

Yugman's Guide to Ghelspad Part Five

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Credits

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Note One: Social Backgrounds

dventurers are not born in a vacuum. There are a number of societies on Ghelspad that provide training and motivation for adventurers. The following Social Background options may be added to those presented in the Scarred Lands Player's Guide, Chapter Four.

Is there anybody more dangerous - and more inexplicable - than a person who has devoted their life to the worship of the very ideal of death? Without a healthy fear of death, a fanatic genuinely has nothing to lose, and that makes them a foe not to be trifled with.

Death cults may - nay, should - seem strange to those not indoctrinated, but those who hear the call of these foul and loathsome cults find themselves consorting with (and often becoming) very real threats to the security and safety of Ghelspad.

Many of these groups are clouded in secrecy, tradition, and ritual. The average woman on the street may scoff at the idea that they even exist. These are the people of terrifying tales told by firelight, the monsters used to threaten badly-behaved children. How many of us were threatened with a gruesome death at the hands of the Angels of Nemorga should we not eat our greens, as though that crime is worthy of such a gruesome fate? They may be little more than folk tales to some, but the stories and myths that surround these organizations do not change the fact that the death cults are very real, and very dangerous.

That is not to say that all of these organizations pose a threat. Some, like the scholars at Hollowfaust, serve benevolent aims even if their means are macabre (though I for one question why they do not make more of an effort to separate themselves from the term "death society." They clearly need to invest in more effective propaganda, rather than spending all of their energy and resources meddling in things best left untouched). Still, even the Hollowfaustians wield great power and strange knowledge, and you would do well to step as carefully around them as the more nefarious groups detailed here.

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The Angels of Nemorga

D eath is not sorrowful. It comes to us all in our allotted time. These are the teachings of Nemorga, passionless god of death. However, the interpretation of this ambiguous scripture varies from region to region. This is no clearer than in the case of the Angels of Nemorga, a heretical sect of assassins who wander the length and breadth of Ghelspad meting out death to those they deem to have outstayed their welcome in the mortal world.

SHORTLY AFTER MY RECOVERY I WAS ATTACKED BY A PAIR OF THESE SO-CALLED 'ANGELS;' I SLEW THEM, AND THE SECOND PAIR SENT THE FOLLOWING WEEK. AFTER THAT, I SUPPOSE NEMORGA DECIDED IT WASN'T MY TIME TO DIE AFTER ALL.

-ZARRA

The Angels of Nemorga believe that the god of death speaks to them through their conscience. Anyone can approach an Angel with a request for assassination, though the Angel has full right to refuse. In fact, an Angel can only accept a contract if more than one cult member agrees to pursue it. Convincing an Angel of the necessity of any particular contract is a difficult task, however, as the precepts of the Angels require that the target of any assassination attempt be in violation of the natural cycles of life and death. This makes powerful undead, necromancers and mutant titanspawn high priority targets, and precludes the Angels from meddling in affairs of mortal politics in all but the most extreme circumstances.

For the reasons stated above, the Angels of Nemorga hunt their quarry in pairs, executing flawless maneuvers to isolate their target before executing them with pinpoint precision (and perhaps unnecessary zeal). The society is itinerant, enjoying generous sponsorship from a mysterious benefactor overseas. The Angels refuse all paid offers for their services, working solely for the glory of their god. The Angels use weapons and abilities designed to foil the supernatural gifts of their quarry, enjoying a well-deserved reputation as

DEATH SOCIETIES NEMORGA

Titles: The Gatekeeper, The Grey King

No one is sure of Nemorga's origins. During the Titanswar, he appeared seemingly from nowhere to guide the dead to the correct afterlife. Nemorga's creed rules that there is a time and a place for all things to die, and that undeath is an abomination to be corrected. Otherwise known as the Gray King, the Gatekeeper and the Executioner, Nemorga attracts few devoted clerics, but all must pay homage to him should they wish to reach the correct afterlife. Nemorga's divine realm is Limbo, a gray and featureless waste, where the god himself stands at the gates to direct the spirits of the dead on their way.

hunters of vampires, witches and all others who routinely trample over Nemorga's will.

New Social Background: Angel of Nemorga

You have been initiated into the rites of the Angels of Nemorga and enjoy both the privileges and responsibilities of your station.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose one from among Stealth, Athletics or Acrobatics

Tool Proficiencies or Languages: Poisoner's kit or one exotic language

Equipment: A dagger, a set of gray vestments, a blowgun, 10 blowgun needles, a disguise kit

Feature: Wandering Soul

Your membership in the Angels guarantees you (and only you) paid quarters waiting for you in any settlement or city in Ghelspad, a gift from your mysterious benefactor at the discretion of the GM. Equally, you are given a wide berth by anyone aware of your station, with the exception of the official clergy of Nemorga who consider you anathema for your heretical ways. You may be approached by strangers who discover your affiliation with requests for assassinations.

Suggested Characteristics

The cult's members wear austere robes, and rarely indulge in worldly pleasures. A discreet appearance and fastidious approach to personal hygiene are important to the cult, who maintain a professional and aloof demeanor at all times to intimidate possible clients (and for its own sake — one can't spend too much time around dead bodies without developing either a thorough bathing regimen or sepsis). Angels of Nemorga carry discreet weapons in order to blend into the background, and travel light, trusting their material needs will be taken care of at each stop on the road by the help of their mysterious patron.

Cult of the Ancients

Servants of the Witch-Queen Belsameth, the Cult of the Ancients is a secret cabal of murderers that strikes without warning only to disappear on the wings of magic before anyone learns of their involvement. Scattered across Ghelspad, the cult is a morass of splinter sects and local 'guildhouses,' united primarily through worship of their dark goddess and loyalty to the cult leader Talina Som, known as the Whisper of Belsameth (see **The Wise & the Wicked** p. 99). To become a member of the cult is to abandon moral concerns and embrace the will of the Crone – in return, the cult grants power, and the ability to exact revenge on those who have wronged you.

Assassination (which is perhaps a grandiose term for the brutality with which many scions carry out their contracts) is a form of worship. This is a simple fact of existence to the Cult, and the members engage in lucrative contracts across Ghelspad. Belsameth's favor is mercurial, and the cult vies internally to ensure that they end up in her good graces. Sects which fail to please the mother of witches are often eliminated with extreme prejudice. Killing a superior to take their place is not seen as an act that offends Belsameth, though she has been known to rebuke scions who take it upon themselves to enact wasteful killing sprees targeting the membership.

The divine might of Belsameth is vital to keeping the Cult hidden from its enemies. The cult contains a vast array of skillsets, from murderers to thieves to arcanists, but the chief asset of the cult is their control of witchcraft, bestowed by Belsameth on her chosen clerics. Cloaks of night shield the cult from prying eyes. Hexes, curses and all manner of maleficarum bedevil those who would stand in the way of Belsameth's followers. All members of the cult are expected to maintain working knowledge of the basics of the magical arts, at least enough to recognize hostile practices and foil pursuit.

New Social Background: Assassin of the Ancients

You have been trained by the Cult of the Ancients in the blessed rites of holy Belsameth, mother of witches. You are skilled in concealing your activities from those who would track you, and you have training in the rudiments of witchcraft.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose one from among Arcana, Stealth, Religion or Survival

Tool Proficiencies or Languages: Poisoner's kit or one common language

Equipment: A dagger, a set of common clothes, a vial of basic poison, a small bag of silver dust worth 1gp and a pouch containing 10gp

Feature: Ancient Guile

Your training under the Cult of the Ancients allows you to mask your presence in urban locations and enlist the aid of witches wherever they hide. You leave no physical traces of your passing in urban locations unless you wish to. You have friends in the Cult and can usually find a friendly witch in any city you frequent, though their loyalty to your cause should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Suggested Characteristics

Members indoctrinated into the cult are often steeped in occult superstition, and frequently engage in bizarre rites to please Belsameth that will likely disturb onlookers. Cult witches are more gregarious than most, though rarely find themselves on the road unless they are called to action by the goddess herself. The cult favors dark clothing and a serious demeanor, muttering secret prayers under their breath and generally leaving a menacing impression.

HOLLOWFAUST

The necromancers at Hollowfaust are a practical and studious society which founded a city to be a center of learning and study of undeath and its uses. Hollowfaustian scholars are united by a clinical approach to necromancy and death. Their studies are as rigorous as their exams are thorough. Hollowfaustian adepts are steeped in lore of the flesh, making them (incidentally) very capable medics for the living as well as custodians of the dead.

Hollowfaustians follow a strict code of ethics, which prohibits the raising of undead for its own sake, limiting the purview of Hollowfaustian scholarship to only those practices which serve a recognizable and controllable purpose. Lesser undead in the form of walking corpses and skeletal watchmen are common, as their lack of sentience and superior durability compared to the living makes them perfect laborers. With the undead performing all onerous but mundane tasks, every Hollowfaustian is free to pursue the arts, the sciences, or to fill their days with whatever seems meaningful to them. If the cost for this way of life is the use of a few mortal shells from which the soul has already fled, is that not a price worth paying? Nay, is it not the ethical course of action?

The necromancers at Hollowfaust have built their entire society on the backs of thousands of undead slaves. The gates of the city are guarded by a standing army of obedient corpses shackled to the will of necromancers. More conservative scholars amongst the ranks of the learned have begun to wonder if perhaps this way of life is dangerous. Certainly, the undead show no signs of developing their own will at present, but who is to say that will not change? The tides of magic are wild and erratic since the fall of Mesos – should the undead ever break free of their chains, Hollowfaust would be consumed by darkness. Hollowfaust attracts scholars of medicine and the macabre from all across Ghelspad. In particular those for whom the surgical sciences hold some fascination gravitate towards the city, if for no other reason than the plentiful supply of bodies on which to practice. Naturalized citizens of Hollowfaust are likely to possess the Urban Resident background, to reflect their high dependence on the necromantic social structures that keep them in relative comfort.

New Social Background: Hollowfaustian Doctor

You have studied amongst the greatest medical minds of this age and plumbed the deepest secrets of the humanoid form. Your knowledge can coax information from the dead and diagnose the ills of the living. Some might call this strange, or unnatural, but you know that the flesh is nothing sacred — it is just another riddle for you to unravel.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose one from among Medicine, Nature or Survival

Tool Proficiencies or Languages: Herbalism kit or a poisoner's kit

The devotional societies can come across as overzealous to anyone unfamiliar with them. While they certainly have their place in Ghelspad, there are some that cause more trouble than they really should.

While some devotional croups attempt to serve the deities by spreading their influence through conversation and conversion, others take a more violent and overzealous approach. There are many who see any involved in a devotional organization as foolhardy and cullible, but there are many groups who attempt to do right by their members.

Adamantine Church

The Adamantine Church boasts an old and "traditional" cause: the eradication of evil in all forms. To the clerics, paladins, and cavaliers of the church, this means titans and their spawn; many of the more conservative members use this cause to justify their prejudice for even the Redeemed. The church comprises the largest group of Corean devotees on Ghelspad, and some of the new, more progressive members wish to open membership to Corean devotees of Redeemed races.

New Social Background: Minister

As part of the Adamantine Church, you've spent the past several years spreading your devotion to Corean and **Equipment:** A dagger, a pack containing ten glass vials, bandages, a badge certifying your status as a medical professional, a set of common clothes and a pouch containing 10gp

Feature: Chirurgical Training

Your training with and exposure to the dead allows you to divine information from them. By inspecting a corpse, you can tell how long it has been dead, and the most likely method by which the creature perished (if that information would still be discernible from the remains). In addition, as long as you have access to cloth for makeshift bandages, you can always use an action to stabilize a dying creature as if you possessed a healer's kit.

Suggested Characteristics

Hollowfaust is a city steeped in death, and outsiders often find the casual attitude of her residents towards it worrisome, if not outright offensive. Characters from Hollowfaust likely have little reverence towards corpses, funerals or other cosmetic concerns surrounding death or the dying. Their culture favors and rewards dry wit and sarcasm, making them strange and unapproachable figures at the best of times.

DEVOTIONAL SOCIETIES

recruiting more members to the church. You know there is evil in this world in the form titans and their spawn, and you want to convince as many as possible to join you in the fight against them. The Adamantine church has much to offer, especially in the way of training paladins to join the fight against evil. You have a way with words, and you've made many contacts in your time proselytizing — though not all of these contacts enjoy your company.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose one from among History, Persuasion, or Religion

Tool Proficiencies: Choose alchemist's supplies, calligrapher's supplies, or carpenter's tools

Equipment: An alms box, 2 blocks of incense, vestments, and a set of posters advertising the church

Feature: The Devil You Know

The Adamantine Church is the largest group of Corean devotees on Ghelspad, and they are a relatively well-known group. While there may be many who don't trust the church, especially among the Redeemed races, any who see you know what to expect from you. As an emissary of the Adamantine Church, they're familiar with your beliefs and traditions, and those who trust the church will be much more likely to approach or speak with you. There are even some who, despite their dislike for the Adamantine Church in general, have enough respect to speak with you and form an opinion based on your interaction. They may not know you, but they're willing to hear you out.

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Though no one wants to own up to it, rumors about the church have been circulating recently. They built their identity on despising titans and their spawn – even going so far as to reject the Redeemed. But lately, there have been whispers of orcs joining the church and attempting to revolutionize it from within.

If someone who doesn't trust the church is in a bind, they may still be willing to approach if you're the only nearby option. They know that some younger, more progressive members of the church don't have the prejudice toward the Redeemed races the older generations do, but even if they're not sure about you, sometimes they'd rather face the devil they know.

Suggested Characteristics

Many members of the Adamantine Church are obsessive in their quests to root out and destroy evil, which others can find off-putting. When you find a cause, you stick to it until the end. Your dedication and loyalty make you an ideal companion for those whose goals align with yours but make you a dangerous risk for those who may get in your way.

Cult of the Forge

The Cult of the Forge restarted when Corean relit the stars. This cult maintains that since Golthagga needed the forge to create and Corean needed it to restart the world, Forge Zme-dah deserves worship over the deities who used it. Through their worship of the forge, cultists also worship Golthagga and Corean, but most members of Coreanic churches see this cult as heretical and seek to convert or excommunicate these cult members. Though the Cult of the Forge is a relatively minor faction, they are old and storied: most current teachings are based on older Golthagga cults with newer ideas centering around Golthagga's Forge.

New Social Background: Community Crafter

Many of the cult's members are smiths and creators of some sort, and cult communities often only contain a handful of worshipers. You grew up as part of the cult, so you've been smithing or crafting your entire life. You also grew up in a small community and were one of very few smiths in your area, so you had to learn to make many things. Your adaptability made you approachable when your cult affiliation was off-putting, and you've had the benefit of making friends (or at least friendly conversation) with many of the people in your small community. Now that you're on the road as an adventurer, much has changed for you. Large cities have wide varieties of smiths and crafters who are able to specialize in one particular aspect of their trade and perfect it, and now you seek to do the same.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose one from among Performance, Religion, or Sleight of Hand

Tool Proficiencies: Choose one from mason's tools, smith's tools, or tinker's tools

Equipment: Members of the Cult of the Forge all carry a hammer; you also have 10 iron spikes, a flask of alchemist's fire, and a journal with drawings and descriptions of all of your creations

Feature: Crafty Cultist

Members of the Cult of the Forge value metalworking and artistic pursuits, and since you were raised in the cult, you value these things as well. Though you spent most of your early life learning generalized skills to be the community crafter, now as an adventurer, you have the opportunity to find your passion and perfect it. During your search, you find you pick up new artistic and smithing pursuits easily. You can spend hours metalworking, and you can create just about anything nonmagical provided you have access to a forge, materials, time, and an example to work from.

Suggested Characteristics

You desire to perfect your craft and thereby perfect yourself. Your desire for perfection can make you seem rude or judgmental to some, but you like what you like, and you see no reason to cut corners in any aspect of your life.

You are open to new experiences and learning all you can, which can make you come off as either eager or naive, but you have little trouble making friends with those who would share their knowledge with you, and even better if they want to trade skills.

You have yet to decide what to do once you feel you've perfected your craft, and you sometimes lie awake at night, staring at the stars wondering what you'll do. Will you return to your community with your newly earned skill? Or perhaps find a new community in which to settle and introduce an entirely new group to your skill and faith? You don't need to decide yet; you're not perfect yet.

DEFENDER'S FAITH

The demigod Hwyrdd the Rogue, known to halflings as the Great Defender, inspired the creation of the Circle of the Defender's Faith. Members of the Circle honor Hwyrdd by seeking freedom for all halflings, and this religion is

While the cult's desire for perfection is admirable, they sometimes become obsessive in the pursuit of their crafts. This can come in handy when you need a particularly unique item or piece of armor made – in that case, a metalworker from the Cult of the Force will create something for you more wonderful than you ever could have imagined.

particularly popular among halflings in the Heteronomy of Virduk. Circle members invoke the name of their hero Hwyrdd as a rallying cry to inspire rebellions and lead their people to freedom.

There are none more dedicated to rebellion and freedom than the halflings of the Defender's Faith. After overthrowing their own oppressors and tasting freedom, this group banded together to seek justice and freedom for others. Occasionally, their eyes are bigger than their stomachs, and they trap themselves in impossible situations, but these rebels can quickly rally a team to their aid and build up a full-blown rebellion from even a few mistreated workers.

Supposedly, the Defenders have started infiltrating the parts of the Calastian Hecemony where the Defender's Faith is banned, in an attempt to root out any unjust treatment of halflings and free the remaining slaves. This would be an incredibly foolish endeavor, and though the Defenders are indeed brave rebels, they aren't so foolish as to risk drawing the ire of Calastia. At least, not without a very good plan.

New Social Background: Roguish Rebel

You know the importance of freedom, and you do what you can to ensure all taste the freedom that has meant so much to you. You might attempt to lead a strike against an unfair employer, or you may incite a rebellion against an oppressive regime. No matter the scale, you value justice and equity for all, and you won't stop until everyone is free. And then, you'll likely find another group who needs a quiet push in the right direction or a loud chant encouraging them forward to continue your fight for liberty.

Skill Proficiencies: Choose one from among Insight, Sleight of Hand, or Persuasion

Tool Proficiencies: Choose one from calligrapher's supplies, disguise kit, or forgery kit

Hwyrdd

Title: The Rogue

Strong-spirited in the face of adversity, Hwyrdd the halfling god is said to have been instrumental in leading Kadum into the waiting blades of Vangal, Chardun, and Belsameth during the Divine War. Hwyrdd calls on his followers to remain mischievous in the darkest of times and never lose their lust for life. It is this verve that often drives Hwyrdd's followers when hope falters and the oppression of Calastian nobility weighs heavy on the small shoulders of the halflings.

Equipment: A burglar's pack

Feature: Convince Me

You know how to talk to people. More than that: you know how to listen to people. You can talk to anyone, anywhere, and learn what's keeping them from achieving their goals, and you can help them overcome that. You can make friends with anyone being oppressed, and you can help them see the best way to overthrow their oppressor. If you're in a group, you have no problem rallying them to fight back against an opposing force, and because you're so dedicated to freedom, you make sure no one fights their battles alone. You may claim advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks made to coordinate groups of five or more people.

Suggested Characteristics

Your rebellious nature can sometimes come off as being a contrarian, and sometimes you do like to disagree simply for the sake of disagreement. But when it matters, you're on the side of freedom, and your drive to free everyone from their oppressors makes you an honorable and loyal companion. It also makes you an inconvenience to anyone trying to infringe on someone else's freedoms because when you set your sights on a tyrant, you don't stop until they're brought to justice.

THE AIRE OF THESE PEOPLE! TO AGHT ALONGSIDE THE HALFLINGS OF THE DEFENDER'S FAITH IS TO KNOW TRUE HEROISM. TITANSPAWN ARE NOT THE ONLY VILLAINS TO CRAWL THESE HEALING LANDS, WE ALSO FACE MEN WHO WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A BROKEN WORLD. YET TO SEE THESE REBELS, AGHTING WITH BOTH PEN AND SWORD, ALLS MY HEART WITH THE CERTAINTY THAT BALANCE WILL AGAIN PREVAIL.

NOTE TWO: CLASSES

¹his list of class archetypes expands on those presented in chapter three of the Scarred Lands Player's Guide (SLPG).

BARBARIAN

This primal path is practiced by barbarians across Ghelspad.

PRIMAL PATH: PATH OF THE STEPPES ARCHER

Ghelspad is home to many nomadic tribes that live off the untamed lowlands, where there is little shelter from danger. From the Kelder Steppes to the Plains of Lede, these people come from such desolate emptiness that a horse's honest companionship and swift legs are fundamental. Steppes warriors have learned to use the horse as a deadly weapon in war, riding out to meet their enemies and engage them from afar on the wide, open grasslands. These mounts are not merely trained animals, they are friends in peace and allies in war. Life on the steppes is one of constant movement, tearing down and rebuilding to move with herds or outrun winter storms. Barbarians on the Path of the Steppes Archer are the elite warriors of their tribe, dedicating themselves to an often-lonely existence as hunter, scout, and raider. In combat they are able to channel their rage differently than other primal warriors, enhancing their senses and skills with bows. Accomplished steppes archers are said to share their supernatural strength and fortitude with their trusted mounts.

Horse and Rider

Starting when you choose this path at 3rd level, you become proficient in Animal Handling, if you are not

already. Additionally, mounting or dismounting a creature costs you only 5 feet of movement, rather than half your speed, and you do not require a saddle to ride a mount.

Archer's Rage

Also, at 3rd level, you learn to harness your rage differently, entering a state of intense focus. You can use a bonus action and expend one use of your rage feature to enter an archer's rage. While in an archer's rage, you gain the following benefits if you aren't wearing heavy armor:

- You do not suffer disadvantage for making a ranged attack if a hostile creature is within 5 feet of you.
- When you make a ranged weapon attack using a bow, you gain a bonus to the damage roll that increases as you gain levels as a barbarian, as shown in the Rage Damage column of the Barbarian table (System Reference Document p. 8).
- You have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.
- You can use your Reckless Attack feature with any attack made using a bow.

All other aspects of an Archer's Rage function as a normal barbarian rage.

If you choose to enter a normal barbarian rage while in an archer's rage, the archer's rage immediately ends.

BONDED MOUNT

Starting at 6th level, you can form a deep bond with a mount. You spend one day of downtime bonding with a warhorse, a pony, a camel, an elk, or a mastiff (your GM might allow other animals to serve as a bonded mount). The mount has its normal statistics but has bonus hit points equal to your barbarian level + your Constitution modifier. Additionally, if your mount has an Intelligence of 5 or less, its Intelligence becomes 6, and it gains the ability to understand one language of your choice that you speak. ARCHERS HAILING AROM THE STEPPES ARE SHILLED BEYOND COMPARE AND MAKE VALIANT COMPANIONS...IF YOU CAN TOLERATE LISTENING TO ONE-SIDED CONVERSATION WITH A HORSE.



Your mount serves you both in and out of combat. You have an instinctive bond with it that allows you to fight as a seamless unit. While riding your mount, you can use your bonus action to command the mount to take the Attack action.

If your mount dies, you must acquire a new mount before performing the bonding ritual — you do not summon a mount as part of this feature.

Additionally, you have advantage on saving throws made to avoid falling off your mount. If you fall off your mount and descend no more than 10 feet, you can land on your feet if you're not incapacitated.

ARROW STORM

At 10th level, you can fire a bow at blistering speeds. If you do not use any of your movement in a round, you can make one additional attack when attacking with a bow. If you are mounted and use your mount's speed, you can still use this feature.

SHARED FRENZY

Starting at 14th level, when you enter either a barbarian or archer's rage, your bonded mount adds your Rage Damage to any successful attacks it makes and gains resistance against bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

FIGHTER

G helspad is a war-torn land. Though the Divine War ended a century and a half ago, the divine races and the Redeemed still battle over land and resources. Titanspawn threaten to overrun every place where society has gained a foothold. As such, the arts of violence are commonplace throughout Ghelspad.

Martial Archetype: Dragon Knight

Calastia's dragon knights come from among Virduk's finest soldiers, taken to be trained by the Order of the Black Dragon to ride a mock dragon, a species of flightless drake native to Ghelspad, into battle. The mock dragons are cherished by the Order, who have long studied how to breed, train, and care for the unique beasts. Each knight is ordained by a priest of Chardun and then mystically bound to a mount. The loyalty between dragon and rider is unparalleled, making for a terrifying fighting unit.

Fighters who become Dragon Knights of Calastia are master cavaliers. They learn devastating techniques with the lance and, over time, begin to exhibit more magical qualities as well. Even when dismounted, a rare and disgraceful occurrence for any Dragon Knight, they are formidable warriors, unmoved by the horrors of battle.

BONUS PROFICIENCY

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Animal Handling, History, Intimidation, or Persuasion. Alternatively, you learn one language of your choice.

DRAGON MOUNT

Starting at 3rd level, you can form a deep bond with one of the Order of the Black Dragon's special mounts. You spend one day of downtime bonding with a mock dragon (see **Creature Collection**). The mount gains the ability to speak one language of your choice that you know.

Your mount serves you both in combat and out, and you have an instinctive bond with it that allows you to fight as a seamless unit.

If your mount dies, you must acquire a new mount before performing the bonding ritual—you do not summon a mount as part of this feature. Losing a mount as a Calastian Dragon Knight is considered a grave offense to the Hegemony and will come with severe consequences. GMs are encouraged to make acquiring a new dragon mount arduous and dangerous. The Order of the Black Dragon may demand that the disgraced knight perform some quest in service to Calastia before being granted a new mount.

Additionally, you have advantage on saving throws made to avoid falling off your mount. If you fall off your mount and descend no more than 10 feet, you can land on your feet if you're not incapacitated.

DRAGON SPEAR TECHNIQUE

Starting at 3rd level, you master using the lance while mounted. While mounted on your dragon mount, if the mount moves at least 20 feet toward an enemy and you make a successful attack with a lance against that enemy, you deal an additional 1d12 piercing damage. This damage die is rolled again if the attack is a critical hit.

ALTERNATE MOCK DRAGON

If **Creature Collection** is not available to you, your mock dragon has the statistics of a black dragon wyrmling but is Large sized, does not have a flying speed, and its acid breath has a recharge of 6.

You can make this special attack a number of times equal to your Strength modifier (minimum of once), and you regain all expended uses of it when you finish a long rest.

ENDOWMENT OF SCALES

Starting at 7th level, the binding magics between you and your mount cause your body to grow thick black scales. While you are not wearing any armor, your Armor Class equals 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You can use a shield and still gain this benefit. If your dragon mount dies, you lose this benefit after 24 hours. If you form a new bond with a dragon mount, the scales grow back over 24 hours and you regain this benefit.

DRAGONHEART

At 10th level, you gain resistance to acid damage and have advantage on saving throws made against being frightened.

OF ONE BLOOD

At 15th level, the binding magics draw you closer to your mount. Any healing you receive, including through your Second Wind feature, also affects your mount.

WRATH OF THE BLACK DRAGON

Starting at 18th level, you share your dragon mount's powerful breath. You can use an action to exhale acid in a 15-foot line that is 5-feet wide. Each creature in the line must make a Dexterity saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier), taking 5d8 acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

MONK

artial prowess and discipline are hallmarks of the monk. The Way of the Sacred Chain is no exception.

Monastic Tradition: Way of the Sacred Chain

The Order of the Sacred Chain was born in Chardas, a large settlement in Calastia dedicated to the worship of Chardun, the Great General. The Order teaches that if one seeks power over others, then they must first master themself in mind, body, and spirit; the true master rules themself first and then their underlings. The monks dedicated to Chardun have mastered his iconic weapon in combat and serve Calastia as assassins, bodyguards, and secret operatives. They are often pitted against more traditional Calastian knights in duels, urging both to better themselves, and thus Calastia as a whole.

Monks hailing from Chardas itself wear a heavy iron manacle on one wrist, to which they permanently latch their spiked chain. The manacle and chain serve as an outward representation of their teaching and a reminder that they are slaves to Chardun.

Monks following the Way of the Sacred Chain dedicate

themselves to the weapon. They learn to subdue opponents quickly, bringing them off their feet or transferring their ki through the weapon, enslaving their enemies' minds. Masters of the style are dervishes on the battlefield, able to bring down entire squadrons of Virduk's enemies in a flurry of steel.

SPIKED CHAIN MASTERY

When you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you become dedicated to studying and mastering the spiked chain (**SLPG** p. 118). You become proficient in the spiked chain if you are not already. Additionally, the spiked chain counts as a monk weapon for you.

When you make a successful attack with a spiked chain, you can spend 1 ki point to attempt to trip your enemy. The target must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

SLAVER'S STRIKE

Starting at 3rd level, you can strike a wounded creature and bring them to heel. When you make a successful attack with your spiked chain against a creature with half or fewer of their hit points remaining, you can spend 2 ki points to attempt a slaver's strike. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be incapacitated for 10 minutes or until they take damage. While incapacitated in this way, the target's speed is reduced to 0.

CLIMB THE CHAIN

Starting at 6th level, you can use your spiked chain to pull yourself to any object within 10 feet of you, spending an amount of movement equal to the distance traveled. Your GM may also allow you to anchor the chain to an object above you and swing over obstacles, traveling no more than 10 feet.

DERVISH OF TERROR

At 11th level, you can use your action and spend 4 ki points to perform a flourish with your spiked chain. Creatures within 20 feet of you that can see you must make a Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you for 1 minute.

IRON TEMPEST

Starting at 17th level, you can create a storm of attacks with your spiked chain. When you use the Attack action, you can expend 5 ki points to make an attack against every creature within 10 feet of you.



Note Three: Races of the Scarred Lands

G helspad is a diverse land. Characters hail from a wide array of geographic and racial backgrounds. The

following options may be added to those presented in the Scarred Lands Player's Guide, Chapter Two.

HALF-ORCS

fter the Divine War, orcs' nomadic tendencies allowed them to spread through the nations of Ghelspad rapidly, allowing them to establish strong relationships with other cultures and races. When an orc and another mammalian race come together and have a child, their half-orc offspring often takes after both parents, though their orcish genes tend to show through the child's size and skin color.

Orcs, especially those still following the traditional nomadic lifestyle, tend to be very welcoming to half-orcs of all kinds. Even within orcish populations, half-orcs create their own customs that combine orcish traditions with those of other races to encourage inclusion among all half-orcs. These complex customs can be difficult to learn, but half-orcs, and the orcs who participate in these customs, are always willing to teach anyone who's willing to learn.

Orcish societies, because they're so open and welcoming, embrace half-orcs and their parents. If a non-orc wishes to live in an orcish society to raise their half-orc child, most orcish tribes happily welcome them, with or without the orcish parent.

Physical Description: Half-orcs often take after their orcish parent in size; no matter the race of their non-orc parent, half-orcs are typically large and tall. Still, as half-orcs can vary so widely, there isn't a specific size range that defines them. Typically, a half-orc can be anywhere from slightly larger than typical of their non-orc parent's race to slightly smaller than an orc. Not all half-orcs take after their orcish parent, however, and some may not display physical traits associated with orcs.

HALF-ORC/HALF-ELF

To create a character that is half orc and half elf, choose either the half-orc or half-elf racial option as your base and use the information from the other parent's base race to fill in the traits.

For example: either choose the half-orc base and the elf options to create your character or the half-elf base and orc options.

While the appearance of half-orcs can also vary widely depending on their parentage, most half-orcs usually still have a faint green cast to their skin, revealing their orcish heritage. This is not always the case, however.

Society: Because orcs have such an open society, half-orcs find themselves welcomed into their orc parent's culture easily. Many orcs lead semi-nomadic lives, and the half-orcs who live with them integrate into their society, traveling with the tribe.

Half-orcs raised outside of orcish society, however, typically have vastly different experiences. If a half-orc child is raised with their non-orc parent, they're much more likely to experience discrimination from those who mistrust, misunderstand, and fear orcs in general. If their non-orc parent is from a particularly insular and discriminatory society, the half-orc child may even be shunned or worse. Orcs do not suffer the small-mindedness of those who would mistreat them or their half-orc brethren, however, and any half-orc child is welcomed into the nearest orcish society, with most orcs happy to help orphaned half-orcs find a home within their tribe.

Relations: A half-orc's relations to others depends heavily on how they were raised. Half-orcs raised in a traditional and nomadic orcish society tend to take on similar views: they're open to all and happily take part in traditions and customs while also integrating new parts into their own customs based on their mixed heritage.

Orcs who have spent longer in cities might be less interested in helping half-orcs develop new customs and encouraging their inclusion, but it's unusual for any orc to be wholly unwelcoming toward a half-orc.

A half-orc raised with only a non-orc parent typically takes on the mores and traditions of the person who raised them.

Alignment and Religion: Half-orcs can be of any alignment but typically gravitate toward the alignment of whichever parent or parents raised them. Half-orcs raised in primarily orcish societies tend toward neutral alignments.

Depending on where they were raised, half-orcs don't generally feel strong allegiance to any one deity, but much

like their orcish parents, would choose Denev if pressed. However, if a half-orc child is raised in a society that observes a specific deity or religion, the half-orc would likely follow

in that same path.

Adventurers: Half-orcs raised in semi-nomadic orcish societies need little convincing to become adventurers. Already accustomed to travel, they leap at the chance to learn more about the world and, potentially, their own culture. Orcs raised in orcish tribes may also wish to travel to showcase their skills, much as orcs would. Half-orcs raised outside of orcish society may choose to become adventurers for any number of reasons, including attempting to find a more welcoming society than their own, learning more about their orcish heritage, or a simple and unexplained wanderlust.

Half-orc Names: Names for half-orcs follow the conventions of the parent(s) who raised them.

HALF-ORC RACIAL TRAITS

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 2. Choose an ability score other than Strength from your non-orc parent to increase by 1.

Age. Orcs have relatively short lives. Half-orcs whose non-orc parent comes from a long-lived race typically outlive most orcs. Half-orc lifespans can be anywhere in the range of either of their parents'.

Size. If both of your parents' size is Medium, then yours is, as well, though your orcish heritage may ensure you're larger than others of your non-orc parent's race. If one parent is Small, you may choose to be either Small or Medium, but even if you're Small, you may still be slightly larger than others of your non-orc parent's race.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet if you are Medium, 25 feet if you are Small.

Half-orc Heritage. When creating your half-orc, you gain a total of five racial traits. You may choose racial traits from either parent. If your non-orc parent has a feature that increases their speed, you may choose this as one of your

racial traits. The mix is up to you, but you may not choose contradictory traits; for example, a Small character can't choose Powerful Build.

> Languages. Half-orcs speak the languages of both of their parents, as well as one other language.

MINOTAUR

fter many epochs of witnessing the wanton destruction wrought by her brethren, Denev, the Earthmother, created the first minotaurs. She bade them to go forth, defend those who could not defend themselves, and heal the destruction wrought by the titans and their spawn.

Over time, minotaurs developed methods to subdue enemies without injuring them. Guided by the Earthmother, they constructed a mindscape known as the Labyrinth. Scholars debate whether the Labyrinth is a hallucination or a real place, perhaps a pocket dimension of some kind, but it is an apparently endless maze of stone where a minotaur may send the mind of an opponent, rendering them harmless for a short time.

Physical Description: Minotaurs tower over most other humanoids, standing over 8 feet tall. With a head and legs like a bull and a body like a human, they are an intimidating sight. Highland minotaurs tend to have skin and fur ranging from pure white to light browns and tans, while lowland minotaurs exhibit darker brown, reddish-brown, gray, or black hues. While all minotaurs are powerfully built, highlanders tend to be stockier and have thicker fur. All minotaurs have horns, with highlanders having shorter horns which may point upward or sweep back toward the ground, and lowlanders having longer horns that arc toward the sky.

Society: Minotaurs share a tight-knit community. A matriarchal society, the Sovereign Mother stands at the head of all tribes, each of which has a Matron that guides day-today life within their settlements. The Sovereign Mother is chosen by majority vote amongst the Matrons, and may be highland or lowland, but always lives within the citadel in the mountain bastion-city of Dromyas in the Titanshome Mountains. That city is carved from the very stone of the mountain, and those who have seen the Labyrinth notice similarities in design.

Hiraedh is a strong part of minotaur culture. While it translates to Ledean as "obligation," the word holds stronger meaning in minotaur society. It is the sense of being honorable by doing one's duty to the Earthmother, one's own clan, and the peoples of the world. When a minotaur is considered old enough, they go on *hiraedh*, the word here meaning to travel the world, seeking those who need help, and healing that which is corrupted. Some choose to go on *hiraedh* several times throughout their lives. For a minotaur to tell another that they have no *hiraedh* is to say they have no honor, but also that they are too weak, vile, or cowardly to uphold their sacred duty.

A minotaur that returns from *hiraedh* is marked, either by etchings on their horns or receiving a tattoo or piercings. These symbolize the journey the minotaur has taken and are markings of honor in minotaur society. Those who serve a lifetime of *hiraedh* take on the title of Elder, and it is considered dishonorable to address them without their title. Not all long-lived minotaurs achieve the title, and aged village chieftains honor those younger than them who have earned the name of Elder.



Relations: Minotaurs are held in contempt by many titanspawn races, particularly those who are not considered Redeemed. The bastion-city of Dromyas is often attacked by titanspawn of the Titanshome Mountains, though they have yet to breach its walls. An alliance is forming with the Gleaming Valley, the Hollow Knights there respecting the abilities and society of the minotaurs. Ganjus elves are particularly friendly with the minotaurs, each race being connected to the earth, and they honor the minotaurs' life quest to protect the land and heal what is corrupted.

Though minotaurs fought side-by-side with humans, the Calastian Hegemony wants nothing to do with the titanspawn race, and actively seeks to keep minotaur missionaries outside of its borders.

Alignment and Religion: Almost all minotaurs revere the Earthmother, Denev, who created them. Worship of gods is not unheard of and is not frowned upon as long as such devotion does not go against *hiraedh*.

Most minotaurs are lawful, with a penchant for neutrality or good, though there are those amongst the race that have chaotic and evil tendencies.

Adventurers: While family and home are important to them, the call to be a boon to the world is strong. The call to go on *hiraedh* means that almost all minotaurs are adventurers at some point in their lives.

Minotaur Names: Branys, Drarath, Hammara, Jhroban, Kerzan, Nikhis, Riven, Tyssia, Vyrasha, Wynkhes

MINOTAUR RACIAL TRAITS

All minotaurs share certain aspects. You have the following traits.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength and Constitution scores increase by 1.

Age. Minotaurs mature at a rate similar to humans and are considered ready to go on *hiraedh* in their late teens. You can live for 150 years or longer.

Size. Lowland minotaurs tower over 8 feet tall, while highland minotaurs tend to be just under 8 feet. Both weigh between 280 and 360 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

Into the Labyrinth. Beginning at 5th level, you can focus on a target you can see within 30 feet of you and attempt to send their mind into the Labyrinth. The target must make a Charisma saving throw. On a failed save, they believe they have been teleported to an ancient maze of stone, inhabited with terrifying monsters. This has the effect of the *confusion* spell, but also causes auditory and visual hallucinations. If the target is allowed to act normally due to their roll at the start of their turn, their mind glimpses what is going on around them outside of the labyrinth for that turn. You cannot cast other spells that require concentration and must make concentration saving throws if you take damage while using this feature. You may use this ability once and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this power.

Labyrinthine Recall. You can perfectly recall any path you have traveled.

Tauric Fortitude. Your thick hide allows you to occasionally shrug off injury. When you take damage, you can use your reaction to roll a d12 and add your Constitution modifier to the roll. You reduce the amount of damage taken by this amount. After you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Languages. You speak Titan Speech and two other languages.

HIGHLAND

As a highland minotaur, you are stout and hardy, able to survive in the cold climates of the highest mountains of Ghelspad.

Ability Score Increase. Your Constitution score increases by 1.

Mountain Born. You're acclimated to high elevations, including elevations above 20,000 feet, and you are naturally adapted to cold climates.

Touch of the Earthmother. You know the *spare the dying* cantrip. At 3rd level you can cast *aid* once as a 1st level spell, and at 5th level you can cast *beacon of hope* once as a 2nd level spell. You regain the ability to cast these spells after a long rest.

LOWLAND

As a lowland minotaur, your powerful build and wicked horns make you a formidable opponent.

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score and one other score of your choice increases by 1.

Charge. If you move at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hit with your gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an additional 1d6 piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Gore. Your horns are natural weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. On a hit you deal piercing damage equal to 1d6 + your Strength modifier, instead of the bludgeoning damage normal for an unarmed strike.

Powerful Build. You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can lift, push, or drag.

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