone or one that only he and a few of the original inner circle are in on. What it is, exactly, depends on the GM and the setting - in particular the source of witchcraft in the setting. Some suggested secret agendas are:

There is no book. Witchcraft comes from an infernal source (or at least Alexander's does) and in teaching it to his society he is acting as an infernal instrument and damning their souls. That infernal source may have its own aims but it may be content simply to watch the discord that allowing the society to have real magic can create and harvest the souls of the witches once they die.

There is no book. Witchcraft comes from a pagan source. Alexander is the last in a long line of pagans who worshipped the old gods for longer than Britain has been Christian. He has been preparing the ground for re-instigating a pagan Britain since first introducing his inner circle to the idea of rediscovering ancient magic. The society is his last step before revealing publically that the pagan gods

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are granting true power to their followers and challenging the established churches to better the miracles he and his followers can perform. If this is the secret agenda it is likely that a few members know it and support it, with more being brought into the inner circle all the time.

There is no book. Witchcraft comes from a neutral source. Alexander one day discovered that he did, indeed, have the capacity to develop genuine magic spells. He doesn't know how he does it but through experimentation he is learning and getting better. He believes he is on the cusp of being the head of a magical revolution every bit as important to society as the industrial revolution. He keeps up the pretence of having a book which tells him how to cast the spells he teaches so that nobody else realises they can experiment with magic themselves until he reveals himself as the founder and greatest mind of the discipline.

There is a book. Witchcraft comes from an infernal source. The reason Alexander refuses to show the book to anyone else is that it details not only the magic but that its writer sold their soul to devils and the profane rituals they went through to learn the book's secrets. Partially he fears that if this was in the hands of others they might seek to learn even more than the book reveals and, hence, do heinous things he cannot countenance. Partially he fears that if the source of his magic were discovered other people more righteous than he is would destroy the book and hang him and everyone else in the society.

There is a book. Witchcraft comes from a pagan source. Alexander, though, is a Christian at heart or does not want to undermine the Christian faith for some other reason which he feels revealing the source of his magic would do. He has reconciled himself to the idea that the pagans were wrong and that magic truly comes from God but does not think others would be so quick to accept that. He teaches the magic because he believes it is a gift from God and does not want to see it squandered, the gods allow him to because they hope that followers will come to them through the magic they are learning.

There is a book. Witchcraft comes from a neutral source. Alexander guards the book jealously because he wants to keep all the really good stuff for himself. In particular he suspects that he can have eternal life, or at least a second life, through the secrets therein and does not want to grant *anyone* else that power. In this case Alexander is a power-hungry individual who teaches magic because it makes those who want to learn reliant on him and gives him power over them.

The Folklore Revivalists and The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn

The *Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn* were a real-life magical order founded in the 1880s. The *Folklore Revivalists* might be founded slightly earlier or later depending on the needs of your own setting but they will almost certainly be contemporaries.

If the *Golden Dawn* appears in your chronicle as allies/opponents/both to the *Folklore Revivalists* and also has access to genuine magic they should not have witchcraft. Their's was a different type of occult revival, drawing more on magicians like Dr. Dee who practised ritual magic in the Elizabethan court with impunity while witches were being burned elsewhere in Europe. It is 'high magic' compared to the 'low magic' of witchcraft and the standard rules for playing a magician would suit their practises better.

Some of the potential conflict can be found in the difference between magical styles but the Order was also full of egos. Aleister Crowley, MacGregor Mathers, the poet WB Yeats, and many others clashed within the Order and would almost certainly have clashed with a group of folklorists also trying to rediscover magic in the Victorian age. The two orders may even engage in a covert magical war for reasons as petty as Crowley and Alexander disliking each other's accents or as important as believing that the future paradigm of the universe rests on it.



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The two groups may be allies, however. They have much in common, not least a belief in magic in a world which ordinarily dismisses it as a fantasy. Many of them will also have a yearning for the past, even if the society yearns for a life in a cottage in the forest while the order yearns for a position at a Renaissance court. They are both likely to be drawn into any supernatural threat to either the world or the British empire and are likely to find themselves fighting side-by-side should such a thing occur.

The Society's Future

The society's future is most likely the future of similar esoteric/folkloric societies of the late Victorian age - it will split apart either owing to death of Alexander or because of ego clashes while he is still alive. Its legacy will be its influence on the alternative spirituality of the 20th century and on into the 21st. Very likely people will continue to see themselves as disciples of Alexander Thatcher much as people still consider themselves disciples of Aleister Crowley. If this is the case some fragments of the society will have access to genuine magic, though Alexander's famous grimoire will be lost (if it ever even existed).

There is a chance, though, that the society will complete its grand aims (if it has them in your setting) and usher in a world quite different from the one we all live in today. Alexander Thatcher might find his immortality, or at least a way to lengthen life so that he lives into the modern era. Backed up by witchcraft would the British empire ever fall? Would World War I have been over by Christmas owing to magical healing that was better than penicillin? What would happen to Christianity if a pagan group was openly showing that it had real magic?

If the *Folklore Revivalist's Society* succeeds in its most ambitious goals then any chronicle set afterwards will likely be very much in the realm of alternative history and/or parallel dimensions.



The Order of Saint Gustav: The Hunters' Heresy

This organisation is designed for a medieval-early renaissance setting in which witchcraft comes from an infernal source, is widely believed in and widely known to come from an infernal source. It may be incorporated into the Catholic Church of that period and the infamous Inquisition but is probably better used in a fantasy version of that time. It could also conceivably be used in a dark future setting in which witches are hunted by cyborg religious fanatics in order to keep the universe from the taint of the infernal.

Formed in Blood and Fire

The dark days when the infernalists ruled the land are long passed but not forgotten. Once men and women who called themselves 'priests' sold their souls to dark powers for temporal control and magic. Then good people who saw the corruption at the heart of their society rose up and overthrew them, burning them alive in the hopes that such a death would scour the evil from them and save their souls even as it took their life.

The revolution was not the end of the infernalists, though. Some of them worked behind the scenes, unknown to the general populace. They stayed in the shadows, working against the brave new world from within. An Inquisition was formed; brave front-line soldiers in the war against evil. Their methods were often vicious because they fought such a vicious and cunning opponent. Often, innocent people against whom the circumstantial evidence was too great to allow them to go free were burned alive beside genuine witches. Among some of the population their brutality won them enemies and so a movement against them grew formed partly of infernalists and partly of innocent people wronged by the Inquisition who assumed the evils that came before were a thing only of the past.

Over time the Inquisition found itself less and less able to count on the support of the common man. Secret renegade groups proliferated, almost all of which were backed up by witchcraft somewhere in their ranks. The Church itself began to suffer accusations of being no better than the evil priests they had overthrown. Fewer and fewer of the brave, strong and clever - the recruits the Inquisition relied on - were joining them.

The crunch came in a small principality. Its Crown Prince was a popular man among his subjects but the Inquisition discovered that he had aligned himself with infernal powers. The Church made its move and sent its best people, including knights pledged to serve the Church until death and Inquisition experts on demons and their ilk. It was not enough, the Prince's popularity combined with his magic and authority led to the Inquisition's men suffering defeat after defeat until a small band of ten knights and one Inquisition occultist were barricaded in an old temple, once dedicated to demons but now dedicated to the light of God.

The mob was coming and it was then that the occultist, Gustav, made his proposal. They had no chance of victory over the dark powers in this principality by the strength of God - His light had been too diminished. Instead, he proposed, they should use the duplicity and hatred among demons as a source of power for themselves. He told them that he could do it, that he could sell his soul in exchange for the power to prevent other souls being damned.

Some of the knights were appalled and threatened to murder him then and there but of the ten, seven were agreed and four of those also offered their souls. Horrified by their own actions but certain there was no other way to avoid absolute defeat, they subdued the three dissenters and sacrificed them on an altar that had not tasted blood in generations in order to draw the attention of the demons they sought.



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They left that temple and marched towards the Crown Prince's men; knights and serfs gathered to burn the temple with them in it. Empowered both by witchcraft and a sword, now known as *The Bloodthirsty Blade*, that could steal the life-force of their enemies and use it to empower its wielder they slaughtered the assembled host. They did not fight without cost and by the end of the battle only two of the knights and Gustav remained alive out of all the Inquisition forces that had been sent to the principality. The Crown Prince, though, was dead - sent to an eternity in the company of his infernal masters - and his power broken. Their victory was hailed as a miracle by the Church (and for that and numerous other minor miracles Gustav was canonised and then sainted after his death).

News of the Crown Prince's crushing defeat swept throughout the world. The Church spread rumours which made his kingdom seem a depraved and dark place, and so few of his loyalists survived that nobody gainsaid it (for fear of being declared heretics themselves). Gustav and the two knights privately told the Church's Chief Hierophant of what they had done, damning themselves forever, and to their surprise the Chief Hierophant commended their noble sacrifice.

Over time the Order of Saint Gustav grew into a body of determined anti-witches, using the powers of darkness to bring light to the world even as they sacrificed their own souls to do so.

Shades of Grey: The Truth

Despite their constant internal warring, demons and other infernal forces do not grant power to people they believe will use it for the greater good. Gustav and the knights who first followed him were genuine in their devotion to the Inquisition and ideals of the Church, not a one had previous dealt with the infernal except to bring it low. What the people say about the Inquisition is true, though, they have brought evils as great as the infernalists they overthrew and although very few sell their souls directly they bring a level of pain and suffering to the world which demons delight in.

In reality the Prince Consort was closer to what the Order of Saint Gustav thinks it is. He saw that his people were starving, miserable and in constant fear of the Church and so he turned to the Church's enemies - the infernal - to attain the powers he needed to help his people. The demons he dealt with believed that buying his soul would corrupt it, as it had so many others, but his will and dedication to his people were both too strong. To their dismay he used his powers as he had planned and as the Church's power waned the people of his principality grew fatter and happier.

When Gustav summoned a demon in order to sell his soul and that of four knights the infernal realm seized its chance. They granted the band of men not only the powers they requested but a blood drinking sword as well, forged in the pits of their hell. At the right time, when the Crown Prince's forces depended on it, they withdrew their patronage. This meant they lost possession of his soul by breaking their side of the pact but they considered it a worthwhile exchange to snuff out his little spot of light in the dark.

There was one member of the Church that the infernal realm had corrupted previous to Gustav and proved essential to the founding of the Order - the Chief Hierophant had sold his own soul a long time before. Not every Chief Hierophant since has been so corrupted but the Order of St. Gustav is such an effective wing of the Inquisition that even those who remain untainted cannot bring themselves to disband it. So the Order of St. Gustav continues its blasphemies under the belief that what they do is a noble sacrifice.

Secrets and Lies: The Order within the Church

Within the common clergy and among the laity all that is known about the Order of Saint Gustav is that it is an Order within the Inquisition known for its efficiency and for the miracles its founding Saint performed. It is feared and respected in equal measure and not to be questioned, a position which helps it

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keep its dark secret from general knowledge. At this level there are not even rumours of infernalism (unless the GM wants the Order to be very close to being unmasked and brought down in their setting).

Within the Inquisition's lower orders there are murmurs and whispers that the Order may be corrupt. Those who have worked closely with them suspect them of being just a little too lucky, a little too willing to expose themselves to disease and too sure of the holy protection of their Saint Gustav. Many among the Inquisition put these rumours down to jealousy but there are some who watch the Order closely for signs of corruption. So far nobody has found proof of corruption within the Order, or if they have they have not lived to tell of it.

In the upper echelons of the clergy some are made aware of the Order's infernal pacts. There has not been a Chief Hierophant since the Order's founding that did not know the truth about it and several of the Hierophants know. There are some Hierophants who would not approve of the Order's nature, and they are kept from it by those that do. Such Hierophants are never likely to become Chief Hierophant as they have more devotion to their faith than political pragmatism and it is widely accepted in the Church that the latter is more important in the top job.

The Inquisition sees the darker side of their faith a lot more than the clergy do and most who have the title Inquisitor - the actual heads of Inquisition branches - are aware of the Order of Saint Gustav's dubious talents. The majority of them look to a future where the Order are the only infernalists left and on that day they will turn on the Order, burn them to save their souls and the world will be cleansed of infernal influence once and for all. The Order of Saint Gustav actually encourages this world-view as it persuades those unhappy with compromising with the dark powers that they simply have to wait until they can finally dispatch the last enemies of goodness.

Inquisitors, Investigators and Knights: The Order's Organisation

The Order of Saint Gustav, like all of the Inquisition, is split into inquisitors, investigators and knights. Inquisitors are the Order's leaders, each regional branch of the Order has only one and their main branch is led by the Chief Inquisitor who heads the organisation. They are the ones who ask the questions and wield the true power of the Inquisition. They are also the judges of the Inquisition, deciding who is guilty and what their punishment should be. Their commands rank higher than the monarch's in many nations, as even monarchs fear the influence of the infernal. As inquisitors are drawn from the ranks of investigators and knights they also draw on the skills they learnt before their advancement.

Investigators are essentially occultists with some detective skills. They are usually the most magically capable, spending their time researching new ways of using the power of the infernal against its source. Inquisitors look to investigators to know where to direct their activities. There are normally two to three investigators to each branch, including the inquisitor if he was drawn from their ranks.

Knights are the Order's warriors, men trained in the art of warfare (in most settings they are, literally, knights but they call themselves such whatever time period the Order is set in). The inquisitor is ordinarily the one that calls the knights into an area but any investigator can do so in an emergency. The knights of the Order of Saint Gustav are unusual in the realm of spell casters in that, because their magic is granted by the infernal and their lives are mostly spent training in the martial arts, they actually know relatively little about the occult and the other lores that occupy most magicians.

Which professions?

Obviously the profession of *Witch* is not suitable for the inquisitors, investigators and knights of the Order of Saint Gustav. Instead the profession of *Scholar* or *Occultist* matches the investigators' role and the



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profession of *Soldier* matches the knights' role. In the case of the *Scholar* they should be allowed to take Status instead of one of their optional Knowledge or Science skills. In the case of *Soldier* both Status and Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) should be added to their six setting-appropriate options (though few of the knights study the occult, they come into contact with it often enough to learn something through experience).

Inquisitors would obviously be based on one of those three professions but should only be played from the beginning if the game is at Heroic or higher level (to reflect their greater experience). If, however, the GM wants to run inquisitors as being no more skilled than their underlings they could have the profession *Priest* with the explanation that skills they would have learnt as an investigator or knight have atrophied through lack of use.

Devoted to Demons? The Order and Allegiance to Black Magic

Although they sell their souls (or make other deals, not every member is willing to go that far but if they do not they will never have the full powers their enemies enjoy) no member of the Order should be a disciple of the infernal in his heart. For this reason no member of the Order *should* benefit from allegiance to black magic.

The temptation is strong, though. Once you start using evil against evil the lines between right and wrong begin to blur. Questioning so many heretics leads some among the Order to question their own devotion and wonder if they should not serve the forces of the infernal so that their soul will be treated better once it falls into their hands. When they do give themselves over to infernalism they find that it grants them more power and the opportunity to advance very quickly through the Order.

For this reason the heads of the Inquisition and the Church keep a close eye on members of the Order who seem *too* capable - to selflessly give up their soul is one thing but to serve evil in their heart is quite another. For that reason even some innocents (relative to how innocent you can be when in the Order of Saint Gustav) who have progressed too quickly have ended up being burnt at the stake through fear that their devotion was not truly to the Church.

Obviously, anyone who managed to reach apotheosis of Black Magic within the Order would be hunted by their colleagues as soon as it was discovered (and it is difficult to hide the hideousness that comes with such a transformation). To date, though, nobody in the Order ever has.

Light in the Darkness

Although the Inquisition is by no means a force for good anymore (if it ever was) it advertises itself as such and some good people believe it and seek to serve within it. The Order of Saint Gustav, for its part, seeks out the most capable and self-sacrificing among the rank and file of the Inquisition. This means that though it is the most corrupt wing of a corrupt organisation its membership are, paradoxically, the most inclined to see that corruption and want to cut it out.

What happens when a member of the Order of Saint Gustav realises that the powers of darkness are not the ones being tricked? So far those few that do have ended up being silenced, one way or another - either by the Order, the infernal or the Chief Hierophant. It can only be a matter of time, though, before one of those righteous, self-sacrificing individuals turns on the Inquisition with a force or a political skill that matches the force and political skill of the corrupt inquisitors.

Witches and Warlocks: Sample Characters

This section lists sample characters for the three example organisations given in **All That's Best of Dark and Bright: Witches' Organisations**. It also has sample characters for the *Darks Ages*, *High Medieval*, *High Fantasy*, *Arabian Nights* and *Renaissance* settings. Unless otherwise stated the characters were made under the Witch profession described earlier in this monograph.

The Old Religion: Sample Characters

Elizabeth Moore - The Crone

One of three leaders of the Old Religion, Elizabeth Moore has achieved apotheosis in Black Magic. It is she that performs all official sacrifices at the annual Sabbat. She is not evil, but firmly believes that the gods of darkness and cruelty deserve as much respect and worship as those of light and kindness. Even powerful members of the Old Religion are afraid of her and younger witches never approach her voluntarily.

Owing to her terrifying appearance and her immortality she has long since forsaken human contact outside of the Old Religion. She lives in a cave somewhere, protected from both the elements and trespassers by her magic. Only The Lady and The High Priest know of the cave's location.

She appears to be an incredibly wizened old crone, though no-one of any sense would guess her real age unless they knew of her supernatural powers. She has warts all over and dresses in rags which belie her true importance in order to give the impression of a crazy old vagrant to anyone who might come across her in her travels (which is rare, when she does travel she does so at night and hides from any people she hears come near).

Age = 172 years, though she suffers none of the usual penalties for ageing

STR: 7 (Effort 35%)
CON: 11 (Stamina 55%)
SIZ: 11
INT: 14 (Idea 70%)
POW: 21 (Luck 105%)
DEX: 14 (Agility 70%)
APP: 4 (Charisma 20%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 11 (Major wound = 6)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Craft (Potion) 100%, Craft (Talisman) 100%, Fly 57%, Insight 55%, Knowledge (Folklore) 76%, Listen 65%, Literacy 50%, Perform (Ritual) 100%, Sense 60%, Spot 55%

Spells Normally Memorised

Aura of Dread* 74%, Broomstick Flight 84%, Change (Witch's Variant) 84%, Control* 74%, Dark* 80%, Weather Control 84%, Wounding* 100%

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Spells Known but not Normally Memorised

Contagion* 54%, Curse of Ill Fortune* 54%, Nightmares* 54%

* These spells are Black Magic and therefore require half the requisite power points when cast by The Crone as she has achieved apotheosis.

Potion Recipes Known

Anti-Poison, Flying Potion, Healing Potion, Invisibility Potion, Sleeping Potion

Allegiance

The Crone has achieved apotheosis in Black Magic and has 120 allegiance points.

The Crone is a character generated under the rules for Superhuman characters.

Susannah Ifans - The Lady

One of the three leaders of the Old Religion, Susannah Ifans has achieved apotheosis in White Magic. Her unearthly beauty is such that she must hide herself away as much as The Crone does, though she lives in slightly better circumstances in an isolated cottage buried deep within a forest set aside for hunting. Most of the hunters who live within it are followers of the Old Religion and act as a sort of honour guard for her as well as company.

She is the most approachable of the three leaders and is often the one sent to speak to coven leaders and issue the three's commands. When she does appear in the world to speak to people outside the Old Religion she is often mistaken for an earthbound angel and though she does not confirm such suspicions she does not normally contradict them either, preferring to respond to them with a simple smile.

She is a healer and empathetic to anyone sick or in pain, as such she will always agree to help an injured or sick individual unless they have proven themselves to be an enemy of the Old Religion (and even then will often help in exchange for a conversion from that person or a favour done by them and/or their friends).

Age = 139 years, though she suffers none of the usual penalties for ageing

STR: 11 (Effort 55%)
CON: 12 (Stamina 60%)
SIZ: 13
INT: 14 (Idea 70%)
POW: 18 (Luck 90%)
DEX: 12 (Agility 60%)
APP: 24 (Charisma 120%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13 (Major wound = 7)

Damage Bonus: None

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Skills: Bargain 45%, Craft (Potion) 85%, Craft (Talisman) 85%, Fly 56%, Insight 75%, Knowledge (Folklore) 71%, Literacy 50%, Medicine 70%, Perform (Ritual) 100%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%

Spells Normally Memorised

Broomstick Flight 52%, Dispel 52%, Heal* 82%, Luck* 72%, Neutralise Poison* 82%, Speak with Animals 52%, Whispering Wind 52%

Spells Known but not Normally Memorised

Cure Disease* 62%, Enhance* 52%, Speak with the Dead 42%

*These spells are White Magic and therefore require half the requisite power when cast by The Lady as she has achieved apotheosis.

Potion Recipes Known

Anti-poison, Curative Potion, Healing Potion, Restoration Potion, Resurrection Potion

Allegiance

The Lady has achieved apotheosis in White Magic and has 115 allegiance points.

The Lady is a character generated under the rules for Superhuman characters.

Matthew Hawthorne - The High Priest

The male, and neutral, leader of the Old Religion. He is the newest of the three leaders and, as his neutrality means he is not immortal, it is likely that he will die long before either The Crone or The Lady. Despite The Lady's beauty he is the most human of the three, and traditionally the one that keeps the Old Religion on its path of seeking dominance in the world once again.

The current High Priest, Matthew Hawthorne, has come to terms with the fact that the Old Religion will never be dominant again and instead seeks acceptance within the wider community. His view is not shared by The Crone or The Lady, however, and he is fighting against centuries of learned bitterness and secrecy.

He is seeking a successor who would share his views and continue leading the Old Religion in that new direction. In the back of his mind he is also considering possible means of replacing The Crone and The Lady with women more inclined towards his vision. He is as much inclined towards kindness as cruelty, though, and is not yet willing to resort to such drastic measures. Recently he has learnt the Possess Item spell in an attempt to achieve a kind of immortality for himself.

Age = 68 years

STR: 10 (Effort 50%)
CON: 12 (Stamina 60%)
SIZ: 13
INT: 16 (Idea 80%)
POW: 17 (Luck 85%)
DEX: 6 (Agility 30%)
APP: 10 (Charisma 50%)

Move: 10



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Hit Points: 13 (Major Wound = 7)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Bargain 30%, Craft (Potion) 75%, Craft (Talisman) 75%, Fast Talk 65%, Fly 53%, Insight 30%, Knowledge (Folklore) 71%, Literacy 30%, Perform (Ritual) 85%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Broomstick Flight 56%, Change (Witch's Variant) 36%, Countermagic 56%, Foretelling 56%, Heal 56%, Lightning 36%, Possess Item 16%, Whispering Wind 36%

Potion Recipes Known

Anti-poison, Flying Potion, Love Potion, Luck Potion

The High Priest is a character generated under the rules for Epic characters.

Marcus Blake - Huntsman of the River Tor Coven

Marcus Blake has the title Huntsman and is leader of a coven of seven, including a High Priest and a High Priestess, that meets at River Tor - a hill which overlooks a large river that provides water for several nearby towns and villages.

His family has always been a part of the Old Religion and his long heritage has made him a traditionalist. He does not approve of new blood coming to the Old Religion (though grudgingly accepts the necessity) and prefers to leave teaching such people to the more junior members of his coven. To those of old, established blood he is relatively forgiving although he makes sure to present the image of a stern taskmaster to everybody. He is not the most magically capable of his coven, but he is the most knowledgeable regarding the old ways and the most competent ritualist.

In his town Marcus serves as the local blacksmith, again a position that has run in his family. Blacksmiths are commonly believed to have some magic about them and as a result his family's powers have been hidden by the superstitions surrounding their profession.

Age = 38 years

STR: 14 (Effort 70%)
CON: 12 (Stamina 60%)
SIZ: 14
INT: 12 (Idea 60%)
POW: 15 (Luck 75%)
DEX: 8 (Agility 40%)
APP: 9 (Charisma 45%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 13 (Major wound = 7)

Damage Bonus: +1D4

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Skills: Appraise 65%, Bargain 50%, Craft (Blacksmithing) 75%, Craft (Talisman) 70%, Knowledge (Folklore) 71%, Perform (Ritual) 85%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Broomstick Flight 42%, Cure Disease 27%, Curse of Ill Fortune 27%, Invisibility 27%, Luck 27%, Whispering Wind 42%

Marcus Blake is a character generated under the rules for Heroic characters.

Lucy Moss - Probationary member of the River Tor Coven

Lucy Moss is the youngest, and newest, member of the River Tor Coven. She has been taught witchcraft and the ways of the Old Religion from an early age by her mother, who acts as the village healer. She has proven to be something of a prodigy and so has been accepted into the coven.

She is expected to become a White Witch owing to her learned profession as a healer, her natural empathy and the spells she has chosen to learn. Her talents also lean towards potion creation but nobody else is yet aware that she has discovered the recipe for love potions - something normally kept out of the hands of the young for very good reason.

Age = 22 years

STR: 8 (Effort 40%)
CON: 10 (Stamina 50%)
SIZ: 12
INT: 16 (Idea 80%)
POW: 17 (Luck 85%)
DEX: 14 (Agility 70%)
APP: 14 (Charisma 70%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 11 (Major wound = 6)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Craft (Potion) 50%, Insight 55%, Knowledge (Folklore) 21%, Literacy 30%, Medicine 60%, Perform (Ritual) 25%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Broomstick Flight 61%, Cure Disease 61%, Heal 61%, Luck 61%

Potion Recipes Known

Curative Potion, Healing Potion, Love Potion

Lucy Moss is a character generated using the rules for Normal characters.

The Folklore Revivalist's Society: Sample Characters

Alexander Thatcher - Founder of the Society



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Alexander Thatcher had an interest in folklore from an early age, an interest which increased while at university. He dedicated his life to rediscovering ways of living that had been forgotten in the faster-paced world of Victorian Britain. He acquired funding to explore the pagan side of medieval Britain and threw himself into his studies.

He never completed those studies, though. Instead he claimed to have discovered a book called the *Grimoire of the Shadow Path* which detailed various magic spells and processes including the making of potions and talismans. He has refused to show the book to anybody, and there is some doubt as to whether or not it truly exists, but he has definitely demonstrated real magic. He founded the Folklore Revivalist's Society, filled it with old friends from Oxford and began teaching the magic he had learnt from the grimoire.

The Society has been growing continually ever since and Alexander always plays the part of a genial scholar and tutor. Whether or not he is simply a scholar or has some darker agenda behind teaching people his secrets is uncertain. If he does have some dark purpose it is safe to say that even his inner circle are unaware of it.

He is a short, thin man who dresses very much like the Victorian academic he purports to be. There is a light in his eyes that indicates boundless enthusiasm but has an undercurrent of menace - his priorities are not like those of other people and he considers unique knowledge more valuable than other people's lives.

Age = 30 years

STR: 10 (Effort 50%)
CON: 11 (Stamina 55%)
SIZ: 8
INT: 15 (Idea 75%)
POW: 15 (Luck 75%)
DEX: 11 (Agility 55%)
APP: 11 (Charisma 55%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 10 (Major wound = 5)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Craft (Potion) 81%, Craft (Talisman) 50%, Fast Talk 95%, Knowledge (Folklore) 90%, Literacy 95%

Spells Known and Memorised

Banish Ghost 55%, Control 35%, Cure Disease 55%, Foretelling 55%, Lightning 55%, Luck 55%, Weather Control 35%, Speak with the Dead/Conjure Elemental/Conjure Demon* 35%

*Alexander's last spell depends on the setting and the source of his own power. If it is a neutral source then he has *Speak with the Dead*, a pagan source grants him *Conjure Elemental* whereas an infernal source grants him *Conjure Demon*.

Potion Recipes Known

Curative Potion, Flying Potion, Invisibility Potion, Resurrection Potion, Sleeping Potion



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The Grimoire of the Shadow Path

If it exists the *Grimoire* contains all witchcraft spells. For reference these are: Aura of Dread, Banish Ghost, Broomstick Flight, Change (Witch's Version), Contagion, Control, Countermagic, Cure Disease, Curse of Ill Fortune, Dark, Diminish, Dispel, Enhance, Foretelling, Heal, Invisibility, Lightning, Luck, Neutralise Poison, Nightmares, Perception, Possess Item, Speak with Animals, Speak with the Dead, Steal Youth, Vision, Weather Control, Whispering Wind and Wounding. It also contains Conjure Elemental if witchcraft comes from a pagan source or Conjure Demon if it comes from an infernal source.

If the *Grimoire* does not exist then the only spells Alexander knows are the ones he has memorised.

Depending on the secrets of the Society Alexander might have Allegiance to White or Black magic. Whatever the case he certainly does not have apotheosis.

Alexander Thatcher is a character generated using the rules for Epic characters.

Lord Avebury - Member of the Folklore Revivalist Society's Inner Circle

Lord Thomas Avebury is the man who bankrolls the Folklore Revivalist's Society. He was good friends with Alexander Thatcher at Oxford and shares the man's passion for folklore and, latterly, for magic. He is not as fanatical in his devotion to knowledge as Alexander is, though, and so Alexander will keep any extreme actions taken from him.

He is a tall man and getting fat since his sporting youth is behind him. As a result he and Alexander look like David and Goliath standing side-by-side. Nevertheless Alexander can cow Lord Avebury quite easily; he is not a brave man and does not want to face the lightning magic he knows Alexander is capable of wielding.

Age = 30 years

STR: 12 (Effort 60%)
CON: 13 (Stamina 65%)
SIZ: 15
INT: 14 (Idea 70%)
POW: 14 (Luck 70%)
DEX: 9 (Agility 45%)
APP: 11 (Charisma 55%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14 (Major wound = 7)

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Bargain 80%, Craft (Potion) 50%, Craft (Talisman) 35%, Insight 25%, Knowledge (Folklore) 61%, Status 90%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Banish Ghost 44%, Control 44%, Cure Disease 44%, Foretelling 44%, Luck 44%, Weather Control 44%

Potion Recipes Known

Curative Potion, Flying Potion, Sleeping Potion



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Lord Avebury is a character generated using the rules for Heroic characters.

Sarah Thompson - Member of the Folklore Revivalist's Society

Sarah is a beautiful young woman, introduced to the Society by Lord Avebury in an attempt to impress her. She has proven to be remarkably capable given that she was chosen for membership based on her looks. Her surprising competence has played against Lord Avebury's plans or a quiet seduction since it has led to Alexander taking a personal interest in her.

She has goals of her own, though. She sees in witchcraft a past in which women possessed the dominant role in society. She intends to use magic, combined with her natural intelligence and beauty, to garner power, money and influence over society. She will then use that power to uplift similarly gifted young women. If she could get her hands on the *Grimoire* she would either attempt to copy it or steal it and create her own proto-feminist magical order.

Age = 21 years

STR: 8 (Effort 40%)
CON: 9 (Stamina 45%)
SIZ: 10
INT: 14 (Idea 70%)
POW: 12 (Luck 60%)
DEX: 11 (Agility 55%)
APP: 16 (Charisma 80%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 10 (Major wound 5)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Etiquette 75%, Fast Talk 25%, Insight 35%, Knowledge (Folklore) 43%, Persuade 75%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Control 56%, Cure Disease 56%, Foretelling 56%, Luck 56%

Sarah Thompson is a character generated using the rules for Normal characters.

The Order of St. Gustav: Sample Characters

Lucien Drake - Chief Inquisitor of the Order of St. Gustav

Lucien Drake is the current Chief Inquisitor of the Order of St. Gustav. He is uncompromising in his beliefs and that often makes him cruel, though he will not stand for injustice - unlike some Inquisitors under him he will not hang or burn an innocent person simply because it more convenient than seeking the truth.

He is good friends with the current Chief Heirophant, an equally uncompromising man, and his position is secure until death or befuddlement strips him of it. He has been thinking a lot about death recently; he is nearer death than birth and he knows that his soul is forfeit - if there was a way of avoiding facing that

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final judgement he would take it whatever the cost. To that end he has recently learnt the spell *Steal Youth* - a spell banned by the Order as too corrupting to be worth the risk - and intends to use it on some guilty target soon.

Lucien was once a handsome man but the rigours of his duty have taken their toll on his looks. He has an ugly scar across one cheek where a heretic's sword nearly sent his soul to hell early and sunken, haunted eyes. Together they make him look cadaverous and the way he moves his limbs quickly but awkwardly owing to the stiffness of age gives the impression of a dead body being jerked about like a puppet.

Age = 53 years Profession used = Occultist

STR: 9 (Effort 45%)
CON: 8 (Stamina 40%)
SIZ: 14
INT: 15 (Idea 75%)
POW: 14 (Luck 70%)
DEX: 8 (Agility 40%)
APP: 7 (Charisma 35%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 11 (Major wound = 6)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Insight 55%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 71%, Knowledge (Occult) 71%, Language (Latin)* 40%, Literacy 70%, Status 95%

*Or whichever language is used as the high language of the Church.

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Aura of Dread 65%, Control 45%, Countermagic 65%, Curse of Ill Fortune 45%, Dark 45%, Dispel 65%, Lightning 45%, Steal Youth 25%

Lucien Drake is a character created using the rules for Epic characters.

Andrew Martell - Inquisitor of the Order of St. Gustav

Andrew Martell is the third son of a powerful nobleman - a position which coupled a sense of entitlement to no actual entitlement to anything. His father had him join the Church, something which did not sit well with young Andrew but he found himself forced to accept it.

Once within the Church he vented his anger on those he could, those who were brought before him as sinners and traitors to the faith. He developed a deserved reputation for cruelty and an undeserved reputation for religious zeal. He was approached by the Order of St. Gustav and immediately joined, seeing it as a quick way to the power he thought he deserved.

He did not fully understand the price to his soul when he joined the Order but he understands that it is too late to do anything about it now. So he works to increase his own power within the Church and make the best of what he has since learnt was a bad decision. He is an angry, cruel man who uses his power to abuse those under his control - he is, of course, a secret favourite of the demons who grant the Order their



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power. He began his career in the Order as a knight and the bold, straightforward ruthlessness that distinguished him in that position also distinguishes him as an Inquisitor.

Age = 32 years Profession used = Soldier

STR: 16 (Effort 80%)
CON: 16 (Stamina 80%)
SIZ: 16
INT: 11 (Idea 55%)
POW: 14 (Luck 70%)
DEX: 14 (Agility 70%)
APP: 9 (Charisma 45%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 16 (Major wound = 8)

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Brawl 50%, Dodge 53%, Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 51%, Literacy 40%, Melee Weapon (Bastard Sword) 55%, Missile Weapon (Medium Crossbow) 50%, Ride 30%, Status 75%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Counterspell 56%, Curse of Ill Fortune 21%, Enhance 21%, Heal 46%, Invisibility 46%, Wounding 46%

Andrew Martell is a character created using the rules for Heroic characters.

Augustus Raff - Investigator for the Order of St. Gustav

Augustus is a young man with a passion for the faith and for hunting down the faith's enemies. He began his career in the Church as a priest but his keen mind and curiosity gave him the dubious honour of being approached to join the Inquisition. He was not immediately a member of the Order of St. Gustav, rather he discovered that the Order was working with Infernal forces.

He went as far up as he could with that dangerous information and then the reality behind the Order's infernalism - that it was a noble sacrifice rather than a fiendish corruption - was explained to him. He was invited to join the Order and, although he still had his doubts, he was smart enough to know that his choice was that or death despite the smiles and conciliatory talk of his superiors.

He still suspects that the Order is not the force for good it claims to be and investigates it from within as best he can. Most of the time, though, he is kept busy investigating infernalists not sanctioned by the Church. His position is a dangerous one - if he does find that the Order is genuinely corrupt the demonic forces behind that corruption are not likely to allow him to expose them.

Age = 29 years Profession used = Scholar

STR: 5 (Effort 25%)
CON: 9 (Stamina 45%)
SIZ: 11
INT: 18 (Idea 90%)
POW: 14 (Luck 70%)

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DEX: 14 (Agility 70%)
APP: 13 (Charisma 65%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 10 (Major wound = 5)

Damage Bonus: -1D4

Skills: Knowledge (Blasphemous Lore) 51%, Knowledge (Occult) 21%, Knowledge (Theology) 51%, Language (Latin)* 50%, Literacy 60%, Persuade 35%, Research 55%, Status 40%

*Or whichever language is used as the high language of the Church.

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Foretelling 58%, Perception 58%, Speak with the Dead 58%, Vision 43%

Augustus Raff is a character created using the rules for Normal characters.

Sir Vathek the Brave - Knight of the Order of St. Gustav

Sir Vathek is the last remaining member of a group of knights errant who wandered the countryside seeking work as mercenaries (and occasionally acting as brigands when honest work did not present itself). They were hired to act as bodyguards to a minor noble who had become suspiciously wealthy in the space of a year.

The Order of St. Gustav suspected the nobleman of working with infernal sources to secure his wealth and one winter evening they ambushed him and his mercenary guard. The knights errant fought well but there were out-numbered and surprised. Every one of them was cut down but Sir Vathek was healed so that he could testify against the nobleman when the time came.

He testified and found himself, during the course of the trial, learning something about the work of the Order of St. Gustav. The priest presiding over the trial convinced him that his destiny was making itself known and he petitioned to join the Order. Since that time he has proven a capable and loyal knight, though he is hardly the most pious member he is proud of his work and unlikely to fall entirely to infernal corruption. His ineptitude with magic also helps to insulate him somewhat from the corruption of the Order.

Age = 23 years Profession used = Soldier

STR: 15 (Effort 75%)
CON: 14 (Stamina 70%)
SIZ: 15
INT: 9 (Idea 45%)
POW: 3 (Luck 15%)
DEX: 11 (Agility 55%)
APP: 8 (Charisma 40%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 15 (Major wound = 8)



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Damage Bonus: +1D4

Skills: Brawl 75%, Dodge 42%, Melee Weapon (Bastard Sword) 75%, Missile Weapon (Medium Crossbow) 75%, Ride 55%, Status 40%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Dark 29%, Heal 29%, Luck 29%, Wounding 29%

Sir Vathek is a character created using the rules for Normal characters.

Sample Characters for Different Settings

The following are relatively generic characters that can be played either as PCs in a setting using Normal character generation or as NPCs selling the PCs potions or causing them trouble.

A Dark Ages Witch - The Local Healer

The *Dark Ages* witch is not likely to be accepted by the reigning Church and there are almost certainly laws against black magic if not all magic. Nonetheless the old traditions of a healer using spells alongside his or her herbal remedies are still strong in the minds of the common people. The witch of this era is not commonly persecuted, being equally loved and feared by the populace, but this is the beginning of the down-slide.

Age = 28 years

STR: 10 (Effort 50%)
CON: 12 (Stamina 60%)
SIZ: 10
INT: 14 (Idea 70%)
POW: 17 (Luck 85%)
DEX: 10 (Agility 50%)
APP: 11 (Charisma 55%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 11 (Major wound = 6)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Craft (Potion) 65%, Insight 75%, Medicine 75%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Cure Disease 64%, Heal 64%, Neutralise Poison 64%, Weather Control 64%

Potion Recipes Known

Anti-poison, Curative Potion, Healing Potion, Restoration Potion

A High-Medieval Witch - Cunning and Cruel

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In this period witches are undoubtedly feared and persecuted. They have two choices; either hide what they are or cow the local people into not revealing them to the authorities. For that reason witches of this period are cunning and often cruel. Most are willing to give aid to powerful people in exchange for their protection.

Age = 29 years

STR: 14 (Effort 70%)
CON: 14 (Stamina 70%)
SIZ: 13
INT: 13 (Idea 65%)
POW: 18 (Luck 90%)
DEX: 11 (Agility 55%)
APP: 8 (Charisma 40%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 14 (Major wound = 7)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Craft (Potion) 35%, Craft (Talisman) 35%, Fast Talk 55%, Insight 55%, Sense 35%, Spot 50%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Change (Witch's Version) 58%, Dark 58%, Invisibility 58%, Wounding 58%

Potion Recipes Known

Flying Potion, Healing Potion

A High-Fantasy Witch - The Witch of Fairy-Tales

Though there are certainly many possibilities for a high-fantasy witch, including the healer or the secretive and cunning witch described for Dark Ages and High-Medieval settings respectively, the witch described here is the witch of fairy-tales. This is the witch that flies on a broomstick, sends lovers to sleep for decades and works mischief and wonder wherever she goes.

Age = 29 years

STR: 8 (Effort 40%)
CON: 9 (Stamina 45%)
SIZ: 10
INT: 13 (Idea 65%)
POW: 19 (Luck 95%)
DEX: 11 (Agility 55%)
APP: 14 (Charisma 70%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 10 (Major wound = 5)

Damage Bonus: None



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Skills: Craft (Potion) 70%, Craft (Talisman) 50%, Insight 30%, Perform (Ritual) 40%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Broomstick Flight 68%, Change (Witch's Version) 68%, Curse of Ill Fortune 68%, Foretelling 68%

Potion Recipes Known

Curative Potion, Love Potion, Resurrection Potion, Sleeping Potion

An Arabian Nights Witch - Hawker of Curios and Wonders

This witch is a travelling merchant, part con-man, that sells fine wares, goods that purport to be potions and talismans and goods which really are potions and talismans. His actual spells are those which he uses to enchant useful talismans on the rare occasion someone has enough money to buy a real one (apart from *Broomstick Flight* which, combined with a carpet he keeps on hand, provides him with a quick exit should his cons be discovered too soon).

Age = 32 years

STR: 8 (Effort 40%)
CON: 10 (Stamina 50%)
SIZ: 12
INT: 15 (Idea 75%)
POW: 17 (Luck 85%)
DEX: 10 (Agility 50%)
APP: 11 (Charisma 55%)
Move: 10

Hit Points: 11 (Major wound = 5)

Damage Bonus: None

Skills: Bargain 55%, Craft (Potion) 61%, Craft (Talisman) 60%, Fast Talk 55%, Literacy 50%, Persuade 64%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Broomstick Flight 40%, Cure Disease 40%, Luck 40%, Neutralise Poison 40%

Potion Recipes Known

Curative Potion, Healing Potion, Love Potion, Luck Potion

A Renaissance Witch - The Outcast Scholar

The persecution witches faced in the medieval period is more or less over but it has left a dearth of those who keep the knowledge of witchcraft alive. Those few who do are either scholars trying to reclaim the knowledge that has almost been forgotten or those whose families were of high enough status to avoid the fires of persecution and now treat their inheritance as little more than a curiosity.

Age = 28 years

STR: 9 (Effort 45%)

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CON: 13 (Stamina 65%)
SIZ: 10
INT: 15 (Idea 75%)
POW: 14 (Luck 70%)
DEX: 11 (Agility 55%)
APP: 11 (Charisma 55%)

Move: 10

Hit Points: 12 (Major wound = 6)

Damage Bonus: None

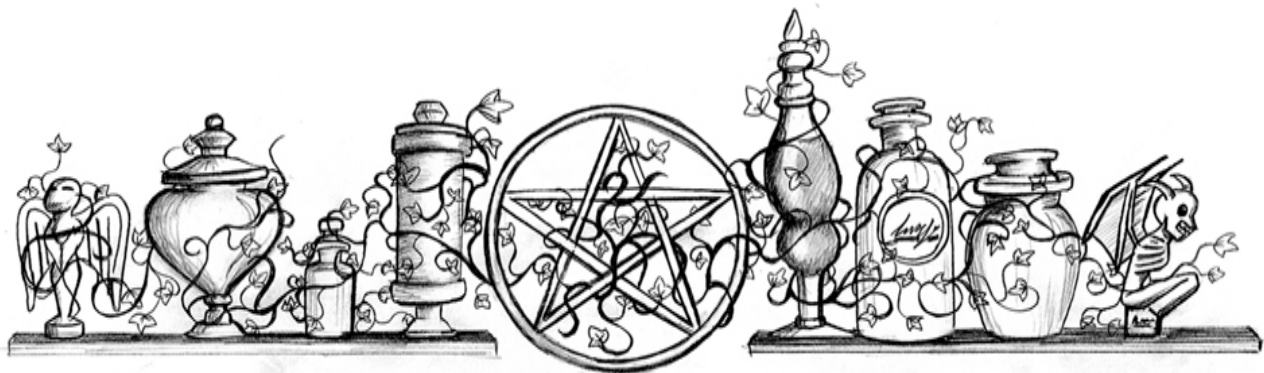
Skills: Craft (Potion) 41%, Craft (Talisman) 40%, Knowledge (Folklore) 75%, Literacy 75%, Perform (Ritual) 50%, Status 40%

Spells Known (All are Memorised)

Curse of Ill Fortune 45%, Foretelling 45%, Luck 45%, Speak with the Dead 45%

Potion Recipes Known

Curative Potion, Flying Potion, Love Potion

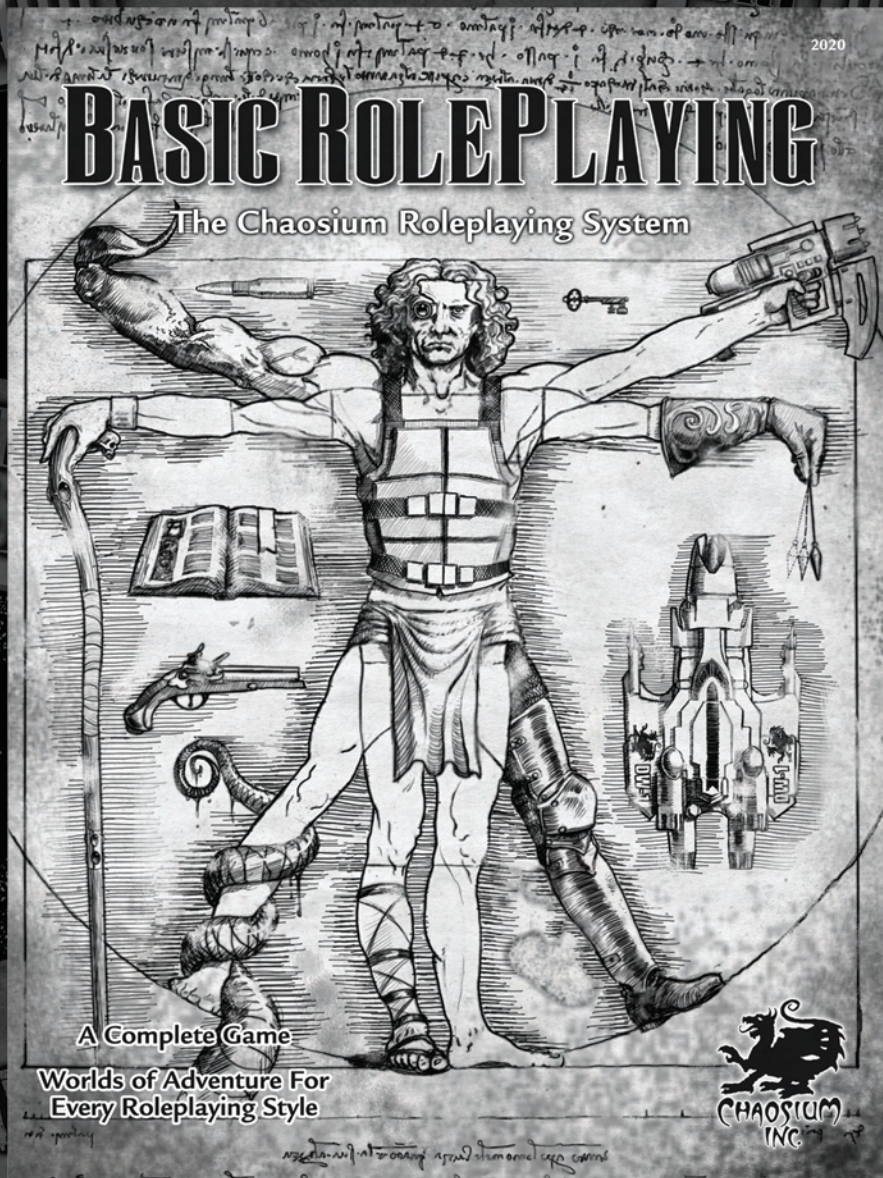


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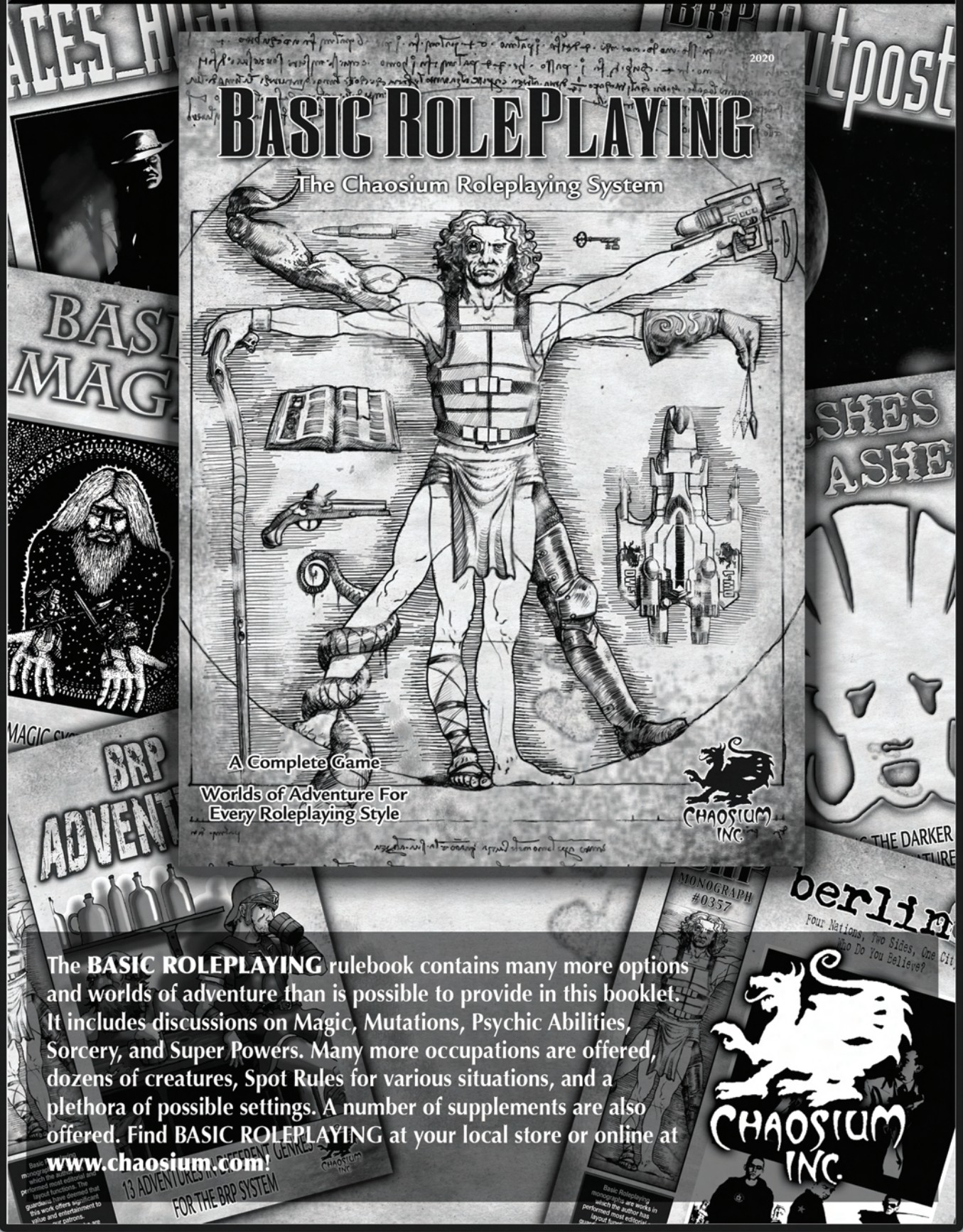


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