



# Heroes of the Mists



Character options and new rules for Ravenloft and the *Curse of Strahd*  
by "JESTER" DAVID GIBSON



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# INTRODUCTION

**Ravenloft** is neither the name of the planet, nor the name of a land. Ravenloft is an ancient castle in the land of Barovia, a nation that lies at the heart of the continent known as “the Core”.

The world itself has no name, simply being known as “the world”. To some it is called the “Land of the Mists”. Travellers from distant lands sometimes label the world the “Demiplane of Dread” but locals laugh at that hyperbole. Others have called the world such things as a prison for the damned, a crucible for the virtuous, or a realm of fear. To you, it is simply “home”.

## 10 Things the Common Person Knows

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Many beliefs vary from land to land, as people disagree on what is true and what is myth. But the majority of the Core’s inhabitants commonly accept the following as facts:

**1 – Magic Is Real.** It is widely accepted that magic exists, but it is disputed if magic is an abomination or part of the natural order. Most folk never witness displays of true magic but still accept that it exists.

**2 – People Are Isolated.** The average person lives their entire life within thirty miles of where they were born. The farthest most folk travel is the neighbouring town or village.

**3 – Monsters Are Real.** The majority of people die from natural causes, never having encountered a creature of the night. Regardless, it is agreed that monsters are very real and that dangers lurk in the shadows.

**4 – Superstitions Work.** As monsters are real and dangerous, adherence to ritual is what keeps people safe. By strictly adhering to tradition, tragedy is avoided.

**5 – Humanity Is Predominant.** The various inhuman races are rare, almost unknown in many lands. At best they are viewed as less than human, and at worst they are seen as beasts or monsters.

**6 – Technology Advances.** The progress of science has created modern wonders, such as clockworks, firearms, gaslights, and some steam power.

**7 – The Gods Are Silent.** While prayers are sometimes answered, the gods themselves do not speak directly to mortals. Some claim to hear the voice of god, but these are called madmen as often as they are called prophets.

**8 – Do Not Anger The Vistani.** Wandering vagabonds, Vistani are often considered thieves, but these gypsies can also be entertainers, traders, craftsmen, and mystics. Despite widespread fear and mistrust of the wandering folk, the potency of their curses and use of the Evil Eye keep the Vistani from being barred from towns.

**9 – Beware The Mists.** Cool white fogs borders the known lands. It is easy to become lost in the Mists, which have been known to snatch travellers, depositing them in faraway lands or even other times.

**10 – Magic Is Unreliable.** Outlanders from distant lands complain that magic does not work as it should: it cannot detect morality, travel between nations, accurately divine the future, or cross into other worlds. Even those spells that do work often have unintended consequences.

## Horror and Heroes

RAVENLOFT is a world of terrors, a campaign setting created for the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS roleplaying game. RAVENLOFT is a land where the common threats are not beasts pulled from Greek Mythology or High Fantasy, instead coming from Gothic tales, folk tales, and old horror films. Beasts like the chimera or mantichore are rare, and it is instead a world of vampires, werewolves, ghosts, and hags.

For the inhabitants, their world is not a place of nightmares. Wicked gods do not cause dramatic events that shake the land, armies of orcs do not rampage across the countryside, and huge dragons do not burn



whole villages. The occasional person might die a mysterious death or vanish under suspicious circumstances, but most folk live relatively normal lives in peace before dying a mundane death. Yet there are still horrors: monsters lurk in the shadows, in the woods, in the ruins, and in the dark places even the brave fear to walk.

While there are no dragons, neither are there shining knights wielding radiant swords, righteous holy warriors with unwavering faith, and magi who flaunt their control over the fundamental forces of the

universe. Such bravery is rare, and champions that flagrant become easy prey for the forces of the night. Heroes in RAVENLOFT are a different sort, not choosing a life of adventure for glory or wealth, but usually having the hero's life thrust on them, for more personal reasons. They are unlikely to turn the tide against the forces of evil or save the world. Many will not even be remembered for their deeds, save by the people whose lives they saved.



# CHAPTER 1: RACES

As she moves through the village green, the half-vistani feels the eyes of the entire town silently watching her every move with suspicion. Ducking hurled fruit and stones, the caliban ran harder in a desperate attempt to escape the mob and their pitchforks. He struggled against the bonds restraining him to the stake, the fire slowly spreading around his feet, as the inquisitor preached to the crowd about pointed fiend ears and corrupted blood.

Humanity is predominant throughout the Land of the Mists. In some lands nonhuman races are even dismissed as a myth, having never been seen or their appearance dismissed as an unfortunate birth defect. Others view the various demihuman races with fear, seeing little difference between a halfling and a goblin, an elf or a dark fey. However, there are still some lands and settlements where dwarves, elves, and others can be found, though these are rare and isolated. In addition to the standard, familiar races, there are a number of other races, more common in the Mists than in other lands.

## Dwarves

The dwarves of the Mists are a dying race living in the shadow of past glories. Most dwarves are labourers who throw themselves into their work for lack of a greater cause, performing mundane tasks without zeal or passion. On the whole, dwarves are a foul-tempered, joyless folk whose only joy is the acquisition of treasure.

Dwarves belong to one of three clans: Hreidmar, Fjalaram, or Dvalin. Clan Hreidmar was founded by an ancient dwarven king and the clan views itself as burdened with leadership and noble purpose. However, there are few to lead and the clan elders bicker endlessly, competing for power and authority. Clan Fjalaram is known for its skalds and storytellers, and all dwarven eddas and histories were written by Clan Fjalaram. It is said the clan's muse has forsaken them, and even works of mediocre quality are seldom

seen. Clan Dvalin's carvers of runes hold the secret of etching magic symbols into stone. Those with the talent for rune carving are rare, and most of the clan now busies itself with mundane stonework.

The past of the dwarves has become little more than stories. Dwarves tell tales of greatness but cannot craft the wonders of their legends or engage in the glorious battles of yore. Their god is silent and their prayers go unanswered, their ancestral heroes all but forgotten, and even their ancient enemies unknown. Some rare dwarves refuse to let this be the end or – as they put it – "go quietly into the deep". These brave few are determined to give the world something to remember of the dwarves.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Dwarvish and a regional language of your choice, typically Balok or Darkonese.

## Subraces

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In the Land of the Mists, dwarves belong to the same nation, with divisions between dwarves related to lifestyle and the family's profession.

### Hill Dwarves

Raised in the light of the sun, hill dwarves are craftsmen and traders. Hill dwarves have homes atop or close to the surface, and many live in human communities. The dwarves of Tempe Falls and Corvia mostly hill dwarves.

### Mountain Dwarves

Also known as pale dwarves or blackbeards, mountain dwarves make their living deep underground. A few still dig for ore and gems but most now delve for the coal and tar sought by the Western nations, especially those dwarves who live in the Sleeping Beast mountain range.



## Fey (Elves)

The fey are the inhabitants of enchanted woods, seldom visited by outsiders. Typically found in the vast forest of Sithicus or the Misted woods of eastern Darkon, the fey are immortal, aloof, and arrogant.

The Fair Folk are timeless, possessing only an academic knowledge of death. While intelligent, they are erratic and flighty, endlessly procrastinating or wasting years to mundane pursuits; and elf thinks nothing of devoting a century to a song, dance, poetry, or other pleasurable artistic pursuit. At their core, elves are creatures of the forests and spend much of their time tending to their woodlands and gardens, enjoying the beauty of nature.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Elven (also known as Sithican) and a regional language of your choice. High elves typically know Mordentish or Vaasi while wood elves typically know Darkonese or Balok.

### Subraces

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In the Land of the Mists, high elves come from the large southern wood and the land of Sithicus, while wood elves come from the smaller forests and the nation of Darkon.

#### High Elves

Sithican elves feel detached from the world. In their heart they believe this world is not their true home and have difficulty forming a bond with the land. This leads them to apathy and disinterest in the larger world, and they often sink into a profound malaise. They seldom maintain their cities and homes, which are now decaying around them. High elves are private and hold lesser races in contempt. Travellers are not always welcome in their enchanted woods.

#### Wood Elves

Darkonian elves live a nomadic life in their woods and are more flighty and curious. They have been known to steal away things that catch their fancy, be they objects or people. Currently, the wood elves are suffering a time of strife; their prophetic stargazers have

predicted the end of days is nearing and – for the first time – the immortal race is wrestling with the foreknowledge of death. They are not handling the revelation well.

There are a small number of wood elves in Barovia, which are locally known as *dusk elves*. Please refer to *Curse of Strahd* for information on these elves.

#### Drow and Eladrin

The origins of the drow and eladrin are uncertain. It is thought that elves raised in areas of black magic become corrupted, similar to how human babies become caliban.

This is not the whole truth. Hidden inside the Shadow Rift is a mysterious race of fey known as the Arak. Their land is a place where the realms of Faerie and the Pale overlap. The Arak are divided into two courts: the *seelie* and *unseelie*, each filled with many different types of fey whose appearance varies depending on personality and allegiance. The eladrin are members of the seelie court while the drow belong to the unseelie, with more powerful members of each being respectively known as shee and sithe.

## Fey-Touched (Half-elves)

The fey-touched are neither human nor elf: they have the perpetual youth of the immortal fey but grow old and die as humans. They are still cursed with long lives and doomed to watch loved ones age and die. The vast majority of half-elves are the result of unions with Darkonian elves, as Sithicans seldom deem to have even non-romantic relations with humans.

Half-elves have no communities of their own, making their homes in the lands of one of their parents. Most half-elves are raised by humans; some men awake one morning to a bassinet on their doorstep a year after being ensorcelled or Mist-led. Human communities often fear the inhuman fey-touched, but seldom act against half-elf children out of fear of drawing the vengeance of the fey.

**Languages.** You begin play speaking Elven and a regional language of your choice.



## Gnomes

Curious and inventive by nature, gnomes possess an insatiable curiosity and hunger for knowledge, believing all problems must be solved and all mysteries answered. All gnomes appear wizened and old, developing their first wrinkles in their youth while their hair quickly greys or balds.

Gnomes enjoy tinkering, inventing, and experimentation. While partial to clockworks, some gnomes prefer alchemy, animal husbandry, botany, mathematics, and even philosophy. Gnomes make no art and engage in as little farming and crafting as possible to leave time to perform their experiments.

To humans, gnomes seem mad, with obsessive tendencies and strange compulsions. Gnomes have little empathy, often bordering on sociopathy. Gnomes have a well-earned reputation for macabre humour. Not deliberately cruel, gnomes simply lack social graces. Gnomish practical jokes are elaborate – often overly so – and designed to encourage the victim to view things in a different light.

**Languages.** You begin play speaking gnomish and a regional language of your choice.

## Subraces

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Differences in gnomes are cultural rather than ethnic and relate to the gnome's obsession and choice of guild.

### Forest Gnome

It is rare for a gnome to belong to one of the guilds that focuses on biology, herbalism, philosophy or theology. Forest gnomes are strange even to other gnomes, being prone to weird philosophies and beliefs. They can often perform minor feats of magic not because of an innate magical talent but an ability to manipulate reality through belief or disbelief.

### Rock Gnome

Belonging to the more physical guilds of physics, mathematics, and chemistry, rock gnomes are also known as "tinkerers" for their obsessive need to create and continually fiddle with their hands.

## Humans

Easily the most populous race, humanity outnumbers all the other races nine-to-one and comes in a bewildering variety of colours and cultures.

In the Core, most humans have pale or light-brown skin, typically with dark hair, although some nations (Lamordia, Nova Vassa) have light brown to blonde hair. Those from the central lands (Barovia, Invidia, Borca) have dark black hair and slightly dusker skin. There are also brown-skinned humans who come from Souragne and the Verdurous Lands. The distant land of Rokushima Taiyoo also has people with dark hair but pale skin and unusually shaped eyes.

**Languages:** You can speak, read, and write your regional language and one extra language of your choice.

## Ethnicities of the Mists

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The predominant race in the Mists, humans vary greatly depending on their homeland and ethnicity. Even in the Core, a small continent, there is a great deal of variance among humanity.

### Balinok

A widespread ethnicity that is primarily found in Borca and Barovia in the central Core, but also more distant G'Henna (and Markovia before it moved). Balinoks are characterized by their stocky builds with broad shoulders, meaty limbs, and wide hips. Their skin ranges from an olive-tan to light brown and dark hair and eyes are the norm.

A subculture is the Gundarakites, who are similar in appearance but ostracized for their minor differences by other Baloks.

**Balok Names:** (male) Alexandry, Cosmin, Dimitry, Mircea, Ocidiu, Radu, Casile; (female) Bianca, Draguta, Florica, Izabela, Lizuca, Nadezhda, Petra, Simona; (surnames) Anghelescu, Balan, Constantin, Funar, Grigor, Negres, Popescu, Sala, Ungur, Vladimir

**Gundarakite Names:** (male) Baltasar, Demetrius, Fredek, Istvan, Miklos, Rognvald, Varady; (female) Antonia, Dominika, Horenzia, jusztina, Orzebet, Serafin, Tzigane,

Zsofika; (surnames) Babic, Brankovic, Davad, Dragic, Ilic, Kasun, Kovac, Loncar, Pavkivic, Zupan

### **Falkovnian**

In the central-western Core, Falkovnians are seldom permitted to venture from their homeland. Fair of skin and hair, their eyes tend to run from hazel to brown. Every native born Falkovnian has the hawk seal of Vlad Drakov branded onto their forehead.

**Falkovnian Names:** (male) Alber, Artur, Felix, Franz, Hans, Ivan, Leopold, Vladimir, Viktor, Wulfgang; (female) Anya, Emma, Greta, Inga, Ingrid, Klara, Marie, Olga, Rebek, Sylvi, Tasha; (surnames) Angerhausen, Bauer, Bloch, Denhardt, Diesel, Faulhaber, Faustmann, Glauber, Goebel, Hammerich, Hauser, Kierkegaard, Lambrecht, Manstein, Oberman, Pfeiffer, Reinhardt, Schenk, Van Volkman, Weiss

### **Rashemani**

One of the two ethnicities found in Hazlan, the Rashemani are a tough and sturdy folk. Short stature, they have skin ranging from olive to a deep bronze, dark eyes, and wild yet straight hair with thick beards.

**Rashemani Names:** (male) Alpagu, Doukan, Haydar, Kubilay, Nizami, Ragap, Toktampo; (female) Adelet, Bengi, Cemiyet, Feyza, Julide, Roxelana, Sobehat, Zumrut; (surnames) Albaf, Baris, Chergoba, Dyernina, Iltazyara, Katirci, Murnyethara, Sadik, Stayanoga, Teke, Ulmokina

### **Mulan**

The wealthier ethnicity of Hazlan, Mulan are tall and slim with fine bones but prone to obesity. They have angular features with pronounced cheekbones and noses. Their skin is pale and sallow and their eyes are shades of greys. Their hair would be a dark blond or chestnut brown but is typically shaven daily.

Tattoos are common among the Mulan and are a rite of passage into adulthood. Traditionally masculine tattoos are geometric designs and depictions of legendary beasts while feminine tattoos are flowers, vines, and abstract whorls. Elemental imagery, such as flames, are gender neutral.

**Mulan Names:** (male) Aoth, Balsler, Enevold, Ehput-Ki, Kethoth, Kyrill, Mumed, Ossur, Preben, Ramas, So-Kehur, Taico, Thazar-De; (female) Arizima, Cattia, Helma, Leila, Murithi, Nephis, Neya, Sefris, Trine, Zilla; (surnames) Ankhalab, Anskuld, Fezim, Hahpet, Nathandem, Sepret, Uuthrakt

### **Lamordian**

Found predominantly in the northwestern Core, Lamordians are lean and tall with wiry limbs but square shoulders. They have well-defined features and have extremely pale skin that is permanently ruddy from their cruel winters. Hair varies from flaxen blond to rich brown and eyes are blue and green hues.

**Lamordian Names:** (male) Augustin, Berthold, Conrad, Dieter, Hubert, Juergen, Niklaus, Stefan, Werner, Yann; (female) Brigitte, Camilla, Daniela, Erika, Ingrid, Johanna, Katia, Pascale, Teresa, Victoria; (surnames) Acklin, Albrecht, Baertschi, Bertod, Egemann, Geiger, Gisler, Huber, Lautens, Monachon, Riegler, Sforza, Zurcher

### **Mordentish**

While primarily found along the western Core in the lands of Dementlieu, Mordent, and Ghastria, people claiming Mordentish ties can be found on many smaller islands in the Mists, such as Souragne. Mordentish people are fair-skinned with eyes of blue, green, or gray. Common hair colors are blond and brown, though many other hair colors are known.

**High Mordentish Names:** (Male) Claude, François, Gaston, Georges, Gerard, Henri, Jacques, Louis, Luc, Mathieu, Michel, Phillippe, Remy, Renard, Thibault (female) Adélaïde, Adèle, Brigitte, Danielle, Désirée, Emmanuelle, Giselle, Isabelle, Jacqueline, Monique, Sabine, Sophie, Valerie, Vivienne, Zoé; (surnames) Alard, Beauregard, Camus, Chevalier, d'Aubec, d'Espivant, Deneuve, Durand, Garnier, Gauthier, Jean-Aubry, Larroquette, Laurier, Marceau, Moreau, Renault, Roche, Soulette, Thibedeaux, Tourette

**Low Mordentish Names:** (male) Alfred, Andrew, Brian, Charles, Christopher, Edward, Elias, George, Henry, Isaac, James, Jonathan,



Lawrence, Matthew, Nathaniel, Oliver, Richard, Robert, Samuel, Stephen, Theodore, William; (female) Abigail, Annabeth, Beth, Candace, Dorothy, Elizabeth, Emily, Grace, Katharine, Lillian, Lucile, Margaret, Martha, Mary, Ruth, Sarah; (surnames) Abbot, Archer, Bennett, Carpenter, Collier, Dole, Fisher, Fletcher, Garrett, Laydon, Mutton, Powell, Reade, Sexton, Sullivan, Sykes, Towtales, Unger, Weaver

### **Tepestandi**

The Tepestandis are found in the northeast-central Core. A muscular and handsome people, their fair skin often has freckles and their eye color is typically green or blue. Hair color ranges from strawberry blond to brown, though many are redheads.

**Tempastani Names:** (male) Berrin, Brion, Calvagh, Colm, Donagh, Dougal, Eamon, Fearghal, Fergus, Garvan, Hewith, Keane, Liadan, Lochlan, Murtagh, Nealon, Oran, Patrick, Rafe, Reardan, Rory, Rowan, Seamus; (female) Aisling, Brigid, Cara, Darina, Deirdre, Eileen, Enya, Fiona, Jocelyn, Keira, Maeve, Moira, Molly, Noreen, Rosaleen, Rose, Siobhan, Slaney, Tallula, Tressa; (surnames) Aiken, Athey, Baggett, Baird, Brynnock, Byrne, Callahan, Cochrane, Connolly, Conroy, Darby, Donlan, Doyle, Fitzpatrick, Gavaghan, Hennessy, Kilcullen, Kilgore, Lydon, Nolan, O'Bannon

### **Vaasi**

Dominating the southeast Core are the rugged people of Nova Vaasan heritage. Average of stature, they possess wide hips, and stout limbs gained through generations of horsemanship. Their facial features include angular chins, prominent cheekbones, and wide, full-lipped mouths. Skin color is usually pale and ruddy, though pale olive or sallow skin are not unusual. Eye color is usually dark green or gray, while hair color ranges from dirty blond to black, with darker colors being more common.

**Vaasi Names:** (male) Andor, Christer, Erik, Fraanse, Gunnar, Ivaar, Konraad, Mikaal, Olav, Rudolf, Tor, Ulf, Viggo, Warnaar; (female) Anja, Dagmar, Else, Grete, Helena, Inge, Lucia, Magda, Marta, Sofie,

Thora, Ulla, Vanja, Vita; (surnames) Arneborg, Bakhvalova, Claussen, Damsgaard, Ebel, Ejlersgaard, Eriksen, Gimsing, Halkenhvad, Hvass, Jankowski, Kasprovicz, Matschewski, Nowak, Partyka, Skaarup, Thodberg, Wajda, Zinck

### **Valachani**

In the southwestern woods of the Core, the Valachani are tall and muscular, with wide shoulders and long, sturdy limbs. Despite being relations of the Vaasi, Valachani skin color is a dark coffee brown, though it can range from a creamy tan to a charcoal black on occasion. Eye color is almost always dark brown, but every once in awhile an odd individual with bile-yellow eyes is born. Valachani hair is glossy black and worn long and straight by both genders.

**Valachani Names:** (male) Aksell, Audun, Brand, Davin, Egil, Jens, Mikkell, Morten, Nils, Oleg, Ragnar, Skjold, Stefan, Trigue, Varik; (female) Aleksia, Birget, Dakin, Faiga, Grette, Katarine, Liese, Magna, Nissa, Rakel, Saffi, Semine, Unni, Vanja, Ylwa; (surname) Amundsen, Arup, Bakken, Daehle, Fjortoft, Frethheim, Grieg, Hagen, Ingstad, Kjeldaas, Mostue, Nyberg, Ostenstad, Ratkje, Skarsgard, Tveit, Ulving, Ytterhus

### **The Little People (Halfling)**

By nature the Little People are perpetual children, born happy and fearless. However, they are quickly educated in terror and taught caution. The small halflings found themselves easy prey for the horrors of the Mists. Whole communities now live in a state of perpetual paranoia, always waiting for something terrible to occur, protecting themselves through isolation and secrecy.

Halflings are a quiet and peaceful people who enjoy the simple pleasures of life, which they deny themselves: halflings repress their natural happiness, mute their jovial expressions, replace their colourful fashions in their continual efforts to avoid notice. They settle in forgotten corners of the world or hidden inside human cities. Their homes are built in both secluded valleys and dales that are invisible from the distance, or ensconced



between city blocks and overlooked buildings.

**Languages.** You begin play speaking Halfling and a regional language of your choice.

## Subraces

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Humans categorize halflings as either “lightfoot” or “stout” but halflings have their own names, and divide lightfoot into two different lineages.

### Lightfoot

To halflings, lightfoots are known as either *Gillesonn* or *Mórlúrdan*. Gillesonn are nomadic and roam the Southern lands of the Core, typically in bands of extended family. These halflings are known for their reputation of finding trouble, but remain more lighthearted than other halflings. Mórlúrdan were once nomadic as well but settled down in secluded villages or in human communities. These halflings are found across the Northern Core from Lamordia to Nova Vassa with smaller communities or neighbourhoods in Tepest, Borca and other lands.

### Stout

Known as *Casfalt* in the halfling tongue, these halflings can be found in the Western lands of the Core such as Dementlieu, Mordent, Richemulot and Borca. Stouts are more cautious than other halflings and slightly xenophobic towards non-halflings. As they have been settled for longer they tend to be more traditional and superstitious,

## Tieflings

Many tieflings have fiendish blood in their veins, the result of couplings or assaults from summoned outsiders, but other are the result of infernal pacts, exposure to hellish energies, or some form of corruption.

Tieflings typically look human save a deformity or two that betrays their heritage. Common fiendish traits include small horns, cloven feet, clawed hands, patches of scales, or crimson eyes. Many are able to pass as human, either in dim light, or under clothing such as a heavy cloak or broad hat. All tieflings live in fear of being discovered and

branded a witch, killed as a devil worshiper, or merely ostracized as a freak of nature.

Those with fiendish blooded are often considered innately evil by common folk; this is not entirely untrue as some tieflings feel compelled to commit evil acts. Most just have a strong predilection to law or chaos dependant on their heritage. Tieflings with devilish blood often cannot tell a lie or break an oath, while those with demon blood compulsively lie or chafe under any rules or instructions.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write your regional language and one extra language of your choice.

## Caliban

*“That tetrahedron nose-that horse-shoe mouth-that small left eye over-shadowed by a red bushy brow, while the right eye disappeared entirely under an enormous wart-of those stragglng teeth with breaches here and there like the battlements of a fortress-of that horny lip, over which one of those teeth projected like the tusk of an elephant-of that forked chin-and, above all, of the expression diffused over the whole-that mixture of malice, astonishment, and melancholy.”*

-Victor Hugo

*The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*

Twisted humans, calibans were cursed before birth, tainted by dark magic while still in the womb. The birth of a caliban is seen as a sign of witchcraft in the community, or that the parents performed an unnatural act so foul that it corrupted their unborn child.

## No Two Alike

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There is great diversity between calibans; each has a unique set of deformities. Slightly larger than humans, calibans are typically between 6 and 7 feet in height and weight 150 to 250 pounds, but they often appear smaller due to their twisted limbs and poor posture.

Calibans are physically powerful despite their misshapen muscles. They tend to be paler than humans, often with a slightly unnatural white or yellow hue to their skin. Their features are asymmetrical and distorted with uneven limbs, or animalistic traits such

as protruding tusks and bristly hair.

Calibans breed true, and unions produce caliban children with a mix of parental traits, along with new deformities. Mixed unions (caliban and human) almost always produce a caliban.

### **Cast Out and Alone**

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Most calibans are killed by fearful parents shortly after birth or left to die of exposure; few survive until adulthood, and even fewer are permitted to interact with normal humans. Some are raised by their ashamed families, frequently in secret, while others are given to religious orders, such as priests of Hala.

Given that their name is a derivation of "cannibal", calibans are widely considered brutish and savage beings. Many fit the stereotype of petty brutes, but this is often a product of their upbringing. Being raised in isolation and continually treated like a freak makes many calibans into the monsters they are believed to be, but in truth calibans have the same innate capacity as humans for nobility or cruelty.

### **Fringes of Society**

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Calibans are most frequently born in lands where magic is common – such as Darkon, Hazlan, and Tepest – but adults can be found in any land.

Calibans make their homes in secluded areas where they will be left alone, such as abandoned buildings, cellars, sewers, graveyards, and ruins. They survive however they can, stealing and scavenging for food or living off vermin or pets. As few calibans are taught survival skills. They seldom live in the wild, but those that do find a peace commonly denied their kin.

### **Little to Live For**

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An unfortunate number of calibans embrace their perceived inhumanity, but others set out to prove their humanity and demonstrate that the nobility of their soul is human.

These calibans take up adventuring, hoping

### **Uncommon Races**

In the secluded corners of the Land of the Mists are inhuman races that are unknown in other lands. While only found in the Land of the Mists, these races are far from commonplace or accepted. Superstitious commoners might react with fear and isolated villages might assume them to be monsters.

These uncommon races remain optional, and their availability (or even existence) is determined by the Dungeon Master.

**Calibans:** Humans corrupted by dark magic before birth, calibans take the place of half-orcs, as orcs are unknown in the Mists.

**Gargoyles:** Stone covered elemental guardians, gargoyles replace dragonborn, who are not native to the Land of the Mists.

**Giomorgo:** The half-Vistani have a mixed heritage, with one parent being human and the other belonging to a wandering tribe of gypsies.

**Dhampyrs:** Touched by undeath, dhampyrs are living beings with some of the powers of vampires.

to show that they are not defined by their appearance, if only to themselves. Others believe themselves touched by darkness and hope to redeem themselves from the sins of their parents. A few calibans believe that they are being tested, being put through a crucible or some divine challenge to reveal their true nature. And some calibans are just fleeing their old life, hoping to find a better place or just escape prejudice.

## Caliban Names

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Caliban names are as diverse as their appearance. Those fortunate enough to be raised by caring parents have names appropriate to their parent's culture or nation. The rest have unfortunate nicknames given by their peers or frightened neighbours. These are often insulting and descriptive of the caliban's particular deformations.

Some calibans choose a names for themselves. These new names are descriptive titles or simple, guttural sounds.

**Chosen Names:** Beastly, Clod, Clubbit, Gruff, Jab, Krall, Loner, Lurk, Nobody, Rog, Shrott Shuck, Trog.

## Caliban Traits

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Your caliban has a number of traits as a result of their magical corruption.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2.

**Age.** Calibans theoretically have a lifespan similar to humans but their hard lives force them to grow up quickly and often lead them to an early end. They reach maturity in their mid-teens and seldom live longer than 75 years.

**Alignment.** Calibans have the same potential for good and evil as humans, but their treatment has made them fearful of the other races and strangers, pushing them towards neutrality. Many are wary of authority and lean towards chaos rather than law.

**Size.** Calibans are somewhat larger and bulkier than humans but are often slouched or hunched over so their full size is not apparent. You stand between 6 and 7 feet in height and weigh 150 to 250 pounds. Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** The twisting magic has given you keen but animalistic senses. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Outsider.** You gain proficiency in the Intimidate skill.

**Merciless.** When you score a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, you can roll one of the weapon's damage dice again and add it to the damage of the critical hit.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write your regional language and one extra language of your choice.

**Subrace.** Calibans vary greatly from land to land. As it is the largest region, most calibans come from the Core, but others hail from distant clusters and look remarkably different. Each caliban is still unique, but the types of deformities vary. Scholars theorize it is the presence of different magics or forms of corruption that influences the caliban's appearance.

### Core

As a caliban from the fore Core, you look twisted and asymmetrical. You might possess a warped frame, uneven features, gangly limbs, or a pronounced hunchback. After a lifetime of adversity, you have grown particularly hardy.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Relentless Endurance.** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

### Shadowlands

As a caliban from Nidala, you look diseased, as if afflicted with leprosy or beset by tumours. You're not actually ill and carry no particular contagion, but simply resemble the infected. Ironically, after a lifetime amid the sick or in squalid conditions, you resist disease far more than other folk. More than in other nations, Shadowlands caliban are blamed for their own appearance.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Caliban Resilience.** You have advantage on saving throws against disease.

## Verdurous

As a caliban of either the Verdurous Lands cluster or the island land of Rokushima Taiyoo, you have animalistic features rather than deformations. You might have a mixture of human and bestial traits or even appear as a human/beast hybrid. Your bestial nature gives you keen senses and a natural cunning, but you can be just as intelligent and civil as any other race.

Many Rajian caliban are slain at a young age under the mistaken belief that they are a rakshasa or lycanthrope.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Improved Darkvision.** Your darkvision increases to 120 feet.

**Keen Senses.** You gain proficiency in the Perception skill.

## Zherisian

As a caliban of Paridon, you are albino-pale and lithe, and unnaturally skinny, with skin stretched tightly over your protruding bones. Your joints are large and knotty, increasing your skeletal appearance, but giving you a superior range of motion.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Slight Frames.** You can add your proficiency bonus to Dexterity checks to squeeze through tight spaces or escape from restraints. Additionally, whenever you make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to escape a grapple you are considered proficient in the Acrobatics skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

## Dread Gargoyle

*"As when, O lady mine, With chiselled touch The stone unhewn and cold Becomes a living mould, The more the marble wastes, The more the statue grows."*

*-Michelangelo*

As much stone as flesh, dread gargoyles are a rare and forgotten race that dwells unseen in the remnants of humanity. They lurk in ruins and graveyards, guarding the ancient grounds for reasons unknown. The origins of dread

gargoyles is unknown. It is rumoured that they are statues brought to life, or an evolution of the more common gargoyles. Some believe that dread gargoyles were once mortals corrupted by elemental forces, who have since forgotten they were ever human.

## Stone and Sinews

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The outer skin of a dread gargoyle appears to be cracked stone, but beneath these rocky scales, gargoyles are flesh and blood creatures. Their heavy hide does little to slow down the powerful creatures. Most gargoyles look vaguely human, save their elfin ears, sharp teeth, and small row of horns across their brow. Gargoyles have four fingers on each hand, each topped with a sharp claw. Tall and muscular, gargoyles stand close to 6 feet and weigh 300 pounds or more.

All gargoyles are tied to the elements, especially earth which grants them great strength and resilience. Their rocky exterior ranges in colouration from a dull grey to a sandy brown. Some have a marbled exterior with ribbons of colour decorating their hides. Gargoyles are hairless, but grow small horns across their head. The pattern and shape of these horns varies between gargoyles, possibly along family lines. Common patterns of horns include small brow ridges, short curving horns, or long straight horns that run close to the scalp.

Being resistant to nature, gargoyles feel little need to wear clothing. Most dress in simple tunics or loincloths, employing a belt as a place to store items. When forced to travel in human lands, they wear long cloaks, often wrapping themselves in rags to pose as a leper or other ill vagabond.

## Cool as Stone

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Unsociable, dread gargoyles prefer to avoid interacting with others, seldom socializing even with their own kind. They enjoy silence, communicating with their actions over their words. A gargoyle never says with a sentence what they can communicate with a word and a gesture. To other races, gargoyles seem contemplative or introspective, or are dismissed as slow or even unintelligent.

Gargoyles may not socialize with their kin, but they seldom live alone. Gargoyles live and share territory with an extended family, known as a flight. The reproduction of dread gargoyles is unknown, but flights shift in numbers over the years. Sages currently believe an elemental spirit is drawn to gargoyle flights, using available minerals to fashion a body, but other research insists gargoyles hatch from rock-like eggs. Gargoyles themselves are silent on the issue, save mentioning that they believe the souls or their ancestors are reborn.

A gargoyle seldom shows their sadness or rage and always keeps their emotions in check. This is not to say they are unfeeling creatures. With the fury of the elemental chaos hiding in their veins, gargoyles are innately passionate and prone to mood swings. However, hatchlings are quickly taught patience and self-control.

Dread gargoyles live for centuries and can reach 300 years before succumbing to decay and moss. They have the patience of eternity and are never in any rush to act. Gargoyles consider their options carefully before acting, and regularly reflect on the past. Mistakes weigh heavily on a gargoyle, who will brood on their errors for decades to come.

## **In Man's Shadow**

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Gargoyles are innate guardians, defensive of their lands and broach few intruders. While territorial, gargoyles seldom attack those who trespass in their lands, saving their ire for those that bring harm or wish to plunder their territory. Territory is inherited, passed from elder gargoyles to their kin, always staying with their flight. Sages wonder if gargoyles have been guarding ruins since the buildings were new, or if the gargoyles claimed already abandoned spaces.

As creatures of the elemental earth, gargoyles are not entirely at home in the mortal realms. Gargoyles do not build homes. They make no art, forge no tools, and sow no crops. They make their territory in forgotten spaces built by other peoples.

As they seldom craft items, dread gargoyles

are scavengers. They find cast off or forgotten items and claim them as their own, repairing them to the best of their ability. Useful tools and weapons that are in decent condition are passed down the flight, being heirlooms used by gargoyle after gargoyle. Dread gargoyles will go to great lengths to repair or reclaim an heirloom despite it being much easier to acquire a replacement.

## **Hidden Watchers**

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It is rare for a gargoyle to leave its territory, as that would be leaving it undefended. The most common reason for a gargoyle to leave is if it is necessary to pursue intruders. If the flight believes the intruders will return in larger numbers, a gargoyle might be sent to scare them off or otherwise see that they never return. Other times an interloper will cause lasting damage to a gargoyle's territory and retribution is necessary, or something valuable will have been taken from the flight's land which must be recovered.

Gargoyles might leave to seek supplies necessary for the survival of their flight, such as food during lean years or medicine for illnesses. Others leave for less altruistic reasons, such as revenge or curiosity; it is not unknown for young, rebellious gargoyles to be unsatisfied with guarding their land and seek new experiences. Other times a larger danger might arise that threatens the flight's territory, and a gargoyle must involve itself with the outside world to protect its flight.

Those gargoyles that do leave avoid drawing attention to themselves, moving at night or avoiding populated areas. They might move across rooftops to avoid the streets or make a detour of several miles to avoid a populated settlement.

## **Gargoyle Names**

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As dread gargoyles seldom interact with other races beyond their small flight, names are unnecessary. Gargoyles identify each other based on physical features: the colour of their scales, the shape of their horns, or a noteworthy personality trait. Gargoyles that spend enough time with other races are often given a nickname, but these vary greatly.

**Flight Names:** The One With Goat Horns, The One With Ochre Scales, The One With Keen Eyes, The One With Mist White Eyes, The One Who Flies Too High, The Scarred One, The One Who Climbs Trees.

## Gargoyle Traits

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Your gargoyle character has a number of traits tied to their individual strengths.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 2.

**Age.** Young gargoyles grow quickly. They walk hours after hatching, attaining the size and development of a 10-year-old human by the age of 3, and reach adulthood by 15. Once they reach maturity, gargoyles age at half the rate of humans, living a couple centuries.

**Alignment.** Gargoyles are territorial and protective, tending towards lawful alignments. They have no predilection towards good or evil.

**Size.** Gargoyles are as tall as humans but much heavier, standing 6 feet tall and averaging almost 300 pounds. Your size is medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Stoney Scales.** Your durable hide protects you from much harm. You have resistance to a damage type of your choice: acid, cold, fire, lightning, or poison.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write your regional language and one extra language of your choice.

**Subrace.** There are three types of dread gargoyle, whose connection to the elements manifest in different ways. Flame-gazers can focus their elemental power into a blast of energy, sky-watchers have wings large enough to carry them aloft, and stone-lurkers can hold still enough to be mistaken for an unmoving statue.

### Flame-gazer

As a flame-gazer gargoyle, the power of the elementals flows through your blood. It burns inside you, urging to be unleashed. You are more passionate than other gargoyles, quickly responding to threats and intruders in your territory. Flame-gazers are less subtle than other gargoyles, preferring dramatic actions

## Designer's Note: Angels in the Night

More than other races, the gargoyle is optional.

Unlike the other races in this document, the gargoyle doesn't come from established Ravenloft lore, being a new addition for this product. It exists to fill the mechanical gap left by the absence of the dragonborn, a race wholly unsuited for Ravenloft. Rather than just removing dragonborn and encouraging DMs to ban the race, it seemed preferable to give an alternative. Just like the calibans are the replacement for half-orcs in a world without orcs, gargoyles fill the mechanical role of dragonborn but are more thematically appropriate.

Some DMs might feel comfortable allowing an inhuman race of gargoyles into the fantasy horror Ravenloft campaign, while other DMs might prefer to exclude them from their human-centric gothic horror Ravenloft campaign. I leave the choice to them.

or fear rather than manipulation.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Breath Weapon.** You can use your action to exhale destructive energy. Your breath weapon uses the same damage type as your stoney scales ability.

When you use your breath weapon, each creature in the area of the exhalation must make a saving throw, determined by the damage type. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level.

After you use your breath weapon, you cannot use it again until you complete a short rest or a long rest.

Damage Type	Breath Weapon
Acid	5 × 30ft. line (Dex. save)
Cold	15 ft. cone (Con. save)
Fire	15 ft. cone (Dex. save)
Lightning	5 × 30 ft. line (Dex. save)
Poison	15 ft. cone (Con. save)

### Sky-watcher

You possess small bat-like wings that allow you to catch the air, falling without fear of injury. As you gain strength, you can catch air currents to travel short distances or even fly for a short period. Sky-watchers prefer nesting up high, and find perches with a view, living atop towers or spires. Sky-watchers tend to be passive even for gargoyles, watching the world from above and only acting if absolutely necessary.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

**Wings.** When you fall from a height that would cause falling damage, as a reaction you can slow your descent. You fall at a rate of 30 feet per round for 1 minute or until you land. When you reach 3rd level, you can glide. You can use a bonus action to gain a fly speed equal to your walking speed for 10 minutes, but half your movement must be downward, either diagonally or straight down. When you reach 5th level, you can fly. You can use a bonus action to gain a fly speed equal to your walking speed for 10 minutes. Additionally, your glide speed increases to twice your walking speed.

After you use your wings to glide or fly, you cannot use them again until you complete a short rest or a long rest.

### Stone-lurker

Despite your rocky appearance, you move with surprising grace. Stone-lurker gargoyles are subtle and secretive, preferring to be unseen and striking at intruders through presumed accidents or natural events, manipulating people into avoiding their territory. They are the most quiet of gargoyles, being even more patient and calm, never being hasty or letting themselves be rushed.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity

score increases by 1.

**Lurking.** You can remain motionless for prolonged period, assuming the appearance of lifeless stone. As an action you can freeze in place, allowing you to make a Dexterity (Stealth) check to hide, even when not obscured or otherwise unseen. While you may be seen, creatures whose passive Wisdom (Perception) will assume you are an immobile statue. You can remain hidden as long as you wish, so long as you do not move or take any action. You cannot do this while being observed, and intelligent creatures familiar with an area might question the sudden appearance of a six-foot statue.

## Giomorgo

*"28 May.--There is a chance of escape, or at any rate of being able to send word home. A band of Szgany have come to the castle, and are encamped in the courtyard. These are gipsies. I have notes of them in my book. They are peculiar to this part of the world, though allied to the ordinary gipsies all the world over. There are thousands of them in Hungary and Transylvania, who are almost outside all law. They attach themselves as a rule to some great noble or boyar, and call themselves by his name. They are fearless and without religion, save superstition, and they talk only their own varieties of the Romany tongue."*

*-Bram Stoker, Dracula*

**Giomorgo** are the offspring of a nomadic Vistani gypsy and a *giorgio* or non-Vistani. An offshoot of humanity, the Vistani are a separate people by both choice and nature. They are feared throughout the Mists for their magical powers, especially the Evil Eye. Half-Vistani possess some of the magical powers inherent to their heritage but their magic is weak as their blood is diluted.

## Not Of The Blood

Lean and quick-witted, few trust the sly giomorgo. While technically human, half-Vistani are less diverse and varied than humans, being slightly taller and thinner on average. They range between 5-and-a-half feet to a little over six feet tall and weigh 120 to 200 pounds.



Half-Vistani favour their Vistani parent and have angular, aquiline features. They possess dusky or olive skin, and almost universally have dark hair and eyes. Vistani hair is straight and thin but a few giomorgo have wavier hair.

Some half-Vistani attempt to appear human, dressing in the local fashions and rejecting Vistani garb. Others proudly clad themselves in the bright Vistani colours, wearing baggy trousers, loose shirts, and colourful vests accessorized with long scarfs around the head or waist. While dressed as such, they can pass as a Vistani to a human giorgio, but any true Vistani will recognise them as giomorgo on sight. *Between Two Worlds*

Giomorgo are passionate and pessimistic by nature, haunted by unhappy childhoods. The cultural divide runs deep, so few giomorgo ever grow up knowing both parents. It is rare for the Vistani to raise a giomorgo; most often the Vistana parent moves on in the night, abandoning the child to a giorgio family. Often the child is given to the other parent, but sometimes the infant is just left on a convenient doorstep or in front of a church.

Giomorgo children may be cared for but never truly accepted. A giorgio family fears the child will develop the talents of the Vistani, while a giomorgo is not truly “of the blood” and is unable to share the Vistani experience.

The mixed heritage of the Vistani has its cost: Giomorgo are prone to insanity and most suffer from a unique form of lunacy. During nights of the full moon, half-Vistani become irritable during the day and feel the irresistible urge to run free under the night sky. This restlessness and anxiety is known as *lunatio* (or moon madness) by the Vistani.

## Home on the Road

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Vistani are nomadic, never staying in the same place for long. They travel the world in painted *vardo*: a horse-drawn wagon. While giomorgo do not suffer the same irresistible need to travel, they still feel an innate wanderlust.

Many half-Vistani find work that allows them to travel, such as in merchant caravans,

mercenary companies, traders, messengers, or even travelling carnivals. Some have a home that they return to when not travelling, while others simply live on the road.

Those giomorgo that do not take to the road live among humans. There are no communities of half-Vistani. Some try to blend into humanity living within human cities and settlements. Others live on the edges of civilization, making a living farming or ranching where they are not continually reminded they are an outsider.

## Seeking Meaning

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Giomorgos often take to adventuring out of a desire to find a purpose in life or forge a legacy, frequently after being denied a place in their family trade or lineage. Many giomorgo become adventurers after falling in with other outsiders and outcasts, accidentally become adventurers while seeking happiness in new lands or foreign nations.

## Giomorgo Names

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Giomorgo typically only have a given name. Those raised by giorgio are often given local names, and some are allowed to keep their giorgio's family name. Others are denied the family name and identified by their homeland or community. Giomorgo raised or named by Vistani are given traditional names and lack a family name, instead being identified by their lineage.

**Male Names:** Bela, Grigori, Iosif, Karol, Ludovic, Nicu, Pyotr, Simione, Stefan, Vasile.

**Female Names:** Ana, Eliza, Isabella, Lena, Natasha, Papusza, Rozalina, Sofya, Ursula, Yvonne.

## Giomorgo Traits

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Vistani blood gives your giomorgo character a number of traits.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Wisdom score increases by 2.

**Age.** Giomorgo reach adulthood in their late teens and live less than a century.

**Alignment.** Giomorgo no more inherently good or evil than any other humans. However, most spend their lives alienated from society

and grow to distrust authority. As a result, giomorgo favour chaos over law.

**Size.** Giomorgo vary widely in height and build, from barely 5 feet to well over 6 feet tall. Regardless of your position in that range, your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Evil Eye.** You know the *guidance* cantrip. When you reach 3rd level you can cast the *hex* spell once per day. When you reach 5th level, you can also cast the *bestow curse* spell once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Moon Madness.** During the three days the full moon, while you are indoors or underground, you have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks and Intelligence (Investigation) checks. Additionally, in order to take a short or long rest you must first make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw.

**Nature Affinity.** Whenever you make a Wisdom (Survival) check related to navigation, identifying plants and animals, or starting a fire, you are considered proficient in the Survival skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write two regional languages of your choice. If raised by the Vistani you also speak Patterna, but if raised by humans you gain one extra language of your choice.

**Subrace.** Vistani are divided into three *tasques*, each of which is comprised of several different tribes that are essentially extended families. The natural talents and inclinations of a giomorgo depend on the tribe of their parent. The children of two half-Vistani have the tribe of only one parent. The children of half-Vistani are never true Vistani: the introduction of human blood irreversibly taints the bloodline.

## Boem

The hallmark of Boemians is ostentation. They specialize in entertainment and similar services. While travelling, Boem caravans are filled with music, and members of the *tasque* sing as they go about their daily business. As proud as they are passionate, the Boem privately lament having to play the fool for

superstitious townsfolk. When the Boem are camped, and there are no outsiders present, the Vistani are more tense and brooding, and prone to telling tales of tragedy and singing songs of horror.

The two Boem tribes are the Corvara and the Naiat. The Corvara are natural con artists but have little natural showmanship, and instead offer unsavoury diversions such as gambling, narcotics, and cockfighting. The Naiat are skilled at training animals for show, with their dogs and horses raised to perform tricks and stunts.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Sly Wit.** You have proficiency in the Deception skill.

**Tool Proficiency.** You gain proficiency with the tools of your choice: forgery kits, a musical instrument, or thieves' tools.

## Giamarga

Less common than the pairing of a Vistani and a human giorgio is one between a Vistani and an elf. Known as *giamarga*, most of these are normal half-elves, but some take after their Vistani parents and have the abilities of a giomorgo.

Unsurprisingly, *giamarga* are most common in lands where there are elves, such as northeastern Darkon and the misted woods around Sithicus. A curious number are also found in Tepest, Barovia, and other lands bordering the Shadow Rift.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

**Fey Ancestry.** You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic cannot put you to sleep.

## Kaldresh

Vistani of the Kaldresh *tasque* are practical, concerned with trade and crafts rather than mysticism or entertainment. Kaldreshites have an unusual talent for finding conflict. Whenever blood is about to be spilled in battle, it seems the Kaldresh have arrived and are ready to sell weapons and supplies.

The three Kaldresh tribes are the Equaar, the Kamii, and the Vatraska. The Equaar are animal breeders and trainers, and their

caravans are surrounded by small herds of animals. The Kamii are known for their metalworking, which has been said to rival the craft of dwarves. The Vatraska are healers and herbalists, but are known for their potions as much as their poultices.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Desensitized.** You have advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

**Tool Proficiency.** You gain proficiency with herbalism kits, land vehicles, or the artisan's tools of your choice: brewer's supplies, carpenter's tools, jeweler's tools, smith's tools, or woodcarver's tools.

### Manusa

Aloof and exotic, the Manusa are the smallest of the tasques. Manusa cannot be found unless they wish to be, and are said to be affected by time differently than other races. When encountered, the Manusa are taciturn and reticent and their answers to questions – if any – are short and cryptic. The Manusa practice no craft and have few interactions with giorgio, but seem able to provide for themselves. When they seek out the giorgio it is because they want a service, not to provide one.

The two Manusa tribes are the Canjar and the Zarovan. The Canjar are naturally magical and many have skill in creating magical items, although these are never for sale. The Zarovan are feared even by other Vistani, and have strange powers over the Mists.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

**Bend Time.** You can take a bonus action or reaction while incapacitated. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you complete a long rest.

## Dhampyr

*"But first, on earth as vampire sent,  
Thy corpse shall from its tomb be rent:  
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,  
And suck the blood of all thy race;"*

- Lord Byron, *The Giaour*

Born from death, dhampyrs are the offspring of the survivor of a vampire attack, someone almost turned to undeath but saved prior to death. Those who survive their early years face a lifetime of fear and mistrust: their pallor, unearthly reflexes, and unnatural beauty mark dhampyrs as scions of the night as surely as their sensitivity to bright lights. Dhampyrs do not need to consume blood to survive, but have a powerful desire for blood that nothing else can truly sate.

Not all dhampyrs are descendants of vampiric victims. The victim of a vicious vampire attack can become a dhampyr, especially if they barely escape undeath themselves. If a vampire assaults or turns a woman with child, the infant – if it survives – can be born a dhampyr. A few rare dhampyrs are the progeny of the rare and unnatural union of vampires and mortals, typically a vampire father and a mortal mother.

### Touch of the Grave

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Dhampyrs resemble their mortal parent with subtle signs of their connection to death. Tall and slender, dhampyrs fall within the range of humans, and are between 5 1/2 feet to over 6 feet tall and weigh 125 to 180 pounds. While they possess all the diversity of humanity, dhampyrs have paler skin and darker hair than others of the ethnicity. Most also have pronounced canine teeth and piercing red eyes, along with many secondary characteristics of vampirism: pointed ears, a single, connected eyebrow, bestial features, or hairy palms.

For reasons unknown, the vast majority of dhampyrs are human. It is speculated that other races are just more resistant to vampirism than humans. Non-human dhampyrs have the same traits as other dhampyrs but the size of their base race, albeit tall and thin.

## Alone in the Night

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Dhampyrs are symbols of a nocturnal world most folk are happier pretending does not exist. They are not welcomed by most people and commonly seen as monsters. There is also the fear dhampyrs that will rise after their death, becoming true vampires. It is rare for dhampyrs to have happy childhoods. To their parents dhampyrs are a continual reminder of violence: the embodiment of a violent assault. Many reject their child, or have trouble bonding with the unnatural infant. Other dhampyrs alienate their family as youths, through aggression or antisocial behaviour. Those few dhampyrs that are accepted by loving families do not escape tragedy, as they are cursed to outlive family and friends, living long enough to watch siblings and even children grow old and die.

Necrotic energies influence the emotions of dhampyrs, making them aggressive and predatory. Dhampyrs instinctively categorizing people as pack members, competition, or prey. They find happiness fleeting and shallow, making them naturally melancholy, and most are brooding and pragmatic.

## Life Among Death

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There are no communities of dhampyrs: the bloodline is rare enough that dhampyrs seldom meet others or their kind. The new necrotic energies that create a dhampyr are also not hereditary, and their children are not dhampyrs. Unions between two dhampyrs are rare enough to be almost unknown, but even these unions produce normal humans, albeit tall and gaunt.

Dhampyrs live their lives among humanity, often pretending to be human, sometimes even to themselves. Few dhampyrs remain in one place for too long, as their lack of aging quickly draws unwelcome attention. Most move from city to city, seldom tarrying for longer than a few years. Others abandon a stationary life and live nomadically, joining merchant companies, mercenary bands, or other travelers. A few dhampyrs pretend to

age with makeup and hair dye, reinventing themselves as relatives or descendants every few decades. A few try and find a home amount longer lived races such as elves or dwarves, but their unnatural natures make them unwelcome.

## Seeking Redemption

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Those dhampyrs that become adventurers often do so out of necessity, simply as a means to survive in the world or to prove that they are not monsters from birth. Like tieflings, many people they are believed to have innately evil souls dooming them to a foul afterlife. Some rejoice in this assured damnation, as it means their fate is sealed and they can act however they wish, but others try to earn a place in Paradise through good deeds and continual self-sacrifice. A few become vampire hunters, either for simple revenge or striving to save others from their fate.

Their long lives also mean dhampyrs might take to the adventuring life out of boredom: having tried their hand at many other mundane professions, unusual occupations are appealing.

## Dhampyr Names

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Dhampyrs are named by their parents based on their homeland and culture. Most dhampyrs change their name over the years, as they assume new identities to hide their age or to escape their past. They tend to keep at least one of their names as a reminder of their past; some retain their family name to remind themselves of their kin, while others keep their given name.

## Dhampyr Traits

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Your dhampyr character has several unnatural powers derived from their undead lineage.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Dexterity score increases by 2.

**Age.** Dhampyrs mature at the same rate of humans but their aging slows after puberty, and they can live to be over 4 centuries old. Most retain their youthful looks until their last

decades, when they rapidly age.

**Alignment.** Dhampyrs' unnatural hunger pushes them to acts of violence, and their dark emotions put them at odds with society. They lean towards chaos, but their partial humanity means dhampyr are not automatically evil. However, it is more common for them to succumb to temptation and become evil than to resist and remain good.

**Size.** Dhampyrs are the same height as human but tend to be more thin and lithe than the average human. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** Born into a twilight world, you are not inconvenienced by the night. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray

**Bloodthirsty.** Feasting on the lifeblood of the living increases your healing and gives you renewed vigour. During a short rest you can drink the blood of a willing or helpless living creature. This forces the creature to spend a Hit Die. The creature receives no benefit from this Hit Die, but you regain hit points equal to  $1d6 +$  your Constitution modifier.

**Slow Metabolism.** You can survive on half the normal amount of food and water.

**Vampiric Resistance.** Your necrology gives you resistance to necrotic damage.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, and write Common and one extra language of your choice.

**Subrace.** The varieties of vampire bloodlines result in three different types of dhampyrs. The stryg is most common, often being equated with dhampyrs as a whole. The nosferatu and obiri dhampyrs are related to the vampires of the same name; the former prefer to hide their existence, while the latter are harder to identify as dhampyrs and often go unnoticed.

### Stryg

Descended from common vampires, the stryg are often considered synonymous with perceptions of dhampyrs. You have the unearthly beauty and charm of your progenitor, along with their prenatal strength. You have pale skin, sharp features,

and your eyes have a slightly crimson iris that catches the light like a cat's. Your canine teeth are slightly elongated and pointed, but are not so large as to be easily noticed. While attractive, your charm is not entirely mundane, and creatures that catch your gaze can become bewitched.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength score increases by 1.

**Improved Darkvision.** Your darkvision increases to 120 feet.

**Stryg Blood.** You know the *friends* cantrip. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *misty step* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** When you, the target of an attack, or an object you're trying to perceive is in direct sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### Nosferatu

Also known as *vrykolaka*, nosferatu are a rare breed of vampire that possesses immortality but not eternal youth, growing ever more withered and deformed over the centuries. Nosferatu occasionally become infected with diseases, and while their undeath prevents them from succumbing to illness it does not cure the disease, leaving them perpetual carriers.

Kin to nosferatu vampires, you have the long life of other dhampyrs but age normally. While you retain your vigor until late in life, you eventually appear ancient and decrepit. You no longer look human, being unnaturally pale, bald, and with pronounced fangs. You may have sharp canines, but some nosferatu have elongated incisors instead.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Constitution score increases by 1.

**Fangs.** Your pronounced fangs are a deadly weapon. You are proficient with your bite, which is a melee weapon that deals  $1d4$  piercing damage. This counts as an unarmed attack.

**Nosferatu Blood.** You know the *friends* cantrip. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *spider climb* spell once per day.

Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** When you, the target of an attack, or an object you're trying to perceive is in direct sunlight, you have disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

### **Obiri**

Obiri vampires are feared by even experienced vampire hunters. Known as *daywalkers* for their ability to ignore the light of the sun, obiri possess a wide range powers that vary between individuals. Thankfully, the obiri bloodline is rare, and their dhampyr descendants are even rarer.

You look more human than other dhampyrs, lacking red eyes, pallor, fangs, and

aversion to light of other vampire-kin. You have coarse hair and are stockier than other dhampyrs, but retain the agility and piercing eyes.

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Charisma score increases by 1.

**Homeland Dependency.** You are bound to your homeland, and cannot sleep beyond its borders. If not in your homeland, you must carry soil from your birthplace. Only a small amount of earth is needed, enough to fill a locket or small pouch. Without the soil you must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom check to take a long rest.

**Obiri Blood.** You know the *friends* cantrip. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *invisibility* spell once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

## CHAPTER 2: CLASSES AND FEATS

Filled with righteous fury, the anchorite of Ezra protects her flock from the legions of the night, though it may cost her life. A Kartakan skald sings with the passion of a lone wolf. Quick rapier strikes like flashes of lightning denote the skill of a Dementlieuse fencing master.

The Land of the Mists is filled with individuals of skill and cunning. More than others, adventures feel the weight of living in a land consumed by darkness, even if the source and nature of this burden is unknown. Magic is rare in the Mists, but adventurers are among the few who possess the skill and talent to use magic.

### Barbarian

*"Cities do not interest me. With their dirty rivers, foul air, and crowded streets. Give me the wilds any day."*

Hailing for uncivilized regions, barbarians are rare in much of the Core, being more common in rural backwaters for forgotten corners of the land. Most are not born to the wilds but are independent spirits who reject society for a life among nature, or those whose boundless rage alienates them and drives them away from civilization.

Barbarians that focus on pure berserk rage are often cursed with uncontrollable anger. Some barbarians are possessed by a spirit of fury, and the Vistani have been known smite cruel or thoughtless individuals with an accursed rage, the punishment occasionally being passed down bloodlines. Berserkers are occasionally the survivor of tragedy, their rage equal parts grief and remorse. There are a number of barbarians that draw strength from totem animals. Human barbarians in Verbrek and Kartakass frequently emulate wolves, while barbarians of Valachan call on panthers. Dwarven barbarians clad themselves in the skin of bears in the hope of channelling animalistic fury.

### Faerie Hunter

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Mixing spellcraft with weaponry, the barbarians known as faerie hunters are educated in sorcery by fey beings such as unicorns, dryads, or the eladrin. Arcane magic comes easily to these warriors, even when gripped with wild fury. Faerie hunters are often guardians of enchanted woodlands, or act as a bridge between mortal lands and magical realms.

A faerie hunter lacks the uncouth savagery of most barbarians, but instead possess an alien mindset. They are not beings of mindless rage but burning passion, their emotions unrestrained by mortal morality. Faerie hunters can be fickle and unpredictable, possessing the innate chaotic nature of the fey.

Faerie hunter barbarians are most commonly found in the enchanted woods of Sithicus, as the high elves of that forest embrace the alien mindset of the barbarian or ensorcerer mortals to fight on their behalf. Karatakans also sometimes follow this path, mixing martial skill with passion and lyrical magic.

### Spellcasting

When you reach 3rd level, you augment your martial prowess with the ability to cast spells. See chapter 10 of the Player's Handbook for the general rules of spellcasting and chapter 11 for the sorcerer's spell list.

**Cantrips.** You learn three cantrips of your choice from the sorcerer spell list. You learn an additional sorcerer cantrip of your choice at 10th level.

**Spell Slots.** The Faerie Hunter Spellcasting table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level and higher. To cast one of these spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

**Spells Known.** You know two 1st level sorcerer spells of your choice, which must be

from the abjuration and transmutation schools. The Spells Known column of the Faerie Hunter Spellcasting table shows when you learn more sorcerer spells. Typically these spells must be abjuration or transmutation spells of a level for which you

have spell slots, but the spells you learn at 8th, 14th, and 20th level can come from any school of magic.

Whenever you gain a level in this class, you can replace one of the sorcerer spells you know with another spell of your choice from the sorcerer's spell list. Normal requirements, such as spell level and school, still apply when replacing a spell.

**Spellcasting Ability.** Charisma is your spellcasting ability for your sorcerer spells, since you either innately know your magic or were taught it by fey beings. You use your Charisma whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Charisma modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a sorcerer spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

**Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier**

**Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier**

### Focused Mind

Starting when you choose this path at 3rd level, while raging you can cast cantrips and maintain concentration on a spell. Additionally, if you cast an abjuration or transmutation spell that targets yourself while raging, your rage does not end that turn.

### Warding Defence

At 3rd level, you have learned to magically ward yourself from harm. You can use Charisma modifier instead of your Constitution modifier for Unarmoured Defence.

### Single-Minded

Beginning at 6th level, you add double your proficiency bonus to Constitution saving throws to maintain your concentration. If you fail a concentration check while raging, you can use your reaction to end your rage early to

maintain concentration on the spell.

### Faerie Hunter Spellcasting

Barbarian Level	Cantrips Known	Known Spells	-spellcasting slots per spell level-			
			1st	2nd	3rd	4th
3rd	3	2	2	-	-	-
4th	3	3	3	-	-	-
5th	3	3	3	-	-	-
6th	3	3	3	-	-	-
7th	3	4	4	2	-	-
8th	3	5	4	2	-	-
9th	3	5	4	2	-	-
10th	4	6	4	3	-	-
11th	4	7	4	3	-	-
12th	4	7	4	3	-	-
13th	4	8	4	3	2	-
14th	4	9	4	3	2	-
15th	4	9	4	3	2	-
16th	4	10	4	3	3	-
17th	4	10	4	3	3	-
18th	4	10	4	3	3	-
19th	4	11	4	3	3	1
20th	4	12	4	3	3	1

### Sorcerous Might

At 14th, when you spend your action to cast an abjuration or transmutation spell with a duration of at least 1 minute using a spell slot of 2nd level or lower, you can choose to rage as part of the same action. The spell lasts for the duration of your rage and you do not need to maintain concentration for the spell. When you fall out of rage, the spell also ends.

### Bard

*"Hark, and listen to a tale of tragedy and woe, of a warrior jealous of his brother's love."*

Bards have many names and many roles, being skalds to the dwarves, loresingers to the fey, and minstrels to humans. Bards are common throughout the Core. Those hailing from the civilized West live as courtly minstrels or stage magicians, while bards from the wild central core entertain in inns and carry news and gossip between towns, and bards from the East act as court magicians or travel as members of theatrical troupes.

The University of Dementlieu has several



programs dedicated to arcane lore, and the magical training of that nation's stage magicians gives rise to many bards. The College of Liffe also has a respected music program that produces its share of bards, both of Colleges of Lore and Valor. The elven races are noted for their bardic traditions, the magic of song being respected by the wood elves of Darkon, who regularly mix swordplay with magic. Kartakass has a proud skaldic tradition, with regular musical competitions and small musical schools; the history of the land is held in the songs of its bards. Gnomes are also often bards for myriad varied reasons that few other races fully understand.

## College of Theatrics

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The bards of the College of Theatrics are taught how to capture and hold the attention of an audience as well as alter their mannerisms, conceal their features, and veil their intentions. Lies come easily to these bards, who are as adept at making up tales as retelling the truth. Many of these bards find work as actors and performers, whether it is on their own or part of a travelling troupe. A rare few find alternate uses for their skills, as confidence men or even spies. Few of these bards remain in the same place for long, and most journey between theatres, royal courts, or inns.

Bards of Theatrics are often dedicated to their art. Many throw themselves into a role, adopting new mannerisms and habits, and refusing to drop character before their performance is complete. Some even lose themselves in a performance, creating elaborate and detailed backstories. Other bards have a stable of favourite characters whom they can assume at a moment's notice.

The singing land of Kartakass is home to the College of Theatrics, training minstrels and skalds alike. The opera singers of Dementlieu occasionally follow this bardic path. It is said that the Vistani have their own College of Theatrics, but are reluctant to teach their methods to outsiders. However, some bards – especially giomorgo bards – have studied enough performances to learn the basics.

## Bonus Proficiencies

At 3rd level, when you join the College of Theatrics, you gain proficiency in the Deception skill, the Disguise kit, and one skill or set tools of your choice.

## Subtle Enchantment

Also starting at 3rd level, creatures are less aware that you have used magic to influence their behaviour. When a spell you cast that charmed a creature ends, as a reaction you can make a Charisma (Deception) check contested by the creature's Wisdom (Insight) check. If you succeed, the creature is unaware it was charmed.

## Captivating Performance

When you reach 6th level, you have learned how to grab the attention of a small crowd. As an action you can begin a performance that causes all creatures within 30 feet of you who can see and hear the performance to make a Wisdom saving throw against your bard spell save DC or become charmed. Creatures that succeed on this saving throw are immune to your performances for 1 day. The performance lasts for 1 minute and must maintain concentration on the performance, as if you were maintaining concentration on a spell. The performance also ends if you or one of your allies takes a hostile action against one of the targets. You choose the nature of your performance, such as a song, story, or dance. Once you use this feature, you must finish a short or long rest before you can use it again.

Additionally, you can spend a use of your Bardic Inspiration to fascinate creatures charmed by your Captivating Performance. While they are charmed, fascinated creatures have disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks and will not willingly move more than 60 feet from you. Fascinated creatures will follow you but will not walk into visible dangers or hazardous locations.

## Heightened Performance

Starting at 14th level, you can render the audience of your performance awestruck. While concentrating on your Captivating Performance, you can spend a use of your Bardic Inspiration to augment the effect, and

all creatures charmed by your Captivating Performance must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or become stunned until the performance ends. At the end of each of their turns, a stunned creature can repeat the saving throw to end this effect.

## College of Threnody

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Singing songs of loss and lamentation, bards of the College of Threnody often perform at funerals or give final rites to the dead. Their songs and elegies not only honour the dead but express the sorrow of their passing or remorse over deeds left undone. Bards of this college are commonly known as *dirgists*, while the college is dismissively called the "Graveyard School" and decried for its morbid and depressing songs.

Dirgists are often melancholy, tortured artists who struggle to capture motion in song, all the while being too aware of their mortality. Others suffered a great loss, their songs a requiem for departed loved ones or past failures. A few have a fascination with death and undeath that borders on obsession. Threnody bards gain the inspiration for songs through time spent in graveyards or mortuaries. When its members meet, they often do so in large necropolises or ancient mausoleums.

The College of Threnody is popular across the island of Liffe, but the mournful dirgists have become common in eastern Darkon. Mournful songs that inspire feelings of loss or remorse are especially popular there, even in taverns and public performances. The elves of that region are particularly taken with the song, their long lives making death all the more painful, while Darkon's gnomes – already known for their fondness for the macabre and black humour – are drawn to this College. Unlike other bardic colleges, Threnody is unpopular in Kartakass, and funerals are a celebration of the dead's life and not a time to dwell on their loss.

### Lamentful Fugue

At 3rd level, when you join the College of Threnody you can instill feelings of remorse and sadness in listeners. As a bonus action,

you begin a performance that affects one creature who can hear you within 60 feet of you, filling the target crippling depression that lasts until the end of your next turn. When an attack roll is made against that creature, you can use your reaction to expend one of your uses of Bardic Inspiration, rolling the Bardic Inspiration die and subtracting the number rolled from the creature's Armour Class. You can choose to use this feature after the attack is rolled but before any results of the attack are applied. The creature is immune if it can't hear you or is immune to being charmed. You can only affect one creature with this feature at a time.

### Whispers of the Dead

Also at 3rd level, the spirits of the departed sometimes whisper to you while you perform, sharing their secrets and imparting forgotten knowledge. When you make an Intelligence check to recall information regarding a dead (or undead) creature, you can add double your Proficiency bonus to the check.

### Graveyard Sonata

When you reach 6th level, you can wrap yourself in eerie melodies, concealing your presence from undead. As an action, you start a performance that lasts until the end of your next turn. During that time, each undead that can hear within 30 feet of you must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. If the undead fails its saving throw, you are hidden from that creature and treated as invisible.

### Violent Crescendo

Also at 6th level, your song reminds listeners of the inevitability death while heralding victory. When a living creature you can see is killed or reduced to 0 hit points, you can use your reaction to begin a performance that bolsters friendly creatures within 30 feet of you. When a bolstered creature hits with an attack and deals damage, they can end the effect to deal 1d6 additional damage.

### Requiem

Starting at 14th level, personal loss fills your song with a terrifying guilt and sadness. When a friendly creature that you can see is

reduced to 0 hit points or killed, as a reaction you expend one use of your Bardic Inspiration to perform a requiem. All creatures that you choose within 60 feet you who can hear you must make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failure, the creature takes 3d8 psychic damage, or half as much on a successful save. If the creature who reduced your ally to 0 hit points is targeted by this effect, that creature has disadvantage on the saving throw.

## Cleric

*"May Ezra bless and keep you in her sights for the rest of your days."*

The gods are silent in the Mists. Even vocal deities from other realms are silent to their followers in the Mists. Clerics possess great faith: faith that the horrors they witness have a reason and faith that the gods have not abandoned their followers. They are chosen from the devout followers of a deity, the lay priests and common followers who are unable to employ magic.

Most clerics in the Core follow Ezra, but a number also heed the teachings of Belenus or the Lawgiver. Clerics following the teachings of their Church, and work to spread its teachings. The word of their superiors in the Church are often as important as holy script.

## Anchorite

Followers of Ezra, anchorites are not just followers of the goddess but members of the clergy who are taught to tap into their goddess' spiritual bond with the Mists. Anchorites are respected for their divine command of the Mists, but even other followers of Ezra find them slightly unnerving. No one knows the full price paid for assuming the role of a goddess or presuming to influence the Mists.

Anchorites can take the Channel Divinity power Shield of Ezra in place of the Divine Domain feature normally gained at 6th level.

### Channel Divinity: Shield of Ezra

When you or a creature within 30 feet of you takes bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage you can use your reaction to give the creature resistance to that instance of damage.

## Druid

*"Trees can speak if you are willing to listen."*

Bonded to the wilderness, druids reject civilization for the untamed world. They view themselves as defenders of nature, protecting it from the encroachment of civilization and the unnatural. Druids are aware that the horror of the night do not just threaten human lives, and they work tirelessly to protect animals and purify defiled locations. Many druids also know that nature in the Mists can become malevolent, and work to end threats from the natural world before they can spark reprisals from civilized folk.

Druids are found throughout the Mists but are most common in the wild areas of the central Core. Some prefer to operate near civilization to better defend nature or ease the effects of man. A few druids – typically the arrogant Sithican elves – prefer to shape nature into a pleasing state rather than preserve or defend ugliness. The Witches of Hala operate throughout the Core and operate as the Circle of the Land in the Core; while the order includes sorcerers and some clerics the majority are druids. The order protects ancient knowledge and meets in sacred glades or circles of standing stones. Druids of the Moon are rarer in the Mists, being feared as lycanthropes. Many hail from the dark woods of the central Core, living at the fringes of civilization. They seldom live deep in the wilderness, for even those woods are not safe for them.

## Fighter

*"Sir, yes sir!"*

Standing armies are common in the Core but open warfare is rare: few fighters are forged in larger conflicts. Elite knightly orders are also unusual, with few operating publically. Fighters are as likely to be common watchmen and city guards as they are crusaders or swashbucklers. Mercenary companies also exist, guarding trade routes between isolated settlements and protecting the interests of larger merchant companies. Firearms have replaced swords and axes in the refined West, encouraging local fighters to dabble in the art

of rogues and rangers. Those who prefer melee tend to favour light blades over antiquated heavy weaponry. In the east, heavily armoured fighters with slow but deadly weapons are still the norm.

Commoner fighters that were guards or watchmen tend to follow the path of the Champion, lacking the discipline and training to develop specialized skills. Many were hunters or other self-trained warriors. Battle Masters tend to hail from academies, trained to be knights in the East or elite guards and officers in the West. Most come from the nobility, as few commoners have the resources needed to pay for the education. The fey woods of Sithicus are the primary source of Eldritch Knights, as the high elves of that land have long mixed sorcerer and swordcraft. As the University of Dementlieu grows in status that nation is beginning to train soldiers in wizardry and warfare, but so far this is limited to a few exceptional students.

## Monk

*"Most would not consider pugilism an art, but my fists paint masterpieces on the canvas of my enemies' faces."*

Skilled in the art of combat, monks are as deadly with their hands as a fighter is with sword or firearm. Many excel in speed and swift movement while other simply prefer to duck and block blows.

When most folk think of monks they envision the agile and deadly warriors of Rokushima Taiyoo with their unusual yet deadly weapons. Or they think of the exotic warriors from the monasteries of that same land with their coloured robes and shaven heads. Others think of the flowing robed and veiled desert warriors of the Amber Wastes, or the deadly cultists of Sri Raji. Few people think of monks as Vistani bare-knuckle boxers, the sandy wrestling rings of Richemulot, or consider the humanist fighting philosophers of Zherisia.

## Paladin

*"Foul unholy beasts! You will never harm anyone ever again!"*

Rare in the Mists, paladins are holy warriors that seek out evil to destroy it, defending their flock from harm. While clerics live to teach and aid others, paladins lead by example. It is their mission to protect the bodies of people while clerics protect their souls. Despite this, paladins are often considered misguided or deluded by the common folk, occasionally little more than religious fanatics.

Few races other than humans ever produce paladins. Elves lack the discipline while halflings prefer to remain unseen. The innate taint of human-kin folk like teiflings, calibans, and dhampires appear to limit their ability to be paladins. Ezra, the Lawgiver, and the Morninglord all frequently inspire paladins. Paladins of Ezra typically take the Oath of Devotion, as that god teaches Her followers to defend the weak and protect people from the Legions of the Night. The paladins of the Lawgiver tend to focus on the eradication of corruption and disorder and less on evil, and most opt for Vengeance over Devotion. Followers of the Morninglord are split between Devotion and Vengeance, as undead must be eradicated but innocents must be protected and redemption must be offered to those who seek it. A few rare followers of Hala opt to take the martial path, and swear the Oath of Ancients. Green Knights are also occasionally found among the elves of Darkon.

## Ranger

*"Five of them. I'd say they passed by here three, maybe four days ago. One of them was carrying something heavy, something struggling."*

Hunters by trade, rangers are skilled at running down and pursuing prey: be it animal, man, or something else entirely. Most rangers are woodsmen that live between areas of civilization, in the wild parts of the Core. They are often trappers, hunters, or guides who make a living off the land.

Verbrek, Valachan, and Kartakass are known for their rangers. These rangers are

typically Hunters; while there are few colossal monsters, giants, or hordes of humanoid creatures in the Mists, Hunters apply these same skills against dangerous monsters, and packs of feral beasts. In the cities of the West, there are also urban rangers who work as watchmen or bounty hunters: chasing criminals and human vermin. These specialize in the wild areas of cities, such as narrow alleys, squalid slums, and dark sewers. Richemulot and Paridon both have a number of urban rangers and several manhunters are also found in the cities of Darkon, Dementlieu, and Mordent. Beast Master rangers seldom employ wild or exotic animals that are hard to replace, instead training hunting dogs, horses, or birds of prey.

### Alley Stalker

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Colloquially known as urban rangers or grim trekkers, those who embracing these techniques move from natural space to urban wilds: slums, docks, parks, sewers, and alleyways. Many work as members of an official city watch or private mercenary company keeping the peace, while other rangers hire out their skills. In corrupt settlements, an Alley Stalker might take the law into their own hands, enacting justice as they deem appropriate.

Alley Stalkers feel the rhythms of their city and speak of it like the city were a living thing; they know the movement of its people and goods, and defend it from both internal and external threats. To defend their urban protectorate, these rangers learn how to combat the dangers of the city, both bestial and humanoid, and how best to pursue those who violate the laws of either nature or civilization.

Urban lands such as Borca and Richemulot give rise to the most Alley Stalkers. Prior to the Requiem, Il Aluk was home to a number of urban rangers. The corruption and rampant crime found in Nova Vaasa cities also leads many to take learn these techniques.

### Community Explorer

When you reach 3rd level, you consider cities your home as much as the wilderness.

You can familiarize yourself with a number of settlements equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1), treating those settlements as a favoured terrains for your Natural Explorer feature. To familiarize yourself with a settlement, you must spend 24 hours in that community, walking its streets and learning its rhythms. The hours need not be consecutive, but cannot be spread out over a period longer than a week. A settlement must have a population of at least 1,000 to be large enough to qualify for this feature. Familiarizing yourself with a different settlement beyond this maximum replaces an existing settlement of your choice.

### Crippling Blow

Also at 3rd level, you learn to impede your prey for easier pursuit. You gain one of the following features of your choice.

**Bleeding Wound.** Once on each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can open a deep cut that bleeds profusely. At the start of each of the target's turns, it loses 1d4 hit points from the wound. The target cannot be an undead or construct. Each time you hit the bleeding creature with this feature, the damage dealt by the wound increases by 1d4.

Effects from this feature last for 1 minute or until a creature takes an action to make a DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The effect also ends if the target regains hit points.

**Disorienting Strike.** Once on each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can distract or rattle the target, preventing that creature from taking reactions. At the end of the each of the target's turns, it can make a Constitution saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength or Dexterity modifier), ending the effect on a success.

**Hamstring.** Once on each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, the creature's base speed is halved. This has no effect on creatures who use magical means of movement.

Effects from this feature last for 1 minute or until a creature takes an action to make a DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check. The effect also ends if the target regains hit points.

**Staggering Blow.** Once on each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can daze or addle the target. The creature can move or take an action each round but not both. At the end of the each of the target's turns, it can make a Constitution saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength or Dexterity modifier), ending the effect on a success.

### **Crowd Dodger**

Starting at 7th level, you have grown adept at weaving through crowds and quickly dodging around people. Spaces occupied by nonhostile creatures are not difficult terrain to you, and you can move through spaces occupied by hostile creatures, treating such spaces as difficult terrain.

Additionally, you have advantage on ability checks related to chases while in your favoured terrain.

### **Multiattack**

When you reach 11th level, you gain the following feature, or one of the choices from the Player's Handbook.

**Parrying Strikes.** You can use your action to move up to half your speed. Each time a creature targets you with an opportunity Attack during that movement, you can make a melee weapon attack against that creature. If your attack hits, the opportunity attack misses. If your attack misses, the opportunity attack is made with disadvantage.

### **Stalker's Defence**

At 15th level, while you are hidden from a creature, you have advantage on all saving throws that creature makes you roll.

### **Toxic Resistance**

Also at 15th level, you have become accustomed to squalid conditions and are immune to all diseases and poisons.

## **Rogue**

*"The lock tumbler is connected to the driver pins.*

*The driver pins are connected to the lock plug."*

A diverse lot, rogues can be found almost anywhere and are as difficult to pin down into a single role as they are to lockup in a town jail. Some rogues specialize in literally stabbing someone in the back while others prefer a metaphorical knife. Rogues are as just as likely to find themselves robbing a noble's house as beating a mark in an alley or as looting an ancient tomb. Most common in places of civilization, rogues can make a living wherever there is an opportunity to test their skills or earn some gold. Found on both sides of the law, rogues might act as thieves and assassins, or serve as members of the constabulary or thief-takers who hunt down criminals, or even make a role for themselves in the middle of law and crime.

Burglars, thieves, and scoundrels are common examples of rogues and common in most settlements. Other types of rogues include Dementlieuse spies, Borcan assassins, pirates from the Sea of Sorrows, and Invidian knife fighters. Thieves' Guides are common in many major cities: Dementlieu, Borca, and Nova Vassa are all known for their large criminal bands. Guides take offence to independent rogues operating in their territory, excluding common muggings and street crime. The larger guides, such as the two in Port-a-Lucine and Malken's guides in Nova Vassa, recruit and train assassins and thieves with magical arts. There are a number of independent assassin's guilds, including the feared Ba'al Verzi of Teufeldorf, the League of Nine in Sturben, and the Circle Sinister in Port-a-Lucine. Beyond the Core, the Ahltrian are a secretive group of killers operating out of the Shadowlands.

### **Investigator**

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The strongest weapons of an investigator are not a bow and dagger but their keen mind and quick wits. They are adept at piecing together evidence and observing details that others might miss. These rogues are trained to spot flaws in their opponent's defences or gaps

in their fighting style, and quickly communicate these details to waiting allies.

Detectives, archaeologists, and some monster hunters often belong to this archetype. Some investigators remain criminals, becoming masterminds who rely on underlings for theft and murder.

Investigators thrive in urban areas of the Core, such as Borca, Richemulot, Dementlieu, and Nova Vaasa. The Lamplighters of Mordent are renowned law enforcement agent that employees and trains many investigators.

### **Identify Weakness**

Starting at 3rd level, when you take the Help action to aid a creature's attack and that attack hits, the creature deals extra damage equal to your Sneak Attack damage.

### **Keen Observations**

Starting at 3rd level, you can use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to take the Search action.

In additional, if not already proficient in Survival, you can add your proficiency bonus to Wisdom (Survival) checks to follow tracks.

### **Evaluate Target**

Starting at 9th level, you have learned how to study a creature to learn its capabilities and physical characteristics and mannerisms. For each minute you spend watching the creature, you learn if it is your equal, superior, or inferior in one the following characteristics:

- Intelligence score
- Wisdom score
- Charisma score
- A skill
- Total class levels (if any)
- Rogue class levels (if any)

At the DM's discretion you might discover other information such as a special ability, vulnerability, or personality trait such as an ideal or bond.

### **Web of Informants**

By 9th level, you have acquired a number of agents and contacts you can approach for information and research materials. These contacts might be tied to your background or individuals who owe you a debt not easily

repaid. While in a settlement where you have a contact you have advantage on all Intelligence (Investigation) checks made while researching using downtime days.

In addition, you are typically aware of current events as your contacts will dispatch messages to inform you of noteworthy developments and occasionally approach you with new information.

### **Distant Assistance**

At 13th level, you can direct attacks while keeping yourself a safe distance away. You can use the Help action to aid a friendly creature in attacking a creature within 15 feet of you.

### **Sudden Advantage**

When you reach 17th level, when a friendly creature within 15 feet that can see and hear you makes a critical hit, you can use your reaction to grant them your sneak attack damage.

## **Sorcerer**

*"Magic is in my blood. I required no training and I care not for limits or restraint."*

The ambient magic energy and fantastic lineages needed to birth a sorcerer is rare in the Mists. In order to wield arcane power most mortal must study their art, or bargain with otherworldly beings. The majority of sorcerers are born from luck: an alignment of stars during conception, birthed on a site of powerful magic, or the culmination of disparate bloodlines.

The origin of sorcerers is vague and there are many theories, but none with definitive proof. Sorcerers of the Draconic Bloodline prompt the most debate: there are no dragons to sire offspring, so their magic must come from elsewhere. Some arcane scholars point to elemental beings, like salamanders or aquatic beasts, while others claim sorcerers are devolving into some primordial form. Elves claim dragons were really of powerful sorcerers whose power altered them into something inhuman, but dwarves insist dragons were real but were hunted to extinction. The origins of Wild Magic are equally unknown, but it seems tied to the land, with many sorcerers developing

this talent near the misty border or near the nation of Vechor. Sorcerers can also the followers of Hala, as masculine followers of that god often display sorcerous powers when they learn the ways of the Weave.

## **Fey Bloodline**

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Related to high fey or sylvan beings, feyblood sorcerers can trace their arcane power back to an ancestor's dalliance with a fey creature. This relation is not always overt or well known, perhaps being the result of an illicit romance or a fey being disguised as a spouse. Some feyblood sorcerers are mortals who were stolen and replaced by changeling babes, then raised by a fey.

The magic of this bloodline tends to be subtler than that of other sorcerers, more focused on deception and ensnaring minds. Even those feyblood sorcerers who employ evocation magics can do so with more finesse and discretion.

In the Land of the Mists, feyblood sorcerers are common in the land of Tepest, where the taint of hags and the shadow fey is strong. In the misted woods surrounding Sithicus, many feyblood sorcerers are also born. The various elves themselves are seldom sorcerers, preferring the path of wizardry, but it its not unknown for innate magic to manifest.

## **Glamour**

When you select this origin at 1st level, you learn how to cloak yourself in a glamour that alters your appearance in subtle ways. The glamour does not act as a disguise but obscures or veils physical imperfections, grime, and worn clothing, while making you seem more charming and mysterious. While under the glamour you appear somewhat otherworldly, with an ineffable glow and a constant breeze waving through your hair.

As an action you can raise your glamour, which lasts for 1 minute, or until you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell). While your glamour is active you have advantage on all Charisma checks. Once you use this feature, you must finish a long rest before you can use it again.

## **Faerie Resilience**

At 6th level, when you cast a sorcerer spell you can spend 1 sorcery point to gain resistance to nonmagical weapons for 10 minutes.

## **Deceptive Sorcery**

When you reach 14th level, you can use Subtle Spell even if you have already used a different Metamagic option during the casting of the spell. Additionally, when using Subtle Spell you can make a Charisma (Deception) check contested by Wisdom (Insight) to hide the fact you cast a spell from onlookers.

## **Faerie Crossing**

At 18th level, you can partially step into the Feywild to instantly travel in the blink of an eye. As a bonus action you can spend sorcery points teleport, traveling 15 feet for every sorcery point spent. Alternatively, when you are attacked by creature within 30 feet of you that you can see, you can use your reaction to activate this feature, but the sorcery point cost is doubled.

## **Warlock**

*"At night they whisper to me, listing my sins and reminding me of the price I will pay for my magic. Still... it was worth it."*

Those bargaining for power in the Mists risk more than just their soul, as their pacts might twist them: mind, body and soul. Many warlocks are uncertain of the name or nature of their patron, simply knowing it as a voice in the wind, a figure in a vision, a smiling shadow in the corner of the eye, or a spirit of nature. Some warlocks believe their patron is benevolent, such as a nature spirit or animistic being, but it is uncertain if this is truth or wishful delusion. Others believe the common wisdom that a warlock's master is an infernal being, a devil that will claim their soul upon death.

Warlocks commonly come from the wilder realms such as Valachan or Kartakass, lands without arcane colleges or easier access to magic. Tepest claims it is rife with witches, but the folk of that land declare any arcane magic user a "witch" so it is uncertain if there are more warlocks or not. Warlocks of ally with an



Archfey are typically elven or from lands bordering Sithicus or the Shadow Rift. But potent fey creatures lurk in the dark centers of forests throughout the Core, such as the Ebony Unicorn of Nova Vassa or the Green Maiden of Falkovnia. Fiends are common patrons, coming to potential warlocks with offers of power and glory. Some Fiends do not fully enter the Mists and speak through emissaries and lesser fiends, while others dwell in the land like Drigor or Inajira. Great Old Ones are rare in the Mists, with the Far Realm seldom intruding with the land. The slithering horrors of Blutspur revere a being whose mind is powerful enough to contact creatures in other lands and offer them power, and the Sorcerer-Fiend, Gwydion, is free with his power for reasons of his own.

## The Mists

Your patron is more of a force than a being. There is no overt agreement: no parley between the warlock and the Mists or its representative. You might be stealing your power by binding yourself with the land, using the world itself as a power source. Or you might have been touched by the Mists, tainted after a time trapped inside, or corrupted by actions performed while in the Mists.

### Expanded Spell List

The Mists grant you variant magical knowledge, allowing you to choose from an expanded list of spells. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

### Mists Expanded Spell

Spell Level	Spells
1st	<i>fog cloud, longstrider</i>
2nd	<i>blur, detect thoughts</i>
3rd	<i>haste, stinking cloud</i>
4th	<i>confusion, phantasmal killer</i>
5th	<i>cloudkill, modify memory</i>

### Relative Time

When you choose your patron at 1st level, time begins to move differently for you. When you roll initiative, you can choose to add or subtract your proficiency bonus from the

result, decided after you roll.

You can also slightly shift through time. When a creature ends their turn, you can use your reaction to change your initiative so you act next in the initiative order. Once you shift your initiative, you lose all benefits of this feature until you complete a short or long rest.

### Mist Call

At 6th level, as an action, you can conjure a thin pool of mist. The mist forms around you and has a radius in feet of five times your proficiency bonus, and remains for 1 minute or until you dismiss the effect. The pool of mist lies close to the ground obscuring the terrain but not any creatures standing within. The mist moves with you but at any point during your turn, you can choose to make it stationary. While inside the mist, as a bonus action you can teleport to any other point in the mist. Teleporting also makes the mist stationary. You can summon this stationary mist back to you as an action.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

### Grasping Mists

Starting at 10th level, you can summon writhing tendrils of mist to wrap around your enemies. As an action, you cause each creature in a 15-foot radius circle originating from you to make a Dexterity saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. Creatures that fail their save are caught in the wispy yet solid tendrils and restrained for 1 minute or until you end the effect as an action. A creature restrained by the misty tendrils can use its action to make a Strength or Dexterity check (its choice) against your spell save DC. On a success it frees itself.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

### Mist-Led

By 14th level, you can trap a creature in the Mists, pulling them into a space between spaces. As an action you cause the Mists to rise up to snatch a creature within 60 feet that you can see. The creature remains lost in the mist for 10 minutes. As an action, the creature can try to will its return with a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC. On a

success, the creature returns to the space it previously occupied, or the nearest unoccupied space. At the DM's discretion, the target of this attack might need to make a saving throw against madness.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

## Wizard

*"The forces of nature bow to my commands, for I know the forbidden secrets of the universe!"*

Those with arcane knowledge have seldom been trusted in the Land of the Mists. While not as feared as warlocks, wizards are still distrusted in most lands. Commoners whisper over the unholy rituals committed by wizards in the name of their art and the price that must be paid. All arcane spells are seen as black magic with a cost in blood or the caster's eternal soul.

The University of Dementlieu is especially does have a Department of Arcane Sciences, which equally examines the magical and pseudoscientific. While not dedicated to producing wizards, many students of that department do graduate with some knowledge

of spellcraft. Arcane magic is somewhat accepted in that land, although it is not respectable and seen as a quaint distraction unworthy of serious attention. Darkon and Hazlan have a number of mage colleges that train new wizards, with the latter's being held in high esteem although the populace is still untrusting of magic. Private scholars are available in some of the western lands, such as Dementlieu, Mordent, and Richemulot, who tutor those with magical potential, sometimes without full parental permission. Foreign mystics are also common, with Sri Raji and Har' Akir are both known for their magical tradition.

Students of the University in Dementlieu attempting to learn magic tends to focus on illusion and conjuration, owing to the frequency of stage magicians in that region. There are also a number of noted tomes on enchantments, but the department lacks books on abjuration. The academies in Liffe have similar topics of interests. Darkonian schools have a strong focus on necromancy, with some illusion, divination, and abjuration training. Hazlani wizardly colleges focus on the schools of evocation, transmutation, and abjuration.

## CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUNDS

The monk from the order of guardians, farmer's son skilled with a crossbow, and an inquisitor hunting for heretics

Adventurers in the Land of the Mists are often common people forced into the role of champion. They are seldom natural born heroes or mythic warriors destined for greatness. Instead, adventurers are more likely to come from humble origins, average people who discover an untapped potential when thrust into the life of adventure or emerging from a tragedy.

### Backgrounds for the Mists

Mundane occupations are just as prevalent in the Land of the Mists, and most backgrounds are just as commonplace.

Examples of how the backgrounds from the *Player's Handbook* fit into the world are provided below, along with variants and a few new backgrounds.

#### Acolyte

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You might have been raised or educated by the churches of Ezra and the Lawgiver. Both churches run small orphanages or foster youths. The dominant churches in the land, the two faiths have an organized hierarchy: your role and duties were clearly defined by Church dogma or scripture. The clergy of the Lawgiver is particularly known for inflexibility with their charges and harsh corporal punishment. Followers of Hala might also have fostered you. The witches of Hala are much less structured, customizing their lessons to fit the needs of the student.

#### Variant: Guardian

Living in isolated or hidden monasteries, the Order of Guardians is an organization in name only. Each monastery is independent, only loosely affiliated with the others, often being unaware of the location of other monasteries. They present themselves as an ascetic order, following the routines and rituals common to monasteries, but each has a

secret purpose: guarding a single powerful magical relic. These relics cannot be destroyed and are considered too dangerous to be loosed in the world.

Not being tied to a single deity, it is easier for you to find shelter or simple aid in chapels or temples. However, priests are less likely to offer you free healing. You may also have vague information on the location of other monasteries, which are typically in out-of-the-way rural locations.

#### Changeling

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You are a child planted in a foster home by foul hags or otherworldly shadow fey. Your parents' true child was stolen away in the night, for purposes unknown, and you were left behind in its stead. Most changeling babes are fated to waste away and die, but you managed to survive. You might remember that you are not entirely human, having vague memories of your origins. But even if unaware of your true nature, on some level you know that your foster parents are not your real family.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Deception, Persuasion

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of artisan's tools

Languages: Sylvan

**Equipment:** A set of artisan's tools (one of your choice), a mundane iron item (such as a nail or horse shoe), a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

#### Feature: Familial Facade

You are naturally adept at adopting local mannerisms and making people comfortable. You can often find a place to rest for a few days by presenting yourself as a distant relation. This family is unlikely to put themselves in danger helping you, but might offer minor assistance or supplies.

#### Suggested Characteristics

Changelings are essentially abandoned at birth, left behind to die with a family of

strangers. Their initial memories are of rejection, and the entire reason for their existence was to veil a theft before dying. Changelings are often driven to find a place in the world, seeking a family or a new purpose for their existence.

<b>d8 Personality Trait</b>	
<b>1</b>	I have varied interests and I'm seldom interested in one thing for too long.
<b>2</b>	I do not suffer slights nor do I forgive betrayals.
<b>3</b>	I'm always eager to meet new people and make new friends.
<b>4</b>	Taking risks makes me feel alive.
<b>5</b>	I'm emotionally reserved and reluctant to let people in close.
<b>6</b>	I have a short temper and I'm prone to fits of rage.
<b>7</b>	I enjoy the company of attractive people and am a shameless flirt.
<b>8</b>	I'm passionate, experiencing intense emotions that can shift quickly.

<b>d6 Ideal</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Friendship.</b> One cannot survive without companionship. (Good)
<b>2</b>	<b>Creativity.</b> New endeavours and ideas are worth pursuing. (Chaotic)
<b>3</b>	<b>Aspiration.</b> Pushing myself to the limits is the only way I will grow. (Any)
<b>4</b>	<b>Independence.</b> No one controls my fate but me. (Chaotic)
<b>5</b>	<b>Greed.</b> I will have all that has been denied me. (Evil)
<b>6</b>	<b>Nature.</b> The wilds need to be protected and feared. (Any)

<b>d6 Bond</b>	
<b>1</b>	The people of my home village always made me feel accepted.
<b>2</b>	I refuse to be treated like a freak or an outcast.
<b>3</b>	I owe everything to my mentor, who took me in while others cast me out.
<b>4</b>	My lover is my inspiration, my muse, and my happiness.
<b>5</b>	I want to know who I really am and where I come from.
<b>6</b>	I will have vengeance on one who has wronged me.

<b>d6 Flaw</b>	
<b>1</b>	I'm fairly irresponsible and change my mind on a whim.
<b>2</b>	I believe I know everything, and what I do know is never wrong.
<b>3</b>	Filth and disease unnerve me, and I hate becoming dirty.
<b>4</b>	I am reserved and emotionally detached with little empathy for others.
<b>5</b>	I have little sympathy for those too weak to defend themselves.
<b>6</b>	I collect valuable baubles and take things that catch my eye.

## Charlatan

You might be an urban charlatan hailing from the Western lands, equally at home in the streets of Port-a-Lucine or Ste. Ronges, selling dubious wares or running crooked games on a street corner. Or you might wander rural backwaters of the central Core, offering protective wards or curative elixirs. If a half-Vistani, you might have spent your formative years in the caravan, fleecing the giorgio with fake fortunes and supposedly enchanted trinkets.

## Criminal

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The impoverished lower class of Dementlieu has proven fertile ground for criminals, who have established an influential guild that has started spreading into neighbouring lands. Borca is home to several criminal families that control trade and finances and are involved in trafficking illicit goods throughout the Core. The wealth flowing westward has also given rise to numerous highwaymen and bandits, especially in the northern woods of Darkon and moors of Mordent. A strong Thieves' Guild operates in the cities of Nova Vaasa while independent groups of bandits ride the plains. The streets and alleys of the mist-shrouded city of Paridon are also rife with well-organized criminals, as adept at cutting throats as purses.

### Variant: Poisoner

In most lands the preferred method of assassination is a knife or crossbow bolt. In Borca, the weapon of choice is a fine powder or subtle liquid. While your art is illegal, poisoners are frequently employed by nobles and criminals alike. Poisoners are typically skilled at either crafting poisons for sale or employing assorted toxins, but a few are adept at both.

Rather than proficiency with thieves' tools, you are proficient with poisoner's kits.

## Entertainer

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Common entertainers in the Core include Dementlieuse opera singers, Kartakan skalds, Ghastrian poets, and Liffen musicians. Numerous acting troupes and carnivals travel the lands, entertaining towns for a night before moving on, and several Vistani caravans earn a living doing the same. You might have been professionally trained in Dementlieu or Liffe, been apprenticed by an established master, or simply have taught yourself the performing arts.

### Variant: Stage Magician

Mixing mundane illusions and showmanship, Dementlieuse stage magicians give the impression of magic with sleight of hand and some alchemical tricks. Most stage

magicians have no ability to cast spells, but a few are actual wizards hiding their arcane talents in plain sight, supplementing their common tricks and deceptions with true magic.

Rather than proficiency in Acrobatics, you are proficient with Sleight of Hand.

## Folk Hero

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Being a hero in the Land of the Mists is dangerous. Tyrants and the lords of the land do not like being opposed or defied: to be a folk hero is to be a target. Your reputation as a hero is as much a curse as a benefit. Your reputation might be exaggerated, based on surviving the assault of a monster rather than defeating it or other false claims of heroism.

### Variant: Common Folk

The path of an adventurer is not always chosen: your defining event was not one of heroism but of tragedy and loss. You might be a rancher, farmer, shepherd, or fisherman that has been pushed towards the heroic lifestyle. You likely eschew the title of "hero", simply doing what needs to be done. You are still often welcome in the homes of other commoners, not out of appreciation but out of simple kindness.

d8	Defining Event
1	A loved one was killed or injured by a monster.
2	I left home to prevent my family being punished for something I did.
3	A dangerous magical item was entrusted to me.
4	I killed a monster that became a person upon death, so now I am thought a murderer.
5	I am being stalked by an unknown creature.
6	I was injured or scarred by a creature.
7	I was accused of a crime I did not commit.
8	A fortune teller foretold that my loved ones would suffer if I stayed at home.

## **Guild Artisan**

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While artisans can be found in all lands, the nations of Nova Vaasa, Mordent, and Lamordia are known for their craftsmanship and the quality goods. Guilds are most commonly founded in those lands, with knowledge and trade secrets passed onto promising apprentices. Liffe also has a reputation for artisans, being known for its mimicry of foreign goods and imitation of other artisans.

The lands with the strongest merchant companies are Dementlieu and Borca, with the former having firm control of the Western sea while the Boristi Trading Company of Borca has influence across the Eastern Core and employs folk from all lands. Darkonian merchant companies used to be more powerful, but the destruction of Il Aluk greatly reduced their influence.

## **Hermit**

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The most common hermits in the Mists do not live alone but live in monasteries with fellow ascetics. still having no interaction with other people. Those who can survive alone in the wilds are rare, as solitude makes one easy prey for the horrors of the night. A few rare hardy souls survive in remote locations, living in corners of the world equally forgotten by man and monster. Some hermits are drawn towards other people for safety or other reasons but can't bring themselves to settle among them, living on the outskirts of settlements or in nearby caves or ruins.

There are a number of unwilling hermits, such as those who have survived a shipwreck or the destruction of their village. Those imprisoned for a lengthy duration might come to view their incarceration as a forced hermetic lifestyle.

### **Variant: Prophet**

Not a hermit by choice, you are a prophet cursed with foreknowledge and visions of the future. Your discovery came not after a period of contemplation or reflection but as sudden revelation. You became a hermit to avoid your gift being abused or your prophecy becoming known by those who would attempt to turn it

to their advantage.

Rather than proficiency in herbalist tools, you are proficient with one type of artisans tools. You can replace the herbalist kit in your starting equipment with a set of artisans tools of your choice.

## **Inquisitor**

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You belong to an organization or church that hunts down heretics, witches, or black magic. You are part of the vanguard, the holy warriors that not only defend the common folk but hunt down the unrighteous and sinful. Noteworthy inquisitions include the witch-hunt in Tepest; the Iron Inquisitors of the Church of the Lawgiver in Nova Vaasa, who pursue of heretics and blasphemers; the followers of Elena Faith-Hold in Nidala, who crusade against sinner and monsters; and the Darkonian sect of the Church of Ezra, who zealously defend against the Legions of the Night.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Insight, Intimidation  
**Tool Proficiencies:** Herbalism kit

**Languages:** One of your choice.

**Equipment:** A holy symbol, an herbalism kit, manacles, vestments, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp.

### **Feature: Interrogator**

The terrifying reputation of an inquisitor unnerves folk, who might readily volunteer unrequested knowledge in the hope of placating you and avoiding your wrath. When you attempt to gather information (through either forcible extraction or diplomatic enticement) but fail to learn what you want, your subject might offer related lore or reveal minor secrets.

### **Suggested Characteristics**

Inquisitors have a strong sense of right and wrong, firmly believing in the existence of true evil. They know the dangers of the supernatural and have seen the corruption of sin. Even ex-inquisitors, ones who no longer a servant of the Church, continue to believe in the righteousness of their actions, simply shifting their absolute convictions.

<b>d8 Personality Trait</b>	
<b>1</b>	I believe that monsters are everywhere and anyone could be a creature of the night.
<b>2</b>	I like to make rhetorical speeches and sermons.
<b>3</b>	I am weary of always finding corruption and seeing the worst of humanity.
<b>4</b>	It's my belief that everyone has secrets, everyone is hiding something.
<b>5</b>	I'm always reciting parables relating to the current situation.
<b>6</b>	I'm extremely pessimistic, always expecting the worst.
<b>7</b>	I try my hardest at everything I attempt, never giving less than my best effort.
<b>8</b>	I feel strong remorse over what I must do, especially my failures.

<b>d6 Ideal</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Protection.</b> I defend those who cannot defend themselves. (Good)
<b>2</b>	<b>Faith.</b> My god gives me all the strength I require. (Any)
<b>3</b>	<b>Honesty.</b> I refuse to sully my lips with a falsehood. (Lawful)
<b>4</b>	<b>Power.</b> So long as I have power, it won't corrupt anyone else. (Evil)
<b>5</b>	<b>Responsibility.</b> I must fulfil my duties and keep oaths I have sworn. (Good)
<b>6</b>	<b>Greater Good.</b> If I must damn myself to give others salvation, so be it. (Any)

<b>d6 Bond</b>	
<b>1</b>	I would venture into the Abyss for my parishioners or congregation.
<b>2</b>	I have dedicated myself to unveiling evil of all kinds.
<b>3</b>	If I must damn myself to give others salvation, so be it
<b>4</b>	I will hunt down and destroy the foul beast that escaped me.
<b>5</b>	I owe my sponsor in the Church a debt I can never fully repay.

<b>6</b>	My family means more to me than my own life.
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<b>d6 Flaw</b>	
<b>1</b>	I see the world in absolutes: there is only good and evil.
<b>2</b>	I can be heartless and when dealing with those I see as sinners.
<b>3</b>	I gain more pleasure than I like to admit at punishing the wicked.
<b>4</b>	I expect perfection from everyone.
<b>5</b>	I'm stubborn, refusing to compromise in matters of importance.
<b>6</b>	I put too much faith in the Church and my superiors.

## Noble

While wealthy individuals can hail from any land, the aristocratic courts of Dementlieu, Richemulot, and Borca produce the true nobility of the Core. The upper class of Dementlieuse and Borcans set the trends of culture, establishing new fashions and areas of interest. The lesser nobles of Richemulot are more imitative, following the lead of other nations. Darkon and Nova Vassa also have a sizable upper class, but these nobles are more interested in local politics and trends than international fashions. The city of Paridon also has a well-established aristocracy, although the isolated city-state's concerns are very localized.

## Outlander

The great woods of the central Core cover much of Verbrek, Valachan and Invidia. These lands are dotted by small ranches, homesteads, and small villages too small to appear on any map. Lands adjacent to the dense forests, such as Valachan, Kartakass, and Barovia, are also home to numerous trappers, ranchers, and reclusive woods folk. However, even civilized lands like Mordent, Darkon, and Nova Vassa have small secluded hamlets that are all but forgotten, or wild space occupied by independent folk.

There are also distant lands less touched by

civilization, such as the dense jungles of the Wildlands, where outlanders are the norm. These include the windswept deserts of the Amber Wastes, or the snow covered Frozen Reaches.

## Sage

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Scholars come from the assorted colleges of the Core. The erudite nation of Lamordia produces the most sages, with most focusing on the various sciences. The universities of Dementlieu and Liffe also produce a number of academics, although these are more focused on language and history than science. The monasteries and cathedrals of Nova Vassa also produce some scholars focused on religious lore.

Darkon was formerly the primary source of sages, with most graduating from the prestigious University of Il Aluk. With the destruction of the city, only those scholars absent during the Requiem remain.

### Variant: Physician

Your studies were focused on biology and the human body rather than chemistry or the physical sciences. Human anatomy was a major topic of your education, and you were treatments for many common ailments and injuries. Herbal remedies were also included in your education and you know how to make simple curatives.

In place of one additional language, you are proficient with the herbalist kit. You can replace the quill and bottle of ink in your starting equipment with both healing and herbalist kits.

## Sailor

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Traders are rare in number on the perpetually overcast Eastern Sea, but a few brave merchants ply the waters, following the well-charted routes connecting Grabben, Liffe, and Nova Vassa. Trade along the Wake of the Loa Mistway also attracts sailors, but most of these sailors hail from Souragne, seeking goods from the Core that will sell well in their native land.

The Western Sea is much more heavily trafficked, with Ghastria and Blaustein trading

with Mordent, Dementlieu, and Lamordia. Merchants from the Core also regularly sail the Way of Venomous Tears and Emerald Stream mistways. A few brave sailors risk the Leviathan's Clutches mistway, but the route is fraught with hazards and a full thirds of vessels that attempt the journey do not return; however, the price Rajian spices and silks fetch in the Core ensures there will always be a ready number of captains risking the trip.

## Soldier

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Few lands have large organized armed forces, with the armies of most of the western nations comprised of various local militias or town watchmen. Falkovnia is one of the few lands with a trained military, its Talon knights famed for their skills and merciless training. Borca and Dementlieu have the most formalized armies, but these have seen little actual combat and are mostly for show, with officers being promoted due to familial connections. The Barovian military has seen little use in the last several centuries outside of controlling Gundarakite insurrectionists.

Invidia has an increasingly large and skilled militia, trained in traditional warfare and guerrilla tactics. Each of the Nova Vassan noble houses has a large personal guard that theoretically serves as that nation's army, but their loyalties lie not with king but their lord (or, rather, their lord's coin).

Numerous mercenary companies operate across the Core. Most of these are associated with merchant companies, with some being formed by powerful consortiums. The Boristi Trading Company has its own mercenary company dedicated to protecting their interests. This unnamed company is highly trained and well equipped, rivaling the armies of some smaller nations.

## Sole Survivor

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You lived through a great tragedy, an event so traumatic that it now defines your entire life. Everything you once loved or valued is now gone forever. Who you were before the tragedy no longer matters, and returning to your old life seems impossible: that life is a distant memory, more akin to a dream than



reality. The trauma you survived likely involved serious personal injury or the loss of a loved one (or both), but it could have also involved the loss of your livelihood, home, or reputation.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Perception, Survival

**Tool Proficiencies:** One type of artisan's tools (your choice)

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Equipment:** A set of artisan's tools (one of your choice), a memento from your past life (lock of hair, locket with a picture, or worn toy) a set of traveler's clothes, and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

### Feature: Safe House

Having barely escaped disaster once, you are overly prepared to avoid future calamity. You have one or more hidden caches where you stored a change of clothes, basic supplies, a few coins, and some food. This cache might be hidden in a crawl space barely able to fit a single person, a shack hidden in the woods, or a small second home in the city.

### Suggested Characteristics

Survivors have experienced a great deal of emotional trauma, which makes it difficult for them to form emotional attachments. They can be suspicious, possibly to the point of paranoia. Some survivors have difficulty thinking about the future, dwelling on the past and their regrets. Other survivors plan for any contingency, hoping to avoid future tragedies.

d8	Personality Trait
1	Despite my emotional problems, I maintain a facade of normality.
2	I am extremely pessimistic, always expecting the worst.
3	I try to be ready for anything to happen. Anything.
4	Humour is my preferred defense, and I take very little seriously.
5	I can be overly cautious, even in mundane situations.
6	I appear unemotional, being overly logical and withdrawn.
7	I have a plan for any situation, and a back-up plan for when that fails.
8	My happiness is fleeting, as I'm filled with a deep sorrow.

d6	Ideal
1	<b>Aspiration.</b> I must be better, I must try harder. (Any)
2	<b>Power.</b> Those in positions of power can prevent tragedies. (Evil)
3	<b>Vengeance.</b> I will have retribution for my pain. (Evil)
4	<b>Protection.</b> Someone has to defend the weak. (Good)
5	<b>No More.</b> I will not stand by and let others suffer. (Chaotic)
6	<b>Community.</b> Neighbours should look out for neighbours. (Lawful)

d6	Bond
1	My friends and companions keep me sane.
2	I'm determined to help others whenever possible.
3	Helping others keeps me grounded: as long as I'm active, I can't dwell on the past.
4	Someone helped me after my loss. I owe them a great debt.
5	The people of my home town are the closest thing to family I have left.
6	Revenge drives me forward.

d6	Flaw
1	I have strong feelings of guilt for surviving.
2	It is difficult for me to trust others.
3	I view strangers as expendable.
4	Nightmares prevent me from having a full night's sleep.
5	I'm self-destructive, taking unnecessary risks.
6	My mood changes wildly and without warning.

### Town Guard

As a member of a constabulary or city watch, you were trained to uphold the law and protect the citizens of your settlement from mundane threats. Your job was one of deterring crime: being visible and vigilant.

When needed, you pursued fleeing criminals or intervened in disturbances, but investigation of crimes was outside your duties.

You might have been a common guard, or a member of a specific law-enforcement order. Examples include the Lamplighters, the small but efficient constabulary of Mordentshire; the Gendarmerie, given authority to enforce the law across Dementlieu; the Bellmen of Paridon, headquartered on Bell Street and focused on hunting murderers; or a low-ranking member of the Kargat, the secret police of Darkon.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Insight, Perception

**Tool Proficiencies:** Vehicles (land)

**Languages:** One of your choice.

**Equipment:** Badge of office, an oilcloth cloak, a truncheon (club), evidence from an unsolved crime, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing 10 gp

### Feature: Officer of the Law

You are still recognised as a member of the town watch by fellow guards of your order. Those of a lower rank will typically defer to your authority or recognise your experience. The town watch of other settlements may identify you as a fellow guard and offer aid as a courtesy. Other guards will help you will any lawful endeavors, offering minor assistance such as discussing current investigations or information on local affairs.

### Suggested Characteristics

Those who opt to join a town watch often have strong feelings towards law and order and are driven to help people. They put their life at risk and make themselves a target for retribution for very little recompense. A few become guards because they like the feeling of authority and are something of a bully, but the dangers of the job mean these individuals are rare.

<b>d8 Personality Trait</b>	
<b>1</b>	I do everything according to the strict letter of the rulebook.
<b>2</b>	I take copious notes, recording everything I witness to avoid forgetting details.
<b>3</b>	I would rather spend a week in the stocks than walk away from a fight.
<b>4</b>	The danger of my job makes me feel more alive than anything else.
<b>5</b>	I work hard during the day, and just as hard on my time off.
<b>6</b>	I always have a ready drink or a preserved snack.
<b>7</b>	It is difficult for me not to snoop into other people's business.
<b>8</b>	I always make the first move. I can ask questions after.

<b>d6 Ideal</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Honesty.</b> I cannot do my job if I'm not trustworthy. (Good)
<b>2</b>	<b>Tradition.</b> Laws are a constant across the generations. (Lawful)
<b>3</b>	<b>Rules.</b> A code of law is what separates us from animals. (Lawful)
<b>4</b>	<b>Power.</b> Someone has to make the rules and keep the streets safe. (Evil)
<b>5</b>	<b>Action.</b> If your heart isn't beating, you're not alive. (Any)
<b>6</b>	<b>Punishment.</b> The wicked need to be brought to justice. (Any)

<b>d6</b>	<b>Flaw</b>
<b>1</b>	I believe everyone is guilty of something.
<b>2</b>	I don't take bribes, I just get paid extra to do my job.
<b>3</b>	Breaking out of a cell is easier than changing my mind.
<b>4</b>	When someone is accused of a crime, I always believe they did it.
<b>5</b>	It is not my place to decide which laws to follow. I enforce them all equally.
<b>6</b>	I sent an innocent person to jail and have done nothing to free them.

### **Variant: Detective**

Most guards do little to hunt down criminals, leaving this task to trained investigators. Detectives do not keep the peace or deter illegal acts, but look at the evidence left after a crime to discover the perpetrator. Detectives are rare: few constabularies make use of their services and fewer still have a detective as a member of the watch. Many detectives sell their services, freelancing for the town guard or whomever can pay for their services.

Rather than proficiencies with Insight and Perception, you are likely proficient in Search and Persuasion. And in place of your proficiency with Vehicles, you might be proficient with thieves' tools or a disguise kit.

### **Urchin**

Poor or homeless children are a common sight in the larger cities of the Core. These might be orphans or the offspring of negligent or abusive parents. A few hail from other lands or rural areas who ventured to the city trying to make a life for themselves. Following the Requiem, there were large numbers of Darkonian orphans who settled in various cities or fled to other lands. Falkovnia's frequent use of capital punishment also creates a large number of urchins in its cities. There are particularly large numbers of urchins in Dementlieu and Richemulot, with the youths of the former frequently being

recruited by criminal elements, while the urchins of the latter band together to claim entire buildings.

The large city of Paridon has many urchins roaming the street, displaced with their families from their homes. The youth of Paridon are frequently organized, recruited by thieves' guilds, cults, or other charismatic individuals.

Elsewhere in the Mists, the isolated domains of Odiare and Sebuia are entirely populated by children. These youths either do not grow old or die before reaching full maturity.

### **Optional Rule: Pushing Characteristics**

This rule allows the Dungeon Master to encourage their players to portray their character's flaws. It is useful in a horror campaign as in both Gothic literature and horror tales the protagonists are often flawed: subject to temptations, human frailties, or personal compulsions. They are often powerless to control themselves and struggle against their weakness. But at times of great importance they can rise to the occasion and overcome their personal demons.

Instead of reactively rewarding good roleplaying, you prompt a player to act on their characteristics, offering inspiration to portray a particular personality trait or flaw. You should suggest how the trait might be currently affecting the character. This characteristic is typically a flaw, but it could also be a bond or dark shadow temptation. The player can opt to take the inspiration and roleplay the personality trait – either using your suggestions or their own interpretation – or they can refuse the inspiration and choose to portray the character overcoming their weaknesses.

This variant should be used when it is narratively or thematically appropriate, when it makes sense for a character to be tempted by their frailties. It can also be used to set the mood, reminding players of the humanity of their characters.

## New Characteristic: Greatest Fear

In a horror campaign it is very possible to overuse saving throws against fear, making players feel that their character's reactions are beyond their control. This optional rule encourages players to consider of what frightens their characters, and be proactive in portraying terror.

The **greatest fear** characteristic is chosen at character creation, when determining your character's personality traits, ideal, bond, and flaw. Your greatest fear is something that terrifies your character, and might drive them to inaction, cause them to act out of character, or send them fleeing in terror.

Your greatest fear might suggest some traumatic incident in your past, a personal demon you never overcame. Or your greatest fear might be something you worry about in the future.

d20	Greatest Fear
1	Losing a loved one
2	Becoming seriously ill
3	Failing those I love
4	Being a helpless victim
5	Succumbing to temptation and becoming corrupted
6	Not achieving my dreams
7	Being abandoned by those close to me
8	Something moving inside my body
9	Becoming insane
10	Getting old and senile
11	Being poor or homeless
12	Getting trapped in a fire
13	Becoming lost in an unfamiliar place
14	Losing control of myself
15	Being covered in vermin (insects, rats, spiders)
16	Losing my reputation
17	Being paralyzed or not in control of my body
18	Trapped in tight spaces
19	Losing my faith
20	Being all alone in the dark

## CHAPTER 4: CUSTOMIZING CHARACTERS

The Vistani dances around the fire faster and faster, his daggers becoming a blur as he demonstrates his deadly art. Careful not to pour more than a couple drops, the Lamordian chemist, mixes an extract of undeath with a vital fluid, curious to see the results. Desperate, the monster hunter slumps against the wall, fumbling to reload their crossbow with their blood-slicked hands.

Adventurers in the Land of the Mists are different than standard adventurers. While some still desire riches and fame, many more become adventurers to fight against the darkness that looms over the land. They are not glory seekers or treasure hunters but champions driven by revenge and loss, love and duty, or simply fear of the night. More than the heroes of other lands, adventurers in the Mists are tragic figures who have been touched by darkness, often being in as much risk from the evil that lurks within.

### Dark Shadows

Mina Murray struggles to retain her humanity during her vampiric transformation, and is often cast as the reincarnation of Dracula's lost love. Seeking power and forbidden knowledge, Doctor Faust makes a deal with fiendish being. Deformed from birth, both Quasimodo and Erik the Opera Ghost are pushed to become the monster they resemble. Opium leads Franklin Blake into moral conflict as he is accused of a theft he does not remember. And an unnamed narrator confronts his inhuman lineage after a visit to Innsmouth.

In Gothic fiction a shadow often looms over characters, an omnipresent doom marring their life and influencing their actions. Characters are often linked to supernatural forces, and it is sometimes this ability which allows them to prevail against the odds. This potential tragedy drives common folk to become heroes, as they try to free themselves from their curse, strive to make the most of what time they have, or struggle to prove to

themselves or others that their corruption does not define them.

### Purpose

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Dark shadows are an optional rules module designed to help you emulate some of the more common tropes and character traits present in Gothic fiction. They are designed to be complementary to your character's background, and work as a supplementary rule to the inspiration system

Your character's dark shadow might be the reason they became an adventurer. Dark shadows are also a possible method to reflect simple curses or other prolonged conditions your character might suffer during the course of a campaign.

### Gaining and Losing a Shadow

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You can choose to give your character a dark shadow at character creation, having been born with the affliction or gaining it before the start of the campaign. The source of this dark shadow should be described in your character's backstory. It might be a reason your character has taken up the life of an adventure rather than staying close to the safety of home.

It is also possible to gain a dark shadow, attaining an affliction during the course of a campaign. Gaining a shadow should be the result of events that occur during an adventure. For example, after suffering a vicious wound from a lycanthrope, you might take the bitten shadow. You do not choose a dark shadow like you would a feat or spell, instead working with your DM to determine when your character has gained a dark shadow.

Most dark shadows can be taken at any time, but a few make the most sense if taken at character creation (such as redheaded or reincarnated). However, with the DM's permission, is possible to discover a previously unknown affliction at any time.

Through play, it might be possible to

remove a dark shadow. This should happen naturally as a part of the campaign, possibly as the culmination of a long quest or storyline. Losing your dark shadow should be an important character milestone.

You can only have a single dark shadow at a time. If your character gains a new dark shadow, this replaces the benefits of your old dark shadow. However, you can choose to keep the characteristics and temptations of both shadows.

## Using a Shadow

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Dark shadows are a new category of personal characteristics. They work in addition to personality traits, flaws, and bonds. They provide additional roleplaying hooks that can be used to portray your character, giving depth to their motivation and drives. These characteristics might also allow you to earn inspiration from your DM. Shadows are both negative and positive: they are a source of strength but also a constant temptation that must be fought.

### Characteristics

Each dark shadow has suggested character traits. These are suggestions for how a shadow might influence your character's personality or motivations. You can use these suggestions or think of your own.

### Temptation

Each dark shadow pushes a character towards further corruption or negative behaviour. Temptations include a flaw and advice for how the shadow subtly or overtly influences your character's behaviour.

### Benefit

Each dark shadow provides an additional use for inspiration that you can use instead of gaining advantage. Typically, using inspiration can only be done on your turn but does not require an action.

## Accursed

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A malicious hag, dark cleric, or vindictive Vistani has cursed you. You might have been cursed by an evil creature for attempting to stop them, or cursed by a good or neutral

individual as punishment for misdeeds. The nature of this curse varies dramatically; you might suffer from misfortune, a wasting disease, a weakened sword arm, a tendency to repulse people of the opposite sex, or any number of lesser or greater afflictions.

### Characteristics

Depending on whether the curse was warranted or not, you might feel either guilty or persecuted. If the curse was justified you might feel remorseful for your misdeeds or prone to self-pity over your misfortune. If you feel the curse was unwarranted (rightly or out of denial) you might feel unjustly targeted and unfairly judged. As most curses have an escape clause, your continued suffering means you are likely too stubborn to change your behaviour or attitude.

### Temptation

Flaw: *"I'm quick to blame my curse for any failure."*

Feelings of revenge are difficult to escape, having been judged and damned by one person. There is the desire to blame the curse's invoker rather than look inward to personal accountability.

### Benefit

Having been plagued by misfortune for years, you have learned to limit the impact chance has on your actions. You can spend your inspiration before making an ability check to roll 3d6 instead of a d20. If you have advantage on the check, you instead roll 5d6 and use the total of the three highest rolls.

## Addict

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You have a physical addiction to a substance such as alcohol, tobacco, cocaine, or opiates like laudanum or opium. You might be a regular user, a recovering addict, or casual user that has unknowingly become dependant on the drug.

### Characteristics

You have an addictive personality and respond to stress and conflict by seeking pleasure, becoming depending on outside stimuli for relief. You have difficulty delaying

gratification and may be impulsive or impatient. You might have low self-esteem or suffer from depression. Your addiction might also be a way of coping with uncomfortable feelings, such as crippling fear or impotency from being confronted by supernatural horrors.

When you are denied your drug, you become irritable and irrational, willing to do almost anything to end the physical and mental cravings. Use is often habitual, with little conscious thought needed.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"Once is not enough. It will never be enough."*

No matter how much time passes, part of you will always desire your addiction and a single relapse is all that is needed to descend again into full addiction. Your cravings will always be worse during periods of stress or after times of failure.

### **Benefit**

Accustomed to being intoxicated, if you are poisoned you can spend your inspiration to remove the condition.

Additionally, you know unsavory people and possess some underworld contacts. Even if your particular vice is legal, you have crossed paths with unseemly characters and know how to get in touch with them. You can spend your inspiration to gain information from an illicit source or sway the opinions of a disreputable individual.

### **Bitten**

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You have been savaged by the natural attacks of a supernatural creature such as a werebeast, vampire, or ghoul. Having recovered from any initial assault (and any related infection) the attack has left deeper scars than the ones that mar your flesh, tainting you with unnatural magic.

### **Characteristics**

You experience heightened emotions and are prone to fits of passion and rage, especially when your territory or possessions are infringed upon. You feel uncomfortable when alone, preferring to be with others with whom

you share a bond. Participating on a hunt enflames your blood, be it a rapid chase or slow stalking, and you have difficulty walking away from prey.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"I long to hunt with my pack, to satiate my hunger."*

You desire to consume something based on the creature that infected you: raw meat, rotting flesh, or warm blood. This urge is not omnipresent and is easy to ignore when not confronted by the subject of your hunger. However, when the subject of your hunger is present you have difficulty focusing on anything else and might become distracted or irritable.

You also possess a kinship to those of your bloodline, especially the one who infected you. This does not extend to all creatures of the same type, only those of the same lineage. For example, if bitten by a wererat you do not have a kinship with all lycanthropes or even all wererats but only wererats of the same bloodline.

### **Benefit**

By unleashing your inner beast your senses become heightened, increasing your vision, hearing, and sense of smell. You can spend your inspiration to be considered proficient in the Perception, Investigation, and Survival skills for 1 minute. If the check is related to the subject of your hunger, you add double your proficiency bonus.

### **Cat's Eyes**

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You were born with bright yellow eyes and slightly ovoid pupils, which catch the light and appear to glow in dim illumination. This rare trait is found only in folks hailing from Vaasi lands. It is most common among the Valachani, but the eyes are sometimes found in Nova Vaasans. The cause is unknown but there are many superstitions. Some believe a cat took some of your soul as an infant, others think you have the blood of a werebeast, and still others believe you are the reincarnated spirit of a feline.

**Characteristics**

You have feline quirks, such as a fondness for napping in the warm sun, hiding in tight places, toying with small creature, and stalking prey. You can be fickle and unpredictable, shifting your loyalties and affections when the mood strikes.

**Temptation**

Flaw: "*A quick kill is boring, and I wish to be entertained.*"

While you may bond with a small handful of people, too many unnerve you, pushing you to withdraw from society and dwell with the creatures with whom you feel a kinship. You might opt to share your home with cats, breeding them or rescuing strays. Or you might choose the wilds, hunting in the tall grass with plains cats.

**Benefit**

You can spend your inspiration to speak with felines. You can communicate freely with cats for 10 minutes, as if using the spell *speak with animals*. The cat is under no obligation to help or share information with you.

Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to gain darkvision for 1 minute. You see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. If you already have darkvision, its range increases by 30 feet.

**Cold One**

An undead creature drained you of your life energy, almost killing you and turning you into an unliving monstrosity. Your assailant might have been a spectral undead, like a wraith or ghost, or a corporeal one, like a wight or vampire. Since the attack, you have regained your strength and vigor, but not your humanity and vitality: some ineffable part of your soul is absent.

**Characteristics**

You lack warmth, both physically and emotionally. Your body temperature is low and your skin is cool to the touch. While not entirely emotionless, you are lacking in joy and compassion and find happiness fleeting. Even your strong negative emotions, such and

anger, as muted, as you lack the passion that fuels rage, jealousy, and hatred. But you are also calm and not easily frightened or unnerved.

**Temptation**

Flaw: "*I cannot hate but neither can I love.*"

Without passion you have few hopes and little dreams, and there is the continued urge to succumb to your melancholy, to sink into inaction and surrender to crushing malaise. It is difficult to find the motivation to continue to fight against the darkness, both external and internal.

**Benefit**

If frightened, you can spend your inspiration to remove the condition.

Additionally, animated undead such as zombies and skeletons pay you little attention. You can spend your inspiration to make a Dexterity (Stealth) check against such creatures as if you were heavily obscured. This effect last 1 minute or until you take any action.

**Fugitive**

You have earned the enmity of a powerful and formidable opponent who haunts their every action. Few champions live for long in the Mist without acquiring an enemy, but you have earned the attention a particularly potent and unforgiving foe. This enemy might be the ruler of a nation, a secret society, or even the law. Whomever they are, they will not forgive, and they will never forget.

**Characteristics**

You spend every waking minute wondering if your enemies are waiting nearby, ready to strike. You might hope to one day vanquish your pursuers, but that day is a long way off, and never seems any nearer. You can be suspicious and paranoid, and for good reason, having been betrayed in the past.

**Temptation**

Flaw: "*Trusting others leads to betrayal or disappointment.*"

Survival is your primary drive. You do what you must to escape and survive. Your



opponent has more resources and power than you, being virtually unassailable. Sometimes escape means sacrificing others as a distraction, or betraying others before they betray you.

### **Benefit**

You can spend your inspiration to gain proficiency in the Perception skill for 1 minute. If already proficient, you instead double your proficiency bonus. Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to act in a surprise round.

### **Gravesight**

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The spirits of people and events are visible to you as vague mist-like outlines. You can see both ghosts and the imprint left by strong emotions and dramatic events on a location. You are able to find places of ethereal resonance and witness events from decades past. This power is limited to sight and you have no special ability to hear or interact with ghosts.

### **Characteristics**

You cannot turn off your sight and have witnessed many scenes of horror and tragedy, often without warning. At any time you might experience a vision of the past or encounter a ghost that does not wish to be disturbed. You are wary about entering new places, which might have witnessed uncountable horrors or be the home of several spirits. You are cautious and possibly a little nervous. You may also have grown detached, emotionally hardened after years of horror.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"Having seen so much horror, I can be callous and unsympathetic."*

Knowing that at any time you might be subjected to visions without warning pushes you to withdraw, to isolate yourself in safe places where there was no death and unpleasant memories. There's also the danger of becoming emotionally dead and uncaring of the suffering of others.

### **Benefit**

You can spend your inspiration to witness the ethereal resonance a recent event. The event must have had some emotional significance and have occurred in your current location. Watching the ghostly re-enactment might offer some clue as to what happened or provide new information regarding the past. This might call for the normal Horror check for witnessing a disturbing event.

Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to partially see an invisible undead creature. Make a Wisdom (Perception) check to locate the creature as if it were only lightly obscured.

### **Haunted**

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The ghost of a loved one or family member follows you around, seldom leaving your side. You cannot see other spirits and no one else can see your ghost, but you can interact with the ghost as if it were a regular person.

### **Characteristics**

You have likely been thought crazy for seeing and hearing someone who is not there. You have grown used to not being believed and have grown tired of trying to explain who you are talking to. You might have limited social skills from spending too much time talking with the dead, especially if you were isolated due to your perceived insanity. You might seem perpetually distracted, as if listening to multiple people at once or lost in thought.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"I often forget the living, listening only to my spirit."*

Listening to the dead too much is also not healthy: ghosts do not have the same concerns as the living, and their advice cannot always be trusted. Your spirit may not be too concerned for your safety, possibly believing your death will release them or pushing you towards a goal they think will free them.

### **Benefit**

You can consult with your spirit, learning otherwise unknowable knowledge. Pick one skill: History, Investigation, Perception, or Survival. Once you pick a skill you cannot

change it until after you take a long rest. You can spend your inspiration to gain proficiency in that skill for 1 round.

Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to roll a Wisdom (Perception) check when it is not your turn, but doing so uses your reaction.

## Hollow

---

You are lacking a soul. You might have been born without a true soul or lost most of your soul as the result of a near death experience. As you lack a soul you cannot be resurrected by magic, and will not experience an afterlife.

### Characteristics

You are prone to slips of morality ranging from antisocial to sociopathic. You are pragmatic, feeling little guilt for your misdeeds. With potentially no afterlife, you have fewer worries of final punishment but also no reward for a life well-lived. You might have the desire to make your actions count, or you might avoid danger to prolong the only life you have.

### Temptation

Flaw: *"I am not burdened by guilt, shame, or remorse."*

With no worry of long-term consequences, there is the potential to forgo morality and the restrictions of polite society, to live hedonistically and consequence-free.

### Benefit

You can spend your inspiration to make a new Wisdom saving throw against being charmed or stunned. You can do this when it is not your turn by using your reaction. If the effect is related to emotions, you are considered proficient with Wisdom saving throws and add double your proficiency bonus.

## Lunatic

---

Your emotions are tied to the cycle of the moon. You grow increasingly excited and energetic during gibbous moons but become lethargic and depressive during waning moons. This lunacy might plague your bloodline, be the result of some trauma or illness, or have no understandable cause.

## Characteristics

Your emotions are not your own, tied to a force beyond your control. You often feel impotent, not in control of yourself or your own life. You might go to extreme lengths to justify your free will and demonstrate your self-efficacy. You are also plagued by insomnia, leading you to distance yourself from the outside and the light of the moon, moving to windowless rooms lit by lamps and gaslight.

### Temptation

Flaw: *"Not being fully in control, I take little responsibility for my actions."*

It is all too easy to surrender to the tides of emotion, riding them up and down with the moon. This is taking the path of least resistance, no longer fighting to contain your feelings and forfeiting all control of your emotions and letting your impulses and sudden desires drive your actions.

### Benefit

During periods of where the moon is half-full you can spend your inspiration to add your proficiency bonus to your initiative. Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to act in a surprise round.

## Possessed

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You are the victim of fiendish or undead possession. The will of another entity imposes itself on you, pushing you to take actions that are not of your choosing. The other presence cannot yet take full control of your body, and you retain your free will and independence but it is a constant struggle. The entity cannot simply take command during a moment of weakness (such as when you are sleeping or injured): you must surrender control and give into its desires.

### Characteristics

Waging a constant unceasing war for your soul, you are controlled and restrained, allowing yourself few indulgences and luxuries. Pleasures are few and fleeting, and you live an ascetic's life, potentially bordering on monasticism. Because of the voices in your head or foreign urges, you often appear

distracted or conflicted, unable to separate your emotions from those of the entity. You are prone to occasional outbursts or uncharacteristic behaviour as your restraint momentarily slips.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"I cannot allow myself a single moment of weakness."*

You are directly tempted by the entity that shares your mind, as it whispers seductions to you, offering you power, riches, and pleasures of the flesh. At the same time you are constantly denying yourself luxuries common folk take for granted. You wonder if indulging just once would truly hurt.

### **Benefit**

You can confer with your possessing spirit, learning some forbidden knowledge. Pick one skill: Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion. You can spend your inspiration to gain proficiency in that skill for 1 minute. If already proficient, you instead double your proficiency bonus.

Once you pick a skill you cannot change your choice until after you take a long rest.

### **Redheaded**

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Having been touched by the fey, witchcraft, or other magical forces, you possess a minor magical talent. The superstitious believe you are the harbinger of ill-fortune, or made a pact with infernal forces. While not all redheads are touched by otherworldly forces – the majority simply have red hair – all those similarly "blessed" possess vibrant crimson locks.

### **Characteristics**

Being met with suspicion and whispers, you have grown either withdrawn and shy or become defensive and defiant. You may be tired of being accused of witchcraft or evil deeds and grow angry and irate at the suggestion of impropriety. Or you may feel guilty and ashamed of your abilities, hiding them and your hair to the best of your ability. Either way, you seldom feel like you are seen for who you are and few people see you as an individual.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"I see myself as others see me."*

Whether hiding your hair or overreacting to suspicion, there is a desire to define yourself solely by your hair, to let being touched by the otherworldly define who you are. You might decide it is easier to become the corrupt person many believe you to be, and ally with unnatural forces.

### **Benefit**

You can spend your inspiration to gain either the *mage hand* or *thaumaturgy* cantrip for 10 minutes. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this cantrip.

### **Redeemed**

---

After a lengthy inner struggle, you have escaped corruption. Your past misdeeds were so foul as to leave a physical or spiritual stain, which you have finally managed to erase. While you can never regain your innocence or purity of spirit, you are not longer mentally or spiritually tainted.

### **Characteristics**

As you accepted blame for your past deeds, you are honest or responsible. You are not prone to denial or blaming others for your failings. However, you are wary of falling from grace again, overcompensating in your attempts to avoid sin, temptation, or prove your redemption. Because you succeeded where so many others have failed, you might be prideful and prone to egotism.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"I look down on those who lack the strength to redeem themselves."*

Having given into sin once, there is always the possibility you will return to your evil ways. You also experience strong feelings of guilt and remorse for your past, potentially accepting blame for things beyond your control. Similarly, as you redeemed yourself, you might look down upon those unable to do the same, condemning or judging them for their perceived weakness.

### **Benefit**

Having earned redemption once, you are strong willed and refuse to give up or surrender. You can spend your inspiration to add your proficiency bonus to Wisdom saving throws or death saving throws for 1 minute or until you fail a Wisdom or death saving throw, whichever comes first.

### **Reincarnated**

---

Caught in a choice of death and rebirth, this is not your first life and you have returned from the grave into a new body. You only dimly recall the events of your past life in a dream-like haze but occasionally you experience intense memories, feelings, and urges. It is also difficult for you to be resurrected by magic, as your soul is quickly reborn minutes after your death.

### **Characteristics**

You seem more experienced than age would suggest: wise beyond years and possessing esoteric and varied knowledge. You likely appear book smart, having more historical and trivial knowledge rather than current events. You might be thoughtful and quiet, prone to silent reverie and introspection. You are also occasionally forgetful, calling people by the wrong name and referring to events long since past.

### **Temptation**

*Flaw: "I'm more comfortable in days past than the present."*

The weight of ages tugs you to embrace elements of your past lives over the present: old friends might seem more familiar than current companions and old homes more comfortable. You experience an occasional loss of identity and sense of self. Past traumas, especially deaths, make you hesitant to do certain things or go certain places.

### **Benefit**

Tapping into the knowledge of a past life, you can spend your inspiration to be considered proficient in a skill your choice for 1 minute, or a tool of your choice for 1 round.

Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to recall memories from a past life,

## **Designer's Note: Power Creep**

Characters possessing a dark shadow are theoretically more powerful than characters without a dark shadow. While the benefits provided by the option are designed to be roughly equal to inspiration, having more options and choices can potentially make a character more powerful.

The purpose of dark shadows was to allow flavourful options into the game, such as being bitten by a vampire or reincarnated. These options made poor backgrounds, not only because they do not provide skills, but also because they were something that could be gained or removed during play. It seemed strange to have characters lose their background as they shook off the curse of lycanthropy.

Dark shadows are tied to inspiration as that mechanic is left in the hands of the Dungeon Master. If a DM finds a dark shadow is being abused then inspiration awarded to that player can be limited. Similarly, if one or more players opt not to take a dark shadow and feel left out or less powerful, the DM can just award them inspiration more often.

potentially recalling some details of a person you have never met or place you have never been.

### **Second Sight**

---

You have the ability to catch glimpses of the future, through visions, prophetic dreams, reading fortunes, or divining signs. You might rely on tools, such as bones or tarokka cards, or patterns found in tea leaves or chicken entrails.

### **Characteristics**

Seeing events unfold in a nonlinear fashion, you can be erratic or mysterious: prone to non-sequiturs, cryptic statements, or even confusion over cause and effect. You might be distracted or have difficulty focusing on the moment, receiving images or impressions of different times or possible futures. You may also be fatalistic, having little belief in free will.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"I find it difficult to believe my actions have meaning."*

There is the potential to abuse your visions and foreknowledge for personal reasons, selfishly using your gift to gain material comforts. Seeing inevitable future tragedies or failing to alter the future can lead to depression and pessimism, believing that you cannot alter destiny and people have no choice or real freedom.

### **Benefit**

You can take advantage of your foreknowledge to succeed at simple tasks. You can spend your inspiration to treat a d20 roll as an 11.

Alternatively, you can use your gift to gain a brief vision of the future. This vision is cryptic and often veiled in metaphor, but useful when otherwise lacking direction.

## **Shadow Touched**

---

The darkness moves and shifts around you

as shadows move on their own. You have been touched by the plane of shadows and are one with darkness and the night. The shadows around you move with a will of their own, but you can occasionally exert some control, shifting or shaping the darkness.

### **Characteristics**

Having stared into blackness you see things in black and white. This might be a literal colour blindness, which removes all hues from your vision depriving you of the beauty of colour, or metaphorical, as you philosophically view things in absolutes.

### **Temptation**

Flaw: *"Everyone has a darkness inside them."*

As shadows are created by light, it is easy to believe that evil is created by good. You might see sinners and villains everywhere, or the darkness lurking in everyone. It can become hard to even believe in goodness and light.

### **Benefit**

Through sheer will, you can lengthen and darken nearby shadows. You can spend your inspiration to make a creature or object lightly obscured for 1 round.

Alternatively, you can spend your inspiration to shape or sculpt an existing shadow into a simple two-dimensional image. This shadow can be no larger than a medium-sized creature.

# CHAPTER 5: EQUIPMENT

The cliffs of the Balinok Mountains towered above on either side of the narrow Svalich Pass; the guards eyed the road nervously, equally wary of bandits and rockslides. The small hammer struck metal with a light tap, the precise and delicate blow of a true artisan, yet mirrored all along the short avenue: the gunsmiths of Dementlieu were busy today. The gears and fine tools lay in a precise order on the black velvet as the Lamordian clockmaker began the work of repairing the damaged pocket watch.

In much of the Core, technology is more advanced than in other realms and worlds. This has granted easier access to firearms, clockworks, and other wonders of science. Gas lamps are beginning to replace candles in many homes

## Weapons

Light weapons and armour have replaced heavy steel in many lands, with knights on horseback almost anachronistic. Renaissance firearms are available in the Western Core, but are typically only affordable by the wealthy.

### Weapon Properties

Most weapons use the common properties, but craftsmanship in the Mists allows lighter weaponry that is easily hidden.

**Concealed.** You have advantage on checks to hide the weapon from sight.

## Variant: Alternate Materials

The vast majority of weapons are made out of common steel, which is durable and holds an edge. But not all of the horrors of the Mists are susceptible to steel weaponry, and some require more exotic minerals.

### Silver

The alchemical silver of other worlds – which allows silvered weapons to be as effective as steel – is far more rare in the Mists. Most silver weapons are made of silver alloy, and dulls more quickly than steel, threatening to bend or break. Silver weapons weigh 1.5x more than steel weapons.

A silver weapon costs an extra 50 gold pieces due to the value of the weapon and the extra skill required to work with the metal. When you roll a 1 on an attack roll, reduce the size of the weapon's damage die. For example, a d8 becomes a d6. This lasts until you take a long rest. If the damage die would be reduced below 1d4, the weapon breaks.

### Cold Iron

Made from cold worked iron or ore mined from deep within the earth, cold iron negatively affects fey like silver affects lycanthropes. Cold iron is brittle and easily breaks if the user is not careful with their swings.

Because extra effort is required in the

Item	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
<b>Martial Melee Weapon</b>				
Sword Cane	15 gp	1d6 piercing (sword), 1d6 bludgeoning (cane)	2 lbs.	finesse, light, concealed
<b>Martial Ranged Weapon</b>				
Coat pistol	150 gp	1d8 piercing	2 lb.	Ammunition (range 20/60), loading, concealed
<b>Martial Hybrid Weapon</b>				
Pistol-rapier	300 gp	1d8 piercing	5 lb.	Ammunition (range 25/75), loading, finesse

mining and forging processes, a cold iron weapon costs an extra 150 gold pieces. When used against fey this weapon is considered magic in regards to resistance. If you roll a 1 on an attack roll you must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or the weapon becomes damage and you have disadvantage on attack rolls with that weapon until you complete a short rest.

### Gold

While a heavy metal, gold is soft and easily deforms making it unsuitable for weapons. To be effective, gold weapons are made of gold alloys, being only half or three-quarters gold. Gold weapons weigh twice as much as steel weapons.

A gold weapon costs an extra 300 gold pieces, which includes the metal and the extra work required to strengthen the metal. When you roll a 1 on an attack roll, reduce the size of the weapon's damage die. For example, a d8 becomes a d6. This lasts until you take a long rest. If the damage die would be reduced below 1d4, the weapon breaks.

### Stone

Weapons can be made of stone such as flint. While hard and heavy, stone weapons shatter after periods of stress. Most stone weapons weight slightly less than steel weapons, but the size needed to make them effective offsets the lighter material

Stone weapons are cheap to make but require special orders to build, costing half as much to craft but twice as much to buy. If you roll a 1 on an attack roll you must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or the weapon breaks.

### Obsidian

Volcanic glass is brittle but razor sharp, able to hold a sharper edge than steel.

Obsidian weapons are cheap to make but require special orders to build, costing half as much to craft but twice as much to buy. When attacking with an obsidian weapon that deals slashing or piercing damage, once per turn you can reroll a damage roll. You must take the second result, even if it is lower. If you roll a 1 on an attack roll you must succeed on a DC 14

Strength saving throw or the weapon breaks.

### Bone

Bone is a simple building material, but over time bone grows brittle and does not hold and edge for long. Bone weapons weigh half as much as steel weapons.

Bone weapons are cheap to make but require special orders to build, costing half as much to craft or buy. If you roll a 1 or 2 on an attack roll you must succeed on a DC 14 Strength saving throw or the weapon breaks.

### Improvised Weapon

Commoner heroes and angry mobs often have to make do with what is at hand rather than manufactured weapons. The table below provides the equivalent weapon. Characters using worn or crudely made improvised weapons do not apply their proficiency bonus to attack rolls.

Tool	Weapon Equivalent
<b>Axe</b>	Battleaxe
<b>Broken Bottle</b>	Dagger
<b>Crowbar</b>	Mace
<b>Gaff</b>	Pick
<b>Hammer</b>	Light hammer
<b>Hatchet</b>	Handaxe
<b>Hoe</b>	Quarterstaff
<b>Carving Knife</b>	Dagger
<b>Machete</b>	Scimitar
<b>Cleaver</b>	Handaxe
<b>Pitchfork</b>	Trident
<b>Fireplace Poker</b>	Spear
<b>Scalpel</b>	Sickle
<b>Shovel</b>	Quarterstaff
<b>Skillet</b>	Club
<b>Sledgehammer</b>	Warhammer

## Adventuring Gear

Item	Cost	Weight
Clock		
pocketwatch	300 gp	-
Mantle	250 gp	5 lb.
grandfather clock	200 gp	80 lb.
Compass	15 gp	1 lb.
Phonograph	100 gp	10 lb.
wax canister	10 gp	-
Plague Mask	10 gp	1 lb.
Syringe	10 gp	-
Straightjacket	20 gp	5 lb.
Tarokka Deck	50 gp	1 lb.

**Clock.** Clockwork timepieces keep accurate time so long as they are wound or maintained. The smaller the clockwork the more delicate work required to manufacture the clock.

**Compass.** A compass unerringly points north, granting advantage on all Wisdom checks related to navigation.

**Phonograph.** A device used for recording sounds on metal cylinders coated with wax, and then replaying recordings through a large horn.

**Plague Mask.** A leather hood with a long, conical nose resembling a beak. The nose is stuffed with aromatic herbs designed to shield the wearer from contaminated vapors. While wearing the mask you have advantage on saving throws to against airborne diseases or effects caused by foul odours. The herbs dry out after 1 day and need to be replaced at a cost of 15 gp.

**Syringe.** A sturdy medical syringe can deliver a potion or poison. Using a syringe requires an attack roll and can be done in place of an attack.

**Straightjacket.** These canvas restraints can bind a Small or Medium creature. Escaping a straitjacket requires a successful DC 20 Dexterity check. Tearing them requires a successful DC 25 Strength check.

**Tarokka Deck.** A simple deck of fortune-telling cards kept in a velvet lined box. While magical variants exist, most decks are mundane.

## Tools

Item	Cost	Weight
<i>Artisan's tools</i>		
clockworking tools	50 gp	10 lb.
gunsmithing	30 gp	7 lb.
<i>Vehicle</i>		
Vardo, simple	60 gp	600 lb.
Vardo, ornate	120 gp	650 lb.

## Trinkets

d100	Trinket
1-2	An ebony walking stick with a silver head monogrammed "J.F."
3-4	A pickled human head in a jar.
5-6	A cameo necklace with an ancestor's portrait inside.
7-8	Thirteen glass teardrops in a velvet lined box.
9-10	A black leather-bound book written in an unknown language.
11-12	A dagger with a blood stain that won't wash off.
13	A well-read copy of a Van Richten Guide with personal annotations.
14-15	An obsidian glass eye.
16-17	Half of a map of the Ste. Ronges sewer system
18-19	A long silk handkerchief embroidered with the name "Collins".
20-21	A rosary whose wooden beads have been worn smooth with use.
22-23	A straight razor with a pearl handle.
24-25	Blueprints of an unknown manor house in the Mordentish style.
27-26	A small velvet bag of fortune-telling bones.
27-29	A silver coin minted in an unknown land.
30-31	An elaborately carved goat's skull candle holder.
32-33	Ruby and silver cufflinks.
34-35	A broadsheet newspaper with next year's date.
36-37	A wax phonograph cylinder
38-39	A tin snuff box.
40-41	The desiccated body of a bat.



<b>42-43</b>	A mummified humanoid hand.	<b>74-75</b>	A silk top hat that's just a little too large for you.
<b>44-45</b>	An ivory game piece shaped like a queen.	<b>76-77</b>	A cipher for cracking an unknown code.
<b>46-47</b>	A pocket watch with thirteen hours that manages to tell the correct time.	<b>78-79</b>	Fragments of a gold-covered drinking horn.
<b>48-49</b>	Small stone statue of a horse.	<b>80-81</b>	A porcelain doll resembling a family member.
<b>50-51</b>	A puzzle box you have been unable to solve.	<b>82-83</b>	A sealed glass vial of blood.
<b>52-53</b>	A compass that doesn't point north.	<b>84-85</b>	A bottle of Borcan wine without a label.
<b>54-55</b>	A water damaged autobiography.	<b>86-87</b>	Three polished black stones in a silk pouch.
<b>56-57</b>	Gold rimmed spectacles with a thin golden chain.	<b>88-89</b>	A package of spices from across the sea.
<b>58-59</b>	A jade pendant that always feels warm to the touch.	<b>90-91</b>	Six red candles with blackened wicks.
<b>60-61</b>	Sheet music for an unfinished opera.	<b>92-93</b>	A human finger bone on a leather cord.
<b>62-63</b>	A key to an unknown lock with a bow shaped like a cat's eye.	<b>94-95</b>	A black lace mourning veil.
<b>64-65</b>	A small lockbox shaped like a coffin.	<b>96-97</b>	A hip flask engraved with the phrase "patience".
<b>66-67</b>	A braided lock of black hair.	<b>98-99</b>	A used and slightly deformed silver bullet.
<b>68-69</b>	The fang of an unknown animal.	<b>100</b>	A black rose that never wilts.
<b>70-71</b>	A single masterfully painted tarokka card.		
<b>72-73</b>	A chapbook almanac of the Core.		

## CHAPTER 6: FAITHS

The gods of the Mists are silent. They might answer prayers but never commune with their followers, although some followers would argue otherwise and insist that the gods are simply more subtle in their advice. Followers of the divine argue their existence can be seen in the wonders of nature and the existence of man, not their physical presence.

Skeptics and atheists believe there are no gods, while the faithful maintain that the rare clerical magics prove the existence of the divine. Doubters argue that clerical magic might be another form of arcane magic and point to examples of fallen clerics not being chastised for blasphemy through the loss of spellcasting.

### Belenus

A god of the sun and fire, Belenus is the deity of three unrelated lands: Tepest, Forlorn, and the Shadowlands.

**Titles:** The Master of Fire

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Suggested Domain:** Light

Followers of Belenus claim that he bestows the life-giving light of the sun on those who please him and withholds it from those who earn his wrath.

In Nidala, the civilized heart of the Shadowlands, the worship of Belenus is organized and takes place in a huge and glorious cathedral. Only women can join the priesthood, and must take vows of chastity. Men serve the church of the one true god as enforcers or guardians. Other religions are ruthlessly persecuted, as are transgressions against Belenus.

In Tepest, the veneration of Belenus is a folk religion, incorporating many local traditions, habits, superstitions, and legends. The faith is mingled with tales of shadow fey, ravenous goblins, and horrible witches.

Once limited to village priests tending their small congregations, this changed after

the Great Upheaval when the neighbouring lands of Markovia and G'Henna were seemingly destroyed. Believing fey and black magic was responsible, a priest of Belenus, Wyan, organized an inquisition to fight back.

In Forlorn, Belenus is worshipped as part of a larger pantheon of deities by reclusive human druids.

### Eternal Order

The state religion of Darkon, it does not revere a single deity but instead wards off the end of the world.

**Alignment:** Neutral Evil

**Suggested Domains:** Death, Knowledge

Darkonian tradition holds that the land once belonged to the unliving. The living stole the world, banishing the spirits to the Grey Realm. It is prophesied that one day, the Hour of Ascension will come and the vengeful dead will rise and return to reclaim what is rightfully theirs.

The Eternal Order performs countless rituals intended to appease the dead and continually postpone the Hour of Ascension. It liberally borrows rites and tenants from other religions, especially those related to death or undeath.

The Requiem, the horrifying event which killed every living inhabitant of Il Aluk, was seen by some as the beginning of the Hour of Ascension. The clergy placed the blame for the tragedy on the Darkonian people and their weak faith. This has fragmented the populace, with some renewing their faith and dedication to the Order while many others abandoned the religion.

### Ezra

Once a mortal, Ezra returned as a god and protector.

**Titles:** Maiden of the Mist, Our Guardian in the Mists

**Alignment:** Lawful Neutral

**Suggested Domains:** Life, War

The most widespread religion in the Mists, this is practiced in most of the Western and Northern Core, and missionaries have brought the faith to distant lands such as Souragne. The worship of Ezra is centered in Borca where it is known as the Home Faith.

Ezra is commonly depicted as a tall, slender woman in flowing, white robe, with raven hair that contrasts sharply with her pale skin. Revered as both protector and healer, she is usually depicted holding an alabaster kite shield and a slender sword of similar construction. The shield is often adorned with a sprig of wolfsbane in recognition of her role as a healer.

The Church of Ezra has no fewer than four distinct sects, each with their own objectives and methods, although they all recognize the authority of the central church.

According to most traditions in the Church, Ezra was a virtuous woman who, despairing of the evils in the world, surrendered her mortality to the Mists to become an eternal guardian of mankind.

## Hala

A secretive and mystical faith, followers of Hala are often accused of being witches or hags.

**Titles:** The Witch of the Weave, Last of the Nine

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Suggested Domains:** Arcana, Nature, Tempest

Worshippers of Hala commonly operate out of hospices, where they offer healing to anyone who comes to their door. The church does not actively seek new followers. While they can be found in every land, nowhere is the faith the predominant religion.

According to the holy text of Hala, *Tales of the Ages*, nine deities created the world from roiling mists of Chaos. The deities then withdrew, allowing mortals free reign. But the mortals lacked wisdom and the world soon filled with pain and anguish, so one of the Nine, Hala, returned to ease suffering in

the world. She gathered together thirteen women and thirteen men and taught them secrets of the Weave, a form of magic. Followers that identify as male tap into elemental forces, typically becoming sorcerers, while the feminine are clerics or druids.

The witches of Hala are frequently persecuted. The Weave is not inherently evil, though its use is rife with occult dangers. Exposure to the Weave or witches of Hala is rumoured to create caliban, foul milk, ruin crops, and worse. According to superstition, followers of Hala that lose control of their magic are transformed into monstrous hags.

## Lawgiver

The state religion of Hazlan and Nova Vaasa, it rewards blind obedience.

**Titles:** The Iron Tyrant, the Black Lord

**Alignment:** Lawful Evil

**Suggested Domain:** War

Clerics of the Lawgiver claim that the revelation of His true name would strike a mortal dead. His religion asserts the divine providence of rulers: those born into wealth and power deserve to rule, those born into poverty deserve only what is earned through dutiful service to their betters.

The church enforces stratification. Clergy drawn from different social classes do not mix and marriage between different ethnicities and races are forbidden.

## Morninglord

The god of the rosy dawn that ends even the darkest of nights.

**Titles:** The Bringer of Dawn

**Alignment:** Chaotic Good

**Suggested Domains:** Light, Life

The Cult of the Morninglord asks little of its followers, save that they treat each other with kindness and retain hope in their hearts. This is a humble faith whose simple teachings conceal a message of intense hope: no matter how bleak the future may seem, no matter how dark the night, dawn will come.

The Morninglord's clergy is small,

focused in Barovia. However, the faith has spread with traders and but its cultists can be found across the Core. It tends to attract a following among the downtrodden, who have little to offer but kindness and hope.

The Morninglord is usually depicted as a luminous sylvan humanoid with blonde hair and golden skin. In the oldest images of the god, his face is smeared with blood. The cult teaches that this is because even the greatest good can hold some stain of evil, and that even the most depraved evil may yet contain a spark of good.

## Wolf God

Beast-god of the night worshiped in primordial forests.

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Suggested Domains:** Nature, Trickery

In the misted woods of the southwestern Core demonic wolves that walk like men praise a savage and predatory being known only as the Wolf god. They worship their patron with frenzied rites of blood and carnal acts under the light of a full moon.

Followers of the Wolf God hold that wolves are divine beings. All other predatory

creatures are abominations, pathetic rivals to be slain or a herd to be thinned.

## Zhakata

The beast-deity of G'henna that demands continual sacrifice.

**Titles:** The Devourer and the Provider

**Alignment:** Lawful Evil

**Suggested Domains:** Light, War

Depicted as a monstrous creature squatting atop a pile of bones, Zhakata is appeased not worshipped. Believed to appear to his followers in two forms – the Devourer and the Provider – the people of G'henna have only experienced the former. They starve themselves to offer their sacrifices of food in the hopes of one day earning the era of plenty.

There is no separation between church and state in G'henna and the word of the priests is law. All foodstuff is delivered to the church so Zhakata's portion can be taken and the remainder divided among the populace. In the poor land, buying or selling food is a religious offence and obesity is sacrilege.

## CHAPTER 7: TREASURE

The tip of the short spear was crimson, stained by the blood of countless victims and still hungry for more. The simple ring is carved from a single piece of obsidian, curiously red in hue; when touched there is the slightest tingle of static electricity. Masterfully crafted in gold and silver, this triangular amulet is marked with iconography of Osiris, Horus, and Anubis.

### Types of Treasure

Most of the standard forms of wealth exist in the Mists.

**Coins.** With the many travellers that pass into the Mists from foreign lands, coinage from any kingdom is generally accepted without question. Most merchants have scales and other tools to test the value of unfamiliar coins. Some more xenophobic lands (Falkovnia) are more reserved regarding foreign currency and settlements on the borders have moneychangers.

**Gems.** With most communities being isolated and self-sufficient, gems are harder to trade; few farms need to trade the wealth contained in a gemstone and seldom have the coinage needed exchange for a gem.

**Art Objects.** As you cannot eat a painting, most art objects are only as valuable as their material. In larger cities there might be a demand for art, and some lands pay highly for pieces of beauty.

**Magic Items.** Spellcasters are rare in the Land of the Mists, but magic items are not unknown. Items have an unnerving tendency of becoming magic, especially those involved in acts of evil or left in places stained by darkness.

### Awarding Treasure

Treasure is less important in the Mists. Fewer adventures are entirely motivated by the acquisition of wealth. Adventurers driven by greed often find themselves consumed by this sin. But treasure still exists and will eventually be discovered, whether in the lair

of a vampire or scattered among the remains of a werewolf's meals.

### Magic Items

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In the Mists, permanent magic items should be awarded deliberately and seldom handed out randomly.

All magic items should have some history – even if it is just implied. This past might include the origin of the magical item or the deeds of its past owners. Magic items might be created spontaneously: the essence of the land seems to seep into items, giving them minor enhancements and subtle properties. Many magic items are relics of some sort, items that were employed by people of great destiny or even mundane items that were at the site of a momentous event and then used in the creation of a magic item. Fragments from a stake used to burn a witch might become a *wand of fireballs* and the finger bones of an anchorite of Ezra who died while tending to her congregation during a plague might become a *periapt of health*. In the latter example, the magic item is not just a *periapt of health* but "the knucklebone of Sister Anne-Marie".

The majority of permanent magic items should have a quirk or minor property. These should be atmospheric and tie into the nature of the magic item. As fewer magic items are created, most do not look magical or wondrous, appearing as more mundane items. Many folk discover a magical item and have no idea the treasure they hold, considering it another battered sword or tarnished ring; magic items that appear magical are often the most dangerous and are frequently cursed.

### Reducing Magic Items

If randomly rolling on a treasure table there are a couple methods to reduce the number of permanent magic items in the campaign.

**Different Dice.** When determining treasure for a hoard, instead of rolling a d100,

you can instead roll a d10 and a d8 with the d10 being the "ones" and the d8 being the "10s". This produces results from 10-89. This increases the chances of getting a magic item but removes upper end of the table.

**Static Subtraction.** When determining treasure for a hoard, roll 1d100 - 10.

**Random Subtraction.** When determining treasure for a hoard, roll 1d100 - 3d6.

## New Magic Items

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### Animated Portrait

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

An unremarkable piece of art that appearing to be painted by someone of average skill, this painting always features at least one person. While touching the painting you can cast *alarm* as an action, warding the room where the painting is hung. When the *alarm* is triggered you can speak the name of the painting to see through the eyes in the portrait. You can observe for as long as you concentrate, up to 1 hour. While watching through the painting, the eyes in the painting move and mimic your eyes. While seeing through the painting you cannot see what is happening around your body and you are considered blinded.

### Avenger's Sword

*Weapon (any sword), rare (requires attunement)*

This worn sword looks deceptively plain, with no special adornment. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. This sword has 3 charges. As an action you can spend a charge to cast *locate creature*, detecting a creature that took hit point damage from the sword in the past day. The sword can only track one creature at a time. The sword regains 1 charge at dawn.

### Ba'al Vaerzi Dagger

*Weapon (dagger), rare, (requires attunement by a rogue or monk of evil alignment)*

This grim dagger cannot be sheathed until it has tasted blood. Its leather sheath is made from the skin of the assassin's first victim. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls

made with this weapon. When you hit an incapacitated creature with this weapon the target must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking an extra 2d8 piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much on a success.

### Baron's Arm

*Weapon (mace), uncommon*

This exotic flail is fashioned in the shape of an armoured gauntlet. A short barbed whip is attached to the hilt. Barons arms are exclusively wielded by the Black Leopards of Valachan. You gain a +1 bonus to attacks and damage rolls with this weapon. Both the mace and scourge ends cause terrible scarring wounds; when you score a critical hit the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be scarred. While scarred, the target has disadvantage on all Charisma checks. Each time the target takes a long rest they can repeat the saving throw, healing the scars on a success. Magic such as *greater restoration* can also remove the scars.

### Blood Coin

*Wondrous Item, legendary*

Resembling a common silver piece there is the faintest red smudge on one side that cannot be wiped off. The coin always appears minted in the expected nation, such as the current land or your homeland. The coin allows you to cheat or swindle with ease, making any deal you propose seem reasonable. This effect is noticeable, and you innately know it is the coin's influence.

Creatures that you try to do business with are considered to be charmed and utterly convinced your proposals seem reasonable, the terms of any agreement you suggest seem fair and equitable. The creature is under no compulsion to accept the trade, and can still refuse to sell items of personal value or immediate need.

**Curse.** Until the curse is activated the coin can be given or thrown away. However, the coin refuses to be used in a purchase unless it is the last coin in your possession, magically returning to your purse. Once you have used the coin to cheat someone the curse activates, the coin becomes attuned, and cannot be given, lost, or spent. The coin reappears in

your possession within moments.

The coin causes you to weep tears of blood. The blood is mundane and causes no damage but is visible, staining everything it touches. You weep blood for 1 minute for every silver piece swindled. For example, if you use the coin to cheat someone out of 150 gp you cry blood for a little over a day. A *remove curse* spell does not remove the coin's curse but pauses the weeping for 1 day.

To be rid of the coin, you must give away all your possessions (save the clothes on your back and the coin) and live as a beggar for a year and a day. At the end of the year you can give away the coin: nothing can be bought with the coin and it cannot be thrown away, it must be freely given.

### Candle of Nightmares

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

This midnight blue candle has a long, slender wick that barely seems touched by flame. While lit this candle sheds half the normal light and is not consumed by its flame, burning for 8 hours or until extinguished. When you light this candle you whisper the full name of the target. That night the target experiences vivid nightmares and must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be unable to benefit from their long rest. Once lit this candle cannot be used again for 1 week.

### Carrion Blade

*Weapon (guisarme), rare*

The blade of this guisarme is serrated like a sawblade. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. When you score a critical hit against a living creature, the blade tries to burrow into the flesh of the target, allowing you to use a bonus action attempt to grapple the target. If you start your turn with a creature grappled with the weapon, as an action you can automatically deal damage as if you had hit the target with an attack.

### Cat of Felkovic

*Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)*

This item seems like a *figurine of*

*wondrous power*. When you throw the figurine to a point on the ground within 60 feet of you as an action, the figurine becomes a living cat using the statistics of a panther. If the space where the cat would appear is occupied by other creatures or objects, or if there isn't enough space for the cat, the figurine doesn't become a cat.

The cat is friendly to you and your companions. It can become a house cat for up to three hours every day. The cat has an intelligence of 5, understands Vaasi, and obeys your spoken commands. If you issue no commands, the creature defends itself but takes no other actions. If the cat is recalled while feeding the kill becomes part of the

### Giant Cat

*Huge beast, unaligned (neutral evil)*

**Armor Class** 14 (natural armour)

**Hit Points** 104 (9d12 +18)

**Speed** 50 ft.

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**Str** 20(+5) **Dex** 15 (+3) **Con** 15 (+2)

**Int** 5 (-3) **Wis** 12 (+1) **Cha** 8 (-1)

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**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +7 **Senses**  
passive Perception 13

**Languages** Vaasi

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

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#### TRAITS

**Keen Smell.** The giant cat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

**Pounce.** If the giant cat moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the giant cat can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

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#### ACTIONS

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 piercing (1d12+5) damage.

**Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 slashing (2d8+5) damage.

figurine, vanishing when unobserved.

Each day the cat is not fed it animates on its own during the night and hunts for food. While animated by hunger the owner has no control over the cat. During this period the cat is immune to nonmagic weapons and has advantage on all saving throws against spells. On the first nights, the figurine appears as a tiny house cat and hunts small prey such as mice. Each subsequent night the cat awakens as a progressively larger and fiercer cat, hunting prey of an appropriate size. When the cat has eaten its fill, it returns to where it animated and reverts to figurine form.

<b>Statblock</b>	<b>Days w/o Feeding</b>	<b>Meat Required</b>
<b>Cat</b>	1	1 lb.
<b>Jackal</b>	2	20 lb.
<b>Panther</b>	3	30lb.
<b>Lion</b>	4	40 lb.
<b>Saber Toothed Tiger</b>	5	50 lb.
<b>Giant Cat</b>	6	60 lb.

### **Crimson Zombie Ring**

*Ring, rare*

When you place this ring on the hand of the corpse of a humanoid creature, after 10 minutes the ring animates the corpse as a zombie. As the zombie is being animated its skin dries and crumbles away revealing the creature's musculature. The zombie is not under your control and attacks the first living creature it sees. Once the ring has animated a zombie it ceases to have any magical power.

### **Death Shades**

*Wondrous item, rare*

These dark spectacles are rimmed in thin bone. You can don these glasses as an action, and while wearing them you see the world in shades of black and white. Living things appear brighter, almost being slightly luminescent while dead creatures and nonliving objects are black. Creatures with full hit points are vibrant, slowly dimming as they become injured. You can look at a creature and instantly tell if they are at full health, have

three-quarters of their hit points, or are below half. However, while wearing the spectacles you have disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks.

### **Dreamcatcher**

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

This circle of intertwined twigs, strings, beads and feathers is created by the Abber nomads of the nightmare lands to protect themselves from mental control and the influence of dark dreams. The *dreamcatcher* starts with 5 charges. When you hang this item you can spend a charge to create a 10-foot-radius sphere that protects all creatures in the area from being charmed, frightened or possessed by elementals or fiends, functioning similar to a *magic circle*. The dreamcatcher also protects you from effects relating to dreams and nightmares, such as the *dream* spell or haunting power of night hags.

### **Edge of the Kargat**

*Weapon (dagger), very rare (requires attunement by a creature of non-good alignment)*

Also known as Azalin Daggers, these weapons were created for elite agents of Azalin Rex's secret police. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. When you deal hit point damage to an uninjured creature, you can use a bonus action to become invisible until the end of your next turn.

### **Fog Juice**

*Potion, uncommon*

When you pour out this jug a swampy fog fills a 40-foot-radius sphere, spreading around corners. The area is heavily obscured for 1 hour or until a wind of moderate or greater speed (at least 10 miles/hour) disperses it.

### **Fraternal Ring**

*Ring, uncommon, (requires attunement by a spellcaster)*

This silver ring is shaped as two intertwined asps holding a black onyx in their mouths. These rings were created for the Fraternity of Shadows, serving as a symbol of



membership. While wearing this ring you can cast the spell *darkness* once per day. You don't need to concentrate on the spell but duration is only 1 minute.

### **Grave Robber's Shovel**

*Wondrous item, rare*

The shaft of this shovel is black and the blade a dark grey steel. The cutting edge of the shovel's blade is pointed, designed for cutting into soil. You can dig incredibly fast with this shovel, creating a 15-foot-square hole in 1 minute. You can only use the shovel for moving earth, sand, and gravel. Tunnels created with the shovel collapse.

### **Greatsword of Purity**

*Weapon (greatsword), legendary (requires attunement by a creature that has never gained a level of corruption)*

The blade of this weapon seems to be made of a slightly translucent metal. One such sword is known to be owned by the mistress of the Carnival.

When drawn the weapon sheds silvery dim light in 10' radius. You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. When you hit a creature with at least 1 level of corruption or an undead, fiend, or aberration that creature takes an extra 2d6 points of radiant damage.

### **Heartseeker Spear**

*Weapon (any spear), very rare*

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. When you hit an undead with this magic weapon, that creature takes an extra 2d6 piercing damage. If the target is a vampire with 50 hit points or fewer after taking this damage, it must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or it is stated through the heart. If the attack was a critical hit the vampire has disadvantage on the saving throw.

### **Mirror of Reflecting**

*Ring, very rare*

Reflections in this mirror shows true appearance of its subjects. The mirror doesn't reflect illusions and invisible creatures can be seen in the mirror. The does not reveal the existence of any magical effects, nor details

relating to creature type. For example, vampires appear normally in the mirror.

### **Orb of Augmentation**

*Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement)*

This orb was created by sealing the still-living brain of an arcane spellcaster inside a crystal orb. The orb can be used as a spellcasting focus. The orb has 4 charges and regains 1d4 charges at dawn. If you are a spellcaster holding the orb, you can convert a charge into spell slots to cast spells you have prepared or know. You can create spell slots only of a level equal to or lower than your own spell slots, up to a maximum of 5th level. You use the charges in place of your slots, but otherwise cast the spell as normal. For example, you can use 3 charges to cast a 1st level spell as a 4th level spell.

### **Ring of Reversion**

*Ring, very rare (requires attunement by a cleric)*

This ring is a blood red garnet set onto a simple iron band inscribed with ancient runes. You can force a shapechanged creature to revert to its true form or exorcise a soul possessing a body. As an action you touch a creature that is polymorphed, shapechanged, Wild Shaped, or otherwise not in its natural form. The creature must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or return to their true form. If the creature touched is possessing a body that is not its own it must make on a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or the possessing soul is forced from the body. Once the ring has been used, it cannot be used again until dawn the following day.

### **Sacrificial Dagger**

*Weapon (dagger), very rare (requires attunement)*

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this weapon. When you attack an incapacitated creature with fewer than 50 hit points they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be slain instantly. As an action you can choose to animate the slain creature as a zombie that is permanently under your control. Once a

zombie has been created, this power can't be used again until the next sunset.

### **Scroll of Escape**

*Scroll, legendary*

Reading this scroll takes 10 minutes. If you are interrupted you must begin again. Once you have finished reading the scroll it bursts into flame. Embers and sparks drift up from the scroll, burning a hole in the fabric of reality the size of a door. The portal remains open for 5 minutes before closing. The exact location the portal leads to is seemingly random.

### **Soul Searcher Medallion**

*Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)*

This smoky glove is suspended on a fine, silver chain. This medallion is rumoured to be able to bend the laws of the land and reveal the true nature of people. To use this amulet you must hold it in both hands and focus on a creature or object within 60-feet. The medallion shows the truth as a *true seeing* spell, also revealing the target's alignment, level of corruption, and any spells or curses affecting them. A soul seeker medallion is extremely fragile, and a single hit point of damage will cause it to shatter.

### **Sphere of Night**

*Wondrous item, rare*

This glass sphere holds a viscous black fluid. The sphere is fragile, and easily breaks when it strikes a hard surface. If thrown the sphere has a normal range of 20 feet and a long range of 60 feet. When you break the glass a magical darkness spills out, filling a 30-foot radius sphere. The darkness spreads around corners. A creature with darkvision can't see in this darkness, and nonmagical illumination does not function. If any of the darkness overlaps with light created by a spell of 2nd level or lower, the spell that created the light is dispelled.

### **Sword of Arak**

*Weapon (longsword), legendary (requires attunement)*

The ivory hilt of this sword is carved to resemble a wailing banshee, and the blade is

slender, seemingly forged from black mithril. You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this sword. While using the *sword of arak* you have darkvision out to a range of 90 feet. When you score a critical hit against a creature that has fewer than 50 hit points, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be slain

**Curse.** Once per day you must help kill a living creature of at least Small size with the sword. Each day the sword's thirst is not quenched you must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On a failure you have disadvantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma checks but gains advantage on Strength and Dexterity checks. You also become possessive of the blade, not wishing to let it out of your sight. If the weapon is taken you will do almost anything to recover it.

### **Talon Armour**

*Armour (heavy), uncommon*

Specially crafted for the Talons of Vlad Drakov, the armour is stylized to resemble fiendish birds of prey. While you're wearing it you have advantage on Charisma (Intimidate) checks against humanoids.

### **Talon Bracer**

*Wondrous item, uncommon*

Worn by the Talons of Falkovnia, these bracers are welded shut upon the soldier's initiation. To be removed they have to be cut off. While wearing these braces you have advantage on saving throws against the charmed and frightened conditions.

**Curse.** As long as you wear these bracers you are utterly loyal to Vlad Drakov and must succeed at a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw to disobey an order from Drakov or betray Falkovnia.

### **The Wishing Imp**

*Wondrous item, legendary (requires attunement)*

This 1-foot-tall black stone statue is carved in the shape of a cherub with batlike wings, small horns, and a barbed tail. Despite its appearance, the wishing imp is an intelligent and malevolent creature. The imp bonds with its owner, offering wishes. However, the imp

## Wishing Imp

*Tiny construct (devil, shapechanger), chaotic evil*

**Armor Class** 13

**Hit Points** 14 (4d4 + 4)

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 30 ft.

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**Str** 6 (-2) **Dex** 17 (+3) **Con** 13 (+1)

**Int** 12 (+1) **Wis** 17 (+3) **Cha** 16 (+3)

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**Skills** Deception +5, Insight +6, Persuasion +5  
Damage Resistances cold

**Damage Immunities** fire, poison;  
bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from  
nonmagical weapons that aren't stone

**Condition Immunities** exhaustion,  
paralyzed, poisoned, petrified

**Senses** darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 13

**Languages** telepathy 60 ft.

**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

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### TRAITS

**Fiendish Sight.** Magical darkness doesn't  
impede the wishing imp's darkvision.

**Magic Resistance.** The imp has advantage on  
saving throws against spells and other magical  
effects.

**Statuesque.** While the wishing imp remains  
motionless, it is indistinguishable from a small  
inanimate statue.

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### ACTIONS

**Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5  
ft., one target. *Hit:* 6(1d6 + 3) piercing  
damage, and the target must make on a DC 13  
Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (3d4)  
poison damage on a failed save, or half as  
much damage on a successful one.

**Invisibility.** The wishing imp turns invisible  
until it attacks or until its concentration ends  
(as if concentrating on a spell).

**Wishes.** The wishing imp can cast the *wish*  
spell once per day. The imp cannot cast this on  
their own, and requires their owner to explicitly  
make a wish, and the owner must state their  
wish while within 60-feet of the wishing imp.

always tries to test and distort the result of the  
wish, regardless of the wording. The imp  
always reminds it's owner that the harm cause  
by a wish can be fixed by the next day's wish.

**Curse.** Once you gave attuned to the

wishing imp and it has taken you as its  
master you can only get rid of the imp by  
giving or selling it to another creature. The  
full truth of the imp must be explained prior  
and the creature must willingly accept the  
imp. If you try to get rid of the imp by other  
means it always reappears among your  
belongings. Death is the only other release.

### Wolf's Head Amulet, Silver

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This amulet bear an image of a wild beast  
wrapped in chains. While wearing this  
amulet you cannot use cannot use a  
shapechanger trait gained from lycanthropy,  
and if infected with the curse of lycanthropy  
you do not change shape during a full moon.

### Wolf's Head Amulet, Ivory

*Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)*

This amulet bear an image of a wild beast  
wrapped in chains. Attuning to the amulet  
curses you until you are targeted by the  
*remove curse* spell or similar magic:  
removing the amulet fails to end the curse.  
While cursed you become a were beast  
during periods of the full moon, as if you  
were infected with the curse of lycanthropy.

### Wolfspaw

*Wondrous Item, common*

This simple peasant's charm is the paw of  
a wolf stuffed with wolfsbane and hanging  
from a leather thong. Wolves, wild dogs, and  
other canines must make a DC 15 Wisdom  
saving throw to move closer than 10 feet  
from you. Supernatural canines such as  
werewolves and vampires in the form of a  
wolf have advantage on the saving throw. A  
wolfspaw dries out quickly and ceases to  
function after 7 days.

### Zombie Blood

*Potion, rare*

This potion looks putrid and foul but is  
actually odourless and tasteless. When you  
mix the potion with a beverage you stir it  
with a finger. The creature who drinks the  
potion must succeed at a DC 16 Wisdom  
saving throw or becomes charmed by you for 1  
day. While the creature is charmed, the  
creature is effectively a living zombie under

your control. If forced into combat, the creature uses the zombie statblock. The creature obeys your commands to the best of its abilities, but is limited to simple actions with no more than two or three steps. If the creature completes its task and doesn't receive further instructions, it defends itself to the best of its ability and is allowed to make a new saving throw against the effect at the end of its turn.

## Artifacts

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### Apparatus of the Alchemist

*Wondrous Item, artifact*

This glass and magic device is 30-foot-tall and 20-foot-wide at its base. The central glass globe is 15-foot-tall glass and topped by a network of cold iron rings. The globe rests upon a tripod of wood and steel that elevates it 15-feet from the ground. Inside the globe is a spinning ball of sulphur. Two smaller spherical glass chambers are suspended below the large central globe, connected to the central globe with a curving steel tube. These two smaller globes are 5-foot-tall, with a trapdoor in the bottom permitting a Medium sized or smaller creature access to the inside of the glass chamber. The twin globes are linked by a thin hourglass-like neck. A series of smaller glass spheres ring the base of the tripod, linked together by thin glass tubes. A series of wires and plates connects the circle of spheres to the two human-sized glass chambers.

The *Apparatus of the Alchemist* requires lightning to charge itself. Electricity is focused through the metal rings into the central globe where it is converted into magical force. For every 15 points of lightning damage the *Apparatus* absorbs it gains a charge. The *Apparatus* can hold a maximum of 15 charges, but the energy of charges fade over time and it loses 1 charge every 10 minutes.

**Transpossession.** You can use the *Apparatus* to swap your mind with that of another creature. The target creature must occupy one of the glass chambers while you stand in the other. When the *Apparatus* is activated it consumes 10 charges and you and the other creature fall unconscious for 1d4 x

10 minutes. Your game statistics are replaced by the statistics of the creature, though you retain your alignment and your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. You retain the benefit of your own class features. If the target has any class levels, you can't use any of its class features.

**Division.** You can split a creature into two using the *Apparatus*, dividing it based on its personality. Activating the *Apparatus* consumes 12 charges and requires a *rod of Rastinon*. The target creature must occupy one of the glass chambers. A moment later and exact physical duplicate of the creature appears in the unoccupied chamber. Both typically have identical game statistics but have different alignments and personalities. Both have the same bond and ideas, but approach these differently; each has one of the original's personality traits but only one has the original's flaw.

A creature divided by the *Apparatus* commonly separates based on alignment, splitting into a good half and an evil half or a lawful half and chaotic half. Other variations are possible just as a multiclass character splitting along class lines, a werewolf becoming a wolf and a human, a half-elf becoming an elf and a human, etc.

**Fusion.** The *Apparatus* can rejoin a creature it has divided, restoring it to what it was. Activating the *Apparatus* consumes 10 charges and requires a *rod of Rastinon*. The target creatures must be in opposite chambers. A moment after activation, the creatures are rejoined and only a single creature remains. The creature uses their original game statistics and remembers everything done and experienced by both. Any negative effects and conditions that affected one, such as poison, now affect the combined creature. If experience was gained while divided, the rejoined creature uses the higher total.

It is theoretically possible to fuse two normal subjects into a unique whole. This aggregate being uses the higher level of the two and the highest of each of its Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity ability scores. The new body might retaining a combination of all

all racial traits, or some unique combination. The minds of the two creatures might be merged into a single entity, in which case the creature possesses the higher of the Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma ability scores. Alternatively, the souls might be independent, with a dominant mind controlling the body. In this situation the two minds retain their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, and engage in a contest of wills for control of the body, making opposed Wisdom checks to assume control.

### **Apparatus, Rod of Rastinon**

*Rod, rare*

A crystal shaft 2-feet-long and half-an-inch in diameter. Silver sparks flicker and quietly crackle inside the rod. This transforming crystal is the key to using some of the features of the *Apparatus of the Alchemist*. No other use has been discovered.

### **Fang of the Nosferatu**

*Weapon (dagger), artifact (requires attunement)*

Flowing symbols are etched along the blade of this dagger, the grooves filled with ruby dust giving the appearance of being written in blood. A ruby is mounted in the pommel and the hilt is wrapped in unusual leather, thought to be the hide of some unnatural aberration. You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls with this dagger. It has the following additional properties.

**Blood Drinker.** When you deal damage to a living creature with this dagger you regain 1d4 hit points. The fang grows thirsty if it doesn't drink blood. Each point of damage it inflicts satisfies its thirst for 1 day, but it cannot remain satiated for longer than 7 days. Animal blood can delay this hunger but once each month the *fang of the nosferatu* must kill a sentient creature with an Intelligence score of 7 or higher.

**Vampiric Shapechanging.** As an action you can polymorph into a Tiny bat or a Medium wolf, or back into your true form. Your statistics, other than size and speed, are unchanged. While in bat form, you can't speak, your walking speed is 5 feet, and you

have a flying speed of 30 feet. While in wolf form, you can't speak, your walking speed is 40 feet. Anything you are wearing transforms with you, but nothing you are carrying does. You revert to your true form if you die.

**Invulnerability.** If you kill an intelligent humanoid creature each night for 6 nights the weapon it grants you invulnerability. You gain immunity to damage from non-magical weapons and resistance to all damage from magical sources. While in possession of the weapon you regain 15 hit points at the start of your turn. You only die if you start your turn with 0 hit points and do not possess the weapon. You also cease aging and suffer no further penalties from old age or magical aging effects.

These effects last for the next 13 years. During this period the *fang of the nosferatu* cannot be attuned to another creature.

**Sentient.** The *fang of the nosferatu* is a sentient chaotic evil weapon with an Intelligence of 17, a Wisdom of 8, and a Charisma of 12. It has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 120 feet.

The weapon knows the emotions of any creature it touches and can telepathically communicate with its wielder. It speaks in a whisper, cajoling and coercing them to violence to sate its thirst. While you are attuned to it, the *fang of the nosferatu* understands every language you know.

**Personality.** The *fang of the nosferatu* has little personality of its own beyond its eternal hunger, being little more than a cruel predator. It enjoys the pain and fear it inflicts, and telepathically shares those emotions with its master, channelling the last feelings of its victim to you. The weapon is happiest when its user shares its sadistic joy of inflicting suffering.

**Curse.** If the *fang of the nosferatu* is not kept fed it draws life from you. Each day the weapon does not inflict 1 point of damage on a living creature your hit point maximum is reduced by 1d4. These hit points cannot be regained by any means until the *fang of the nosferatu* is fed. This drain happens even if you are not in possession of the weapon.

## CHAPTER 8: CAMPAIGN OPTIONS

All Ravenloft campaigns have some element of horror, whether the heroes are brave monster hunters or fearful commoners just trying to survive. This chapter contains variant rules as well as new rule optional to add to your game.

### Adventuring Options

This section provides optional rules to add to your campaign to customize the tone of your game.

#### Dark Inspiration

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When an adventurer has an instance of good luck, the Dark Powers follow this will ill fortune, balancing the scales of fate.

This option allows the Dungeon Master to gain inspiration. When a player spends inspiration to gain advantage you gain inspiration. Like players, you can only have a single instance of inspiration.

You can expend your inspiration to grant a creature advantage on an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check. You can also expand your inspiration to give a creature disadvantage an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check. However, you can't use your inspiration to impose disadvantage on a roll where a player is spending inspiration to gain advantage.

#### Dread Pool

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This optional rules adds random tension to non-combat situations.

While the party is in an unnatural or horrifying places – such as a sewer, haunted castle, or vampire's lair – you place one or more d20s on the table. This is known as a "Dread Pool". As the party adventures you gradually add more d20s, typically one die after 30 minutes of play. You can also choose to add dice after a player uses their inspiration, scores a critical hit, or a moment of drama.

When a player attempts an action with no chance of failure (such as taking the Search or Use an Object actions) they roll the Dread

Pool. If they roll a 1 something dramatic or horrible occurs. After the Dread Pool has trigger an event the dice in the pool are halved, to allow tension to slowly increase. The triggered event might be a random encounter, a triggered trap, some environmental effect, or a planned event. A player investigating a coffin in a crypt might unleash a zombie, a horde of clawing rats, or a cloud of toxic putrid gas. A group of adventurers exploring Castle Ravenloft might be ambushed by Count Strahd.

The Dread Pool can be replaced by other physical elements, such as a bag with a coloured beads, poker chips, or coins. Part of the effect is the continual presence of the Dread Pool, and the visual reminder of the increasing odds of disaster through the growing number of dice.

#### Emotional Distress

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A counterpart to fear and horror, emotional distress is a short nervous breakdown in response to continual stress. A character experience emotional distress when in an unnatural or horrifying location for a prolonged time. They can also gain emotional distress if continually fighting temptation or madness: striving to present normalcy and control their symptoms.

In a regular campaign, the player characters are heroic adventures that are immune to the stress of days underground in the dark while constantly being assaulted by monsters. This is not necessarily true in a Ravenloft campaign. You can use emotional distress to draw attention to the hazards of continual exposure to terrifying locations or omnipresent danger, and emphasise the toll adventuring has on the psyche.

Resisting emotional distress usually requires a Wisdom or Charisma saving throw. If your game includes the Sanity score (see chapter 9 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), a creature makes a Sanity saving throw instead. The DC of the saving throw usually starts lows, steadily increasing the longer the character is in the distressing area. On a failure, the

character gains a short-term madness. You might rule that characters suffering from an indefinite madness or resisting the effects of a fear, flaw, or dark shadow temptation have disadvantage on this saving throw.

## Outcasts

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Communities in the Mists tend to be isolated and insular, fearful of outsiders and the unusual, especially inhuman races. This is reflected in the outcast optional rule.

When dealing with someone who views you with suspicion or fear, you do not add your proficiency bonus to Charisma checks other than Intimidation.

The most common outcasts are demihuman races such as elves and caliban. In isolated lands, all travellers or foreigners might be outcasts. But in some lands arcane magic users or Vistani might be outcasts. In communities that have been tricked or swindled by false heroes, all adventurers might be outcasts.

## Altered Magic

The forces of magic are subtly altered by the Dark Powers, twisting and changing the effects of spells and magic items or imposing limits.

## Divination

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The Mists cloud even the future, and attempts at divination can be hazardous. Attempts to discern the future or best course of action are often vague, while divinations based on morality automatically fail.

The Dark Powers have influence over what can be gleaned of the future, and are often purposely misleading or subject to personal interpretation. However, spells will still never give outright false information: if a response cannot be vague or cryptic, then the attempt simply fails. Spells such as *arcane eye* carry additional risks: creatures might be able to detect the attempt, and attempt to use powers that require sight, such as gaze attacks.

The Vistani are a notable exception to the restrictions on divination. Vistani who possess the Sight are unhindered by the restrictions placed on others. However, Vistani can never divine their own personal futures. It is said

hags can also pierce the veil of the future, but dealing with those creatures is fraught with danger.

All attempts to use divination to determine the moral alignment or true nature of a creature fail. Details of creature's nature (such as their race, type, or origin) can't be discerned through any spell or ability. Sometimes the attempt fails obviously (or spectacularly), while other times the result is whatever would be most beneficial to the target, such as a divination revealing a vampire as a mortal or an elf as human.

## Domain Borders

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No spell, ability, or effect can affect a domain's closed border in any way. If the border is closed nothing can cross the border or affect anything on the other side. A closed border cannot be crossed using mortal magic: no form of teleportation magic will allow someone to escape from a sealed domain, and magically flying over a closed border will fail. Sometimes the magic just ceases to work but other times it fails spectacularly with deadly consequences.

Additionally no powers, abilities, or rituals can cross the Misty Border. Abilities function normally between open borders of adjacent domains but not between domains separated by the Mists, even if there is a Mistway. A character could cast a spell across an open border but not through the Mists.

## Planar Travel

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Only the border realms are accessible within the Demiplane of Dread: distant planar travel is not possible. Creatures can travel to the border ethereal or the local shadowfell or feywild, but all attempts to journey to the Astral Plane or reach the Outer Planes automatically fail.

The reverse is not true. It is possible to enter the Mists from other worlds. Portals and gateways function normally inward, but they are strictly one-way. Gateways can be opened to the Outer Planes that allow creatures to be brought into the Mists, but their return is not guaranteed.

## Resurrection

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While many of the dead do not rest easily, souls that have passed beyond the Land of the Mists are not easily reachable. Even the most powerful of magics can sometimes fail to restore a soul, and the journey from death to life is arduous.

In Ravenloft, spells like *raise dead* require the creature being restored to life to make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw check. Failure by 4 or less means the process was traumatic but successful. The restored creature might gain a madness, develop a flaw or dark shadow, experience a personality shift, or have permanently scarred from their fatal wounds. Failure by 5 or more means the soul did not fully return and the creature was only partially raised, returning as an undead creature.

## Optional Rule: Magic Rating

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Not every land has the same level of magical capacity. In some areas there is simply less ambient magical energy, and casting more potent spells is difficult. Other sites are infused with powerful magical energies allowing spells to flow freely.

Locations can have a magic rating, ranging from 1 to 6. In the Mists, most lands have a base magic rating of 3, but other worlds have a magic rating of 5. In order to use a spell slot equal to or higher than 4 + the magic rating you must make a DC 13 ability check, using your spellcasting ability score.

Magic ratings of 6 are rare. In places where the magic rating is 6, a spellcaster can regain one 1st or 2nd level spell slot after a short rest. There might be other effects such as certain spells having a longer duration, dealing maximum damage, or ignoring resistance.

An area's magic rating can vary depending on the type of magic. Some areas might be tied to particular schools of magic, such as illusion, or an energy type, such as fire. An ancient crypt serving as the lair of a monster might have a magic rating of 3 (5 necromancy).

## Curses

In the Mists, cries for vengeance or justice are sometimes answered. Passion and anger can draw the attention of the Dark Powers, who may respond to dark thoughts and words as they do to foul deeds.

Any intelligent creature can be cursed or invoke a curse, from a high level paladin to a lowly stable boy. Monsters and beasts are typically immune to curses, but are also unlikely to curse other creatures. The Dark Power typically respond when there is an imbalance in power; victims who have the ability to enact their own revenge or justice seldom see their curses take effect.

The Vistani are known for their curses, which are frequently realized. It is unknown if the Dark Powers pay special attention to the Vistani or if the Vistani themselves have a supernatural ability to enact their own curses.

The Dark Powers only enact a small percentage of curses. Whether a curse takes effect or is ignored should be determined by the Dungeon Master based on whether a curse would be appropriate for the story or not. If random chance is desired, the character can make a Charisma check to see if they attract the Dark Powers attention. The DM should set the DC but it should be around DC 20 (lower for Vistani). If the curse is emotionally charged or the invoker desires justice (such as a death curse) the invoker might have advantage on the check or the DC could be reduced to 15. In special cases of gross injustice and strong emotions the DC might be lowered *and* the invoker granted advantage.

Curses should be aimed at the action of the character, not the player, and should never be used by the Dungeon Master to punish players for misbehaving. It's also preferable for curses to be reactive, crafted in response to actions rather than initiating a story. You should never set out to curse a character.

## Removing a Curses

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Removing a curse can be difficult, as the Dark Powers do not forgive or easily let someone escape their justice.



## Escape Clause

Almost all curses have an escape clause: a conditional statement that allows the curse to be lifted upon completion. Very rare is the curse without any escape clause or limits.

Escape clauses range from a single deed to a daunting and prolonged quest. Once the task is completed, the curse is instantly lifted and all its negative effects are removed. For example, an escape clause might be as simple and plain as “until you climb the highest peak in the land” or as vague and prolonged “until you perform one hundred truly noble deeds.”

Other escape clauses may require continued behaviour; so long as the condition is upheld, the curse is in remission and the victim suffers no ill effects; the curse returns the instant the behaviour stops. The escape clause “while you speak with your sword” might mean the victim is not cursed as long as they attempt peaceful resolution before violence. Or the curse might just apply to all attempts at violence, regardless if they were preceded by diplomacy.

Curses could also have a set duration. This is a variant escape clause, but there is typically no way to end the curse early. The traditional length of time is “a year and a day.” Time limits are sometimes paired with continued behaviour, especially if the duration is short.

Escape clauses can be poetic, possibly even metaphorical. There might be a specifically intended meaning or interpretation to the metaphor or there might be multiple solutions that allow any reasonable attempt to lift the curse. Vague escape clauses might offer loopholes that can be exploited. The fighter cursed with the clause “while you speak with your sword” might find the negative effects sidestepped if he uses an axe. Or not.

## Magic

Spells such as *remove curse* or *break enchantment* typically cannot lift a curse that has been placed by the Dark Powers, especially if the curse has an escape clause. Magical methods of removing curses simply suppress the curse for a number of days equal to the level of the spell slot used to cast the spell. More powerful magic like *wish* may permanently lift a curse whether it has a worded escape clause or not.

Curses without an escape clause can be lifted as normal.

## Lifting a Curse

A curse can be lifted by its invoker at any time. They must be willing to do so and not subject to bribery, duress, or enchantments (reparations being different than bribery).

Only the individual who laid the curse can revoke it. The invoker must be alive to lift the curse. Magic, such as the *speak with dead* spell, cannot be used. Spirits and other undead cannot typically lift curses, although there are exceptions, especially if the curse is preventing a ghost from crossing into the afterlife.

The Vistani are a noteworthy exception, as any member of the same family can lift a curse; however the Vistani will seldom do so without just cause.

## Designing Curses

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When designing a curse, pains should be made to keep it dramatic, being atmospheric and reflecting the original offence.

Good curses should hinder the victim but not immediately remove them from the game, making a character unplayable. It is preferable for curses to have an escape clause, preferably one with multiple options that encourage creativity.

Spoken curses should avoid mentioning game mechanics and terms. They need not be poetic (although that's nice) but should be more than just someone shouting, "I curse you!" If improvisation is not a strong suit, having the curse spoken in another language is an option, offering more time to pen the actual phrase. Similarly, the mechanical effect might affect the character slowly over a period of time. But there should be some immediate sensation such as a cold wind blowing over the creature or a chill running down their spine.

## Sample Curses

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Below are some sample curses to use in your game.

### Hunger

*"Flesh and fat and meat be gone. Feel a hunger to the bone."*

The cursed creature can only go a single day without adequate food before they begin to suffer exhaustion and must consume three times the normal amount each day: three pounds of food and three gallons of water. This increases for each level of exhaustion they possess. For example, a creature with two levels of exhaustion must consume five times the normal food and drink.

### Madness

*"May you feel the legs of spiders crawling on your brain, an infirmity that cannot be scratched away."*

The cursed creature gain an indefinite madness that cannot be cured until the curse is lifted.

### Misfortune

*"Just when you believe you have found success, you will experience ill luck's caress."*

Once per day when the cursed creatures succeeds on an ability check, saving throw, or attack roll with neither advantage nor disadvantage they must roll again and take the lower result.

### Weakness

*"Your strength is a mirage that fades from sight leaving you devoid of all of your might."*

The cursed creature has disadvantage on any ability check, saving throw, or attack roll that uses Strength, has half the normal carrying capacity, and all weapon damage based on Strength is halved.

### Vengeance

*"Your days grow short and nights grow long. Vengeance will soon be mine."*

After each long rest the cursed creature must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, their hit point maximum is reduced by 5. These hit points cannot be regained until the curse is lifted.

## Dark Powers Checks

Those who commit evil deeds are blessed and cursed by the Dark Powers: the enigmatic forces that hold sway over the Land of the Mists. When someone commits an evil or questionable act there is a random chance the Dark Powers are watching and will respond.

## Making Checks

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Whenever a character knowingly performs an evil deed you can ask the character to make a Dark Powers check. On a failed check, they have attracted the attention of the Dark Powers and gain 1 level of corruption. On a successful check, the character has escaped the notice of the Dark Powers (or the Dark Powers have just ignored the action for some ineffable reason). No ability or feature can modify this roll or allow the d20 to be rerolled.

A typically Dark Powers is DC 3, but you can set the DC of the Dark Powers check based on the action, considering factors such as the motive of the character, the alignment of the victim, and the number of victims. If the victim of the crime was evil the DM can reduce the DC by 1 and if they were inhuman the DC can be reduced by 2. If the victim was good or a true innocent the DC can be increased by 1 or 2. Committing numerous small crime or evil acts that individually did not warranted a Dark Powers check might increase the DC when the character finally crosses the line. Similarly, if a character commits a series of related evil actions they only roll a single check at a higher DC.

The Dark Powers are more likely to respond to deliberately evil actions, being less interested in unthinking or casual evil. If the creature acted rashly or had good intentions the DM can rule they have a advantage on the check, while if they acted for purely selfish reasons or the crime was premeditated they might gave disadvantage. A creature acting against their nature might also impose disadvantage on the check.

You are the arbiter of what is and is not worthy of a check. Only truly evil acts call for a check: immoral, cowardly, or spiteful acts might not necessarily be evil and unworthy of

## Design Note: When to Roll

When to make a Dark Powers check is a matter of personal taste. "Does this warrant a Powers check?" is a frequent message boards question. In the end, the best answer is "what do *you* think?"

Dark Powers checks are meant to create drama and introduce moral consequences to the game. They are not meant to be used as a threat to keep troublesome players in line. Instead they should set the mood and reinforce the themes of the campaign.

The morality of adventurers is a topic beyond a single sidebar, with many contrasting opinions. Some people believe that killing orc children is good, as orcs are "chaotic evil", but others view the murder of any children as an evil action. Similarly, looting the dead is hard to adjudicate as so much of the game is predicated on killing monsters and taking their stuff. It is very possible for the DM and a player to have opposing views on what is evil and what is good, and Dark Powers checks should not be used as a way for the Dungeon Master to impose their morality on the players.

Hard rules for Dark Powers checks are tricky as not every game is the same and not every DM wants the same focus on corruption. There can also be moments of silliness as something that is not evil triggers a Powers check. For example, a rule that casting a necromancy spells call for a check means a character might gain corruption for casting *gentle repose* or *spare the dying*.

Firm rules also leaves the system open for abuse. Thematically, the benefits of a single failed Powers check outweigh the costs because they are a temptation, but this also makes it a temptation for players: players seeking more abilities for their character are incentivized to sin a little, to get the first stage or two of corruption.

a check. The frequency of Dark Powers checks is dependent on the tone of the campaign. A story emphasising the continual struggle against evil or the inevitable fall into darkness benefits from more frequent power checks, but a heroic campaign of brave monster hunters might overlook morally grey actions done in the greater good.

## Corruption

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When a creature fails a Dark Powers check they become corrupted, gaining 1 level of corruption. Corruption can manifest in multiple different ways depending on the crimes of the creature. The type of crime determines the eventual benefits and curses that accompany the Dark Powers' attention.

### Crimes

Evil acts can be loosely divided into one of four categories.

**Betrayal.** These are typically crimes against a person or organization. Betrayal results in social corruption. These include revealing deep secrets, perjury, character assassination, gaslighting, or selling-out an ally.

**Blasphemy.** These are crimes against a faith or a god. Committing blasphemy leads to spiritual corruption. Examples include violating a tenet, breaking an oath, grave robbing, defacing a holy item, and defiling a holy site.

**Dark Magic.** These are violations of the natural order. Practicing dark magic leads to mental corruption. Examples are laying a curse, raising the dead, allying with evil creatures, using dark rituals, creating the undead, or the use of an evil artifact.

**Violence.** These are crimes against a person. Acts of violence lead to physical corruption. Examples include bullying, extortion, assault, torture, and murder.

### Mental Corruption

Tainting of the mind is the result of dark magic. This is incurable mental deviation is beyond mere madness.

The corrupted creature can gain an understanding of forbidden knowledge as the Dark Powers open the brain's many locked

doors. There is the possibility of a devious intelligence, unrestrained by morality and decency. Or the madness, could be all-consuming: the corrupted creature's mind is free but random, moving chaotically between ideas and possibilities without the grounding force of reality.

### Physical Corruption

Physical corruption alters the body. This type of corruption is obvious and apparent: there is little subtle about physical corruption.

Physical corruption can increase physical strength at the cost of agility or mental ability, changing the corrupted creature into a dim-witted brute. Alternatively, physical corruption can make a creature quick and agile, but frail. Agile corrupted creatures tend to be more impulsive, lacking caution and common sense.

### Social Corruption

Social corruption affects the personality and interpersonal abilities of the corrupted creature. While not obviously physically deformed, there might be some inhuman features and telltale traits that reveal their depravity.

The socially corrupt often excel at lies and deception, being prenatally charming or always knowing the right thing to say. The corrupted might have unnatural abilities and powers that affect or influence others. Or the corrupted creature might be socially awkward and repulsive, repugnant to be around as their mannerisms betray their inhumanity.

### Spiritual Corruption

Repeated blasphemy results in the befouling of the soul. This is more than mere damnation -which all failed Powers checks lead to- but a total and almost infectious blackening of the spirit.

A creature with a corrupted spirit quickly forgets the difference between right and wrong. This immorality is paired with preternatural sight and wisdom. In contrast, a spiritually dead creature is dull and poorly motivated, yet relentless when pursuing their single-minded goal.

## Stages of Darkness

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As a creature gains levels of corruption they advance through the stages of darkness. The curses and dark gifts bestowed upon the creature depend on their stage.

Corruption Level	Stage
-	Innocent
0	Pure or Redeemed
1	The Caress
2	The Enticement
3	The Invitation
4	The Embrace
5	The Descent

**Innocent.** This is a rare stage. Not only has the creature never failed a Dark Powers check, but they have never done anything to warrant one. Often the creature has never been exposed to horror. Most adults lost their innocent not far into their adolescence.

**Pure.** The creature has never failed a Dark Powers check. However, they may have done something worthy of a Dark Powers check.

**Redeemed.** The character has failed a Dark Powers check but managed to reduce their level of corruption to 0, cleansing their soul. However, the creature will never be Pure again.

**The Caress.** The creature's soul is stained but they have not truly fallen to darkness, nor have they been overly cursed.

**The Enticement.** The Dark Powers have given the creature a significant reward for their actions along with an increased penalty.

**The Invitation.** The creature's gift increases as the Dark Powers offer a great boon, but the cost is much higher and apparent. A little piece of their humanity is lost.

**The Embrace.** Well on their way to true darkness, the creature is now much more than human, capable of inhuman feats. Sometimes this supernatural nature is apparent, but other times it is veiled. Regardless, a normal life is impossible for the creature's appetites or abilities are too monstrous.

**The Descent.** The creature is lost to

darkness, as their soul is irrevocably tainted and they have become a member of the legion of the night. The creature's alignment becomes evil and the DM might take control of the character.

## Redemption

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Corruption is difficult to remove but not impossible, and damnation is not a certainty. Although, recovering from corruption takes time and effort, and the Dark Powers may subtly guide the creature back to darkness.

To cleanse the soul, a creature must encounter a situation similar to the one where they chose to commit the evil act, only this time they must willingly choose a different course of actions. If this is done a number of times equal to 1 + the creature's current level of corruption, their corruption level decreases by 1 level. Sometimes the Dark Powers do not lightly release a pawn, and the creature must reroll the Dark Powers check to reduce their corruption level.

## Act of Ultimate Darkness

Some deeds are so monstrous that they cannot fail to attract the attention of the Dark Powers. These are deeds so unforgivable that they forever stain the soul. These are Acts of Ultimate Darkness.

Acts of Ultimate Darkness are unquestionably evil, often involving an innocent or a family member. The action should also be so heinous that is difficult if not outright impossible to make reparations, making redemption unlikely. The crime is not easily described by one of the four types, fitting into two or more categories. Failing a Dark Powers check by 10 or more is also considered an Act of Ultimate Darkness.

If a character ever commits an Act of Ultimate Darkness they are forever touched by the Dark Powers. They can never lower their level of corruption below 2. If a character ever commits an Acts of Ultimate Darkness their alignment becomes evil and the DM should take control of the character.

## Darklords

To become a darklord, a creature must gain a 5th level of corruption through an Act of Ultimate Darkness. There are no darklords of minor crimes or who have committed a multitude of small sins. Although each darklord is a unique creature, most gain some standard powers.

**Immunities.** The darklord is resistant to magical effects and conditions with a permanent duration, such as curses or spells. Once every year they can reroll the saving throw, ending the effect on a success.

**Legendary Creature.** The darklord is becomes a legendary creature and gains 3 legendary actions. If already a legendary creature, the darklord gains 2 additional legendary actions to a maximum of 5.

**Legendary Resistance (2/Day).** If the darklord fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

**Longevity.** The darklord ages at half the normal rate, if not slower.

**Lord of the Land.** The domain reshapes itself to match the temperament and personality of its lord. The darklord cannot leave their domain and is trapped within its borders. The entire domain is considered the darklord's lair (although some darklords have a seat of power with additional abilities).

**Persistence.** Time has little impact on darklords. Most darklords cease to age entirely, while others appear to age at half the normal speed but suffering none of the penalties associated with old age.

## Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties) the darklord takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- **Close Borders.** Magical barriers encircle the borders of the domain, keeping all creatures from departing the land. No mortal magic can pierce a closed domain border. The exact form of the barrier depends on the personality of the darklord. The borders remain closed so long as the darklord maintains concentration, as if they were concentrating on a spell.

- **Sense Disruption.** The darklords senses any disruption to their land, such as those created by a paladin or the reality wrinkle of a fiend or celestial.

## Paths of Corruption

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When a creature gains corruption they progress along a Path of Corruption. Each Path gives the creature a new flaw and various effects based on the level of corruption. Creatures suffer the effects of their current level and all lower levels.

Below are several sample Paths of Corruption. These can be customized as needed, and you can make your own paths for your players.

### Path of the Brute

Bullies, thugs and those who take pleasure from hurting others often find themselves on this path. It results from crimes of aggression, turning the corrupted creature into a hulking, inhuman monster.

**Flaw.** *"While angry, I find it harder to think clearly."*

**Level 1.** You gain advantage on a Strength check or saving throw, but have disadvantage on Dexterity ability checks and saving throws for 1 minute. Once you use this ability you must complete a short rest before you can use it again.

**Level 2.** When making an attack with melee weapon you treat damage rolls of 1 as a 2. When you deal damage with melee weapon you have disadvantage on Wisdom ability checks and saving throws for 1 round.

**Level 3.** Your increase your reach by 5 feet but you take a -5 penalty to Dexterity (Stealth) checks and Intelligence ability checks and saving throws.

**Level 4.** When you take damage greater than your Strength score in a single turn you must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become enraged. While enraged you deal an extra 2d6 damage with each melee attack. If you end your turn while within 60 feet of another creature and have not taken the Attack action you take 10 (3d6) psychic damage. You can repeat the saving throw at

the end of each of your turns, ending the effect on a success.

**Level 5.** You become a massive hulking beast like an ogre or troll.

### Path of the Coward

While violent crimes lead to this path, they are acts of subtle violence, less clumsy and overt. Thieves, muggers and assassins can find themselves on this path, and the Dark Powers reward their pragmatism with swift movement but weakness and frailty.

**Flaw.** *"My hands tremble during a fair fight."*

**Level 1.** You gain proficiency in the Stealth skill for 1 minute. If you are already proficient you add double your proficiency bonus on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. While using this ability cannot take the Attack action. Once you use this ability you must complete a short rest before you can use it again.

**Level 2.** When you make a Dexterity saving throw roll 1d6 and add the result to the saving throw. You take a -2 penalty on all damage rolls with melee weapons.

**Level 3.** When you take damage from a creature within 10 feet of you, your speed increases by 10 feet until the end of your next turn. You have disadvantage on all saving throws against the frightened condition.

**Level 4.** When you hit a blinded or incapacitated creature you deal maximum damage, but you have disadvantage on all attack rolls made against creatures not suffering from any conditions.

**Level 5.** You become a sneaking creature like a wererat or ettercap.

### Path of the Lunatic

The result of crimes against the natural order of the world, those on this Path find their minds shattered from dealing with the unnatural, especially those who seek knowledge that was not meant to be known. Those who consort with aberrations or raise undead often find themselves on the path of the lunatic.

**Flaw.** *"My mind wanders and thoughts come in random bursts."*

**Level 1.** You have advantage on saving throws against the charmed condition. After

moments of stress, such as the end of combat, you must make a DC 12 Intelligence saving throw or gain a short-term madness.

**Level 2.** You can babble as an action. Creatures that hear you and understand your language must make a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw or become frightened of you for 1 minute. Once you use this ability you must complete a long rest before you can use it again. You also have disadvantage on all initiative checks.

**Level 3.** You no longer need to sleep and can't be magically put to sleep. Instead, you meditate for 4 hours each day. After meditating, you gain the same benefit that a normal human does from 8 hours of sleep. However, the madness you gain after stressful situations becomes a long-term madness.

**Level 4.** You are immune to the charmed and frightened conditions, but you gain vulnerability to psychic damage and an indefinite madness.

**Level 5.** You become incurably insane, gaining a new long-term madness at each dawn and randomly swapping your personality traits after each long rest.

### Path of the Mastermind

The result of crimes of betrayal, this path is followed by those who use people for personal gain. Those on this path often treat others as tools, viewing people as something to be used then discarded. As creatures progress along this path their physical form begins to fade, until they can only act through others.

**Flaw.** *"When I do things for myself I feel weak and lethargic"*

**Level 1.** You can cast the *friends* cantrip. Once you cast this spell you must complete a short rest before you can use it again. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this cantrip. After you use this ability you have disadvantage on attack rolls for 1 minute.

**Level 2.** When a creature you can see targets you with an attack, you can use your reaction to have the attack instead target a friendly creature within 5 feet. Once you have used this ability, you cannot use it again until you complete a short rest. After you have use this ability, creatures gain resistance to your attacks for 1 minute.

**Level 3.** You become partially incorporeal for 1 minute. While incorporeal you can move through solid objects as if they were difficult terrain and gain resistance to damage from nonmagical sources. Once you have used this ability, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest. Creatures within 5 feet have advantage on attack rolls against you.

**Level 4.** As an action, you can make a charmed or friendly creature take the Attack action or cast a cantrip. Once you have used this ability, you cannot use it again until you complete a short rest. You can no longer take the Attack, Help, or Use an Object actions.

**Level 5.** You become incorporeal or a bodiless vapour that can possess creatures.

### Path of the Mentalist

Those who dare to defy the natural order can have secrets doors of the mind unlocked, revealing unnatural psychic abilities that are beyond mortal control. Those that have dealings with the unholy and unnatural can progress down this path.

**Flaw.** *"Sharing knowledge and revealing secrets makes me feel ill."*

**Level 1.** You can cast the *minor illusion* cantrip. Only one creature in range can see or heal the illusion. Once you cast this spell you must complete a short rest before you can use it again. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for this spell and others spells gained from this path. You have disadvantage on saving throws against the charmed condition.

**Level 2.** You can cast the *command* spell once per day. You experience terrible nightmares and must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw to take a long rest.

**Level 3.** You can cast the *detect thoughts* spell once per day. You project your emotions and intentions outward, giving yourself disadvantage on Charisma (Deception) and Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

**Level 4.** After a short rest, you regain the spells granted by this path. The DC of the saving throw needed to take a long rest increases to 15. If you fail by 5 or more you take 14 (4d6) psychic damage.

**Level 5.** Your head distends as your brain increases in size. You might become an aberrant creature.

### Path of the Seer

Crimes of blasphemy against faiths lead to this path. Those who find themselves on this path are often corrupted leaders or fallen religious figures, those who have betrayed their faith. The Dark Powers reward them with unnatural wisdom and knowledge of hearts of others at the cost of their sight.

**Flaw.** *"I can see the hate in people."*

**Level 1.** You have advantage on passive Wisdom (Insight) checks but disadvantage on passive Wisdom (Perception) checks.

**Level 2.** You have a visions of the future that trigger when confronted with important choices. Visions lasts 1d4 minutes, and you are incapacitated while having the vision. You must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw to prevent a vision. After having a vision you can modify the future based on your foreknowledge; during the next hour you can reroll a single d20 roll and must take the new roll.

**Level 3.** You gain blindsight 10 feet but automatically fail Perception checks to see creatures or objects farther than 100 feet away.

**Level 4.** You can cast *detect thoughts* once per day. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for this spells. You have disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) and Intelligence (Investigation) checks that rely on sight.

**Level 5.** You become permanently blinded but gain blindsight 60 feet

### Path of the Serpent

Vile liars and tricksters fall prey to this path: those that turn their back on what they believed or sell out their confidants. They often commit these crimes for a profit, valuing money more than people. The Dark Powers reward them with a literal forked tongue, gradually making the creature more cold blooded and reptilian.

**Flaw.** *"I audibly hiss while telling the truth or making a fair deal."*

**Level 1.** You can gain advantage on a Charisma (Deception) or Dexterity (Stealth) check, but have disadvantage on Strength checks and saving throws for 1 minute. Once you use this ability you must complete a short rest before you can use it again.

**Level 2.** You gain a bite natural attack that

deals 1d6 piercing damage. You must always carry gold or other coins on your person, with a minimum value of 20 x your level. You take 7 (2d6) psychic damage each hour that you lack coins of the appropriate value.

**Level 3.** Your bite attack becomes poisonous. Creatures that take damage from your bite must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or take 4 (1d8) poison damage, or half as much damage on a successful save. You can only eat living creatures, such as mice or rats. Food that has dead for more than 1 minute offers no nourishment.

**Level 4.** Your skin is scaly and reptilian. While not wearing armour your AC is 15 + your Dexterity modifier. You must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw to spend or give away coins or other valuables.

**Level 5.** You become a reptilian creature like a lizardfolk or weresnake.

### Path of Vermin

This path leads from blasphemous actions against the natural order. Cultists for foul religions or inhuman beings can find themselves on this path, as well as those who defile holy sites or rob from the dead. As the corrupted creature is acting inhuman, they are given influence over the lowest of creatures.

**Flaw.** *"Regardless of how often I bathe, I smell foul and attract insects."*

**Level 1.** By consuming a handful of insects or spiders your saliva becomes poisonous. Creatures that ingest your saliva must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The vermin bites you as you eat them, dealing 5 (2d4) piercing damage.

**Level 2.** You have advantage on saving throws against poisons and disease. You must consume 1 lb. of rotting meat each day or gain 1 level of exhaustion.

**Level 3.** Insects crawl across your body. You can hurl a handful of vermin as a thrown weapon with a normal range of 10 feet and a long range of 30 feet. Creatures struck by the insects take 7 (2d6) piercing damage and must make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. You have



disadvantage on all Charisma checks (except for Intimidation) and all ability checks related to hearing.

**Level 4.** Insects move and write underneath your skin, emerging then burrowing below. When you are injured, insects erupt from wounds. Creatures within 10 feet that deal piercing or slashing damage to you must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 9 (2d8) poison damage. You gain vulnerability to piercing and slashing damage.

**Level 5.** You become a being of vermin or a large insectoid creature.

## Fear and Horror

The player characters might be brave heroes, but they are not immune to fear. Their bravery comes in acting despite their growing terror. But even the bravest of heroes sometimes become frightened, especially when confronting the unknown and wholly unnatural.

Ravenloft is a world of fantasy and gothic horror. Because fear and horror are such important themes of the campaign, greater attention needs to be paid to the differences between the two. Rules for Fear and Horror are in the Adventuring Options section in Chapter 9 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## Fright

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Also known as shock, panic, or terror. Creatures feel fear when in physical danger – even if the danger is only implied. A situation that puts a character or their bond in jeopardy is frightening.

Many factors influence the need for a fear saving throw. If the nature of the enemy is unknown or the player character feels unprepared to confront their foe, then a saving throw against fear might be appropriate. If the player character is facing a foe that previously defeated them, they might also become scared. A surprise attack can also be frightening, especially in a location thought safe.

## Horror

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Also described as repugnance, revolt, or dread. Creatures feel horror when not physically threatened. Typically, a place or event is horrifying. A situation that makes a character question their ideals or bonds is horrifying.

Horror saving throws are typically required when a creature enters a horrifying area or when a horrifying detail is first noticed. Creatures can feel horror when confronted with extreme violence or the supernatural. Encountering something that seems impossible or defies logic is also horrifying.

Horrific events are less clear-cut than frightening events. Horror does not need to be overt or obvious, and a subtle wrongness can be just as horrifying as a dramatic revelation. The horrifying nature of some encounters is darkly ironic, as the truth of events and the assumed reality are opposites. Finding a dead body is unnerving, but finding one in a perceived safe haven is horrifying. Having a monster threatening to eat you can be frightening, but discovering stew you just ate was made from people is horrifying.

## Madness

Individuals willing to risk their lives fighting monsters more powerful than themselves are often not entirely sane, but the stresses of facing the legions of the night can take their toll on the most stable of monster hunters. Many champions descend into madness and end their days battling far more personal demons.

Below are a number of new indefinite madnesses that can be taken in place of the ones from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

## New Madness Effects

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### d20 Effect (lasts until cured)

1. **Obsession, Individual.** *"We belong together."* You are convinced someone is your soulmate, the reincarnation of your lost love, or the best friend you always wanted.
2. **Obsession, Object.** *"It brings me luck."* You believe a mundane object is responsible for all your success and without it you are nothing.
3. **Obsession, Activity.** *"I have to do it ten more times."* You feel compelled to perform a rite or routine every day or you become anxious, possibly to the point of panic.
4. **Self-Flagellation.** *"I deserve to suffer."* You punish yourself for slight failures, either physically or mentally.
5. **Phobic.** *"Get it off me, get it off me!"* You have a crippling fear of something. Roll 1d10:
  1. a type of animal (snakes, dogs, spiders, rats)
  2. heights
  3. fire
  4. open spaces
  5. closed spaces
  6. clowns
  7. thunder & lightning
  8. flying
  9. germs or dirt
  10. injury
6. **Multiple Personalities.** *"I didn't do it, they did."* You have 1d4 extra personalities, each with their own personality traits, flaws, and ideas.
7. **Eating Disorder.** *"I hate how I look."* You over or under eat, having negative perceptions of your figure that are likely not true.
8. **Depression.** *"Why bother?"* You are depressed to the point of being unmotivated, pessimistic, and possibly even suicidal.
9. **Destined for Glory.** *"I was born for great things."* You are convinced you have a special destiny, perhaps even a unique power.
10. **God's Chosen.** *"I have heard Her voice."* You believe your god talks to you, and has plans for you.
11. **Sadist.** *"Pain brings out the truth."* You enjoy personally inflicting physical pain on other creatures.
12. **Imposter Syndrome.** *"I don't deserve this."* You believe you are unworthy of something, and at any time it will be taken away.
13. **Absolute Morality.** *"You're either my ally or an enemy."* You view the world in absolutes, typically good and evil, with no middle ground.
14. **Masochist.** *"There is beauty in agony."* You enjoy experiencing pain and other discomfort.
15. **Fascination.** *"Look at the way it catches the light. Beautiful."* You are enraptured by the sight of something, finding it difficult to look away. Roll 1d8:
  1. fire
  2. gems
  3. blood
  4. mirrors
  5. books
  6. death
  7. attractive individuals
  8. gold
16. **Graphomania.** *"The words have to come out."* You are compelled to write things down. If no paper is available you turn to the walls, furniture, or skin.
17. **Traumatized.** *"I relive it every night, every time I close my eyes!"* You cannot stop remember a terrifying event, possibly becoming emotionally numb.
18. **Antisocial.** *"They'd do the same to me, I just did it first."* You are unconcerned with the feelings of other, being manipulative, aggressive, or amoral.
19. **Hallucinations.** *"Stop it! Stop whispering to me!"* You either see or hear things that are not there.
20. **Delusional.** *"It's true, I know it is."* You completely believe something is factual despite not being so, such as believing you have abilities or skills you do not possess.

## Treating Madness

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In addition to magical remedies, there are there are mundane treatments for recovering from madness.

After fourteen days of downtime spent being treated for madness you can make a DC 15 Wisdom or Charisma saving throw (your choice). A successful save puts the madness into remission: you no longer suffer any ill effects, but if you fail another saving throw against a madness effect the madness returns. If you continue to rest and succeed on a saving throw while your madness is in remission you are cured.

You need to be in a safe and comfortable location to treat a madness through downtime. Being in a dungeon or other hostile environment imposes disadvantage on the saving throw, while being in an asylum or hospice grants advantage. Madness cannot be treated while in an alien or inhuman environment.

## Variant: Instability Condition

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For campaigns where madness inducing elements are commonplace and the threat of insanity is a continual theme, the existing madness rules might be lacking, not allowing for a gradual descent into madness.

With this optional rule, failing a saving throw against a madness inducing effect does not cause insanity but instead you suffer one or more levels of instability. If you already have one level of instability and suffer another effect that causes instability, your current level of instability increases by one.

Level	Effect
1	-
2	Gain a short-term madness
3	Gain a short-term madness (duration doubled)
4	Gain a long-term madness
5	Gain a long-term madness (duration doubled)
6	Gain an indefinite madness

A *lesser restoration* spell removes one level of instability. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic removes two levels of insanity.

## Mistways

The Mists bordering the known lands can displace travellers who venture within. Travel through the mists is random and unpredictable: sometimes nothing happens to folk who wander into the Mists and sometimes interlopers are swept away to distant lands. However, there are a few paths through the Mists that connect lands allowing repeated travel. These are known as "mistways". Some mistways allow travel in both directions, while some only work one way.

Following a mistways requires a Wisdom (Survival) check to navigate the mists, the difficulty of which depends on the reliability of the mistway. Excellent reliability mistways are DC 12, moderate reliability mistways are DC 15, and poor reliability mistways are DC 18.

Failure indicates the journey either takes longer than expected (by days or even weeks, although the delay might vary between the traveller and the larger world) or leads to an unintended destination, such as a different land or a different location in the expected domain.

## Resonance

Resonance is the memories of the land. Places of resonance are the result of actions fueled by intense emotions that were so dramatic that they imbuing an area with their memory. Areas of resonance are often places of great importance, places of tragedy, or sites of either great evil or heroism.

## Rank

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Instances of resonance are given a rank, ranging from from 1-5.

The resonance's rank acts like a proficiency bonus. Any effects caused by the resonance that require a saving throw have a DC of 11 + rank, and the attack modifier of a resonance is equal to its rank + 5.

A resonance fills an area with a maximum

radius of fifty feet for each rank, but resonances can be smaller. Resonances are typically spherical, but some have been known to fill a corridor or other irregular shape, so long as the total area does not exceed the maximum. The effects of a resonance can sometimes pass through walls and other barrier, but most resonances are confined to natural borders of the area, such as a single chamber or a forest glade, and do not extend beyond this area.

## Type

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Passionate actions burn themselves into reality creating an overlap between the mortal world and adjacent planes. Each place of resonance is imbued with a focal emotion such as fear, sadness, or desire. In a resonance, related emotions are intensified.

### Fey

Strongly tied to the emotion that caused the resonance, when someone enters an area of fey resonance they experience unfamiliar urges and feelings that are not their own. A site of a great tragedy, such as a betrayal or murder, might fill visitors with an inexplicable rage, agony, or sadness.

Fey resonances are mental and lack the visual cues of other resonances. Discerning the cause or background of a fey resonance is often difficult, as the only evidence are emotions. A few fey resonances take control of living creatures, as if they were possessed by the spirits of the dead. Possessed creatures re-enact the events that led to the creation of the resonance, only this performance is frequently exaggerated and distorted. If multiple creatures are possessed their actions might appear contradictory and their conversations fragmented. Possessed creatures are also not bound to replay the same event again and again, and can interact with other creatures or reinterpret the originating event with slight variance.

### Shadow

Connected to the world of shadows and despair, areas of shadow resonance drains the joy and vitality from those inside.

Patches of shadow resonance appear dark, with muted colours and menacing gloom. Phantasms and a subtle wrongness pervade shadow resonances: walls seem to shift, strange sounds echo, shadows move, and creatures see their inner fears out of the corner of their eyes. No creature perceives an area of shadow resonance the same way, and all bring their own fears and darkness to the resonance. The figments for a powerful shadow resonance will sometimes become solid

Stories of places touched by a shadow resonance tend to spread and grow, quickly becoming legends. The curious come and expect horrors, and are greeted by those same imagined terrors. Very often the source of a shadow resonance becomes lost and forgotten, buried under myth and rumour.

### Spiritual

Spiritual resonance overlaps with the ethereal plane, the ghostly realm of the recently dead. These areas of resonance are typically created by the death of a creature or other tragedy. Spiritual resonance is frequently mistaken for a haunting, but there is no single spirit that needs to be put to rest.

Also known as ethereal resonance, this variant is typified by ghostly, insubstantial figures continually re-enacting the scene that created the resonance. Phantom objects might also appear, presenting the area as it looked when the originating event took place. The timing of the replaying of events varies between instances, sometimes happening when new observers enter the area or occurring on a daily basis. Some weaker resonances only repeat on the anniversary of the incident.

Creature and objects created by a spiritual resonance are treated as difficult terrain. Incorporeal or ethereal creatures, such as ghosts, treat instances of spiritual resonance as solid objects and cannot pass through them. Creatures inside an area of spiritual resonance are lightly obscured.

## Sinkholes of Evil

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When acts of darkness spawn a resonance the imbued evil causes the area to become spiritually unclean, the very soil has been corrupted by the triggering deed. These areas of malevolence resonance are known as "sinkholes of evil". Only the most malicious of deeds creates a sinkhole of evil, and they are typically created through prolonged depravity and suffering, evil actions committed again and again in the same location. Occasionally, a sinkhole is created through single action, but it is rare for one deed to impart enough negative emotions and evil. These sinkholes are the sites of an act of ultimate darkness or the creation of a darklord.

Non-evil creatures that enter a sinkhole of evil must make a Charisma saving throw. One a failure the creature gains vulnerability to necrotic damage. Undead and fiends that enter a sinkhole gain resistance to radiant damage. Spending an extended time in a sinkhole of evil can also drive a creature insane, and taking a long rest in a sinkhole is cause for a saving throw against madness. Many sinkholes of evil have other effects, often mimicking the *hallow* spell.

## Destruction

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A steady supply of emotion is needed to sustain a resonance. If the sustenance of a resonance is cut off it will weaken and slowly begin to dwindle away.

Creatures do not need to be in close proximity to resonance to feed it and can be miles away. Many resonances are maintained through repetition of their story: recitations of the incident that led to the creation of the resonance. So long as people talk about a particular tragedy, gossiping or frightening children with the tale, the resonance will continue. Because tales of tragedy and horror spread more rapidly, resonances with negative emotions last longer while happy resonances spawned by acts of love or romance slowly shrink until the fade away.

A resonance can survive without the relevant emotions for a number of months equal to its rank. If the appropriate emotion is absent, the resonance's rank is permanently reduced by 1. Once its rank reaches 0 the resonance melts away into nothing.

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