

OATH OF THE AEGIS



A SWORDMAGE ARCHETYPE FOR PALADINS

Defend those in your charge using both spell and sword with this new class option for the world's greatest roleplaying game.

Ver 3.1

OATH OF THE AEGIS: A SWORDMAGE ARCHETYPE FOR PALADINS

BY JEREMY FORBING

Special Thanks: Leo David Pakirdjian for design help and inspiration, and Chris Bisette for his inventive special trinkets from the *Players Companion*

A NOTE ON SPELLS

Spells marked with asterisks should be noted as follows:

*=This is a new spell described in this document.

**=This spell is from the *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (and may also appear in the *Elemental Evil Players Companion*)

***=This spell is from the *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*

In some cases, content from the author's other products has been adapted or included—rather than require you to reference those products, all necessary rules are repeated here.

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THE SWORDMAGE

The lone traveler walking along a distant, borderland road; a hero described in epic poems by bards; an otherworldly high elf with wild hair and glyphs for tattoos; a human youth trained in the Feywild with a skill that few understand—any of these individuals might be a swordmage. Swordmages are unlike other paladins. The combination of mental and physical skills required for their path makes them rare. In the tavern, a swordmage tends to draw curious glances at the least; more often, a swordmage is regarded with fear or respect.

FIELD OF STONE

Dhal stopped. The trail ahead twisted into a field of weathered boulders. The great pale stones lay scattered around a fey crossing, a place where the world is warped by the proximity of the Feywild.

The location was a nightly destination for Dhal. Here, his instructor tutored him in the ways of blade and spell. Why the eladrin had selected Dhal as her sole student, he had never learned. The question seemed irrelevant now. She was a swordmage, and she said she was passing her craft to him. That was enough for Dhal.

In the span of a year, he had learned secrets that would have turned his parents' hair white, had they still been alive to care. He had developed his sword bond, mastered the ancient mysteries of the aegis, and discovered the power of combining sword and sorcery.

This night, something seemed different about the boulder field. A low wind breathed through the stones, whispering warnings. The shadows played against the moonlight, casting bleary silhouettes of things that weren't there.

"Teacher?" Dhal called.

A chill gust was his only answer.

Dhal pulled his sword from its sheath and advanced. He conjured his arcane warding with his free hand, erecting the invisible magical field as a guard against some unseen menace.

He came close to the base of the mound that marked the fey crossing. The eladrin swordmage stood on its top, outlined by the full moon.

"Dhal," she said in a solemn voice, "are you ready for your final test?"

He swallowed nervously, but raised his sword in salute.

"Yes, Teacher."

"Then prepare yourself."

The wind turned colder yet. For a moment, all was silent. Then the boulders around the mound began to tremble. All at once, they leapt together like joints on a closing fist. Dhal cried out in surprise, but his voice was blanketed by the thunder of grinding stone.

A troll of animate rock emerged from the collision of boulders and, without a moment's hesitation, charged Dhal.

Dhal responded instinctively to the attack. Arcane power swirled around his blade and outward toward the charging troll, engulfing it in an inferno.

The test had begun.

—From *Arcane Power*

NEW PALADIN SACRED OATH:

OATH OF THE AEGIS

Paladins who supplement their divine and martial might with the art of arcane spellcasting are rare, but their numbers are growing. In most worlds, they are known as swordmages, arcane defenders, mage knights, or the Aegis-sworn. (In the Forgotten Realms, they are most often called the Knights of the Weave, referring to the eldritch tapestry overlaying their world, through which raw magic can be accessed and directed by spellcasters.) This oath emphasizes two tenets above all others: Dedication to magic itself, which must be respected and guarded, and vigilant defense, absolute devotion to the protection of people and places worthy of the swordmage's loyalty. This text describes those who prioritize the latter; these paladins call their path the Oath of the Aegis.

This oath binds you to spend endless hours practicing your special techniques, combining magic with martial mastery and divine empowerment to defend vulnerable people and places, as well as magic itself from larger corrupting forces. All Aegis-sworn live on a path of constant discipline and training. Your blade not only bites with steel and holy wrath, but pulses with fire, lightning, frost, thunder, or sheer eldritch energy. Magical barriers of force swirl around you, protecting you from harm as you defend your allies and unleash magical fury against your foes.

Nothing is more important to you than the subjects of your protective oaths. You likely worship a god whose portfolio includes magic, knowledge, guardianship, vigilance, or secrets. You are also less likely to wear heavy armor than other paladins, though not likely to eschew armor entirely.

Most paladins who swear this oath are influenced by the elven roots of magical swordplay, favoring armor with silver or gold filigree and graceful etching, often worn beneath a colorful tabard. However, some other races are also known to have their own separate, well-developed swordmage traditions. Paladins of the rare genasi race often swear the Oath of the Weave, basing their iconography and practices on the elements. The swordmages of the other-worldly githyanki are also infamous across many planes.

Although you study powerful magic, most of what you know relates to enhancing your fighting abilities and your place is in the thick of battle. Your power comes from pure magic, and eventually you develop increased ability to use magic, counter hostile magic, and defeat enemy spellcasters. Your mastery allows you to break enemy spells and protect your allies with lightning quickness.

TENETS OF THE AEGIS

Learning and Lore. Knowledge is the flickering candle on the shore of an ocean of darkness. Keep that light burning, despite the rising tides of time and ignorance. Recover lost artifacts and magical items. Never stop learning.

Diligence. Train every day. Just as your blade requires sharpening before every battle, your magical and martial prowess must be honed by relentless practice. Magic is a

supreme privilege, and should be approached with caution and respect.

Guardianship. Those who use magic for evil ends often prey upon the weak. Whether you've sworn an oath of guardianship or merely wandered into the path of such predation, you know the safety of any ally or innocent in your presence is your personal responsibility. If the choice is between harm coming to you or to the subject of your protection, you take the blow yourself.

Unbound Arcana. Magic manifests in countless incarnations. Go forth and seek them all. Learn from the old, and devise the new, but whatever you do, explore magic in all its myriad wonders.

OATH OF THE WEAVE MULTICLASSING

If you are using the optional multiclassing rules, paladins of the Oath of the Weave gain a special benefit: they can substitute their Dexterity score for their Strength score when determining if they can be multiclass paladins.

VARIANT RULE: INTELLIGENT KNIGHT

If the DM and player agree, a paladin of the Oath of the Weave may use Intelligence instead of Charisma for their spells and other paladin abilities.

If this rule is used, multiclassing Knights of the Weave should also be allowed to substitute their Intelligence score for their Charisma score when determining if they can be multiclass paladins as well.

OATH SPELLS

You gain Oath Spells at the Paladin levels listed.

OATH OF THE WEAVE SPELLS

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>detect magic, shield</i>
5th	<i>misty step, warding bond</i>
9th	<i>counterspell, dispel magic</i>
13th	<i>death ward, dimension door</i>
17th	<i>conjure elemental, teleportation circle</i>

CHANNEL DIVINITY

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

Spellfire Blade. You can use your Channel Divinity to enhance your weapon attacks. As a bonus action, you infuse your weapon with arcane energy for one minute. The next time during that minute that you hit a target with a weapon attack that is also part of the action used to cast a cantrip (such as for the *booming blade**** or *frostwind blade** cantrips), the target takes extra radiant damage in addition to any other effects of that hit. The extra damage equals 2d8 + your paladin level. In addition, the next time the target tries to cast a spell before the end of its next turn, it must make a Constitution saving throw against your paladin spellcasting DC. On a failed save, the spell fails and has no effect.

Spellfire Shield. When you make a successful saving throw against a spell, or a spell attack misses you, as a reaction you can use your Channel Divinity to reflect the spell onto an enemy. Choose the spellcaster or another creature you can see within 30 feet. The spell targets the

chosen creature instead of you. If the spell forced a saving throw, the chosen creature makes its own save. If the spell was an attack, the same attack roll is rerolled against that creature.

SPELLSHATTER

Beginning at 3rd level, when you use your Divine Smite feature, you can use a bonus action to imbue that weapon with anti-magic energy bestowed by your deity. If the target takes damage from the attack, any spell that is on the target ends if it is of a level equal to or lower than the spell slot you expended for your Divine Smite. In addition, if the damaged creature is concentrating on a spell, the DC of the saving throw it makes to maintain its concentration is equal to your paladin spell save DC or half the damage inflicted, whichever is higher.

You can use this feature twice, regaining expended uses when you finish a short or long rest.

ARCANE CANTRIPS

At 3rd level when you take this oath, choose two of the following cantrips: *challenger's mark**, *booming blade****, *echoing blow**, *frostwind blade**, *greenflame blade****, *looming shadow**, or *punishing strike**. You learn those two cantrips in addition to your paladin spells.

When you cast a cantrip gained from this feature, you can expend 10 hit points from the pool of healing granted by your Lay on Hands feature to change the casting time to 1 bonus action for this casting.

AEGIS AURA

Starting at 7th level, an aura of magical power radiates from you. Starting at 7th level, you radiate an aura of magical energy that protects your allies and allows you to ward them against danger. Whenever a friendly creature within 10 feet of you is the target of an opportunity attack, that attack is made with disadvantage. When you reach 18th level, the aura grows, and opportunity attacks against friendly creatures within 30 feet of you are made with disadvantage.

When you reach 9th level, choose one of the following spells: *aegis of assault**, *aegis of ensnaring**, or *aegis of shielding**. Whenever a friendly creature within the aura provided by this feature is struck by an attack, you can use your reaction to cast the chosen spell on the attacker as a 3rd-level spell without using a spell slot. The chosen spell is also added to your oath spell list, and like your other oath spells, it is always prepared.

MYSTIC CHAMPION

At 15th level, you learn one wizard cantrip, and you choose one wizard spell of 4th-level or lower. That spell is added to your oath spells list. In addition, when you use your action to cast a cantrip, you can make one weapon attack as a bonus action.

ARCANE INCARNATION

At 20th level, you become imbued with the power of the Weave, capable of unleashing magic in its raw form. As an action, you wreath yourself in a maelstrom of magical fire. For one minute, you gain the following benefits.



- You can teleport up to your walking speed as a bonus action.
- Hostile creatures within 30 feet of you have disadvantage on saving throws against spells you cast, and take a -5 penalty on Constitution saving throws to maintain concentration on a spell.
- When you use your action to cast a spell, you can make one weapon attack as a bonus action.
- When you roll damage for a spell, you can reroll a number of the damage dice up to your Charisma modifier (minimum of one). You must use the new rolls.

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

RACES OF THE AEGIS

Paladins who follow this oath and walk the path of the swordmage come from many races. You might be a young wood elf in search of a noble quest in the name of magic, a stranger to the wider world outside the seclusion of your homeland; a self-trained genasi bodyguard, gifted with an affinity for elemental magic; the scion of a disgraced human noble family, taught by the finest tutors in your youth but now a footloose expatriate; or a high elf arcane champion, rigorously trained in a war magic academy to serve in the armies of your Feywild kingdom. Some details on playing paladins of various races who follow the swordmage's path are described below.

Elves. Among high elves, wood elves, and drow elves alike, swordplay is a skill as valued as the arcane arts. In fact, many believe that the common ancestors of all three subraces were the first to combine blade and magic. As a race that promotes study and mental achievement, elves are perfectly suited to the Oath of the Aegis. Their cunning in battle helps them evade physical blows while wearing the light armor typical of a swordmage. Elves often combine their cultural fighting art of bladesong with the path of a

paladin, and high elves like to begin adventuring with a cantrip that allows them to better control the battlefield, favoring such spells as ray of frost.

Half-elves. Many half-elves take up both blade and magic to defend themselves when traveling through hostile lands. These accomplished diplomats naturally learn a gamut of skills, and so half-elves viscerally appreciate the fusion of magic and swordplay that Knights of the Aegis employ. With a flare

for deception and intimidation, half-elves paladins of this oath tend to use of the *aegis of ensnarement* spell with their magical paladin's aura.

Humans. Like half-elves, humans are able learners and quickly adapt to combinations of seemingly disparate skills such as magic and swordplay. Often, human swordmages are foundlings who were raised by high elves or their eladrin cousins in the Feywild. Others are fostered by genasi and learn the ancient Oath of the Aegis from them. These swordmages are proud of their heritage, and their skills rival members of more innately magical races.

Halflings. Nimble and quick, halflings rely on agility instead of size. Although the Oath of the Aegis is favored chiefly by bigger folk, the knowledge has percolated through the world, and even a few halflings have sworn to follow this path.

A halfling who takes up blade and magic in this way is most often an ardent worshipper of Arvoreen, the halfling deity also known as The Defender or The Wary Sword. They swear oaths to defend an important personage or threatened community. They use their size and natural luck to great advantage when defending those in their charge. A halfling who becomes a swordmage is likely to choose the *aegis of shielding* spell to use with their aegis aura.

Dwarves. Few dwarves choose to take up the arcane blade and learn the secrets of the Oath of the Aegis. Many dwarves prefer fighting styles more reliant on enduring strength than precision, favoring hammers and axes in combat over blades. Others simply disdain arcane spellcasting entirely, preferring to rely on martial exploits and divine prayers. Dwarves are not entirely unreceptive to the art, though, for their culture has a long tradition of demonstrating their physical endurance in defense of the vulnerable. In addition, the resilience required to channel magic through one's body and into the blade makes dwarves capable swordmages when they focus on shielding allies or ensnaring foes. Surprisingly, they usually spurn the *aegis of assault* spell, focusing on control and defense.

Dragonborn. Although a dragonborn's natural aptitudes are ideal as a foundation for life as a paladin, few dragonborn knights seek to sword and sorcery. Those who do are usually drawn to the intellectual challenge. The heritage of dragonborn promotes a strong bond with one's weapon, which encourages a few dragonborn warriors to pursue this vocation, often combining it with the similar tradition of the eldritch knight. Natural strength and dedicated study of the arcane arts can make such paladins powerful indeed. When choosing a spell to use with their aegis aura, they tend to favor the more confrontational *aegis of assault*.

Gnomes. While gnomes are unlikely to become paladins, those who do usually choose either the Oath of the Ancients or the Oath of the Aegis. In their culture, magic is not seen as separate from defense of hearth and home, but as an essential tool in protecting their communities. These natural tricksters favor the *aegis of ensnarement*.

Tieflings. Tiefling paladins are rare as a rule, and those who do exist are not as naturally disposed to the Oath of the Aegis as elves or genasi are. Their heritage, however, makes them skilled swordmages when they do pursue the art. They tend to be less considered with defending people or places than the preservation of magical power, and like to combine their use of the *hellish rebuke* spell and the *aegis of assault* spell to stay in thick of the front lines and punish enemy attacks.

Genasi. In most worlds, genasi seldom have a national identity or culture of their own, but members of this race maintain a long tradition of becoming swordmages. Many genasi repudiate the claim that elves were the first paladins to practice this oath's techniques. They allege that their earliest ancestors were responsible for this unique combination of magic and blade. Elves point to their unique art of bladesong as evidence of their history with such fighting style's, but no absolute evidence exists to confirm either race's assertion.

What is certain is that these descendants of geniekind are often born with a combination of mental and physical prowess that suits them perfectly for mastering the Oath of the Aegis. Their affinity for the elements means that both body and blade can crackle with lightning or burn with fire.

Githyanki. Many githyanki seek the glory of their tyrannical queen by following the vocation of the *gish*, a legendary warrior-type equally capable with martial weapons and arcane spells. A more offensive gish likely pursues the path of the eldritch knight, but those sworn to the defense of their queen or other figures of authority tend to be paladins of the Oath of the Aegis. Githyanki are known to practice their own very regimented and particular swordmage tradition, and of the aegis spells, nearly all favor the *aegis of shielding*.

ALTERNATIVE TRINKETS FOR AEGIS PALADINS

When choosing your trinket during character creation, you may use this table rather than the one in the *Player's Handbook*:

d10 Trinket

- 1 The substance inside this small glass pendant appears to be something between a gas and a liquid, and glows with a strange light. You believe it to be a scrap of magic in its raw form.
- 2 This long cape is embroidered with strange symbols and geometric designs in delicate gold thread meant to depict the sensation of letting magic flow through you unfettered.
- 3 This age-worn scroll contains a list of legendary magical items and brief descriptions of their properties, though it holds no clue as to their whereabouts.
- 4 This illustrated children's book contains humorous tales about people who fooled around with magic and suffered terrible consequences, each individually illustrated.
- 5 This well-preserved letter comes from the head of a temple you once saved from destruction, thanking you for your protection and offering you a debt of gratitude.
- 6 This half-burned journal is mostly illegible, but the fragment you have been able to decipher speaks of a forgotten library filled with ancient arcane knowledge.
- 7 This small compass is intended to always point towards the nearest source of magic. Unfortunately, being imbued with its own enchantment, it usually attempts to point at itself.
- 8 This grimoire comes from the study of a long-dead mage notable for his ineptitude. The spells contained within it either have no effect or else result in wildly unanticipated consequences.
- 9 This book is entitled *A Brief History of Magic in the Realms*, and purports to have been written by one of the most celebrated mages of the age. It is anything but brief, and very likely a fake.
- 10 This palm-sized iron disc is always warm to the touch and has the glyph to a teleportation circle stamped on its surface. You have been unable to determine where the circle it point to might be.

THE OATH OF THE AEGIS IN THE FORGOTTEN REALMS

KNIGHTS OF THE MYSTIC FIRE

Knights of the Mystic Fire are paladins sworn to Mystra who act as defenders of knowledge and arbitrators of the use of magic. The Mystic Fire Knights regularly join priests of Mystra on missions to find and uncover lost stores of ancient magic. They also serve as guardians at large Mystran temples and at magical workshops, usually providing military leadership to devoted protectors who lack mystical gifts. Many Knights of the Mystic Fire also choose to dabble in wizardry, and take on scholarly roles as well. They express their love of mystery and all things arcane in their armor and shields, inscribing the metal with long lines of runes and placing precious stones in well-crafted sockets, favoring bright shades of blue and silver for tabards and capes, in tribute to their goddess.

GUARDIANS OF THE WEAVE

In the Forgotten Realms, the Guardians of the Weave are a loosely allied group of spellcasters who oppose evil spellcasters, evil gods of magic, and those who would damage or destroy the Weave. Founded before the Spellplague by concerned agents of Mystra, the group quickly gained support from other churches and is now a widespread organization of heroes who try to undo the damage caused by evil spellcasters. What binds the Guardians together is a love of magic and the desire to protect it against all threats, and in this cause people of many countries and styles of magic set aside their differences to defend their common joy—the Weave.

The Guardians come in many shapes, sizes, and temperaments. Some are far-traveling, some remain in their home city their entire lives. All keep alert for news of harm to the Weave and its good users, whether a phaerimm plot, a new wild magic zone, witch hunts by nonspellcasters, or rumors of someone plotting against Mystra herself. They aid each other as best they can, whether by providing a place to rest, spell trading, or even an emergency teleport spell if possible. The Guardians recognize that the practice of magic is a bond between brothers and sisters of power, and believe that protecting that bond and its source is more important than life itself. Or, as their founder, Aluvauna Thornym, put it, “What purpose to destroy an enemy, if magic itself be the cost?”

All members have essentially the same duties: Keep an eye out for known or obvious evil spellcasters and evidence of the Shadow Weave (whether caster, item, or ongoing effect), report on what they find, and capture (or kill, if absolutely necessary) said spellcasters or people responsible for the Shadow Weave materials. Some members stay close to home and mainly spend time on reports and research, but most are active travelers and steer their adventures toward finding foes of the organization. Most have a magical or mundane way to contact another member in an emergency, and because some of the Guardians are only mid-level spellcasters, sometimes help arrives by way of a teleport spell.

History. The Guardians of the Weave was founded in 1372 by Aluvauna Thornym, a black-haired adventuring mage from Waterdeep. Aluvauna was troubled by an encounter with a Zhent wizard whose magic was difficult to identify, resist, and counter. Her special sense of the Weave, coupled with research into the wizard’s spellbook and certain divinations, revealed the existence of the “Shadow Weave,” an early stage of the goddess Shar’s attempts to become goddess of magic (which eventually resulted in the Spellplague). Disgusted at this affront to Mystra’s magic, she gathered several of her allies and told them of her concerns. They concurred that Faerûn needed good-minded spellcasters to join to protect the source of pure magic, and the Guardians of the Weave was born.

Aluvauna pulled a few strings with the church of Mystra and got an official church blessing for her endeavor. Within a month, a dozen more interested Mystran and Azuthan casters joined the group, hailing from as far away as Halruaa, and within a year, representatives of Deneir, Isis, Savras, Selûne, and the elf and gnome magic deities pledged solidarity with the Guardians. Aluvauna found



herself in charge of a network of activist mages spanning much of Faerûn. Quickly adjusting to the position of leadership, she designated a lieutenant in each city served by a Guardian, trained her associates to recognize the signs of the Shadow Weave, and circulated magic to help them observe and report on dangerous spellcasters. Far more public than the Harpers, the Guardians earned a positive reputation in the magical chaos that followed the Spellplague, working tirelessly to protect the common folk of Faerûn.

The Guardians Today. Though now a century old, this organization is still young compared to groups like the Harpers or Zhentarim, and it has suffered its share of growing pains. With such rapid growth, a wide network, and language difficulties, there was some chaos in the ranks over who reports to whom and the establishment of common badges and signals—but Aluvauna’s efforts stabilized the organization’s numbers and provided a stronger hierarchy for passing information. Some lieutenants are concerned that spies have infiltrated their group, and they’re trying to find a subtle way to identify potential enemies without offending or alarming existing members.

A little-known secret among rank-and-file guardians is that their leadership has cultivated ties to individuals in

two key areas: non-evil necromancers who choose to worship Velsharoon instead of Azuth or Mystra, and progressive Thayan wizards of the Thayan Resurrection movement, who seek magic for its own sake rather than for the power to dominate others. She feels that these Velsharoonite and Thayan contacts would allow her people access to information otherwise blocked to them.

Most Guardians are practical enough to accept that ideology isn't enough to convince opposing spellcasters to turn away from evil and destruction, so they study common techniques used by evil mages and practice magical strategies that block or counter those styles. When not seeking out and fighting evil spellcasters, they catalogue wild magic and dead magic areas, offering a small reward for tips that lead to the discovery of a new location not in their records. Their small library is expanding quickly in this specialized area, and they do what they can to mark these dangerous areas or repair them. Other Guardians explore ruins and unearthing tombs looking for dangerous magic items and artifacts so they can be locked away, destroyed, or otherwise kept out of the hands of those who would use such things to do harm.

The Guardians of the Weave has outposts (usually a lieutenant's home) in Silverymoon, Waterdeep, Baldur's Gate, Neverwinter, Arabel, Shadowdale, Selgaunt (Sembia), Darromar (Tethyr), Heliogabalus (Damara), Velprintalar (Aglarond), Mulsantir (Rashemen), Alaghôn (Turmish), Cimbar (Chessenta), Skuld (Mulhorand), the Great Rift, Halagard (Halruaa), and Ylraphon (the South Moonsea region). When members convene, they usually hold small meetings at a local lieutenant's house, though they have built a shrine outside Silverymoon that they consider the spiritual center of their organization; some have reported unusual beneficial magic effects near the shrine. Many members have never met each other.

The Guardians' Foes. All organizations of evil mages are enemies of the Guardians, but a few are particularly hated. The Cult of the Dragon not only practices horrible forms of necromancy, it wishes to help evil dragons rule the world. The Red Wizards are mostly evil, most of them want to rule the world, and most of those who don't are interested in using magic to corrupt and pervert other creatures. Though the Zhentarim has greatly changed in its operations and membership, the Guardians judge it based on its past activities, and well recall nefarious activities under the leadership of the archmagi Manshoun. Smaller local organizations seeking to control magic for their own ends or manipulate other spellcasters—such as Luskan's Arcane Brotherhood or the Cloaks of Mulmaster—also receive special disdain and opposition.

Of course, there are many lone mages, or minor cabals of foul-minded spellcasters—and the Guardians have a much easier time dealing with them. In the case of members of large groups such as the Cult of the Dragon, the Guardians are more cautious in their attacks, tracking their enemies until they can be dealt with in a way that doesn't bring retaliation upon their own organization.

While this practice makes them unpopular with evil mages and users of the Shadow Weave, the Guardians have rarely been attacked despite their public availability. One reason is that any mage who would attack another without provocation normally brands himself as dangerous,

and most evil mages aren't willing to expose themselves to attack from public authorities without a very good reason. Another reason is the Guardians are known well enough to one another that an attack on one would bring an investigation and retaliation by others in the group. Thus, like city guards, the Guardians have relative safety in numbers and the power of order on their side; aside from infrequent attacks by the unbalanced, they can move safely despite their stated opposition to evil and chaos.

The Guardians' Allies. The group's devotion to good has made it easy for the Guardians to make alliances with other organizations. The Harpers, the Lords' Alliance, the Order of the Gauntlet, and various knighthoods and paladin orders have pledges of mutual assistance with the Guardians in times of need. Rumors in some high circles say that back before the Spellplague, the legendary Seven Sisters gave the group their blessing as well.

The Guardians have strong ties to the churches of Mystra, Azuth, and Selûne, and they maintain friendly relations with the followers of Deneir, Isis, Savras, Oghma, Thoth, and Gond. Their gnome members have built ties with the church of Baravar Cloakshadow, and their elf-blood members communicate with the churches of Corellon Larethian, Hanali Celanil, and Sehanine Moonbow. The church of Torm appreciates the Guardians' aid in dealing with wild magic and dead magic areas, and for their particular efforts against the Zhentarim; Kelemvor's church respects them for their opposition to dark necromancy.

Membership in the Guardians. A potential member has to show a love of magic, active opposition to evil, and integrity. The Guardians can't afford to have warriors who flee in the face of wizardry, rogues who cower at the first sign of a magical trap, or spellcasters who are content to let evil magic flourish as long as it doesn't directly affect them. A current Guardian must recommend a potential member to a lieutenant, who gathers information on the person and, if seemingly suitable, arranges a meeting. If the meeting (which requires on-the-spot castings of *detect evil* and *zone of truth*) goes well, the lieutenant petitions for approval by the five senior members.

Most of the Guardians are active spellcasters, though a small number pursue other fields and only dabble in magic. Many worship Mystra or Azuth, and about a third of those are clerics. Spellcasting forms the backbone of the Guardians, though they hire trusted nonspellcaster friends to deal with other functions vital to keeping the group running.

Members are given a badge of office (a brooch, pin, or amulet shaped like a golden web stretched across a circle) but are not required to wear or display it. Each badge is marked on the back with a number to allow the members to track each other and (if necessary) identify a fallen or missing comrade by a found badge. Guardians can act alone or in groups, and there is no restriction against Guardians working with those outside the group (such as a member's fellow adventurers). Like Harper pins, some Guardian badges are magic items.

The Guardians accept dues in the form of money or small magic items that can be used by agents. Dues are used to pay for research, informants, government permits, and damages to property done in the pursuit of their goals. Since most of the members are adventurers, the group is

fairly wealthy, and the dues are just a token to maintain the organization without having to dip into private funds. Members in financial trouble can have their expenses covered by the group when on missions for the organization, but this is discouraged and normally only done in true emergency situations

KNIGHTS OF THE WEAVE IN FAERUN

In the Forgotten Realms, this oath is often (though not always) called the Oath of the Weave, and those who practice it prioritize the protection of magic itself rather over the (still-important) defense of places or persons. This calling is a necessary one in that world, for magic itself has been threatened and endured cataclysmic disaster more than once, especially in recent years. Many of those who swear the Oath of the Weave are paladins of Mystra, who join an order known as the Knights of the Mystic Fire.

There are few Knights of the Weave, no more than two score, and while they do not have an organized code of conduct, they recognize each other as kindred spirits working for a common purpose. Regardless of alignment, religion, or country of origin, the knights understand the love and respect that each of them has for magic, and they go out of their way to avoid conflict within their ranks. Many act as the military arm of the Guardians of the Weave, much as various churches have orders of knights focused on protecting their interests with necessary violence. Even those knights not involved with the Guardians respect them, and the Guardians see the knights as their champions.

Any knight can teach a qualified person how to begin attuning themselves to the right parts of the Weave. Some potential knights discover the necessary information by accident or research, but most who would become knights meet an existing knight at some point in their travels. A qualified person is one who shows an interest in magic, has at least a rudimentary knowledge of the Weave and its history, and is dedicated enough to swear an oath to protect it with his life. Many aspiring knights swear this oath in front of another knight, but that is not necessary—the Weave itself bears witness to the oath.

Training is an informal matter and does not require active tutelage by another knight. The new knight instinctively (or by studying subtle shifts in the pattern of the Weave) understands what sort of meditation, practice, or study is required to progress as a knight. Sometimes this preparation entails fasting for several days near a dead magic area or trying to cast spells on the fringe of a wild magic area. Another knight might train by studying lore on pools of radiance in a Mystran library or meditating on the shore of a sea to recognize how the ebb and flow of the tides mirrors the shifting strands of the Weave. In between experiencing these revelations, the knight continues to practice his spellcasting and fighting and keeps an ear to the ground for news of things needing his attention.

Each knight feels a pull from a slightly different part of the Weave, guiding what spells he develops in his mind and the role he adopts among the knights. Some avenging or crusading knights choose aggressive magic, believing the best defense is a good offense. Others see themselves as protectors and learn metamagic, counterspelling, and ways of repairing damage to fragile parts of the Weave. Yet others try to become personifications of magic, using their knowledge to augment their own

abilities or even create items that boost them further. Though a wizard might suggest learning a little bit of everything to be ready for all situations, that approach rarely fits the typical knight's mentality; most knights focus their magic in a specific area, relying on their physical prowess and versatile spellfire to make up for any specific lack of spell knowledge.

Since the order is rare and its members few in number, knights are usually more than willing to help each other in times of need, whether by lending a magic item, casting a helpful spell, or even joining a quest for a short time. The last occurrence is particularly common if two knights have very different and complementary skill sets. One thing knights are always generous with is knowledge; they keep no secrets from each other when it comes to protecting the Weave. The knights have friendly relations with churches of Mystra, Azuth, and (to a lesser extent) Savras and can sometimes get aid (particularly healing magic) from those groups.

Knights of the Weave have a long reach but lack the overt power to destroy their enemies outright. This means they must take a more strategic role or use small-scale forays to accomplish their goals. This often leads them to seek adventure. They can't topple the Red Wizards or the Kraken Society on their own, but they know a lot and become very mobile through the use of teleportation magic, making them a great resource for other adventurers as well.

On a day-to-day basis, knights search for threats to the Weave, lost magic they can discover, lore to learn, and receptive minds to teach about respecting the Weave. Many knights are loners, but others excel as leaders. In any case, most of them lead by example rather than by giving orders. They respect considerate spellcasters, and knights in leadership positions tend to quickly earn the loyalty of any spellcasters in the area for their attentiveness and honest desire to hear a qualified opinion.

The knights do not have any official ranks, though they observe each other's progress and comment when one of them demonstrates a new ability. They don't have any serious rivalries within their organization, since they recognize that different opinions (like spells of different schools of magic) are natural, and while they may oppose each other at times, these differences are not worth fighting about. For example, the knights think the rivalries between the various Thayan wizard factions are absurd and a waste of time, but are glad those rivalries keep the Red Wizards from spending all their efforts outside Thay. This is not to say that the knights don't argue, but they're usually happy to let a matter drop and go their separate ways, expecting not to see their verbal sparring partner for a year or more.

Paladins of this oath share much with eldritch knights and wizards who practice the elven tradition of bladesong. While secrets of bladesong are taught only to elves, members of many races now learn the techniques of the Knights of the Weave, though most adherents of this oath are elves, half-elves, or humans tutored in the elven tradition. What differentiates a Weave-sworn paladin from both eldritch knights and bladesingers is their focus on combining spells and steel for the specific purpose of guarding their allies, charges, and protectorates, as well as the Weave itself.

Spells

spell lists

The following spell lists show which of the new spells in this document can be cast by characters of which class. A spell's school of magic is included in parentheses. (None of these new spells can be cast as rituals.)

BARD spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

echoing blow (abjuration)

CLERIC spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

challenger's mark (enchantment)

DRUID spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

frostwind blade (evocation)

punishing strike (necromancy)

PALADIN spells

3RD LEVEL

aegis of assault (conjuration)

aegis of shielding (abjuration)

SORCERER spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

challenger's mark (enchantment)

echoing blow (abjuration)

frostwind blade (evocation)

looming shadow (illusion)

punishing strike (necromancy)

3RD LEVEL

aegis of ensnarement (enchantment)

WARLOCK spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

challenger's mark (enchantment)

echoing blow (abjuration)

frostwind blade (evocation)

looming shadow (illusion)

punishing strike (necromancy)

3RD LEVEL

aegis of assault (conjuration)

WIZARD spells

CANTRIPS (0 LEVEL)

challenger's mark (enchantment)

echoing blow (abjuration)

frostwind blade (evocation)

looming shadow (illusion)

punishing strike (necromancy)

3RD LEVEL

aegis of assault (conjuration)

aegis of ensnarement (enchantment)

aegis of shielding (abjuration)

spell descriptions

The spells are presented in alphabetical order.

AEGIS OF ASSAULT

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when a creature within range hits one of your allies with a melee attack

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, M (a weapon)

Duration: 1 round

With a flash of light, you bring instant vengeance to the attacking enemy. As part of the reaction used to cast this spell, you choose to do either one or both of the following:

- Teleport to an unoccupied space within range, as long as that space is not farther away than you are now from the creature that made the triggering attack.
- Make one melee weapon attack against the attacker if it is within reach. You can use your spellcasting ability instead of your Strength for the attack and damage rolls of this attack if you choose. If the attack hits, it deals an extra 1d4 radiant damage.

If you are unable to do either one, the spell ends. Otherwise, after the triggering attack is resolved, the creature who made that attack has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures besides you until the end of its next turn.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the range increases to 60 feet, and the radiant damage increases by 1d4 for each slot level above 3rd.

AEGIS OF ENSNAREMENT

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when a creature within range hits one of your allies with a melee attack

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, M (a weapon)

Duration: 1 round

Your magic ensnares an attacking enemy, compelling it to attack you instead of your ally. The creature that made the triggering attack must roll a Charisma saving throw before that attack is resolved. If it fails, you teleport it to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. It then makes the triggering attack against you instead, comparing the same attack roll to your Armor Class to determine whether it hits or misses you.

Whether the saving throw succeeds or fails, after the triggering attack is resolved, the attacking creature takes 1d4 psychic damage and has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures besides you until the end of its next turn.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the range increases to 60 feet, and the psychic damage increases by 1d4 for each slot level above 3rd.

AEGIS OF SHIELDING

3rd-level abjuration

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when a creature within range of you hits one of your allies with a melee attack

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, M (a weapon)

Duration: Instantaneous

You protect your ally with a gleaming barrier of invisible force. Until the end of the turn, the target of the triggering attack gains resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage, as well as a +5 bonus to AC, including against the triggering attack.

After the triggering attack is resolved (whether it hits or misses), the creature that made the attack takes 1d4 force damage and has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures besides you until the end of its next turn.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the range increases to 60 feet, and the force damage increases by 1d4 for each slot level above 3rd.

CHALLENGER'S MARK

Enchantment cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 5 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 round

You bellow out a magical challenge that your opponent finds difficult to ignore. When casting this spell, make a melee weapon attack against one creature within range. On a hit, the target suffers the attack's normal effects. In addition, before the beginning of your next turn, the target has disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes that does not target you. Also, if the target willingly moves more than 30 feet away from you, or makes an attack that suffers disadvantage from this spell, it immediately takes 1d8 psychic damage.

This spell's damage increases when you reach higher levels. At 5th level, the melee attack deals an extra 1d8 psychic damage to the target, and the damage the target suffers for moving more than 30 feet away from you, or attacking you with disadvantage, increases to 2d8. Both damage rolls increase by 1d8 at 11th level and 17th level.



ECHOING BLOW

Abjuration cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 round

As part of the action used to cast this spell, you must make an unarmed strike or weapon attack against one creature within range. On a hit, the target suffers the attack's normal effects, and if the target is concentrating on a spell when this attack hits, the attack deals an extra 1d6 thunder damage, which creates a loud noise that can be heard up to 100 feet away.

In addition, until the start of your next turn, the next time the target you hit with this cantrip makes a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration (such as against damage from this spell), it does so with disadvantage.

This spell's damage increases when you reach higher levels. At 5th level, the melee attack deals an extra 1d6 thunder damage to the target, and the damage the target suffers if it is concentrating on a spell increases to 2d6. Both damage rolls increase by 1d6 at 11th level and 17th level.

FROSTWIND BLADE

Evocation cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 5 feet

Components: V, S, M (a melee weapon)

Duration: 1 round

As part of the action used to cast this spell, you must make a melee weapon attack against one creature within the spell's range, otherwise the spell fails. Your weapon leaves a frosty trail as it cuts through the air, striking a blow that inflict winter's wrath. On a hit, the target suffers the attack's normal effects, and the next time the target makes an attack roll until the end of your next turn, it must either accept disadvantage on the attack roll or take 1d10 cold damage and make the attack roll normally. A creature within 5 feet of you that takes cold damage from this cantrip reduces their speed by half until the end of your next turn.

This spell's damage increases when you reach higher levels. At 5th level, the melee attack deals an extra 1d10 cold damage to the target, and the damage the target suffers for not taking disadvantage on their next attack increases to 2d10. Both damage rolls increase by 1d10 at 11th level and 17th level.

LOOMING SHADOW

Illusion cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S, M (a ranged or thrown weapon)

Duration: 1 round

As part of the action used to cast this spell, you must make a thrown or ranged weapon attack against one creature within the spell's range; otherwise, the spell fails. If the weapon or ammunition hits the target, a shadowy duplicate of it appears, hanging in the air just short of where the original struck, and you choose one of your allies within 30 feet of the target. The first time the target attacks the chosen ally, forces the chosen ally to make a saving throw, or includes that ally in a harmful area of effect before the end of your next turn, the second weapon or piece of ammunition automatically strikes, inflicting 1d10 psychic damage.

This spell's damage increases when you reach higher levels. At 5th level, the ranged attack deals an extra 1d10 psychic damage to the target, and the damage the target suffers for acting against the chosen ally increases to 2d10. Both damage rolls increase by 1d10 at 11th level and 17th level.

PUNISHING STRIKE

Necromancy cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 5 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 round.

As part of the action used to cast this spell, you must make an unarmed strike or melee weapon attack against one creature within the spell's range; otherwise the spell fails. On a hit, the target suffers the attack's normal effects. In addition, a black web of necrotic energy radiates across its skin from where it was struck until the start of your next turn. If the target willingly takes a reaction before then, it immediately takes 1d8 necrotic damage, and the spell ends.

This spell's damage increases when you reach higher levels. At 5th level, the melee attack deals an extra 1d8 necrotic damage to the target, and the damage the target suffers for taking a reaction increases to 2d8. Both damage rolls increase by 1d8 at 11th level and 17th level.

