

THE BOOK OF THE RIGHTHEOUS



By Aaron Loeb

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GRR 1015

THE BOOK OF THE RIGHTHOUS

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Aaron, Chris, and William would like to dedicate this book to the memory of Sandeep Rao. He made an oath to himself, he got his share, he couldn't drink a cup of coffee without spilling it, and he never met a game he didn't like. We'll miss you at Gen Con every year, Deeper.

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That Seems Familiar

In crafting the religions and church structures for the Book of the Righteous, we have sometimes drawn on real-world religions and customs to inform the writing. This was done for verisimilitude only (after all, our imagination can hardly equal the splendid variety of actual human experience) and was not done to draw any comparison between the religions in this book and actual world religions or customs. No “hidden” commentary on real-world societies was intended or should be read into the text, and we certainly mean no offense to anyone, religious or otherwise. We certainly do not mean to liken actual religions to those found herein, which are pure works of fancy.

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Chapter I ~ Introduction

Chapter I: Introduction

Welcome to *Book of the Righteous*, third in Green Ronin's Arcana series. In previous volumes we have explored magical cabals (*Arcana: Societies of Magic*) and the dark art of necromancy (*Secret College of Necromancy*). *Book of the Righteous* focuses on the divine: mythology and cosmology, gods and their servants, and churches and their beliefs. If you want religion to feature strongly in your fantasy campaign, *Book of the Righteous* is for you.

What Is This Book For?

This book provides almost 20 pick-up-and-play churches corresponding to gods that feature in most fantasy campaigns (god of earth, god of war, god of justice, god of magic, etc.). Each church features lavish detail, including in-depth information on its clerics, holy warriors, and prestige classes. These churches can be put in any campaign to bring a whole new level of detail to the religious characters. Plus, for those who don't have a complete cosmology or mythology in their games, *Book of the Righteous* provides a complete mythology that unifies all of the gods for which we provide churches. That mythology, and its corresponding cosmology, is *not* tied to an existing campaign setting, so you can easily incorporate it into any homebrew campaign. However, if you don't like it, or if you already have a very complete mythology, you don't need the mythology we provide to use the detailed churches.

Why Do I Need This Book?

You need this book if you intend to make religion a part of your game. If you're a Game Master who wants your characters' beliefs to *mean* something, *Book of the Righteous* will be an invaluable resource. If you're a player intending to make your character's religious beliefs an important part of her behavior, you will find *Book of the Righteous* terribly useful. This book will ensure that you no longer have to make stuff up off the top of your head when talking about her god, her church, or the tenets of her faith. We provide each church's core beliefs, laws, clergy titles, power structures, primary missions, and more.

You need *Book of the Righteous* if you intend to play a cleric, holy warrior, or prestige class religious character. After all, your character's life, powers, and entire motivation for leaving the comfort of home and killing monsters is based on her religion – don't you owe it to her to know more about her beliefs than the name of her god?

But I Already Have a Book with Gods in It!

We've found that other books out there that list gods still require the player and the DM to invent a whole series of myths incorporating the gods into the game world. In general, these books don't explain who created the world, what relation the gods have to one another, or what to call each god's clerics. There are all sorts of useful details left out, and scant or no detail about the churches that worship these gods. Even very thorough campaign settings on the market give short shrift to what the worship of their gods is actually like.

Listing many religions as a small subsection of a full campaign setting simply cannot provide the exhaustive detail that people playing religious characters want and need. This shifts the burden onto the player and DM to provide that detail. *Book of the Righteous* is as detailed as any campaign setting, but it focuses only on religion. Its detail can therefore easily be added to any other setting – either on the market, or homebrew.

Book of the Righteous gives you:

- One pantheon with over 20 gods;
- Absolutely complete detail for *every* god in that pantheon;
- A complete mythology explaining the relations of those gods to one another, which can be used or ignored if you already have a full mythology;
- A complete cosmology, including a cosmological map that, like the mythology, can be used or ignored;
- Very thorough descriptions of every church of every god in the pantheon, including titles, structure, core beliefs, and religious laws;
- A major new class, based on the paladin, called the holy warrior;
- Three holy orders (a cleric, a holy warrior, and a prestige class) for nearly every god; and
- New spells, magic items, and domains.

So You Want to Play a Cleric

In the world of fantasy role-playing games, it's easy to sit down and play a fighter. You have your favorite weapon; when you see the bad guy's head, you hit it with the weapon. As a rogue you steal stuff, and as a wizard you hoard spells. But the cleric requires some finesse. You have to know about a religion, and you have to let that religion guide your character's actions.

Chapter I ~ Introduction



Anwyn, Morwyn and Rontra, the maiden, the mother and the grandmother, are often shown together so.

If you're like us at Green Ronin, you tend to want more information about your religion than "I worship the god of thunder." Sure, it's a great icebreaker at the local tavern. But what do you say when that drunk guy in the corner comes to you all weepy, telling you he's led a terrible life (killed a few guys, left a wife and seventeen kids at home, etc.) and that he desperately needs spiritual salvation? "Thunder is good" is not an appropriate reply.

Book of the Righteous was born as an idea when we sat down one day to play a d20 game, using a very thorough campaign setting, and the person playing a cleric had this to say after receiving a list of gods: "Okay, I want to worship the god of strength. What does that mean?"

The truth was, all we had to offer the player was the god's name, alignment, appearance, and favored weapon. Religions are more complex and deserve more detail. So we conceived this book: a massive compendium of churches based around the kinds of gods people like to see in their fantasy worlds. Then we realized that some people don't have time to think up a full mythology and cosmology explaining who the gods are, where the races come from, why there's evil in the world, and all those other big questions a cleric should be able to answer. So, for those folks who don't have the time, we built a complete mythology unifying all the churches.

Why Should I Care About Religion?

Swords and sorcery are cool, we'll grant you that. But in all flavors of fantasy, from the legends of King Arthur to the myths of ancient

Greece, the divine is a unifying thread for the characters. There would be no Grail Quest if it weren't for religion. If the gods didn't love and hate Hercules, he never would have had to perform those twelve labors. Introducing a consistent religion to your game world, including the tensions between various practitioners of the faith, opens up a new world of intrigue, adventure, and excitement to your game. The more detailed your understanding of the religion, the more exciting the opportunities. Frankly, without a carefully designed religion in your game, you're missing one of the pillars of the fantasy role-playing experience.

That's Where We Come In

If you don't already have a mythology and cosmology in your game world, you need one. In addition to supplying very complete churches, *Book of the Righteous* provides you with a well thought-out religion. It's based on the common threads of many real-world ancient mythologies, though you will not find Odin, Zeus, or Set within these pages. If you are very familiar with ancient myths, you will find some elements taken straight from them (for example, Apollo rode a chariot drawn by swans; in our mythology, so does Naryne), but no direct analogs. In general, we have taken window dressing from some mythologies and invented the rest using the ancients as our compass, distilling the spirit of real mythologies into something entirely fantastic.

Along with a full family tree of gods and a mythology about their struggles and politics, you will find in *Book of the Righteous* a complete section on campaigning that suggests relations between all the churches and ways to incorporate the mythology into the world of your game.

Chapter I ~ Introduction

Why Not Real Myths?

Originally, we had thought of creating plausible churches for several real-world mythologies. Quite often in games we end up using a familiar mythology to flesh out our clerics and paladins. But the problem is that real-world mythologies are just that – real world. The Greek pantheon makes perfect sense in another world on the surface, but once you bring in myths surrounding Mount Olympus, the Trojan War, and Athens, it starts to make a little less sense. Similarly, the Norse myths work great when you have a people surrounded by ice and warfare, but would a people born on a peaceful tropical island really spend much time contemplating an icy war that would end the world? Worse, there's always someone at the table who's read more of the real-world mythology than the person playing the religious expert. There is nothing worse than playing a cleric with a 22 Knowledge (Religion) skill mod and having the dwarven fighter constantly correcting you about your gods.

But beyond all that, there's something that feels inherently wrong to us about playing Igran, from Fuilli, an island off the Continent of Migrum, who's a cleric of Isis. Real myths are simply too tied to our world and can't help but shatter the artifice of the fantasy.

For these reasons, we felt an entirely fantastic mythos was best for our purpose – to give players and GMs a mythology that can be “plugged in” to any world. Clearly, people who are very persnickety about myth will find flaws. Just as real-world myths are grounded in the geopolitics of the region that gave them rise, ours isn't. There is a splendor to real myths that, obviously, we can't capture while maintaining “plug in” status (and we're not even bothering to mention the hubris of trying to capture the beauty of thousands of years of oral tradition in a year behind a word processor). For this reason, in Chapter IX, we provide plenty of ways to ground the mythology in your game world, and in Chapter X we offer plenty of ways to change what we provide.

How To Use This Book

We've broken what you need to know down into several easily managed sections.

Chapter II

Chapter II is a complete reference section that you can keep referring back to – a brief mythology and a cosmological map and legend. If you have a game with a complete mythology and cosmology already, you may enjoy reading this, but you can also skip it. In this chapter we explain who all the gods are and where they came from; if you intend to use the churches in this book for gods that already exist in your game, this might not be useful to you.

Then comes the heart of the book: the gods and their churches. Each of the next five chapters provides a description of the church of each god, usually with at least three character classes from that faith (a cleric, a holy warrior, and a prestige class). We give you some of the myths of that church, the prayers and holy days common to its adherents, and a complete ethos for the faithful.

Chapter III

Chapter III is an introduction to the churches and The Great Church.

Chapter IV

Chapter IV lays out information on the old gods (Earth, Water, Air, the Creator, and the Tree of Life).

Chapter V

Chapter V covers the gods of the tree (Healing and Mercy, War and Valor, Knowledge and Magic, Inspiration and Madness, and Death);

Chapter VI

Chapter VI details the gods born of womb (Justice, Travel and Tricks, Art and Love, Home and Hearth, and Forge and Artisans); and

Chapter VII

Chapter VII describes the Three Sisters (Nobility, Victory, and the Hunt).

Chapter VIII

After the chapters on the accepted faiths, we come to Chapter VIII: Take a walk on the wild side and explore the secret faiths of the dark gods; gods so mean they once shot a man for snoring too loud. We discuss what these blasphemous cults believe, how they remain hidden, and how belonging to such a cult affects your character.

Chapter IX

Then it's off to Chapter IX: adventure and campaign ideas, giving you quick and easy ways to bring this material into your existing or new campaign. We also supply several campaign and adventure ideas for groups of religious characters.

Chapter X

We roll it all up with Chapter X: the “How to ignore this book and do it all yourself” section, which, if you're going to ignore this book, you won't read. But if you *do* read it, you'll find everything you need to know about adding on to the mythology presented in Chapter II and Appendix I, changing it around, and incorporating new gods into it or using it in combination with other mythologies.

Chapter XI

Then we offer you Chapter XI: all the rules you need to make it fly – the new holy warrior class, feats, domains, spells, items, servitors of the gods, and more. Except in cases where new rules are very specific to a particular church, such as the prestige classes, the final chapter is home to all new rules introduced in this book.

The Appendices

Finally, there are the appendixes. Appendix I provides the complete story of the gods. The Great Sage Matalou takes you through the tales of creation – who are the gods, where did they come from, and how were the races of the lands brought into being? The story is broken into parts that can easily be introduced into a campaign, either as long-standing mysteries that the players slowly unravel by finding ancient tomes on their quests, or as common knowledge passed on to every child on his naming day. You decide. Appendix II is a handy genealogy and glossary of all the gods and races covered throughout the book. Appendix III is a reference guide to the faiths.

That's the book in brief. From here you can either delve into the mythology and cosmology in Chapter II or jump ahead to the churches in Chapter III. The secrets of the gods await!

Chapter III ~ The Mythology



In the beginning...

Chapter III: The Mythology

About This Chapter

Chapter II provides you all the information you need to understand the mythology upon which this book is based. **This book is designed so that you can use the gods and their churches without reading or following this mythology** – if you already have a “God of Justice” in your campaign, for instance, and want more detail on what the members of his church believe, the church of Maal should work quite well and provide you more information about structure and core beliefs than most of us can generate extemporaneously. The churches of the gods are found in chapters III – VII.

That being said, much of the value of this book comes from the unification of detail; these gods and their followers have relationships based on myth. We therefore recommend that you check out the mythology and use as much, or as little, as you like in your campaign. For ideas on altering the myths and excising details, be sure to check out Chapter X.

You will note that we have named the gods. If you don't like the names, or you already have names for the gods in your campaign, the names we provide are in no way required to make sense of the material. See Chapter X for more detail on renaming the gods.

If you don't have time to dig into a big, meaty mythology (as found in Appendix I), this chapter will give you everything you need. It's structured so that you can keep flipping back to it to find reminders of all the little details as you go through the book, and contains all you and the other folks in your campaign will really need to introduce the gods of the mythology to your campaign world. This chapter is supported by Appendix II, a genealogy and glossary of all the gods and races found throughout the book.

This chapter has three main sections: 1) Listing of the Gods, 2) The Story, and 3) The Cosmology.

1) Listing of the Gods: The first thing you'll want to know is what gods we cover in this book. Section one lists areas of concern commonly ruled by gods, as well as the names of the *Book of the Righteous* gods that correspond to them.

2) The Story is a quick look at the tale of the mythology. It is written in a very matter-of-fact tone with important details highlighted. Sometimes there are d20 terms put in brackets to make matters clearer. (This is a very quick synopsis and not very colorful; for the complete mythology, read Appendix I, which presents the mythology in story form, told in character by the Great Sage Matalou.) The story section is followed by a timeline. For reference purposes, headers before many of the paragraphs make it easy to find that part of the story later on.

3) The Cosmology is a map of the universe as implied by the mythology (see Chapter X for notes on modifying this cosmology) and a legend.

While we certainly expect that every member of your group will buy a copy of this book, we understand that you may want to keep parts of it secret. We therefore grant you the right to photocopy any part or all of Chapter II (and Appendixes I and II) to act as a handout to your players.

Chapter II ~ The Mythology

Listing of the Gods

So, who are the gods? What follows is a full list of the popular areas of concern (sometimes known as “portfolios”) for gods we’ve seen in many campaign worlds, and which god rules each area of concern. For some of the listings, we say “see Chapter VIII.” This is because we have tried to keep the identity and worship of the evil gods secret so DMs using this material can have plenty of surprises up their sleeves. If it says “see Chapter VIII,” it means that there is a god of this area of concern in the book, but we’re not talking about him or her openly.

You’ll also note that some of the names are repeated. This is because we’ve provided very detailed churches for these gods, and it would be impossible to go into detail for a god of lightning, a god of thunder, and a god of the sky. Instead, they’re all the same god. If you want them to be separate gods, you can do that; we cover many ways of doing that in Chapter X.

In cases where more than one god is listed for a single area of concern, either one will work. You should choose the god most similar to the one you have been using in your world. Now, the listing of the gods:

Table 21: Listing of the Gods

God of Valor: Terak	God of Slaughter: See Chapter VIII	God of Water: Shalimyr
God of Dwarves: Korak	God of Orcs: See Chapter VIII	God of Earth: Rontra
God of Halflings: Anwyn	God of Knowledge: Tinel	God of Air: Urian
God of Woodlands: Thellyne	God of the Sea: Shalimyr	God of Wisdom: Morwyn
God of Gnomes: Zheenkeef	God of Pirates: Darmon or See Chapter VIII	God of Truth: Tinel
God of the Sun: Urian*	God of Warriors: Terak	God of Wine: Zheenkeef
God of the Elves: Aymara	God of Rebirth: Mormekar	God of Laughter: Darmon
God of Strength: Canelle	God of the Harvest: Rontra	God of Song: Aymara
God of Death and Magic: Mormekar	God of the Feast: Anwyn	God of Dancing: Aymara
God of Retribution: Maal	God of the Forge: Korak	God of Healing: Morwyn
God of Magic: Tinel	God of Lightning: Urian	God of the Dead: Maal
God of Roads: Darmon	God of Thunder: Urian	God of Learning: Tinel
God of Nature: Rontra	God of Rain: Shalimyr	God of Soldiers: Terak
God of Rogues: Zheenkeef, Darmon	God of Storms: Shalimyr, Urian	God of Nobility: Naryne
God of Tyranny: See Chapter VIII	God of the Winds: Urian	God of Hatred: See Chapter VIII
God of Death: Mormekar	God of the Moon: Urian*	God of Greed: See Chapter VIII
God of Secrets: Tinel	God of Fire: Kador/Asmodeus	God of Gluttony: See Chapter VIII

* This god also has a servant (mentioned in his church section) who occupies this position as a demi-god. For a complete genealogy showing the relationships of the gods to one another, see Appendix II.

The Story

How the Universe and the Creator Were Born

In the beginning, the universe was perfect, and good, and empty [pure law and good]. Then came the force of change and evil, called *Shachté* or *Corpus Infernus* [pure chaos and evil]. In the meeting of perfection and change, there was a flash and the Nameless One [neutral Creator God], an all-powerful being, uttered the first sound: His name. In speaking His name, He summoned Himself from nothingness.

How the Elements Were Created

In the First Epoch of creation, the Nameless One was alone in the darkness. He created a palace for Himself in the void and pondered His existence. At last, He began to create. Speaking four words, He created the four elements: fire, water, earth, and air. Knowing He could do anything with these four powers, He created a vision of what would come. He watched this vision for some time, seeing that by His action a world would be created and it would be filled with life. Then He acted as the vision had foretold.

How Our World Was Created

In the Second Epoch of creation, the Nameless One built four pillars from the four powers [the elemental planes]. Each pillar was one of the powers in its purest form. Then He created a great sphere and placed it on top of the pillars. This sphere is our universe. At first the universe was empty [filled with nothing but ether and shadow], and then the Nameless One created a central sphere [the prime material plane], filling it with all of the parts of the sky: suns, moons, stars, winds, and vapors. Then He created land under the sky: mountains, hills, valleys, plains, and cliffs. Then He surrounded the lands He had created with the waters: oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and streams.

The Birth of the First Being, the God of Fire

Having created a world where life would grow, the Nameless One waited. But life did not come, so He made it – a companion He called Kador [lawful evil God of Fire]. To Kador He gave the gifts of life, will, and fire [these three elements form a soul], and ever after, only creatures with these three gifts were complete. The Nameless One was so pleased with Kador that He gave will to the earth, the sky, and the waters also. Then He delivered to Kador three prophecies:

Chapter III ~ The Mythology

The Three Prophecies of the Nameless One

First, He declared that much life would come to the world and that it was Kador's duty to give the gift of fire to all those born of the world. Second, He whispered a long decree into Kador's ear. Third, He proclaimed that as all of creation was born with the uttering of His name, so too would all creation cease when His name was spoken again. This said, the Nameless One departed from the sphere and was never heard from again.

The Birth of the Elemental Gods

The earth, sky, and waters, having heard that much life would come to the world, tried to create it, but were unable. Eventually, Kador tricked them into unifying. All the parts of the earth unified and awoke with life as **Rontra**, the Earth [LG Goddess of Earth]. All the parts of the sky unified and awoke as **Urian**, the Air [NG God of the Air]. All the waters unified to awake as **Shalimyr**, the Water [CN God of the Waters]. Kador gave these three fire.

The Birth of the Tree of Life, the Cursing of the Fifth Fruit

From the joining of Shalimyr and Rontra arose a great and lovely tree, called **Eliwyn** [N Tree of Life], and on it blossomed five fruits, tended to by Urian. Kador demanded the fifth fruit on the tree for himself, but the other three would not allow it. Kador had become corrupted by the *Corpus Infernus* [this is the power of pure corruption; the assumed state of all life is lawful good, but this power can drag life away from good or law or both]. Kador was drunk with power and believed himself higher than the others, likening himself to their father. Their refusal to give him the fifth fruit angered him, and he cursed it so that the child within would be weaker than a god but more plentiful – and would rebel against those who grew in the other fruits.

The Birth of the Four Main Gods

The other four fruits ripened and in them grew four young gods: two brothers, **Terak** [LG/LN God of War] and **Tinel** [CG/N God of Magic]; and two sisters, **Morwyn** [LG Goddess of Healing] and **Zheenkeef** [CN Goddess of Inspiration]. Terak, Tinel, and Zheenkeef could not wait for their fruit to ripen, so they forced their fruit to fall. Tinel and Terak landed at the same moment. Then their sister Zheenkeef fell. At last, Morwyn's fruit finished ripening and she fell. When all four gods emerged, Kador came to them and offered fire to the eldest. Each brother insisted that he was the elder. Kador gave all four the fire, pleased at having sown dissent among them, and then tried to steal the fifth fruit he had cursed.

The Birth of the First Race, the Div

The fruit burst open at his touch, and from it came the **div** [precursors to Genies], the first race of the world, weaker than the gods but more plentiful, for there were thousands of tiny div. Their blood was fire and they did not age or grow ill. They ran all over Kador and he shook them off, scattering them across the world and forming three great tribes: the **Marid**, the **Shaitan**, and the **Shee**.

The First War and Death of the Gods and Tree of Life

In the **Third Epoch** of creation, the races of the div spread further across the world. Terak, Tinel, and Zheenkeef engaged in the **lesser war of the gods**, using the fire given them by Kador to make

weapons: Terak made the axe; Tinel made magic; Zheenkeef made inspiration. Terak and Tinel fought to be the eldest, and Zheenkeef believed that if she destroyed them both, she would gain the title. Morwyn watched in horror. All four gods began teaching the div and granting them powers. Eventually, Terak and Tinel were tricked by Zheenkeef and killed each other using Eliwyn, the Tree of Life, which was also destroyed.

The Birth of the God of Death, the Corruption of the God of Fire

In the moment that the two gods were killed, **Mormekar** [N God of Death], the Shadow, was created. He told Morwyn that while death was in his power, so too would be rebirth if he possessed fire. Morwyn, Mormekar, Urian, and Rontra called to Kador for fire, but he refused to give it, even though he had been commanded to do so by the Nameless One; Kador had become so corrupted by the *Corpus Infernus* that he was now completely evil.

Rebirth of the Gods and the Tree:

Since Kador had betrayed his duty, Morwyn gave Mormekar her fire, which she had never used to make a weapon. Mormekar used it to burn the bodies of Tinel and Terak on a pyre built from the wood of Eliwyn. Zheenkeef so loved the dancing flames that she threw herself on the pyre and was consumed. When all was burnt to ash, nothing happened, and Morwyn fell to her knees and wept. When her tears hit the ashes, Eliwyn sprouted forth anew with five fruits, and at the foot of the tree were three infants: Terak, Tinel, and Zheenkeef reborn.

The First God Born of the Womb, The Creation of the Celestials:

Morwyn and Mormekar raised the three infants and had a child of their own, which they named **Maal** [LN God of Justice]. As Maal and the other gods grew, Morwyn made her three great works. First, she called the most powerful of the div to her. There were many who had been given great powers by her siblings in their war, and these div she made into the celestial host, separating them from their people but teaching them the songs and wisdom of the gods. The chief of this host was the archangel **Iblis** [a Huge Solar who is now a LE Duke of Hell]. Second, she discovered, with the eyes of a healer, why it was that her siblings had gone mad and killed each other, and she created a cure. Third, she concocted three great laws.

The Casting Out of the Demons:

When Morwyn's works were complete, the gods were all fully grown. She called them to her and explained their illness – they were infected by the *Corpus Infernus*. To cure them, she had used her power and the power of the celestial host to build a prison outside of the world. This place she called **Hell** [LE plane]. Opening a portal to Hell, she expelled the *Corpus Infernus* from the gods and the celestial host, and this raw stuff of chaos and evil became what men call **demons**. This done, the gods would descend no further into evil.

The First Laws of the Gods:

She then shared the three laws with the gods: first, that the gods would never make war against one another; second, that the gods would use their strength to guide the div and the new races ripening in Eliwyn's fruit; and third, that no one god would rule the others. As the eldest, she would lead, but she could not order the other gods to obey and follow.

Chapter II ~ The Mythology

The Creation of the Devils

These laws agreed to, the gods all turned their attention to Kador, who had turned evil and had to be cured of *Corpus Infernus* or cast out. Kador had prepared for this and had given great powers to several div, making them as great as any of the celestial host – perhaps greater. His servants were named Lilith (with whom he procreated, giving birth to countless dark beasts), Baal (his fiercest warrior), Dispater (the clever), Mammon (the mad and power-hungry), and Leviathan (a Marid he had stretched into a sea-creature larger than any ocean). He also sought to make a creature in his own image, as the Nameless One had created him, and this creature he called Mephistopheles. He would call his servants “divils,” which would later become the word “devils.”

War of the Gods, Birth of the Dragons

The gods attacked Kador and his minions in the **Great War of the Gods**, but were driven back by a great deluge of fire unleashed by Kador just as Leviathan swallowed Shalimyr so that the waters could not douse the flames. Fire spread everywhere, and those div caught in the deluge had their skin burnt away. Most died, but some were transformed into creatures of pure fire and power – the first dragons.

Imprisonment of the God of Fire

The gods attacked a second time and this time broke Kador. The fire he was entrusted with was taken from him and placed into the five fruits of the tree so that all the children of the world born from those fruits would possess it. Kador and his servants were cast into the prison Morwyn had made for them, Hell, and most of the children spawned of Kador and Lilith went with them.

Birth of the Young Gods

The gods had prevailed and there was peace for a period of time. Morwyn took Terak as a second husband, and together they had twins, **Anwyn** [LG Goddess of the Hearth] and **Korak** [NG God of the Forge]. Tinel and Zheenkeef married and also had twins, **Darmon** [CG God of Travelers and Messengers] and **Aymara** [CG Goddess of Art and Love]. They raised these children happily and all was well.

Rebellion of the Div

Before long, the remnants of the Marid and the Shaitan grew restless. The div had been used and abused in every war of the gods and sought now to overthrow them. They rose up, as Kador had foretold they would, and were put down by the celestial host led by Iblis. The gods knew they had to expel the div from the world, for they were cursed by Kador. The Marid were sent to the pillar of water and the Shaitan to the pillar of fire. But the Shee, the silent third race of div, had never partaken in any war. They had remained hidden about the earth; yet Kador had cursed them too.

The Birth of the Fey and the Elves

The gods gave each Shee a choice – to be stripped of the fire in their blood and become mortal or to be stripped of the gift of will. Those who agreed to be stripped of the fire were gathered by the gods and placed, sleeping, under Eliwyn, for they were a new mortal race called the **elves** and would wait for the ripening of the other fruits. Those who agreed to be stripped of will were allowed to remain in their hiding places around the world and were called the **fey**.

Birth of the Dwarves

The children of the gods grew, and yet the fruits still did not ripen. Finally, Zheenkeef grew impatient and went to the tree. She grabbed the sleeping elves to play with them, hurling them into the woods; but some awakened and bit her hands. Yelping, she shook her hands and the elves fell into the water and the earth. Her hand covered in blood, she grabbed the first fruit and hurled it across the earth. Meanwhile, Korak, the none-too-bright son of Terak and Morwyn, was playing across the world. He was hit in the head by the bloody fruit, thus gaining some of Zheenkeef’s inspiration, but being knocked unconscious for many years. Out of the fruit rose the **dwarves**, and they made great halls in Korak’s head.

Birth of the Gnomes

Zheenkeef plucked another fruit and then noticed she had bled all over it. She licked off her blood and hurled this fruit across the world. From it came the **gnomes**, who had been touched by her inspiring blood, tongue, and breath.

Birth of the Halflings

The next fruit she kicked and it bounced across the world, squashing the people inside – who were supposed to be tall and willowy – to half their size. Thus were born the **halflings**.

Birth of the Humans, and the Fifth Fruit

Hungry from her labors, Zheenkeef plucked the fourth fruit and gobbled it up. This made her quite ill, and Morwyn came at the sound of her bellowing. Morwyn made her vomit up the fruit and all the gods worked to reconstruct the contents. The people inside the fruit, **humans**, had lost something of themselves in the process – which is why they are so short-lived – and were made into many different forms by the gods, which is why they look so different from one another. The fifth fruit remained untouched and still has not ripened.

Making of the Land of the Dead

The children of the gods grew to maturity after this, and there was an **age of heroes** as the gods walked among the mortal races giving them great gifts and teaching them countless tricks. During this age, Maal and Korak built a great realm for Maal [the land of the dead] under the earth, beneath the roots of Eliwyn, so that he might oversee the souls of the dead.

The Three Companions Find the Three Sisters

Some short time after the completion of the realm, Maal, Darmon, and Korak went adventuring together looking for wives. On their journey, they found three sisters: **Naryne** [LN Goddess of Nobility], **Thellyne** [NG Goddess of the Hunt], and **Canelle** [CG Goddess of Victory]. While Maal and Naryne immediately agreed to marriage, Darmon and Korak’s love for the other two sisters (Darmon’s for Canelle, Korak’s for Thellyne) went unreciprocated. Regardless, these three sisters joined the family of the gods.

The Gods Divide Over Chaos and Law

In the **Fourth Epoch** of creation, the age of heroes came to an end. The gods, forbidden to fight against one another directly, taught the mortal races to think like them. They cultivated followers and used these followers against one another. Though *Corpus Infernus* was not in them, they still had powerful disagreements. Some believed strongly

Chapter III ~ The Mythology



The fruit gave Zheenkeef a terrible stomach ache and she began howling in pain.

in the importance of individualism [chaotically aligned], while others wished to see strong societies and laws [lawfully aligned]. The two sides gave some of their followers great powers to work their will on the world, speaking to them directly, even walking at their sides.

The Separation of Heaven and Earth

Eventually, though, the struggles of the servants of the gods grew so ugly and intense that the gods almost came to war again. This was too much, and the gods agreed on a Compact, a system of laws that prohibited them from directly ordering the mortal races to do their bidding. The gods had been living in the earthly sphere [the prime material], but they then set themselves apart, creating a great mountain away from the world and living at its spire [the seven Heavens]. Maal's Kingdom was also separated from the earth, with only a dark river connecting them.

The Creation of the Compact, Gehenna and Elysium

Rather than instructing mortals directly, the gods created a system, called The Compact, in which mortals might be given powers to serve the will of a god only if the mortals came, of their own free will, to worship that god. This new order gave the gods power from the belief and prayers of mortals. To make the mortals' choice to serve the gods meaningful, the gods agreed to allow the dark forces to tempt mortals toward darkness. In their effort to contact the demons to arrange this, the gods discovered that Kador had conquered Hell with his followers, the devils, and that he was now called **Asmodeus**. Concerned by this, the gods determined a method to keep Asmodeus in check,

allowing the devils and the demons (now located in an infinite **Abyss** [CE plane] that they had burrowed out of the sphere) to battle over the souls of the wicked. The gods then created the **daemons** and the guardian angels to track all the small acts of wickedness and goodness, placing them in their own planes (Gehenna and Elysium, respectively).

How Things Stand

The gods put in place the following order of the world, which prevails to this day: Mortals have free will. They are instructed by the earthly servants of the gods (the clergy and other mortals who worship the gods) to do good, but are tempted by evil mortals and the powers of Hell and the Abyss to do evil. At all times they are watched by the guardian angels and the daemons that keep great ledgers of their deeds. When they die, their souls are claimed by Mormekar and led down the dark river to **Maal's Kingdom**, where they stand before the King of Souls and tell the tale of their lives. If they have led undistinguished lives, they wait in Maal's Kingdom to be reborn. If they have led lives of brutal evil [chaotic evil], they are sent to the Abyss for punishment; of petty evil [neutral evil], to Gehenna [NE plane] to be punished by daemons; and of cunning evil [lawful evil], to Hell and the embrace of the devils. If a person has led a life of great good or terrible tragedy, she may be admitted to the halls of Maal to live in bliss for eternity. The most devoted are claimed by their gods to ascend to the mountain of Heaven and become servants of their gods for eternity.

The Fall of Iblis:

This is the order of things as it stands now, with the gods drawing the mortal races toward good – though arguing over the nature of good – and the creatures born from or severely tainted by *Corpus Infernus*

Chapter II ~ The Mythology

Timeline

First Epoch

Creation

Birth of Shachtè
Nameless One creates himself

N.O. creates his palace

Contemplation

N.O. sees the future

Second Epoch

N.O. creates the four pillars
N.O. creates the Great Sphere
N.O. creates the material plane

N.O. creates Kador

N.O. utters prophecies
N.O. leaves

Birth of Rontra
Birth of Urian
Birth of Shalimyr

Birth of Eliwyn

Kador curses the fifth fruit

Birth of Terak
Birth of Tinel
Birth of Zheenkeef
Birth of Morwyn
Birth of Div

Third Epoch

Lesser War of the Gods

Death of Terak
Death of Tinel
Death of Zheenkeef
Birth of Mormekar
Rebirth of Terak
Rebirth of Tinel
Rebirth of Zheenkeef
Rebirth of Eliwyn

Birth of Maal

Corpus Infernus is cast out
The Three Laws

Great War of the Gods

Birth of Dragons

Kador cast out

Birth of Darmon
Birth of Aymara
Birth of Anwyn
Birth of Korak

Rebellion of the Div
Div cast out
Birth of the Fey
Birth of Elves

Birth of Dwarves
Birth of Gnomes
Birth of Halflings
Birth of Humans

Discovery of The Three Sisters

Fourth Epoch

Conflicts of the Gods

The Compact
Creation of the Sphere of Heaven
Creation of Gehenna & Elysium
Removal of Maal's Kingdom from Material Plane
Fall of Iblis

The Present

Chapter III ~ The Mythology

drawing mortals toward evil. This system, with the heavens and the dark powers united to focus their attentions on the mortal races, did not sit well with everyone, and eventually the chief of the archangels, Iblis, rose up against the gods in protest. His protest was put down and he was cast into Hell to abide with the devils he had helped defeat long before. Since the creation of the Compact and the uprising of Iblis, there have been no major conflicts of the gods, and the mortal races have come into their inheritance of the world, which they enjoy to this day.

The End of Things:

There are many theories about the apocalypse, the End Times, when all existing orders will be brought to an end. The three main theories are: Someone or something will speak the Nameless One's name and bring an end to existence; Asmodeus, who was Kador, will free himself from Hell and achieve his revenge against the gods; or the fifth fruit, still on Eliwyn's bough, will ripen and fall – and that which emerges from it will change the world.

Cosmology

All the following descriptions reference the map of the universe on page 17. The places on the map, starting at the top and moving clockwise are described as follows:

Heaven

In the fourth epoch, the gods set themselves apart from the world, building for themselves a magnificent home outside the prime material plane. Heaven is a great mountain with seven shining cities on its slope as you ascend. An archangel (in general, a Huge Solar) watches over each of those cities. The spire of the mountain is where the city of the gods is found, and though it is at the top of the mountain, it is said to be infinite. At the center of this seventh city is a great hall, where all of the gods sit on their thrones to debate and watch the Prime Material Plane.

Gates

During the time of the compact, Tinel and Korak built many gates between planes so that one could not easily travel from place to place without knowing a way around or through the gate. The only gate that is considered truly impassable and unassailable is the gate to Heaven.

Elysium

With the Compact, a system was necessary to observe the good and bad deeds of all mortals. The gods created Elysium, where a “light shadow” (essentially, a likeness made of light) of every living mortal walks about. These likenesses are constantly observed by the guardian angels of Elysium (usually devas), who record all of their good deeds, great and small, in enormous ledgers that are delivered to Maal's kingdom when each person dies.

The Dark River

With the compact, it became necessary for souls to travel from plane to plane, sometimes without guidance. So the gods created the dark river, which flows through all of the planes of the sphere – and is even said to have a source in the Prime Material Plane. It is called the Dark River because it seems dark to most who ever travel it. However, as it approaches Elysium and the mountain of Heaven it actually becomes a bright river of light.

The Great Sphere

The Nameless One first formed the four pillars, and then he placed this sphere on top of them. When he created the Great Sphere, it was

filled with emptiness in the form of ether and shadow. He pushed the ether and shadow into the center when he created the prime material, filling the rest of the sphere with image and sound or, as most know it, the Astral Plane. Outside the Great Sphere is the infinite void. When one says “the Sphere,” it is usually a reference to the center sphere, the Prime Material Plane. Few refer to the Great Sphere.

The Astral Plane

When the Nameless One first created the Great Sphere, it was filled with shadow and ether. He pushed the shadow and ether into the center of the Great Sphere, forming from it what would become the Prime Material Plane. The rest of the Great Sphere was filled with the energy that was most like Him: stillness thrumming with the power of possibility. This energy has no substance, but forms the great expanse that is found between the spheres of existence. If a person leaves a sphere, she will find herself in the vast emptiness of the Astral Plane, which has traces of light and sound and little else.

The Four Pillars

The elemental planes exist outside the Great Sphere, and even the gods who hold sway over the elements in the Prime Material do not control these pillars. They are the purest form of the energy they represent.

Water Pillar

This pillar is a plane of pure water. Many creatures have come to live in this plane, and even come to the Material Plane from time to time.

Earth Pillar

A pillar filled with nothing but rock and dirt and the pure energy of the earth. The creatures that reside here rarely come to the material plane, as they lack curiosity.

Air Pillar

A place of pure air and cloud; many clever creatures live here and seek to travel to the Material Plane to learn and investigate.

Fire Pillar

Most of the div were exiled to the fire pillar, a dangerous place of nothing but fire raging for eternity. Travelers beware.

Chapter III ~ The Mythology

Hell

The nine circles of Hell were built as a prison for the creatures called demons. It is now ruled over by Asmodeus, once the god of fire and now the king of deception and lord of Hell. This is where lawful evil souls go when they have been condemned to punishment by Maal.

Gehenna

Created by the gods on top of a battleground of demons and devils, Gehenna is the place of observation, where petty crimes are observed and recorded by the daemons in great dark ledgers. Just as every person casts a light shadow of herself into Elysium, which is observed by the guardian angels, so too does she cast a dark shadow of herself into Gehenna, where the daemons watch her and whisper vile little temptations in her ear. This is where neutral evil souls go when they have been condemned to punishment by Maal.

The Abyss

The most powerful demons, the qliphoth, are like dark shadows of the gods – pure beings of Corpus Infernus. Using their incredible might, they long ago burrowed through the Great Sphere and out into the infinite void. This is why the Abyss in which the demons reside is infinite, stretching out forever into the void. They build themselves vile homes out in the nothingness and wage their war with Hell across Gehenna. This is where chaotic evil souls go when they have been condemned to punishment by Maal.

The Land of the Dead

Originally found at the center of the earth in the Prime Material Plane, the Land of the Dead was set apart into its own sphere when the gods formed their Compact. This is where Maal rules with his wife Naryne, judging all souls based on the great ledgers kept by the guardian angels and the daemons. Those who have led exceptional lives live here for eternity in one of four great halls of reward. Some scholars consider those halls planes in their own right. Those who have led lives of great evil are sent to one of the three evil planes for eternal punishment. A rare few are sent to Heaven to be with their gods. Most are sent back to the Material Plane after a while to distinguish themselves. From time to time, Maal's half-brother, Korak, will come to the Land of the Dead and "reforge" a soul, banging out all of the flaws and sending it back to earth to lead an exceptional life.

It is believed that only members of the five mortal races stand before Maal to be judged, and that other races lack the souls to be so judged.

The Central Sphere

The central sphere, often called simply "the sphere," is where the mortal races live – and so much more. There are several parts to the sphere, as explained below.

The Planes of Positive Energy and Negative Energy

When the Nameless One entered into the Great Sphere and created the Material Plane, he formed a perfect crystal sphere to contain what is our existence – the Central Sphere. Within that crystal were the two forces from which all of creation came to be: positive and negative energy. Called light and dark, sound and silence, life and death, all creation requires a balance of these two forces. So the Prime Material Plane is enclosed in a sphere of crystal made of these two forces, and where they meet within the crystal there are huge and dangerous maelstroms. Few ever go within the crystal to one of these planes, but those that do find them terribly dangerous.



Called Gehenna, it is the home of the daemons, and there they watch mortals and tempt them to the petty wickedness of day to day life

The Ethereal and Shadow Planes

Within this crystal sphere, the Nameless One gathered the energies that filled the Great Sphere when he first created it. These energies, ether and shadow, were perfect but had no substance. Combining their power and his own great words of power, the Nameless One created the skies, earth, and seas on top of the ether and shadow. So it is to this day – the shadow and ether are all around the world of substance, the material plane, but go mostly unnoticed.

The Prime Material Plane

Everything a normal mortal can see and touch is a part of the Material Plane – the sun, moon, stars, land and water. With great magic, a person can see the Ethereal and Shadow planes that coexist within the sphere with the Material Plane, and with even greater magic a person may travel outside of the sphere and to other planes.

Chapter III ~ The Mythology



The Dark River



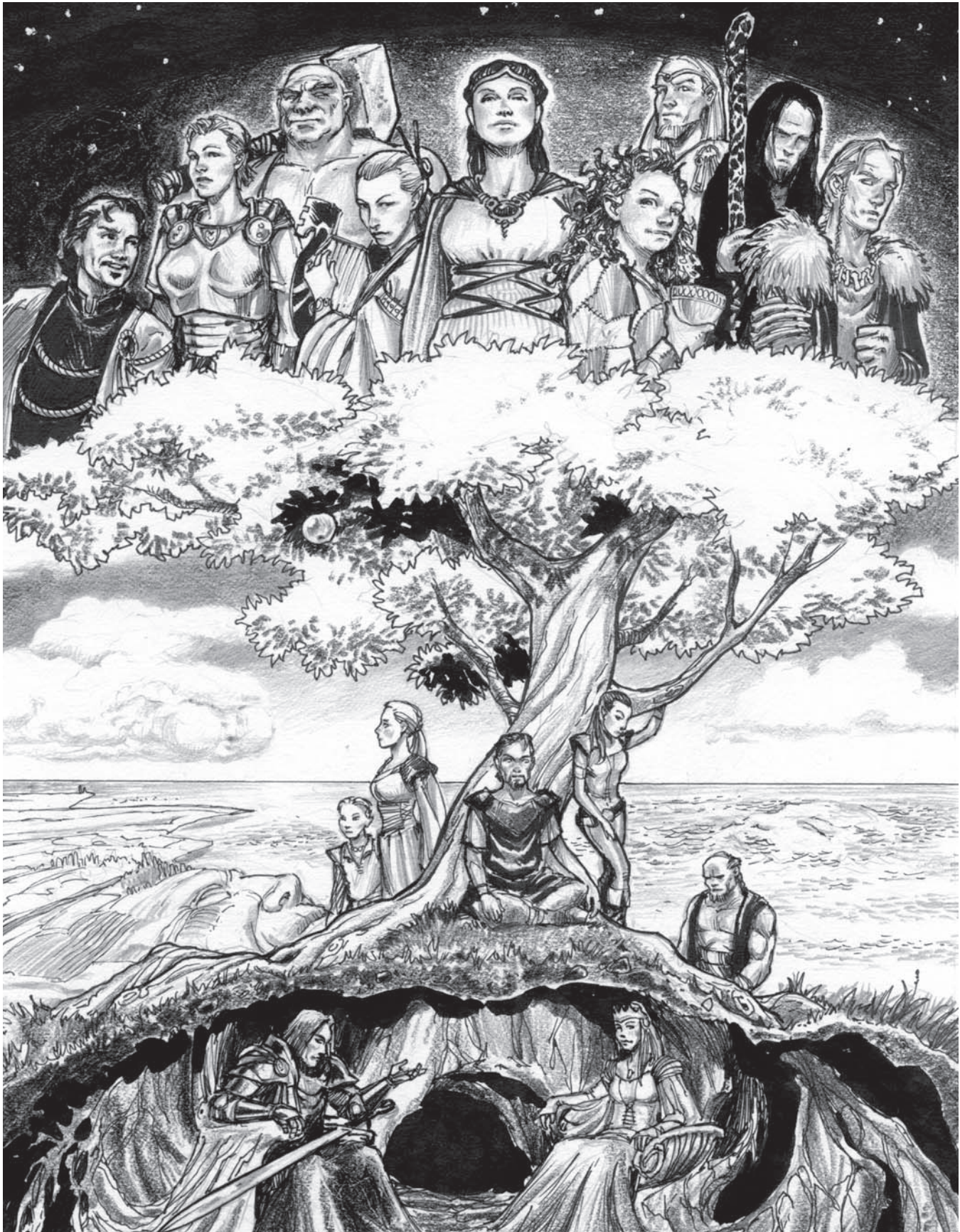
Gate

~ Legend ~

- 1. Heaven
- 2. Elysium
- 3. The Dark River
- 4. Astral
- 5. The Great Sphere
- 6. Negative Energy
- 7. Positive Energy
- 8. Ether
- 9. Shadow
- 10. The Prime Material
- 11. Hell
- 12. The Abyss
- 13. Gehenna
- 14. Fire Pillar
- 15. Air Pillar
- 16. Earth Pillar
- 17. Water Pillar
- 18. Band of the Dead

Todd Gamble, Cartographer.

Chapter III ~ The Great Church



A classical Great Church representation of Eliwyn, the gods and the five mortal races of the earth.

Chapter III: Practicing The Faith: The Great Church

About This Chapter

Now that you know the history of the gods, it's time to get to the nitty-gritty – their churches. More importantly, it's time to discuss the clerics and holy warriors who make up those churches, their roles in society, and what their worship is like. We have broken down discussion of these gods into five chapters, one for each generation of the gods. This first of five chapters discusses the structure of the church sections and provides the rules for The Great Church – a single religious body that worships all the gods. Your GM may not want to have a Great Church in her world, so check first before assuming it is in the game.

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

Church Section Structure

In the next five chapters we provide a church for each of the gods mentioned in the history in Chapter II. Here's how the church sections are broken down, and how to use the information you'll find in each.

The God

Name

This is the common name of the god (accompanied by a pronunciation guide) and any titles or common ways of referring to the god.

Myths

One or two common myths about the god. The myths use the god's various titles so that one can get a sense of context for their use.

Associations

A list of what the god is associated with. This is broken down into three sections: Concepts, Animals & Creatures, and People. Usually, a short explanation will accompany these associations.

Alignment

All of the gods are capable of acts that, committed by a common mortal, would be considered profoundly evil, just as all of them have committed acts of such profound goodness that entire plagues have ended, or whole races have been saved. Suffice it to say that easy categorization of the alignment of the gods is impossible. It is also the case that the gods, as a group, are good. This is axiomatic, as cosmically the gods are at the opposite spectrum from demons and devils, particularly Kador/Asmodeus, who is their great enemy and the very pinnacle of evil. If he defines evil, the gods and their will are the very definition of good. That being said, the alignment provided for each god explains how that god's actions are perceived by mortal consciousnesses.

Characters who are established members of churches, particularly clerics, may be one alignment shift from the god's alignment and no more (though a cleric may not be neutral unless his god is neutral also). An important note on alignments of clergy: unless specifically stated otherwise, no cleric of one of the churches listed in the next five chapters may be evil. If you want to play an evil cleric who worships an evil god, or an evil cleric who worships one of the gods in these chapters, check out Chapter VIII.

There are two gods, Tinel and Terak, who present as having two different alignments. In these cases, it is possible to play a character who is one alignment shift from either alignment; the ramifications of this are explained in the appropriate church section.

Representations

Gods are usually represented by their worshippers in two ways: iconic imagery and symbolic imagery. Iconic imagery is a representation of

how the good looks – a tall man with a huge axe, for instance. The symbolic imagery, a triangle in a circle for instance, is generally a stand-in for the church, not the god. For example, a holy symbol scrawled on a door means “people of this church are welcome here” more than it does “this door is blessed by the symbolic incarnation of this god.” There are exceptions, which are noted, in that some gods are never represented with icons, and have only symbolic representations.

Purpose

Here we discuss what this god's motives are. Motives of gods are generally not fathomable by mortals and are only of interest on a truly cosmic scale. If your campaign does not involve large religious conflicts, this information will be of academic interest only, but will be useful for GMs and players alike to get a full sense of what the god stands for.

Servants

The chief servants of the god are mentioned here by name. Some of these servants are detailed more completely in Chapter XI. In general, these servants are powerful celestials who are not part of one of the three mighty choruses, but are instead boon companions to the god.

The Church

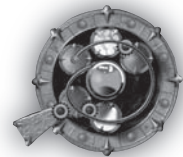
Church Description

This is a description of the church in general terms – its popularity, how commonly one might find its temples, its secular goals, etc.

Church Structure

This is how the church is run, including a listing of its holy orders and their titles. Holy orders include the clergy, the various holy warriors (a new concept to *Book of the Righteous*, explained below), the prestige classes of the churches, and some NPC classes so profoundly dull no PC would ever play them.

This section also explains how the church is run (by a supreme leader, a council, etc.) and where its seat of power can be found (usually accompanied by the symbol at right, meaning the GM may want to place that seat of power on the map).



At the end of the church structure section, we briefly discuss the makeup of a typical church of the faith.

A note about the titles provided for the holy orders: Usually in a d20 game, when someone asks you “what are you?” you answer with your class; the holy order titles take precedence over class names, so an officer of Maal would answer “what are you?” by saying “I am an officer of Maal,” rather than “I am a holy warrior of Maal.” Beyond that, most holy orders have several levels of status (for instance, the officers of Maal have junior members called swords, more senior members called shields, etc.). These strata are explored further in the sections dedicated to each of the orders, as each level of status receives its own honorifics. In the holy order sections we discuss the orders’

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

Important Notes

Here are two things that must be read by the GM. No really. Read this.

#1: Our goal with *Book of the Righteous* is to provide material that can be used in any fantasy campaign setting using the d20 system. We have tried to avoid defining a “game world” except where it pertains to the gods and their churches. You’ve likely noticed that even the best campaign settings available today offer scant detail on the gods, and even fewer details on the structures of their worship. So we conceived of *Book of the Righteous* as an aid to the player or GM who wants a more detailed sense of religion but doesn’t want to go through the elaborate effort of defining inter- and intra-church hierarchies.

That being said, it is important to note that in defining churches we have to connect them to the temporal world. Wherever there is one of these connections that the GM must complete (for instance, a holy day that must be given an actual date in the GM’s campaign setting, or a holy city that must be placed on a map) we have preceded the section with the symbol at right. When you see this symbol, it means there’s a “fill in the blanks” for the GM.

#2: We have endeavored to make every church interesting for your PCs should they choose to play a cleric of that faith. We are well aware, for instance, that the appeal of playing a cleric of war is far more readily apparent than playing a cleric of the God of Comfort and Peasants. Because of this, we’ve introduced some fairly elaborate plot items and conspiracies into the churches. Depending on your players, you may not want to let everyone read this book cover to cover. Depending on your preferences, you may not like some of these intrigues. Just a note of warning. They are there to make sure all of the churches are fun.



addresses and, when applicable, introductions:

- An address is an honorific applied before saying a name (i.e. if a deacon of the Great Church is to be addressed as “deacon,” Grimthor the deacon would be greeted thus: “Hail and well met, Deacon Grimthor!”). Usually an address can be used without the name (“How are you today, Deacon?”).
- An introduction is the full form that a herald would use at court or an author would use in a formal letter. Unless stated otherwise, members of holy orders are introduced by their address honorific followed by their order name and their church. So the Archdeacon Grimthor would be introduced as “The Archdeacon Grimthor of the Deaconry of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.” Some orders have other forms for their introductions, which are explained individually. When it says that a member of the order is introduced by “full title,” for instance, it means that the address for that rank of the order does not include the actual rank name, but a formal introduction will. A dean of the Great Church is addressed as “reverend father,” for example, which does not include the word “dean.” Deans are introduced with “full title,” though, so Grimthor would be introduced as “The reverend father, Dean Grimthor, of the Clergy of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Doctrine

The peculiar story of religion is that organized faiths often interact with the world differently than the gods they worship intend. This is particularly possible when the gods have mostly left the sphere and now observe how the mortals behave. In this section, we discuss how the church has developed, and what its core doctrine is for its followers and priests.

Common Prayers

Prayer is the quintessential religious activity, and here we provide some of the basic ones that members of the church use in day-to-day life.

Holy Days

Here we delve into the types of holy days celebrated by this church. We do not assign calendar dates – that’s up to the GM – but we do make liberal use of this symbol to notify the GM that such assignment is necessary.



Saints

Sainthood and martyrdom are important concepts in most faiths – how will you be remembered when you die after a lifetime of pious service? Here we discuss the church’s policy on naming saints, and sometimes even provide the names of a few.

God’s View of the Church

This is important for the GM. How does the god interact with the church founded in his name?

Preferred Weapon

This is the preferred weapon of the god, either because she wields it, or due to a symbolic tie. It is not necessarily the preferred weapon of her followers. Most holy warriors wield swords, for instance, regardless of their god’s preferred weapon. When a religion’s holy orders pointedly wield the same weapon as their god, it is highlighted in the text.

Holy Orders

The d20 system divides people into classes. If you are a fighter, you likely have more in common with another fighter than you do with a thief. However, every class can be subdivided into groups: For instance, a fighter who spends all of his training mastering the bow and other ranged weapons is thought to be a part of the group called “archers” or “range specialists,” whereas a fighter with a great axe and the Great Cleave feat is likely to be sub-categorized as a “tank” or “melee specialist.”

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

Clerics and holy warriors have similar subdivisions, though their subdivisions are determined by their choice of god. In *Book of the Righteous* we refer to these subdivisions as holy orders, with each order having its own titles for its members.

Example: Matt wants to play a cleric. That is his class. He decides he wants his cleric to be a dwarf who perfects himself for war. Looking through the book, he decides that the best faith for such a character is the worship of Terak, god of war, valor, and physical struggles. So he makes his cleric a member of a Teraketh Temple. That is his church. As a cleric of Terak, he is a member of the order of soldiers. That is his holy order.

In the example above, *Book of the Righteous* provides all the information you need to determine a character's church and holy order. Class information is found in the *PH*. The exception is that we define a new class – a sort of expanded paladin – called the holy warrior, below.

Each church defined in Chapters III - VII has a section dedicated to its holy orders as follows:

Clerics

Here we discuss the various titles, spell domains, alignments, spell preparation times, and all other pertinent information to clerics of this church.

Holy Warrior Class

As the *PH* explains, the paladin is a holy warrior who does not owe allegiance to a particular god; she fights for all that is holy. In *Book of the Righteous*, we treat paladins as just one version of the holy warrior class. Like a cleric, the holy warrior chooses a set of domains based on her god. The paladin, as explained below, is a holy warrior for the entire pantheon, just as the cleric who chooses any two domains is a cleric for the entire pantheon. In this section of each church, we discuss the holy warrior for that god, including titles and organizational structures of the order.

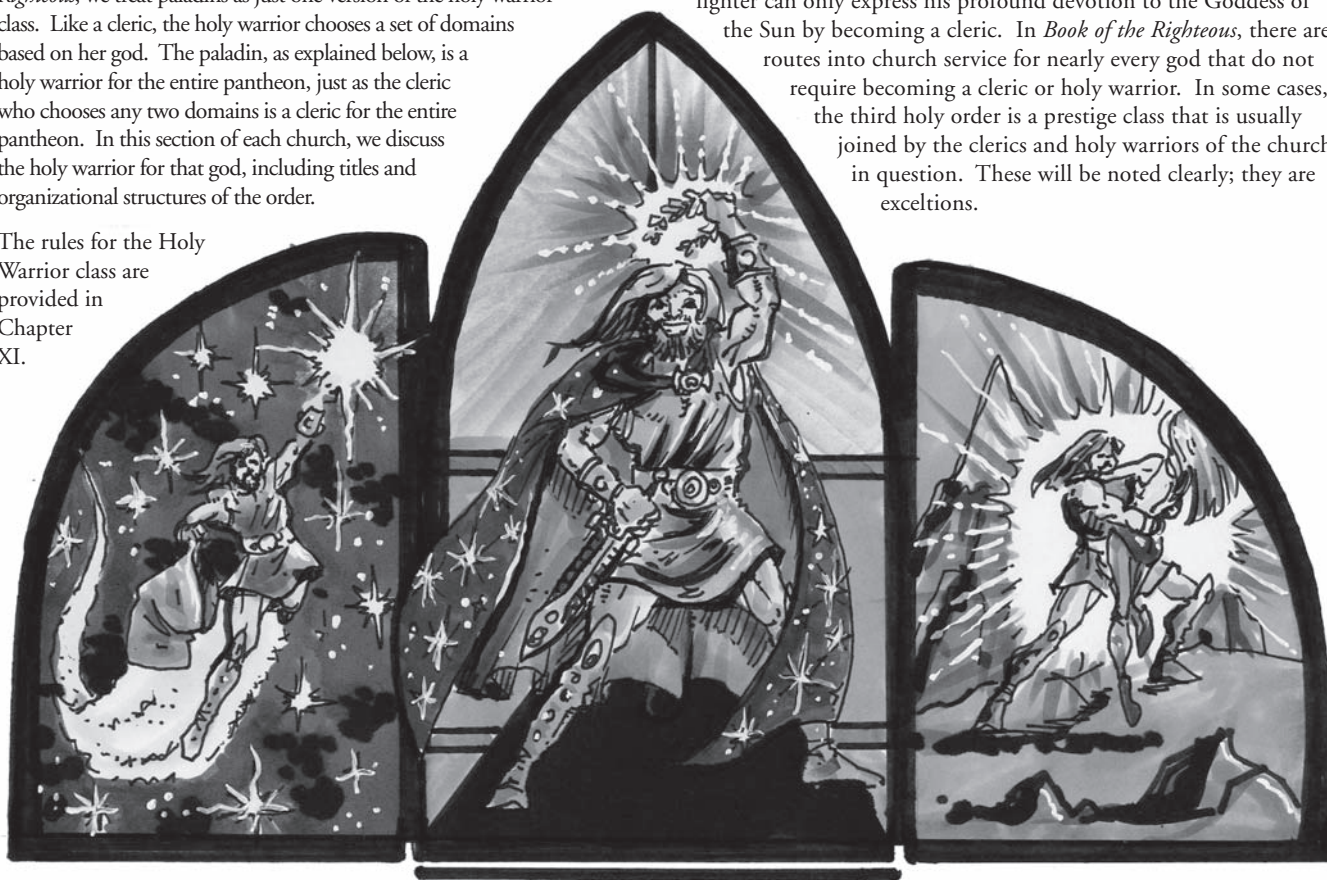
The rules for the Holy Warrior class are provided in Chapter XI.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

Paladins and clerics from the churches in this book may take on prestige classes. Prestige classes found in other books that pertain to good clerics are perfect for many of the clerics in this book. For instance, the good prestige classes in *DotF* are quite fitting. We do not list many prestige classes specifically for clergy and holy warriors, nor do we explore any culture-specific groups or highly specific prestige classes pertaining to the religions. There are lots of great culture- or tone-specific prestige classes out there in other material; for instance, in some areas where people tolerate extreme methods in the hunt for infernal influences, there are orders of inquisitors. A prestige class for this can be found on our website at <http://www.greenronin.com>. We do not explore this sort of thing because our goal is to make religions that can be popped into almost any fantasy world.

Instead of very specific character types, we use the prestige class and other orders section to discuss the third holy order that every church in this book possesses. In some especially large churches, there will be several additional holy orders; some are prestige classes, while others are NPC classes or existing PC classes banded together in a group. All such orders will be detailed in this section.

In general the third holy order (and accompanying prestige class) is provided for characters who are devout followers of the god in question but are not themselves part of divinely powered character classes. We've always been disheartened that our deeply religious fighter can only express his profound devotion to the Goddess of the Sun by becoming a cleric. In *Book of the Righteous*, there are routes into church service for nearly every god that do not require becoming a cleric or holy warrior. In some cases, the third holy order is a prestige class that is usually joined by the clerics and holy warriors of the church in question. These will be noted clearly; they are exceltions.



Darmon steals the stars from the heavens for his cloak, first meets his lady love, Canelle, and is named Champion of Heaven.

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

The Churches: an Overview

The churches are split into five groups.

Chapter III: The Great Church

Church of the common person, where respect can be shown to all of the gods. This is the longest section, as it introduces many key concepts for the book. Its description is a little different from the others, since it explains the behavior of the gods, and mortal worship of them, as a pantheon rather than individually. The other church sections focus on one god at a time.

Chapter IV: Churches of the Old Gods

The Church of Urian, God of the Air

Church of the downtrodden, the enslaved, wanderers, those seeking freedom from internal strife, the contemplative.

The Church of Rontra, Goddess of the Earth

Church for farmers, miners, lovers of the earth and its treasures.

The Church of Shalimyr, God of the Water

Church for sailors, fishermen (and anyone else who relies on the sea), fathers, the humble.

The Church of Eliwyn, the Tree of Life

There is no formal church of Eliwyn, but it is said that the druids are the protectors of the great tree and the last fruit.

The Church of the Nameless One, the Creator

Worship of the creator is rare, though it is said many monks contemplate His nature and their own.

Chapter V: Churches of the Freeborn Gods

The Church of Finel,

God of Magic and Knowledge

Church of magicians, those who rely on or admire magic, scholars, the perpetually curious, seekers of truth.

The Church of Zheenkeef,

Goddess of Inspiration, Madness, and Wine

Church of madmen, geniuses, vintners, inventors, half-wits, dreamers, outsiders.

The Church of Ferak,

God of War, Valor, and Struggle

Church of soldiers, warriors, any who must face physical conflict, weapon makers.

The Church of Morwyn,

Goddess of Healing, Wisdom, and Mercy

Church of those who revere wisdom, mothers, healers, the compassionate, the charitable, those in need of mercy, common leaders (such as mayors).

The Church of Mormekar,

God of Death and Rebirth

Church of the dead (all who die must come through Mormekar's church), crusaders against the undead, those who must face death regularly, those afraid of death, seekers of rebirth and redemption.

Chapter VI: Churches of the Gods of The Womb

The Church of Maal,

God of Justice, Law, and Judgment

Church of judges, seekers for justice, those in need of retribution.

The Church of Darmon,

God of Travel, Trade, Joy, and Rogues

Church of merchants and other professional travelers, diplomats, messengers, thieves, jesters, the mischievous, those who live by their wits.

The Church of Aymara,

Goddess of Love and Art

Church of lovers, those suffering unrequited love, bards, artists of all kinds, those who hate devils.

The Church of Korak,

God of the Forge, Skill, and Artisans

Church of smiths, artisans, architects, craftsmen, laborers, apprentices.

The Church of Anwyn,

Goddess of the Home and Hearth

Church of home, hearth, servants, peasants, the lowly, the impoverished.

Chapter VII:

Church of the Three Sisters

The Church of Naryne, Goddess of Nobility

Church of the nobility, particularly kings and queens.

The Church of Canelle,

Goddess of Strength and Victory

Church of athletes, competitors, victory, glory.

The Church of Thellyne, Goddess of the Hunt

Church of woodsmen, trappers, those who love or rely on the woods and animals.

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

The Lords of Heaven

The Great Church

The Lords of Heaven (Lords of Good, Gods of the Tree, Holy Ones)

Myths

First Thunder

In midsummer, cons ago, Zheenkeef hit upon a cure for her boredom. She would enchant a lump of normal marble so that whosoever beheld it would swear the rock was a statue in the likeness of the beholder. Her enchantment would be so powerful that to look at the rock would be to become utterly convinced it was a statue. Such a thing would reveal the vanity of all around her, for every member of her family, all of the Lords of Heaven, would look upon her creation and believe it was a monument in his own honor and preen and strut at the sight of it.

When she had crafted this glorious work of mockery, Zheenkeef put the statue in the middle of the great hall of the Holy Ones. That night, when the Gods of the Tree assembled for their feasting, each one came upon and the rock and gazed in wonder. "Who has put this statue of me in the middle of the hall?" shouted Terak with a great laugh, so delighted was he at its workmanship. "Was it you, Korak, my loving son?"

Korak thought perhaps his father had gone mad, or played him a trick, for he stared quite plainly at his own face hewn in the marble. He was about to respond when Tinel called out, "Why do you always spread your lies, brother? Can you not stand even one statue of me, that you must demean it by calling it your own?"

It was not long before the argument of the gods reached such a volume that Urian shook and Thunder was born. Whenever the gods argue to the exclusion of all else, Urian shakes and rumbles that all of the world might hear.

Founding The Great Church

The statue was never forgotten by any of the Holy Ones. Though they put aside arguing about it for a time, hiding it under Terak's great chair, once in a while one of the Lords of Good would mention it and the shouting would begin anew. After some time of this, Darmon grew tired of the ceaseless arguing. "It is quite clear that we will never agree on what this statue represents. Clearly, it is important that we decide this matter, or Heaven shall be sundered over a lump of rock." Darmon had ever a honeyed tongue and the gods could not help but agree with him. "What does my clever brother suggest?" Aymara asked.

Darmon suggested the statue be destroyed, which was not a popular notion. Each of the gods presented a different way to resolve the problem, each more ludicrous than the last, until at last Anwyn, the gentle little sister, suggested that the gods pluck a lowly mortal from the world and have him tell them what he saw. He would be beyond guile and other such problems, for he would be the simplest fellow they could find.

And so Darmon set out to tour the mortal sphere and find such a mortal. One day he stumbled on a drunken shepherd asleep in his pasture from a night of long drinking. He grabbed this fellow by the collar and shouted at him, "Awake, shepherd! For you have much to do! You must resolve a great dispute among my family..." and he took the shepherd to the Celestial Palace.

As would soon become apparent, this drunken shepherd was in fact a religious scholar. Named Hefasten (HEH-fuh-stun) the Wise, he had been exiled by the king of his country, for the monarch was jealous of his wisdom and influence. At this time, each of the gods had a church dedicated to his or her honor, but faith in all of the Gods of the Tree had never been unified. Hefasten, a scholar and faithful member of Morwyn's Healing Halls, was known as a peacemaker and had negotiated settlements in many conflicts between churches.

Despondent at his exile, Hefasten found shelter with a poor family in a neighboring land. After four years of drunken ostracism, the wise man found himself taken by Darmon to an opulent house. There he was surrounded by a large family of the most beautiful people he had ever beheld. It took him only a moment to realize he stood before the gods in mortal guise, but before he could prostrate himself and make proper obeisance, the woman at the head of the family spoke: "What is your name, simple shepherd?"

"My name is Hefasten, who was once Hefasten the Wise, and is now Hefasten the Drunk, milady Morwyn, the compassionate." So saying, he fell to his knees and touched his forehead to the ground three times, as is fitting.

This was precisely what the gods had not wanted. Instead of a simple peasant, they had a religious leader, and one who had sworn himself to Morwyn. The Holy Ones began to argue once more, and thunder shook the heavens. At last they came to a solution:

"Hefasten, who was once the Wise, we would ask this of you – to help us solve a riddle," Tinel said to the blessed shepherd. "But before we ask for your aid, we ask that you cast aside your worship of my sister, Morwyn. We ask that instead you swear that you will give homage to each of us equally, and swear to obey us all when we have need of your service."

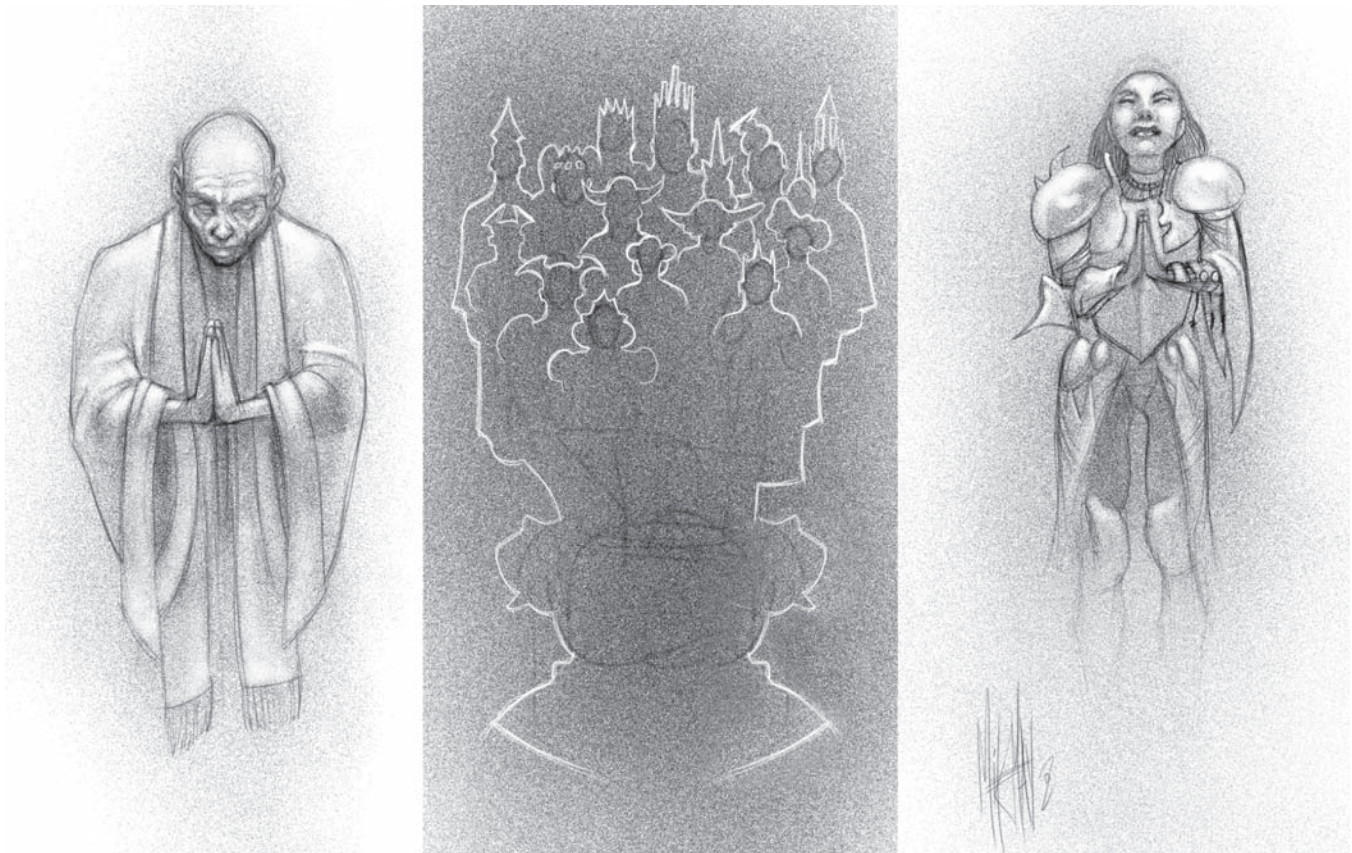
To this Hefasten agreed. Once he had done so, the gods asked him what he saw when he looked at the statue. And when he gazed at it, he beheld the likenesses of all the Lords of Heaven standing before him. When he said so – "I see all of you" – the argument was resolved. For indeed it was a statue of them all.

They gave Hefasten the statue and returned him to his flock. The scholar journeyed back to his homeland, with the lump of marble upon a cart, and he went about the land preaching the worship of the Lords of Good together, without exclusion. The king who had exiled him was converted upon beholding the statue – which seemed to him a magnificent statue in his own likeness – and, when he heard it was a gift from the gods, he built for Hefasten the Wise a great cathedral in which to house it. It rests there today, the central cathedral of the Great Church.

Associations

Because the Great Church worships the gods equally as a family, it is hard to say what the God of this church is associated with. The individual gods in the family have associations as described in the sections on their churches below.

Chapter III ~ The Great Church



This triptych commemorates the beginning of the Great Church and the foundation of the paladins.

As a group, the gods are called the Lords of Good for a reason; they are associated with all that is holy and sacred. Together they represent life, its many wonders and its prolific disappointments. There are three groups of gods: the old gods, the treeborn gods, and the gods born of woman (which usually includes the three sisters, though their origins are mysterious). The old gods can generally be associated with the fundamental earth – the elements that are everywhere with or without the interference of the mortal hand or mind (rocks, oceans, stars). Scholars sometimes call these the “chthonic” gods. The treeborn gods can be said to represent the individual, with Terak being the body, Tinel the mind, Morwyn the spirit, Zheenkeef the emotions and dreams, and Mormekar the body’s ultimate failure, death. Finally, the young gods represent the concepts of society, or groups of individuals – nobility, forging, diplomacy, love, woodcraft. The Great Church, therefore, worships everything that is living and thriving in the world as personified by the Gods of the Tree, from the smallest monetary transaction to the unfathomable workings of the heavens.

The gods as a group do not associate themselves with any particular creatures or animals, and the Great Church does not hold any such beings as sacred. In truth, if the gods are associated strongly with any living creatures, it is the five great mortal races.

The Gods of the Tree are not associated particularly strongly with any one group of people, or any one race. The Great Church certainly is, though, and its associations are explained below.

Alignment

The gods can be described as dominantly neutral good. Although the pantheon is divided quite strongly between the chaotic-tending gods

and the lawful ones (necessitating the Compact), they are united in their opposition to the works of evil – slaughtering infants, slavery, eating your sister’s baby, etc. Unlike every other church in this book, **the Great Church is not the same alignment as the pantheon.** The dominant alignment of the Great Church is lawful good. Because of this, the chaotic gods can rarely be bothered with the Church.

Representations

When the Great Church represents the gods with icons, it shows them seated in a semi-circle on thrones of gold. Each god appears in such representations as she is described in the following chapters. The symbolic representation of the Lords of Heaven is a white tree with five golden fruits growing on it. A cleric of the Great Church’s holy symbol is usually a tree crafted from white gold with five yellow gold fruits.

The tree symbol is simplified when scrawled or put on small surfaces as an inverted triangle containing five circles in a star pattern. This is a much less formal symbol than the tree, but it can be made quickly or crafted out of basic materials and used by a cleric of the great church as a holy symbol in times of crisis. It is also the symbol used by the very poor.

Purpose

As a family, the gods’ motives are complex. Each god seeks to further her own ends, bringing mortals to her way of thinking. As determined by the Compact, a god grows stronger with worship, so it is each god’s goal to influence the world through her followers and promote those forces that lead worshippers to her. This often brings two or more gods into conflict. Add to this the schism between the two families

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

of gods: one is unruly and believes that the individual is the strongest force in the universe; the other believes that organization and societal structure are the keys to strength.

Now, while the gods have much to argue about, they *are* unified in the principles of good. They oppose senseless destruction, murder, and the many other trappings of evil. This is for several reasons: The destruction that evil brings leads to fewer followers (or at the very least corrupts the mortal races away from the ways of the gods); the gods are quite fond of the mortal races and would see them thrive; and the treeborn gods were nearly destroyed by murder and mayhem in their youth when they were moved to war against one another – they have learned the perils of that path. The purpose the gods serve as a unified group, therefore, is to aid the mortals in their struggles against evil.

Servants

While each god has a number of celestials to perform his bidding, the three great choirs of Heaven exist to serve the gods and mortals without prejudice. It can therefore be said that the entire celestial host serves the Lords of Heaven. There are three choirs of angels, ranging from the mightiest Seraphim to the lowest Ischim. For more information on the structure of the choirs, check out *Legions of Hell* from Green Ronin Publishing.

Principal among the Heavenly host are the Seven Archangels (all of whom are Huge Solars):

- Mika'il (mee-kah-EEL), chief among the Archangels, protects the downtrodden and is the champion of those in need. Mika'il is a being of such profound goodness that some worship him as a god in his own right. He was once a great div king who was elevated to great power by Morwyn and raised to be chief of the Archangels after the fall of Iblis.
- Jibra'il (zheb-rai-EEL), the herald of the gods, marches at the front of the Heavenly host. She is the most charismatic of the choirs, and it is said that to hear her un-muted voice is to hear a music so perfect that the mortal heart will break with joy.
- Rafai'il (ra-fai-EEL), the guide of the lost, is the giver of charity from the gods. It is said that if the gods send a mortal aid, it is Rafai'il who delivers it. Rafai'il is charged with overseeing Elysium.
- Uriel (YUR-ee-el) is the protector of Heaven. Mortals will only have an opportunity to meet with Uriel should they seek entrance through the locked gates of the mountain of Heaven. Uriel also watches over the celestial host; it is he who casts down the fallen. It is also said that Uriel, who is the favorite of Tinel, gave magic to the mortal races when they lost it long ago (see the Church of Tinel).
- Saraqael (say-RA-kai-el) is the magistrate of Heaven. It is

Saraqael who oversees the laws of Heaven and sees to it that all celestials perform their duties under the Compact. She is not well liked by the chaotic gods.

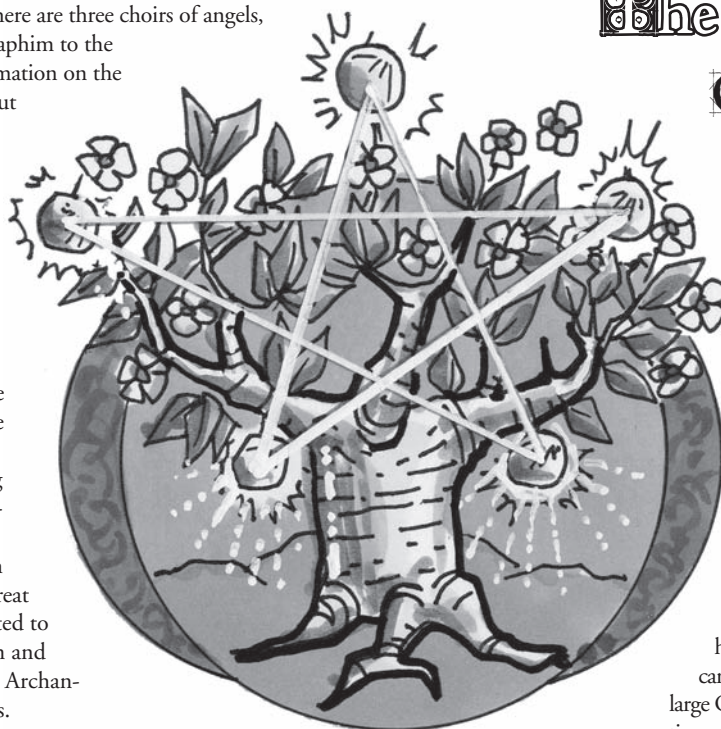
- Raguel (RA-gyoo-el) is the vengeance of Heaven. Raguel is charged by the gods to smite down those who have grown too high and think themselves equal to the gods (such as all-powerful wizards researching spells to kill the gods), as well as infernal powers when they trespass on the prime material plane for reasons other than the Compact.
- Camael (CAH-mai-el) attends the thrones of the gods. Camael is, essentially, the minister of the kingdom of Heaven, and stands behind the gods. It is Camael who oversees all the workings of the gods' court and arranges audiences with some of them — a *commune* spell is, in essence, a plea to her for a god's ear (some of the gods have servants who perform this function for them; these are mentioned in the appropriate church sections). The Great Church believes that it receives its powers from Camael on behalf of the gods.

The Church

Church Description

The Great Church, whose members simply call themselves “the faithful,” is an enormous organization spanning nations and cultures. Its primary goal is to make sure that every population center in the world has a church dedicated to all of the gods and performing their work. Its secondary goal is to make the worship of the gods pedestrian and accessible to everyone. Because of these goals, there is a church dedicated to the entire pantheon in almost every human or mixed-race city you might care to visit. In the cities with particularly large Great Church structures, other churches sometimes set up small shrines within the Great Church's halls (so that a traveler, asking for the church of Korak, may be told “It's yonder, in the Great Church”).

The Great Church enjoys good relations with most of the other churches, particularly the lawful churches, which is why clerics of individual gods are willing to offer services under the Great Church's roof. But these pleasant relations are, in many cases, only surface deep. The leaders of the Great Church believe that all of the other churches wrongly focus their worship and condescendingly humor them. Many of the leaders of the other churches are jealous of the Great Church's wealth and authority, which are significant. Because it is easy to avoid alienating any religious group by supporting the Great Church, many secular leaders give generously to its missions, support its efforts to expand, and otherwise interact with it as the accepted legitimate religious center of power in the world. Further, the leaders of the Great Church are generally free to involve themselves in politics and other earthly matters, since they do not have direct rapport with any one god



Chapter III ~ The Great Church

and are not being used regularly by the gods as instruments for their plans in the mortal sphere. This freedom means that many secular leaders have a cleric or paladin from the Great Church as an advisor, and members of the local Great Church hierarchy are often on town and city councils. All of this amounts to a church that is able to exert an enormous amount of influence on the political affairs of the day.

To be absolutely clear: The Great Church is less connected to the gods than any other church, and the other churches are in no way loyal to or subservient toward the Supreme Patriarch of the Great Church. While its clerics receive spells, and its paladins are a force for righteousness throughout the world, the gods rarely reveal themselves to members of the Great Church or call upon its faithful to perform great deeds in their name. Each of the gods relies on her own church for such purposes. The Great Church is therefore a fantastic place for smug NPCs, or for PCs interested in politics. If you want your PC at high levels to actually become an instrument of the will of the gods, the Great Church is an unlikely home.

While the organization welcomes worshippers of any race, its membership is made up mostly of humans. Other races seem to find its highly unspecific worship of the gods unappealing. It is therefore rare to find a Great Church in, say, a dwarven hold or elven wood.

The Church's congregations are generally made up of those who do not have the time or inclination to dedicate themselves to one god in particular. Religion is an important part of nearly everyone's life, but the average commoner has no real reason to specify her worship. When her crops are failing, she goes to the Great Church and prays to Rontra. When she is heavy with child, she goes to the same church and prays to Morwyn. Usually, this is done for simplicity, but it is also done to avoid offending any of the gods. Legends are quite explicit: If you pray to all of the gods and accidentally leave one off, that god will grow angry and vengeful against you. The Great Church takes these sorts of concerns out of the common person's hands, providing complete, non-mysterious ceremonies for all occasions and making religion far more accessible to the average peasant or layperson. Its popularity with the common folk also helps account for its wealth, as a tithe to the church is customary, swelling the church's coffers as its congregations grow.

The Great Church is terribly unpopular with religious zealots of all varieties. They accuse the Church of making the gods commonplace, decreasing their worship to a few perfunctory gestures made out of duty or habit instead of devotion. There are many people deeply concerned with what seems to be the unstoppable growth of the Great Church; many of the concerned are elders of other churches.

Church Structure

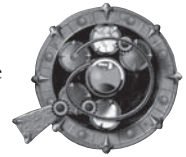
The Great Church has three powerful holy orders: clergy, paladins, and deacons. The clergy has five levels of status: clerics, deans, bishops, archbishops, and the Supreme Patriarch or Matriarch. The paladins have three: paladins, captains, and lord or lady protectors. Deacons have only two: deacons and archdeacons. There are also two lesser holy orders: the churchguard and the friars.

Of these orders, the clergy are dominant, deciding the direction of the faith. The paladins are enormously important and influential, but operate almost entirely autonomously from the Church. The deacons are perhaps the Church's greatest strength: While they are officially referred to as "teachers," they are actually an order dedicated to influencing the secular leaders and events of the world. The deaconry is made up either of Church members skilled in political matters or secular leaders given status in the Church to seal their loyalty.

The Supreme Patriarch or Matriarch, the highest-ranking member of the clergy, heads the Church. The Supreme Patriarch is seated in the Great Cathedral, which is located in the city where Saint Hefasten founded the Church. In the center of the Cathedral is the great rock, the lump of marble enchanted by Zheenkeef. Anyone looking at it will see their own likeness unless they make a Will save of DC 100. Once in a great while, someone, presumably someone chosen by the gods for greatness, sees something other than themselves in the rock, as Hefasten did. This has not happened for hundreds of years, and is an event of potentially cataclysmic importance.

The usual Great Church in a population center has a dean, three or four clerics, one or two paladins, six to ten churchguard and a deacon. The dean makes all decisions pertaining to the Church, usually after consulting with those below her. While the paladins are technically free to follow their own paths, they will obey the dean if told to do something and will certainly consult with the dean about their adventures and any matters requiring spiritual guidance.

The Great Church's places of worship vary wildly in size: The Great Cathedral has the Supreme Patriarch, an archbishop, a bishop, 25 clerics, three lord protectors, ten captains, 100 paladins, 12 archdeacons, 20 deacons, and 50 churchguard.



Doctrine

"If the people shall not come to the gods, verily, verily, we shall bring the gods to the people."

– From Saint Hefasten's *A People, A Doctrine, A Faith*

The Doctrine of the Great Church can most easily be described as pure good. One should strive to give, not to take; to love, not to hate; to befriend, not to shun. It is the moral imperative of every mortal to try to do as the gods have done – offering shelter to the weak, raging against terrible wrongs, and protecting their families. Of course, the Church is well aware that the world is filled with fallible people and believes that, if we ask for our wrongs to be forgiven, the gods will forgive them as they once forgave each other for great wrongs. The Church believes, however, that there are sins that cannot be forgiven: trying to topple the gods as Kador did, making bargains with devils or demons, and giving up your soul for any reason. These behaviors take one outside the realm of forgiveness, and offenders become like demons in the eyes of the faithful. All else, including the most heinous crimes against another person, can be forgiven by the gods (though likely not by the law). It is in this that the Church's lawful side is seen, for while its faith in the gods is one of pure good, the Church professes a very legalistic worship of the gods. The clergy discusses the laws and commandments of the gods that all people should obey. The church sees itself as bringing the rule of the gods to the uninformed.

The Great Church has two great schools of thought in approaching this doctrine, and while they usually operate in harmony among church elders, they are occasionally drawn into conflict.

The first philosophy, that adhered to by clergy and deacons, is the ministry of the gods' work. The Great Church, according to this school of thought, exists to spread the legends and worship of the gods – particularly to foreign or barbaric lands with different faiths. Part and parcel with this is the Church's goal to consolidate its power base and make sure that the lands where the gods are worshipped never lose sight of the faith. This involves making sure that the Church has many chapels and cathedrals throughout the land. One of the many reasons the Church puts such a focus on secular matters is that it serves the Church's goals to have close relations with the nobles who own the land and run the nations.

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It would be easy to assume the clergy pushes for expansion because its hierarchy is made up of rank opportunists seeking to line their pockets with donations. In fact, the Church really is a good organization (as far as anyone can tell – GMs may have other plans...) and most of the clergy believe deeply in this idea. It began with Hefastan, who believed that he had been selected by the gods to answer the riddle of the statue because the gods had tired of their constant infighting. At the core of Hefastan's teachings is the notion that every person's life is bettered when she comes to pay proper homage to the gods. When Hefastan, the first Supreme Patriarch, was writing his earliest screeds, most common people had no idea how to pray or pay proper homage to the gods; instead, they let their priests do it for them. Hefastan believed in the democratization of faith, and it is still very important to the Great Church that the ways of worship be made understandable to anyone, that everyone know how to pray to the gods herself. This is clearly a good goal, even if the Church's rate of expansion and political power is quite threatening to all the other churches.

The second major branch of Church philosophy states that the Church's mission is to tirelessly oppose evil in all its many forms. One can see that this requires a very different mindset than actively spreading the religion, and over the years the two doctrines have led to a friendly split in the clergy. While most focus on the strengthening of the Church and the spread of the faith, there is a core group of adventuring clerics who seek simply to do good in the world in the name of the Gods. Supporting this group of "good works" clergy is an entire holy order dedicated to fighting the good fight: the paladins.

Common Prayers

Most Great Church prayers invoke all of the gods by referring to them as "Holy Ones" or "Lords of Good" or "Lords of Heaven." An example, called "The Passage," is from the naming ceremony where the Church recognizes a child after its birth:

*"May the Lords of Heaven shine on thee,
May they lift you up in their great presence,
For thou art name'd in their hallowed halls,
And the Holy Ones shall know thee in the last."*

However, the most common prayer, which is used as the invocation for important events and is said by many common folk when they need a formal prayer, is the Order. The Order refers to each of the gods by name. In particularly important ceremonies a candle is lit (or a bell is rung) when each name is read:

"Lords of Heaven, hear our prayer!

*That Rontra's earth will feed us,
And nourish those who hunger;*

*That Urian's skies will warm us,
And shelter those in need;*

*That Shalimyr's waves will wash us clean,
And cleanse those who have failed us;*

*That Morwyn's wisdom will guide us,
And her compassion aid the lost;*

*That Terak's strength will embolden us,
And protect those who are weak;*

*That Tinel's teachings will open our eyes,
And lift up those who are in ignorance;*

*That Zheenkeef's inspiration will better us,
And her wine will bring us happiness;*

*That Mormekar's hands will take us at our time,
And pass over the young and the innocent;*

*That Maal's judgment will not find us lacking,
And his laws prevail over darkness;*

*That Naryne's rulership will forever prevail,
And her servants share in her wisdom;*

*That Korak's forge will provide for us,
And his skill will be reflected in mortal hands;*

*That Anwyn's hearth fire will always burn,
And give sanctuary to the weary;*

*That Thellyne's prey will be plentiful,
And that her gardens will flourish;*

*That Canelle's swift feet shall carry us,
And we may all be victorious;*

*That Darmon's trade will prosper,
And that we may share in his fortune;*

*That Aymara's eyes will shine on us all,
And we each shall know love.*

*So we pray, Oh Holy Ones,
So we entreat you as your servants."*

Most of the prayers are far less elaborate than this one, and many that are situation-specific name only one god. Before a competition, a cleric may invoke only Canelle. Before a birth, Rontra, Morwyn, and Anwyn are all named. At weddings, funerals, and other great life-changing ceremonies, however, all of the gods are called on for blessing.

Paladins say the prayers of the Church in ceremonies, but in general the paladins' prayers are far less elaborate. They usually involve a quick invocation of "all that is holy" or "may the gods protect us." It is rare for a paladin to appeal to just one of the gods, but there have been members of the order who feel closer to one god than the others. Many times, these paladins become members of the church of that god as well as the Great Church (and yet retain their status as paladins, as this in no way violates their holy mission or oaths).

Holy Days

The holy numbers of the mythology are three (three good elemental gods, three sisters, three tribes of Div, etc.) and five (five fruits on the tree, five mortal races, five treeborn gods, five gods born of woman, etc.) and so the holidays take place on threes and fives.



Three Sorrows

The third month of the year is called the "Three Sorrows." For the deeply devout, one must fast in the daytime and contemplate all of one's misdeeds over the past year at night (it is allowed to continue to work and perform one's secular duties during this time, including adventuring). On the third, ninth, and 27th nights of the month are day-long services followed by solemn feasts. Each such holiday is an observance of one of the great sorrows:

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

The First Sorrow

On the third day of the third month, this service mourns the fall of Kador (whose name is not spoken in the service and is instead called “First Born” and “Fallen Fire”). This service serves as a reminder of the pitfalls of personal greed and pride, and all in attendance are to see themselves in Kador.

The Second Sorrow

On the ninth day, the service recalls the first murder, brother upon brother, when Terak and Tinel killed one another and the great tree. The service reminds all in attendance to be forgiving of their neighbors and to live in harmony.

The Third Sorrow

On the 27th day, the service recalls the departure of the gods from the world with the forging of the Compact. In this service, the faithful pray to be reunited with the gods in death, and hope for a time when the gods may rejoin the world of mortals in peace. It is the church’s belief, as expressed in this ceremony, that the gods left the earth not only for their own struggles but because of the weakness of mortals, a weakness that is lamented in the ceremony.

Those of the faithful who are not particularly devout do not fast during the month, but nearly everyone attends the three ceremonies of sorrow.

Five Blessings

The fifth month of the year is called the “Five Blessings” and is a month of great celebration. If at all possible, the devout will avoid being far from home during this month, though church business has certainly taken servants of the faith far from home even during the five blessings.

Every five days of this month there is a great festival day, including a noontime service in the local parish (which usually spills out into the streets, as these ceremonies bring so many people to the church) and an enormous feast.

The First Blessing

On the fifth day of the fifth month, the faithful thank the gods for the blessing of life. On this day all the babies born in the past three months are dressed up in ceremonial costumes and given special names. However, each name is whispered to the baby by the cleric performing the ceremony after he recites “The Passage,” so it’s generally unheard of for any of the faithful to know their baby name. It is said that if the baby dies before it can speak, this name will grant it an immediate audience with Lord Maal. Babies born more than three months before this ceremony usually have already had a small ceremony and received their name.

The Second Blessing

On the tenth day, the faithful thank the gods for the blessing of food. On this day everyone in the parish prepares the most sumptuous dish they can imagine, usually spending more than they can possibly afford on ingredients, and the faithful feed one another all day long in a festival that takes place in the streets.

The Third Blessing

On the 15th day, the faithful thank the gods for the blessing of home and family. On this day there is a great festival where the parish builds a home for anyone who may need it. In small communities, this may

involve raising a barn if no one needs a new home, but most often a new house is built for newlyweds married in the past year who, up until this time, have been living with the parents of the bride. In very large communities with omnipresent beggars, the congregation will build a home for only one person selected symbolically by the dean of the church.

The Fourth Blessing

On the 20th day of the fifth month, the faithful enjoy their greatest festival – and the one that brings the Church its most converts. On this day, the faithful thank the gods for the blessing of joy. Also known as “Fool’s Day,” this holiday sees no poor performers. Acting troupes, jugglers, jesters, and every other entertainer who can bring out a laugh is paid handsomely by the church to perform in the streets for the faithful. There is a great deal of wine consumed, and all of the faithful dress up in outlandish costumes, usually in animal forms.

The Fifth Blessing

On the 25th day, the faithful thank the gods for the gift of death, which brings all mortals back to the gods’ embrace. At this festival, likenesses of all those who have died that year are placed on a dais, and all those in attendance have a great feast in their honor. It is the duty of the family of the deceased to try and accomplish something this day that the departed left unfinished.

Even those who are not devout members of the church observe these five holy days, and it is considered wrong to work during the festivals.

Along with these two months of celebration, the Great Church has weekly religious services.

Saints

Saints are named such only by the Supreme Patriarch. A servant of the church must have been dead for at least a decade before she can be named a saint, and only then if she is credited with a deed of tremendous importance to the Church’s work. This is the key: the *Church’s* work. Nearly always, this includes the most pious members of the Church who have worked great goods in their life, but it also occasionally includes secular figures who have aided the Church greatly, with land grants and other gifts.

A saint’s name is remembered with great reverence, and the holy orders often have sub-orders named after saints. For instance, there is an Order of St. Edrien among the paladins. Saint Edrien was a lord protector who, it is said, journeyed to Hell and won back the immortal soul of a Supreme Patriarch wrongly stolen by the servants of Asmodeus. The order in his name is especially dedicated to protecting those who are attacked by Hell for their goodness.

Most churches are named after saints from the area. The two most famous saints are Saint Hefastan and Saint Anne, the founders of the Great Church and the order of paladins, respectively.

God’s View of the Church

The gods actually view the Great Church with some ambivalence. They are made very powerful by its world prominence, but it is not as useful to them as their own churches. That being said, the gods all know that the Compact has allowed Hell and the Abyss to become very powerful, and the paladins and other works of the Church against evil are very valuable to their struggle against Asmodeus and the demon princes. Once in a great while a figure will arise in the Great Church who is so

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good and pious that she will become a favorite of all the gods and receive special boons from the entire pantheon. This is exceedingly rare and has not happened since Saint Anne.

Preferred Weapon

The preferred weapon of the Church is a heavy or light club, the more tree-like the better. Particularly powerful or important clerics have massive maces made to look like trees, with green heads and studs that look like golden fruit.

Holy Orders:

Clerics of the Great Church

The Order

The clergy is the center of the Great Church's five holy orders. From the clergy arise the bishops, the archbishops, and the Supreme Patriarch. Members of the order focus on both missions of the church, spreading the faith wherever they go but also doing great work in the name of the gods.

The clergy of the Great Church is quite vast, and within it there is room for many different beliefs. However, the official attitude of the order, its missions, its goals, and its actions are all determined by the Supreme Patriarch. Therefore, the role of the Church in any world will vary based on the heart of its highest-ranking cleric.

Titles

A first-level cleric, addressed as "father" or "mother" and introduced by full title, will be part of a group of clerics assigned to a church – large or small, depending on the campaign. A character is ordained as a cleric after spending several years working in a church learning all of the prayers and services necessary. A character wanting to multi-class as a cleric will either have to stop adventuring for several years, or already know the entire Great Church liturgy. First-level clerics of the Church do not operate independently in any way and are not trusted with their own ministries. They may only go adventuring on Church business or with their dean's permission. Once a cleric reaches third level, however, he may operate freely and be away from the Church to which he is assigned for long periods of time performing the gods' work.

At seventh level, a cleric becomes eligible to become a dean of his own church – generally a small one for a first-time dean. The local bishop makes this decision, and it is usually a political one. A cleric must petition the bishop directly for the deanship, and may be turned down for any reason. One may only petition for deanship once per level. A dean oversees all the goings on of his church, issuing assignments to all the clergy below him. A dean is addressed as "reverend father" or "reverend mother," and introduced by full title.

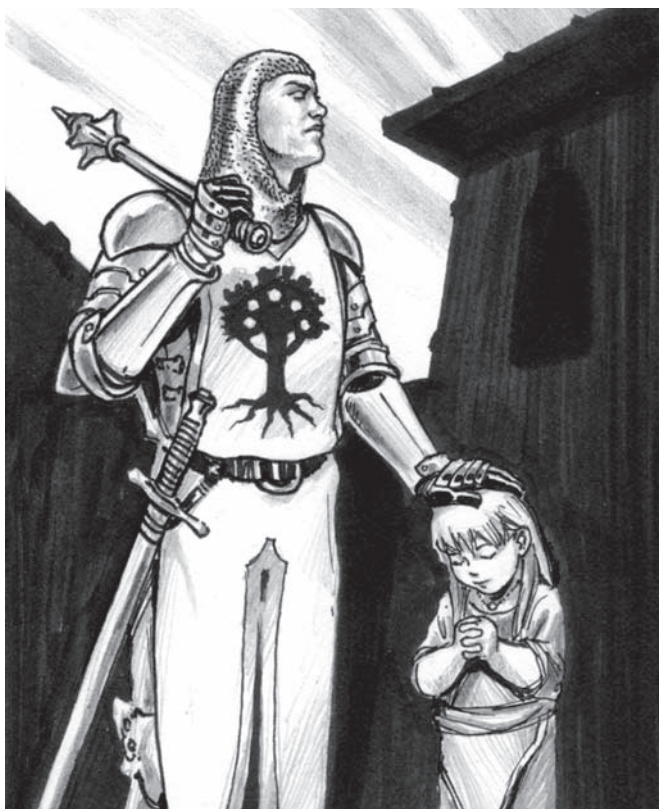
At 12th level, a dean becomes eligible to become a bishop. The bishops are handpicked by the archbishop of the nation, and each archbishop has only as many bishops as are allowed him by the Supreme Patriarch – so getting a bishop spot usually requires the death of an existing bishop. One may petition for a bishopric as often as one likes, but such petitions are only important when one is available. A bishop oversees a large geographic area and is generally found at its largest church, instructing the deans and participating in the political affairs of the area. Bishops are addressed as "blessed father" or "blessed mother," and introduced by full title.

At 15th level, a bishop may be named archbishop of a nation or large region by the Supreme Patriarch. There is no petitioning for this position, and the method by which archbishops are chosen is shrouded in mystery and known only to the Supreme Patriarch. As with bishoprics, an archbishopric is only available when a new region becomes available to the Church or an existing archbishop dies (or is elevated to Supreme Patriarch). An archbishop is granted control of the Church's presence in

an entire nation or other significant political body, is addressed as "holy father" or "holy mother," and introduced by full title.

An archbishop may be named the Supreme Patriarch or Matriarch only by a unanimous vote of all the archbishops. When the existing Supreme Patriarch dies, all the archbishops convene at the Great Cathedral. Together they determine who among their number might be an appropriate Supreme Patriarch. All those named are excluded from the vote. One can imagine that this is a very useful political tool for removing dissenting voices and raising a candidate some of the archbishops might oppose fiercely – and it is a method that has been abused in the past. Each archbishop may only name one appropriate candidate, and no more than half of the deliberating body may be forced to sit out the decision. Once appropriate candidates have been selected, the remaining archbishops come to a unanimous conclusion and name the new Supreme Patriarch or Matriarch. This may take months. The Supreme Patriarch is the voice of the Church

and commands the clergy and the faithful alike. The Supreme Patriarch is addressed as "Most Reverend Lord/Lady" or "Most Holy Father/Mother," and introduced by full title.



The clerics of the Great Church usually wear white tabards bearing the tree of the gods, trimmed with gold or silver.

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Bishops, archbishops, and the Supreme Patriarch can all be addressed as “your eminence,” “your holiness,” or “your grace.”

Table 3A

Clerics of the Great Church Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Cleric	Three Years Training
7	Dean	Available Church; Petition Granted by Bishop
12	Bishop	Available Bishopric; Named to Position by Archbishop of Region
15	Archbishop	Available Archbishopric; Named to Position by Supreme Patriarch
15+	Matriarch Supreme Patriarch/	Death of the Previous Supreme Patriarch; Unanimous Vote of Body of Archbishops

Domains

The clerics of the Great Church are exactly as described in the *PH*. They are unaffiliated clerics who may choose any two domains. The sole exception is they may not choose the Evil domain, as none of the Lords of Heaven are evil.

Spell Preparation Time

Clerics of the Great Church may prepare spells at any time of the day they feel fit – the gods place no requirement on it. Most prepare their spells in the morning at dawn, but this is for purely ceremonial reasons.

Alignments

Most clerics of the Great Church are lawful good in alignment, as is the Church. However, there are strong contingents of neutral good and lawful neutral clergy. The lawful good clerics are dedicated to the furthering of the Church’s goals for the spiritual salvation of every common person, and believe strongly that this can best be accomplished by doing the Church’s work and spreading its teachings and laws.

Lawful neutral clerics of the Church care for little but the Church itself. Most are busily involved in Church politics as well as secular affairs, seeking to expand the influence of the faith. Because they are so dedicated to their work, lawful neutral clerics are among some of the most powerful in the Great Church. They are also the most closely tied with the deaconry.

Neutral good clerics are as a rule unskilled politically, but are particularly good at fulfilling Church doctrine. It is from the neutral good group that most of the adventuring clerics come, with many of them gone from their home Church for years on end performing the gods’ works abroad. For this reason among others, they make terrible deans and almost never receive the opportunity to rise further in Church hierarchy.

Holy Warrior:

Paladins of the Great Church

The Order

Paladins are the warriors of the Great Church. Founded by Saint Anne, the first paladin (or, according to the Church, the first “modern” paladin, as the many mortals who fought at the gods’ side before the Compact were all paladins), the holy order of paladins is vast and dedicated to opposing evil wherever it may rise. Saint Anne was a pilgrim who came to see the wondrous marble statue in the Great Cathedral soon after the founding of the faith. When she looked at it she saw herself in shining armor flanked by a thousand warriors. At Saint Hefastan’s urging, she founded the order, and its numbers soon began to swell as people from all over the world heard the call to rise up and fight evil.

The core doctrine of the paladins is spelled out in the *PH*. They do not pay homage to any one god in particular. They worship them all, receive power from the Choirs (or so Church scholars assert), and fight evil in the name of the gods. They are totally loyal to their order and, therefore, the Church – but were the Church to become corrupt, it likely would not take the paladins with it, as they seem connected to the heavenly at a deeper level than most.

Loyal as they are, paladins are not the enforcing arm of the Church’s will, or servants and protectors to the clerics. Paladins are great heroes with their own will and purpose, wandering the earth to fight against evil and depravity in their many forms. Every paladin heeds a very personal call to do this, feeling destiny-bound to perform her duties.

The primary purpose of paladins is to go questing. They travel, righting wrongs. When they are not abroad, they use a Church as a base of operations. At low levels, paladins are given quests by higher-level paladins or, if there is one at the Church, a captain.

The paladin holy warrior is exactly as written in the *PH*.

Titles

A first-level paladin, addressed as “sir” or “dame” and introduced by full title, is usually housed at a Church where a captain is regularly present. The process for becoming a paladin is simple enough – those who receive the call know instinctively what they must do. They go to a Great Church and pray for three days without food or sleep until they are lifted up by the local paladins and taken into the order. For the next ten years they are trained exhaustively in warfare and holy doctrine. In cases where the new paladin already knows much of this (at least a first-level character with at least one rank in the Knowledge (religion) skill), this period is reduced to a year. Obviously, these are only general rules and are at the GM’s discretion.

At tenth level, a paladin becomes a captain. No one’s permission is needed for this transition in title. All other paladins will recognize that the character is a captain and will obey her. In cases of more than one captain ordering a group, the lower-level captain will simply defer to the higher-level – no argument necessary. Deans of churches (and higher authority figures) and any cleric of the Great Church with a Wisdom higher than 13 recognize a captain for the commanding figure she is without needing to be told. A dean will always welcome a captain to use his church as a base of operations for the captain’s quests. A captain continues to be addressed and introduced as a paladin.

At 18th level, a captain becomes a lord protector. Again, this simply happens and does not require anyone’s permission. Throughout the

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world, a lord protector is a figure of legend and renown. Kings bow to them, the infirm beg them for healing, and those of evil heart leave the continent when they hear a lord protector is coming. Lord protectors are addressed as “lord” or “lady” and introduced by full title.

Table 3/2

Paladins of the Great Church Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Paladin	Ten Years Training or 1 st Level Character with 1+ Rank in Knowledge (Religion) and One Year of Training
10	Captain	None
18	Lord/Lady Protector	None

Additional Class Skills

“A dull mind wields a dull blade.”

– Saint Anne.

Paladins often expand their training into the intricacies of medicine and healing. Further, they are well trained in the arts of diplomacy. The paladin’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Heal (Wis) and Diplomacy (Cha). See **Chapter 4: Skills** in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains & Gift of the Gods

Unlike most holy warriors, paladins receive no choice in domains. The paladin starts with the Champion and Guardian domains. If your GM prefers, a paladin may receive the choice of any two domains like her cleric counterparts. Her Gift of God is the *remove disease* ability received by paladins every three levels.

Spells, Mount, Conduct, and Associates

The paladin’s spell list, special mount, code of conduct, and philosophy for associates are all exactly as appear in the *PH* for the class.

Alignment

A paladin must be lawful good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

There are three other holy orders in the Great Church, though the churchguard and friars are generally NPC orders.

The churchguard are charged with protecting and serving the clergy and the churches themselves. They are usually fighters or warriors who are devout members of the Great Church. They don’t adventure, since their duties keep them bound to their churches. The churchguard wear uniforms of red with tabards bearing the Tree and the five fruits on their chests.

The friars are a contemplative order made up of those who want to walk away from their lives and think on the teachings of the gods. Friars have no possessions and simply wander the land, taking what people offer them. They are fed by the Great Church and given shelter there, participating in holy services, but often they make pilgrimages into distant lands. Much of the spreading of the faith is done by friars. Many members of this order serve for only a few years and then go back to their prior professions. Some friars are actually monks, able to fight against evil powers with their fists and their inner

strength – but this is quite rare.

The prestige class we provide here is for the third major holy order of the Great Church: the deaconry. It is important to note, however, that not all deacons need to take the prestige class. It is also important to note that deacons who do take the prestige class do not receive gifts from the gods, but rather expert training at gauging the hearts of mortals.

A person is named a deacon by a bishop or higher official of the Great Church. It can be a title only and left at that, with no special powers attached to it. It is quite possible to be a full-time politician and dedicate no time to one’s order – the deaconry welcomes members who are out in the world, influencing events. It is also possible to donate one’s time and money to the Church and receive the title of deacon in return (a donation of 10,000 gold or a great quest for the Church will usually result in receiving a deaconship; lifetime donations in excess of 100,000 or the recovery of a Church

artifact or similarly important quest will often result in archdeacon status). However, an openly evil character, or a character with an evil reputation, will never be made a deacon.

For those who take the prestige class, granted the opportunity to become a deacon for whatever reason, the order makes available its ancient books and secret rooms, from which the character may learn the hidden arts of influence and intrigue.



Tending toward golden armor and the same tabards as the clergy, paladins have no uniform and need not openly wear holy symbols.

Chapter III ~ The Great Church

Deacons are addressed as “deacon,” while archdeacons are addressed as “archdeacon.” The order is dedicated to securing the secular position of the Great Church and influencing political leaders and events. Deacons are often expert diplomats, performing missions abroad for their bishops. The greatest among the archdeacons have the ear of the Supreme Patriarch and work closely with him.

Table 3-3

Deacons of the Great Church Titles

Title	Requirement
Deacon	Named by Bishop, Political Importance; or Important Aid to the Church; or 10,000 GP Donation or More; or 1 st Level in Prestige Class; May Not be Openly Evil (or Said to be)
Archdeacon	Named by Archbishop, Major Political Importance; or Enormous Aid to the Church; or 100,000 GP Lifetime Donations or More; or 8 th Level in Prestige Class; May Not be Openly Evil (or Said to be)

Prestige Class:

Deacon of the Great Church

A deacon is a member of the third great holy order of the Great Church. Dedicated to political and secular matters, deacons work with prominent members of the community to further the goals of the Church. As such, a deacon is an expert at diplomacy, languages and the subtle arts of intrigue, all in the name of the gods’ good works. It is also possible to be a deacon without taking levels in this prestige class, in which case the character is essentially someone marked as a “friend of the church,” usually because of useful ties to secular government.

Bards, rogues, and wizards are often deacons, as this is a way for them to use their specialized skills to the benefit of their faith. Fighters and rangers sometimes become members of the deaconry; usually they are already established and powerful adventurers, named deacons by the Church in recognition of their status as great heroes. Other classes are almost never made deacons, while clerics of the Great Church and paladins cannot be deacons; they are already members of another holy order.

Being a deacon means becoming part of an established Church order with resources and wealth made available to the character for the

spreading of the Church’s influence. NPC deacons are generally influential, smooth and clever speakers, and experts at getting people to see things their way without resorting to ugliness. For players who want their characters to be tied to the Great Church without being clerics or paladins, working toward being named deacon is a worthy goal. Many famous adventurers over the years have been made deacons, and eventually archdeacons, for bringing back great treasures and giving them to the Church – or simply for aiding the Church greatly in times of crisis. The class brings with it excellent training in political skills, very useful to the wily PC. Once a deacon, the character will often be sent by his archdeacon or the bishop to perform diplomatic missions in the name of the Church, so every deacon must be skilled as a diplomat with at least one group (such as the barbarians of the north, dwarves, or any other distinct group your GM feels is appropriate).

Hit Die: d6

Abbreviation: Dea

Requirements

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

Alignment: Any nonevil.

Feats: Skill Focus with at least one of the following skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Forgery, Gather Information, Innuendo, Knowledge (religion), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (local), Listen, Read Lips, or Sense Motive.

Patron: Must be a faithful member of the Great Church.

Diplomacy: 5 ranks.

Sense Motive: 5 ranks.

Knowledge (nobility) or (local): 3 ranks.

Speak Language: Dwarven, Elven, Gnomish, or Halfling.

Special: Because deacon is a title, the character must be named a deacon by a bishop for the prestige class to become available. This is usually accomplished by a donation of at least 10,000 gold to the Church or the completion of an important quest for the Church, but it may involve something more or less difficult at the GM’s discretion.

Class Skills

The deacon’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all

Table 3-4: Deacon of the Great Church

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Special status: Deacon, Bonus feat
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Bonus language, Native Tongue
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus language
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Master Diplomat, Bonus feat, Native Tongue
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus language, Church protection (5,000gp)
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Special status: Archdeacon, Native Tongue
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat, Church protection (15,000gp)
10th	+5	+4	+3	+7	Native Tongue, Master Diplomat

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skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (politician or lawyer) (Wis), Read Lips (Int), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the deacon prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Deacons gain no additional proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Native Tongue (Ex)

Through exhaustive training, the deacon learns to pass as a native member of a culture. Though this may be physically absurd (an elf speaking like a native dwarf), the deacon learns idiomatic speech, subtle gestures, and cultural references that only a native would know. The effect is so surprising and charming that the deacon has a perpetual +2 competence bonus to all Charisma and Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with a member of that group. If it is possible for the deacon to disguise himself as a member of the group in question, he receives a +4 competence bonus to his disguise skill when masquerading as a member of the group.

The deacon may learn the Native Tongue of any culture with a distinct language from his own. For example, deacon Trellik is a human and wishes to act as an ambassador to the people of Morigand. While Morigand is a human kingdom, it has its own culture and language, so Trellik may take the Native Tongue ability for Morigand.

The deacon gains the Native Tongue with one culture at 2nd level. At 5th level, he may add another culture; at 8th level, a third. At 10th level, the deacon gains a fourth group and is so seasoned a diplomat that his Native Tongue Charisma bonuses are raised to +4 and his disguise skill check bonus is raised to +8. A deacon may not take Native Tongue twice for the same culture.

Bonus Feat

At 1st level, the deacon receives a bonus feat. She gains additional bonus feats at 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level. These bonus feats must be Skill Focus taken in any of the following skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Forgery, Innuendo, Knowledge (religion), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (local), Listen, Read Lips, or Sense Motive.

Special Status

A deacon is an important figure in the Great Church and as such enjoys privileged status. A deacon need never pay for food or lodging at a Great Church chapter and receives significant discounts from

merchants who are faithful to the Great Church. Further, a deacon asking for an audience with a political figure will only be rejected if that political figure wishes to alienate the Great Church.

At 8th level, a deacon is named an archdeacon for service to the Church (a deacon who does not perform regular services for the Church should not be allowed to take an 8th level in the deacon prestige class). An archdeacon not only receives free food and lodging, but free spells and rituals, with magic items provided at cost from the Great Church larder (subject to availability, of course). Merchants faithful to the Great Church are unlikely to charge an archdeacon for smaller items. Important political figures will invite archdeacons to their courts if they hear they are about.

At the GM's discretion, a deacon may be named an archdeacon before reaching the 8th level.

Bonus Language

At 2nd level, a deacon gains a free language commonly spoken by other cultures with which the Great Church may have business. Such languages include Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Giant, Halfling, and other languages of mortal civilizations. Additional bonus languages are gained at 4th, 6th, and 10th levels.

Master Diplomat (Ex)

By 5th level, a deacon has gained a masterful understanding of mortal behavior. He can discern lies from truth by looking for eye (or tentacle) twitches, modulate his voice to soothe or anger anyone with whom he converses, and manipulate any conversation to the subject of his choosing. He gains a +2 insight bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive checks. At 10th level, he gains an additional +2 bonus, for a total of +4.

Church Protection

Because deacons are extremely valuable to the Church, they receive special protection from the Church's clergy and paladins. A deacon in difficulty may call upon the Church for help, and receive it if at all possible. At 6th level, the deacon is given 5,000gp worth of protective magic items from the Church's vaults (these can be armor, healing potions, or anything else for preserving the life of the deacon). At 9th level, the now archdeacon receives an additional 15,000gp in items.

A deacon with the Leadership feat is provided a retinue of bodyguards from the Church. This includes clerics and even paladins, if the deacon doesn't do anything counter to a paladin's nature. This retinue fills up the character's available followers without the player having to hire or find followers; they are provided by the Church and are immediately loyal.



Deacons, particularly archdeacons, make their status and importance clear, both in attire and in ostentatious presentation of their church's symbol.

Chapter IV: Practicing the Faith: The Old Gods

About This Chapter

In the mythology, we are introduced to the old gods – those created before the fruits hatched on the tree. These gods are still worshiped and are quite powerful. The old gods are in two places at once – they are the personification of the forces of the earth (the air we breathe, the water all around us, the earth under our feet), but they are also walking, talking gods. They are said to reside still in the mortal sphere, but they are sometimes represented among the other gods on the mountain of Heaven. This is one of the mysteries their faithful must strive to understand.

In this chapter, we discuss the faiths of the five old gods: Rontra, the Earth; Urian, the Sky; Shalimyr, the Waters; Eliwyn, the Tree of Life; and the Nameless One himself. The first three have active churches; the other two have sporadic followers whose beliefs stand apart from most.

Chapter IV ~ The Old Gods

God of the Air and Sky

The Myries of Urian

Urian (YUR-ee-uhn) (Radiant, Thunderous, the Wind Lord, Sky King, Sky Father, Great Sky, the Moon and Stars, Windwright)

Myths

Dragging Sun and Moon

For long and long, the sun and moon simply hung in the heavens as a part of the Great Sky. There was no need for them to move, and it was eternally day in one part of the world and night in the other. Into this world the div were born, and before long those in the dark pleaded with Radiant Urian for light; those in the eternal light cried out for the restfulness of night. But how can this be? For a man can no more move his eye from his head to his toe than the Sky Father could move the Sun to the dark parts, and the Moon to the bright.

Yet Thunderous Urian was moved by their pleas, and so he set to earth in his common guise and wandered among the div finding the two mightiest of the race – Ali Mustafis bin Omar and Farouk al Ban. These two div were the greatest heroes of the time, and had come to be renowned among the Shaitan and Marid for their rivalry. They had wrestled 12 times before, and never had one of them won.

When Urian came upon them, it was before their 13th match. Every hundred years the div from around the world (who did not wither with age) would gather for great athletic contests between the strongest and swiftest among them. All eyes were upon the great champions, each of whom swore that he would be victorious this time. The Sky King came to them and made each this offer – should he win, Urian would place him in the heavens for eternity. Both readily accepted.

The two strove for three days, their longest match yet, and at the end, neither was victorious. When the Windwright came to them afterward and sighed sadly that he only had room for one in the sky, each demanded the place. Each swore fervently that he would serve gladly and diligently in the heavens just to keep his rival from the honor. At the end of their oaths, Urian smiled, for he indeed had room and need for both.

And so, Ali Mustafis bin Omar was renamed Alimus and set in garments of pure gold. Urian placed in his hands a great flaxen cord that was lashed about the sun, and every day Alimus drags the golden orb across the sky.

For his part, Farouk was renamed Faro, and he was set in raiment of shining silver. Into his hand was committed a perfect thread of mithril that girded the moon. His commission was to drag the moon across the heavens in the evening.

To this day, the two uphold their duties, though sometimes Faro shows up his rival by racing onto the field of the sky early, and so the moon can be seen in the heavens during the day. And sometimes, though rarely, the two ancient rivals come to wrestle once more and the sun and moon are eclipsed as they strive; to look at the sky at such times is folly, for the wrestlers have such might and glory in them that to gaze at them with the naked mortal eye is to be blinded.

The Chaining of the Winds

When Darmon and Korak taught the mortal races to build great water vessels and Wily Darmon taught them to sail those tall ships across

Shalimyr's back, there were many obstacles to the learning. The mortal races needed to overcome their fear of floating on the water, which was as unnatural to them as flying through the air; they needed to learn to navigate when out in the great and chartless sea; but most important, they needed to learn to harness the wind for their travels.

While Urian the Wind Lord tried to keep his winds in check for the benefit of these mortals, still they were wild and untamed. Just as a man's mind can wander and contemplate that which horrifies him, just as a woman can find her hands striking her child whom she loves more dearly than her own life, so were the Sky King's winds raging against his will. For while the winds were a part of him, they had possessed a spirit of their own from the beginning. Two of them hated those that walked the earth and sailed the seas, and they sought to destroy them all.

The bitter North wind called out, "I shall bite at all I see, tear their flesh and turn them to ice!"

The terrible East wind responded, "I shall shake them and break them, rip them and strip them! I hate them all, I do, and the East wind will destroy!"

But the South wind and the West wind tried to stop the East and North from destroying the mortals, and often the winds would clash in the skies, causing terrible gales that tore up everything in sight.

Perhaps the winds that are part of Urian the Moon and Stars are only a small mirror put to the spirit of the Great Sky Himself. For surely, Radiant Urian has shown through the ages that he both loves and abhors others – sometimes he is placid and lovely, and at other times he is dark and terrible; so too were the winds that were a part of him, but not a part of him.

At last, the raging of the winds became too much. The mortals had learned to sail their tall ships and to build beautiful homes at the water's edge, but whenever they set out on the great journeys that would some day connect the mortal races in trade, the winds would rise up – South against North, East against West – and the ships would be dashed against rocks or lost at sea. One day, Darmon Silver Tongue came to Urian to entreat him to calm his winds:

"Sky Father! Will you not still your raging winds? For do we not all love these clever mortals and wish to see them travel across the land and sea? Yet they cannot travel, for your winds destroy their ships; you rage where even your mad brother Shalimyr does not."

And the Sky King thought on this and determined that little Darmon was right. He did wish to see these mortals travel across the seas and someday, perhaps, high in the air. So he spoke to his winds and demanded they be still. But they would not!

"Nay, Lord! We will rage and blow and destroy, for our hearts hate!" the North and East said.

"Nay, Lord! We must rise to oppose our brothers, or they will destroy the world!" the South and West said.

And at this Urian started, for surely the winds were a part of him as were the stars, as was the Sun and Moon, and yet they resisted his will. And so he reached into himself and plucked the winds from him, as a man might

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rip out an offending eye, or cut off his own hand were it to spite his desires. Urian Windwright then sent Darmon forth to summon the twins, Korak and Anwyn. For the Sky King, Master Korak built four mighty halls in the clouds and mountain peaks to house the winds, and chains to hold them. From these halls, Blessed Anwyn made homes, with furs and fires and splendid feasts.

Urian now resides in these four halls, moving from one to the next, unchaining his winds for a while when he sees fit, knowing that the North and East seek to scour the earth, and the South and West seek to give succor. It is said that two of the halls are in caves atop the tallest mountains in the North and South of the world, and should any be foolish or brave enough to climb these peaks, he might find Urian Windwright or, at the least, one of the winds bound in mighty adamant chains forged by Master Korak. And in the highest clouds of the East and West, one might find two more halls, and in them imprisoned those winds. But in all four halls one thing is assured – winds that were once a part of the Sky King are shackled, yearning to be free.

Let us never forget, therefore, that Radiant Urian, who cherishes freedom, so loved the mortal races that he pulled from himself the most vital part and enslaved it to be our servant; we must forever honor this sacrifice.

Associations

Urian is the god of the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the winds, freedom, and salvation. His voice is heard in thunder, and his countenance is seen in lightning. To most, he is the father of storms, though all agree that rains come from Shalimyr, the waters.

In the animal kingdom he is associated with no animal more than the eagle, though all of the beasts of the feather are referred to as his children and wards of his domain. Among more magical creatures, he is associated with the griffin, which is part eagle and was born of his servant.

Urian is ardently worshipped by primitive people everywhere, and has among them more names than can be counted. The odds are very good that barbarians and nomad societies worship Urian, or some aspect of Urian (like the sun, stars, or lightning), under some name of their own devising. Among those who understand Urian's place in the pantheon, he is most often worshipped by the elves, who love his stars and the moon, and by humans and halflings, who love his sun and sky. Subterranean races care little for Urian.

Alignment

Urian is neutral good.

Representations

In icons, Urian is shown as a mighty old man, with a great white beard made from the winds and wild hair that shines with lightning. In his eyes are stars and the moon, and when his mouth is open it shines with the light of the sun. He is sometimes shown with four beasts behind him on leashes of chain – the four winds, two of which are shown to be snarling, fierce beasts, and two of which are shown to be placid and kindly.

When represented symbolically, Urian's faith is summoned visually with an orb, half gold, half silver; the gold half casts off the golden rays of the sun. This symbol is worn by the Urianath, particularly those of his church. In times of haste when such symbols are not possible, this symbol is made as just a simple orb flanked by four lines – the winds.

This is a hasty symbol and will not be used if the more formal symbol is possible. It is most often seen in small stamps on weapon hilts, etc.



The Sky Father shown here leading the four winds that he tore from his body to protect the mortal races.

Purpose

Urian is the sky and the heavens. His purpose is to continue to shine on the earth with his sunlight and to make the landscape glow with the silver light of the stars. Bound up in this, though, is the central mystery of the worship of Urian, Shalimyr, and Rontra; all three gods *are* the elemental parts of the world, but they are also the guardians of those elemental parts, wandering among them and looking after them. There is a legend of Darmon stealing stars from Urian, and Urian finding the fakes with which the Wily Darmon replaced them. How is this possible if Urian *is* the stars? It is a mystery that anyone who worships him must ponder.

Outside of stewardship of the heavens; unleashing the winds, lightning, and thunder when they are needed; overseeing Alimus and Faro; and presiding over his four great halls, Urian wishes to reach the ignored nooks and crannies. There are places in the world that none care for – perhaps they are ugly or horrible or devastated by evil; Urian reaches them still with his sunlight and starlight, his moon and his winds. He seeks to bring the beauty of the heavens to all peoples and all places, and for this he is dearly loved by those imprisoned and enslaved in such places, for he represents their hope and their freedom. The most common visual theme among these faithful is a prisoner reaching through the bars of his cell for the stars.

Urian is profoundly uninterested in the various petty conflicts of the gods, and he straddles both sides of the disputes between chaos and law. Sometimes he sides with one, sometimes the other; sometimes he takes no side at all. This is because Urian, more than any other of the gods, has a dual understanding of the world, and a dual interaction with it. Sometimes he is radiant and lovely and sometimes he is dark and cold. He sees both as legitimate, and he contemplates what is the proper time for each – when must he unleash the warm and gentle winds, and when must he let fly the bitter and cruel?

Servants

Urian has seven principal servants. There are the four winds, which are discussed above, and can go alternatively by the names Rigyl or North, Ragyl or East, Wyndyl or South, and Wandyl or West. All of the winds are chained in the four halls of the Sky Father, unleashed only when they are needed and carefully controlled to avoid the destruction of all in their path.

There are also Alimus and Faro, who are forever bound to the sun and moon. Some cultures worship these two as gods in their own right, and some believe them to be brothers, having forgotten the true story of their origin. Indeed, they are quite powerful, for they have borne the most lovely of the heavenly orbs aloft for thousands of years, and it has affected them to the core. It is unclear whether worshippers of the two are actually receiving power from the intended target of their worship or from Urian. Alimus and Faro are so powerful after these many years that it is quite possible that they are actually supplying power to their followers.

Closest companion to Urian, though, is Grifynne, his magnificent golden eagle. Grifynne is mother to the griffins (which are named after her) and the lamassus, both races of which were begot on her by Terak's golden lion, Metteron. Grifynne has a wingspan as long as a mighty river and her cry can be heard across the heavens. Her origins are mysterious, though most assume that Urian created her before the gods of the tree were even born.

The Church

Church Description

The barbaric worship of Urian is not covered here, though it should be quite easy to create a sun-, lightning-, or moon-cult that reveres Urian by some other name. Instead, we will focus on the more universal church of Urian, which in the “civilized” world has grown weak. As people move into cities and have ready shelter and warmth, the need to fear the winds and revere the sun is sublimated to reverence for more earthly forces like commerce, craft, war, and medicine.

Because of this, the eyries of Urian (as his Churches are called) and the Urianath (YUR-ee-uhn-ath) who worship there are now exceedingly rare in city settings. The eyries are not secularly strong, and one of their holy orders has vanished from the world. Indeed, the greatest of eyries are found high in the mountains, ancient and magnificent structures that offer a commanding view out across hundreds of miles of valley. These eyries are remote and hard to reach, and it is rare that the skylarks (the clerics of Urian) journey down from them. This does not make for a popular religion.

And yet, for those who seek freedom from enslavement – of the body, the mind, or the spirit – there are few greater places than the eyries. Homes of contemplation, beauty, and austere wisdom, the eyries are a boon to many in the deepest need.

The eyries are aroused to action when they are asked to aid the enslaved and the downtrodden. Just as Urian's wind reaches every corner of the world, the Urianath believe that Urian's care should be available to all people and therefore abhor slavery. However, the Urianath are now so marginalized that, should they seek to topple a major power, they would have to seek aid from another church in the task.

The stance against slavery is a universal position of the faith. There are points on which the Urianath vary. There are some among them who are devoted most to the sun and light of the Sky King. These Urianath strive against the undead and other forces of unlife. Others among the Urianath revere the Sky Father's cold light of moon and stars above all, and these seek individual strength and glory, as the stars are individual points of beauty and light.

Church Structure

The eyries have four holy orders, two of which are nearly extinct, and one of which was last active so long ago that it is now but a dusty and dim memory. Each order is named after a beast of the feather: the skylarks (the clergy) are the dominant order and have two levels of status, the wings and songs; the eagles (the holy warriors) have three levels, the talons, eagle riders, and eyrie lords; the hawks have no levels of status; and the griffins are now an extinct order.

There is no central authority to the Urianath faith, only ancient traditions. The highest authority in any eyrie is either the oldest skylark's song or the eyrie lord if one is present (though the skylark's song will be the authority on all matters spiritual).

The average eyrie may have five or six wings and two songs. There may be one or two talons and one eyrie lord, though some eyries have no members of the order of the eagles whatsoever. These eyries are instead protected by the hawks, still a lively order, and the average eyrie will have at least four hawks in residence.

Chapter IV ~ The Old Gods

Doctrine

“The sky is light and dark. The wind is hot and cold. The sun gives life and death. But the sky is dark when the world needs dark, and death comes of necessity. Can we question and rail against the cold while we praise and hallow the warmth? Can we hate the sun in the desert when we love it in the winter? All of these are part of the Sky Father, and all of these have a purpose in his plan; we must be grateful, even for darkness and death.” – Skylark’s Song Abu Goldfeather’s ‘I Have Tasted the Stars’

The Urianath practice a good faith. This is important to remember because sometimes they praise and glorify things that others find evil (like bitter cold, the blood moon, or darkest midnight) – and it is precisely because others find them evil that they praise them. The core premise of the Urianath faith is that Urian loves the world and its peoples. After all, he guarded the tree, he opposed Kador bitterly, and he pulled the winds from his own body and enslaved them – he who loves freedom most! He gave light to the dark parts of the world, and gave evening to the light parts. It is therefore unquestionable that he loves the world and the mortals who inhabit it.

So why, then, does he sometimes let the wind rage and destroy ships? Why does his cold winter wind come down and kill unprotected children? Why does his sun burn the skin and suck the water from a man’s body, leaving him to the vultures in the desert? Why does the night serve as a haven to thieves and evil beasts?

The contemplation of these questions, and their reflection in every mortal spirit, is the heart of Urianath practice. For these great and difficult questions are reflected in the hearts of men: Why does a good and happy woman consider hurling herself to the rocks below whenever she stands at the edge of a cliff? Why does a loving father consider casting his own child in an open fire? Why do good people do terrible things? The contemplation of these questions is of central importance to the Urianath, and their understanding is that it is the freedom to do evil that makes people good. Just as the Great Sky must sometimes let awful things happen so that the mortal races fully appreciate the good of the world, so too must all people contemplate the darkness in their own souls to fully appreciate the good.

One can see, therefore, why the Urianath so oppose tyranny and slavery. A slave is not free to walk the good path, to explore the depths of her spirit. Tyrants seek to control the thoughts, the hearts of their subjects – though thoughts and hearts must be free to soar or sink. But just as the Urianath oppose the extremes of law, they oppose the extremes of chaos. They believe that discipline and rule are necessary for a person to fully appreciate his goodness. The path of the Urianath is between law and chaos – a path of contemplation and balance on the road to good.

The eyries are most often visited by those wrestling with the darkness of their own spirits, just as the sun and moon wrestle, just as the North and East winds wrestle with the South and West. Those who strive to conquer what they see as their worse nature, those who feel imprisoned by past deeds or wicked desires, find succor in the faraway and hidden eyries, high in the mountains. Whenever they are apart from their eyries, the Urianath seek to bring spiritual guidance and

support to people across the land. They seek to bring freedom of the mind, the heart, and the body to all they encounter so that all people may explore the dual sides of their nature – the light and the dark – and understand that both are necessary for goodness.

Common Prayers

The Urianath have many sayings they repeat over and over again as they contemplate the world and their own spirits. One of the most common is a meditation on light:

*“Father Sky, the Sun and Moon,
Giver of the golden boon,
Silver twilight, radiant dawn,
The cycle ceaseless carries on.*

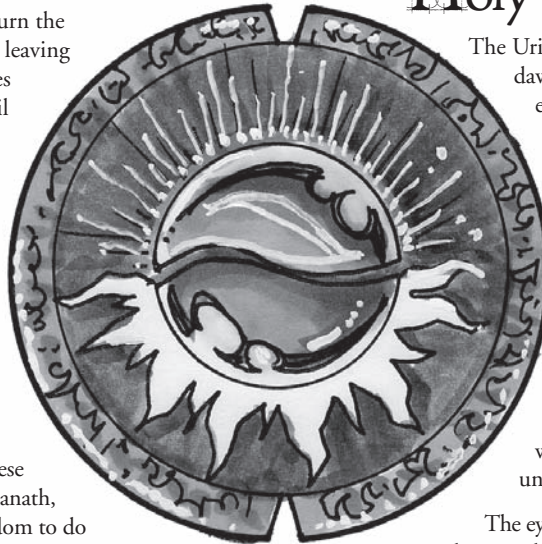
*“Hallowed heavens, pitch and star,
Thou kindle even near and far.
Thy light shines out when all is dim,
Thy darkness forms the nightly hymn.”*

Holy Days

The Urianath view each dawn and dusk as a holy event, and most are sure to be outside to observe these events daily.

Whenever there is a complete solar or lunar eclipse, the Urianath celebrate indoors, as they consider it a taboo to be under the sky at such times. Some cultures also have special celebrations of the sun at harvest or planting time. These are usually festivals to Urian, and the local skylarks will aid in the celebration – but they are not universal celebrations across all cultures.

The eyries do not have regular times for services, as they are places of constant meditation.



Saints

The Urianath recall the names of saints as those who have aided in the freedom of all people. Should someone deter an empire from conquering the world or stop an infernal plan to subjugate the mortal races, she would find herself revered as a saint by the Urianath (regardless of her faith). Usually for the Urianath, sainthood requires martyrdom, as it is highly unlikely that one will achieve such ends without the loss of one’s own life.

The most notable of the saints revered by the Urianath is Griffin Saint Mathilde, who was the last of the Griffins. Her entire order was wiped out by a demonic cult planning on bringing one of the most powerful demon princes to the earth. The cult did not realize Mathilde had survived, however, and in the last moments of its black rite to summon the demon prince, she sacrificed herself to close the gate; the power of the closing wiped out the cultists and barred the prince from the earth for one hundred years and a day. Since that time there have been no Griffins, for there is no one to train them; their sacrifice is remembered, though, for they saved the world from certain doom.

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Urian's View of the Church

Urian has a peculiar view of the world: He either focuses on the highly specific details of peoples' lives or pays attention to trends across hundreds of years. This is best understood as the sun and the stars. The sun rises every single day; its cycle is one of daily repetition. Stars hang in the heavens, unchanging, for thousands of years, their fire never dimming. Their cycle is either so slow as to be immeasurable, or they are not on a cycle at all.

Urian sees the world through these eyes: the day-to-day and the very, very long term. Nowhere is this clearer than in his attitude toward the Urianath faith. He can become intensely involved with the mission of one skylark in a very specific predicament while ignoring everyone else in her eyrie, or he can go for hundreds of years without sending guidance or aid to any of the Urianath – even the most powerful. Most of them accept this as the reason that the Griffins have been gone from the world for so long; they imagine the Sky Father hasn't even noticed yet.

Urian certainly has no reason to mistrust or dislike his church, but he also has the very practical details of being the heavens to attend to. And if he is capricious and uninvolved in his dealings with the Urianath eyries, he is even more so with the various nomads and barbarians who worship him on the fringes of the world.

Preferred Weapon

Urian's preferred weapon is lightning, which cracks from his clouds when the gods argue and he thunders. Lightning is best represented with the javelin and the whip – one flies like lightning, and one cracks with the thunder that follows.

Holy Orders

Clerics: Skylarks of Urian

The Order

The skylarks are a contemplative order. Most of them live high up in the mountains, dedicating their entire lives to pondering the two faces of Urian and the mortal races. They are quiet and kind, and revere the sunshine and moonlight.

Sometimes a wing will leave the eyrie to go on a quest. This is not because he is told to, but because his contemplations tell him to. The skylark

simply picks up, tells the songs of the eyrie that he is to depart, and then off he goes. Sometimes this is based on a vision, other times on a hunch; sometimes they are even certain they have heard the command in the wind. Many of these wings never return, killed on their quests. Others come back soon, their minor quests fulfilled. A rare few live lives of spectacular and heroic adventure and return to the eyrie, old and ready to impart the wisdom they gained on their journeys.

The skylarks value contemplation, kindness and gentle guidance far more than harsh action. There are other orders of the Urianath dedicated to fighting brutal wars and saving the downtrodden – the skylarks are the spiritual and mystic order, and they are often difficult to talk to.

They speak of mysteries and constantly analyze the lessons learned from events. However, for those with heavy hearts burdened by sins past (or perhaps future), the skylarks are marvelously helpful. They have ready ears, are not judgmental, and are eager to offer guidance.

Titles

The skylarks have only two titles, and they are not based on power or prestige, but on age. A young or middle-aged skylark is a wing. The wings are charged with carrying the faith, learning, growing, and performing any physical labors necessary. A wing is addressed as "skylark's wing." All Urianath addresses follow this form, and all are introduced using just this address – the order name is not repeated. So, Idrin would be addressed as "skylark's wing Idrin," and introduced as "the skylark's wing Idrin of the eyries of Urian."

Once a wing is old (based on the age at which a person of his race is considered "old" according to the *PH*) he becomes a song, addressed as "skylark's song." It is his duty to teach others the ways of the skylarks, to oversee

the students and visitors of the eyrie, and to generally live out the remainder of his life in wisdom and grace. The songs contemplate the faith and defer to eyrie lords on secular matters.

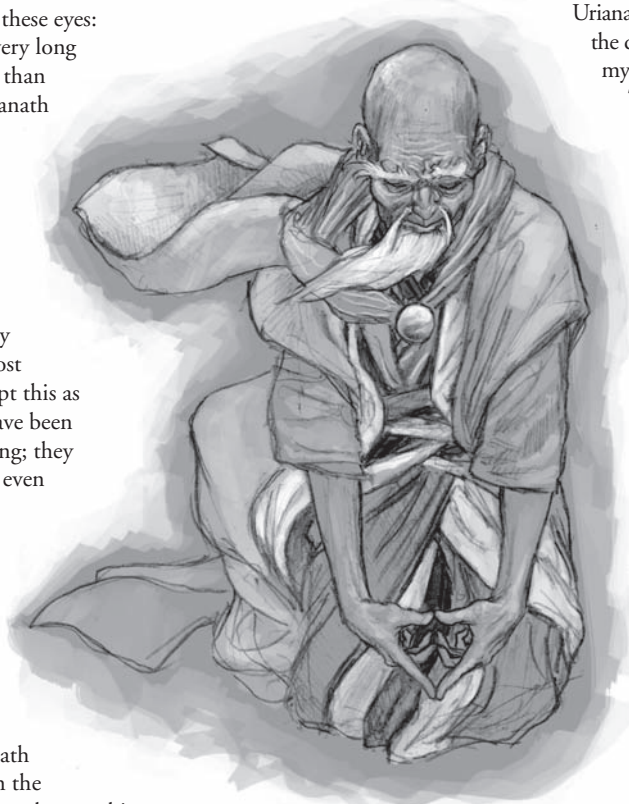
Table 4-1:

Skylarks of Urian Titles

Title	Requirement
Skylark's Wing	Skylark is a Wing until the birthday when he becomes "old" (e.g. 53rd birthday for a human)
Skylark's Song	Skylark is a Song through old age and venerability until death

Domains

Skylarks of Urian may choose two of the following domains: Air, Good, Sun, and Night.



The skylarks wear the light and dark blues of the day and night sky. Their holy symbols are always large and obvious.

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Spell Preparation Time

A skylark must prepare his spells under the open sky at the time of a major heavenly event – sunrise, sunset, a shooting star, moonrise, etc.

Alignments

There are three dominant alignments among the skylarks, though the most common is neutral good. The neutral good skylarks hew most closely to the doctrine of the faith, spending days in contemplation of the dual nature of heaven and man. They are filled with the certainty that goodness can be found in the dark and the light, the cold and the warm, the individual light of a star and the radiant glow of the sun that blankets everything. They are a serene and kindly group.

The lawful good skylarks of Urian certainly follow the doctrine of the Urianath, but they focus on the goodness of light and warmth: There must be darkness for the light to be perceived in all its glory. There must be cold for the warmth to be felt in all its splendor. These skylarks focus on what they call “Urian’s Order,” meaning that all things and people have a place under the sun, and all bad things happen to us so we may learn our place in that order. The lawful good skylarks can truly be said to revere Urian’s sun-face more than any other, and are quite close to sun-worshippers. They feel that when he shines, he is the center of life and holiness, and they hope to bring that light and warmth to the world. Such skylarks are profound enemies of demons and undead.

The chaotic good skylarks of Urian are almost the reverse image of the lawful good. While they too hold that Urian is the center from which goodness flows, they believe that the sunlight and daytime are Urian’s way of aiding the mortal races to overcome their weakness – for nighttime is the pure time. They see the stars as the best guidance to holiness; they are thousands of brilliant lights, standing out individually, making the most beautiful work of the heavens. Urian wishes the mortal races to be like the stars, standing out as brilliant individuals doing wonderful things, and only in the dark when we have no light to guide us are we truly alone and able to stand as such individuals. Urian gives mortals the sunlight because they are too weak to embrace their individual destinies; they are frightened by loneliness, so he brings them back together with the light.

Holy Warriors: Eagles of Urian

The Order

The eagles are a noble and beautiful order. They wear tall, golden helms and carry greatswords of silver decked with gems like the stars. They speak with the song-like voices of birds and are magnificent to behold. Sadly, they are rare, and it is uncommon to see one of the glorious eagle-riders sweeping down on an evil foe from his winged steed.

The eagles stand for the freedom of all people to achieve their potential. They wish to break the locks and gates of the world that obstruct the winds of freedom. They stand in opposition to any force, mortal or outsider, that would enslave or imprison the mortal spirit. This often takes them into opposition with infernal forces, particularly devils, but it also leads them to oppose rulers who dominate by fear or other evil methods. This ends up being a wide assortment of

foes, as they will oppose lawful evil, chaotic evil, neutral evil, even lawful neutral and chaotic neutral regimes. Any that seek to outlaw the freedom of thought, and certainly any that allow slavery, will be opposed by the eagles. With so many enemies, is it a wonder they are rare?

Titles

The eagles have three distinct stages of their careers. The first is learning by doing. Just as the winged eagle learns to feed by swooping down and attacking the prey of the field, the eagles of Urian must learn to oppose evil by fighting evil. They wander the world taking up any mission they can that will improve the lives of others. They make friends with those who are good, bitterly fight those who are evil, and happily soak up knowledge and skill, waiting for the day that they will bond with an eagle. At this stage in their careers, the eagles of Urian are called talons and addressed as “eagle’s talon.” Becoming a talon is as simple as climbing to an eyrie and asking. The eyrie lord examines the prospective eagle and determines, through some strange second sight all eyrie lords have, whether this young person has truly heard the call to take up arms in Urian’s name. The student is then taught the language of the heavens (Auran), given training in weapons, and sent abroad to learn what she might find under the heavens.

When the talon is ready – and she will simply know when she is ready – she goes up into the mountains or a secluded wood, alone, unclothed, and empty handed, for three days. While this would kill most, the eagles of Urian are able to live under the open sky during this time because they are protected by Urian. At the end of the three days, the talon calls down a giant celestial eagle that will serve as her mount. This eagle mount becomes a powerful companion in the eagle’s quest for goodness; she is now called an eagle rider and addressed as “eagle’s master.”

After a long life of riding her eagle mount into battle and winning glory against evil forces, the eagle rider returns with her eagle to the eyrie and retires there as its protector. She lives to train and examine new talons that come to the eyrie, oversee the eyrie’s secular affairs, and ride forth in times of greatest need. She is now called an eyrie lord (regardless of gender) and is addressed as “eagle’s lord.”

Table 4-2: Eagles of Urian Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Talon	Speak Auran, Year of Training
8	Eagle Rider	Call Giant Celestial Eagle Mount
18	Eyrie Lord	None

Additional Class Skills

The eagle’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex) and Spot (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the PH for skill descriptions.

Domains

Eagles of Urian may choose two of the following holy warrior domains: Champion, Air, and Freedom.

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Gift of Urian

Beginning at 3rd level, the eagle can blow out a *gust of wind*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in level (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Gust of wind* is a spell-like ability for eagles.

Beginning at 12th level, her Gift of Urian allows her to ease her mount's flight by controlling winds, as per the spell *control winds*, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Control winds* is a spell-like ability for eagles.

Spells

1st Level – *bless, bless water, bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, magic weapon, protection from evil, read magic, resistance, virtue*

2nd Level – *remove paralysis, resist elements, shield other, whispering wind, wind wall*

3rd Level – *cure moderate wounds, fly, dispel magic, greater magic weapon, heal mount, magic circle against evil, prayer, remove blindness/deafness*

4th Level – *cure serious wounds, death ward, dispel evil, freedom of movement, holy sword, air walk*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 8th level, an eagle may summon a giant celestial eagle. These eagles are golden, speak Common and Auran, and are already quite intelligent. When they bond with an eagle of Urian, they gain all the bonuses of any special mount. See the *MM* for stats on giant eagles and the celestial template.

Until they call their celestial mount, the eagles of Urian may have no other special mount, meaning they must wait quite a bit longer than other holy warriors to receive a special mount.

Conduct

Eagles of the wing soar above looking for the dark, scurrying things of the world. So too do the eagles of Urian. They sally forth into

the world looking for evil deeds to set right. In doing this they must never knowingly commit an act of evil. They must never knowingly allow one of the mortal races to be enslaved (imprisonment for crimes does not count). They must never contribute to any plan that forces one viewpoint or way of thinking on a people. This is a fine line – a society that worships dark gods and believes that all people should have their hands cut off may or may not see itself overthrown by the eagles of Urian; if the people all actually believe this is the best way, it would be wrong to force them to stray from their beliefs. Of course, the odds of a whole society willingly cutting off its hands are pretty slim, and the eagles would be quite skeptical of any assertion to the contrary.

Should an eagle violate this code, she loses her abilities until she properly atones.

Associates

Eagles of Urian will associate with any who are good of heart, though they will not stay long with those who are so convinced of their righteousness that they seek to impose their order on other mortals, or those who are so opposed to order that they will tear apart functioning systems and societies in the false name of freedom. Those who are openly evil will not find an eagle long in their company.

Eagle riders usually travel alone; they fly and few others do. However, particularly exceptional companions will be welcomed into an eagle rider's heart, and she will go out of her way to travel with them.

Alignment

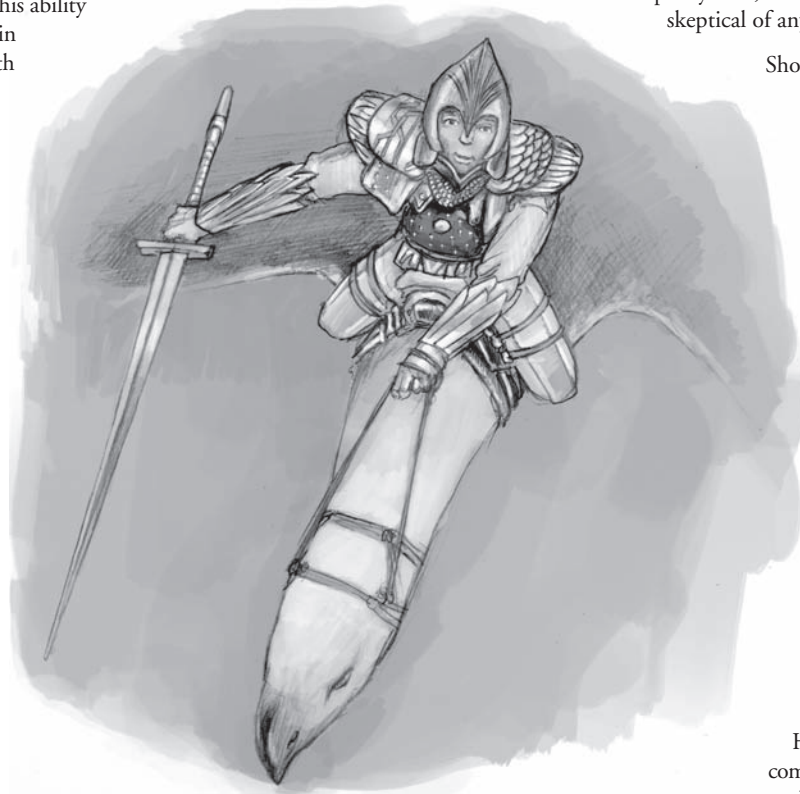
Eagles of Urian must be neutral good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The other two holy orders of the Urianath are the hawks and the griffins.

The hawks are a "less noble" order than the others, essentially guerilla warriors against the forces of evil. While the eagles soar above things, hawks are not afraid to fly low and tear into their enemies. A hawk is addressed as "hawk."

Unlike the hawks, the griffins were magnificent warriors who took on the spirit of the griffin. They gained the strength of the lion and the courage and nobility of the eagle. These powers furthered their tireless war with infernal forces. Sadly, there are no longer any griffins in the world.



The eagles are glorious to behold. They are brightly attired, often wearing jewels so that they shine like stars.

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Prestige Class: Hawks of Urian

The hawks of Urian are trained killers, just as the bird for which they are named can be trained to hunt and maul. Hawks are master bowmen, skilled at sneaking near their foes and devastating them from a range, but when drawn into melee, theirs is a terrible bite. Their fighting style is fierce; they are unafraid, and they do not hesitate to get their hands dirty. As the faith of Urian says, there is good in the light and the dark; the hawks believe that the only way to effectively fight those who would do evil to the mortal races is to engage them in the mud, to mete out brutality and destroy them utterly. To this end, the hawks are wild, passionate warriors, and when they come upon the forces of evil they abandon any sense of “honor” or “mercy” and instead seek to ravage their foes completely. This style absolutely horrifies most who are good, but others understand it as a philosophical stance toward the wicked: The only language that evil understands is violence.

Barbarians, with their innate sense of such tactics, are excellent hawks; often when barbaric peoples who have long worshipped Urian under different names come into contact with the eyries, they readily take on the hawk mantle. It is the holy order of the eyries that makes most sense to them. Rangers, fighters, and rogues also make excellent hawks. The more lawful and bookish classes are highly unlikely to become hawks.

NPC hawks are sometimes found with armies moving against evil forces. They are marked by the symbols of Urian on their breasts or, more often, tattooed on the back of their hands; they dress in colors to blend with their surroundings. They are often in the vanguard or scouting parties. NPC hawks happily work in groups, but their tactics are not often embraced by other good people, as they are more than a bit unsavory. Groups of hawks are rare but profoundly dangerous.

Abbreviation: Haw
Hit Die: d10

Requirements

To qualify to become a hawk of Urian, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Non-lawful and non-evil

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Feats: Quick Draw, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot

Urianath: Hawks of Urian are a holy order of the eyries and must worship Urian.

Vengeful Heart: A hawk of Urian must have something in his background that fills him with such a profound desire to oppose evil that he is willing to stoop to utter brutality to oppose it.

Class Skills

The Hawk's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the hawk prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Hawks are proficient with the use of all simple and martial weapons and all armor (heavy, medium, and light) and shields.

Swift Coup de Grace (Ex)

Using an advanced form of his Quick Draw ability, the hawk is able to slay downed foes much more easily than most. As a move-equivalent action, he may step on his enemy's throat, jab his blade in the downed foe's eye, or make any number of swift and lethal acts that do not draw an attack of opportunity. This move-equivalent action counts as the Coup de Grace that most must take a full round to perform, and does the same damage.

Bloody Murder (Ex)

Should the hawk take a full action performing a Coup de Grace (instead of the Swift Coup de Grace), he does a minimum of 50 points of damage. Bloody Murder draws attacks of opportunity from adjacent foes.

Table 4-3: The Hawks of Urian

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	—Spells per Day—			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	Swift Coup de Grace	0	—	—	—
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	Bloody Murder	1	—	—	—
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	Sneak Attack +1d6	1	0	—	—
4	+4	+1	+4	+1		1	1	—	—
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	Murderous Precision	1	1	0	—
6	+6	+2	+5	+2	Sneak Attack +2d6	1	1	1	—
7	+7	+2	+5	+2	Horrible Wound	2	1	1	0
8	+8	+2	+6	+2		2	1	1	1
9	+9	+3	+6	+3	Sneak Attack +3d6	2	2	1	1
10	+10	+3	+7	+3	Murderous Precision	2	2	2	1

Loss of a Sensory Organ

It's a device as old as fantasy: the bad guy with an eyepatch. The crazy barbarian missing an ear. The hawk helps expedite such matters. Other than the initial shock, horror and damage, the loss of one eye, an ear, or a nose will likely not affect a character. We know that it would actually destroy your depth perception to lose an eye, but in fantasy such consequences can be overlooked. If you want to have a realistic effect for such damage, assume a permanent -2 circumstance penalty to all skill rolls associated with that organ. If an eye is lost, the character suffers from double range penalties when making missile attacks.

When he is done, if his foe is killed, the hawk is able to take a free action and use the remains of the foe (a head, a kidney) and a quick verbal outburst to horrify all foes able to see. This might involve hurling the head of his downed foe into a crowd, or swinging the foe's entrails into a tree while yelling "I'll hang you all from his guts!" All opponents who can see the action must make a Willpower save against fear (CR 10 + the hawk's character level + the hawk's Charisma modifier). Those who fail are shaken for a number of rounds equal to the hawk's class level. All lawfully aligned allies of the hawk who see the display suffer a -1 morale penalty to any rolls pertaining to the hawk (Heal checks, for instance). This penalty remains in place for 24 hours.

Rather than make a public display, the hawk may lop off one of his killed foe's limbs and use it as a weapon against his remaining enemies. Lopped-off limbs do little damage, but every foe hit with a severed limb must make a Willpower save as above, but with a -4 circumstance penalty due to the horror of being beaten with bloody flesh. Lawful allies and foes who witness this bloody bludgeoning are affected normally without the circumstance penalty.

A limb will only last for 1d6+1 rounds of combat before it becomes more jelly than weapon. Damage for limbs is as follows:

Tiny creature limbs:

Size (T) Damage: 1 point

Small creature limbs: Size

(S) Damage: 1d2

Medium creature limbs:

Size (M) Damage: 1d3

Large creature limbs:

Size (L) Damage: 1d4.

Inflct Horrible Wound

If the hawk chooses, when grappling with an opponent he may take a special action called "Inflct Horrible Wound." This works exactly like the "Damage Your Opponent" grappling action, except that it requires an additional grapple check at -4 (i.e. one check to win the grapple, a second check to successfully Inflct Horrible Wound). If successful, a Horrible Wound permanently damages one of the foe's sensory organs. The hawk may bite off the

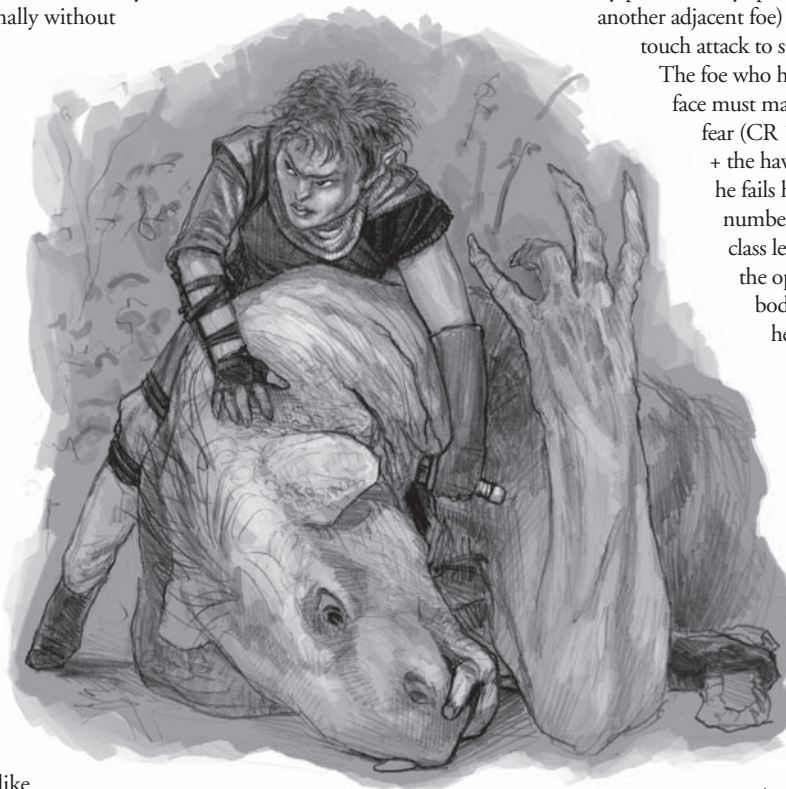
opponent's nose (or one of his ears), gouge out an eye, or rip off a finger (with teeth, or with brute strength if the hawk is one or more sizes larger than the foe and his strength is at least 20). The Horrible Wound does 2d6 points of damage and inflicts permanent bodily injury on the foe. The foe is automatically shaken for the rest of the combat and any foes who witness the infliction of the Horrible Wound must make a willpower save against fear (CR 10 + the hawk's character level + the hawk's Charisma modifier). Those who fail are shaken for a number of rounds equal to the hawk's level. All lawfully aligned allies of the hawk who see the Horrible Wound infliction suffer a -2 morale penalty to any rolls pertaining to the hawk (Heal checks, for instance).

After the attack, the opponent receives a +10 to his grapple check to escape or wriggle free from the grapple, as it is very difficult for the hawk to maintain control of the foe after such an act (if the foe wishes to take any grapple action other than escape or wriggle free, he receives no bonus). In the following round, if the hawk bit off one of his foe's body parts, he may spit it into the face of the foe (or another adjacent foe) as an attack action, making a touch attack to successfully hit the foe's face.

The foe who has had a body part spit in his face must make a willpower save against fear (CR 10 + the hawk's character level + the hawk's Charisma modifier). If he fails he is rendered frightened for a number of rounds equal to the hawk's class level. Fear effects stack, so if the opponent hit with the spit-up body part is already shaken, and he fails his saving throw, he is now considered panicked. All lawfully aligned allies of the hawk who see the raw brutality of spitting a person's body part back into his face suffer a -5 morale penalty to any rolls pertaining to the hawk (Heal checks, for instance). This penalty remains in place for 24 hours.

Murderous Precision (Ex)

At 5th level, the hawk gains the ability to strike surprised and exposed foes with Murderous Precision. Whenever the hawk makes a sneak attack using a ranged weapon, he is considered to have the Improved Critical feat with the weapon he is using for the sneak attack. Since Improved Critical does not stack, this ability has no effect



Hawks wear whatever colors will allow them to blend into the landscape for stealth. They need not openly wear their holy symbol.

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if the hawk has already taken the feat with the weapon in question. At 10th level, the hawk is so skilled at waylaying his foes that anytime he makes a sneak attack, no matter what the weapon, he receives the Improved Critical feat and any critical threats automatically succeed.

Sneak Attack

When wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor (and not carrying a heavy load), a hawk catching an opponent when she is unable to defend herself effectively from his attack can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Basically, any time the hawk's target would be denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether she actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), the hawk's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by +1d6 points every three levels (+2d6 at 6th level, +3d6 at 9th level). Should the hawk score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

It takes precision and penetration to hit a vital spot, so ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is 30 feet away or less.

With a sap or an unarmed strike, the hawk can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. He cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty, because he must make optimal use of his weapon in order to execute the sneak attack.

A hawk can only sneak attack living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. Also, the hawk must be able to

see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot, and must be able to reach a vital spot. The hawk cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

If a hawk gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses to damage stack.

Spells

Beginning at 1st level, a hawk gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the hawk must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a hawk with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Hawk bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the hawk's Wisdom modifier (if any). When the hawk gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 1st level, the hawk gets only bonus spells. A hawk without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. The hawk's spell list appears below. A hawk prepares and casts spells just as a skylark of Urian does.

Hawks choose their spells from the following list:

1st level— *bane, cause fear, deathwatch, detect evil, doom, magic weapon, true strike*

2nd level— *darkness, darkvision, endurance, cat's grace, silence*

3rd level— *blindness/deafness, cure light wounds, haste, invisibility, keen edge*

4th level— *bestow curse, divine power, fear, gaseous form, greater magic weapon*

The Goddess of the Earth

The Foundations of Rontra

Rontra (RAHN-tra) (Grandmother, Venerable, the Earth, the Wellspring, the Earth Mother, the Foremother)

Myths

The Fate of Durgas the Unmerciful

Long ago, when the world was young, as were the children of the Tree, there arose a leader and warrior among men who was a scourge to the earth. His countenance knew only rage and his hands bore naught but death. Durgas the Unmerciful he was called, may his name forever be accursed, for he cut a bloody swathe across the land. All who dared oppose him were crushed beneath his might; his cruelty and malice were unrelenting and only exceeded by his hunger for power. Those conquered by the Unmerciful found their lands, their homes, their very families, pillaged ruthlessly.

Durgas had fought wars on many fronts, but he had never extended his conquests eastward, for that way lay a powerful nation that opposed him bitterly. After a time, the wicked warlord became determined to conquer his Eastern neighbor, and focused his forces for an all-out assault. This was no normal conflict. The pride of Durgas was unending, and he felt it an affront that this nation had opposed him for so long. He therefore had no plan to capture and keep his enemy's lands; his mind was on far more

sinister machinations. He would kill these Eastern people, make their King eat his own family, destroy their cities and homes and sow salt into the earth. If he were successful, there would be nothing left but desolation and death. Then all would know the price of resisting Durgas the Unmerciful.

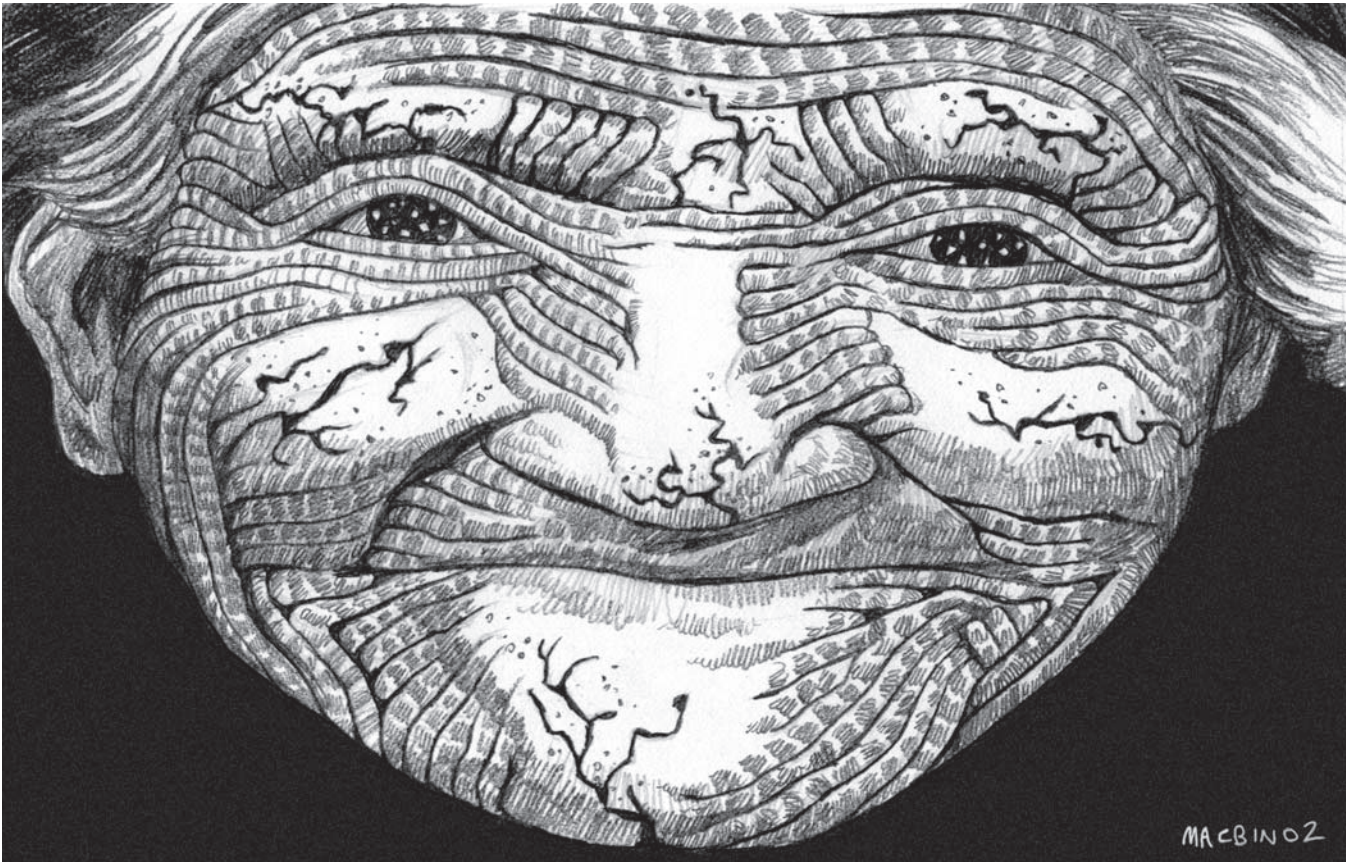
The campaign began as had so many others. Armies of men started out strong against his onslaught, but soon retreated, hoping to fight another day. The horde of Durgas soon set about slaughtering those left behind. Homes were burned, crops destroyed, and the earth poisoned; the stench of death and roasted flesh was everywhere.

Then he saw her.

She was a solitary figure, standing alone, silhouetted by the fires raging behind her. She stood stooped over a cane, seeming ancient and tired. As Durgas roared forward to strike her down, the old woman uttered these words: "Hold, warrior! Stay your hand! You must relent on this path of murder – destroying the people and their lands. Remember, warrior, the earth gives life and life it can take away."

Durgas roared back, "You are a fool, woman! Death is before you and all around you. Only I can give you your life now, but I choose to take it away!" With that the Unmerciful beheaded the old woman.

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Rontra as depicted by the dwarves. In her countenance, the treasures of the earth are found.

Her head rolled on the ground and turned face up. Durgas saw the eyes of the old woman staring right at him. Then the lips moved, speaking thus: "You have made your choice, Durgas the Unmerciful. We shall see who lives and who dies." With that, the head and the body turned to dust before him.

The campaign continued, as Durgas and his army moved further and further into enemy territory. Again, they destroyed everything in their path, leaving nothing but death and destruction behind them.

And again, he saw her.

Venerable Rontra, though Durgas still did not know who she was, stood in the center of a burning field. Heedless of the destruction around her and the approach of Durgas, she stood patiently, waiting for him to approach. At first, Durgas thought it a coincidence, but when she spoke, he knew it to be the same voice he had heard before.

"Durgas," Rontra the Wellspring said, "You have yet to learn. I ask you again to give over your war and go on your way. Only your doom awaits you along this path."

Durgas hesitated for a moment this time, looking down from his saddle at this stooped grey woman who spoke with such authority. His men were stunned, for they had never seen him think over a killing blow. But if there had ever been a place in Durgas' heart where mercy might find root, it was now as scorched and barren as the lands he had left in his wake. Raising his blade, he hewed that old grey head, saying, "You will not stop me, woman. I am Durgas! I am invincible!"

Again, before turning to dust, the last words of Grandmother Rontra were, "You have made your choice, warrior. We shall see who lives and who dies."

Now Durgas was filled with an incredible rage. A fey light was kindled in his eyes and he drove his men to unspeakable acts. No home was left standing, no field left unburned, no life untaken in his path of destruction.

Again he saw the old woman!

She waited for him as before, though now she seemed not so frail. She stood unbent and unbowed at the crest of a hill. As Durgas approached, his men fell back, for whispers of this old woman had now spread through the camp and even the Unmerciful's mightiest captains feared her. Only Durgas dared approach, and he dismounted to climb to the top of the hill and stand face to face with the Earth Mother.

She spoke to him: "Warrior, I ask you now only for the sake of the earth, provider and nurturer of all life, stay your hand. Leave this place unharmed. It is in your power to do this. All you need do is walk away. Think ere you strike."

"I do not need to think, old woman," responded Durgas. "You have been unable to stop me and you will not stop me now, so close to the end. On the morrow, I will have the king of these lands beneath my heel. Durgas stays his hand for no one! I strike you down for the last time. Begone! Trouble me no more!"

This time his cruel stroke split the old woman in half. There were no words from her, and her body dissipated into dust.

Durgas continued his onslaught, cruelly destroying his enemies and their lands, making them uninhabitable. When there was no one left to kill and nothing left to plunder or pillage, he turned his tired army toward home.

The march was long and the land was dry and parched. There was no water and no food – for all around, in every direction, was the destruction

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that Durgas had wrought. One by one his men died, as they had nothing to eat or drink. At last, only Durgas was left.

As he stumbled forward and fell to the ground, he looked up and saw the Foremother standing before him, her cane in her hand. She was robed now in purest white, and her old grey hair shone in the light of the day like threads of pure silver. "Help me!" he said to her. "Please help me."

The old woman looked down on him, and even for this worst man among men, there was pity in her gaze. But there was no sorrow in her voice when she spoke: "Look now on the mighty Durgas. The Unmerciful! The Invincible! Look how you have been laid low. You did not heed my warnings. You did not respect the land. Now you taste death, not at the hands of another warrior, but at the hands of the earth you so sorely abused. For behold! I am Rontra, the Earth, and had you obeyed me, I would have nurtured and sustained you as I do all others who respect me. But in your pride, you destroyed all you saw, and now you will return; from dust you were born, to dust you will return. Go, and be judged!" Finished, the Wellspring plunged her cane into the earth before him.

With that, Durgas faded to dust and his remains seeped into the earth. The cane remained, marking the spot of the demise of Durgas. It grew to a mighty oak tree in time, as the earth around it recovered, spreading out from the spot like ripples in a pond.

Associations

Rontra is the goddess of the earth, plants, farms, dirt, gems, metals, farmers, miners, and all others who revere the earth. She is associated not only with the earth above, upon which all things grow and live, but also with the places beneath the earth. Rontra stands for the fertility of the land as well as the people that inhabit it. She is the grandmother of all people and of the gods themselves, having grown the great tree Eliwyn in her soil. She is, therefore, the patron of grandmothers and old women. She is known as the Foremother, as she offers the gods and the mortal races the loving embrace of their ancestral mother.

Rontra is often linked with the animals of the deep places and caves of the earth, including moles, voles, wolves, and cave bears. Of all the animals of the earth, though, she is most closely associated with rabbits and hares, which live in warm homes in the earth; they are gentle and fertile creatures, as Rontra is gentle and stands for the fertility of all the creatures and plants of the earth, and they desire nothing but peace, yet they will not hesitate to protect their young, even against impossible odds, if they must. Among mystical creatures, she is often associated with treants, which some say are her children but were actually born of the blood of druids (see the church of Eliwyn). She is actually most closely tied to the divine and gentle celestial animal spirits called pookas that sometimes aid humans in need.

Rontra is worshiped by farmers and others who work the soil, who pray that their fields will yield a rich harvest. Miners honor her for her gifts of precious metals and wondrous gems. Women pray to her when they desire children, because it was within the bosom of Rontra that the great tree Eliwyn grew and gave birth to the wondrous diversity of life in the land. Her worship is popular among all five races, though for different reasons – the elves love her natural splendor, the dwarves love her deep and rich caves, the gnomes love their homelands in her hills, and the halflings love her rich soil for farming; humans love her for all these reasons and more, depending on their culture. Half-orcs rarely worship Rontra, as they are considered unnatural by her church, the product of a sinful union. Any character who comes from a farming community is likely to have been raised worshipping Rontra,

though most of her adventurer worshipers are rogues (who specialize in scouting), rangers, the occasional druid, and barbarians.

Note: The worship of Rontra, Morwyn, and Anwyn are all very closely integrated, as they are three generations of the same line of women, and are often shown together: the grandmother, the mother, and the maiden. While Morwyn is the patron of pregnant women and those giving birth, it is Rontra to whom people appeal when they desire children, for the Grandmother is the giver of fertility. Similarly, while Morwyn is the patron of mothers and those raising children, it is Anwyn, the daughter, to whom they appeal for a quiet and restful home.

Alignment

Rontra is lawful good. She seeks the greatest good for the greatest number of her children through an ordered and structured society. Grandmother Rontra says, "You do not cast your seeds to the wind and hope they grow; you must plan, and plan well."

Representations

Over the centuries, Rontra has been depicted in icons as an elderly woman of the race worshipping her. Whatever the race, she has grey hair, approaching silver, and in her face there are thousands of wrinkles like the furrows of the earth and the farm. She is usually shown in robes of flowing white, though when she is prayed to for fertility, she may be shown in robes of red. Her eyes are always black as coal with flecks of gold, silver and iron. She is always shown in unshod feet, to remain always in contact with the earth.

In ancient times – and some of these icons and primitive statues remain – Rontra was shown as a heavyset woman with five exposed breasts. These represented the five mortal races; further, they represented fertility and life, signifying that mortals suckle at her breasts and take life-giving sustenance from the earth.

The symbolic representations of Rontra's church vary slightly, with different regions using different symbols to honor the earth. Those who revere the strength of the soil and its life-giving power represent Grandmother Rontra with a bundle of corn or other crop appropriate for the locale. Miners use the symbol of a sparkling diamond, shining as if lit by a bright light, to represent the treasures of the earth. All recognize the simple shorthand of a single majestic mountain on a field of white, however, and if there is a "universal" symbol of her church, this is it. It is often rendered simply as a tall triangle, though only in times of haste.

Purpose

Rontra has seen what strife and hatred can do to the land and its people. She knows that constant vigilance is needed to make certain that the gods, as well as mortals, do not turn toward destruction and death over petty squabbles. To this end, she views herself as an advisor and nurturer of her people. She seeks to counsel her grandchildren and show them the paths of righteousness. Together with Morwyn, she is the conscience of gods and mortals alike.

For Rontra, there is only one way, and that is the good way, no matter how difficult. She is uncompromising in this and does not equivocate or believe that good ends can ever justify ill means. That said, Rontra is the most "natural" of the gods – while she mourns the terrible events and crimes of the world, she does little to stop them. As is shown in the myth of Durgas, Rontra may warn and cajole, she may plead with the wicked to find the right path, but she will rarely oppose them. As

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the earth, she sees that all things happen for a reason and all in the world is part of a great cycle of life, even destruction and war.

Rontra will protect life in all of its forms through subtle means whenever she can. Legends are filled with families strangely overlooked by marauding armies because a small copse of trees obscured them, or a cave they had never noticed suddenly appeared near their home and was obscured from the raiders. Of all the gods, Rontra moves in the most mysterious ways, rarely showing her hand, rarely making her intentions clear. But those that worship her and study her ways know that she values all living things, from the least insect to the greatest god, as sacred and worth her attention. Whenever life is taken for granted or wanton destruction is spread, her agents are there offering an alternative and attempting to convince those who destroy that the path of life holds more value.

If there is anything that Rontra does actively oppose, it is the unnatural forces that pollute her lands. The Earth Mother despises the undead and their masters. They represent unnatural life not born from the earth. Her servants seek them out to return them to the peace of death.

Servants

Rontra has four main celestial servitors, her allies and friends who do her bidding when she calls. They are listed below:

The Shepherdess

When she needs to take shape, this servant of Rontra appears as a tall female of an appropriate race with flowing robes and long golden hair. In her hand is a shepherd's crook carved out of fresh oak. When the land is being desecrated or otherwise misused, the Shepherdess makes subtle appeals to those responsible to change their ways. She is called the Shepherdess because she is the figure credited in most legends for subtly herding those in danger out of trouble (such as the folk who suddenly find shelter in a cave they never noticed before). Some believe that the Shepherdess is actually Morwyn and not a servant of Rontra at all. That is considered foolish folklore by scholars, though, who know the Shepherdess by the name Gwainlath, who was said to be a great leader who served Rontra in the earliest days of the five races.

The Miner

Known to dwarves as Barik-tharn, the Miner invariably appears as a stout dwarf with a pick made of pure light. He is the protector of the earth's treasures, but most importantly he warns those who are beloved of Rontra when they are in danger of delving too deep or too dangerously. The flash of gut intuition a miner feels telling him his tunnel is unsafe is said to be Barik-tharn whispering to him over his shoulder.

Saint Marlessa

Reputedly the founder of the first Rontran foundation, St. Marlessa is the ear of Rontra, walking at the Grandmother's side and listening to the pleas of her worshipers. She only brings the most pressing to the

goddess herself. She is invoked as "Saint Marlessa, sister of the people" by common folk and is often named in private prayer by Rontra's followers.

The Serpent

The more mystical worshipers of Rontra believe that the surface of the world is actually an enormous serpent biting its own tail (sometimes called Ouroboros). They believe that the serpent is the chief of Rontra's servants and that all strength and power, particularly the power of fertility, is given to mortals through the serpent, which contains in it the power of life and death. Most legends of the serpent are not so grandiose. The more common belief is that the Serpent was created by Master Korak, who ripped off its legs in an effort to woo Thellyne (see the church of Korak in **Chapter VI**). These legends hold that it came to Rontra in terrible pain and she took it to her bosom.

The Serpent now visits those in mortal agony and eases their pain, for Rontra cannot abide suffering.

The Church

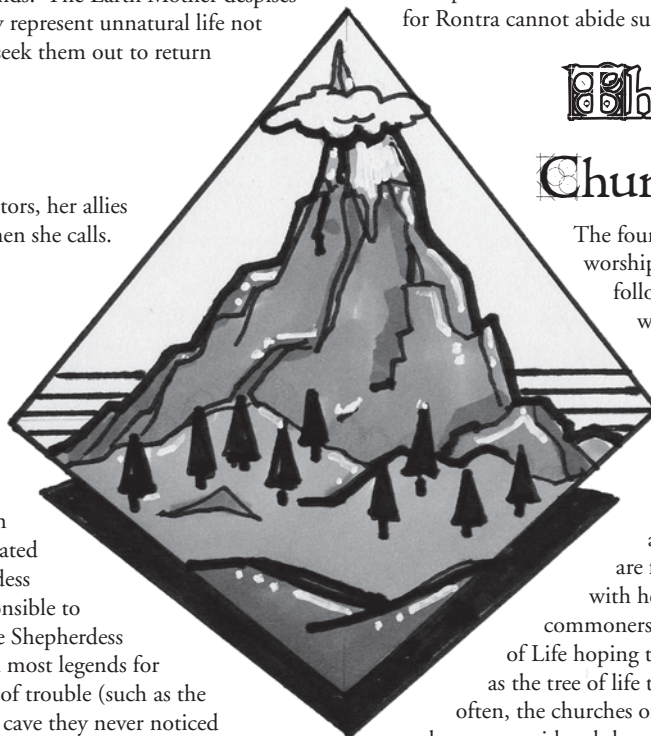
Church Description

The foundations of Rontra, where the Rontrons worship, are spread throughout the land. Her followers are quite numerous. In rural areas, where farming and living off of the land are a necessity, there is almost always a Rontran foundation present. Here, farmers pray daily, so that Rontra may bless their crops and they may feed their families.

In cities, the foundations of Rontra are far less widespread. When they are found, they are most likely concerned with her fertility aspect. Women (nobles and commoners alike) pay homage to the Wellspring of Life hoping that they will be able to bear fruit as the tree of life that sprang from Rontra did. Quite often, the churches of Rontra and Morwyn are linked, as they are considered the grandmother and mother of the people, respectively. In Great Church cathedrals, their altars are always found together.

The main temporal goal of the church of Rontra is to sustain life and the earth that supports it. Those who kill and maim for no reason or pillage the earth without cause are enemies of the Rontran faith. Rontran foundation elders view themselves as counselors of the people more than leaders. They seek to provide guidance to the faithful and maintain the health of their flock through wisdom and advice. They will lay down their lives if necessary to defend the land or the living things that derive sustenance from it, but they rarely will tell people what they should or must do.

Most Rontrons take pleasure in the treasures of the earth, such as gems and precious metals. They often craft these into beautiful valuables as a way to honor their goddess. There are many among the Rontran faith who are expert at such matters, and in mining societies the worship of Rontra is closely tied with worship of Korak, the artisan, who taught mortals to craft such wonders.



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The foundations of Rontra are always constructed from stone or brick, derived from the strength of the earth. The Rontrans never raise their buildings more than one story above the ground, and they often construct many subterranean levels and chambers. The floor of Rontran foundations is always bare earth. Those entering the temple must remove their footwear out of respect and walk barefoot. Thus, they are always in close contact with the Earth Mother. Many faithful Rontrans avoid wearing shoes so that their flesh is in constant contact with the earth.

Church Structure

There is no centralized hierarchy in the Rontran foundations. Each is independent, run by its highest-level clerical member, though it is possible for the foundations in one kingdom or geographic area to form a council. Even without central authority, each member knows who is above and below her in the foundation hierarchy.

There are three holy orders within the Rontran church: the sowers (clergy), wardens (holy warriors), and gleaners. Sowers have three levels of status – prelates, grand prelates, and great elders – while the wardens and gleaners have only one each. The sowers run the foundations and are the authority figures in all matters concerning the Rontran faith.

The average foundation will have at least five prelates and one grand prelate (a foundation cannot be established without a grand prelate). Larger foundations will have three or four wardens in residence. Gleaners are almost never found in foundations, and are instead found at the most rural shrines.

Doctrine

“We cannot mourn that we die, for all things die. It would serve us just as well to mourn birth. The fields are planted and grow full, and then they are harvested and made bare. They are planted once more, and again harvested. Do not mourn the cycles of life; do not resist their wonder. When we are at peace with life, then we will be at peace with each other. This is what our Grandmother wants for us.”

– Great Elder Grombir Ironbrand’s “I Have Seen the Glory”

Rontran teachings are not universal; each foundation focuses on the aspect of the faith its sowers consider most important. For example, inside a dwarf hold there may be a foundation that dwells on the beauty of the earth’s treasures and ministers mostly to miners. In this foundation, there would be no mention of planting crops at all. Conversely, a foundation in the middle of a farming community will spend most of its time focusing on the health of the local crop and not on the precious metals and stones that lie beneath the earth. As mentioned earlier, foundations in cities usually dwell on fertility. But the treasures of the earth, farming, and fertility are all merely aspects of Rontra’s love for those creatures that live on and in the earth; on this all sowers agree.

From this understanding, a core philosophy of the Rontran faith has emerged and can best be understood as “peace through acceptance, sharing, and love.” Rontran teaching focuses on the ramifications of wanting more than is rightfully yours – as with Durgas in the myth above, it invariably results in downfall and sorrow.

We each have our place in the world, and we must learn to accept it. We will die; this is inevitable, and the greed and pride that moves some to seek to extend their lives is wrong and will end badly.

We will all meet with tragedy in our lives, perhaps the death of a loved one or the theft of something we prize. To rage against these tragedies and try to achieve vengeance against the person responsible, or worse, against the world that makes such tragedies possible, will result in even greater tragedy.

Only when all people accept their place and learn to share with others, to love their neighbors and to be kind and gentle with one another, will we have peace. And peace is what Rontra desires for all people.

The Rontran philosophy is a gentle one and is accepted by many people for its simplicity and comfort. It is easy for those who live small lives without pretension to riches or glory to see themselves, through this teaching, as fulfilling their place in a very holy order.

Beyond these teachings, the Rontrans have some basic commandments that all Rontrans must follow. To disobey these teachings is a grave sin, and one must seek out a religious leader of the foundations to seek atonement if one does so:

- Do not consort with devils or demons or other evil creatures that are not of this earth.
- Do not create the undead, or consort with those that do.
- Do not join in physical union with any race not born of the tree of life.
- Do not eat the flesh of any creature not born of the earth; only natural beasts and fowl are appropriate meat for a Rontran.
- Do not sow the land with salt or any other substance that will ruin it for planting.
- Do not waste seed – either that for planting or your own.
- On the first day of each week, in remembrance that the beasts of the earth came from the same fruits that gave life to the mortal races, eat no meat whatsoever.
- If you have food that you can spare and others are hungry, share.
- If you grow food from the earth, one-tenth of all you grow must be given to those who are needier than you, unless none are needier.
- If you pull treasures from the earth, two-tenths of all you make in wealth from the Earth Mother’s treasures must be given to those needier than you, unless none are needier.

Common Prayers

There are many common prayers used by sowers and worshipers of Rontra, and part of a sower’s training is learning the hundreds, if not thousands, of traditional invocations that have been written over the years. One of the first they learn is the prayer of sowing. This is invoked by farmers during planting seasons to help ensure the strength and fertility of the soil.

The Sowing Prayer

*“Great Earth Mother, hear my prayer.
With these humble hands I till the soil,
Prepare the earth for the seeds of life.”*

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*“Great Earth Mother, hear my prayer.
I place each seed within your embrace
And ask that you welcome each into your arms.*

*“Great Earth Mother, hear my prayer.
As Eliwyn grew within your life-giving bosom,
So, too, I pray that my seeds will grow.*

*“Great Earth Mother, hear my prayer.
As I water the earth in due time
And tend the crops with loving care,
May your blessings be upon the land.”*

This last stanza of the Sowing Prayer is commonly used by farmers to ask for Rontra's blessings in their endeavors. Many say it almost absent-mindedly as a common invocation.

Holy Days

There are three main holy days of the Church of Rontra. These are the Fertility Festival, the Sowing of Seeds, and the Harvest Festival. Depending on the particular church and its locale, each holy day or period takes on more or less significance. For example, the Sowing of Seeds and the Harvest Festival are very important to farmers. A description of each holy day can be found below.

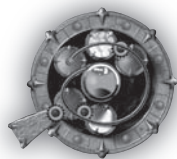
The Fertility Festival



This festival takes place on the first day of spring. This is normally an all-day affair to celebrate the end of winter and the hope and life promised by the coming spring. Most farming villages will shut down during this day, as everyone gathers in the town square to eat, play games, and attend services to honor Rontra. The young perform tests, usually physically rigorous, to prove they are ready to be adults.

In more “civilized” areas, the Fertility Festival is an excuse for a day of parties and revelry. The test of adulthood is often reduced to showing off one's prowess with a sword or bow or besting someone at a game of chance.

The Sowing of Seeds



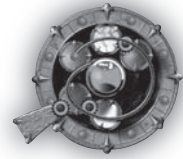
The Sowing occurs at the start of the planting season. This roughly coincides with the months of March and April in the real-world calendar, depending on the climate of your campaign world. During this holy day, members of rural communities attend services at the local foundation to ask Rontra to bless the coming planting.

It is customary on this day for each farmer to plant a young sapling to repay and honor Rontra for her annual gifts of crops. Devout farmers protect their trees with religious zeal, often hiding them away in secret groves.

The Harvest Festival

This week-long affair occurs during the harvest full moon that roughly coincides with October on the real-world calendar. The festival gives thanks to Rontra for the gift of the harvest and is an opportunity for farmers to celebrate the successful completion of another season.

The festival is marked by daily worship. This is followed by contests that award prizes for agricultural products, such as the best pie, the biggest pumpkin, or the sweetest corn. Dancing is also popular, and many a barn is lit up and cleared to make room for the revelers. The long, hard winter is ahead, and this festival allows the people to enjoy themselves before the struggles begin. This is a favorite among halfling worshipers of Rontra.



In mining communities, this festival refers to the harvest from the earth and is celebrated with displays of prize lodes and stones.

Saints

Since the church of Rontra lacks any centralized hierarchy, there are no universal rules for naming saints. By popular acclaim, a person may be named a saint after her death by a unanimous body of prelates. They are normally known only to the local area foundations where they lived and worked.

In most cases, saints were outstanding sowers or wardens who served the community and Rontra in an extraordinary way. On occasion, a member of the congregation who has made an incredible sacrifice for the church will also be so honored. The title of such a saint is normally her name followed by the phrase “Defender of the Earth” or “Protector of the Land,” determined based on the deed that resulted in beatification.

The Rontran foundations do have one famous saint in Saint Marlessa, who established the foundations and has the ear of Rontra.

Rontra's

View of the Church

Rontra never believed in actively influencing events or telling mortals what to do, even in the time of the div, but since the Compact she has become even less involved in the daily lives of mortals. Though she is as bound to the sphere as the land itself, she observes mortals from afar.

She is pleased with most aspects of what her church has become, although she thinks that more focus should be put on the overall welfare of people throughout the world. She thinks that the faith has become too focused on farmers and those that work the land. While she appreciates the reluctance of her faithful to instruct others and to lead them toward the right path – they are taking a page from her book, after all – she does pressure the most powerful of her followers to take a more active hand in the promotion of peace among all people.

When she can, she sends her servants, the Shepherdess or the Miner, into the mortal sphere to right a grievous wrong, stop the wanton destruction of the earth, or (most commonly) subtly influence mortals to do it for themselves.

Preferred Weapon

The preferred weapon of Rontra is the flail, which represents the tool used by farmers in the threshing of wheat from the harvest. Any version of flail may be recognized as a weapon of Rontra: light, heavy, or dire.

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Holy Orders

Clerics: Sowers of Rontra

The Order

The sowers are the clerics of the Rontran faith. Their name comes from farming, but not because they are all farmers; it is a reference to what they do. The sowers plant the seed of Rontra's wisdom and goodness in the hearts and minds of all they meet. But just as a farmer cannot make a seed grow, so are the sowers unable to make this seed of peace take root; that is up to the people.

Most sowers reside in foundations, ministering daily to Rontra's worshippers. There are those in the order who eschew connection to any establishment, seeing the earth as their ministry; these wandering sowers are usually quite popular, as they heal the sick and the maimed, always seeming to show up just when needed. Since the Rontran faith has no higher order, a sower is not required to work at a foundation, though most do because it is the best way to learn and to perform Rontra's works.

There are many small farming villages across the land that benefit from the largesse of the Rontran foundations. Often a foundation will build small shrines to the Earth Mother in outlying communities, stationing prelates at these shrines for periods up to five years. The prelates often train acolytes to take over their ministries once they move on to other duties.

Wherever a sower is stationed, whatever his duty, the order sees his function as offering all people, common and high, a helping hand and sage advice so that they may come to accept their place in the world and be at peace. Sowers sometimes speak in what seem like riddles in an effort to avoid telling people what to do; they are a decidedly non-confrontational order when dealing with people who are good of heart.

When confronted with evil, however, particularly unnatural and outsider forces, they are implacable foes.

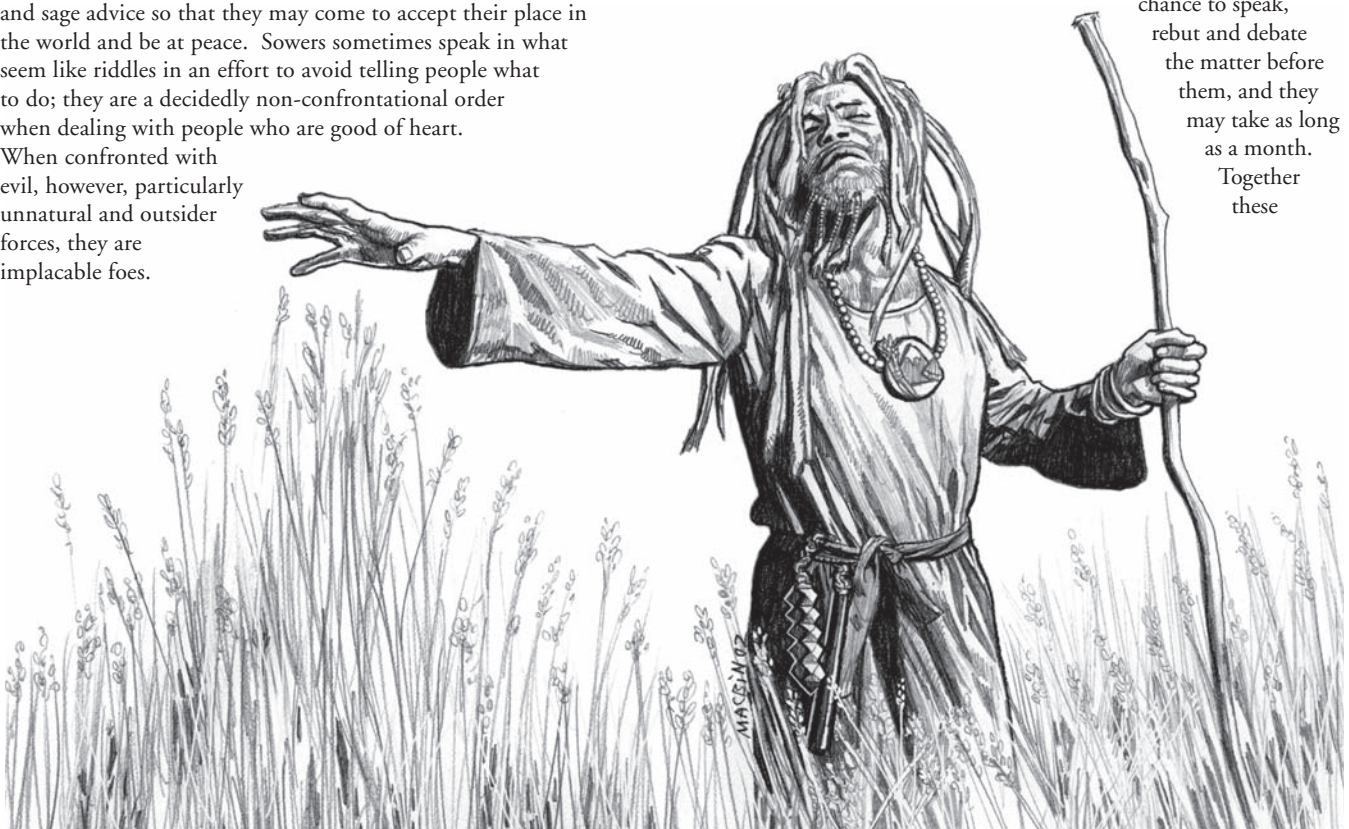
Titles

At 1st level, a sower is named a prelate, a title he will bear for the first many years of his career. A prelate is addressed as "brother" or "sister," and introduced by full title. To become a prelate, a person must show a gift for understanding Rontra's teachings. While there is no formalized hierarchy of the foundation system, the faith is complex, with thousands of recorded prayers and three different forms of ministry (farming, treasures of the earth, and fertility). A prelate must understand all of these things and be just as prepared to tend to the spiritual needs of dwarven miners as to the needs of young wives hoping to get with child. The training usually takes five years, though quite wise candidates have been admitted into the clergy in only two years. A prelate may serve in a foundation, wander, or even run a small shrine.

The Rontrians hold that all prelates are equal; once a prelate is admitted into the order of the sowers, he is free to go where he believes Rontra wants him – unless commanded directly not to by the grand prelate of his foundation. A prelate cannot order another prelate to do something, even if he is six levels higher. The foundations are lawful good in feel and tone, however, and most obey instruction even if it is not required (they call it "heeding advice"). Obviously, this is all an extension of the Rontran hesitance to command.

The only person in a foundation empowered to order others is the grand prelate. When a foundation loses its grand prelate (through death or departure), or when a new foundation is established, all of the local prelates gather for a great council to name a new grand prelate. All voices are equal in these councils, called moots, regardless of age or level. The moots are run in a very orderly fashion, with every

attendant getting a chance to speak, rebut and debate the matter before them, and they may take as long as a month. Together these



Sowers usually wear robes of brown and grey. Those associated with Rontra's mining aspect wear jewels, gems and armor lined with precious metals.

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prelates eventually agree unanimously on the new grand prelate of the foundation. In general, a prelate must be at least 7th level to be considered for the position (though strange things happen). The grand prelate is undisputedly in charge of the foundation and, since there is no higher authority, he becomes the area's arbiter of religious law. Prelates will obey a grand prelate from their foundation, even if they don't want to. A foundation must have a grand prelate to be considered a foundation – otherwise it is a shrine. If a grand prelate cannot be decided on, the foundation is reduced to a shrine and put under the authority of the nearest foundation with a grand prelate. A grand prelate is addressed as “mother” or “father” and introduced by full title.

Whether he is a grand prelate or not, eventually a sower becomes so powerful that all recognize him as an elder of the faith. At 15th level, a sower is understood by all Rontrans to be what they call a great elder. These venerable leaders have usually performed great quests or other monumental tasks in the service of Rontra. It is considered odd for a great elder to continue to serve as a grand prelate if he is one to begin with, and most give up the position. They travel throughout the lands visiting foundations, lending their wisdom and aid when required, and harrying the foes of Rontra that weaker members of the faith simply cannot approach. A great elder is addressed as “grandmother” or “grandfather” and introduced by full title.

Table 4-4:

Sowers of Rontra Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Prelate	Two to Five Years Training
7+	Grand Prelate	Unanimous Naming to Head of Foundation by All Local Prelates
15	Great Elder	None (Cannot Continue to be Grand Prelate)

Domains

Sowers of the Rontran church can choose between the following domains: Earth, Healing, Good, Law and Plant.

Spell Preparation Time

Sowers pray for their spells at dawn, but they must be in contact with the earth at the time.

Alignments

Most sowers are lawful good and, like Rontra, they believe that there must be an order to things and to peoples' lives for the world to be at peace. They desire the happiness of all people, high and low, and they work within the established order to promote it. While they will oppose tyranny, they see nothing wrong with a system of peasant farmers and wealthy landowners – in fact, they convince those who want to rebel against this established order that they must accept their place in life. This is one of the cores of their belief – accept who you are and what you are, and you will find joy unbounded. They are good, though, and will oppose any effort to oppress the people or steal from them what is theirs.

The neutral good members of the order are more ambivalent about established orders. They see many cases where change can improve lives. However, they continue to adhere to the basic tenets of the faith and do not command good-hearted people to change their lives; they work through advice and wisdom. Many neutral good sowers are wanderers, less interested in the foundations than their counterparts, and far more excited about getting themselves to the world's most dangerous areas, where they can do the most good.

Lawful neutral sowers are considered odd by most of their brethren. While prelates need not obey other prelates, the lawful neutral members of the order seek authority and obey authority almost compulsively. They create hierarchies where none exist. Most sowers with this outlook believe that the flaw in mortal reasoning is easily found – dissatisfaction with order. If everyone accepted their place unconditionally and performed their role properly, the world would function perfectly and at peace. The lawful neutral sowers spend their time trying to guide those who have fallen out of their place back into it and waging personal crusades against forces outside the natural order (such as the undead).

Holy Warrior Class: Wardens of Rontra

The Order

Wardens are holy warriors dedicated to protecting the earth from those who would abuse her gifts, but primarily from those powers that would pollute her natural order. While the sowers are concerned primarily with the mortal races and their protection and guidance, the wardens are wanderers seeking out the incursion of unnatural forces. These are primarily undead and evil outsiders, particularly demons and devils. While they will take orders from grand prelates or great elders, in general the wardens are inveterate wanderers on a lifelong mission against evil.

Their mandate is fairly simple to understand; there are natural and magical beasts that are a part of the mortal sphere and were meant to be a part of the mortal sphere. Those evil creatures that invade the mortal sphere from without are a scourge that poisons the Earth Mother and must be removed and destroyed. From this the order gains its name, for they are like the wardens of the wood who preserve its purity for hunting.

Titles

At 1st level a warden is admitted to the order under the title of warden, addressed as “sir” or “dame,” and introduced by full title. She maintains this title and address throughout her career. To become a warden is a very simple process and requires no training (though most are wise enough to seek out martial training). Rontra calls those who serve her and they can feel the call in their very bones. They know it is their duty to oppose the unnatural forces that inhabit the earth, whatever the cost. Many leave behind established trades and lives to heed this powerful call.

A warden is named such by another warden, and the induction process and ceremony vary from warden to warden, usually based on the personality of the prospective member. Many are taken out into a secluded area by their sponsor within the order and there told tales of Rontra's splendor for many days, with little to sustain candidate

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and sponsor but talk. Others lead an entire foundation in prayer for days on end. There are even wardens who were inducted into the order by being buried in dirt up to their necks for three days and nights. Regardless, after some ceremony the newly named warden is master of her own destiny and may wander the lands freely on the quest of her order: the destruction of the unnatural.

Table 45

Wardens of Rontra Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Warden	Induction Ceremony

Additional Class Skills

Wardens of Rontra are close to the earth in many different ways. Some understand the things that grow upon the Earth Mother; others know well the many caves and wonders in her bosom. For this reason, they choose two of the following additional class skills. The skills (and the key ability for each skill) are listed below:

Appraise (Int), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Domains

A warden may choose two of the following Holy Warrior domains: Earth, Life, and Creation.

Gifts of Rontra

Beginning at 3rd level, the warden can *meld into stone*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Meld into stone* is a spell-like ability for wardens.

Beginning at 12th level, her Gift of Rontra allows her to *dismiss* unnatural creatures, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Dismissal* is a spell-like ability for wardens.

Spells:

1st level – *bleed*, *bleed water*, *bleed weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic weapon*, *protection from evil*, *rontra's blessing*, *resistance*, *virtue*

2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*, *delay poison*, *consecrate*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *plant growth*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal animal companion*, *magic circle against evil*, *prayer*, *remove blindness/deafness*

4th level – *cure serious wounds*, *death ward*, *dispel evil*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *neutralize poison*

Mount/Animal Companion

Upon reaching 6th level, a warden calls a powerful animal companion, usually a celestial wolf or celestial cave (brown) bear, to accompany her in her lifelong quest against the unnatural. Wardens rarely ride horses, as they prefer to stay in contact with the earth. Like many Rontrans, wardens often go barefoot.

Code of Conduct

Wardens of Rontra seek to defend the earth from the depredations of the unnatural. They consider all life sacred and strive to protect and nurture Rontra's children. A warden must always remember that the reason for her struggle against the unnatural is to protect the innocent life of the earth. Any warden who kills another without just cause or defiles the earth and its treasures immediately loses her special abilities and is considered a fallen holy warrior. A warden must never imagine that the ends justify the means – they do not for Rontra, and they do not for her servants.

In determining what is "unnatural," the simple rule to follow is this: If it's good or was born on the prime material, it is not "unnatural," per se. So while wardens do not like orcs, they do not see it as a lifelong mission to eradicate them; they are part of the natural order. If it is undead or if it is evil and has the designator "outsider," it is the warden's mission to destroy it. They do not oppose neutral and good outsiders because they are not actively polluting and destroying the natural order.



Most wardens wear earth tones and heavy, unadorned iron armor. Like all deeply devout Rontrans, they go unshod whenever possible.

Associates

Wardens enjoy the company of any who oppose evil through just means. They are closely tied with Morwynites and other lawful churches, and also enjoy the company of other divinely powered characters. They will leave the company of those who resort to

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torture or brutality in the name of what they perceive to be good, however, and they will certainly depart from any company that knowingly commits evil acts. They will actively oppose anyone who raises or creates undead or summons evil outsiders.

Alignment

Wardens must be lawful good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The third holy order of the Rontrans has little to do with the foundations and spends its time in small farming communities. They're called the gleaners, and they take their name from the poorest of the poor; at harvest time, after the reapers cut the wheat and take it to be stored, gleaners come in and pick up the small pieces of grain dropped in the process. They live off these scraps, and a more wretched people cannot be found in any countryside.

The gleaners are a holy order of mendicants, living on what scraps they are given by nearby farmers. They live on the outskirts of rural communities and ponder the nature of Rontra's teachings while also protecting the land from evil incursions – natural and unnatural alike. The order came into existence on the uncivilized fringes of society long ago when the greatest threat to farmers was roving bandits that came to take their crops. The gleaners were warriors inspired by Rontra who arose from the farm communities and drove off bandits in exchange for food.

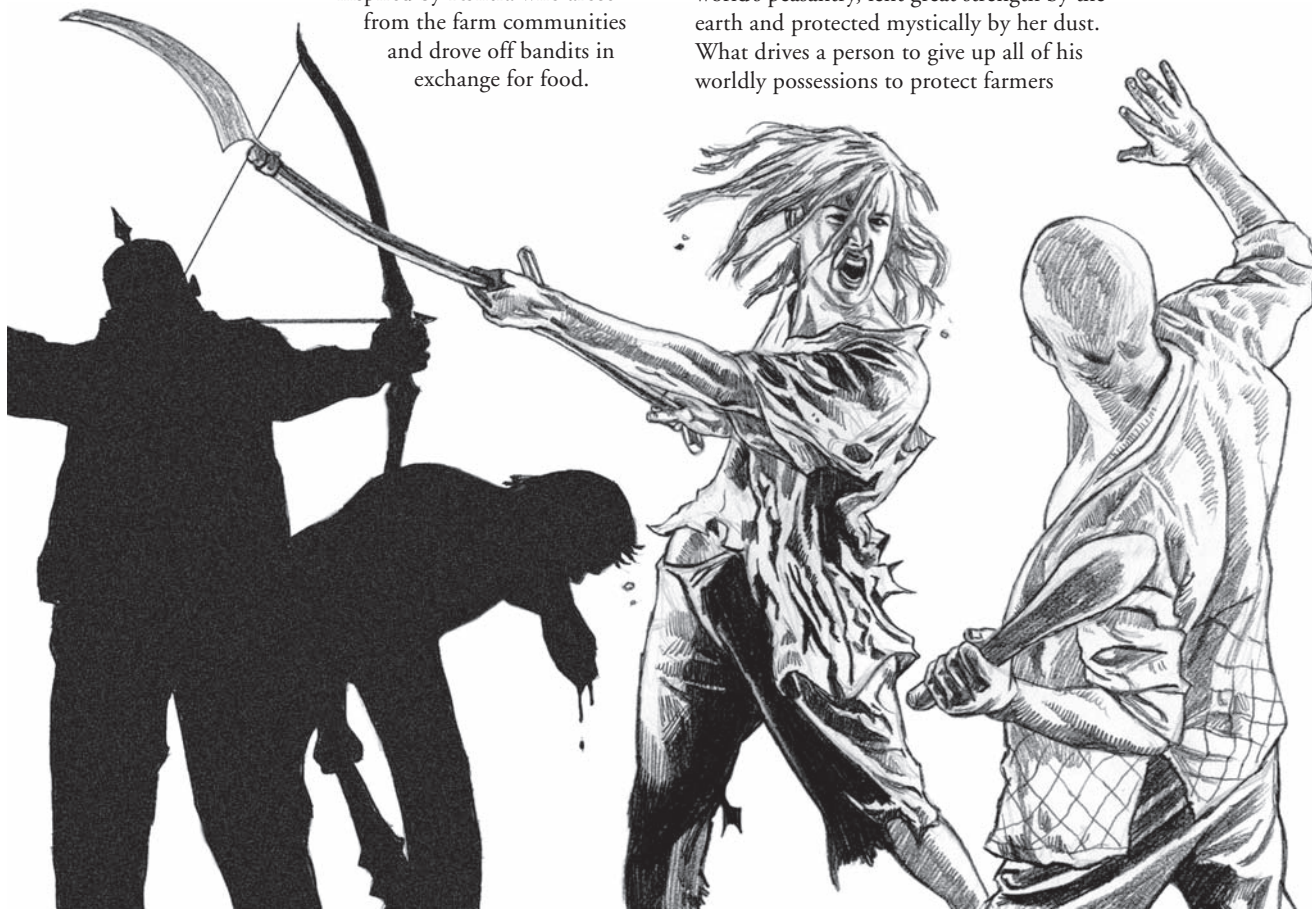
Eventually, they became formalized as an order in their own right, and now they are respected, if little heard from, members of the faith. The gleaners do not have titles, and many cease to even use their names. They are simply called “friend” or “brother” by those they protect. Admission to the order does not require any rite of passage; a person is simply called to serve the order and takes on the mantle of gleaner.

It is not an easy mantle to wear. The gleaners have no property, no families, and often no homes. Eventually, they become tied to the land they protect. While there are certainly traveling gleaners, seeking out rural communities in need of aid, by the end of their careers (should they live long enough), they invariably settle in a single region.

Prestige Class:

Gleaners of Rontra:

Gleaners are warriors who use simple farm weapons and other means to protect Rontra's countrysides. They are the guardians of farmers oppressed by tyrants, attacked by bandits, or terrorized by beasts and undead. Gleaners are unshakable foes, greatly skilled at fighting against impossible odds and unmoved by even the most frightening foe; they are so imbued with the strength of the earth that they will flee from nothing. They are mendicants, meaning they live off the charity of others and do not keep any possessions, giving away all they own but their weapons and the clothes on their backs. The gleaners are essentially the legendary protectors of the world's peasantry, lent great strength by the earth and protected mystically by her dust. What drives a person to give up all of his worldly possessions to protect farmers



Obviously pious, but not obviously divine, the gleaners look like wandering beggars – unless their ire is raised.

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Table 4-6: The Gleaner

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Armor of the Earth
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Resolve of the Earth
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Lesser Bond, Power of the Earth
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Armor of the Earth +1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Resolve of the Earth +1
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Shake the Earth, Power of the Earth +1, Armor of the Earth +2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Resolve of the Earth +2
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Greater Bond, Power of the Earth +2, Skin of the Earth

is hard to say. Most are religious zealots who believe that by fulfilling their duty as gleaners, they are truly performing Rontra's way – and it's hard to argue. After all, what could be holier than giving up your entire life and becoming an utterly wretched and impoverished loner in service to your god?

Fighters, rangers, barbarians and monks from rural regions are all reasonably likely to become gleaners, and more than a few rogues have become gleaners as well. Anyone who has a love for common people and is prepared to take up arms to defend them and their lands might make an appropriate gleaner. It is unheard of for those who require books and other trappings of civilization, like wizards and bards, to become gleaners, as it is a solitary calling.

Common examples of gleaners are the strange old woman at the edge of town who lives in a shack and has no name, or the wild-eyed barefoot man with dirt on his hands who never speaks but shows up at just the right moment to save a small village from a fire. They live on the outskirts of things, alone, watching over a small community (or a group of them) unbeknownst to many of its residents. If there is a village in a "trouble area," for instance near an area infested by the undead, a gleaner is likely to wander into town and establish a home on its edge. Many gleaners have no names and go by simple honorifics like "brother" or "wisewoman." They are often unappealing to the eye and the nose, as they bathe little and do not bother with the trappings of holiness; they are an utterly impoverished order and are happy to live by foraging in utter squalor.

Abbreviation: Gle

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

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

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Iron Will.

Rontran: A gleaner must be a faithful devotee of Rontra.

Vow of Poverty: A gleaner may not own anything other than what he can carry. He may never have more money than required to purchase one month's room and board; all excess must be given to charity.

Class Skills

The gleaner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the gleaner prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Gleaners are proficient with weapons found in agricultural settings: club, dagger, flail (light and heavy), handaxe, javelin, kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, trident (pitchfork), scythe, sickle, and sling. Gleaners are proficient with light and medium armor, but gain no proficiency with shields.

Armor of the Earth (Su)

While the gleaners are able to use armor, most do not. If a gleaner covers himself with dust or dirt (usually mud) and prays, the power of Rontra protects him through the dust of the earth. The gleaner adds his Charisma modifier (if positive) to AC, in addition to his normal Dexterity modifier, and his AC improves as he gains levels: When he receives Armor of the Earth +1, he is granted an additional +1 bonus to AC, etc. (Only add this extra AC bonus if the total of the gleaner's Charisma modifier and the extra bonus is a positive number.) This bonus represents an aura of the earth's protection that surrounds the gleaner and is not lost, even if the dirt is washed off of him (though he must renew his coating of earth every 24 hours). This ability stacks with protective auras based on Wisdom modifier (such as the monk's) or other stats, but will not stack with any other ability that increases AC based on the gleaner's Charisma modifier.

Greater Bond (Su)

Eventually a gleaner will decide upon a homeland, village, or rural area that he wishes to protect for the rest of his life. Powerful gleaners may bind their very souls to the land. Whereas powerful monks become separate from nature, powerful gleaners actually become part of it. No one knows what happens to the souls of such gleaners when they die

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– whether they go before Maal like others, or whether they actually pass into the earth itself, becoming a part of Rontra. Regardless, in their lifetimes the power of their bond is clear.

A gleaner spends a month binding himself to the land he wishes to protect. This is a permanent procedure and may not be reversed once complete. The gleaner must pray every waking moment, pausing only occasionally to eat, and every moment must be spent in contact with the same ten-foot patch of land. After the lengthy ritual, the gleaner is a part of the land. This has three effects as long as the gleaner is within a 15-mile radius of the spot upon which he performed the ritual:

At will, the gleaner may transform himself as though under the effect of the *righteous might* spell. This takes no time to cast. The gleaner simply explodes with growth and might, a terrifying vision to any who would desecrate the land he defends. This has limitless duration, as long as the gleaner is within the radius of his home. Food the gleaner eats that was planted and grown within the 15-mile radius functions for him as though it is a *heroes' feast*. This works like the spell, so the gleaner must spend an hour eating the feast (meaning, also, that there must be enough food to fill out an hour-long meal). The gleaner is under the effect of a constant *negative energy protection*, as though cast by a 20th-level cleric. This is because the gleaner is actually tapped into a massive positive energy source: the earth itself. Only the most powerful negative energy stands any chance of affecting the gleaner.

This power eliminates the Lesser Bond and makes it impossible for the gleaner to establish one. The Greater Bond may not be undone by any means short of a *miracle*.

Should the gleaner leave his home area he suffers 1d10 points of damage for every 24 hours he is away. This damage cannot be healed until he returns home. After 72 hours, it becomes 2d10 points of damage and 1d6 Strength damage every 24 hours.

Lesser Bond (Su)

The gleaner eventually becomes attached to one town or another, though early in his career this may be a passing attachment. He may formalize his attachment, giving him power when in the area he wishes to protect. If the gleaner spends a week without food, chanting and praying while lying on the land he wishes to serve, he becomes bound to the land itself. While the gleaner is within a ten-mile radius of the spot he bound himself to, he gains a +1 sacred bonus to all melee attack rolls and a +1 sacred bonus to all of his saving throws (though this will have no effect on his Willpower save, which already receives a sacred bonus from his Resolve of the Earth ability). As long as he performs the weeklong ceremony, he may move this bond to another location.

Power of the Earth (Su)

If the gleaner is in touch with the earth directly (bare feet touching the ground), he is unmovable and gains the strength of the Earth Mother. Cobblestones and other stone floors do not count – he must be in direct contact with Rontra. The Power of the Earth has three major effects:

Unmovable: The gleaner receives a +4 sacred bonus to his strength statistic against trip, bull rush, and any other attempts to move him. This bonus increases as he gains levels (when he receives Power of the Earth +1, it becomes a +5 sacred bonus, etc.).

Tremorsense: The gleaner feels vibrations through the earth, making him incredibly skilled at fighting multiple enemies. Anyone walking on the earth cannot catch the gleaner flat-footed, or flank or sneak attack him, as long as the gleaner makes a successful Listen check (see *PH* for sample DCs). As he goes up in levels, he gains a sacred bonus to this check, but only for Tremorsense (when he receives Power of the Earth +1, he gains a +1 sacred bonus to Listen for this check). Tremorsense doesn't work against incorporeal, weightless or flying enemies.

Body of Stone: The gleaner adds his Charisma modifier (if positive) to his Constitution modifier while in touch with the earth. Any hit points gained from this go away as soon as the gleaner breaks contact with the earth. These hit points are not lost first the way temporary hit points are. The gleaner gains a bonus hit point (not a bonus Constitution modifier) for every +1 to his Power of the Earth ability.

Resolve of the Earth (Su)

Gleaners are as unmovable as the earth itself, and this extends to their wills. A gleaner receives a +2 sacred bonus to his Willpower saves, which increases as he gains levels (it becomes a +3 sacred bonus when he receives Resolve of the Earth +1, etc.). Further, the Gleaner has SR 17 against any spell effect that causes fear. This increases with bonuses to his Resolve of the Earth ability.

Shake the Earth (Su)

As a move-equivalent action, the gleaner may stomp his foot on the earth and create a tremor that potentially knocks all those around him to the ground. Anyone within ten feet of the gleaner must make a Reflex save (DC 13) or fall down. He may do this as often as he likes. This is one of the reasons gleaners can stand up against large groups of foes.

Skin of the Earth (Su)

The gleaner gains the might of stone itself, his flesh turning common blades. He receives DR 10/+1.

Why No Stats?

Sometimes people like to make books about gods in fantasy games and give them stats. This is not the style of play that we prefer. In a game where the most powerful cleric is roughly analogous to the most powerful character of any other class, it makes sense that the beings providing that cleric his powers are well beyond mortal comprehension.

However, we also include the myth of the making of the keys of Heaven (on page 105) in an effort to explain what will happen if your most powerful characters ever try to attack the gods themselves. Assume the 14 wizards in the story are higher level than any PC you or your players could ever play. For instance, note that they make short work of Tinel's personal celestial guard *in Heaven*. Imagine how powerful a PC would have to be to do that – and then note what happens when they attack Tinel. This story should be a very clear warning to any player thinking of getting some god-slaying under his belt – as, in the world of the game, it is a warning for any wizards or others who think their power equal to that of Heaven.

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God of the Water

The Basins of Shalimyr

Shalimyr (SHAH-uh-meer) (Raging, Magnificent, Endless, the Wave, Grandfather Ocean, Sea Father, the Great Sea, the Waters of the World)

Myths

The Origins of the Merfolk

When Zheenkeef hurled the elves around the world, some landed in the sea and became the sea-elves. While most of the mortal races over which the gods have dominion reside on land, the sea-elves rarely touch earth. But the sea-elves are not the only mortal race to reside under the waves; the merfolk also have souls and go before Maal upon their deaths to be judged. They are actually humans equipped to live under the sea – but how is this possible?

Long ago there arose a seaside kingdom of proud men who sailed tall ships across Grandfather Ocean's back. When he marked them, Shalimyr the Wave loved these humans well, for they respected the waters and wrote joyful songs praising its glory and encomiums to its foams and waves; the sounds of these works were soothing to Raging Shalimyr's ear. But the attention of Shalimyr, the Waters of the World, is fickle, and he forgot about these people whom he so loved.

And so it was that the seaside kingdom, unprotected and unfavored, came to war with a powerful empire that wielded fell magic against its foes. The men of the water cried out to Shalimyr to crush their foes, but he did not – his attention on other matters, his affections won by other people. So the battle raged for many years, the wavelords conquering the ports of the mages, the mages driving them off with fire and lightning.

At last the mages who waged this war against the proud men of the ships determined a tactic to destroy their foe utterly. Calling upon terrible magic, they sank the entire kingdom of the seafaring men to the bottom of the great, wide sea! It is said that Mormekar, the Grim Wanderer (as he is called by all folk doomed to meet him), may claim any few souls without even sparing them his attention; but in that hour so many thousands died at once, that Mormekar was required to walk among them himself. For many long moments, not one of them died, though they clawed at their throats, unable to breathe.

Their terrible suffering reached Endless Shalimyr's ears and he too went to the site of this cataclysm. He asked Mormekar to spare them, but the Grim Wanderer does his duty and stays his hand for few – or none. "They cannot breathe, Shalimyr, and they must die. The choice is not mine." And indeed, Shalimyr understood – the choice was his own: to let these people who loved him and revered him die as one and be erased from the world or to save them. And Shalimyr so loved these folk, every one of them doomed to death, that he transformed them. He gave them the tails and gills of fishes so that they might live on! In wonder at this transformation, the merfolk called out their thanks as one. And so do they still revere Endless Shalimyr to this day, who saved them from death and made them what they are.

The Lost Conqueror

Once upon a time, there was a pirate king called Erikul who claimed dominion over the many seas. When Erikul was a child he had gone to the water's edge and cut his hand, letting his blood spill into the sea. "Sea Father," he said, "I dedicate my blood to you. Let me ride your back to glory!"

His prayer was heeded, and by the time he was full in manhood, he was the greatest sailor in all the lands. He served on a pirate ship and, in the winking of an eye, was the captain of a dread fleet. By the time the first traces of silver were in his beard he was known as the Terror of the Seas.

One day, while sailing on the back of Shalimyr, the Great Sea, his vessel was hailed by the kindly sea-elves who swam at its side. The pirates welcomed the seafolk aboard. At their head was their queen, Shawaliasha, the most beautiful woman on land or water. At once, Erikul was smitten in love and demanded the queen's hand.

"I have forsworn marriage," the queen responded, "until I find a man who is the lord of all he surveys."

Erikul thought this awfully strange, for surely the queen of the sea-elves had heard of Erikul, the Terror of the Seas. "But that is I, lady. I am Erikul, the pirate king, and I am master of all the seas. There are none who would dare oppose me or my fleet. No one sails on the wide back of Grandfather Ocean that I do not know of, none stand against me should I seek to board or take their ship. While other kings rule the weak land, I rule the seas!"

"That is well, King Erikul, but you are not lord of all you survey."

This was terribly vexing to the pirate king, and he looked out over the bow of his mighty ship. And then he turned back. "You are wrong, lady! I am Lord of all I Survey! I see nothing before me that I cannot take for my own, including you and your folk. I have been kind thus far, but should Erikul seek to conquer your folk, he shall! I am the King of all the Seas! I am Master of all the Oceans!"

At this, the queen smiled, for she knew that Raging Shalimyr had heard this claim. Within moments, Shalimyr, the Waters of the World, opened wide his horrible maw and swallowed up Erikul and all of his ships. And so did the queen of the Sea-Elves rid the world of the Terror of the Seas. For no man is King of the Ocean; only Endless Shalimyr may claim domain over the waters. Any man who forgets this is doomed to die as surely as Erikul, who is now bones at the bottom of the sea.

Associations

Shalimyr is the god of the waters of the world: ocean, rivers, lakes, streams, and rain. He is the god of sailing, fishing, and all other mortal endeavors that rely on the water. To those living on coastlands, Shalimyr is the lord of sea storms (though to inlanders, Urian is usually considered father of storms). He is the patron of fathers, for

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he was the father of Eliwyn, the tree from which the gods and mortal races arose; but he is also the patron of grandfathers, for from Eliwyn came the races of the world.

In the animal kingdom, Shalimyr is often associated with the frightening beasts of the sea, such as the great kraken, but most commonly he is connected with fish. His favorites, it is said, are the whales, the sharks, and the dolphins, and certainly Shalimyr's several faces can be seen in these animals: the indifferent whales, the violent and dangerous sharks, the loving and helpful dolphins.

Shalimyr is worshipped most ardently by the aquatic mortal races: the sea-elves and merfolk. These two races revere Shalimyr over all other gods. On land, he is worshipped by those who live by and with the water – primarily elves and humans.

Alignment

Shalimyr is chaotic neutral.

Representations

In icons, Shalimyr is shown as a great blue-skinned figure with hair and beard made of white seafoam. He wields his mighty falchion, Seacrest, and wears his armor of seashells. In his eyes are the wild waves of the sea.

When representing Shalimyr through symbols, most rely on a single cresting blue wave capped with foam. Those wearing a holy symbol of Shalimyr often have a wave made of painted shell, though more elaborate versions are pieced together with lapis lazuli and alabaster. When in a hurry and such symbols cannot be forged, or when the area on which the symbol will appear is so small that such detail is not possible, a more basic form is made – a simple triangle inside a circle, meant to show that at the center of all things is “the Wave,” as Shalimyr is called from time to time.

Purpose

While Shalimyr is not as wild as Zheenkeef, he has as great a love for dramatic shifts and changes in the world. Shalimyr believes that the world should be in constant flux, changing always – or risk stagnation, as his pools grow stagnant with stillness.

This is not to say that Shalimyr has no appreciation for the calm and the quiet. Indeed, he is as fond sometimes of silence and gentleness as he is of raging storms and tossing waves. There is a joy in both, but unlike his brother Urian, Shalimyr does not believe there is good in both. Nor does he care. Shalimyr loves to watch things break as much as he loves to watch them grow. He has as much appreciation for cruelty as he does for love, and believes they are equally valid. This has been noted by his worshippers; the loving Shalimyr is called by them Grandfather Ocean, whereas the cruel and stormy Shalimyr is called Sea Father. All children of

the world love the Grandfather and fear the Father, and Shalimyr seems to enjoy being both loved and feared. What he does not care for is what he sees as the arrogant illusion of permanence.

Shalimyr hates those who are proud and believe that they have built something that will never fall or fail, for they fail to realize that eventually everything collapses – even the world will collapse someday when the Nameless One's name is spoken again. Nothing lasts, no matter how strong or good, and to believe that something will last is pure hubris. Because of this hatred, Shalimyr, more than any other god, levels the proud. Like the fairy tale of the Pirate King above, there are countless tales of men, women, or nations that believed they had achieved perfection only to have everything they were so proud of leveled by waters.

But while he loathes pride in others (including the other gods), Shalimyr is himself quite proud. He works his way into every crevice, slips into every available space, all to make sure that he can see everything, destroy or nourish anything. While he is unlikely to actually try to destroy the world, he loves the power of knowing that drop by drop, he can undermine the foundation of any building, topple any kingdom. After all, water is everywhere – it is in the air, it is in the dirt, it is the blood of people. Thereby, Shalimyr is everywhere, and all the people of the world live by his permission and through his grace. Or so he believes.

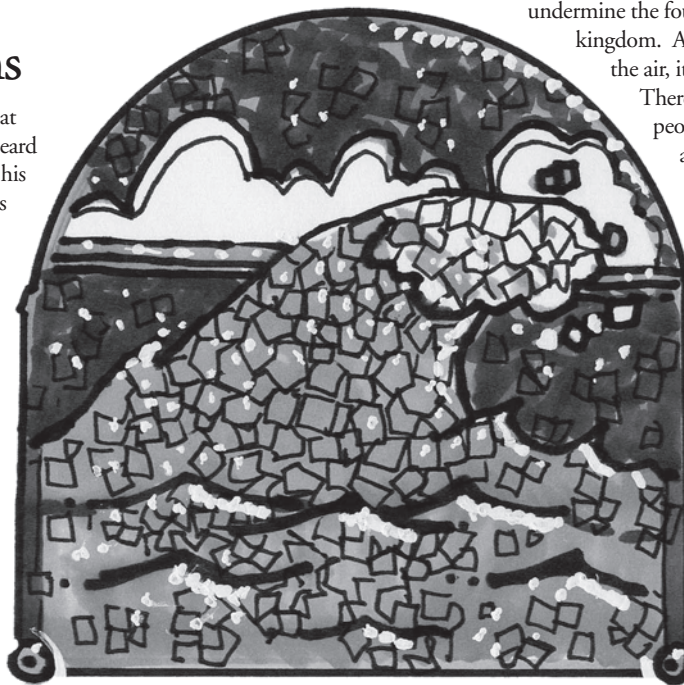
All this being said, Shalimyr is also capable of incredible acts of generosity. Since the earliest days, Shalimyr has allowed the mortal races to sail on his back. Sometimes he rages at ships with his terrible rains, and sometimes he destroys a ship or two, but usually he is quite kind to sailors. The merfolk would have all died but for Shalimyr's grace. Whenever a town is thirsty and finds a new well, it is Shalimyr's grace made manifest. While it is true that he is capricious and quite often a force for destruction, he is no more purely destructive than he is purely nurturing. He is capable of gifts to

the mortal races every bit as magnificent as his punishments.

Among the gods, Shalimyr is usually aloof, except where Zheenkeef is concerned. What was once protectiveness eventually became obsession, and Shalimyr the Wave is hopelessly besotted with the Mother of Madness. It is said that he and she couple often and feverishly, all without the knowledge of her husband Tinel, the god of knowledge.

Servants

Shalimyr has many children from his copious couplings with mortals over the years, and they serve as his attendants. Chief among them are his four daughters, Ocean, River, Lake, and Stream, each of whom oversees some part of his vast waters for him. It is said that Shalimyr lives in a mighty palace made of pearl and alabaster that is drawn through the waters by 12 colossal whales, each large enough to swallow a small fleet of ships. These 12 whales are named after the sounds that waves make when they hit the various types of land.



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The Church

Church Description

The churches of Shalimyr, found in most seaside towns and cities, are called basins of Shalimyr, for they collect the outpourings of his worship. His worshippers, the Shalimyn (SHALL-uh-min), congregate before any great sea journey to bless the sailors and their vessel and pray to Grandfather Ocean for their safe passage. For particularly important journeys they make elaborate sacrifices in the water, cutting open chickens, lambs, even bulls, and letting the blood and water commingle. This is to symbolize that all things owe their life to the water.

For common sailing expeditions, such as the daily voyage of fishing vessels, most sailors meet at the beach before dawn, where a mariner of Shalimyr joins them and prays for their journey. Sacrifices are uncommon in such settings.

The basins are a place to collect worship, and their clergy and other holy orders are there to aid others in their worship. But just as Shalimyr hates pride outside his faithful, he hates it within; the holy orders must not, and do not, represent themselves as necessary for a connection between the individual and Shalimyr. They are wise and the basins are there for guidance, but a faithful Shalimyn does not require a basin, a member of the clergy, or anyone or anything else to connect with Shalimyr – his is a highly individualized faith.

While the basins are usually places of religious devotion and pious prayer, they are also home to wild and raging festivals accompanied by hard drink and sometimes even more carnal activities. The Shalimyn are both peaceful and wild, just like the waters.

Church Structure

While the worship of Shalimyr is likely quite different among the races that live under the waves, we focus here on the basins of the land-bound mortal races. There are three holy orders of the basins, all of which are tied to the waters. The central order, as with most churches of the pantheon, is the clergy, called mariners and divided into two levels of status, shorehands (SHORE-undz) and shipwrights. There are also the ascetics (holy warriors), who have three levels – neonates, ascetics, and waternamed – and the sail masters, who have two levels, sail masters and sail lords.

The only order that regularly resides at the basins is the mariners, with the Shalimyn shipwrights of each basin determining its direction and interactions with secular affairs. There is no central authority of the Shalimyn faith; that position is taken by Shalimyr himself. Indeed, the mariners are considered guides and teachers more than authority figures – every member of the faith is said to have a personal tie to Shalimyr that does not require clergy to act as intermediaries.

The average basin will have six or seven shorehands in residence at any one time, and at least one shipwright. Ascetics and sail masters are almost never in residence at a basin, but in major port cities there might be one or two members of each order convalescing or temporarily living at the local basin.

Doctrine

“There is somewhere the greatest wall ever built, and the men that builded them the wall do stare at it with pride. But o’er that wall, there hangs a bough, its leaves laden with the water. And every day the bough do drip

down on the wall its precious drops. A thousand men may live a thousand lives, and look upon that wall, but one day the water will prevail. Drop by drop, the mortar will be undone. Bit by bit, the wall will crumble and fall, and those proud men will be proud no longer of their mighty wall, broken into dust. I obey the water.”

– *Shalimyn Shipwright Kellyne Seafarer’s “A Daughter of the Sea Father”*

The Shalimyn faith preaches profound humility. We live and die from the water; without the water we are nothing, and to the water we must always show our gratitude. On the surface, this makes the Shalimyn seem like a downtrodden, dour lot, but it is not so. The Shalimyn are humble before the waters, but they are fierce to their enemies and unafraid to die, ready to enjoy hard drink and the joys the body has to offer. They believe that they live only by Shalimyr’s grace, that every day they may be swallowed by the waters – even should they stand in the midst of a scorching desert – and this belief and recognition of impending death makes them fearless (at least in theory).

However, when not in wild festivals or raging against enemies, which is most of the time, a Shalimyn’s faith is mostly based on personal sacrifice. The Shalimyn are constantly shedding things that are important to them, constantly in mourning for losses tempered with gratitude for the gifts of the sea. The more sacrificing a person, the more holy she is thought to be.

The Shalimyn faith is based on three primary principles, referred to by the Shalimyn as the “Three Blessings”:

Humility

If every drop of water believed itself more important than the drop ahead and behind, the river would not flow. If the river thought itself greater than the ocean, the seas would grow thirsty and dry. Every individual must accept that his fate is not in his own hands, and must flow where the river takes him. The practical effect of the doctrine of humility, though, is not a sea of Shalimyn faithful waiting for orders from elders (as one might imagine from a lawful church with a similar doctrine). This is because all mortals must be humble. No mortal can determine another’s path, so every man and woman must listen for the call of Grandfather Ocean, the inevitable pull of fate, the flow of the river pulling them this way or that. This “pull” would be described by a modern person as the unconscious or subconscious – the raw emotional voice that is buried away by most, but heeded carefully by the Shalimyn. This makes for a church of people who, through their humility, are prepared to obey their every animal instinct; and perhaps among the truly righteous Shalimyn, these instincts *are* the call of Shalimyr. Regardless, it makes for a highly chaotic faith.

Sacrifice

We come from the water empty-handed. We must return to the water empty-handed. All things are granted us by Shalimyr, and the belief that anything we have in hand is our property is absurd; it all belongs to Shalimyr. Because of this, Shalimyn obsessively tithe, anywhere from 10% to 80% of everything they own. There are wealthy Shalimyn sea-traders who give away all their wealth when they are old (often to their own children or grandchildren), so this proscription on wealth does not mean that the Shalimyn are all paupers. However, it is ingrained into the Shalimyn in their earliest lessons that they must be prepared to sacrifice everything for the Sea Father, even their lives, for everything they own belongs to him. Nearly all Shalimyn rites involve a sacrifice of some kind, usually mingling the blood of an animal with the water.

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Gratitude

Every day that we awake with our homes still intact, with our vessels still held together, with our sails still whole, it is because the Sea Father has let us awake so. Every man, woman, and child must thank Shalimyr for his gifts at least three times daily: in morning prayer, in mid-day meal prayer, and in evening prayer. Prayers must not be missed. The prayers involve pouring water on the palms, touching water to the lips and eyelids, and reciting the Beatitudes to the Sea Father. If the prayers are missed, the penitent Shalimyn must make painful sacrifices to Raging Shalimyr – one of his finest livestock killed, his best sword given to a pauper, etc. Gratitude is also shown with regular periods of fasting, during which the Shalimyn eat nothing and drink only water for a week at a time.

The Three Blessings are so important to the Shalimyn because they know that Shalimyr is a vengeful and angry god. He nurtures those who show him the proper respect, and destroys the arrogant utterly. The Shalimyn themselves are only too happy to cheer on this destruction. The bar brawls begun by Shalimyn are legendary, and easily set off, for they take it as a religious duty to deflate the egos of pompous men. Should a man brag in a seadog bar about his brave and mighty exploits, he can expect a mug against his head soon after.

The Shalimyn faith is likely the only “good” faith (though it is really only nominally good) where one is doing his religious duty by cold-cocking someone in a bar. But the Shalimyn truly believe that they are helping such people – for if they find such men arrogant, imagine what Raging Shalimyr will do to them! In fact, the truly devout Shalimyn can be heard to mutter “this is for your own good, in Shalimyr’s name” as they hit an unsuspecting pompous fool in the head with a chair.

Of course, not all Shalimyn indulge in this sort of behavior, as the faith runs a wide gamut – from chaotic good worshippers to chaotic evil. Yet nearly all Shalimyn find the imposition of elaborate codes of law ridiculous and laughable. Authority, like Shalimyr’s, must come from personal respect and devotion. This is how the Captain of a ship might have an incredibly loyal crew, all of whom would gladly die on his word, and not be thought arrogant – because each member of the crew knows the Captain and respects him. However, try telling one of the Shalimyn, “You must obey me because those are the rules,” and it won’t get you far. Add to this the fact that the Shalimyn are prepared to lose their lives should Shalimyr call, and you have a potential powder keg for every dock warden in every port in the world.

It warrants saying, though, that like every other religion of the gods of the tree, not every Shalimyn is absolutely devout with an impassioned willingness to die on a moment’s notice. There are many more “rational” followers of Shalimyr the Endless. But the Three Blessings make for a highly chaotic, highly volatile religion.

Common Prayers

The Beatitudes are the Shalimyn prayers repeated three times daily:

Morning

*“Blessed art thou, Grandfather Ocean,
From whom all blessings flow.”*

Mid-Day

*“I praise thee, Grandfather Ocean,
For all thou givest daily.”*

Evening

*“I thank thee, Sea Father,
For sparing me this day.”*

The Beatitudes are said as the Shalimyn perform the actions of prayer, pouring water on the palms and touching the lips and eyelids. They are often followed with less formalized prayers.

Holy Days

The main holy days of Shalimyr revolve around the fishing seasons, and this depends highly on climatic conditions. The night before fishermen sail out again after winter is called Return Night, and it is a festival of absolute abandon. The Shalimyn drink and eat to excess, dance and sing, all to show their gratitude to the Sea Father. Often a great bull is sacrificed in thanks, and all of the Shalimyn feast upon its uncooked meat after its blood has mingled with the waters.

The first week of winter, when the fishermen must dry-dock their ships, is a somber time, and none of the Shalimyn eat for the week, surviving on only water. All Shalimyn must fast during this week, praying in all three daily prayers for a short winter, even if they aren’t anywhere near a fishing community at the time. It is considered an absolutely unforgivable sin for one of the Shalimyn to eat anything during the first week of winter; there are tales of men who grew sick during the week and were force-fed by their friends, who went on to cut out their own tongues in abject shame, or similarly maul themselves. While most aren’t that filled with zeal, it is not a matter taken lightly.

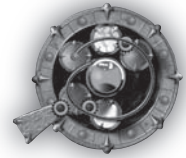
Saints

Martyrdom is important to the Shalimyn, for it is their belief that if they die heeding Shalimyr’s call they are taken into his bosom forever after and are broken free from the cycle. They do not believe that their spirits are carried to Shalimyr’s side to live as his assistants – that would be a haughty, self-aggrandizing belief. Instead they believe that they are made into water, made into a small part of Shalimyr the Endless, and it is the greatest boon any mortal may receive, for they are made part of a god.

Whether this is true or not, it does help to explain the fervor with which many Shalimyn fight, prepared to lay down their lives without hesitation. Should they die performing the will of Shalimyr, the reward is magnificent.

Saints are a very different matter. Saints are folk so holy that they would certainly become part of the water when they die, but are so profoundly good of spirit, humble, and sacrificing, that they reject the opportunity to live eternally as part of Shalimyr. Instead, they live on as his servants, aiding mortals lost at sea, heeding their prayers to Shalimyr, and performing great acts of compassion for the Shalimyn. This amazing sacrifice earns the name “saint.” Quite often saints come from the holy order of the ascetics, and rather than continuing to go by their waternames, they are addressed once more by their birth names.

The Saints of Shalimyr are actually seen in the Prime Material Plane fairly regularly. After their death, extremely devout Shalimyn are called upon by their Lord and become Celestials – more specifically, they are called Ghaeles (an old spelling of the word “gale,” because they fly to the aid of the Shalimyn as swiftly as gales blow across the sea) in Celestial nomenclature. Ghaele servants of Shalimyr introduce



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themselves as “Saint” with their birth name from their mortal life, even though they have more beautiful names in the heavens.

Shalimyr's View of the Church

Shalimyr is more involved with the daily lives of his worshippers than any other god. He is so involved that it is likely he regularly oversteps the boundaries of the Compact. But none of the gods complain, because just as often as Shalimyr sends one of the saints to aid one of his worshippers, he is himself sinking a ship filled with them, or wiping out a town of Shalimyn who have grown fat and arrogant.

Worshipping Shalimyr is a hard life. It involves constant wrestling with one's faith and, fairly often, with one's god. It means tests of one's humility, the constant threat of death, messages from the sea, aid and doom from a god's hand. It is a very dramatic religion, as Shalimyr is a very dramatic god, and its practitioners are rarely weak-hearted.

Shalimyr feels as though his worshippers are the only mortals who truly understand him. While all people who worship the gods of the tree and travel on the sea or river pay homage to Shalimyr, they do not live a life of constant servitude to him as he believes is warranted. Among the gods, Shalimyr is constantly murmuring that he will destroy them all some day, but none of the other gods take him seriously – likely because he is not serious. However, some scholars believe the day will come that Shalimyr floods the world, destroying all but his worshippers. Most view these scholars as only slightly less batty than the Shalimyn themselves.

Regardless, because they have developed a system of showing him such elaborate respect, Shalimyr is quite involved with the Shalimyn, is fond of them, and is saddened a bit when he must wipe out entire ships of them because they have made him angry.

Preferred Weapon

In a contest among the gods, long and long ago, Shalimyr challenged Master Korak to make him a blade out of water. This was a task that drove the King of the Crucible to utter distraction – until one day he hit upon the secret: Water holds reflections. And so he made a magnificent blade of the most shining metals and gems, and then caught its reflection in a pool. He bade Shalimyr to take the reflection from the water – and because the water was a part of him, and thereby the reflection, Shalimyr the Wave was able to do so. Holding aloft his great curved Falchion, Seacrest, the god of the ocean looked in gratitude on Master Korak and offered to repay him with a boon.

Master Korak thought on this a time and could not think of what he would ask of Shalimyr the Endless. He did not ask for anything for many an age, until one day Shalimyr was prepared to flood the many mountain tunnels forged by the hands of dwarves. The Sea Father was infuriated that these stout folk hated the water and did not sail upon it if they had the option. And so Master Korak asked for this boon: that the dwarven people be forgiven forever by Shalimyr for their arrogance. It has allowed the dwarves, more than any other race, to build lasting monuments of stone and great cities uncollapsed by erosion and time; for Shalimyr is as good as his word and forgives them the arrogance to believe that anything they build will last.

What happened to the original blade, from which the reflection was caught, none can say.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Mariners of Shalimyr

The Order

The mariners are spiritual leaders to the often wayward, generally chaotic Shalimyn. In a faith where one's gut instincts can be either benign or malignant, and most of the faithful heed them regardless, guidance is necessary to avoid all-out pandemonium.

The Shalimyn clergy are seen as the undisputed (and only) authority figures in the Shalimyn basins. They perform religious ceremonies, help the faithful to interpret Shalimyr's will, call on Shalimyr's blessings for outgoing and incoming vessels, and even occasionally ride important vessels to keep them safe from Shalimyr's rage.

All that said, they are not necessary to the faith, and are not seen as conduits between the faithful and Shalimyr; they are only spiritual guides and resources for the faithful (if well-respected ones).

The mariners collect the tithes of the faithful, see to the upkeep of the basins, build new basins when called for, and act as the spokespersons of the faith in all secular matters. This leads to an order with a great deal of available wealth, making it more powerful secularly than it is spiritually; sometimes the mariners of a particular basin are completely corrupted by their power and wealth. But should they grow too bold and arrogant, it is certain that Shalimyr will destroy them spectacularly, so this corruption rarely goes beyond petty evils: keeping down or killing political rivals, using the



The mariners wear aqua and other sea colors; even when adventuring, they paint their armor the color of the ocean.

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church's money to promote political programs outside the scope of the Shalimyn faith, or minor abuses of personal authority. Shalimyr seems to have no problem with this sort of behavior – but mariners who take church money to build themselves enormous mansions are soon found drowned in small puddles.

Titles

The clergy of Shalimyr only have two titles, meant to separate the young and hot-blooded Shalimyn clerics from the old and wise ones. The assumption is that if a cleric lives long enough to become an elder in the clergy, it is because Shalimyr loves him.

The young Shalimyn clerics are almost in a caste lower than the rest of the Shalimyn – even the meanest, drunken sailor. This is because they must forswear sailing or riding on the open sea, which is beloved of all Shalimyn. This sacrifice is thought to be the highest one can make, short of losing one's life, and is done as a sign of love for Shalimyr and devotion to the Shalimyn.

At 1st level, a Shalimyn cleric is called a shorehand, because he has forsworn sailing and remains on the shore. A shorehand is addressed as “brother” or “sister” and is introduced by full title. As mentioned above, the shorehands are servants to the rest of the Shalimyn. They are present at births, weddings, and funerals. They stand on the shores and bless ships at launching, and greet them at their return. A shorehand makes regular and elaborate shows of his lack of pride, and is constantly giving away his possessions, keeping just enough to eat and live. Becoming a shorehand takes a very short time, usually six months: one must be devoted to Shalimyr, have a great love of the sea, swear not to ride on the waters while a shorehand, and learn the various prayers and rites of the Shalimyn. Shorehands are allowed to leave their community if they feel that Shalimyr is calling them to do so. Many shorehands wander the world, away from the sea, on great adventures that they feel Shalimyr has called them to perform.

At 9th level, a shorehand goes on a great journey by sea to the “heart of the ocean.” What is referred to as the heart of the ocean changes from culture to culture, but it's usually out in the middle of the nearest sea. Once there, the Shorehand leaps into the water. He either emerges moments later, or never surfaces. Should he emerge, the now ceremonially cleansed Shorehand is hailed as a shipwright, the wisest of the Shalimyn. To avoid confusion with actual shipwrights, these holy men and women are always referred to as Shalimyn shipwrights. They are addressed as “father” or “mother” and introduced by full title.

A Shalimyn shipwright maintains the inner humility of the shorehand, or at least is supposed to, but is treated with reverence by the Shalimyn – after all, if any have a right to be treated nobly, it is these, the representatives of Shalimyr on earth. Common Shalimyn do not speak directly to the shipwrights, and must ask them questions or address them through a shorehand; this is done to show the humility of the speaker, though it certainly elevates the self-importance of the listener. The Shalimyn shipwrights run the basins, and there is always at least one shipwright present at a basin. Unlike the shorehands, they may sail on the water whenever the need or desire arises.

The great Shalimyn shipwright Feroan T'urketh was once asked why the shipwrights are treated with such reverence in a faith that so abhors pride. He explained, “After a lifetime, I have become so used to the ways of humility in the face of Grandfather Ocean, blessed be his name, that they have become second nature. I do not think of the meaning and purpose of humility any longer; I have become so easily humble that there is almost a pride in it. The shipwrights are treated

so well, like kings, so that they may be reminded of the meaning of pride and the need for its purgation. Humility should never be easy.”

Table 4-7: Mariners of Shalimyr Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Shorehand	6 Months Training
9	Shipwright	Journey to the Heart of the Ocean

Domains

Mariners of Shalimyr may choose two of the following domains: Chaos, Water, and Destruction.

Spell Preparation Time

A mariner must be by a body of water to prepare his spells – as small as a creek or as large as an ocean. He may prepare his spells at any time of day, but must meditate by water. Deserts don't often see mariners.

Alignments

Nearly all of the mariners of Shalimyr are chaotic, but their worldviews (apart from chaos) vary radically. The most common alignment for Shalimyn mariners is chaotic neutral. These mariners believe that the world is in constant flux – that anything built today may be around tomorrow or may be torn down by the waters. They therefore put no stock in plans for the distant future and believe that instead one must strive to live only by the edicts of Shalimyr. One must be humble and obey his will – wherever it may lead you. While they usually counsel against casually throwing away one's life, these mariners are not known for their cautious outlook, and they certainly have no care for a “community” outside the Shalimyn. Instead, they live only to serve Shalimyr and the Shalimyn faithful, and will do whatever their hearts tell them is right to perform that service.

Chaotic good mariners extend their concern to those outside of the faith. They believe that the virtues of humility and sacrifice are exemplars for all people, and so they try to live by those virtues. They preach against arrogance – of those who claim to have the answers to all of the great questions, of those who say they know “the way.” They are rabble-rousers and troublemakers, but their entire purpose is to improve the lot of all people through the abiding beauty of Shalimyr. Often these mariners are adventurers, as the basin shipwrights find them too interested in affairs outside of the Shalimyn. Such interest is often condemned as pride, and the mariners must leave their community. There are, however, basins dominated by chaotic good mariners (though rare), and these places are havens to all Shalimyn of a like mind.

Unlike nearly all other churches of the gods of the tree, where evil worshippers have separate cults reviled by the main church, chaotic evil Mariners have a place in the basins as long as their evil ways are not expressed against their fellow Shalimyn. A sort of “activist” offshoot of the basins, chaotic evil mariners believe it is Shalimyn's will that the arrogant and proud be rooted out by mortals. It saddens Shalimyr, their reasoning goes, whenever he has to destroy mortals with his waters, because it shows that his followers are too weak and cowardly to do it themselves. So chaotic evil mariners take the duty to heart by wreaking havoc: for instance, by breaking into the homes of pompous nobles, brutally killing them (and their families), and burning their houses down. While the

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basins routinely deny any knowledge of such activities, there are many basins that support these works as necessary evils.

Holy Warrior: Ascetics of Shalimyr

The Order

The ascetics of Shalimyr are a peculiar bunch. Generally entirely uninvolved with the basins, they are understood by the Shalimyn to be holy people whose terrible sacrifices must take them away from the faithful.

Just as the shorehands of Shalimyr may not ride the waters as a sacrifice to show their humility and faith, the ascetics give up the comfort of home and community and wander the wide world doing what they can for everyone but themselves. The idea is that by living a life of perpetual goodness, aiding others whenever and wherever they can, they show humility by becoming servants to the mortal races. By living lives of perpetual self-denial, they show their sacrifice to Shalimyr.

They are therefore one of the more common “adventuring” holy orders of all the churches. Since their faith requires them to be away from the basins, traveling by land and sea to aid others, they are often found in towns where trouble is near, or at the depths of dungeons.

They do not keep any wealth but that necessary for their survival. They do not hold any property beyond what they can carry. They do not accept accolades or rewards for their services. They seek to be the most humble persons they can be, all the while perfecting their skill in martial matters so they may better fight for the good of the mortal races they serve.

Titles

As an ascetic grows older and more experienced, she sheds all of the trappings of glory. Later, she sheds the markings of holiness, because in them is a kind of braggadocio. Eventually, she sheds even the trappings of “self,” as there is a kind of arrogance in asserting a personal identity when one is really nothing but a servant of Shalimyr.

At 1st level, the ascetic begins this gradual shedding of identity. Becoming a part of the ascetic order after a year of training by an elder member of the order, the holy warrior burns all the trappings of her previous life. She cuts her hair and gives away those things that are not fit to be burned. She takes up the blue tabard of the ascetic order (marked with the wave) and receives the title of “neonate,” having been reborn into her new order. She is thereafter addressed as “child,”

and is not introduced by order or title but as “a child of the basins of Shalimyr.” While most holy warriors are considered knights errant, or heroes, the neonate lives a life of servitude. She wanders the world, offering her sword freely, begging for meals.

At 5th level, the neonate has learned proper humility and is ready to be an ascetic in full. She ceases to have any title whatsoever, and gives her tabard away – usually this is done through training someone to become a neonate and presenting him with the tabard at the completion of his

training. If the neonate has been carrying a refined or well-crafted holy symbol, it too is given away and replaced with a symbol a peasant might wear. Anything that might make it clear to a

casual observer that the ascetic is actually a member of a holy order is given away.

The only things the neonate keeps are her arms, armor, and other tools she may have gained in her journeys that help her serve people. Once this is done, she is properly an ascetic. She has no title, only her name, and she continues her wanderings. She has no honorifics in address, but if introduced is called an “ascetic of the basins of Shalimyr.”

At 12th level, the ascetic has shown she is fully devoted to Shalimyr and to a path of service and humility. And so she sacrifices all that is left of her – her name. She ceases to be called by the name she has been known by her entire life and takes instead the name of a part of water, or a water sound. Lake, Stream, Rush, Falls – all are appropriate water names. Such ascetics are called “waternames,” and they continue to walk the earth, fighting for the good of all people and awaiting their death, when they might become part of the waters.

They are introduced in the same manner as ascetics.



Ascetics care little for the niceties of appearance. If they are able to perform their duties to Shalimyr, it is enough.

Table 4-8:

Ascetics of Shalimyr Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Neonate	One Year Training
5	Ascetic	None
12	Watername	Shedding of Birth Name

Additional Class Skills

The ascetic’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Use Rope (Dex) and Swim (Str). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

An ascetic may choose two of the following domains: Champion, Water, and Body.

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Gift of Shalimyr

Beginning at 3rd level, the ascetic can purify the mind and heart by calming emotions, as per the spell *calm emotions*, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Calm emotions* is a spell-like ability for ascetics.

Beginning at 12th level, the ascetic can purify the body and *neutralize poison*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Neutralize poison* is a spell-like ability for ascetics.

Spells

1st level – *bless, bless water, bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, magic weapon, protection from evil, remove fear, resistance, virtue*

2nd level – *endurance, remove paralysis, resist elements, shield other, delay poison*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds, greater magic weapon, heal animal companion, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, remove disease, water breathing, water walk*

4th level – *control water, cure serious wounds, freedom of movement, holy sword, neutralize poison, restoration*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, the ascetic calls an animal companion, usually a celestial sea bird. Often a great white albatross or gull, the bird becomes the ascetic's closest companion sent from Shalimyr himself. The animal companion receives all the bonuses of a special mount, though it is not large enough to be ridden. The ascetic is able to speak with the bird just as a master and his familiar with the "speak with master" ability (see *PH*, page 51).

When she is 5th level, an ascetic also makes the transition from being a neonate and is recognized by Shalimyr and others as a wandering holy warrior – even though she has made every effort to purge herself of all overt signs of this. It is considered an exceptionally bad idea for one who sails on Shalimyr's back to refuse passage to such a person (including her companions). If it is within a ship captain's power to do so, he will take an ascetic on his ship wherever he may be going. In fact, devout Shalimyr captains will even divert from their set course for an ascetic if asked to do so.

Conduct

Ascetics must never hoard wealth or property. They must never seek a home or status in a home. They may never own a ship or other means of transport. Ascetics must be prepared to die empty-handed and alone. Ascetics have no fear of death and generally do not wish to be raised from the dead should they die before what others might consider their time. Any ascetic who comes to wish for a family or a home or any kind of comfort or possession must leave the order in order to have it, and loses all of her special abilities unless she atones and sheds all of her possessions once more.

Associates

Ascetics are fairly picky about the company they keep. They are constantly wandering and cannot abide the proud. They will not

associate with those who seek glory, fame, or status – particularly if their desire for these things is reflected in the actions of the group and the perception of outsiders of the group. Ascetics have no problem with those who seek wealth and keep personal property; they do not expect all people to live under the same onus of sacrifice as they do. They will speak to their friends about the perils of desire for property, but will not condemn them for it. An ascetic can even abide greed as long as it is tempered with sacrifice. Ascetics most often travel with wizards, monks, druids, rangers, and rogues – those who keep a low profile for one reason or another. They are rarely found with holy warriors or clergy from other churches. Ascetics almost never travel together.

Alignment

Ascetics must be chaotic good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The sail masters are the third and most evangelical of the Shalimyr holy orders. They are known far and wide for their great skill as sailors and their uncanny abilities with ship-to-ship combat. The order was founded by an ascetic, known as Saint Isyl, who was visited in dream by a series of visions from Shalimyr. St. Isyl prophesied, through those dreams, an ultimate day of reckoning for all Shalimyr, when the Sea Father will visit every ship on his waters in the course of a single day. If he finds that the hearts of the sailors around the world are pious and humble, as he demands, then he will give a great boon to all Shalimyr. But if he finds that those he has graced with permission to ride upon his back are selfish and wanting, he will destroy them all and never again allow ships upon his waters. While the mariners believe St. Isyl's vision was metaphorical, the sail masters believe it is quite literal and seek to avert disaster by constantly reminding sailors of their duty to Shalimyr. This is why they are so driven in their evangelism and why they are almost always out at sea rather than residing in peace at the basins.

At 1st level, a new sail master (who has just completed one year training from a sail lord) seeks out a captain who will take him onto his vessel in return for service. The sail master works with that crew until he is satisfied that they are properly pious, then moves on to another ship. This continues for most of his career. Sail masters are addressed as "sail master," and are introduced without their order name.

At 7th level, however, the sail master seeks out someone in control of a fleet – a lord, a powerful merchant, a pirate king, etc. – and offers his service as the powerful personage's sail lord. The sail lord usually holds this position until death, riding on the fleet's flagship but ministering to all of its sailors. He is addressed as "sail lord" and introduced with his full title.

Table 4-9:

The Sail Masters of Shalimyr Titles

Minimum Level	Title	Requirement
1	Sail Master	One Year Training with Sail Lord
7	Sail Lord	Finding Position with Fleet

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Table 4-10: The Sail Master

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	—Spells per Day—			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Sea Legs, Divine Protection	0	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Speed Ship	1	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Inspire Crew	1	0	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Escape Doldrums	1	1	—	—
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Speed Oars	1	1	0	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Hallowed Deck	1	1	1	—
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Fill Sails	2	1	1	0
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Madness of the Seas	2	1	1	1
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Endure Storm	2	2	1	1
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Holy Vessel	2	2	2	1

Prestige Class:

Sail Masters of Shalimyr

“The wind is my brother, the ship is my sister,” the sail masters say, “and the water is my father. I respect my siblings but I obey my father.” The sail masters have brine in their blood, it is said, and no finer sailors live, above or below the waves. Having a sail master on deck is a good omen, a promise of success, and a harbinger of a speedy journey all in one. To attack a vessel with a sail master on board, or worse, a sail lord, is considered sheer folly. The sail masters see themselves as the bearers of Shalimyr’s good word; essentially they are missionaries who reside on ships. Incredibly (and usually exhaustingly) pious, they lead the crew in their three daily prayers, talking constantly of the gifts of Grandfather Ocean and the wrath of the Sea Father. Their order was founded to aid and serve those who are closest to Shalimyr, sailors, and to remind them of the tenets of the Shalimyn faith.

Any deeply faithful Shalimyn may become a sail master. The most common classes to join the order are fighters and rogues, but wizards, sorcerers, members of the Shalimyn clergy, even holy warriors of Shalimyr have all been known to join the order. It requires only a deep understanding of the sea and an abiding love for Grandfather Ocean.

Sail masters are most often found on the water, serving vessels great and small. They rarely bother with those who are not Shalimyn or sailors, so a person booking passage on a ship may never even realize a sail master is aboard. If one travels aboard the flagship of a major fleet, it is almost certain to have a sail lord aboard. Members of the order make odd first impressions – quiet, contemplative, a bit spooky at first, they eventually reveal their religious ardor. Most sail masters shave their heads and wear simple robes adorned with the wave of Shalimyr. It is uncommon to find two members of the order together, unless one is being trained.

Abbreviation: Sai
Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

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

Shalimyn: A sail master must be completely devoted to Shalimyr.

Profession (Sailor): 8 ranks

Swim: 4 ranks

Vow of Service: A sail master lives to serve the ships of others and may not own a ship of his own. At least half of every year for a sail master must be spent in service on a ship.

Class Skills

The sail master’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (boating, cartography, geography, navigation, religion, sea lore) (Int), Profession (Int), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Use Rope (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the sail master prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Sail masters are proficient with simple and martial weapons. Sail masters gain no proficiencies with armor. Armor and water don’t mix.

Divine Protection (Su)

The deck of a ship on the open seas is the sail master’s pulpit; out on the water he needs no protection but Shalimyr’s grace. A sail master adds his Cha modifier (if positive) to his Dex modifier to modify his Armor Class. This bonus is lost if the sail master wears any armor – those who trust in Shalimyr have no backup plans.

Endure Storm (Su)

When a sail master with this ability is aboard a vessel, it cannot be capsized in a storm, no matter how high the waves, except by the will of Shalimyr. Further, it becomes highly resistant to wind damage, with the wood of its hull and masts receiving a bonus to their hardness equal to the sail master’s class level.

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Escape Doldrums (Su)

Sometimes a great ship is becalmed, receiving no wind and going nowhere while her rowers rest. This is called the doldrums. Through sheer force of will, a sail master with this ability is able to keep the ship going as though an invisible hand were pushing it at the rate of a fully winded vessel. The sail master must concentrate to escape the doldrums, and it is taxing work. For every hour he spends performing this minor miracle, he must sleep for three.

Fill Sails (Su)

Once a week, the sail master may call on the power of Shalimyr to speed his ship across the waves as though it had caught incredible winds – even though no such winds are evident. The ship gains 3mph in speed for a 24-hour period.

Hallowed Deck (Su)

Given a week and 500gp worth of livestock and wine to sacrifice, the sail master can make the deck of the ship on which he serves holy ground. He spends the time chanting, sacrificing the animals and letting their blood run from aft to stern, pouring out the wine, and otherwise sanctifying each and every plank of the deck to Shalimyr. All crew members receive a +2 sacred bonus to AC while on deck, and any individuals attacking the ship receive a -1 morale penalty to all skill checks and attack rolls while on the deck of the ship – it just feels wrong. A ship's deck remains hallowed only as long as the sail master serves on the ship. When he leaves, it becomes a normal ship once more, much to its crew's chagrin.

Holy Vessel (Su)

The ship on which the sail master serves may become a holy vessel, in accordance with the prophecy of St. Isyl. If all the crew members are faithful servants of Shalimyr (saying their thrice-daily prayers), the sail master has succeeded in his duties. While he is aboard such a ship and it is on the open water, it glows with a holy aura. Any member of the five mortal races must make a Willpower save (DC 15) in order to attack the ship. Any creature or race with the designator "aquatic" must make a Willpower save to attack it also, but at DC 20. If the subject fails, she is afraid of the ship and all its crew members as though under the effect of a *fear* spell cast by a 20th-level cleric. Even if the save is made, an enemy attacking the ship or its crew suffers -2 morale penalties to her attack, damage, and skill rolls while on board the holy vessel (if she is not touching the ship, she may attack without penalty if she makes her saving throw against the fear effect). The holy vessel will even terrify the undead if they are ghosts of sailors (such as the crew of a ghost ship)

and maintain the personalities and memories of sailors. The holy vessel is clearly protected by Shalimyr's hand and to attack it is to risk the wrath of a god – not something anyone does without a bit of trepidation.

Those who serve on a holy vessel are under the constant effect of the sail master's Inspire Crew ability while on board (they lose the confidence if they board another vessel). The sail master must still deliver oratory if he wishes to inspire in the crew the Madness of the Seas.

Inspire Crew (Ex)

In times of need, a sail master can whip the crew of a ship into a religious frenzy. By praying and chanting loudly and continuously, usually just before engaging in ship-to-ship combat, the sail master plays on the predisposition of all Shalimyr to scoff at death. To be affected, an ally must hear the sail master's oratory for a full round. The effect lasts as long as the sail master speaks and for 5 rounds after the sail master stops speaking (or 5 rounds after the ally can no longer hear the sail master). While speaking, the sail master can fight but cannot cast spells, activate magic items by spell completion (such as scrolls), or activate magic items by magic word (such as wands).

Affected allies receive a +2 morale bonus to saving throws against charm and fear effects and a +1 morale bonus to attack and weapon damage rolls. As Inspire Crew is a natural effect, it cannot be dispelled, but it also does not affect those who do not worship Shalimyr or are otherwise resistant to the sail master's words.

Madness of the Seas (Ex)

As the sail master grows in power, so too does his oratory. When using the Inspire Crew ability, the sail master grants the ability to all of those inspired by his words to fly into a Barbarian Rage, exactly like the Barbarian's ability explained on page 25 of the *PH*. Attentive listeners feel themselves moved with the very rage of Shalimyr and do not care whether they live or die. If an inspired party is already capable of entering a barbarian rage, this is simply a bonus daily instance of the ability. The ability to enter the rage only lasts as long as the Inspire Crew ability (the length of the oratory plus five rounds), but once the rage begins its duration is determined exactly like the barbarian ability's.

Sea Legs (Ex)

A sail master spends years at sea and learns to stay on his feet during fair weather and foul. A sail master gains a +2 competence bonus to



The sail masters make their faith obvious, prominently displaying symbols of Shalimyr. They dress in sea greens and blues.

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all Balance checks. Furthermore, a successful check allows a full move instead of a half move. A failed check still means no movement at all.

Speed Oars (Ex)

If a sail master is below decks before a battle, he may inspire the rowers into a frenzy. By shouting, cajoling and even sitting at the first oar, the sail master can get the ship moving at impossible speeds for a short period. The practical effect is that the ship does triple its normal damage when ramming an opposing vessel (there are several different sets of nautical rules available for the d20 System; this rule should work with all of them).

Speed Ship (Su)

For reasons none but Shalimyr himself can explain, when a sail master is onboard a ship, it simply moves faster. There is no obvious explanation – the speed of the wind does not increase, and the rowers don't seem to go any faster. Ships move at the speed of the next fastest vessel on table 9-6 in the *PH* (page 143) when a sail master is aboard (a sailing ship moves as fast as a warship, a warship as fast as a longship, and so on). Galleys move at 5 miles per hour when a sail master is aboard, or 120 miles per day.

Spells

Beginning at 1st level, a sail master gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the sail master must have a wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a sail master with a wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Sail master bonus spells are based on wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the sail master's wisdom modifier (if any). When the sail master gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 1st level, the sail master gets only bonus spells. A sail master without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. The sail master's spell list appears below. A sail master prepares and casts spells just as a cleric does.

Sail Masters choose their spells from the following list:

1st level—*animal friendship, bless, bless water, create water, divine favor, endure elements, flare, know direction, obscuring mist*

2nd level—*animal messenger, fog cloud, animate rope, spider climb*

3rd level—*consecrate, water breathing, augury, gust of wind, sleet storm, water walk*

4th level—*control water, divine power, quench, rainbow pattern, solid fog*

The Tree of Life

The Druids of Eliwyn

Eliwyn (Eli-uh-win) (Precious, the One Tree, the Tree of Life, the Giver of Life)

Myths

The Coming of the Druids

When the mortal races were at last born from the fruits of Precious Eliwyn, the gods born of the same tree determined it was time for them to depart the mortal sphere. They set themselves in the heavens, building great and shining cities. But on earth, the One Tree was still in bloom, heavy with an unripe fruit. She eventually came to be watched over by Thellyne the Huntress and Rontra, from whom Eliwyn sprang, in case any of Asmodeus' brood might try to harm the Tree of Life.

It was not long, though, before mortals who loved the woods and beasts and all of nature's bounties formed an order of their own without guidance from the gods. They turned their attention from the heavens and instead found all they revered in the dirt and grass, hills and valleys of the world. They did not heed the dictates of the gods, and were interested in nothing but the flowing power of life, from which they drew sustenance and strength.

Before long, the most powerful of these mortals, who came to call themselves druids, sought out and found the sacred grove wherein Precious Eliwyn was hid. Though the Giver of Life was shrouded from the eyes of mortals by the power of Rontra and Thellyne, the druids had become so mighty in their ties to the natural world that they saw through all veils and illusions and came to stand at the foot of the mighty Eliwyn, ten thousand spans high.

Her branches reached through to the heavens, and her mighty roots shot down to the very foundations of the earth, where once the lands of the dead were found. All life came from her branches, and there was no obscuring her power from the druids.

When Thellyne saw that these mortals assaulted the tree, she assayed them with her hunter's bow. In three breaths she had killed the three mightiest of their number, so great was her skill, so mighty her bow, so deadly her aim.

The blood of the first of the druids spilled by Eliwyn's roots; from it spouted forth a field of red poppies, forever showing their sorrow for the great druid's passing, and the offshoots of Eliwyn's roots that bathed in the blood came suddenly to life, and walk the earth still. These are the treants, protectors of the wood.

The blood of the second druid spilled in the glade around Eliwyn; from it burst forth a great bramble of red roses – red from his blood and thorny to protect the Tree of Life. Out of the thicket burst the naga, a great protector spirit like a snake born of bramble and thicket.

The third druid killed was the greatest among them, and from her blood, which spilled at the edge of the glade, there grew the most perfect of all flowers: red lotus blossoms with white hearts. And from the pure white center of the lotuses sprang the most perfect of creatures – white horses with golden horns, the unicorns.

When Thellyne saw the pure and good creatures that came from these dead mortals, she realized she had committed a grave error. She approached those who remained, none of whom had scattered though arrows flew in their midst, and entered into lengthy discussions with the druids. When she had learned who these folk were and understood that they wanted only to observe and protect the Tree of Life, Thellyne agreed to share the grove with them. In sorrow for the deaths she had caused, the goddess of the hunt agreed to let the grove be known among mortals to the druids only, and so she does not even reveal its location to her most blessed worshippers, nor does Rontra.

And so it is that the mightiest of druid groves is also the most serene and sacred place on earth – the grove of Eliwyn, the One Tree, the Giver of

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Eliwyn, the tree of life, is always surrounded by her many protectors. They await the ripening of the fifth fruit.

Life. To this day the greatest of the druids call the grove home and only they among mortals know its secrets.

Associations

Eliwyn is the Tree of Life. She is the “god” of nature, undiluted innocence, purity, the abundant life of the world, and hope. She is associated with treants (which are also associated with Rontra), but most especially with unicorns, the guardians of nature and purest of beasts. Eliwyn’s “worshippers” are druids and some rangers and are from those races that revere nature – primarily humans, elves, half-elves, and halflings.

Alignment

Eliwyn is neutral.

Representations

In Icons, Eliwyn is represented as a great flowering tree with golden leaves and silver blossoms. From it hang five great, golden fruits – or, if the representation is meant to be “current,” one fruit. However, the druids and other “worshippers” of Eliwyn do not represent her in icons, as all trees are born in her image, and all of life is a reminder of Eliwyn’s glory.

Purpose

Eliwyn is not sentient, does not communicate, and does not have a spirit. She is a great and powerful tree, and her purpose is to live until she dies, to

give off sprouts that will grow into new trees, to bear the remaining fruit until it falls, and then, perhaps, to bear fruit again. Eliwyn’s purpose is the same as the purpose of all trees, only on a grander scale, because she is the first tree and from her the cycle of life was begun.

Servants

The chief servants of Eliwyn are her guardians: the treants, unicorns, and naga. All three came into being to protect her. Since then, the treants have come to protect the forests around the world, as the unicorns have come to protect the animals. The most powerful of the naga still lie coiled about Eliwyn, tended to by the druids there, but many naga were long ago captured and corrupted by evil sorcerers.

The Church

Church Description

There are no holy orders to the “church” of Eliwyn. Her cathedrals are the druid groves throughout the world, and her clerics are the druids themselves. If she has holy warriors, they are rangers, and while there may be regions with special orders of druids, there are none that are universal. The worship of Eliwyn is not like the worship of other gods – she does not provide power to the druids and they do not pray to her. She is simply the most perfect and pure form of what they revere: the balanced beauty of the natural order, the perfection of living and blooming things, the beauty and nobility of death in the winter.

Chapter IV ~ The Old Gods

Druids are exactly as described in the *PH*, and the mightiest among them come to reside in the great grove of Eliwyn, where they serve as her protectors. They tend to her and keep her safe from any who might harm her.

There are druids in the world who actually pray to gods, though, and they usually revere a sort of trinity: Rontra, from whom all nature was born; Eliwyn, that is nature; and Thellyne, the first of the gods to truly respect and tend to nature. However, these druids receive their spells from the power of life and nature just like others, and are not considered clergy of Rontra or Thellyne.

In some lands (if your GM likes), a new cult is rising, though. Called the “Cult of the Fifth Fruit,” it has put aside worship of the living gods and instead pays homage to the unripe fruit on Eliwyn’s bough, which represents for them the great unknown and hope for a better tomorrow. Such cultists are thought mad by many, revering a non-existent god to the exclusion of gods that exist. Many such cultists call themselves druids, though they do not (as far as anyone has recorded) receive druidic powers. This misappropriation of the name “druid” has infuriated some actual druids, while others view it as part of the great cycle and remain indifferent on the subject.

The Creator God: The Followers of the Nameless One The Nameless One (the Creator)

Myths

The 101 Steps to Enlightenment

Long ago, longer than most remember, the wise and ancient Limmik Kunar came to a realization – that it is mortality that leads to all things unworthy. His reasoning was simple enough: Because we die, we become attached to life. Because we are attached to life, we are attached to the trappings of life. Because we are attached to the trappings of life, we will commit evil to have them. Because we will commit evil to have the trappings of life, we can be manipulated by those who claim they can help us achieve more in life or receive a greater reward in death.

Master Kunar understood that the primary manipulators of those attached to the trappings of life were members of the religious castes. From the wayfarers of Darmon to the matriarchs of Morwyn, every church offered mortals understanding of how to please the gods and be rewarded in the afterlife. Yet even the afterlife was an illusion, a series of trappings that continued the cycle of life, in which the mortal races could be manipulated into acting against their nature. The gods of the tree and their priests promised one of three paths beyond death: a life of eternal happiness, torment perpetual, or rebirth into the world to continue the cycle. All three paths seemed to Master Kunar to be continuations of the unworthy aspects of mortality, for is not eternal life under the thumb of the gods simply a life of service to their beliefs and manipulations? And is not a life of torment perpetual a terrible evil that none would desire to suffer? And is not rebirth to try again simply rebirth into the same manipulations?

And so Limmik turned his study to the Creator, the Nameless One who made all things and then departed from them. Surely, the only way to be free of the veil of tears that is eternal rebirth and death, punishment or subjugation at the hands of the gods of the tree, is to leave the sphere. Only by being free of existence entirely can one be assured of freedom from the unworthiness of mortality.

With this in mind, Master Kunar spent his life discovering the 101 steps to Enlightenment, the mantras and contemplations necessary for his own

enlightenment. And at the end of his life, it is said that Limmik Kunar became one with the power of the Nameless One or departed the sphere or became a being of pure energy from beyond the Great Sphere; while there are conflicting reports and understandings of the old master’s final fate, all agree that he did not die, but simply disappeared one day.

Sadly for those that walked after him, Master Kunar’s 101 steps, which he painstakingly documented for his disciples, did not result in a similar freedom from the Great Sphere for his followers. The earliest steps were quite useful to harnessing the power he called “ki,” but later in the process the steps, though clearly useful for Limmik to become detached from those things that were important to him in his life, had no meaning for his disciples. And so all who wish to depart the sphere, break the cycle, and be free of existence must walk a new path of discipline and set down their own steps.

Associations

The Nameless One is the creator god, the dispassionate one, the beginning and the end of all things, the order to and breaking of the universe. He is not associated with any animal or other part of the mortal sphere, since He is beyond the Great Sphere. He is “worshipped” by monks and some rare, disciplined members of other classes, such as wizards, who believe that understanding Him is the key to understanding all of creation. His followers are rare among all the races, but are mainly found among humans.

Alignment

The Nameless One is neutral.

Representations

The Nameless One is never represented in icons, due to an ancient superstition that even to reproduce His likeness would end the world. In great works showing the history of creation, the Nameless

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Does the Nameless One still sit in his palace of light watching the sphere? None know, but most doubt he cares.

One is shown as a being of light, shaped like a humanoid, but with no features.

Symbolically, the Nameless One is represented either with a point, or dot, which has no beginning or end (usually a black dot, which followers place or tattoo on the palms of both of their hands). In three dimensions, the Nameless One can be symbolically represented by a strip with a half-twist in it, curled into a ring. It therefore has no beginning, end, inside, or outside.

Purpose

The Nameless One's motivations are entirely mysterious. It is assumed He watches existence still, but many believe He cares no more for the universe than a giant cares for the smallest mite. He provides no divine powers to followers, never answers prayer, and could be entirely imaginary for all the impact He has on the universe as it exists today.

Servants:

The Nameless One is said to have no servants in the universe, but those who have sought to travel outside the great sphere using magic have encountered powerful guardians blocking the way. Some believe that the Nameless One has made many universes and places barriers between them to keep them from commingling, as a wizard might keep her various experiments in separate phials and beakers to keep them from interacting.

The Church

Church Description

There is no church of the Nameless One. Rather, the monasteries that dot the landscape are, many of them, places of study for those who walk the path of master Kunar. They seek to become one with the Nameless One or to leave the great sphere as He did. Therefore, playing a monk player character can be the equivalent of playing a "worshiper" of the Nameless One – at least that is how the worshipers of the gods of the tree might understand it.

While there are now orders of monks who have learned to harness *ki* and yet do not seek to leave the great sphere, but rather seek physical perfection, their roots are all in the work of the old master, Limmik Kunar. Players wishing to play monks should decide with their GM what the outlook of their monastery is.

There are no holy orders to the monasteries but monks, and while some monasteries or cultures may have prestige classes appropriate to the disciples of Master Kunar, there are none that are universal (so none are set out in this book).

The "Vola Ulfhedin" referred to in Appendix I is also best understood as a worshiper of the Nameless One. There are barbarian societies that know the full tale of the pantheon and actually refuse to worship the gods. They see them all as children of the real god, the Nameless One, and believe we are in a world abandoned by any authority that actually matters. They seek to lead good lives despite this abandonment, and tell the tales of the gods as lessons to lead one's life by. They bear no holy symbols and offer no prayers to any god, even the Nameless One.

Chapter V: Practicing the Faith: The Gods of the Tree

About This Chapter

Five gods were born of Eliwyn, the Tree of Life. They remain the five mightiest Lords of Heaven. Four emerged from the fruit of the tree, and the fifth was born from the murder done by their divine hands. In this chapter we explore the faiths of these five gods: Morwyn, the merciful; Terak, the mighty; Zheenkeef, the mad; Tinel, the magnificent; and Mormekar, the shadow.

Chapter V ~ The Gods of the Tree

Goddess of Healing and Wisdom

The Healing Halls of Morwyn

Morwyn (MORE-win) (Gentle, the Compassionate, the Wise, the Merciful, White Lady, Queen of Heaven)

Myths

Reign of Peace

Long ago, when the gods fought their first war to determine who was eldest, they used the div in their struggles. Alone among the gods, it was Morwyn, Gentle Morwyn, who cared for the fiery race. She did not use them, but rather taught them many secrets. It is said that she would go into their cities and whisper a different secret in every ear – secrets of why flowers bloom and why the sun sometimes looks red. She showed them that the world is lovely, and that it is lovelier still when your heart is at peace.

The path she set them down was noble, and these div built great societies, thriving cultures of art and beauty. But Morwyn the Compassionate was not yet Morwyn the Wise, for she had not yet had to temper her love with the bitterness of tears. Her brothers were not yet murdered by brotherly hands and she had not yet experienced the horrors of war. So she taught these div not to build walls or defenses, that the good in the hearts of their kin would come forth. Though war raged around them, she told the div that peace was stronger than war and that when their hostile cousins saw their beautiful homes, savage hearts would ease and all would walk once more on the path of peace.

Sadly, the White Lady was wrong. When the feud of Tinel and Terak reached the peaceful people who Morwyn had instructed, the gentle empires paid war's bounty in tears and blood. Their homes were burned, their temples destroyed. The women were raped, the men killed, and the children enslaved. Soon, there was no sign that there had ever been peaceful empires, and Morwyn, Gentle Morwyn, wept.

She found her brothers then, and falling upon them she wailed and gnashed her teeth. She tore the hem of her robe, crying out, "Why? Why would you tell your servants to do this to my people?" And for a short time, Tinel and Terak put aside their war and went silent, for Morwyn was beautiful and terrible to behold in her sorrow, and their hearts were moved by her tears.

"Sister, I promise you, I never ordered such a thing. I have fought for my rightful place and have no time to tend to them. They are told to destroy Terak's usurpers." Tinel stood tall and proud. He knew the truth: His hands were clean of the matter, and so he mourned not.

But Terak's heart was more than moved; it was wounded to think that he had caused his beautiful and peaceful sister such sorrow, for this was never his intent. He knelt before Morwyn and kissed the torn hem of her robe. "Beloved Sister, I swear to you it was not I that did this thing, for you are the treasure of the Tree that I fight to preserve. I make this war so that you will be safe." And truly it was then that Morwyn saw the love her brother bore for her, and she knew then that she loved him well also.

She saw clearly that they would be married in time, but that much that is sorrowful would come to pass before ever there would be joy. And touching his hair, she walked away from her brothers and let them fight their war.

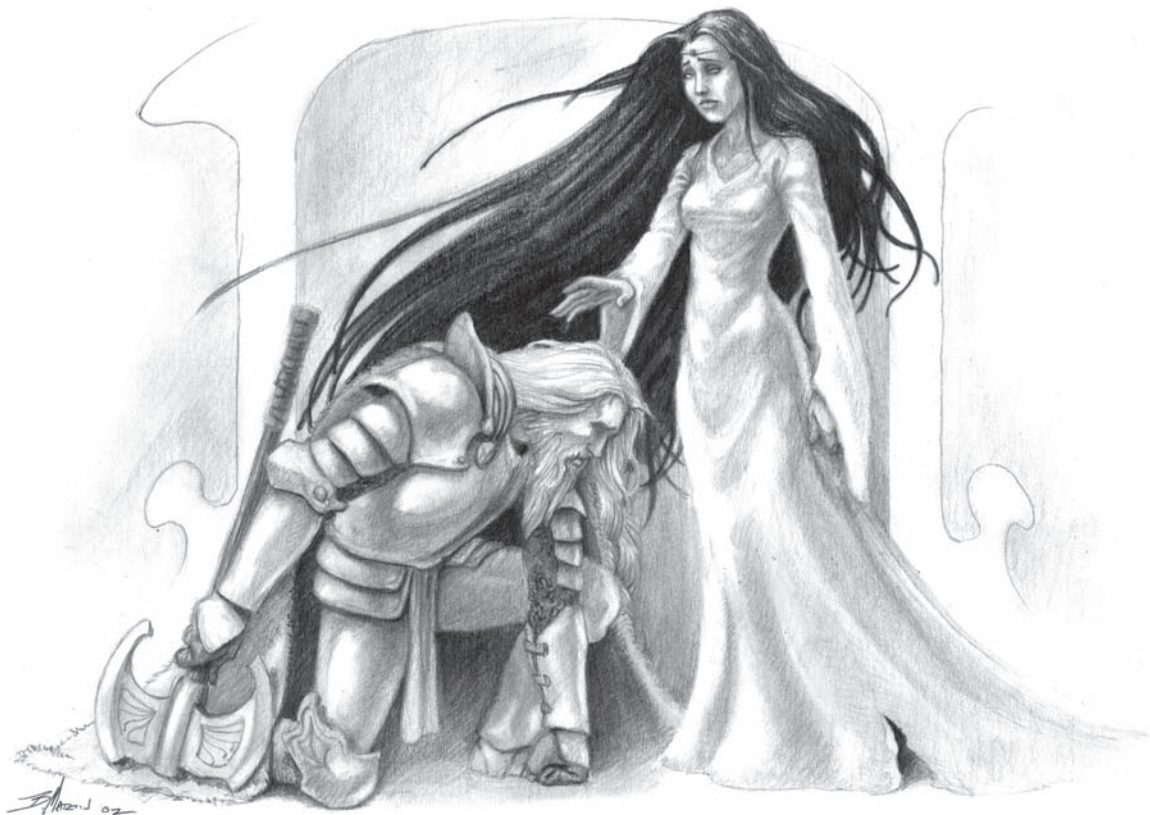
If her brothers had not ordered her people, the gentlest of the div, to be so abused, she determined it must have been Zheenkeef. And so she found her sister playing a game in which she lit two bulls on fire and tried to put them out with her urine. Morwyn watched her sister running around, squatting over the flaming bulls in an effort to douse the flames; but always the bulls, crazed by the pain, would run from beneath her and kick and buck. At one point in this painful ordeal, the sisters' eyes met. In that moment Morwyn the Wise saw the truth – her sister had never ordered such a thing, for she would never care enough about the races of the earth to give such a petty command.

So now she knew that the div who perpetrated these crimes were ordered to do so by Kador the Wicked. It was the only explanation, and she sought these div out to punish them for aligning themselves with the dark power. But when she found those who had savaged her people, they had been enslaved by a yet more powerful kingdom of the div, and they waited to be released from their torment. And when she asked what commands they had taken from Kador, they did not know of what she spoke, for they had taken no order from any god. "We have waged war, lady, and for this we are sorry. We killed your people not because anyone told us to, but because we could. Please, release us!" And so she did, breaking their chains and setting them free, for she could not abide seeing anyone suffer. And she found those that remained of her people, and she took them to secret places of the world and made them safe, but they were few and they nevermore built any wonders worth remembering.

It was then that the White Lady learned that which she knows to this day – the races of the earth do not need the will of the gods to justify horrible acts against one another, for they are no purer than the gods. They have a secret fire burning in their breasts, one that tells them to hate, to rape, and to kill – and abandoned, that fire spreads. But she also learned their hearts hold other secrets.

All people desire peace, Morwyn the Compassionate saw then. Deep in their hearts, perhaps less fiercely than the savage fire of hate, there glows another, warmer light. There will come a time, she knew then, when all mortal people will at last heed their calmer voice. There will be a day, though it may take a thousand thousand years, when all people will be washed clean of the dark fires and all will live in peace. They will no longer kill and burn simply because they can. Until that time, it must be the work of Morwyn, Gentle Morwyn, and those who would walk at her side, to make the damage done by hatred and war the least it might be. They must tend to the flock of the good and gentle, keep them safe, and defend them against those who hate. Never again would Morwyn preach the casting aside of blades, for some, she saw then, must bear blades to

Chapter V ~ The Gods of the Tree



Morwyn, gentle Morwyn is the mother and queen of the gods. She is shown here forgiving Terak, her brother and husband.

protect those who cannot. And daily the Queen of Heaven looks for signs of the Reign of Peace, as she calls it, and where she sees them she blows on them and protects them as does a man kindling a fire in the rain.

Associations

Morwyn is the goddess of healing, wisdom, peace, forgiveness, mothers, and mercy. She is associated with the charitable instinct, childbirth, and acts of contrition, mercy, and redemption. She is the Queen of Heaven, and her name is therefore usually invoked first in lists of the gods.

In the animal kingdom, she is associated closely with the lamb – for she would have all people be as gentle as lambs. She is also sometimes associated with dogs, for long ago she turned wicked men into dogs rather than smite them, and it is said that all dogs are still grateful to her for this. So it is that dogs often make excellent shepherds of lambs, as it is the only way they can manage to repay Morwyn's kindness. In the skies she is likened to the white dove. As she is the peaceful lady in white among the gods, the dove is the peaceful white bird of the heavens. Among mystical creatures, she is associated with the winged serpents – the couatl – creatures of the greatest beauty, wisdom, and virtue.

All five mortal races revere Morwyn. The people who hold her in the highest esteem are mothers, the weak, healers, and those in desperate need of forgiveness. However, as the Queen of Heaven and goddess of wisdom, she is also revered by those who lead though they are not noble. Mayors of towns, for instance, or town council members, will say prayers to Morwyn for guidance, for she was not the strongest

of the gods, nor the most powerful, yet she was given the reigns of leadership and took them well. Most folk, though, see Morwyn as a reminder of how much better they could or should be, and take her teachings to be for saints, not common folks.

Alignment:

Morwyn is lawful good.

Representations

In icons, Morwyn is shown as a tall woman with long black hair and brown, olive, or deeply tanned skin. She is usually attired in flowing white robes so she shines like a star. There is often a silver circlet on her brow, with a single gem in its center. She has a motherly nobility in all representations, for she was the first ever to bear a life in her womb. Usually she is shown with a warm smile, though sometimes she has the regal bearing of a queen. She nearly always bears a deep resemblance to Rontra, seeming a younger version of the Grandmother.

In symbols, Morwyn is often represented by a white lamb, but two simpler symbols, such as those for holy symbols worn by clerics, are most commonly used. There is no division in the church surrounding the use of these two symbols (as there is among the Teraketh); it is merely a matter of personal preference. One symbol is a wreath made of white blossoms. This can be figurative or real, with some clerics wearing painted symbols of white wreaths, but others adorning themselves in actual garlands of cherry blossoms. Wreaths of white blossoms have been worn of old by peacemakers and those negotiating under truce. The other symbol is a crystal tear, meant to remember

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the tears shed by Morwyn over the corpses of her brothers long ago. This is a very practical symbol and is the one most clerics wear around their necks. Also, its simplified form is the holy symbol of Morwyn made in haste, or etched on small surfaces.

This symbol is sometimes extended to three teardrops formed into a triangle (one on top, two below).

Purpose

Morwyn's motives are pure and can only be described as good. She loves all mortals and desires to see them thrive and do well, but she holds a special place in her heart for the kindly and the gentle. She is a guardian of the downcast, but even more a guardian of those who spend their lives caring for the downcast. While her husband Terak seeks to protect the weak and frail, Morwyn seeks to create a world in which they do not need protection. Perhaps it is a fine line, but her all-consuming purpose is to slowly move the world toward good, to see the hearts of mortals shift toward decency over desire, peace over power.

Because of this, she doesn't actually spend a great deal of time concerning herself directly with those who are weak and cannot care for themselves, or those who live in isolation doing no harm. Rather, her energy is spent on guiding the powerful of all races toward caring for these folk. Her chosen people are healers, municipal leaders, mothers – the people who have day-to-day power over lives and who, if evil, may work the most long-term mischief.

Morwyn believes that the Nameless One created the universe so that it will constantly progress toward perfection. It is inevitable, in her view, that goodness will prevail and all forces will be at peace. The question is how much pain, darkness, and misery the gods and mortals must wade through before this perfect state is achieved. She believes that in every epoch, good and evil will suffer a great conflict, and eventually good will prevail so mightily that it will thrust the universe into perfection. Morwyn works to move events toward that state; her fear is that there may be several more disastrous epochal conflicts before it will come to pass. She fears that the world might go through another decimation of its races (as the div have been decimated and banished), that gods may die – or even that the entire order of the gods will fail, to be replaced by another. Morwyn believes if good is weak in the world, these cycles will be more devastating, as the Nameless One's creation shudders toward perfection.

Among the gods, Morwyn is called queen and elder, but this is authority she rarely uses, particularly because she has decreed that no one god rules the others. She seeks to move the gods' hearts toward good, and agrees to things like the Compact because she knows she cannot command the chaotic gods. Rather, she hopes the Compact and other acts of the gods will draw them together against evil. She does not suffer from pride in these matters, and will use any honorable method to bring the gods and the mortal races to the good path.

Servants

Morwyn has three chief servants, each of whom is dear to her:

Mercy

It is said that when a man's heart is heavy with rage and he is about to smite his enemy, on rare occasions he will suddenly feel the heaviness of his heart lifted, as though by a cool breeze. In those moments, Morwyn's beloved Mercy has visited him, invisible, and lifted hate from his heart. Mercy is a beautiful maiden with flaxen hair in a white gown, like that of her mistress. It is said that Morwyn's motives for sending Mercy abroad are mysterious, but that she is found still in the hearts of men from time to time. Many who have been so stricken change at their very core, for to experience the touch of Mercy is to feel as though a holy hand has reached straight into your heart.

The Midwife

Called upon by women in the midst of difficult labors, it is said that the Midwife clarifies matters. There are women who are doomed to die giving life to their children, and the Midwife can no more save them than could Morwyn herself, for that is their fate. But should the Midwife, invisible like Mercy, come to the bedside of a woman in a difficult labor, she may speed the delivery and save the woman's life. If this is not possible, she may at least take away the woman's suffering and let her die in peace. Most women call out to the Midwife and Morwyn in the midst of childbirth, even when they are not traumatic. The Midwife is said to be a heavy woman with broad hips and breasts heavy with milk. When an infant dies in the first weeks of its life, it is often said that she "nurses with the Midwife now."

The Guide

An ancient woman with a lantern, the Guide eases men and women into the wisdom of old age. It is said that few live to be old, and many who do, do not deserve to have lasted so long. But something about age seems to mellow and refine even the fiercest heart. This is because the Guide comes to the aged in their dreams, reminding them of the stories of their families, of their people and their heritage. The Guide also eases women through the penultimate change of life, the loss of their monthly moonblood, and helps them find comfort in it. Many who are old call to the Guide to show them wisdom, and she is said to visit them invisibly, like Morwyn's other servants, and ease their troubled hearts. It is known that the Guide also comes to, and warns, a select few in the moments before Mormekar arrives to claim them. This is why history is filled with tales of those who declare that they are about to die moments before they do, making final amends for old grudges and hurts.

It is unknown from whence these three servants came. They are often at Morwyn's side, and they spread much comfort in the world. If they once were mortal, they surely are not now, and in some isolated cultures they are revered independently as gods in their own right.



Chapter V ~ The Gods of the Tree

The Church

Church Description

The healing halls of Morwyn, as her churches are called, are run by her followers, the Morwynites. The Morwynites are enormously popular wherever their healing halls are found, for they walk among the people, saving them from disease and curing their hurts. All people love the healing of the Morwynites, but not all people love the Morwynites themselves: Many see them as impossibly holy. For this reason, the healing halls are not as common as they could be – the Morwynites receive many donations from their patients, giving them massive coffers, but they lack the people to populate a healing hall in every major population center.

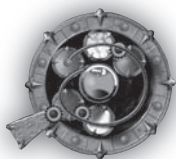
Add to this the somewhat peculiar structure of the healing halls (see below) and you have a popular church with great difficulty spreading its faith. This is the principal temporal goal of the Morwynite faith: to increase its membership so it may continue to expand the presence of its healing halls. This goal places the Morwynites in direct conflict with the Great Church, which is also on a constant quest to increase its membership; this yields the strange result of two lawful good churches eyeing each other suspiciously. Despite this, the churches are quite similar. It is no coincidence that the head of both faiths is called the Supreme Matriarch (or sometimes Patriarch in the case of the Great Church); Hefasten modeled the Great Church after the churches of his native Morwynite faith. While this conflict is almost certain never to come to blows, it is one of deep importance to both churches. The Great Church exists to add members, and the Morwynites fear that if they do not add more members they will cease to exist.

It is a very real possibility. Because the Morwynite message is one of peace and harmony with all people, charity and love for all, the average person is entirely unprepared to commit his life to the Morwynite way; few believe they can live up to the church's, and its god's, standards. More importantly, it is a difficult life; Morwynites constantly give of themselves, in spirit and in fact. The average Morwynite holds only those possessions she must have to survive, giving everything else to the healing halls for charitable distribution. While most folk are happy to give to the Morwynites in return for healing, or when attending a service in thanks for a newborn child or cured illness, that is the extent of their involvement with the healing halls. Since the Morwynites will not refuse healing to anyone if it is in their power to give, there is no real incentive to do more. Because of this, only the purest and most caring souls end up among the Morwynites' numbers; there aren't many of such folk.

Quite often, the healing halls neighbor or adjoin a foundation of Rontra, as their worship is considered intrinsically linked.

Church Structure

Because the Morwynites seek to emulate Morwyn in all things, the heads of the healing halls are those most like Morwyn, starting with gender. The Morwynite faith is the only one of the major churches that is divided along gender lines. Women shape the direction of the faith from its central church, the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand. There the Supreme Matriarch, the ultimate authority on all matters Morwynite, watches over the faith and sets religious law.



There are three holy orders of the healing halls, as with most churches, and two of them are closed to the opposite sex. The matriarchs (clergy), the heads of the healing halls, are all women and have four levels of status: the sisters of beneficence, the holy mothers, the high matriarchs, and the Supreme Matriarch. The faithful sons (holy warriors) are all men, live to serve the matriarchs, and have three levels of status: the brothers, the masters, and the fathers. The white hands, now the most numerous of the three holy orders, are educated in eight circles of healing and are divided by the level of education they have completed.

The average healing hall has three to four sisters of beneficence in residence and one holy mother. There will be as many faithful sons as there are matriarchs, sometimes one or two extra. Most healing halls have two or three white hands who have achieved a high circle of learning; they reside there to teach others the secrets of the order.

The White Hall of Morwyn's Hand has the Supreme Matriarch, six high matriarchs, 12 holy mothers, and 24 sisters of beneficence in residence at any one time. There are twice as many faithful sons, including ten fathers, who serve as the Supreme Matriarch's personal guard. The nearby Tower of the White Hands houses the heads of that holy order and has at least 60 white hands in residence at any time, including the white hands of the eighth circle, who head the order.

Doctrine

"When I was young and righteous it seemed to me that the world was a place of abundant goodness, and I asked, 'Why do men do evil?' But I am old now, and I have no time to wonder at this any more. Now I see that evil is everywhere, its path perilously easy to walk. In my age, I wonder that men ever do good, for what rewards do good deeds offer? They are few and many years in the delivering. No, I will let the young cry out in the streets about the wickedness men do. I will leave it to the righteous to shake evil from men's souls with hard words and harder steel. I choose to spend my remaining days tending to hearts that are safe for goodness; for good is not easy to find, and harder still to embrace."

- The Final Ruminations of Supreme Matriarch Ana Codhwyn

The healing halls are home to those of truly decent and merciful dispositions. They are not politically motivated, they are not cunning, and they do not abide secrets or clever plans. The faithful of Morwyn are exactly what they appear to be – the most loving, kind people in the world. They value hope and joy over victory and righteousness. They purge themselves of pride and self-importance and live to protect, serve, aid, teach, and heal a wounded world. In this they try to live out the mystery of Morwyn, who purged herself of the power of fire, given to all the gods, in order to heal her family.

It is easy to see, then, why the Morwynites grow scarce. Most people do not attend their services or join their numbers because they feel that they simply are not up to a lifetime of service and personal perfection.

For those who are members of the healing halls, either as congregants, clergy, holy warriors, or white hands, the principles of the faith surround a four-word maxim: Charitable, Merciful, Gentle, and Wise.

Charitable

If it is in your power to aid another, why would you not? In her grace, Morwyn has given a limitless bounty to the children of the earth. If in our brief lives we may aid others, what could dissuade us? Morwyn gave up her fire, the very power of the soul, so that the other gods might live; what might the faithful give that could

Chapter V ~ The Gods of the Tree

match this, the ultimate act of charity? For this reason, Morwynites do not demand money for their healing unless there is a good reason (see Wisdom) and they tend to gravitate toward areas where the needy congregate. It is this doctrine that stymies the church's recruitment efforts, as the most faithful Morwynites hold few personal possessions, donating almost everything they own to the healing halls.

Merciful

If you are wronged, you must forgive. If you have an enemy in your power who is redeemable, you must seek to redeem him, even though your heart may tell you it is folly. Redemption is always better than punishment, and sometimes the mere example of mercy is enough to redeem even the hardest heart. For this reason, a Morwynite will never kill a person of one of the five mortal races if she can avoid it; instead she will work tirelessly to redeem the person in question, offering him chance after chance to better himself.

Gentle

War is never the first resort; war is never the second resort; war is never the third resort. Morwynites believe that violence against your kin (meaning the mortal races) should be avoided at all costs unless self-defense requires it. They are not pacifists, in that they are certainly willing to take up arms against evil races, undead, dangerous beasts, and outsiders. However, against those people who are redeemable (which they tend to define as any person of one of the five mortal races; your GM may want to declare that some subspecies, like drow, are unredeemable, or that some usually evil races, like orcs, are actually redeemable), Morwynites will not raise a hand in anger; they will only fight if attacked.

Wise

It should be obvious that the first three parts of the Morwynite maxim could result in a group of people who are easily taken advantage of. But Morwyn is the goddess of wisdom and her followers are no fools. They are not being taken advantage of when they give freely. For example, a Sister of Beneficence might consistently heal a man who has money, but pretends he does not, and who does not make a donation to the church. She will not do so naively, and will eventually make it clear to the man, when he least expects it, that she knows exactly what he is up to. It is this doctrine that keeps the faithful from doing things that are clearly foolish – a Morwynite shopkeeper will not give up his shop simply because someone else needs it; he will determine that he does more good by owning a successful business and donating his surplus to the healing halls than he will do for one person by giving up his shop. While the Morwynites are thought foolish by those who seek to use them, they in fact hold to the hope that they can save such people through good deeds.

Following this doctrine, the Morwynites lend aid to all people and seek out those who are good, or who might be good if lent a hand, and help them on their way.

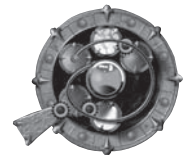
Common Prayers

The life of the Morwynites is, understandably, difficult. Their faith in people is often disappointed; their hopes are often shattered by the petty wickedness of common folk. In their most trying times, the Morwynites utter this invocation:

*“Holy Mother, heed my prayer.
Lend me your wisdom,
So that I might see clearly;
Give me your patience,
That I might bear what I see.”*

Holy Days

The Morwynites have two primary holy weeks. Every spring the Morwynites celebrate the rebirth of Eliwyn, Tinel, Terak, and Zheenkeef in what is called “The Five Tears.” The celebration takes five days, and is marked with fasting in the daytime and celebration and feasting at night.



The other holy period takes place in the mid-winter and is called the “Week of Gifts.” All Morwynites remember the many gifts given the mortal races by the gods; they seek to show their gratitude by giving gifts to those in their community who need them most. It is a week in which the poor are fed and clothed and the homeless are given homes. On the final night of the week, friends and family members give one another gifts also. On that final night they have a great dinner, in which they recite prayers of thanksgiving and discuss the history and gifts of the gods.

Saints

The Supreme Matriarch of the Morwynites delivers the “roll of saints and martyrs” every seven years from the great healing hall where she resides. Those named are henceforth referred to as “Saint,” regardless of whether they are included on the roll for having been beatified or having been martyred.

A saint is someone who has done great work in the name of Morwyn – retrieving a great artifact, saving an entire people, standing in the way of some profoundly evil plot, etc. It must be a work of enormous importance, and it must be done in Morwyn's name. It is possible to be sainted in one's lifetime, and some of the most powerful adventuring Morwynites have been named saints. A saint is introduced as “Saint” and his name, so Amno would be introduced as “Saint Amno,” overriding all other church titles.

A martyr is someone who has been killed specifically for her faith by forces opposed to Morwyn. A Morwynite matriarch murdered by Asmodean cultists, her body desecrated, may be declared a martyr if her sad tale reaches the ears of the Supreme Matriarch. An adventuring faithful son killed by an ooze would not be martyred, even if he was on a very important quest for the healing halls.

Morwyn's View of the Church

Morwyn looks upon her followers with great affection. As the instigator of the Compact, Morwyn takes its terms much to heart. She sees the healing halls as her best and strongest hope for opposing evil and making an impact on the mortal world. However, she also sees how the Compact has bound her hands in those same efforts, and is sometimes frustrated by her inability to take direct action in the world.

Morwyn's primary concern with her church is its apparent inability to draw new people to the faith. The entire purpose of the Compact is to promote the works of the gods through mortal agents, and yet the other gods are achieving the greatest benefits from the Compact. Morwyn

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finds this profoundly disappointing, yet she also believes her worshippers are properly representing her beliefs and her wishes in the healing halls.

Morwyn is in direct contact with the Supreme Matriarch and often gives her guidance in spiritual matters. Indeed, the entire faith was founded by a priestess named Tyngelle, in whom Morwyn put her faith long ago to build a lasting church in her honor. The order established by Tyngelle lasts to this day, and Morwyn sees each Supreme Matriarch as a direct descendent of the first Supreme Matriarch. While Morwyn never tells her representative on earth exactly how to behave, and does not dictate the direction the healing halls should take (not because she can't, but because Morwyn lets her children make their own decisions), she does provide the Supreme Matriarch with advice for the spiritually troubled seekers who come to the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand. For this reason, those who seek answers to some of the most troubling spiritual questions often find all they seek, and more, at the great healing hall where the Supreme Matriarch sits. For not only is the Supreme Matriarch herself incredibly wise, but she may, at times, speak with the voice of the Queen of Heaven.

Preferred Weapon

Morwyn is never shown wielding a weapon, and there are no legends in which she lifts a weapon in anger. Her clergy have adopted the quarterstaff as a preferred weapon, since a few legends refer to the White Lady carrying a walking staff. When one casts a *spiritual weapon* spell, a cloud of crystalline tears appears, pelting the enemy and damaging as usual.

Holy Orders

Clerics: Matriarchs of Morwyn

The Order

The matriarchs are an order of profound goodness, compassion, and love. Made up only of women, they are a part of a profoundly ancient tradition, as the healing halls of Morwyn have maintained their structure for more generations than even the long-lived elves can count. Any woman who shows an aptitude for learning the rites necessary to cast divine spells, coupled with strength of character and goodness, may become a matriarch relatively quickly. The matriarchs agree to hold only those possessions they need to perform their duties, giving everything else to the healing halls (or to the needy they meet on their travels), and they swear oaths of charity, gentleness, mercy, and

wisdom. They follow the doctrines exactly as described above – but unlike common members of the faith, they do not waver in their adherence to these strictures. Should they do so, they must atone.

A faithful son always accompanies a traveling matriarch unless something peculiar is going on (death, disguise, etc.).

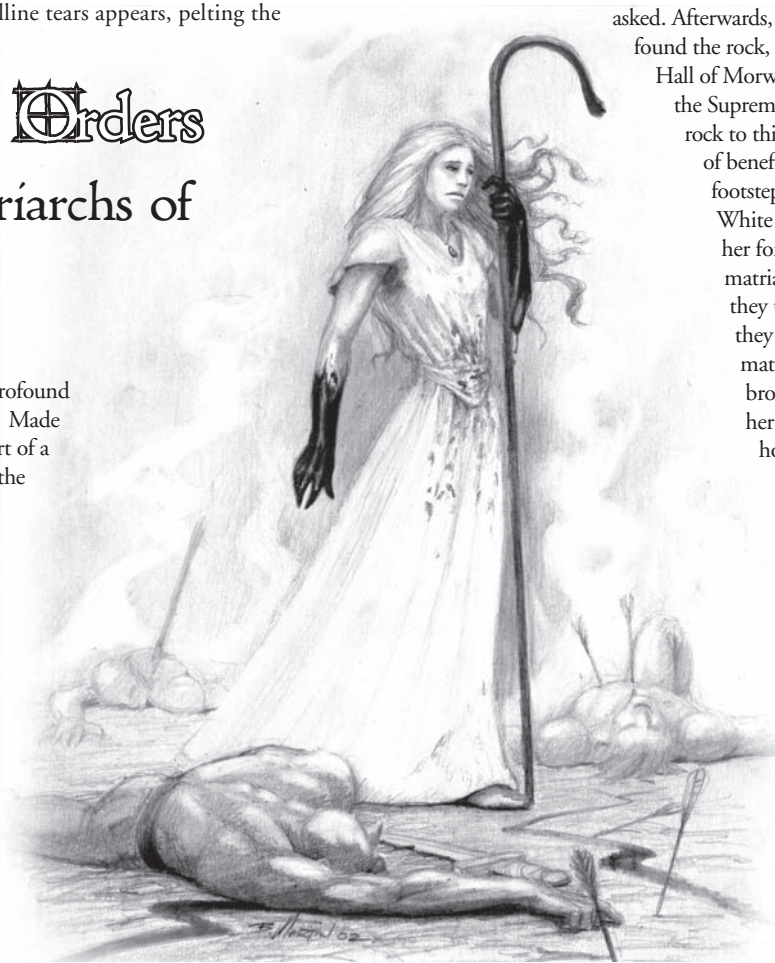
Titles

At 1st level, a matriarch is called a sister of beneficence and performs duties assigned by her superiors. Her superiors are any matriarchs two or more levels higher than she, but most commonly sisters take orders from the holy mother of their healing hall. It is quite common to find a traveling sister of beneficence, ordered by her superiors to spread the good works of Morwyn around the world. In general, sisters of beneficence are healers who avoid conflict and depend on their faithful son companions to shield them from violence. Sisters of beneficence are often referred to as the “beneficent sisters” and are addressed as “sister.” They are introduced with their order title first, so Nimmeril would be introduced as “Sister of Beneficence Nimmeril, a matriarch of the healing halls of Morwyn.”

At 7th level, a sister of beneficence may go on a three-month spiritual retreat into a remote area. This is following in the footsteps of Tyngelle, who spent three months in the desert and saw there a vision of the White Lady touching a rock and a fountain of light springing forth from it.

Standing in the fountain of light, Morwyn asked Tyngelle four questions, which all those who follow in her footsteps are still asked. Afterwards, Tyngelle searched for and found the rock, and upon it built the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand (the great seat of the Supreme Matriarch rests atop the rock to this day). So it is that each sister of beneficence follows in Tyngelle's footsteps, hoping to be visited by the White Lady in a vision that will lead her for the rest of her life. When these matriarchs return from the retreat, they tell a holy mother all that they experienced. The returning matriarch is then clothed in white, brought before all the faithful of her healing hall, and named a holy mother. She is addressed as “mother” and introduced with her order title first.

At 14th level, a holy mother goes on a pilgrimage to the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand, where the Supreme Matriarch sits. Upon reaching it, she speaks to the Supreme Matriarch herself, telling her of her long-ago vision and all she has learned in her life. The Supreme Matriarch then asks her the four questions that Morwyn asked Tyngelle so many years before: What is the nature of compassion? What



The matriarchs gravitate toward areas of misery and horror where they might do the most good. They invariably wear white.

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is the greatest gentleness you have witnessed? Where can the hopeless find mercy? Who is wiser than the wise? Assuming that the holy mother answers these questions to the Supreme Matriarch's satisfaction (and often the answers, and their discussion, take a full day), she is elevated to a high matriarch the next morning. She is clothed in rich robes of white, gold, and red; anointed with holy ointments; and brought before the faithful after a morning of prayer. Once so named, she is given a great task to undertake by the Supreme Matriarch; often this task takes up the rest of her lifetime. High matriarchs are addressed as "reverend mother" and are introduced by full title.

When a Supreme Matriarch dies, the matriarchs who reside at the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand follow the exact rules of succession handed down by Tyngelle. They paint the names of all of the world's high matriarchs on stones and place them in a great barrel (though there are few enough high matriarchs now that the barrel is rarely filled even halfway). They then go and find a young shepherdess (usually around 13 years old) who is completely innocent. They bring the child to the barrel, tell her that there is one stone in it more valuable than all the others, and ask her to find it by whatever method she might choose. The woman named on the selected stone is the new Supreme Matriarch. A contingent of faithful sons is sent out to find her (for she may be doing great works on the other side of the world), and the high matriarchs of the White Hall act as a council in her absence. The Supreme Matriarch is addressed as "Your Holiness," "Your Eminence," "Your Grace," or "Most Hallowed Mother." She is introduced without her name and, indeed, her name is never spoken on formal occasions; she is called "The Supreme Matriarch of the Healing Halls of Morwyn."

Table 5-1

Matriarchs of Morwyn Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Sister of Beneficence	Three Months Training
7	Holy Mother Three-Month	Spiritual Retreat
14	High Matriarch	Pilgrimage to See Supreme Matriarch; Answering the Four Questions
14+	Supreme Matriarch	Death of the Previous Supreme Matriarch; Name Chosen by Shepherdess

Domains

A matriarch may choose any two of the following domains for her divine spells: Good, Healing, Protection, and Knowledge.

Spell Preparation Time

Matriarchs prepare their spells in the morning when they first wake.

Alignments

Most matriarchs are lawful good. They follow the four principles of the faith to the letter and are some of the kindest, gentlest people in the world. They do not think twice about their own well-being, often wading into disease-ridden or otherwise dangerous areas to help the

needy. They have no greed in them and are women of truly heroic character. Such Morwynites want nothing more than to be united with Morwyn in spirit by walking in her footsteps.

Less common are neutral good matriarchs. They have far less interest in obeying the set structure of their church. Indeed, they find the clear-cut definition of goodness a little silly (though they do not say so out loud very often). To think that the soul of Morwyn's goodness can be captured in a four-word maxim seems rather outlandish to these women; instead they look for the good in all people, no matter how small, and try to bring it out through any means at their disposal. So, rather than tell a petty-hearted merchant who loves his daughter that he must learn to be compassionate, merciful, gentle, and wise, these matriarchs would focus on the man's love for his daughter and try to extend that out into a more general notion of goodness.

Quite rare, and disappointing to the other matriarchs, are the lawful neutral matriarchs. These women actually believe that the four-word maxim of the faith is almost like a set of powerful incantations. They say the words to those they meet as though their very repetition will compel people to obey them. While they obey the rules of these principles, they do not do so because they have a deep sense of their rightness – they obey them because, in their minds, Morwyn wants them to obey them. Others in the healing halls find these matriarchs lacking, for they seem at a loss to grasp the true spirit of Morwyn's teachings.

Holy Warrior: Faithful Sons

The Order

The faithful sons of Morwyn are the gentlest of all holy warriors, seeking to resolve disputes rather than raise their blades for justice. They are peacemakers and diplomats, careful men who are always on the lookout for danger, seeking to defuse volatile situations. This is because their primary role is to protect the matriarchs, who are constantly going into the gravest dangers – battlefields, leper colonies, evil lands – in their efforts to do Morwyn's works. The faithful sons see themselves as men striving to make the world safer for goodness, starting with the deeply good women they are sworn to protect. They are unafraid to fight if they must, but they will always make an effort to avoid conflict with a person of the five mortal races if at all possible. Most faithful sons come off as profoundly wise, happy, resolute, and cautious. Less civilized folks think them cowardly for their unceasing efforts to avoid violence.

Titles:

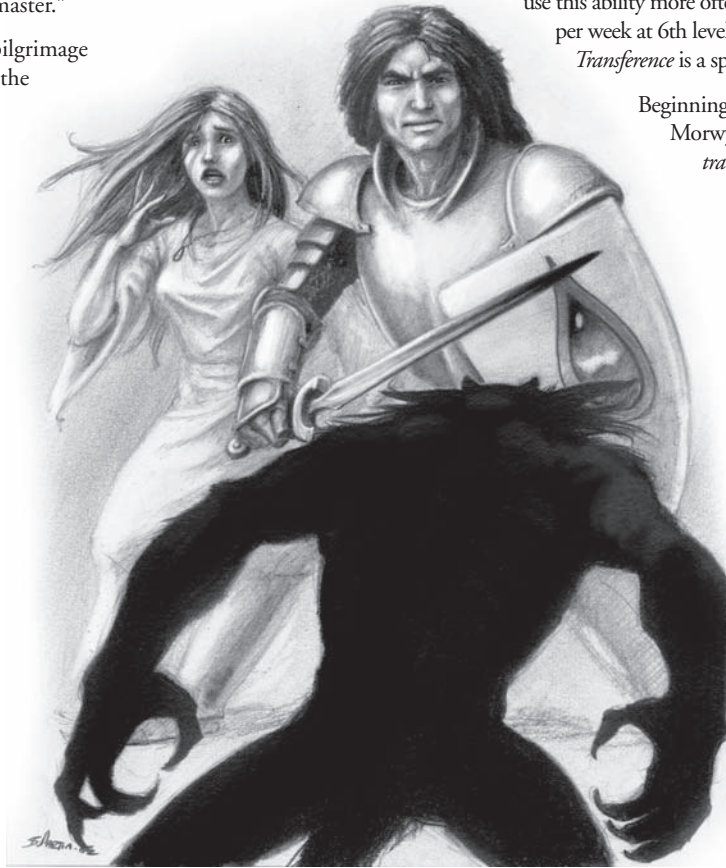
A 1st-level faithful son is called a brother, and is addressed and introduced by that title. He is usually assigned to a sister of beneficence for her protection as she travels outside the healing halls. These relationships are complex, with the two adventuring together for years. It is not unheard of for love to blossom between a faithful son and a matriarch, and marriages born of such relationships are considered quite fortuitous. While it is rare for a brother to be given a task that does not involve accompanying a matriarch, it does happen once in a while. Men who become faithful sons receive the call when they are young; they go to a healing hall, where they receive training that usually takes three to four years. Once in a while, though, an established adventurer will suddenly receive the call to become a faithful son – such men are considered blessed additions to the order and are welcomed with open arms.

At 8th level, a brother has adventured far and wide and kept the matriarch or matriarchs he was assigned to alive and healthy. When he

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reaches this point, he is sent out on his own to do some great deed for goodness and the Morwynite faith. His superiors within the order of the faithful sons appoint this task to him. When he returns from the quest, he is named a master, and begins to oversee the training and command of the brothers of the order. He is addressed and introduced as “master.”

At 15th level, a master makes a pilgrimage to see the Supreme Matriarch of the healing halls. When he reaches her, she asks him the same four questions that all high matriarchs are asked at their elevation. After the questions are answered, the master is dressed in white robes and anointed with holy ointments. He is presented with the shield of the fathers, which bears a snow-white field with the argent tear of Morwyn in its center. The carriers of these shields are called the fathers of the faithful sons; they are addressed and introduced as “father.” They are the greatest and wisest men of the Morwynite faith. Many fathers serve the Supreme Matriarch directly, but even more reside in healing halls on the borders of dangerous areas where they might ride forth and do the most good (and accompany matriarchs doing so). Fathers are considered to have no superiors in their order, and may only be given orders by the Supreme Matriarch herself.



Faithful sons live to serve and protect the matriarchs. They are usually heavily armored and wear prominent symbols of their faith.

Gift of Morwyn

Beginning at 3rd level, the faithful son can call for *transference* once per week, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to his class level. This is a spell new to this book and available in Chapter XI. He can use this ability more often as he advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Transference* is a spell-like ability for faithful sons.

Beginning at 12th level, the Gift of Morwyn allows him to perform a *greater transference*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to his class level. This is a spell new to this book and available in Chapter XI. He can use this ability more often as he advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Greater transference* is a spell-like ability for faithful sons.

Spells

Faithful sons receive the following spells:

1st level – *bless, bless water, bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, entropic shield, protection from evil, shield of faith, resistance, virtue*

2nd level – *calm emotions, cure moderate wounds, shield other, delay poison, aid*

3rd level – *cure serious wounds, remove disease, dispel magic, remove paralysis, heal mount, magic circle against evil, magic vestment, remove blindness/deafness*

4th level – *spell immunity, death ward, dispel evil, freedom of movement, holy sword, neutralize poison*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, the faithful son can call a special steed. Usually white- or silver-maned, these steeds are swift and carry the faithful sons far and wide. Faithful sons rarely use their steeds in mounted combat, and instead use them to carry their charges out of danger when situations get desperate.

Conduct

Faithful sons are assigned to the protection of matriarchs for most of their lives; it is considered a disaster if one of them allows his charge to be killed. Essentially, it is assumed that the faithful son will die protecting his matriarch, and it is hard to imagine how a faithful son could still live if his charge was killed. A faithful son returning to a healing hall after the death of his charge will likely have to go through years of atonement and contemplation before he is assigned the protection of another matriarch.

Table 5-2

Faithful Sons of Morwyn Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Brother	3-4 Years Training
8	Master	Completed Quest
15	Father	The Four Questions

Additional Class Skills:

The faithful son's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha) and Heal (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

The faithful son may choose two of the following holy warrior domains: Life, Guardian, and Compassion.

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If the matriarch died because he was actually negligent or did not wish to risk his own life to protect her, he will be cast out of his order and considered an ex-holy warrior. Atonement for such men is quite difficult, but Morwyn is the goddess of mercy, so it is possible.

Other than their unwavering devotion to their matriarchs, the faithful sons are dedicated to the protection of the innocent and the preservation of the ideals of Morwyn. They do not attack people unprovoked; they do not steal, take vengeance, or act out of pettiness. They show mercy and compassion in all things. They are charitable and kind, thoughtful and peaceful. A faithful son who has cast aside these ideals will lose his class abilities.

Associates

Because they are so tied to the matriarchs, faithful sons usually associate with whoever their charge finds appropriate – though they will object strenuously to traveling with obviously evil companions. The Morwynites believe all mortals are redeemable, though, so a faithful son may find himself with unsavory companions in hopes of turning them to the good path. He will not participate in or abide the commission of evil, however, so if his companions start behaving in an evil manner, he will oppose them.

Alignment

Faithful sons must be lawful good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

Long ago, one of the Supreme Matriarchs determined that the Morwynites could do great good if they educated others in the arts of healing, charging them with the spreading of those arts throughout the land. Called the white hands, these healers were formed into a third holy order of the healing halls, and were indoctrinated into a highly formalized education about the ways of healing – and of Morwyn. However, over the years the Morwynites have stressed Morwyn's teachings less and less in the education. In an effort to spread healing far and wide, the healing halls now embrace the white hands as an almost secular order, existing more for the purpose of healing than spreading faith. Because of this, the order has boomed in size and now far outstrips the rest of the church; the education is superb and nearly free, and members of the order are considered part of the healing halls.

The greatest among the white hands are former matriarchs who have dedicated themselves to the teaching of others, though one need not have been a matriarch to become a member of this order, and it is open to men and women. The heads of the order reside in what is called the Tower of the White Hands. These women (for the heads of the order are all former matriarchs) are powerful healers, able to repair the damage done to armies. Their students are perhaps less formidable, but are great healers in their own

right, sought out for the excellent addition they make to expeditionary forces and other groups.

The education of the white hands is an eight-step process. As one progresses in levels, one moves on to greater circles of healing until certified in the "eighth circle." A white hand tells people her circle whenever she introduces herself – "I am Idri, a white hand of the fourth circle" – but gains no honorifics in address. In formal

introductions, their circle of learning is added to whatever other titles they may hold in the format "a white hand of the X circle." It is important to let people know how competent a healer the white hand is, so they do not expect results she is not capable of delivering.

A white hand moves up a circle by being educated and trained by a white hand at least one circle above her. To become a white hand of the eighth circle, she must travel to the Tower of the White Hands and meet with the heads of the order. They will administer a test that takes several days, making sure she knows every nuance of the healing art. Once she passes, the white hand is admitted to the eighth and final circle.

Table 53:

White Hands of Morwyn Titles

Prestige Class Level	Title	Requirement
1	White Hand of the 1st Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 2nd Circle or Higher
2	White Hand of the 2nd Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 3rd Circle or Higher
3	White Hand of the 3rd Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 4th Circle or Higher
4	White Hand of the 4th Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 5th Circle or Higher
5	White Hand of the 5th Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 6th Circle or Higher
6	White Hand of the 6th Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 7th Circle or Higher
7	White Hand of the 7th Circle	Training by a White Hand of the 8th Circle
8	White Hand of the 8th Circle	Journey to the Tower of the White Hands; Passage of the Final Test

Prestige Class: The White Hands of Morwyn

Across the lands, the white hands of Morwyn are revered for their amazing powers of healing. Skilled in healing disease, madness, and afflictions of the body and soul, the white hands are not clergy but dedicated healers who serve in all walks of life. Some are attached to large military groups; others have shops in great cities where they offer their healing for a mere pittance. They are trained and educated by the Morwynites for the express purpose of spreading healing and comfort throughout the lands. White hands receive an education in healing to aid in their regular lives; most of these folk are not religious



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Table 5-4: The White Hands of Morwyn

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	—Spells per Day—			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	<i>Lay on Hands</i> , Empowered Healing	1	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3		2	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Bedside Manner	2	1	—	—
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Use Healing Herbs	3	2	—	—
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Brilliant Healer	3	2	1	—
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Preventative Medicine	3	3	2	—
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5		4	3	2	1
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	<i>Recall Soul</i>	4	3	3	2

zealots, but highly skilled individuals with a desire to help.

Because the skills of the white hands are so powerfully useful among those who often find themselves in battle, many fighters, rangers, and monks become white hands so they might better tend to the wounds of their fallen brethren. Wizards and sorcerers seeking to extend their magical knowledge into new areas and to master healing as one of their arts are also common inductees into the order of the white hands. Clerics, except for those few Morwynites who seek to help lead the order, never become white hands, as they are able to better master healing through their work for their god. Holy warriors also are rare members of the order.

White hands are usually people with other functions in life. They might be soldiers who are also white hands. They could be nobles, officials, even barmaids. These are folk driven to learn the ways of healing for any number of reasons, and because the education is readily available and inexpensive, it is widespread – at least in the lower circles. Upper-circle white hands are far rarer and are usually serene, dedicated practitioners, kind and gentle. Either way, it is not particularly common for white hands to travel in groups, or even to perform specific duties for their order. They go about their lives, helping people whenever they can.

Abbreviation: Wha

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

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

Alignment: White hands may not be evil.

Heal: 8 ranks.

Profession (herbalist): 5 ranks.

Special: Anyone desiring to become a white hand must swear this sacred oath over a *bind oath* spell (see Chapter XI)

*I am the White Hand against the Red Wound,
I am the hope for the hopeless, the help for the helpless.
I swear to provide healing to any child of the tree in need,
If it is within my power to do so and if that person is not an enemy of
goodness.*

Within the confines of the oath, a white hand may ask to be remunerated for her skills, but she cannot demand it; few people take advantage of this, but it is quite possible to cheat a white hand. The ‘enemy of goodness’ portion of the oath allows white hands not to heal

evil cultists, but soldier white hands in wars with other mortal soldiers must circulate among the enemy and tend to their wounds if it is within their power to do so; prioritizing who to help and making sure that the person healed cannot turn around and attack you are up to the white hand’s discretion (along with other matters of common sense).

If this oath is violated, the white hand’s palms are turned blood red until she atones for her violation.

Class Skills

The white hand’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (religion), Knowledge (nature), Profession (Wis), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the white hand prestige class. Whenever it says “white hand circle,” below, it is a reference to the character’s level in the white hand prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

White hands are proficient with all simple weapons, all types of armor, and shields.

Bedside Manner (Ex)

White hands are trained to be exceptionally good at caring for the wounded. When performing long-term care using the Heal skill, a white hand with this ability can either extend her attention to many additional patients, or focus her considerable skills on fewer patients with greater effect.

More Patients

If the white hand chooses to tend to more patients, she may tend six patients plus the number of her white hand circle.

Focused Attention

If the white hand tends no more than three patients, they may each add the number of her white hand circle to their level when determining how many points they recover per day of rest.

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Brilliant Healer (Ex)

The white hands come to know more about the intricacies of healing than anyone in the world, and are therefore able to make the most out of equipment meant for healers. A white hand using a healer's kit doubles its circumstance bonus (+4 from a normal healer's kit, +8 from a masterwork).

Empowered Healing (Su)

When casting a cure or heal spell that is modified by caster level, the white hand adds her white hand circle to her level, meaning she adds her prestige class level twice. A 5th level cleric/3rd level white hand casting *cure serious wounds* would add 11 to her roll (3d8 + caster level (8) + white hand circle (3)). This number cannot exceed the maximum bonus for the spell; *Cure Serious Wounds* cannot exceed a +15 bonus, and Empowered Healing does not affect that. At 5th level, the white hand begins adding her white hand circle to all Heal skill rolls as well as a competence bonus.

Lay on Hands (Sp)

Calling on the power of Morwyn and the good will of her heart, the white hand may heal wounds with her very hands. This ability works exactly like the holy warrior ability of the same name. If she already has the ability from levels in other classes, she may add her white hand level to those levels to determine the total number of hit points she can heal per day. This ability is not modified by the Empowered Healing ability.

Recall Soul (Sp)

The most powerful white hands are able to call a soul from the gates of Maal's Kingdom back to its body. At -10 hit points, a person dies, but may still be brought back by the most skilled of healers. If the white hand gets to the body within one hour of death and repairs the damage so it is no longer at -10 or lower, she may endeavor to call the person back. This will only work if the soul is willing. *Gentle repose* has no effect on the time limit of this skill, as it is not the body's decomposition being worked against; the white hand is trying to catch the soul before it passes into Maal's Kingdom.

To call the soul back, the white hand must make a Heal skill roll with a DC equal to 20 - the number of hit points the character was at when he died + 1 per minute since the character's death. It is much easier to call back someone who still had positive hit points but died due to shock. If the character was killed by a blow that took him below -10, you must use the number he was reduced to.

Example: Tingo is hit by a fireball and takes 36 points of damage. He has 20 hit points and failed his saving throw, so he is reduced to -16 hit points. Anna, a white hand of the 8th Circle, comes upon Tingo's body 18 minutes later. She casts spells on the body to get it to 4 hit points, but must make a Heal skill roll of DC 54 [20 - (-16) (the hit points Tingo had at death) + 18 (it has been 18 minutes since Tingo's death) = 54]. She has a total Heal skill modifier of 39 with her many bonuses and rolls an 18, totalling 57. As he makes his way down the dark river toward Maal's kingdom, Tingo hears a voice calling him back to his body and heeds it, returning to life.

Recall Soul takes a full minute (the time since death is determined at the beginning of the ceremony) and the white hand is completely defenseless while performing the elaborate incantations and healing rituals.

Preventative Medicine (Ex)

If the white hand knows about a disease or poison that a person might be exposed to within the next week, she can prepare a course of preventative herbs for the patient. The white hand makes a Heal roll, and the patient may use the result instead of his own saving throw roll, as with the Heal skill "treat disease" and "treat poison" abilities. The difference is that this pre-emptive roll applies to the first saving throw made against the disease. So a fighter preparing to fight a mummy might receive herbs from the white hand that will counteract Mummy Rot before the fighter is even affected by it. The white hand must know the exact nature of the disease or poison she is preparing the herbs to counteract; if it is the venom of an outsider the white hand has never heard of, she will be powerless to help.

Use Healing Herbs (Ex)

When the white hand is near a full store of healing herbs (in her home, for instance), she may use them to help her patients. If she



The white hands come from all walks of life, duty-bound to use their healing skills for the good of the people.

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makes a successful Profession (herbalist) skill roll, she may add her white hand circle to her Heal skill check for long-term care, treat poison, and treat disease. If she is not near a full store of healing herbs, but is in the wilderness, she may make a Knowledge (nature) roll instead of the Profession (herbalist) roll to see if she can find the herbs needed; of course, this involves wandering around in the woods.

Spells

Beginning at 1st level, a white hand gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the white hand must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a white hand with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. White hand bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the white hand's Wisdom modifier (if any). The

white hand's spell list appears below. Unlike clerics, white hands need not prepare their spells ahead of time. A white hand may spontaneously cast any spell on the White Hand Spell List (as a sorcerer).

White Hand Spell List

White hands choose their spells from the following list:

1st level—*cure light wounds, deathwatch, remove fear, sanctuary*

2nd level—*aid, cure moderate wounds, delay poison, gentle repose, lesser restoration, remove paralysis*

3rd level—*cure serious wounds, remove blindness/deafness, remove disease*

4th level—*cure critical wounds, death ward, neutralize poison, restoration, status*

God of War and Valor

The Temples of Terak

Terak (FAIRack) (Valiant, Bold, the Mighty,
King of Heaven, Marshal of the Gods)

Myths

From One to Many

It was long said of Terak, King of Heaven, husband to Morwyn the Wise, that reason was not his most pronounced quality. In the earliest days, Bold Terak believed that all could be accomplished by the perfection of self, and so he came to struggle with his brother Tinel – for his brother also held the same belief. But if two seek to be the best, only one can succeed, and the other will be worsted. This is the tale of how Terak came to leave such beliefs to his brother and become the Marshal of the Gods.

On a late summer's day long ago, Terak was approached by one of his many children begot on a mortal woman. This child, who was full in his manhood, was named Aerix, and he was wondrous to behold. Perfect in form, face, and temperament, Aerix was the greatest warrior in the world. He had never met a man or beast he could not slay with his keen spear. He wore armor made from the scales of three of the eldest dragons, each of whom he had slain with a single blow. His long hair was braided with beads of bone – one bone from each of a thousand evil men he had slain in a single battle. The tales of Aerix's heroism are long and many, but we are concerned herein with his death.

When Aerix found his father that day, he asked him for a boon. Valiant Terak, besotted with love for his greatest mortal son, agreed that he would give him any boon that it was in his power to give. "Father, I have faced every foe the world holds," his son began, "and it has become clear to me that there is no challenge for me. I can defeat any foe of this land – nay, any land – but for you and your kin. I ask you, father, if there is anything on this earth I cannot easily defeat, show it to me!"

Terak the Mighty, who fears nothing and no one, recoiled from this request. "Do not ask me this, my son! For it is in my power to give, but I would not see you killed before my very eyes of your own request!"

But Aerix, swollen with the pride only possible in a man who has led a lifetime of victory, laughed. "Then I shall not let you see it, for I shall fight my best and will fell any foe! No, father, I must insist. You said any boon in your power to give, and I will have it!"

So, shaking his head sadly, Terak waved his hand in a gesture of summoning. For quite some time, nothing happened. Summer became autumn, and still the glade where father and son stood was silent. Eventually, Aerix nodded and said, "Ah! Father, you have confirmed what I thought! Nothing comes, for nothing can defeat me!"

But Terak only shook his head sadly and said, "No."

When they had waited quite some time longer and autumn became winter, Aerix again laughed his mighty laugh, "Oho! Father, I see now! You remind me that I am not immortal, and there is an enemy that will destroy me in the end that even I cannot fight: Time! It shall level me, surely. I understand, and shall endeavor to be more humble." And thinking that he had understood his father's riddle, Aerix moved to embrace his father. But Valiant Terak shook his head.

"No, my son. I wish this were so, but it is not. There is no trick. Your doom comes."

Only now did Aerix begin to show fear. They stood there in silence some time longer, and winter became spring. Throughout spring, Aerix guessed at what came, growing increasingly more frightened. "Is it fear, father? Fear will destroy me?" "No, my son." A thousand guesses, and each met with a heavy sigh and a denial. It was not until late summer, a year later to the day, that Aerix's fate became clear.

Early in the day, Aerix began to note that the glade's grass was growing black and dark. After some time he realized that the entire area was covered with tiny black ants, all marching across the glade toward him. Looking at them he wondered, "This is my foe, father? But they are small, and I can destroy them – and even if there are more than I can

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The marshal of the gods, Terak led the angelic host against the armies of the Abyss long ago, destroying many of the qliphoth.

destroy, how can they hurt me?" And so in his pride he stood and fought the ants, as his father knew he would, when he should have fled.

He drank potions that made his breath into fire and burnt a thousand thousand ants. He stepped upon them. He felled trees and lit them ablaze to destroy them. But still they came. Terak had called all of the ants – every one in the world. It had taken them a year to form their army and reach the glade, but there was no stopping them once they attacked. After days of fire and other attacks from Aerix, they reached his feet, now a sea of ants. He stomped and shouted, but before long they were to his knees, an endless horde, unstoppable.

As Terak watched his son flail about, screaming for his father's help, the ants continued their inexorable march, eventually covering Aerix. The greatest mortal warrior in the history of the world soon fell to his knees, but the ants did not accept his surrender. Before long, there was no sign that a man was underneath the teeming mountain of ants. Within a week, the ants had left the glade with no sign that Aerix had ever been there but for bones – everything else of him they had carried away.

Terak took the bones to his son Korak, and had a cloak fashioned from them, which he wears to this day as a reminder of what happened. For Bold Terak realized that his beloved son Aerix had only believed as Terak did: that if a man perfects himself he may do anything, and nothing may stand in his way. On that day, Terak came to realize that it is through the strength of many that all things are possible: One stick, no matter how thick, no matter how strong, may be broken by any force. Bundle together enough sticks, no matter how small, against that force, and they will prevail. And so Terak, King of Heaven, husband to Morwyn the Compassionate, took it upon himself to form and command the armies of the heavens.

Associations

Terak is the god of the body, valor, war, physical struggle, unity, and battle. He is worshipped by soldiers and warriors of all stripes, those who need the protection of physical strength, and protectors of the weak.

In the animal kingdom, he is associated loosely with the animals of war – dogs, horses, and hawks. His closest association, though, is with the strongest of the beasts, the lion, and he is served in the heavens by lamassus, the mystical creatures with which he is often associated – and the children of his animal companion, Metteron (see below).

Terak is worshipped most fervently by the mortal races that wage war in an organized and tactical manner – the humans and the dwarves. Elves, halflings and gnomes certainly pay their respects to Terak as one of the gods, but his worship is not especially popular in their homes. Because of the religion's strict belief that all five mortal races are equal, the worship of Terak is incredibly popular with ostracized half-orcs and half-elves.

Alignment

Terak is lawful neutral or lawful good. There is a pronounced rift among Terak's worshippers and holy orders; he is worshipped in two distinct ways and, depending on which group you ask, can be described as either alignment. By most religious scholars, though, he is considered to be lawful good and his church is primarily this alignment (in determining what alignments a cleric can be, however, use either as the base alignment).

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Representations

When shown in icons, Terak is a powerful figure, broad of shoulder with a great barrel chest. His hair falls to his knees and is either braided or left loose, depending on the culture that made the icon. He is also usually shown with a long beard. Terak is shown in most paintings to have blonde hair and icy blue eyes. He is usually armored, always carries his battleaxe, and is most often represented wearing a cloak of fur and bone – the bones taken from his son, Aerix.

There are two symbols used to represent Terak. The first, used by those who follow the lawful neutral interpretation of his teachings, is a bundle of sticks lashed together with a golden cord. The symbol is called a *fasces* (*FASH-iss*). When one is in a hurry, this symbol is fashioned as several small circles around a central circle. This is used for stamps on weapons, low detail work, and hasty scrawls. This set of circles cast of bronze is often used as a holy symbol, even though it is not supposed to be (see below).

The second symbol, and the one used by his lawful good worshippers, is Terak's axe. Forged in the first epoch, the first weapon made, the axe was used by Terak against his own brother and the tree of life, Eliwyn, but also against Kador and his wicked progeny. The double-headed axe of Terak bespeaks this contradiction – weapons have two sides: They may be used for great harm or great good. This lesson is dear to Terak's lawful good followers. When in haste a very simple version of the axe is drawn.

The correct holy symbol of Terak for purposes of spell casting (and the one worn by most of his faithful) is a bronze likeness of the axe. Sometimes one head of the axe is golden, the other black, but this is an ornate symbol only worn by commanders and similarly powerful faithful of Terak. Even though this is the "correct" symbol, many lawful neutral clerics wear the *fasces* symbol (above), and their spells work fine.

Purpose

In most myths and in many scholarly works, Terak is represented as a sort of knuckle-dragging, violent maniac. The reasons for this are fairly simple: First, he was a violent maniac in his youth (as were his siblings Tinel and Zheenkeef), and second, the myths and scholarly works are usually written by the worshippers of Tinel, Zheenkeef, or one of the other chaotic gods.

In reality, Terak is best understood as the wily king or general from a warrior culture. He sits on his throne pondering warfare and the strengths of nations. Elaborate aestheticism is of little appeal to him, and neither are matters of learning or books. However, he is no longer the simpleton he is represented to be. He has a love for simple songs and poetry without double meanings or hidden cleverness. He enjoys the simple pleasures and joy a life of decency brings.

Since the death of his son Aerix, he has ceased to pursue the expansion of his personal power. In the past Terak was a primitive god who sought glory, strength, and supremacy, which brought him into conflict with his brother Tinel. Now, while he is still in conflict with his brother, it is for different reasons.

Terak sees that there is one thing that truly matters in the world – strength. While his brother Tinel puts faith in the strength of the individual and the power of knowledge, magic, and other abilities that an individual might possess, Terak has come to put his faith in the power of the many. He sees that true strength lies in a unified society. And while he sometimes makes it clear that he opposes the use of that

strength for evil, at other times he seems to support the power of unity without question. These mixed messages have led to a schism among his followers that is generally cordial, but sometimes quite fiercely argumentative.

Terak wishes to see the mortal races unified. He would see a world where the will of the people prevails rather than the will of the few. He is fondest of common folk, and those who protect and serve the common folk, such as soldiers. He has little love for those who consider themselves superior because of their knowledge or magic, or because they possess greater wealth. He seems to have no problem with those who use their physical prowess to unify people against the elite and the learned.

In Heaven, Terak is king because his wife is queen. He bears no special authority as king over his chaotic brother and sister – and indeed, they resent his status. Terak would like Heaven to unify for goodness, but his pride keeps him from extending much friendship to Tinel.

Servants

Terak is the Marshal of the Heavens, meaning that if anyone is ever foolish enough to bring an army against the gods, Terak will stand as the general of its forces. He has a personal retinue of one thousand heroes, all of whom are his children (from his many couplings with mortal women) who became part of the Celestial host upon their death. His closest lieutenant among them is Aerix, who was humbled by the circumstances of his death and is now a radiant figure of goodness without pride.

Lying before Terak's throne in Heaven is the Lion, Metteron. With golden hair and fur, and teeth as long as a man's arm, Metteron is said to be the strongest beast on any plane. He is father to the glorious lammasus, winged lions with human heads, and the magnificent griffins, winged lions with eagle heads, both born of his union with Urian's eagle, Griffynne.

When Terak sends a message, or aid, it comes from one of Metteron's progeny, a lammasu. In particularly dangerous cases, when a lammasu is not enough, Terak may send one of his progeny or another Celestial. On rare occasions, Metteron himself may come to the aid of one of Terak's faithful.

The Church

Church Description

The churches of Terak, which are called temples, are hugely popular in lawful nations and among folk who are often at war. Soldiers, mercenaries, and others who must rely on their military prowess daily are usually worshippers of Terak, called the Teraketh.

As has been said before, the faith is divided. The split is between those who see Terak's teachings as a call to almost blind unity and order, sublimation of the self to the will of the masses, and those who see Terak's wisdom as a reminder that strength and power must be used for the good of the many and not just the individual. Where this division of thought would cause a public and deep divide in most faiths, Terak's strictures promoting order, structure, and discipline have thus far kept the temples united.

That being said, there is no world-spanning organization for the Teraketh faith. Because the religion promotes so strongly the idea that all mortals are equal, that personal prominence is only worthy

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in pursuit of the good of the common man, the temples are gravely suspicious of any oligarchic power structure. Instead, every region has a council of commanders that determines what actions the local faithful will take. A region is defined as any area that can muster a council of seven commanders.

The temples raise support for military actions in their region and supply clerics to the local barracks and military units.

The three most common functions of Terak's faithful are military service, protection of the common folk, and military leadership. To serve all these ends, most temples also have superlative teachers who can instruct in matters of war and weaponry. Many consider these teachers the best in the world, and their services are well worth the time – and the money they ask for in donations to the temples.

Church Structure

The temples of Terak have three holy orders: The soldiers (clergy) are the dominant order and have five levels of status, or ranks: helms, lieutenants, banners, commanders, and lord/lady commanders. The crusaders (holy warriors) are rare and have only one level of status. The masters of the Way are martial instructors and the oldest order of the temples. They are divided into four levels of status: weapons experts, weapons masters, senior masters, and grandmasters.

There is no central authority to the faith; councils of seven commanders (or lord/lady commanders) are its highest authority, determining local policy and religious law for the faithful.

All members of the church may be addressed by their church title or their military rank if they are in active military service (most are), but comparative ranks in secular military organizations have no effect on one's status within the church.

The average temple has one commander or lord commander, one or two banners, three or four lieutenants, and eight to ten helms. There usually aren't any crusaders in residence, as they are a wandering order, and only one or two masters of the Way.

Doctrine

"There is no weakness that cannot be made strength, no frailty that cannot be made firm, save one: the weakness in our spirits that tells us we have done enough, that we may rest, that we have achieved all we can achieve. We must always strive, always improve, always struggle against weakness within and without."

– From the War Chants of Lord Commander Silas Redbrook

The worship of Terak, and the schisms that have broken out between his faithful, can best be understood when one looks at the roots of the Teraketh faith. In the earliest days of the mortal races, Terak was worshipped as a god of strength and personal struggle over the physical. From this religion, the current church arose, and many of its oldest prayers are still common prayers in Terak's temples.

The body is rebellious. It grows old and frail. It does not always work properly. The earliest cult of Terak was based on the overcoming of that rebelliousness – the imposition of order onto the body. As the

religion matured, the body came to have greater meaning: the body of society, of nations, of the mortal races, etc.

Over the years, the faith of Terak has come to embody the following clear principles based on those earliest ideas, all of which today's faithful try to follow:

- All people of the five races are equal. Birth rank, gender, or race does not make one person better than another. While there may be status in the world for good reasons, it must be earned by strength of character and not by the happy accidents of birth.
- The faithful must have only one face to his brothers and sisters. A follower of Terak must never knowingly lie to another person of one of the five mortal races. A worshipper must also never engage in adultery (defined as pre- or extra-marital sex). These restrictions are commonly broken by the faithful (other than those who are actually in a holy order).
 - The faithful must be true to their bodies and, thereby, Terak. This means the faithful do NOT:
 - Cut their hair (except once in their lives, when they reach maturity);
 - Get tattoos or other permanent marks on their bodies, though they may pierce their flesh for adornment;
 - Drink alcohol, smoke tobacco, or take any other intoxicant (this is routinely violated by the casual worshippers of Terak, particularly members of militia and armies);
 - Eat the meat of any unnatural creature (there is lengthy religious debate about what is and is not a natural creature. It can be assumed that if it has the designator "outsider" or "magical," it is not a natural creature).
 - The faithful must shun the trappings of social superiority or elitism. They do not accept, demand, or give wedding dowries, nor do they refuse to marry or bar the marriage of their children based on class, status, or even race (many of the faithful fail to adhere to this, barring their children from marrying outside of their race). They do not raise elaborate markers on their graves, marking them only with simple stones that bear only their names. They do not associate with those who seek to live off the work of others without working themselves. They may not open a business unless they work at the business.
- The faithful must tithe once a month, giving a tenth of all they own to aid the sick and invalid.
- The faithful must bear the five symbols of the faith (see below).
- The faithful must constantly train their bodies and improve their martial skills to be prepared to defend the weak among their brethren.



Many of these beliefs come down to the conquering of the weaknesses of the body, like its cravings for things that make it weak. That same philosophy branches over into the societal beliefs, such as the weakness that the body of society has in mistrusting those who are different, or worshipping wealth.

There are five symbols of faith always found about the person of one of the Teraketh. All worshippers of Terak who bother to identify themselves as such wear or carry these symbols. Even if he smokes,

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drinks, and commits adultery regularly, he will have these symbols, or he cannot claim to be of the faith:

Unshorn Hair

The Teraketh do not cut their hair, so they are easily recognized by their long braids or beaded hair. In very hot climates, they may wear head wraps to keep their hair off their necks.

Vambrace

All followers of Terak wear armor (of leather or metal) on their right forearms. This signifies the protection a warrior wears, the protection an archer wears, and also the bond of service all the faithful bear – both to Terak and to their brethren of the mortal races. When one of the faithful has sinned or violated the strictures of the faith, he or she is chastened when another simply casts a glance at the vambrace – a visual reminder that the bond is violated. For those who cannot wear a full piece of armor for whatever reason, a simple leather wristband suffices.

Holy symbol

All followers of Terak are to wear his symbol, the two-headed axe, openly – though some now wear the *fascis* instead. This is not meant to show off their piousness but to inform all who see them that they are duty-bound to protect the weak. Technically, it is considered a sin for any worshipper of Terak to turn down a request for help from any member of the five mortal races who cannot help him- or herself. This has grown into something rather different, with many turning it into a justification to form mercenary bands and armies – we offer our services to the weak, for a nominal fee.

A Weapon

Even though the holy symbol of Terak is the axe, all manner of weapons please him. A worshipper of Terak must always be ready to stand in the defense of his brethren. Even while the faithful sleep, they wear “sleeping daggers.” Small and ornamental, they cost 1gp, are not balanced for throwing, do 1-2 points of damage, weigh .5 pounds, do Piercing damage, are Tiny, and have a Critical threshold of 19-20/x2.

The Forelock

All Teraketh carry on their person a lock of the hair that was removed in their youth (see below). This is to remind them that they were once young and frail and required the protection of others. The forelock is the “hidden” symbol, in that it is the one the Teraketh do not wear openly.

The doctrinal division between the lawful good and lawful neutral followers of Terak arises from their interpretations of the *reasons* for the above restrictions, laws, and symbols, not from the restrictions themselves – both groups adhere to these laws and wear these symbols. Essentially, the schism can be seen in the understanding of the myth of

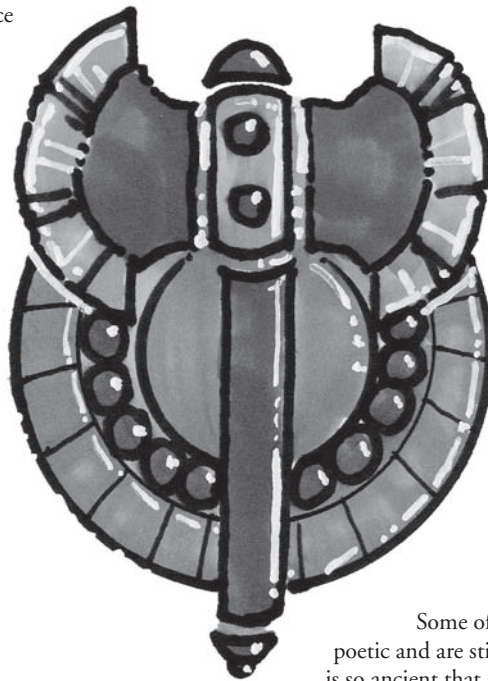
Aerix (found at the beginning of this section).

The lawful good worshippers see themselves in Aerix: He should never have believed his strength to be perfect. Every man and woman must be humble and realize that all people are equal in the eyes of Terak, that strength has more than one meaning. The frail old man who defends a helpless child has done a greater service than the powerful warrior who is too busy adventuring to help that same child. The lawful good worshippers see the above restrictions as lessons in humility, fidelity, and faith.

The lawful neutral worshippers see themselves in the ants: No matter how powerful the individual is, he will never be more powerful than the many. The above restrictions and laws are to set the followers of Terak apart from those who do not walk the true path, and to make the faithful shine out as an example to the weak. Terak’s true faithful form an ever-expanding group that is made strong by its denial of the body’s carnal desires. As those who are brethren (but do not worship Terak) see the Teraketh

walking tall, clean of base desire, they will see that this is the true path and take up the worship of Terak too. When all the mortals of the world properly follow Terak and respond to his call, as the ants of the world did in the legend of Aerix, all will be equal and happy for eternity.

While this division is deep and profound, it has not yet divided the temples, and most councils have commanders of both groups on them. Temples themselves are so divided, with clergy of both groups represented and teaching the faithful the two interpretations. It is considered a decision each Teraketh must make in his lifetime, embodied by the question, “Where do you stand, brother?”



Common Prayers

Some of the oldest prayers to Terak are actually quite poetic and are still in use. One used by soldiers before battle is so ancient that scholars are uncertain of its ultimate origin, with many maintaining that it is what Terak himself uttered before the final assault on Kador.

*“I am the river and the mountain.
As the river, I rage in times of torrent,
And decrease in times of drought.
I swell to overflowing with my wrath,
And my rage is dry in calmer seasons.
None can control my run,
None can alter it.
None can stand against me.
As the mountain, I am strong.
I do not wax or wane.
Age shall never o’ercome me.
I will not be moved.
I will not be shaken.
I will not be broken.
I am the river and the mountain,
Unstoppable and unbreakable.”*

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Holy Days

The temples of Terak do not celebrate any universal holy days. Instead, each regional council organizes celebrations of local holy days tied to great local battles. The temples take it upon themselves to commemorate fallen heroes from such wars and campaigns, regardless of their faith.

Among each of the faithful there is one particularly important and holy day, which is the day of adulthood. Called the sword day (shortened to Swordday and pronounced Soreday, a favorite pun among those mocking the Teraketh), it is the day a member of the faith comes of age. The young boy or girl is given a family weapon (usually an axe or sword crafted just before his or her birth, but sometimes one passed down from generation to generation), and the child's head is shaved – removing the hair of youth. This is the only time the hair of the faithful is ever cut (though they are allowed to shave), and the forelock from the occasion is saved and carried by the Teraketh for the rest of his life.



Once the weapon is bestowed and the head is shaved, several stout warriors from the community gather around the newly minted adult and, depending on the culture, either beat him or her into unconsciousness (against fierce opposition by the adolescent) or stage a ceremonial fight.

Saints

Because of the strict belief among the Teraketh that all are equal, sainthood is never bestowed or spoken of. Also, since it is the duty of every worshipper of Terak to fight in the defense of the weak, all who die in battle are considered glorious martyrs – no matter how ignominious the death. It is therefore not a part of the faith to throw away one's life in an effort to become a martyr. One should live on to fight another day, unless one is certain one's death will be meaningful and actually help others.

Terak's View of the Church

Terak is very fond of the church that has arisen in his name. He often sends what aid he can to the soldiers and crusaders of the temples without violating the Compact. He is particularly impressed with the laws that have arisen from the faith and thinks of them as his own inventions, though they were not.

Terak, more perhaps than any other god, has been as affected by the mortal races as they have by him. When he was first born from the tree, he was in fact the battle-hungry barbarian represented in myths like the ones found in Chapter II and Appendix I. Since the mortal races were born, and even more so since the creation of the Compact, Terak has come to love the mortal races and wish for their happiness and prosperity. For this reason, he is very fond of the lawful good followers of the church.

He has also been influenced by the death of his mortal children, and has watched as they have faded into obscurity and myth among the mortals. While they all live on at his side, it has affected him that no act of individual heroism appears to have a lasting effect, while powerful societies and empires can live on for generations. For this reason, he believes that the unconditional unity of the mortal races is their only path to happiness, and so he is also very fond of the lawful neutral faithful.

That he is equally supportive of both sides of the schism helps to keep it going, as neither side has any reason to believe it is wrong. This is

also what keeps the temples together, despite their powerfully disparate philosophies – there is no clear reason for either side to believe Terak disapproves of the other.

Terak is most fond of his faithful who are truly pious, carefully follow the Teraketh laws, and seek to unite people in faith. He has no tolerance for hypocrites or those who think highly of themselves, their wisdom, or their martial prowess, and he will personally take such members of his faith down a peg or two if these offensive behaviors grow too prominent.

Preferred Weapon

Terak's favored weapon is the battleaxe, though among dwarven temples Terak is shown with a dwarven waraxe. Because the Teraketh are so dedicated to battle, though, all weapons are valued, and there's nothing strange about a holy warrior of Terak using a sword.

Holy Orders

Clerics: Soldiers of Terak

The Order

The soldiers are the clergy of the Teraketh temples. Soldiers of Terak are found in large military units serving as chaplains or leaders, in towns or cities that often face military attack, or wandering in troubled areas defending the weak. Soldiers of Terak often attach themselves to adventuring groups to serve as spiritual advisers and healers, and to aid in quests. Anyone who has been called and has the aptitude may take up arms and become a soldier of Terak – no special training is required beyond learning the prayers necessary to cast divine spells and perform services. This makes multi-classing into being a soldier quite easy.

Titles

All soldiers of Terak are addressed with their order title and introduced with their order title, followed by "a soldier of the temples of Terak." So a helm named Matthias would be addressed as "Helm Matthias," and introduced as "Helm Matthias, a soldier of the temples of Terak."

Junior soldiers, those who are 1st and 2nd level, are called helms. They are expected to adventure, serve in the military, or act as *aides de camp* to a more senior member of the clergy. Mortality rates among the helms are astonishing, as their only qualifications are a love for Terak and a willingness to fight. Helms often serve in the front lines of combat to distinguish themselves.

At 3rd level, a helm is promoted to "lieutenant" and expected to be a little wiser in battle, serving as a healer and chaplain to the troops rather than wading in himself. The only requirement for lieutenant is reaching 3rd level alive and being willing to serve.

By 7th level, a lieutenant will have distinguished himself in many campaigns or adventures. Lieutenants who have survived this long are promoted to "banner." A banner continues to serve with battle troops and, in some cases, acts as a unit commander. Banners are fierce warriors, as their spells enable them to call upon Terak's strength and might to turn the tide of battle.

At 12th level, a banner has gained a wealth of knowledge about warfare, tactics, and command. The region's council of commanders

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summons him and promotes him to “commander.” Anyone in need of a general or tactical advice would be hard-pressed to find a better aid than a commander of the Teraketh. If a commander lives in a region that already has seven on its council, he is expected to begin or join a new council elsewhere, or to leave on campaign until there is an opening in his council. Openings on a council remain vacant until the surviving commanders can find an appropriate replacement.

Each of the seven commanders on the council is given charge of his own temple, meaning that a region cannot have more than seven Teraketh temples, and any commander wanting to control his own temple must find an open temple in another region or found a new region. A temple built in a region that already has seven other temples is considered a “shrine” (no matter how big it is), and is beholden to the orders of the nearest temple. The commander of that temple assigns a soldier of his temple to run the shrine until it is a part of a region in its own right. Because shrines and council seats are open until a commander rises to take them, it is quite possible that a banner will be promoted to commander, given authority over a temple, and admitted to the council of commanders all in the same day.

At 18th level, a commander has won countless battles, fought in more wars than he can recall, and slain more foes than he can list. The most powerful figures in the Teraketh faith, these men and women are called lord or lady commanders, and they are revered far and wide. The king of a great nation might have many Teraketh “regions” within his borders, each with seven commanders, but may have no lord commanders, but may have no lord commanders in

all his lands; they are that rare. If the king did have one in his borders, he would surely seek the lord commander’s counsel in times of war. Becoming a lord commander has no effect on council membership or temple control.

Table 55:

Soldiers of Terak Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Helm	Training in Ceremonies
3	Lieutenant	Survival
7	Banner	Survival; Wisdom High Enough to Cast 4th-Level Spells
12	Commander	Survival; Control of a Temple and Membership on a Council (Both Require Vacancies)
18	Lord/Lady Commander	Survival



Advisors to generals and kings, the soldiers of Terak are expert tacticians and brave warriors. Their arms and armor are always impeccable.

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Brotherhood? Why not Sisterhood?

There are a few orders of the faiths referred to as brotherhoods or fellowships. This does not mean that female characters cannot be members. In the case of the joyous brotherhood, a female member would be referred to as a joyous sister, but a member of the joyous brotherhood. If the GM prefers, the gender of these terms can easily be switched so that the order is called the joyous sisterhood. Whatever you call these orders, it should not in any way reflect on who may be a member – with the sole exception of the orders of Morwyn, which are gender-specific.

Domains

A soldier of Terak may choose two of the following spell domains: (Good), Law, Protection, War, and Strength. (The soldier may only choose the Good domain if he believes Terak is good in alignment.) If the War domain is chosen, the soldier may take the free proficiency and Weapon Focus in any axe, not just the Battleaxe.

Spell Preparation Time

Soldiers of Terak prepare their spells just before battle. If they are in a military campaign, this is usually at dawn. If they are adventuring, it is just before they enter an area of danger. In the case of continuing campaigns, military or adventurous, the soldiers pray for their spells at dawn every day of the campaign.

Alignments

While soldiers have four alignment groups, only two of the groups are large, and one is unwelcome in the temples. The two main groups often stand in opposition to one another on matters great and small – though their conflicting opinions have never come to blows. Councils have been known to split up due to the alignment division, but that is the most divisive the issue has ever become.

On one side of the divide are the lawful good soldiers. They believe it is the duty of the church to protect the weak. It is their duty to improve themselves physically and spiritually, and to help others do so. These soldiers are closely aligned to the crusaders, but rarely control councils. Most of the members of this alignment are found adventuring, or aiding people in catastrophically dangerous areas (a number of dwarves planning to re-colonize an ancient mine that is overrun with strange, tentacle-laden, mind-sucking beasts might have a few lawful good soldiers along to help). Their life expectancy is, therefore, quite low, with few surviving past banner.

The other side is typified by lawful neutral soldiers. They believe that it is the duty of the church to unify all common folk in the worship of Terak. They proselytize, defend villages, serve with armies, and obey the orders of their commanders. They believe in unity and conformity, and the strength that can be achieved through the two. Most councils are made up of a majority of lawful neutral soldiers.

Far more rare than lawful good or lawful neutral followers of Terak are the neutral good soldiers. In them the roots of the Teraketh faith can be found. They do not embrace a “societal” outlook on the religion, but hold to a very personal faith in Terak. They believe that every person is responsible for bettering himself, which is only possible if one is not oppressed by evil or in constant mortal danger. Therefore, the neutral good soldiers are almost entirely adventurers, helping the weak to be free of oppression so that they might find their own way. These soldiers face grave dangers in their constant quest for improvement of their bodies and spirits. Often they die, making them the rarest of the faith.

There are lawful evil worshippers of the lawful neutral aspect of Terak, considered heretics by most. If there are any in the temple structure, they are well hidden and do not reveal themselves. They maintain a “might is right” ethic, believing that they are Terak’s chosen people; the “protection of the weak” that is so important to them means conquering the weak and telling them what to do for their own good. For these evil Teraketh, a wicked cult has arisen, discussed further in Chapter VIII.

Holy Warrior: Crusaders of Terak

The Order

The crusaders of Terak are more rare than the holy warriors of many other gods. For whatever reason, it is uncommon to receive the call to serve as a holy warrior of the Teraketh faith. The order exists to fight against evil, to stand shoulder to shoulder with common soldiers and give them hope in times of need, and to conquer even the most daunting foes. Some within the temples believe that in the near future a sea of crusaders will rise up, called to aid all of the mortal races against threats so dire they are too terrifying to imagine. Others believe that the Teraketh faith’s strictures promoting equality and readiness have made all of its adherents into crusaders.

Titles

Becoming a crusader takes very little time, with the candidate training with another crusader for just two or three months. In fact, the hardest part about becoming a crusader is tracking down a teacher. Seeing more than one crusader at a time is rare and usually means there is trouble. As it stands, the crusaders do not have a well-established order and refuse to pretend that they do.

Taking the teaching of Terak that all mortals are equal quite seriously, the crusaders put no faith in strict hierarchy or titles. They are all addressed and introduced as “crusader,” and the most senior or skilled crusader commands the others in times of need. For instance, if several crusaders band together to fight evil sorcerers, the crusader with the most knowledge of evil sorcerers will command the others, even if she is the lowest level among them. Because of this (and the tenets of their faith), the crusaders do not hold to honorifics and will actually correct those who call them “sir,” “master,” or anything other than “crusader.”

Table 5-6: Crusaders of Terak Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1+	Crusader	The Call; Some Training in Religion

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Additional Class Skills

The crusader's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Jump (Str) and Swim (Str). See the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

The crusader may choose from two of the following holy warrior domains: Body, Leadership, and Might.

Gift of Terak

Beginning at 3rd level, the crusader can make her weapon *keen edged*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Keen edge* is a spell-like ability for crusaders.

Beginning at 12th level, the crusader's Gift of Terak allows her to monitor the *status* of her allies, as per the spell *status*, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Status* is a spell-like ability for crusaders. We realize that many GMs allow players to freely exchange the information given by the *status* spell, making the spell itself unhelpful. If this is the case, you may choose to gain additional weekly uses of the *keen edge* ability.

Spells

Crusaders may cast spells from the following spell list:

1st level – *bless*, *bless water*, *bless weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic weapon*, *protection from evil*, *remove fear*, *resistance*, *virtue*

2nd level – *delay poison*, *endurance*, *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal mount*, *magical vestment*, *prayer*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *wind wall*

4th level – *cure serious wounds*, *death ward*, *divine power*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *sending*

Mount

At 5th level, a crusader may call a special mount. Crusaders are known for wading into battle on the backs of their mighty steeds; they often train rigorously for mounted combat. There are legends of some crusaders riding on the backs of Celestial Lions. With the GM's permission, a Celestial Lion may be called as a mount for a crusader at 6th level, if he forgoes calling a horse (or loses his horse).

Conduct

Unlike most of the Teraketh, a crusader must actually follow all of the rules set out in the doctrine section, above, to the letter. He may never drink or indulge in intoxicants, may not seek personal glory, etc. They are absolutely monomaniacal about the brotherhood of all mortals, do not tolerate "racist" remarks or slurs, and certainly never make them. Further, the crusader is held to a much stricter standard regarding the protection of the weak. There is literally no rest for the crusader, for she

must be in a constant quest to help the downtrodden. There is no such thing as retirement for them – they fight against evil until they die, no matter how old they become or how much they might desire to set aside their burdens. It is a miserable life, or so it would seem to most, but they are consumed by their call to duty and do not easily shrug off their responsibilities. If a crusader of Terak ever knowingly violates this code, she immediately loses all special class abilities until she atones.

Associates

Crusaders will associate with any who seek to oppose evil and defend the weak. They do not associate with those who are actively prejudiced against other mortal races, no matter how well intentioned they might be. They may make an effort to change them from the path of prejudice, but failing that they will break company over what may seem like "innocent" comments.

For instance, the lawful good dwarven fighter who is constantly deriding pointy-eared elves may be fine company for most, but a crusader will not accept his intolerance. Crusaders generally don't care about their companions' leanings toward chaos or law, as long as they are actively good. A party that seeks to help people will find a crusader their fast



Crusaders wear the best armor, wield the finest weapons, and tend toward metallic- and dark-colored garments. They are without fear.

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ally. Parties that have to have their palms greased in order to help people, or need convincing to offer aid, will not find a crusader long in their midst.

Alignment

Crusaders of Terak must be lawful good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The temples of Terak have three distinct holy orders. While one of the orders, the crusaders, is rare, the other two are fairly common, and a temple is not really a temple without the presence of both. Every temple must have a commander, as explained earlier, but it is also incomplete if it lacks a master. Almost any temple of Terak, and even most shrines, will have a training ground behind it where masters of the Way hold lessons in martial matters. It is one of the most practical holy orders of any church, and also one of the oldest.

At 1st level, a master of the Way is called a weapons expert after being trained by a weapons master, as much an acknowledgement of his past achievements as his skill in the order. He is just beginning to learn the secrets of the Way. A weapons expert is addressed as “teacher” and introduced by full title.

At 3rd level, a weapons expert seeks out a senior master who trains him in the secrets of the Way. Many of these secrets are still beyond his ken, but when he can explain them he is called a weapons master. A weapons master is addressed as “master” and introduced by full title.

At 6th level, the weapons master understands the Way and is strong enough to “live in the Way.” He seeks out a grandmaster and receives further training to become a proper master of the Way, taking on the title of senior master. He is still addressed as “master” and introduced by full title.

At 9th level, the senior master possesses nearly legendary skill with weapons and is prepared to put it to the test. He seeks out three other senior masters and must best them all in duels; then he must seek out a grandmaster (usually the same grandmaster who made him a senior master). This grandmaster gives him a grueling test of physical prowess and spiritual fitness, the passage of which entitles the senior master to

the title of grandmaster. A grandmaster is addressed and introduced as “grandmaster” (“Grandmaster Matthius of the temples of Terak”).

Table 5-7: Masters of the Way Titles

Minimum Prestige Class Level	Title	Requirement
1	Weapons Expert	Prestige Class Requirements; Training with Weapons Master
3	Weapons Master	Training with Senior Master
6	Senior Master	Training with Grandmaster
9	Grandmaster	Besting Three Senior Masters; Passing a Test Administered by a Grandmaster

Prestige Class: Masters of the Way

The masters of the Way predate the orders of soldiers and crusaders considerably. Their abilities, which they call “the Way,” were first taught to mortals in the Third Epoch, when the gods first began to teach the races various tricks and crafts. When the first temples of Terak were built, the masters of the Way were his first priests. Today they are the teachers who populate the temples. The masters of the Way learn to use every weapon they can get their hands on. In turn, they teach the arts of combat to all who are prepared to pay for a lesson, making them valuable members of any society. Most of the fee for their lessons goes to the temple, though they also support themselves on it. The Way is, essentially, the elaborate art of fighting with weapons. Masters of the Way know every form and stance, and at high levels are deadly foes in a duel with weapons.

Masters of the Way are often former monks who have cast aside the art of unarmed combat and introspection and decided they prefer the way of weapons, or fighters who are more interested in the artistry of combat than in merely doing what they must to survive. Any other class that might be interested in mastering the art of weapon use may become a master of the Way, but it is rare for any other than a fighter or monk to join the order.

NPC masters of the Way are usually instructors at the local temple of Terak. They are quite involved with their communities and are unlikely

Table 5-8: The Master of the Way

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Training Expertise; Martial Instructor feat
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Bonus feat; Cut Arrows
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Assess Battle; Test of Skill; Uncanny Dodge
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat; Way Power (+1)
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Superior Skill
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Armored Stance; Way Power (+2)
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus feat; Uncanny Dodge (2)
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Shifting Blade
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Bonus feat; Perfect Strike; Way Power (+3)

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to travel or adventure, as they are quite interested in the practice, teaching, and continued mastery of the Way. There are adventuring masters, though, who seek to perfect their art through practice against real foes. A weapon that is not used is a useless weapon, after all.

Abbreviation: Way
Hit Die: d10

Requirements

To qualify to become a master of the Way, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-chaotic. A master of the Way must be absolutely dedicated to training, counter to a chaotic temperament.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Feats: To begin on the path of Mastery, the warrior must already be quite accomplished with many weapon skills. He must be proficient in at least two exotic weapons – whether through a feat or a class. He must have the Weapon Focus feat with at least two weapons. He must have the Quick Draw and Weapons Master feats (Weapons Master is new to this book).

Teraketh: Masters of the Way are all religiously tied to the temples of Terak. It is a holy order of that church and, therefore, its secrets will not be passed on to heathens. While masters of the Way will train anyone in weapons skills, they will only teach the secrets of the Way (this prestige class) to one who is dedicated to the worship of Terak and who follows the laws of the temples as set out in the doctrine section above.

Profession (Teacher): 3 ranks.

Tumble: 3 ranks.

Balance: 3 ranks.

Training: A prospective master of the Way must receive training from a weapons master to be inducted into the holy order of the masters of the Way. This training requires that the candidate has proven his loyalty to the temples of Terak and is a faithful follower of the Marshal of the Gods. Some weapons masters may require a payment equal to 1,000 gold pieces times the candidate's character level to provide the training – though this is rare and if the character has proven his loyalty to the temple consistently almost unheard of. Every three levels, the master of the Way requires further training.

Class Skills

The master of the Way's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (teacher) (Wis), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master of the Way prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Masters of the Way are proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and all armor (heavy, medium, and light) and shields.

Armored Stance (Ex)

At 7th level, the master of the Way has trained extensively at fighting smoothly and swiftly while wearing even the heaviest armor. The max

Dexterity bonus for any armor he wears is increased by 2, and the check penalty for any armor he wears is reduced by 2.

Assess Battle (Ex)

At 3rd level, the master of the Way becomes extraordinarily adept at gauging battles – determining what his opponents will do by their subtlest shifts in movement. He gains a competence bonus to his initiative checks equal to his Wisdom modifier.

Cut Arrows (Ex)

At 2nd level, the master of the Way is able to knock away missile attacks with his weapon. This works exactly like the Deflect Arrows feat, but the master of the Way need not have a free hand – he is using his weapon. In fact, he must be wielding a weapon.

Shifting Blade (Su)

At 9th level, the master of the Way may focus the power of the Way into his weapon once per day to make it phase, blur, and shift between dimensions. Any effort to strike the weapon itself is made at a -4 and has a 50% chance of failure (as though it were incorporeal). Further, the weapon may hit ethereal and incorporeal opponents as though it were in their plane, thus suffering no penalties or percentage chance of not damaging. This effect lasts for five rounds + the master of the Way's class level.

Martial Instructor

At 1st level, the master of the Way gains the Martial Instructor feat (see Chapter XI), even if he doesn't meet the prerequisites.

Test of Skill (Ex)

Starting at 3rd level, a master of the Way fighting a single opponent using a weapon can draw his opponent into a pure test of weapon skill (this will not work against animals, creatures, or monsters with claw attacks, nor will it work against unarmed attackers).

The test of skill begins with the master of the Way probing his opponent's defenses, skill, and form by fighting defensively for one round, with the corresponding bonuses and penalties to AC and attack bonus. After that round, the test of skill begins between him and his opponent. The entrance of other combatants (either by directly attacking or positioning to flank) will immediately suspend the test, though it resumes in the round following the dispatch or withdrawal of these new foes.

During a test of skill, both combatants add their Base Attack Bonus to their Attack Bonus (BAB is doubled for determining overall Attack Bonus) and AC as a "Test of Skill" bonus. This bonus to AC pertains only to the Test of Skill opponent and does not protect against ranged attacks or other attacks from a third party. A monster or creature's hit dice are considered its character level for these purposes.

Either combatant may end a test of skill by withdrawing from the combat or fighting without weapons. However, opponents may not understand why the master of the Way is suddenly defeating them so easily. One must make a Wisdom check, DC 15, to realize how to break free of the test unless already familiar with the ability. Once a test of skill has ended, it may not be reinitiated during that combat unless both combatants do so willingly.

Superior Skill (Ex)

At 5th level, the master of the Way is able to capitalize on his superior abilities. If he engages in a test of skill (above) and receives a higher bonus than his opponent, all of his attacks receive a +2 damage bonus

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as though he had the Weapon Specialization feat with that weapon – no matter what weapon he is wielding (even an improvised weapon like a chair leg). He retains this bonus as long as the test of skill lasts.

The master of the Way is so skilled with weapons at this point that he can use anything to deadly purpose. He is able to attack for normal damage with subdual damage weapons without incurring any penalty.

Perfect Strike (Ex)

Woe betide any who enter into a weapons duel with a grandmaster of the Way. If the master of the Way successfully initiates a test of skill (above) with an opponent who is at least three levels lower than he is (meaning that the master of the Way's net bonus to AC and Attack is at least +3), every attack the master lands during the test of skill is considered a "perfect strike." Any critical threat made with a perfect strike automatically succeeds.

Fraining Expertise (Ex)

The master of the Way is very good at using weapons educationally. He can make subdual damage attacks with a normal weapon without any penalty to hit. He can also intentionally inflict only 1 point of damage with any attack.

The master of the Way can also ignore the negative impact of one level of size difference between weapons when disarming opponents (though he must take the Improved Disarm feat if he wants to do so without drawing attacks of opportunity or counter attacks). This means a master of the Way with a shortsword (small) can disarm a warrior with a longsword (medium) without the opponent gaining a +4 bonus on his Disarm opposed roll. However, if the master of the Way only has a dagger (tiny) the +4 bonus for his opponent is retained.

Finally, he can ready an attack or delay for an action within 4 of his initiative roll without lowering his initiative for the remainder of the combat. For example, a master of the Way with this ability and an 18 initiative can delay to 14 initiative and still go at 18 the following round.

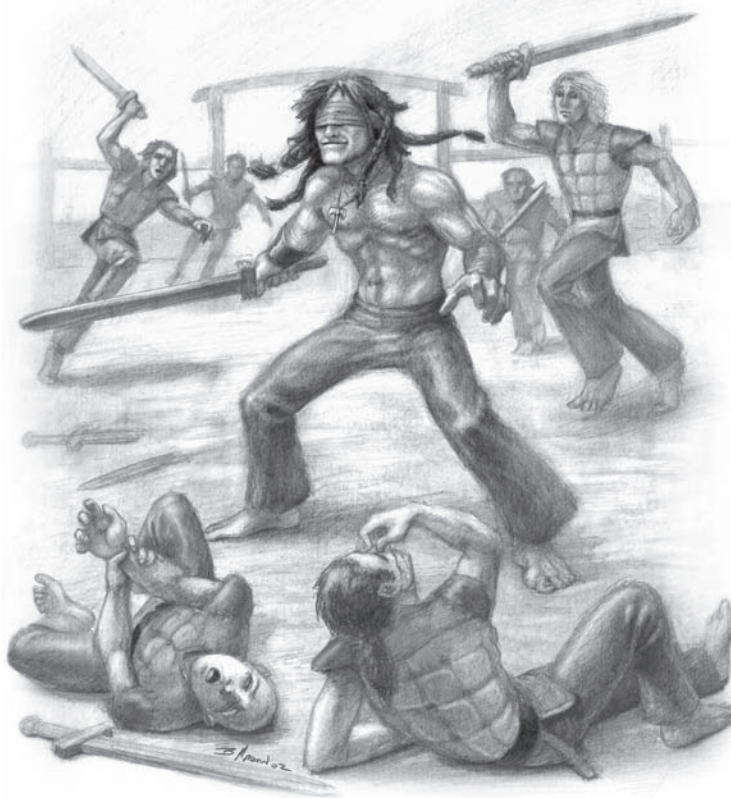
Way Power (Su)

The Way is a dance, a masterful series of movements and invocations of Terak, as well as the perfection of one's body for war. Mastery of this power allows the master of the Way to make any blow, from any weapon he holds, flow with the power of the Way and damage any creature with damage reduction as though the weapon has a +1 enhancement bonus.

As the master of the Way improves in his training, so too does his ability to channel the Way. At 7th level, his weapons may damage creatures with damage reduction as though they have a +2 enhancement bonus. At 10th level, whenever the master of the Way desires, and for as long as he desires, he may channel the Way through his weapon, causing it to glow as though under the effect of a *daylight* spell, and damaging creatures with damage reduction as though it has a +3 enhancement bonus. If he does not intentionally will his weapon to glow with the power of the Way (a free action), it only damages creatures with damage reduction as though it has a +2 enhancement bonus.

Weapon Specialization

The master of the Way may never specialize in a weapon. Even if he becomes a 4th level fighter and has access to the feat, he simply may not take it without losing his master of the Way abilities. Masters of the Way do not specialize in the use of any one weapon – the Way is found through them all. If the master of the Way has already taken Weapon Specialization as a feat before taking levels in the prestige class, he loses the feat over time. At 1st level of master of the Way, the damage bonus from the Specialization is reduced to +1. At 3rd level, the damage bonus is gone altogether. This is because the master of the Way slowly loses his specialization as he broadens his mind to the Way.



The masters of the Way display the highest and most deadly level of martial prowess

Uncanny Dodge

Starting at 3rd level, the master of the Way gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to even be aware of it. At 2nd level and above, he retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.)

At 8th level, the master of the Way can no longer be flanked, since he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack the master of the Way. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least four levels higher than the master of the Way can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

If the master of the Way has another class that grants the uncanny dodge ability, add together all the class levels of the classes that grant the ability and determine the character's uncanny dodge ability on that basis.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd level, the master of the Way gets a bonus feat, with additional bonus feats at 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th levels. These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Weapon Focus, Exotic Weapon Proficiency.

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Goddess of Wine, Madness and Inspiration

The Vineyards of Zheenkeef

Zheenkeef (zheen-KEEF) (Red-Haired, Wild-Eyed, the Shifting, of the Many Ways, the Gnomish, Titan's Root, Mother of Madness, Inspiration)

Myths

The Coming of the Titans

When Zheenkeef ate the fruit that held humans, it is well known that all the gods worked to piece the race back together. And indeed, the Mother of Madness retched up nearly all she had eaten. But she had already digested some of the sacred fruit, and it was lost to the world – or so the other gods believed.

In the cover of night, when none of the other gods looked, Zheenkeef went to the deepest pool of the world, and by the water's edge she unloosed her bowels. With clay from the river and her own excrement, she sculpted tall figures. Because her offal held the very stuff of life from the fruit, she had only to breathe three hot breaths across these tall figures, and they came to life. She painted them up and made them beautiful, with skins of copper and tan, and keen eyes.

These figures not born of her womb, but born of her belly nonetheless, looked at her and said, "You are our mother! This we know well. But what are we?"

Before she should speak, behold! the water of the pool rose and a figure stepped from its depth. "If thou art their mother, Zheenkeef, then truly I am their father, for thou hast taken the clay from my most sacred pool, and in it the seeds of my water. I demand them for my own!" It was Shalimyr who spoke to her then, and the tall children at the water's edge trembled before him.

Zheenkeef only giggled. "You are no more their father than I am their mother, Shalimyr, but you have hungered for me since the earliest days. If you cannot have me, then you would have these children."

Shalimyr was shamed, for Wild-Eyed Zheenkeef saw his purpose and knew the lust that consumed him. He stood there by the water's edge, watching her with wolf's eyes.

"You are the Titans," Zheenkeef the Shifting told the tall figures then, "and you are not born but made. You shall do great things and have great adventures, and you shall never be dull – for I see clearly now that these mortals born of the tree shall forever vex me. They will concern themselves with simple matters, most of them, and will not surprise me much."

With this foretelling, she set the Titans out to thrive and do great deeds. And though they have no souls and do not go before Maal when slain, they are each of them like a living legend, with great adventure following in their footsteps. For this is what they were made to be.

And when they had gone, Zheenkeef lay with Shalimyr by the water's edge for the first time, but surely not the last, for it is said that Imperious Tinel is oft cuckolded by his wife and the Wave. Of the Titans, much is written, but this first: that Zheenkeef created them, and Shalimyr watches over them out of love for their creator.

The Need for Wine

It is remembered by most that Zheenkeef has been the cause of much of the world's worst mischief, and so the weak do not trust in her as they should. But all know the truth – that more than mischief, Red-Haired Zheenkeef has brought the mortal races joy, wonder, and delight.

When other gods made their gifts to the mortals, Zheenkeef the Shifting watched on with interest. The gifts were practical and they made lives better. Yet, no matter how greatly the gods (such as her son, Darmon) gifted the mortal races, their lives were still hard, and they knew death and misery most of their days. They were given fire and shown how to build homes, how to smelt iron, how to sail the wide sea. So many gifts, and yet the mortals had no life in them but toil. They lived to work, and worked to live.

Finally, Wild-Eyed Zheenkeef could stand no more of it and traveled her many ways to the mortal world. Assuming the guise of a red-haired mortal of each race, she went to the homes of the greatest among them. Appearing to them as a mad woman, which was not far from right, she showed the mortals many tricks. One she taught the skill of counting out rhythm. Another she showed cat gut pulled taught and plucked to make a pleasing noise. This one she showed the warm sounds made by a hollowed-out gourd when blown upon, and that one she led through a planned step for dancing. Unlike the others of the gods, she gave no race a completed skill or art. Instead, she sat back and watched as the races invented their own musics from these basic tools, their own dances from these simple beginnings. And soon they began sharing their inventions with other races, and music and dance grew rich.

Yet still, the humans were not happy. Art gave them an outlet for their longing, a way of expounding upon their misery, but they were never free of their deepest sorrows. One day, the Mother of Madness overheard a woman say to her friend, "I wish I could feel this way all the time" as the two of them spun and spun in a great circling dance that combined elven music and human steps.

So it was that Zheenkeef the Gnomish went to her favorite folk among the mortals, the gnomes, who were so like her in temperament. She saw that they too enjoyed the arts and that they too reveled in the skills they had learned from the gods. But they also longed for the exultation and freedom they felt when dancing to last longer. For a long while she walked among the gnomes as a red-haired lady of their kind, and she inspired them to experiment with dances and chants and contraptions of metal and fire that might capture that feeling for longer. And in those days the Gnomes came to know this red-haired lady as Inspiration, for so she was to them, an Inspiration for all their wild schemes and foolish inventions.

At last, Zheenkeef of the Many Ways had walked nearly every part of the gnomish lands, and still they were no closer to capturing the sensation of euphoria. One night she stayed with a poor gnomish family, Glor and Glin. The old couple had a small grape farm and no children, and the Mother of Madness saw that sorrow was heavy on their hearts. Yet the two old folk, seeing her red hair, took her into their home and fed her like a queen. Glor, the husband, gave her his pipe and his best pipeweed, and Glin, the wife, stayed up all night baking bread for her travels. When

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Zheenkeef parted with them, she blessed their grapes so that they should always give them the greatest happiness.

From this blessing, of course, great things arose. Within a year, Glor and Glin were famous among the gnomes for the spectacular drink they had invented from the grapes. Wine, they called it, and in it one found the euphoria of dance and the happiness of the sweetest music. But Glin and Glor were not proud, and they never accepted the praise, telling all who would listen that it was Inspiration who had given them this gift.

So it was that Zheenkeef brought music, dance, and wine to a world that was suffocating under the weight of blandness and toil. It was not long before the prayers of artists and musicians bored her, and she gave her daughter mastery over these things (yet another decision that has forever benefited the mortal races). She has never parted ways with her favorite of all things, however, the best invention that came from her time among the mortals: wine. It is said by those who know the sacred drink best that if one drinks enough, Inspiration will pay a visit.

Associations

Zheenkeef is the goddess of inspiration, intuition, wine, madness, invention, internal turmoil, creativity, tragedy, prophecy, oracles, half-wits, and geniuses. Put simply, she is the goddess of those that live on the edge and dare to peer into the dark parts of their hearts.

In the animal kingdom, she is associated with the wolverine, the badger, the jackal, and the hyena. The strongest of these associations is the hyena, whose laughter is much like her own. Further, many hyenas have red fur like the hair of the Mother of Madness.

Zheenkeef is quite popular among many chaotic peoples, with barbarians and sorcerers holding her especially dear. Some sorcerers believe it is her blood that courses through their veins, giving them their remarkable gifts. Oracles, prophets, and seers of all varieties have held Zheenkeef as their patron for many ages. So too have inventors and vintners. Among the five races, the gnomes hold Zheenkeef dearest, for they see her as their patron and lady, but the elves, humans, and halflings also revere her for the inspiration she offers. Dwarves name her in their prayers grudgingly, receiving all the inspiration they need from her nephew Korak.

Alignment

Zheenkeef is chaotic neutral.

Representations

Zheenkeef is usually shown as impossibly tall, with a wild mane of red hair. Her eyes are usually inhuman – solid black or red – and she is sometimes shown with the tail of a dog or with more than two arms. In such cases, these representations are symbolic or come from an artist's vision; the pose of Zheenkeef's hands and the items clasped in them usually bear some deep significance.

Symbols for Zheenkeef are infinite, for those who worship her select a symbol for their faith on the day they dedicate themselves to her work. Common symbols include manacles worn on the wrists with the connecting chain sundered, an eye tattooed on the forehead, and a creeping grape vine, dried and wrapped around the left arm at all times. But these are just a few – truthfully, there is no one symbol of Zheenkeef. That being said, when those who are not adherents of the Zhenkefan faith (and the members of the Great Church) need

to symbolize Zheenkeef, they use a cluster of grapes. This is usually simplified to an inverse pyramid constructed of circles.

Purpose

Zheenkeef seeks to be surprised and entertained. She is a god of pure impulse and whimsy, caprice and insanity. To ascribe to her long-term motives is absurd, as she rarely concentrates on anything long enough to call it a plan. Her motives can be seen in trends rather than in histories, repeated circumstances rather than continuing traditions.

Zheenkeef wants the mortal races to be interesting, to do things differently from one generation to the next. She likes to see them give in to their passions, and has little – or no – respect for those who hold themselves in check. If a man wants to drink, he should drink. If he wants to sing, he should sing. If he wants to destroy the world, he should try to destroy the world. Those who fear to live out their desires because of the possibility of change are those she loathes most among the mortals. So it is that Zheenkeef, when she intentionally acts on the world, or through her agents, does whatever she might to make the world more interesting. Sometimes this means promoting grave evil, sometimes great good – that isn't truly of interest to her. What matters to her is that nothing remains static for long.

Her favor falls upon some for a matter of years, other for minutes, but it rarely lasts a lifetime. Some of her most faithful servants have never even been noticed by the Mother of Madness and are instead seen to by her celestial attendants. One does not revere Zheenkeef for her warmth.

Her mercurial attentions and moods are not always merry. She is considered the patron of tragedy for a reason, as legends tell of a feverish sorrow that consumes her from time to time. Her boredom with life and the world sometimes coalesces into a stultifying misery, thick and terrible, and in those times she is wont to lash out at friends and foes alike or, worse for those who follow her, withdraw entirely.

Servants

Zheenkeef's servants are many, but most are forgotten and end up wandering her realm in Heaven aimlessly. Over the millennia, she has accumulated countless odd followers, most of them formerly mortals, and at any point she may call upon one to do her bidding.

The 1,001 Handmaids

Most any servant called to Zheenkeef's side becomes a "Handmaid," whether man, maid, or beast. The Handmaids' attire is determined by Zheenkeef's whim – sometimes they are attired in robes of gold; other times they wear nothing but fish guts. Usually, the Handmaids are powerful celestials capable of performing any important task for their mistress on earth or in Heaven.

The Menagerie

For her amusement, Zheenkeef keeps two of every kind of creature that has ever been in a great menagerie of Heaven. These creatures wander freely in her realm and are sometimes sent earthward with a Handmaid on a task. In all the menagerie, Zheenkeef is fondest of Heka and Tekit, the two hyenas, and they accompany her wherever she goes.

The Titans

While not her servants, the Titans are Zheenkeef's children, and she takes more interest in them than in any of the mortal races.

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The Church

Church Description

The vineyards of Zheenkeef, where the Zhenkefans (zhenn-KEFF-uhnz) worship, are raucous and lively places. Overseen by the oracles (or not, depending on the community), the vineyards are not places of strict authority. Each vineyard's members determine its hierarchy, as explained below. One thing is constant; the vineyards are places of celebration, invention, folly, and sometimes even danger. They are enormously popular among the common folk, in part because they make some of the finest – if not *the* finest – wine in the world. They are also regularly frequented by those seeking the prophecies of the oracles of Zheenkeef.

Many cultures will not allow vineyards in their more important cities or their “higher class” neighborhoods and temple districts. This is because they are home to wild revelries and, sometimes, a fair bit of debauchery. The refined and lawful members of society therefore consider them a “necessary evil.” Someone from the upper crust of lawful society might visit an oracle in need, but would do so hooded to keep from being seen. Essentially, the vineyards are popular but of ill repute. Few are concerned that their shunning of the vineyards will draw Zheenkeef's wrath – everyone knows Zheenkeef cares little about the opinions of mortals.

Regardless of high society's attitudes, the Zhenkefan faith is popular, and the sight of her apostles and oracles is fairly common wherever one might travel.

Church Structure

There is no “supreme order” of the vineyards; they are entirely congregationalist, meaning that each vineyard determines its own power structure. Usually, the highest-ranking local oracle is in charge of the vineyard, but there are vineyards run by councils of children or the local half-wit – even a vineyard that takes its instruction from an enchanted gibbon. However the Zhenkefans choose to structure their faith, there is no one to gainsay them.

Regardless of vineyard structure, though, there are three orders universal to the Zhenkefan faith. A person who dedicates her life to Zheenkeef's works may join one of these orders, whether it is a powerful order in her local vineyard or not. The clergy are called the apostles. The holy warriors are called the joyous brotherhood and have two levels of status: laughing brothers/sisters and drunken brothers/sisters. The oracles, who most consider the religious authorities of the faith, have two levels of status: seers and prophets.

There is no “average” vineyard. Most have an oracle in residence and three or four apostles, but there are many vineyards that are made up of local Zhenkefans and no one from the holy orders.

Doctrine

“We have no need for great men and their towering spires. We cast our lot with the outsider, the poet, and the fool. In the end times, we all will be remembered by the mad acts of the shunned and the outcast, not the rigid perfection of the pillars of society.”

– *The Visions of the Prophet Glorik Hillock*

The Zhenkefan faith revolves around six sayings, called “The Vintner's Creed” or “The Creed.” The earliest oracles of Zheenkeef handed



The representations of Zheenkeef are nearly infinite. However, she is always shown with her red hair, the mark of inspiration.

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down these maxims at the founding of the vineyards. This was quite some time ago, as the vineyards have maintained their form of worship longer than nearly any other church of the pantheon. Perhaps this is because the traditions are captured in six simple sayings and do not require a great deal of doctrine or dogma to be passed from generation to generation.

Whatever the case, all Zhenkefans contemplate and observe the Creed. It is supposed to be repeated daily, if the Zhenkefan remembers, but weekly observance is enough. The reason for the Creed is that the true worship of Zheenkeef is very hard to grasp for those who do not possess profound wisdom. As her greatest apostles, oracles, and joyous brothers understand, Zheenkeef's nature is highly mystical – for what does it mean to be the source of inspiration, to be the feelings below the surface that men rarely heed? The wise understand that the strength, the inner glow that one feels when one has drunk too much wine, that is Zheenkeef; there are those who can harness that deep assurance, that happy strength, without the aid of wine, but for most folk it can only be found in drink. Just as those truly touched by the Mother of Madness can experience inspiration without the aid of wine, those who are wisest can contemplate her without the Creed. But for most, wine and these sayings are necessary.

"The fruit of the vine is sweet. Drink deep!"

Always the first invocation of the Zhenkefan, this is a remembrance of Zheenkeef's gift of wine to the mortal races. It is also a rumination on the power of Zheenkeef – through her gift of wine, she makes life sweeter for the mortal races. A Zhenkefan seeks to savor the sweetness of life, finding the joy and vibrancy in all things that most folk find only in wine. There is only one terrible sin among them: to refuse to drink from the cup of life. This bears explanation; life is filled with wonder and despair, and many (particularly the lawful and the neutral) try to avoid the despair by living quiet lives of caution, thus missing the wonder as well. Wine should not be sipped, nor should life – one must live to the fullest and savor life's wonder and despair.

"There is no joy without suffering."

This is the saying in which the Zhenkefan ponders savoring despair. Zheenkeef is a goddess with bright red hair, of course, but she is also embodied in the grapevine. In the summer, the grapevine yields the grapes that make the wine, but in the winter, the vines must be pruned constantly or they will not produce the following year. In legend Zheenkeef is often joyous and wild, like the vines in bloom, but at other times she is dark and sorrowful, like the vines in winter, undergoing the pain of a thousand cuts. She is the most tragic of the gods, the patron of tragedy, sometimes filled with delight, but at other times overtaken by the darkness of her madness; many of the ingenious artists and inventors for whom she is Inspiration suffer from similar tragedy.

"All that there is will be undone."

Everything changes, and everything will change, regardless of the hopes and endeavors of the mortal races. For this reason, it is sheer folly to become attached to societies, structures, or any other work of mortals.

They will all be washed away in the end. The Zhenkefans, therefore, do not become attached to their inventions or their ideas, happily turning them over to others who wish to waste their time building off their work (exactly as Zheenkeef gave music to her daughter to look after). For this reason, the Zhenkefans are far more interested in the works of those on the fringes of society, unfettered by convention, than they are in the lives and times of the powerful and noteworthy.

"Only that which you have not done is worthy."

Because nothing lasts, repetition of labor or ideas is an utter waste of one's life. It is incumbent upon each person to try to broaden his experience in the course of his life – to visit new places and cultures, learn new wisdom, and partake in new activities. It is particularly best when a Zhenkefan manages something that has never been done in all of mortal history. Thus, invention and creativity are truly holy pursuits.

"Inspiration's voice is felt, not heard."

Zheenkeef is the goddess of the intuition, the gut feeling, the well of emotions that are deep below the surface and harder to interpret than the common feelings of love, loyalty, and courage that other gods represent. Zhenkefans heed their intuition and learn to act on it, for it is the voice of Zheenkeef; further, it is through the intuition that inspiration and invention are found. Giving oneself over to one's intuition is likened, by most, to madness; indeed, this is the madness that Zheenkeef provides to all mortals – the swirling emotions deep in one's gut.

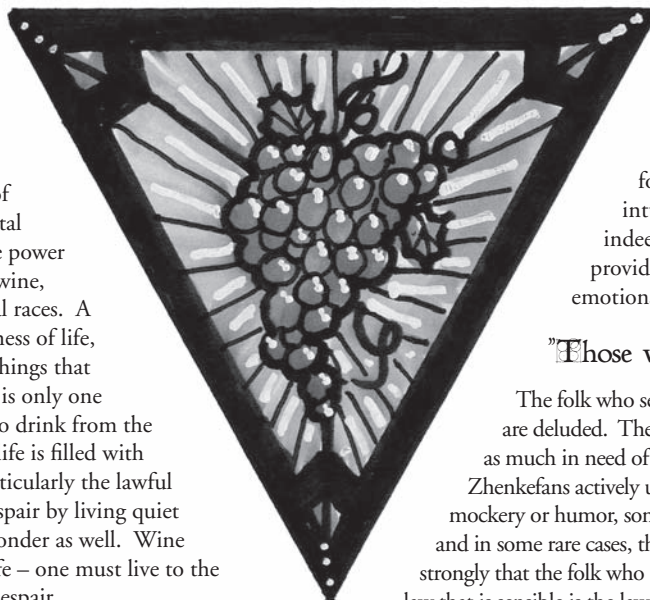
"Those who crave control are slaves."

The folk who seek to impose law and structure on others are deluded. They are slaves to their established beliefs, as much in need of liberation as those they control. The Zhenkefans actively undermine lawful beliefs, usually through mockery or humor, sometimes through debate and argument, and in some rare cases, through violent overthrow. They believe strongly that the folk who impose laws are wrong, that the only law that is sensible is the law that all people agree to abide by. This is important – some Zhenkefans are actually anarchic in their beliefs, holding that all law is wrong. Most are more democratic in outlook; as long as people agree to the laws they must adhere to, the laws are valid. These beliefs make vocal Zhenkefans fairly unpopular with monarchies, as they hold that power by right of birth is nonsense. It is rare for vineyards to take an active hand in politics, however (what could be more boring and repetitive?), so their beliefs in these matters usually end up being ignored.

Common Prayers

The Zhenkefans do not adhere to standard structures, symbolism, or even liturgy. For this reason, there are no set prayers to the faith other than the Creed; indeed, every Zhenkefan is expected to extemporaneously compose prayers for any given situation.

There are some common themes in these prayers. They often begin with an invocation of Zheenkeef, usually "Mother of Madness, heed my prayer!" Prayers are usually said while drinking wine and are nearly always in verse form; the more complex the rhyme scheme, the better.



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Holy Days

As with their prayers, the Zhenkefans do not standardize their holy days. In fact, vineyards will often decide to have a 'holy day' with no notice; they will announce to the community that the next day, or even that very day, is a sacred celebration. Other times, they will plan elaborate festivals for months.

One time is always kept sacred for the Zhenkefans, though, which is the first pressing of the new harvest of grapes. A great festival is held for the pressing, culminating in the drinking of some of the young, fresh wine.

Saints

While the Zhenkefans do not name saints (they do not hold with titles), they do have a strong belief in martyrdom. Because the Zhenkefans have a fondness for those at the fringe of society, they revere and remember those who give up their lives for change, innovation, and wild ideas. Sometimes big, new ideas are wildly unpopular and result in the innovator being killed horribly – Zhenkefan vineyards remember these folk with occasional toasts as martyrs of the faith.

Zheenkeef's View of the Church

Zheenkeef cares about her church only as much as it keeps her entertained. She has never had much interest in structures or organizations; but individual



members of her faith often draw her eye. Particularly faithful members of the vineyards who live seeking change, alteration,

insight, and inspiration will sometimes find themselves protected and guided by their goddess. Just as often, though, they do not.

The Zhenkefans have a saying, "Her vision is not ours to fathom," and they often utter it when it seems like the god they serve cares nothing for them. It is a frequent problem for the faithful, as Zheenkeef seems just as likely to take an interest in a mad peasant as in the workings of her worshippers. For this reason, it cannot be said that Zheenkeef has a particular interest in the vineyards. She watches them, but does little to interfere with their affairs. Her servants in the heavens tend to such trivial matters as heeding prayers and supplying powers.

Preferred Weapon

Zheenkeef wields an enormous morningstar bound with iron and spiked with a thousand spears of fire. The weapon is called Askew, and its touch is said to drive the searing fires of madness deep into the minds of her foes.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Apostles of Zheenkeef

The Order

The apostles are Zheenkeef's clerical order, but they are rarely found in the vineyards. An apostle is a wanderer, spreading the teachings of Zheenkeef and lending a hand to her works. The stereotype of this order's members is a wild-eyed man, with an unshorn and tangled mane of hair, dressed in simple robes and a rope belt, with an enormous morningstar in one hand and a flagon of wine in the other. Indeed, many of the apostles never shave or cut their hair, and their diet often consists of little more than garlic, onions, and wine. Many apostles are half mad... or more than half.

The duty of an apostle is to seek out the places of the world where the goddess' hand is not felt, where her inspiration is not seen.

Often they speak out on street corners, from hillocks, in the corners and dark places of the cities. They will spread the lessons of the Creed to anyone who will listen.

That being said, the Zhenkefans do not seek to actively convert others to their outlook, and that is not the

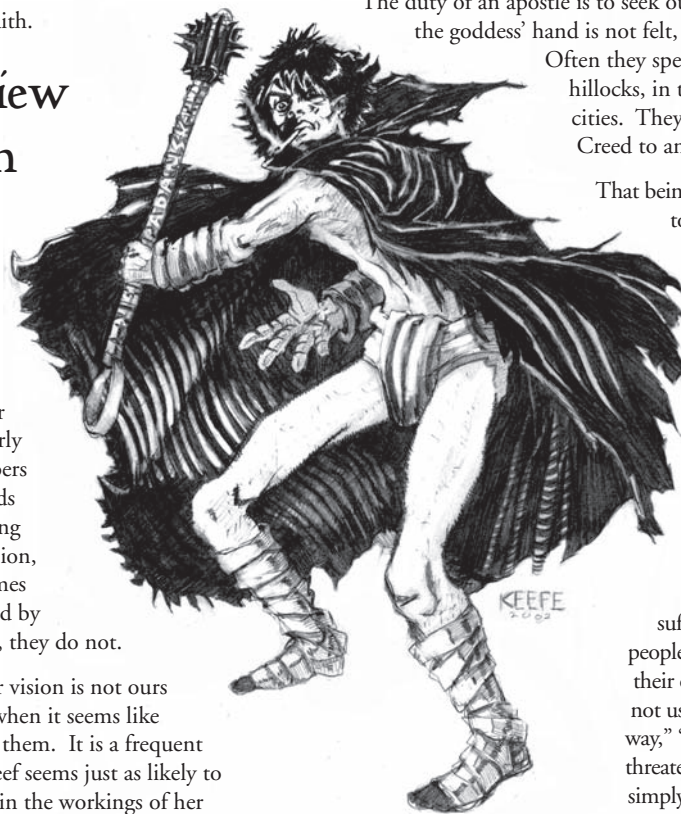
function of the apostles. The apostles offer all people the lessons of Zheenkeef in the hope that, seeing the way of inspiration, they will take up the Creed and live a free life.

Zhenkefans see most evangelism as a kind of tyranny (one unique to religion), and therefore they will speak against those religious leaders who tell the uninitiated that they must follow a certain path or suffer. As the sixth Creed teaches, all people are free and must be free to choose their own path. The preaching apostles do not use language such as "this is the only way," "follow this way or suffer," or other threatening inducements. Instead, they simply speak of Zheenkeef's way and hope that their words will reach attentive ears.

The apostles hardly care about secular matters, and pay little attention to politics and issues of local concern; their

heads are in the clouds and they think only of the great teachings of the Mother of Madness.

Beyond the spreading of the doctrine, the apostles are also fierce opponents of the stultifying and tyrannical forces of the world, such as devils, whose influence they cannot abide. They stride into the mouth of danger time and again to topple any force that threatens the freedom of the five mortal races. In battle they are known to have a wild cast to their eyes, raging against their foes with their spiked morningstars.



Tending toward very simple attire, the apostles are as comfortable unarmored as armored. They carry few possessions.

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Titles

At 1st level, a cleric of Zheenkeef is named an apostle. This is the only title a member of the order will ever bear, and they do not take on honorifics such as “father” or “brother.” If they are introduced it is by name and “an apostle of Zheenkeef.” A prospective apostle requires little training and receives it either from another apostle or from one of the oracles at a vineyard. Training takes only a few months, but requires absolute devotion to Zheenkeef.

Table 5-9:

Apostles of Zheenkeef Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Apostle	Three Months Training

Domains

An apostle may choose any two of the following domains for his divine spells: Chaos, Oracle, Inspiration, and Trickery.

Spell Preparation

Time

A beginning apostle prepares his spells at a private time that is significant to him, a time when he is inspired to work his prayers. This time remains his spell preparation time for the remainder of his days.

Alignments

Most apostles are chaotic neutral and see it as their primary duty to spread the teachings of Zheenkeef. These are the wild-eyes apostles that most folk know, opposing the works of tyrants when they may, but mostly seeking to change the world and undermine established orders. These apostles have little interest in politics and the workings of the vineyards; they are dedicated wanderers and mendicants.

Chaotic good apostles are far more interested in inspiration and uplifting the oppressed. They pay attention to the temporal workings of the world, learning about political leaders that wrong their fellow mortals and speaking out against them. These apostles are often agitators and troublemakers, using their protected status as representatives of a god to promote freedom of thought and feeling.

There is a dark side to the denizens of the vineyards. There are chaotic evil apostles of Zheenkeef as well, but they are not openly welcomed in most vineyards and tend to worship in dark and secret places. These heretics and their activities are discussed in Chapter VIII.

Holy Warrior:

Joyous Brotherhood of Zheenkeef

The Order

The joyous brotherhood is made up of those who feel the very power of inspiration flowing through their veins and limbs. While Darmon is the god of joy and laughter, the joy in the hearts of the Zhenkefan brotherhood is more like religious euphoria and bliss than the simple joy of a good laugh. The members of this order are lent great strength and power by the elative forces of Zheenkeef, and are able to move themselves into divine trances in battle.

Though they are sometimes seen to have a wild look in their eyes, the joyous brothers do not seem mad like the apostles. Instead, they are an ecstatic people, moved from the very well of their being to do great things. Also unlike the apostles, they *do* care about secular matters. They travel far and wide, often becoming involved in local struggles and political matters, befriending and aiding the underdogs and those without a voice. In the classic “family feuds” of legends, where two great families tear apart a town, the joyous brotherhood would choose the side of the faceless peasants caught in the middle. They are trained at noticing the details and people others ignore.

The order focuses its attentions on service to these ignored people and the opposition of all forces that seek to enslave minds and hearts. The joyous brothers laugh at and delight in matters great and small, fighting against evil with their massive morningstars and with their happiness. When confronted with the stolid considerations of decorum, they resort to mockery and japes. Good manners are not their forte, and for this reason many call them the “vulgar order.” They drink wine – often to excess – do not hold

their emotions in check, and do not stay their tongues when they feel someone is wrong. They are bold, brash, loud, and unquestionably empowered with the divine inspiration of their goddess. While many in power would like to think them drunken buffoons, they are in fact terrifyingly observant, and often cut haughty men low with a single perfectly worded observation.

Every autumn, the joyous brothers see it as their duty to aid in the harvesting of grapes and the pressing of wine. They disguise themselves and show up in communities where they are strangers, lending their work to the farmers and departing days later when the



The joyous brotherhood delights in bright clothes and armor. Often, they have layers of beaten copper over their armor.

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harvest is done. In this, they see themselves as walking in the footsteps of Zheenkeef, who also wandered the land, lending aid to strangers and departing, her identity unknown.

While there are other holy warrior orders, like the Eagles of the Urianath, who seek to oppose tyranny and free the enslaved, there is no order even similar to the joyous brotherhood in behavior. While the brothers do seek to free those who are literally enslaved, they also wish to awaken the desires of those who are not drinking deep from the cup of life. “There is a kind of slavery in the heart,” they are known to say, “when a man lives free of physical bonds, yet never strays from what is expected of him.” The joyous brothers seek to move all those they meet to live life to its fullest, to be bold, to love all people, and to speak their minds and hearts openly. More reserved folk find them insufferable.

Titles

At 1st level, a member of the joyous brotherhood is called a laughing brother or sister. They are addressed as “Brother” or “Sister” and introduced by full title. A laughing sister is charged to ride forth, often with other members of her order, and do great works against the broad powers of Law run amok. Usually, a laughing sister is someone who heard the call, the inspiration of Zheenkeef, at a young age and went at once to a vineyard for training in the ways of the order. Quite often, the call is heard with the young person’s first sip of wine; it is through wine that Zheenkeef speaks to her chosen. The training to become a member of the order usually takes only about two years, and most of that is martial training – someone who is already an experienced warrior can become a member of the order in six months.

At 12th level, a laughing sister has become so powerful, so filled with the inspiration of Zheenkeef, that she is raised to a drunken sister (or brother). She is addressed as “Honored Brother” or “Honored Sister” and introduced by full title. The ceremony raising her is true to the name, as the newly named drunken sister drinks for an entire day from the finest wine available until she is blind drunk. She is then stripped of her weapons and armor and sent to a remote area – a wilderness, a desert, a mountain – to wander alone for three days. Of course, by this time the drunken sister is quite powerful, and it is rare that one does not survive the initiation.

After the initiation, many of the order swear off wine for some long period, except when drunk in ceremonial celebration. Indeed, they hardly need it any longer, for they are called the drunken brothers due to their incredible facility at conjuring up the deep joy of inebriation without the drink – and without its side effects. A drunken sister laughs louder, speaks more freely, sees more clearly, and is inspired more deeply than ever she was as a laughing sister. She may be understood to be drunk with life rather than with wine.

Table 5-10:

Joyous Brotherhood of Zheenkeef Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Laughing Brother/Sister	Three Years Training
12	Drunken Brother/Sister	Drunken Initiation

Additional Class Skills

The joyous brotherhood is trained to be vigilant about details other holy warrior orders ignore, and are most comfortable among common

and base folk. Though the joyous brothers appear to be drunk or oblivious much of the time, they are ever-observant, constantly noting their surroundings and keeping an eye out for hidden evil.

The joyous brotherhood’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Gather Information (Cha) and Spot (Wis).

Domains

A member of the joyous brotherhood may choose two of the following domains: Freedom, Mind, and Emotion.

Gift of Zheenkeef

Beginning at 3rd level, once per week the joyous sister can flood the area around her with waves of *emotion (hope)*, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Emotion (hope)* is a spell-like ability for the joyous brotherhood.

At 12th level, a joyous sister receives no additional weekly invocations of *emotion (hope)* but may inspire it in herself, and herself only, once per day, as per the spell from a caster of her class level. She can use this ability on herself more often as she advances in levels (twice per day at 15th level, three times at 18th level). It is still a spell-like ability.

Spells

The joyous brotherhood may cast spells from the following list:

1st level – *bleed*, *bleed water*, *bleed weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *comprehend languages*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic weapon*, *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*, *delay poison*, *undetected alignment*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *create food and wine (works exactly as create food and water, but creates wine instead of water)*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal animal companion*, *discern lies*, *prayer*, *remove blindness/deafness*

4th level – *cure serious wounds*, *divination*, *dispel evil*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *tongues*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, a member of the joyous brotherhood may call to her side an animal companion, usually a celestial hyena, wolverine, or badger. This companion goes wherever she goes and often defends her while she sleeps, for the joyous brothers are often on the road with no other companions. The animal companion gains all of the bonuses a holy warrior’s steed receives.

Conduct

The rules of conduct for the joyous brotherhood are more poetic suggestions than clear edicts:

- Never accept the words of the powerful at face value;
- Those who are too weak to afford beliefs should be offered aid;
- Look for the detail no one else sees;

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- Remind all those you meet that life is sweet;
- Never shrink from looking into the face of tragedy;
- A person enslaved by his own beliefs should be offered the hand of friendship;
- A person enslaved by the beliefs of others must be freed;
- Remember the Creed each day.

Interpretations of these edicts vary, so it is unlikely that a joyous brother would be ejected from the order for violating one – unless that violation was patently obvious (becoming the obedient servant of a king, for instance). The stricture about freeing the enslaved does not pertain to evil folk who have been imprisoned for their evil; that much is universally accepted by the members of the order.

Whatever the interpretation of these edicts, if a joyous brother knowingly commits an evil act or actively aids in the commission of an evil act, she will lose her abilities until she atones.

Associates

The joyous brothers prefer chaotic companions, as they are a highly chaotic order. It is very rare to find a joyous brother traveling with, say, an officer of the courts of Maal. Most often they will travel with fighters, barbarians, rogues, rangers, and others who do not mind the occasional song and large jug of wine. Those who take themselves very seriously or insist that their companions obey every rule are unlikely to find themselves in the company of a joyous brother for long.

Alignment

Members of the joyous brotherhood must be chaotic good

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

Most vineyards are run by the oracles, the oldest of the Zhenkefan holy orders. The motivations of this order are mysterious; they sometimes aid those who have nothing but contempt for the vineyards and its worshipers while denying the requests of the most ardent Zhenkefans. Whatever motivates them, their powers are unrivaled; they see far.

At 1st level, a prospective oracle must seek out a prophet and request admission into the order. Often the prophet will send the person away, but if she deems the applicant worthy, she puts him to the test. He is made to answer 12 questions that can only be answered with divination, culminating in the test of the chalices: he is put before 30 goblets of wine, all but one of which are poisoned. He must determine which chalice he may drink from. Should he survive, he is admitted to the order and named a seer. A seer is addressed as “Far-Seeing Master” and introduced with the words “The Seer” before his name. So Karzgar would be addressed as “Far-Seeing Master Karzgar,” but introduced as “The Seer Karzgar, an oracle of Zheenkeef.”

At 7th level, a seer declares himself a prophet. It is not a title one can be provided. The prophet, having known he would bear this title some day, has prepared new robes and a new staff of office for this day. A seer who is not preparing robes or a staff for himself either knows he will find some in his journeys or has foreseen that he will never become a prophet. A prophet is addressed as “All-Seeing Master.” A prophet is always introduced with the words “The Prophet” before his name.

Table 5-11:

The Oracles of Zheenkeef Titles

Minimum Prestige Class Level	Title	Requirement
1	Seer	Passage of the Test
7	Prophet	Preparation of Robe and Staff

Prestige Class: Oracles of Zheenkeef

Frail, peculiar, a bit mad, the oracles of Zheenkeef see things they should not and know more than they let on. They call on the power of Zheenkeef to fill them with swirling, mad images of the future, most of which cannot be cast into words. Many do not reveal the secret knowledge they bear, believing that others would be better off not knowing. Some compulsively reveal all they see, terrifying children with their dark futures. Most who spend time with these provisional leaders of the Zhenkefan faith end up asking themselves whether the fates they foresee may be avoided. To be an oracle is to live a life plagued by visions – most of which make no sense, some of which contain the secrets of the future.

Oracles usually come from the apostles of Zheenkeef, though many sorcerers and wizards who love Zheenkeef have come into the order over the years. There are even members of other clergy who end up converting to the ways of Zheenkeef late in life; the order is open to any who wish to give themselves to the visions Zheenkeef’s inspiration provides. Those incapable of casting divination spells cannot become oracles; if they tried, they would certainly die in the initiation.

NPC oracles of Zheenkeef are the wild-eyed leaders of the faith, speaking in riddles and whispers, sending people on bizarre errands only they understand. They are often found in rooms filled with clouds of stinking incense or in chasms, smelling the vapors from fissures in the earth. They read the many signs of the universe and converse with voices none but they can hear – or with the Mother of Madness herself. It would be easy, and perhaps comforting, to discount them as mad, but they know too much to be ignored. When two oracles meet, particularly two prophets, it is both propitious and terrifying; their visions may spin all around them into salvation... or despair.

Abbreviation: Zor

Hit Die: d4.

Requirements

To qualify to become an oracle, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-lawful; attending to the visions Zheenkeef provides requires an unordered mind and spirit.

Feats: Skill Focus (Scry).

Zhenkefan: An oracle must be able to tap directly into the inspiration of Zheenkeef to receive visions; this requires a profound devotion to the Mother of Madness. Anyone but a deeply religious Zhenkefan would go mad from the visions.

Scry: 12 ranks.

Spellcasting: Able to cast six divination spells, including at least one of 5th level or higher.

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Table 5 12: The Oracle of Zheenkeef

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	<i>Read Fortune</i>	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Avoid Disaster	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+3	+3	Uncanny Dodge (1)	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+4	+4	Vision	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+1	+4	+4	Impart Fortune	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+5	+5	Uncanny Dodge (2)	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+5	+5	<i>Minor Prophecy</i>	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+2	+6	+6	Sense of Doom	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+6	+6	Foretelling	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+7	+7	<i>Major Prophecy</i> , Uncanny Dodge (3)	+1 level of existing class

Class Skills

The oracle's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Oracles gain no additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Spellcasting

An oracle continues training in magic. Thus, when a new oracle level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of oracle to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Read Fortune (Sp)

At the beginning of a journey or adventure, the oracle can read the

fortune of one of his allies (the oracle may not read his own fortune). Discerning the fortune takes an hour and the ally must be present. It can be read with tarot cards, tea leaves, a wine-induced trance, or any other method that strikes the oracle's fancy.

There is a 50% chance that the fortune is weal, and a 50% chance that it is woe. If it is weal, at some point during the journey or adventure the oracle may declare a single roll of a d20 (saving throw, attack roll, skill check, etc.) as the subject of the fortune before it is rolled. The roll declared weal is automatically read as the result most favorable to the ally (e.g. if she is being attacked, a 1, if she is attacking, a 20). If it is woe, at some point in the adventure the oracle must declare a single d20 roll as the subject, and it is automatically read as the result least favorable to the ally. Some players may try to "game the system" by picking insignificant rolls ("I want to make a Spot check to see if the glass is half empty.") for woe results. GMs should remember that fickle fate is under their command, and use its powers to humble such players.

An oracle with this ability alone is incapable of putting the fortune into words (as it is a swirling mess of visions and sounds) and cannot tell his ally of her fate other than to indicate whether it is weal or woe. In such cases, the oracle must accompany the ally to declare what roll is the subject of the fortune. If the



There is no set attire for the oracles, though most dress lightly. They are often surrounded by braziers and censers – it gets hot!

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oracle cannot impart the fortune and cannot accompany the ally, he may not use this ability.

If a woe result is not declared by the end of the adventure, the declarant (either the oracle or the ally, if the oracle has and uses the Impart Fortune ability) loses 5,000 XP, which (not coincidentally) is the experience cost of a greater *miracle* – avoiding your fate counts. Having died is no excuse. Woe results are not required to be declared (but we recommend doing so). What counts as “a journey or adventure” is up to your GM. It should be obvious based on circumstances, but if there is any question, say a single game session.

Avoid Disaster (Ex)

At 2nd level, an oracle's head is so filled with visions of possibilities for the future that the worst threads of probability begin to scream out at him. He gains the uncanny ability to avoid disaster, meaning that if he is exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage (such as *fireball*), he takes no damage with a successful saving throw. Unlike the rogue and monk, he can wear any type of armor and maintain this ability.

Uncanny Dodge

Starting at 3rd level, the oracle is so keenly aware of every possible disaster awaiting him that he gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to even be aware of it. At 3rd level and above, he retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.)

At 6th level, the oracle can no longer be flanked, since he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack the oracle. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least four levels higher than the oracle can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

At 10th level, the oracle gains an intuitive sense that alerts him to danger from traps, giving him a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps.

If the oracle has another class that grants the uncanny dodge ability, add together all the class levels of the classes that grant the ability and determine the character's uncanny dodge ability on that basis.

Vision (Ex)

Divinations, scrying devices, and spells in the hands of normal mortals are powerful; in the hands of oracles, they are divine. The oracle may add his Charisma modifier (if positive) to all Scry checks as a sacred bonus. Further, any divination or scrying with a percentile roll involved (*divination's* chance of success, *scry's* chance of casting select spells through it) is easier for the oracle due to his visions; he receives a bonus to these percentage rolls equal to his oracle level.

Impart Fortune (Ex)

As the oracle gains in experience, he is better able to interpret his visions and explain them. When he reads an ally's fortune (using the Read Fortune ability), he may tell his ally all he has seen, leaving it to his ally to determine what roll is affected. The oracle may choose to keep the fortune to himself.

Sense of Doom (Su)

At 8th level, the oracle is so attuned to the visions that haunt him that he has a perpetual sense of what fate is about to befall him. At the beginning of every session, the oracle rolls a d20; this will be his next saving throw result. The oracle does not know when this roll will be used, but knows whether it is good or bad. An oracle who begins his journey with a low roll has a sense of doom hanging over him and is naturally quite nervous, where an oracle with a high roll knows that fortune will smile on him soon. The oracle may do whatever he likes to prepare himself for the fate, though it may not be obvious when it will come.

When the roll is used, he rolls again and saves the new result until it is used. This means an oracle always knows what his next saving throw result will be, but doesn't know what it will be for, or which save-type (Fortitude, Reflex, or Will) will be used.

When the roll is a 1, the oracle has a -1 morale penalty to all rolls until it is used. He is so nervous about his impending doom he can't muster much enthusiasm. When it is a 20, he gains a +1 morale bonus until it is used.

Foretelling (Su)

This incredible ability has two effects, one on combat and the other on a campaign in general:

- Once per week while in combat, the oracle can foretell the result of a round of battle for one of his allies (he may not do this for himself). As a full round action, the oracle announces what he has foreseen in exacting detail. In the following round his foretelling bestows two of the following effects on the ally: +20 insight bonus to attack roll, +20 insight bonus to AC, +20 insight bonus (for one round) to initiative, +20 insight bonus to Reflex saving throws.
- Whenever the GM wishes (often at the beginning of a major adventure), the oracle is struck with a foretelling pertaining to himself and his allies. “We will stand on top of a white hill, and Korim will hold a stone axe over his head, crying out in a foreign tongue. We will see the heavens part and fire will rain from the sky.” If the GM does not wish to make up a foretelling, possible substitutes are giving the player a 30-second glimpse at the dungeon map or a minute to study descriptions of one or two of the monsters he and his companions will face.

Minor/Major Prophecy (Sp)

Powerful oracles are able to draw on Zheenkeef's inspiration to read the future. Kings come to them before great wars to learn the future of their endeavors; heroes seek them out to hear how their epic quests will fare. Given an hour to concentrate and meditate on the visions and threads of the future, these oracles can make a prophecy about an upcoming adventure, military campaign, or other major event.

A minor prophecy costs 100XP, and the oracle rolls a d10 on the following chart. A major prophecy costs 500XP, and the oracle rolls a d10 on the chart and adds his Wisdom modifier. The effects of the prophecy last for the duration of the event about which the oracle is prophesying or for three days – whichever is shorter. At the GM's discretion, the oracle may also roll a d100 with the d10; if the d10 roll with modifiers is the same as the d100 roll, it's very, very bad (see below).

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Table 5.13: Oracle Prophecy Results

Roll	Result
1	Ill Omens. All participants who hear of the prophecy suffer a -2 morale penalty to all rolls during the event.
2-3	Signs Unclear. No effect.
4	A Dangerous, Deadly Road. All participants who hear of the prophecy are wary. They suffer a -1 morale penalty to attack rolls, but a +1 morale bonus to all saving throws.
5-7	Tragedy and Victory Await. The oracle may bestow up to four “woe” fortunes (see Read Fortune) and four “weal” fortunes on any combination of participants (e.g. one person may receive all eight, eight people receive one each, etc.); an equal number of weal and woe must be distributed.
8-9	The Foe Is Sure to Fall! The oracle names one foe type (evil monks, red dragons, demonic cultists, etc.); all participants receive a +2 morale bonus to attack rolls against that foe type.
10	Glory Awaits! All participants receive a +1 morale bonus to all rolls.
11-12	The Good Road Waits and a Hero Will Rise! All participants receive a +1 morale bonus to all rolls. The oracle also names one of the participants; she receives four “weal” fortunes.
13-14	The Heavens Smile on You All! All participants receive a +2 morale bonus to all rolls.
15+	You Are Chosen. The oracle singles out up to ten participants by name. Each receives five “weal” fortunes; further, none of them can be killed unless they reach double their maximum negative hit points (-20 for most). They are assured of their success and each receives a +2 morale bonus to all rolls.
If d10 and d100 are same	Doom! The endeavor is doomed and anyone involved is likely to die horribly! All involved receive a -5 morale penalty to all rolls.

The God of Magic Knowledge, and Truth The Scriptoriums of Tinel

Tinel (tuh-NEE-EE) (Magnificent, Aloof, Imperious, All-Knowing, All-Seeing, the Great, the Whisperer, of the Countless Locks, the Heavenly Archmage, Lord of Secrets, Keeper of the Keys)

Myths

Making of the Keys

Tinel the Great has always held that in exploring the mind, the mortal spirit can be uplifted to great heights. He believes that the individual is capable of wonders unachievable by the many, and encourages his worshippers to explore learning, science, and the study of magic over all else. Twice in the history of the mortal races has this doctrine shown its limitations, and twice has All-Knowing, All-Seeing Tinel determined the best way to mend the damage done.

So long ago that it is recorded by few and remembered by fewer, there came to be a great council of fourteen wizards. These men and women of tremendous power determined that all knowledge had been laid bare before them and that there was no crevice, no niche into which they had yet to peer – but one. For no living mortal had ever journeyed to Heaven for the express purpose of knowledge. Certainly, some of the faithful had

been called before the throne of one god or another and returned in a babbling religious rapture. But the wizards were people of knowledge, not faith, and it was their determination that they should have in their possession maps, surveys, and a full exploratory journal of Heaven.

Mustering the length and breadth of their skill, knowledge, and power, the mortals opened a series of portals, powerful and terrible, and through their thresholds lay the kingdom of Heaven. When the fourteen stepped into the holy home of the gods, the Lords of Heaven were outraged. Shalimyr moved to smite them for their pride, and few were prepared to gainsay him, but Imperious Tinel spoke: “Hold thy hand, Sea Father, for these are my folk, and they are precious to me. I have told them to seek knowledge, and they have come seeking the greatest knowledge – the faces of their gods.” For indeed, Tinel was overcome with pride himself: the pride of a father for his children.

So it was that Magnificent Tinel came before these fourteen in the very halls of Heaven and showed them his glory. His face glowed with the light of one thousand fires. Each strand of his hair was a burning river of gold. In his hands sat power, on his brow shone the wisdom of all the ages.

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The keeper of the keys, Tinel is called magnificent for a reason; to behold him is to see the pure light of raw magic.

“Behold!” he declared to the fourteen, “Ye have come of my bidding, and I allow ye to walk in my halls, for I am Tinel, the Lord of Secrets!”

But the fourteen spoke among themselves and did not respond to him. And Tinel saw then that they made notes and drawings, and did not fall to their faces as he had expected. In their pride, many of the mortals turned their backs and walked from the presence of Tinel the Whisperer; these began to map the vaulted halls of Heaven. When Tinel ordered the celestials of his hall to gather these mortals together before his majestic presence once more so that he might explain to them their relative unimportance in Heaven, the celestials moved to do so. But these mortals were as powerful as they were arrogant, and working terrible magics they bore the celestials from their feet and bound them to the ground.

“How dare ye strike my anointed?” Tinel the Great bellowed, but the mortals ignored him and continued their exploration. When he took one into hand, a wizard called Mariliya the Red, and demanded an explanation for their impudence, the red enchantress noted in her book: “It is capable of emotional response, raising its voice to demonstrate rage.”

It was then clear to Tinel that the unfettered quest for knowledge had within it his destruction. For these wizards were so pleased with themselves and their conquest of all laws – natural, magical, and spiritual – that they saw Magnificent Tinel and the other gods as mere creatures, like ducks, or men, or fiery giants. Should they convince the rest of the mortal world that this falsehood was true, it might become so, for lies become true when the whole world believes them. “I will not abide this,” the Lord of Secrets declared, and prepared to expel these mortals from Heaven, for there was still a father’s pride in him and he would not see them destroyed utterly.

The mortals had prepared for this eventuality, however, and with a shouted warning from Mariliya, they congregated in the winking of an eye. Together they worked grim spells and cast up mighty wards against Tinel, for their plan had been all along to lay low one of the Lords of Heaven and to bring her back to their tower and study her. They intended to capture Anwyn, whom it is said is the weakest of the gods, but they were confident in their abilities and believed they could hold Tinel at bay.

And Tinel looked at these wards with confusion, for though he is All-Knowing and All-Seeing, Lord of Secrets, and possesses many other names of might, it is possible for him to be surprised from time to time, and he could not discern what these mortals intended. They had prepared this assault in secret, weaving great spells to keep the Lords of Heaven from observing their work, and so they believed they would prevail. Seeing the Heavenly Archmage so amazed, the fourteen pressed their advantage and brought to bear their mighty staves. Crafted in solitude over long years with the most powerful runes ever etched by mortal hands, forged in fires of pure magic and cooled in the blood of titans, each was, in its own right, the greatest wizard’s staff ever made. Together they formed an awesome power, and their light was seen in Heaven, on earth, and in Hell as they assaulted Tinel the Great.

It was not until the magic from their mighty wizard’s lances crashed down upon him that Tinel at last understood what it was that these mortals meant to do. In that terrible moment, he reckoned the fullness of their plan, though he still could not believe it. For one terrible moment, the mortals believed they had conquered a god. For one terrible moment, the hosts of Hell cheered at the light they believed the downfall of Heaven, and the hosts of Heaven quailed.

But it was only a moment. With the wave of the Heavenly Archmage’s great hand, the fourteen staves were sundered. With one utterance that sounded like one word but also every word ever spoken by mortal tongues, the wizards were reduced to ash, and their spirits were caught in his palm.

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He placed them then in a jewel, and this jewel he placed on his brow so that for all eternity they could observe what he observed and know that they were fools. However, their folly stayed with him in more than this jewel, for he had seen in them that mortals might believe themselves his equal; it did not sit well with him. Since that time many mortals have known him as Aloof, for he has never again shown a father's pride in their seeking of secrets. It is whispered in dark places that one of the demons of the Abyss now shows that pride in Tinel's place, encouraging mortals to seek out any and all forbidden knowledge. This wicked prince of the Abyss, called Astaroth by his followers, has thus won away many weak hearts from Heaven.

Having seen that the quest for knowledge must eventually lead all mortals powerful enough to walk the planes to seek out Heaven, Tinel was grave and despondent. First, with a wave of his mighty hand, he stripped magic from the mortal races. For some years, there was no arcane magic to be worked by even the mightiest wizard. That done, the Heavenly Archmage called upon his nephew, Korak. Together, Tinel and the King of the Crucible forged the locks of Heaven and their countless keys. These locks they scattered about the Great Sphere in a pattern, powerful in its weaving, known only to Tinel of the Countless Locks. No one who is not summoned by the gods may gain entry into Heaven without coming to one of the locks and presenting to it a key. And should one open one of these locks and seek entrance into the holy realm, he would encounter Uriel the Archangel, guardian of Heaven. Tinel is the Keeper of the Keys, and he has not once surrendered them to any mortal; none but those summoned have come to Heaven since the forging of the keys.

From that day forward, the realm of the gods was locked to mortals, even those powerful enough to walk the planes. It is said to this very day that any mortal who believes his knowledge makes him equal to the gods is visited by Tinel the Whisperer, and the Lord of Secrets speaks to the proud fool, warning him of the path he walks. Should the mortal persist in his beliefs, he is placed in the jewel on Tinel's brow and heard from nevermore.

The Name Unspeakable

The Making of the Keys is the tale of the first of two times that Tinel of the Countless Locks has had to intercede against the mortal quest for knowledge. Of the second, little is known and less is said. There came a time that a people arose who sought to piece together the name of the Nameless One and, uttering it, end all things. How much of the name they gathered is not known – or if it is, those who know will not say. Yet, it is known that Tinel the Great, Keeper of the Keys of Heaven, discovered their plan with the aid of his mortal servants. Descending upon this unholy cadre, the Heavenly Archmage destroyed them utterly and made this declaration: “This is the greatest crime any may commit, and the torment they shall know for eternity will be shared by any who would follow.”

So it is that little is spoken of this, for to even ponder this thing is to flirt with pain and torture unending.

Associations

Tinel is the god of magic, knowledge, the mind, secrets, truth, science, magicians, those who rely on or admire magic, scholars, scribes, the inquisitive, and seekers for truth.

In the animal kingdom he is associated with cats, ravens, monkeys, and all variety of weasels – all of which are highly curious and intelligent creatures. Cats and ravens are particularly common associations, because they have about them an air of mystery as well as inquisitiveness. But the closest animal association to Tinel is the rook, a bird that not only shows great curiosity and intelligence, but

also gathers together with others of its kind to share their secrets. The rooks, it is said, watch the world of mortals from the bough and the air, reporting all they see to All-Seeing, All-Knowing Tinel himself.

Among mystical creatures, Tinel is associated closely with the pseudodragon. It is said that Tinel was the first of the gods to befriend the dragons, born of the great war of the gods, and it was through his magic that this strange offshoot of the world's greatest creatures were born.

Tinel is worshipped most commonly by wizards, bards, rogues, and others who seek knowledge or secrets. Those who live a life of the mind, or survive by their wits and knowledge, hold Tinel dear, for he smiles on those who love learning. Interestingly, Tinel is also patron of those who seek the truth, so those who investigate crimes or seek to unravel mysteries often invoke his name. He is quite popular with the races that revere magic and learning, particularly elves, gnomes, and humans. There are halfling and dwarven worshippers of Tinel, but they focus more on knowledge and truth than on magic.

Alignment

Tinel is chaotic good or neutral. Tinel is a strange and mysterious god. The Tinel worshipped by most is chaotic good, for he seeks the mastery of magic and all knowledge for the good of the world and to further the struggle against evil. However, there is also Tinel the Aloof, who is the same god, but with a very different attitude. At times he seems to be completely neutral, interested only in the acquisition of knowledge and the preservation of secrets, entirely disinterested in the mortal realm. For purposes of determining the alignment of his followers, consider Tinel both alignments – but his followers are very different depending on which aspect of Tinel they worship. This is discussed below.

Representations

In icons, Tinel is shown as a tall figure wearing flowing robes of white, with golden hair and golden eyes. He has a red jewel on his brow, held there by a silver circlet. In his left hand he holds a tall staff engraved with countless runes, and from his waist hangs a ring heavy with golden keys. His right hand is usually held aloft in a somatic gesture, as though casting a spell.

Symbolically, Tinel is represented with a golden key. The key symbolizes the keys to Heaven, of course, but also the keys to the countless secrets of the world. When in haste, this symbol is quickly sketched as a two-tined key with very little detail, though this is rarely used.

Worshippers of Tinel seeking to display a holy symbol wear at least one key about their necks as symbol of Tinel, and some wear keys all over their person.

Purpose

Tinel is mysterious, and his motives are his own. His attentions are torn, and the reasons are clear – he knows the future. Tinel is more acutely aware than any of the other gods that, someday, he will cease to be, either because the sphere will cease to be or because the mortals will all become like the 14 wizards who sought to logically chart Heaven. He believes the end is inevitable. For this reason he is slowly giving in to what would be described in a mortal mind as madness. Some of the time he continues to pursue knowledge and promote the

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learning of magic and good because it matters to him, and sometimes he is utterly lost in his studies and his secrets, entirely uncaring about the rest of the sphere. It is like he is two different beings – and because he is a god, he exhibits these two personalities concurrently; how this is even possible is one of the mysteries his followers ponder.

It is not altogether unreasonable to call Tinel mad, and perhaps his wife, Zheenkeef, has had an effect on him. The Tinel focused on the world believes that the individual is greater than the community, that one person who finds her purpose, her calling, can achieve far more than a thousand people doing what is expected of them. For this reason, he drives those who seek him out in prayer toward quests of personal discovery and internal inquisition. There is no one more dear to him than the man who questions his own motives, who accepts nothing at face value, who sees the entire world as a lesson.

Yet Tinel also suffers from a divine malaise, retreating to his sanctum and studying every minute detail of the universe. Perhaps he seeks to unravel the mysteries of the Nameless One in an effort to keep the world from ending should his name be spoken. Perhaps he strives to ensure that he and his family will never cease to be. Whatever it is that possesses him, in this state he cares nothing for mortals, for individuals, or even for his own family.

These two faces of Tinel are sensed by those who worship him, which has led to a profound schism in his faith. The schism is so deep that his church has actually expelled a large movement of heretics, and is often torn by internal bloodshed and rivalry. If this bothers Tinel, he seems to have done nothing to stop it – some believe that he waits to see which side of the schism prevails to put to rest his own struggle – that in the end he will become like the winning side forever.

Just as he does not seem to care about the rift in his church, he also pays little attention to the rift in his own family. Zheenkeef and Shalimyr cuckold him constantly, and he takes no heed. Many believe that he does not know, just as the wisest men and women often fail to see those things that are most close and hurtful to them.

If there is one thing Tinel continues to be passionate about, however, it is his rivalry with his brother Terak. He opposes his brother in nearly all things. Just as his brother's reason for continuing the vendetta has changed greatly since their youth, Tinel's has also. While he once fought to be the eldest, now he argues with his brother because he sees his doctrines as the likely downfall of the gods. Terak would create a world where mortals need no gods, where they live in unity without questions, obeying their leaders. In such a world, the leaders are the gods and truth is unimportant. Terak's vision of the world is soulless, in Tinel's esteem, and the individual will be crushed and washed away if his brother has his way. For this reason, the old grudge is still strong in Tinel's heart – though even this is weakened in the Tinel withdrawn to his studies.

Servants

Tinel has three primary groups of servants, each with a leader:

The Scriveners

Tinel has an enormous body of scribes, all of them mute and hooded, who take note of every event in the mortal world and Heaven, making the supreme record of history. Their chief is called the Black Scribe, as he alone among them wears rich robes of sable and ermine trimmed in silver, a symbol of his office. Only the Black Scribe speaks, and he conveys news to Tinel and orders to the Scriveners.

The Cataloguers

It is said that every book ever written by hand, mortal or immortal, is stored in the library of Tinel. The very act of writing ensures that Tinel will learn your thoughts. The Cataloguers store the works of mortals and all the records of the Scriveners, making them available to Tinel – or the other gods – whenever necessary. Their chief, the Grey Librarian, so called for her robes of grey wolf fur trimmed in gold, is the only member of the Cataloguers to speak to Tinel – though the Cataloguers are all capable of speech and constantly whisper to one another. It is said that the halls of the Cataloguers constantly echo with their unearthly whispering and the scratching of their quills.

The Eyes

Made up primarily of Rooks, the Eyes are animal servants of Tinel, mostly, who go from the mortal plane to Heaven and back, reporting on all of the events of the sphere. These eyes whisper their findings to the Scriveners, who take their notes to be catalogued by Cataloguers. Some of the Eyes are said to be far more frightening than Rooks, Ravens, or any other animal, but what nature these Eyes may be is not known. The chief of the Eyes is called the

White Whisperer. Hooded in robes of snow fox fur trimmed in ebon, the White Whisperer is of mysterious form and background and speaks to no one but Tinel himself.

Uriel

Beyond these groups, Tinel is closely associated with one of the Archangels, Uriel. Uriel is the guardian of Heaven and watches the gates that Tinel locked long ago. The faithful of Tinel, particularly those concerned with magic, hold Uriel dear in all of their prayers, for after Tinel stripped magic from the mortal races, it was Uriel who convinced the Lord of Secrets to return it. Legend has it that it was the Archangel himself who bore the magic back to the mortal races in a great chest or ark.



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The Church

Church Description

The scriptoriums of Tinel, where the Tinelites worship, are found in most major population centers. There are not many shrines to Tinel on the roadsides or in the wilderness. There are a few scriptoriums in hidden towers, like the isolated mage towers of legend, but in general one must go to a city or town to find a scriptorium.

The scriptoriums vary in size. Many are just small libraries with facilities for scribes. The largest scriptoriums are multi-story buildings with thousands of books, or sometimes a complex of buildings. They are funded mostly by reading and scribe fees: People pay the scriptoriums to access their books, or to have the scribes copy a text.

The money gathered from these fees goes to fund schooling out of the scriptoriums. Teachers come to the Tinelite centers of worship from miles around to hear the lectures of the wise and the learned in matters philosophical and esoteric. It is customary for those attending the lectures to pay the lecturer afterward a fee equal to what the listeners estimate the lecture was worth to them. The scriptoriums do not benefit from these transactions and see them as part of their works in the name of Tinel.

For many years now, the scriptoriums have been subject to a deep and ugly rift. Most scriptoriums are controlled by the chaotic good side of the conflict, but a few are run by the neutral branch of the faith. The chaotic good scriptoriums are open to the world, whereas the neutral branches hoard their knowledge and their secrets jealously.

Church Structure

There are five holy orders of the scriptoriums, two of which are not particularly powerful (NPC orders). For most folk, the scriptoriums are run by the inceptors (clergy), who are divided into three levels of status: neophytes, teachers, and armari. However, for those who practice the magical arts, the most powerful order of the scriptoriums is the hierophants, which has two levels of power: the hierophants themselves and the Five who oversee the order. Protecting the work of these orders and seeking out lost knowledge are the mage guard (holy warriors), who have two levels of status: defenders of the word and keepers of secrets.

In the background of every scriptorium are the two lesser orders, the scribes (who have two groups, scribes and master scribes) and the librarians (who are divided into librarians and chief librarians).

There is no supreme authority in the scriptorium structure, with the highest-ranking inceptors of each scriptorium determining its policies and interpretations of the faith. However, the order of the hierophants, which matters only to those who practice the arcane arts, is centrally overseen by the Five, the world's most powerful arcane spellcasting worshippers of Tinel.

The average scriptorium has at least one armarius, four teachers, and 12 neophytes in residence at one time. There are often as many as ten scribes, one master scribe, four librarians, and one chief librarian. There are usually only four or five mage guard at any one scriptorium, and the hierophants – who almost always have their own sanctums – are rarely found at scriptoriums.

Doctrine

“When I walk down the road that I know I must walk, and I come to the path I know I must take, I hope to find myself opposed. For if there is a rock in my path, I will not say ‘I must move this rock,’ as might the practical man. I will not say, ‘I will turn around,’ as might the impatient man. I say, ‘Why has this rock been placed here before me?’ Obstacles lie across our many paths in life to teach us the meaning of our journey. There is nothing that happens to us without the knowledge of the Lord of Secrets. All that we experience in our lifetime is meant to edify. May we have the wisdom to learn.” – the Journals of Madrigan Yewstaff

There are many aspects of the scriptoriums of Tinel, and there is even a violent division between his faithful, but two beliefs are universal among all Tinelites:

- First, that there is Truth. There are facts about the universe that are incontestable, and it is the duty and purpose of the faithful to find and examine the Truth through the use of their senses and empirical evidence;
- Second, that mortal life is a test. In our brief time on this earth, we are being watched and judged; the final reckoning takes place before Maal, and we will do well in that final reckoning if we solve the personal riddle of our existence.

How these beliefs are interpreted varies based on which faction one belongs to.

The Faction of Tinel the Heavenly Archmage (Chaotic Good)

This, the dominant faction of the scriptoriums, believes that Tinel wants every man, woman, and child to be happy. However, we have free will and cannot be made happy with the wave of his mighty hand. We must find happiness, and the only way we will find it is if we explore the meaning of our own existence. Every person has a great riddle, perhaps unsolvable, that he is meant to unravel in the course of his lifetime. Almost no one does, and this is why we are reborn again and again, sent back by Maal to try again. The solving of the riddle is only possible if one seeks out the Truth, sometimes hard and terrible, and that is only possible if one shares knowledge with others who also seek the Truth.

The followers of Tinel have an advantage over others in the quest to solve the riddle of their lives, for they know how to seek the signs. Tinel wants us to be happy, and so he makes signs and portents available to all people throughout the world. The most important of these is the Vision of the Opening Eye. When a Tinelite is young (or young in his faith, for a late-in-life convert), he learns a series of meditations to open the closed eye of the mind. After some time, usually a few months, the Tinelite is visited in his sleep by an incredibly vivid dream. The dream is often filled with strange symbols – for instance, the Tinelite in question wandering a barren field and planting bloody seeds as eight blue hawks fly overhead. The vision will be the Tinelite's passion for many years to come as he seeks to unravel its meaning.

Many never find the meaning of their visions. Those who come to understand (in a moment of epiphany; one cannot delude oneself about this) take on new surnames based on their understanding of the vision.

Comprehending the vision is only the first step, though, likened to finding one of the keys to Heaven. The Tinelite spends the rest of his life seeking out how the vision unlocks the riddle of his being, searching for the lock to fit that key. The Tinelites explain that each of

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us has some great lesson we are expected to understand completely before we die – the riddle is uncovering and comprehending that lesson; few manage it in their lifetimes. Those who do are among the most serene mortals one could hope to meet, perfectly at peace. Sadly, because the riddles are personal, they cannot actually pass along the answer for future generations, short of explaining the lesson they have learned and how it pertains to them.

This vision serves not only as a central pursuit for the members of this scriptorium faction, but also as an explanation of their view of Tinel; he loves us and provides us with clues so that we may find our way. We must preserve and share knowledge to help each other on our journey to find our answers. There should be debate and rancor and argument and struggle. The world is not pretty, and we must look at every aspect of it in our quest. This is why societies should be free, and lawful outlooks are counter to what is best for people. Highly lawful societies only work when there are questions people are not allowed to ask, places people are not allowed to go. Groupthink is the enemy of us all; the greatest good is found in many free individuals, not in many united slaves. However, simply looking at all aspects does not mean partaking – these Tinelites are not evil and do not give in to depravity. The quest is for knowledge to live a good life.

They regard the neutral faction of the faith as heretics, teaching lies about Tinel.

The Faction of Aloof Tinel (Neutral)

This faction agrees that one must seek Truth. Life is a great test; upon this they agree as well. Both factions have the Vision of the Opening Eye, and therefore both factions seek to comprehend their visions. But the faction of Aloof Tinel believes that a person must collect knowledge and secrets to break the riddle of one's life. The vision is a sort of map to the Truth that one must collect to serve Tinel. These Truths, once collected, are kept close by the Tinelite and his scriptorium.

The mortal world is an illusion without consequence, created by the gods to weed out the worthy from the worthless. When we die, those who have accumulated the most knowledge – the only thing that is real in this fleeting illusory existence – will be sent from Maal to stand before Tinel. Those who show they have unraveled the secrets of life will be enlisted to aid Tinel in his studies to preserve the universe from the End Times. All that matters is the accumulation of Truth for this final test before the Lord of Secrets. Therefore, this faction encourages the hoarding of learning. They believe it is wrong to give knowledge to those who are not worthy and will waste Tinel's time.

They believe Tinel is no longer a caring god. They argue that Tinel places no signs in the world and does not offer a guiding hand to anyone. The vision is not a loving embrace from Tinel, it is a way of seeing the pure and beautiful Truth that one must seek out for the rest of one's days. When the vision is comprehended, it means the Tinelite is well on the way to finding the Truths necessary to serve Tinel.

They regard the chaotic good faction of the faith as deluded idiots, chasing phantoms. Tinel is too busy studying his secrets to pay attention to the inconsequential mortal races – mortals must prove themselves worthy to go to him.

The Schism

The division between the factions has actually resulted in a good deal of bloodshed in the past. However, since the faction of Aloof Tinel

doesn't care about much beyond the accumulation of knowledge, it was not able to keep up a struggle against the dominant faction. For this reason, members of the chaotic good faction dominate the scriptoriums; since scriptoriums rarely mix factions, it is not easy to find a neutral scriptorium. How long this will continue is unclear, but one thing is certain: The schism has not lost much of its rancor over the years, and members of these two factions still see each other as fools and heretics.

Common Prayers

The Tinelites believe that the mind, when open, can perceive many things that the naked eye cannot, including visions, portents, and symbols in the landscape. The opening of the mind's eye is a lengthy process, and involves the chanting of a meditation prayer on a daily basis; this prayer is one of many variations, as the Tinelites tailor the words to their personal outlook:

*"I walk the road of light and shadow,
I see the blossom grow and die,
I hear the wind and feel the stillness.
I feel joyous and desolate,
I know everything and nothing,
I am open to all things:
My eye is open to all things."*

Holy Days

The Tinelites actually have a calendar filled with holy days, many of them so minor that most people, even the most orthodox Tinelites, do not bother to observe them. As a faith, they observe the occasions of great historical events and moments of learning. For example, the birthdate of a great teacher who discovered a new method for preserving food is a holy day to the Tinelites.

But their holy days are not all so minor. There are two great festival periods for the Tinelites: the Festival of the Word and the Festival of Magic.

The Festival of the Word

More than any other faith of the gods of the tree, the Tinelites revere the written word, books, scholarship, and learning. In the Festival of the Word, which takes place every year, the Tinelites honor and reward the greatest scholars of the day. Usually this takes place on a national scale, so all of the scriptoriums within a single country band together to name the most worthy works of scholarship of that year and bestow kingly gifts to the scholars who made them. In places where neighboring countries have friendly relations and cultural ties, the scriptoriums of all of those nations may band together to issue only one set of awards.

The Festival of the Word takes eight full days, during which there are great feasts, lectures, recitals, and other celebrations of the written word. It takes place at the height of Summer.

The Festival of Magic

At the height of winter every year, the council of Five Hierophants decrees a single location where the greatest wizards and sorcerers of the world will convene for a great celebration of the gift of magic, given to the mortal races by Tinel. They arrive from all around the world for the five-day festivities.

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The Festival is open only to those who practice the arcane arts and involves much debate about arcane pursuits, the relations between those who use magic and those who do not, the policies of the council of the Five, and other matters of interest to powerful magic users. There is a great competition each year, with the winners receiving powerful magic items. The nature of the contests change each year, with the council of the Five determining the challenges just before the festival, but there are always at least two contests: one to show raw magical skill, the other to show cleverness and creativity with the use of magic. Sometimes there is even a contest for apprentices, but that is at the whim of the Five.

Saints

The Tinelites have books upon books of saints, with almost anyone who has furthered the mortal pursuit of knowledge and magic being named a saint. It is a posthumous title, and does not mean much for its commonness. For example, the Great Sage Matalou is a saint of the Tinelite faith, but he is not referred to by most as Saint Matalou.

Tinel's View of the Church

When Tinel is in a mood to pay attention to mortal affairs, he offers guidance through signs and portents to his faithful. However, the worldview of his church means that he can be fairly distant, as the faithful are looking to learn through discovery, not to be ordered about. This suits Tinel just fine, and he views his followers as clever, wise, and worthy of his affections. It is almost unheard of for Tinel to appear or speak directly to one of his followers.

When a Tinelite the Lord of Secrets is fond of is in terrible trouble, though, Tinel is not above lending a hand if a sign or small bit of guidance might snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. He speaks to his followers in the whispers of the wind, the strange faces seen in clouds, the creaking of the trees, and the many other languages of the world that are heard just beneath the surface.

Tinel has little interest in the schism between his followers. They are both right and both wrong and he is perfectly happy to let them battle out their differences to their hearts' content. After all, it is through struggle that mortals learn best. That being said, he keeps an eye on the neutral faction, which sometimes comes perilously close in its "knowledge is all" philosophy to the hubris of the Fourteen Wizards long ago.

Preferred Weapon

In battle Tinel wields the stuff of raw magic, and it takes many forms. Traditionally he is shown in the war against Kador, blasting the servants of the dark lord with five great knives of magic. For this reason, many of Tinel's followers learn to fight with the knife or dagger.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Inceptors of Tinel

The Order

The inceptors are preservers of knowledge, both mystical and mundane. To be an "inceptor" means to be just beginning, to be taking everything in; while some inceptors are vastly knowledgeable and have already taken in a great deal, the order's title still pertains.

An inceptor, no matter how venerable, is always learning and taking in new information as though he were still a young student.

An ancient order, the inceptors are able to trace the names of their elders across many generations. They are record-keepers, meticulous in their notation of details great and small. They do not have the minds or demeanors of accountants and lawyers, though, for their philosophy is one of exploration, discovery, and constant questioning. They question what they record; they doubt the rules and test them constantly for their veracity.

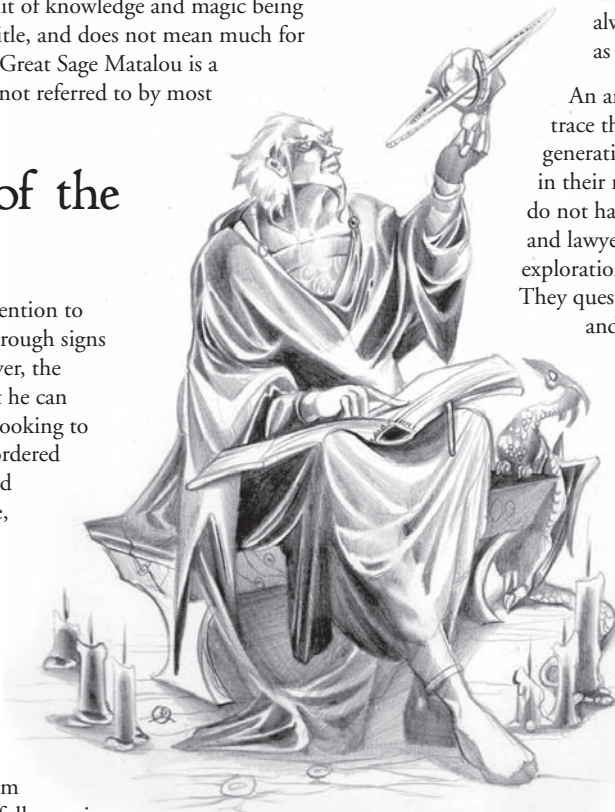
The Bard Imarillus once observed: "Morwyn's matriarchs say, 'How may I help you?' The soldiers of Terak ask, 'How may I defend you?' The Zhenkefan apostles wonder, 'What will inspire you?' But an inceptor of Tinel asks only 'Why?' and 'Why?' again, until a man wants nothing more than the company of the unholy and the unclean." The inceptors wonder at everything, try to pick apart the details of everything, and find questions to ask that no one else would think to ask; they do so because they are on a lifelong mission to understand the world and help others to understand it.

Most inceptors are part of the dominant (chaotic good) faction of the scriptoriums. These folk take on the duties of wanderers

and teachers, both to better themselves and others, but rarely in the pursuit of a specific piece of knowledge. It is their belief that the journey is the key; that exploration of knowledge, of the mind, will yield many things that are unexpected; and that the most worthy answers are the ones you did not seek in the first place.

The inceptors of the neutral faction, on the other hand, care only about finding knowledge. They do not aid others in their learning, and have no interest in the exploration of their own inner being or the guided discovery of another's. Instead, they join a cabal of the "worthy" and work together, almost like a hive, to track down and solve the mysteries of the universe. Their missions are nearly always to pursue a specific piece of learning and bring it back to the other inceptors.

There are two distinct phases in the career of an inceptor, whatever his faction. The younger inceptors wander, seeking information, while



The inceptors usually wear rich blue robes, though unlike mages they are perfectly happy to wear armor in danger.

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the more powerful inceptors stay at the scriptoriums to work. There are certainly exceptions, and history is filled with heroic inceptors who never had time to go back to their home scriptoriums and teach others all they had learned. These adventuring inceptors are sometimes the source of legends and great tales, and nearly always write down the memoirs of their life of travel before they pass on.

Titles:

At 1st level, a prospective member of the inceptors comes to the scriptorium seeking training. He is made a neophyte as soon as he has had his Vision of the Opening Eye. It is impossible to become an inceptor without being on the lifelong quest to solve the riddle of one's existence. A person who has already had the vision is immediately inducted into the order. All new members of the order are called neophytes, the title by which they are addressed and introduced, and will be for many years – in some cases for the rest of their lives – as they work to study the universe and its secrets. Neophytes travel widely, read constantly, debate contentiously, and, most importantly, learn.

At 5th level a neophyte may become a teacher. A council of inceptors made up of local teachers and armari grill the neophyte over three days of testing. They ask the neophyte in-depth questions on topics the neophyte has spent his career thus far studying. At the end of the three days, should the neophyte prove knowledgeable enough, he is elevated to teacher. It is usually a teacher's duty to spread learning, through his scriptorium or by wandering from town to town educating people. Among the neutral faction of the faith, teachers oversee large projects within their scriptoriums, assembling great reserves of learning on a particular topic. Whatever his faction, a teacher is expected to unravel the mystery of his vision. A teacher is addressed as "master" or "mistress" and introduced by full title.

At 10th level, or any time after that, a teacher may be made into an armarius. An armarius must have unraveled the mystery of his vision. A teacher may not become an armarius before 10th level, even if he has come to understand the vision, because he lacks the necessary insight. If the teacher has not come to understand the vision at 10th level, he may become an armarius when he does. To gain the title, the teacher must deliver a lecture to a scriptorium explaining his vision and its interpretation, at the end of which he takes on a new surname pertaining to the vision. Because the Tinelites document matters so thoroughly, it is possible to go back through generations and read the notes from very old armari lectures about their visions. An armarius is addressed as "revered master" or "revered mistress" and introduced by full title.

The armari oversee the scriptoriums and are their supreme authorities, issuing commands to all the other orders except the hierophants. If a scriptorium has several armari, they make decisions for the scriptorium as a council; simple majority rules. Once an armarius, it is the inceptor's goal to aid others, but also to comprehend the riddle of his life through his interpretation of the vision. Even among these, the most knowledgeable of the Tinelites, it is rare that one does so.

Table 5-14: Inceptors of Tinel Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Neophyte	Vision of the Opening Eye
5	Teacher	Pass 3 Days of Testing
10+	Armarius	Unravel the Vision; Deliver Lecture About Vision; Take New Surname

Domains

An inceptor may choose from two of the following domains: (Chaos), (Good), Knowledge, Truth, and Magic. (Only members of the chaotic good faction of the Tinelite church may choose the Chaos or Good domains.)

Spell Preparation Time

Inceptors prepare their spells over a long series of meditations following their daily record keeping. It is an inceptor's duty to record everything that he has learned in a day; most inceptors record events after a night's sleep, believing their dreams may help bring clarity.

Alignments

There are two primary alignments of inceptors: chaotic good and neutral.

Chaotic good inceptors belong to the dominant faction. They believe that there is no holier act one may perform than to broaden the awareness of another. Their worship of Tinel is individualistic and revolves around small groups, small societies, and one-on-one interactions. These inceptors are often wanderers, have an intense sense of curiosity, and are driven by a deep desire to do good. They believe that good will be best served if the world is filled with well-educated, well-informed individuals, and so seek to offer people the knowledge they need in life.

The other members of the chaotic good faction are neutral good. This is a sizable minority of the faction and, while they also believe good should be done through knowledge, they are willing to do it through large organizations. Neutral good members are responsible for expanding the educational aspects of the scriptoriums. In cities and nations where they have real influence, the Tinelites are involved with governments in educating people on a mass scale. These inceptors are happy to use any kind and decent method available to expand the minds of those they encounter, and lack the suspicion of law and government that their chaotic good brethren evidence.

Neutral Tinelites, on the other hand, care little about the welfare of others or the good they might do in their works. They are completely convinced that what we do on this world matters not a whit – save what we do to prepare ourselves to serve Tinel in the next life. These Tinelites are as distant from secular concerns as one could be, and are happiest when they are left alone with their books and studies.

There are many different alignments among the neutral faction: lawful neutral, chaotic neutral, and neutral evil. The lawful neutral members of the faction work to expand the hive aspect of the neutral scriptoriums. They organize the cells of neophytes and teachers working together on research projects, planning out the missions to send junior members of the order on. It is thought that the influence of these members has kept the faction from falling apart entirely in the face of opposition from the chaotic good inceptors.

Neutral evil members of the faction organize the resistance to the primary church. They believe that the hoarding of knowledge is their right and that the chaotic good clergy are denying them their rights. They wish to topple the more powerful faction, and they resort to acts of pure evil to achieve their goals. These Tinelites have a deep lust for knowledge, so much so that they will kill for it.

Chaotic neutral members of the inceptors cannot really be considered a part of either faction, though they are loosely associated with the

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neutral faction. These inceptors love secrets – the collection of secrets and the telling of them. These members of the clergy are not only disinterested in secular affairs, they do not even care about church affairs; they simply wander the world looking for secrets. This decidedly odd offshoot of the order of the inceptors arises from a mystical belief that the Visions of the Opening Eye are actually secrets being revealed to mortals by Tinel. If every person recorded his vision and they were all put together, the resulting vision would tell the story of all of creation – past, present, future. There is no secret these inceptors love more than the details of a person's vision, but they believe there is power in all secrets and long to hear them.

Holy Warrior: Mage Guard of Tinel

The Order

The mage guard are powerful warriors, many of whom accompany wizards or sorcerers on important missions. They serve two purposes: to protect and recover knowledge and to oppose and destroy anyone who seeks out forbidden knowledge, particularly mages.

The mage guard are expert at fighting arcane spell users. While they are quite friendly with, and fond of, good-aligned spell casters, their order was founded after a dread cult sought to use magic to reassemble the name of the Nameless One and destroy all of creation. The elders of what would become the order of the mage guard determined then that the world required a force that respected magic, but also knew how to oppose it. Too often those who knew how to fight evil magic-users were superstitious and small-minded tyrants who didn't know the difference between an Abjurer and a Necromancer. If another evil body of wizards arose and threatened the world, no one of the Tinelite faith wanted to have to count on Inquisitors and other fools to stop them.

However, it is not often that the world needs a force skilled in the opposition of magic, so the mage guard serve another purpose. They are the sworn protectors of knowledge, the knowledgeable, and important secrets. The great libraries of the world simply attract mage guard, and anyone with a vital secret that must be protected can plead with one of the strongest of the mage guard to keep it safe.

Because the world has lost a great deal of knowledge over the years, traveling mage guard seek out lost lore and secrets, hoping to bring them back to light. It is this sort of thing that takes up most of their time; it is rare that a member of the order finds herself ordered by an armarius to seek out and oppose a user of arcane magic. Indeed,

many mage guard go their entire careers without a mission based on the order's charter. Of course, many mage guard just happen to find themselves in opposition to evil wizards in their quest for lost knowledge.

The mage guard do not have their own command structure and take orders directly from the armarius (or council of armari) at their scriptorium. A mage guard does not take orders from any inceptor who is not an armarius; it is said that only one who has unlocked the vision bears the insight to give orders to this deeply holy order. In the field, if there are several mage guard (and there often are), they will follow the orders of the highest-level member of their order present.

Titles

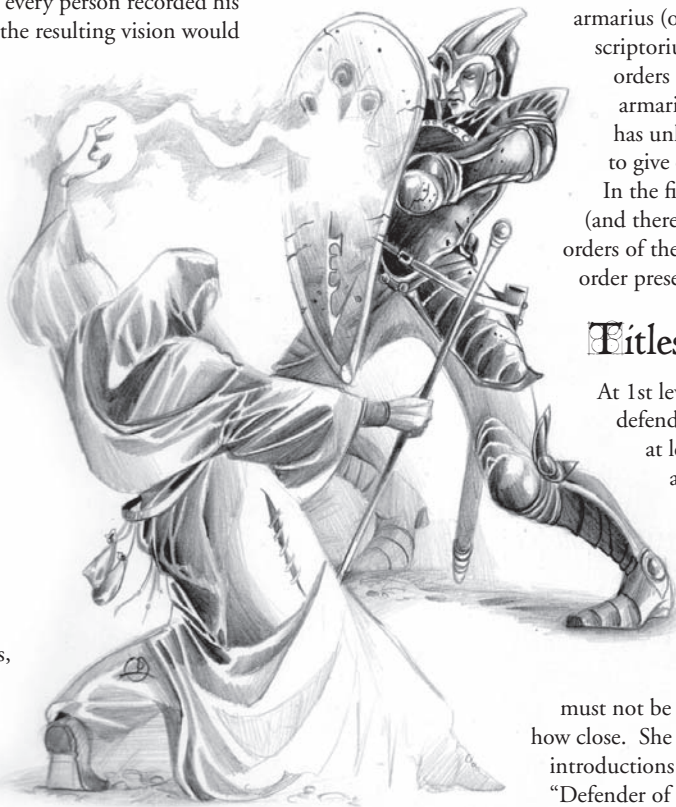
At 1st level, a mage guard becomes a defender of the word. This involves at least six years of training to learn all of the skills necessary to be a mage guard, though it is far less (perhaps a year) if the mage guard is already a trained fighter. To become a mage guard, a person must have had the Vision of the Opening Eye, and it must not be shared with anyone, no matter how close. She is addressed as "defender," but in introductions this is extended to the full title: "Defender of the Word Morik, a Mage Guard of the scriptoriums of Tinel."

As with most holy warriors, there is no explaining why people are called to the order – they simply feel a pull, a need

to take up the sword and join the mage guard. After completing her training, the new mage guard is sent to a scriptorium and put under the auspices of an armarius. Often the mage guard is ordered to go forth and find lost knowledge, or to stay at the scriptorium and protect its knowledge. Sometimes a mage guard is put together with others of her order, and they become what's called a "cadre," working together on whatever missions their armarius supplies.

At 9th level or later, a defender of the word becomes a keeper of secrets. To become a keeper of secrets, the defender must unravel her vision. Unlike the inceptors, the defender tells no one but her commanding armarius about the vision and its meaning (she does publicly take on a new surname, though). She keeps the vision's meaning secret from all but one person, and it is in the imparting of her most personal and carefully kept secret to another that she becomes a keeper of secrets. Keepers of Secrets are addressed as "keeper" and introduced in the same fashion as defenders.

There are many secrets of the order of the mage guard – tales about the name of the Nameless One that only they know, for instance – and the keepers are charged with holding them closely. Not even the armari know these tales; the keepers pass them down, one to the other. Upon being inducted into the order, the keeper is given a book of secrets, known only to her, that she will keep on her person and



Mage guard usually bear black shields with Tinel's key as their crest. Their armor is often silvered.

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in private for the rest of her life. This is a constant reminder of her duty. These books are passed down from keeper to keeper – when one dies, her book is kept in trust by an armarius until another keeper is elevated, and the book is passed on. Only one living person may know the contents of the book at a time. As she travels, the keeper adds secrets to the book. When the last page is reached, it is hidden away with the secrets kept by the keepers. Many who are evil of heart would love to find one of these caches, as would the neutral faction of the scriptoriums.

Keepers of secrets are charged with the protection of any secret that needs it. Sometimes political leaders as important as queens and emperors will ask for the aid of these most powerful mage guard, for they might have a secret that needs to be sent to another land and cannot be divulged to anyone but another leader for any reason whatsoever. Once a keeper of secrets swears she will not divulge what she has heard, everyone knows she will never violate the oath.

Table 5A5:

The Mage Guard of Tinel Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Defender of the Word	Six Years Training Vision of the Opening Eye
9	Keeper of Secrets	Unravel Vision: Divulge Secret to Commanding Armarius; Receive Book of Secrets

Additional Class Skills

The mage guard's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (arcane), and Spellcraft (Int).

Domains

A mage guard may choose two of the following domains: Magic, Mind, and Guardian.

Gift of Tinel

Beginning at 3rd level, the mage guard can *dispel magic*, as per the spell, once per week as a wizard of two levels less than her class level (ignoring the fact that a level 1 wizard cannot cast the spell, e.g. her dispel check will be 1d20 + 1). She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Dispel magic* is a spell-like ability for mage guard.

Beginning at 12th level, her Gift of Tinel allows her to bestow *spell immunity* on herself or her allies, as per the spell, once per week (as from a caster of her class level). She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Spell immunity* is a spell-like ability for mage guard.

Spells

The mage guard may choose from these spells:

1st level – *bless*, *bless water*, *bless weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *identify*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic*

weapon, *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*, *nystul's magical aura*, *nystul's undetectable aura*

2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*, *invisibility*, *purge*, *silence*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *discern lies*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal animal companion*, *magic circle against evil*, *prayer*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *nondetection*

4th level – *cure serious wounds*, *death ward*, *dispel evil*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *dimensional anchor*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, a mage guard may call a celestial animal companion that acts very much like a mage's familiar. Common companions include large rooks and ravens, cats and monkeys. Rather than receiving the bonuses a mage's familiar receives, the animal gains the bonuses of a Paladin's mount, as explained in the *PH*. There is one difference, though: The mage guard and her animal companion are able to speak with one another, as per the master and familiar ability "speak with master."

Conduct

The conduct of the mage guard is oriented toward the protection and preservation of knowledge more than the exploration and discovery of knowledge. This is what sets the mage guard and the inceptors apart – the inceptors are on a constant quest for discovery; the mage guard live their lives protecting the works of the past. In this regard, there are two edicts all mage guard must follow:

- Never allow the wicked to seize control of learning or secrets if by your life you might prevent it;
- Hold all secrets bestowed to you in sacred trust. Do not reveal them to any but those with whom you have been directed to share.

The mage guard do venture from their role of protection when they happen upon "lost knowledge." When faced with the possibility of recovering ancient or lost learning or secrets, the mage guard are charged with such retrieval:

- If by the toil of your brow or the blood of your body, you might recover that knowledge which is lost to the wise of the world, it is your sacred duty to do so. You shall not sacrifice your life for such retrieval as long as others might recover the knowledge on a separate quest – rather, you are oathbound to inform your brethren in Tinel of the lost learning at once so they might recover it.

Finally, the mage guard have the ancient purpose for which they were founded long ago: They are duty-bound to oppose those who use magic toward evil purpose. It is up to the GM to determine what 'evil purpose' is in her world, but in general we go with the big three: raising undead hordes; consorting with demons, daemons, and devils; and destroying or imprisoning souls.

Associates

The mage guard will travel with any who value knowledge and individual purpose. Some whose outlook is counter to the general Tinelite outlook (such as most Teraketh) will grow irksome to a mage guard, but in general any who are good, or even neutral, make excellent companions for a mage guard. They will not travel with evil users of arcane magic and will actually seek to oppose them.

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Alignment

Mage Guard must be chaotic good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

There are three additional orders of the Tinelites, though two of them are generally for NPCs or make excellent backgrounds for a PC seeking a new life of adventure. The holy order of scribes, who are addressed and introduced by their order title, are charged with copying manuscripts new and old. They have no central authority figure, but each scriptorium with any significant number of scribes will also have a master scribe. The master scribe reports directly to the armarius (or armari council).

The librarians are very similar to the scribes. They catalogue the Tinelites' accumulated works; in larger facilities, they are of vital importance to a well-functioning scriptorium. It is not easy to keep track of thousands of books. In any scriptorium with a significant number of books, there will be several librarians and at least one chief librarian who, like the master scribe, reports directly to the armarius.

These two orders are usually made up of devout Tinelites unable to join one of the three major holy orders. These orders themselves have no disposition toward the schism, and their members are just as likely to serve in a neutral scriptorium as a chaotic good one. The hierophants form the third major holy order of the Tinelites. It is their function to interpret Tinel's will as it pertains to the use of magic. All are aware that long ago the Lord of Secrets stripped the mortal races of magic; none are eager to see it happen again, and so the order was founded. These powerful arcane magic users are almost entirely separate from the scriptorium structure and are rarely (if ever) found in one. Certainly, any inceptor can point an interested party in the direction of the nearest hierophant, but the hierophants only maintain cursory contact with most clergy. The chief inceptors at each scriptorium are sure to keep in contact with the order and stay abreast of its beliefs and policies so they might guide any arcane spellcasters who come to a scriptorium to worship.

Even the lowest apprentice knows the laws set out by the order – they are something anyone who studies the arcane arts will hear of – but only the most powerful can help set those laws. Violation of the laws may have no consequences or may bring the order – or the mage guard – down on one's head. It's obviously a gamble most evil spellcasters

are willing to take, but for those not steeped in wickedness the hierophants draw a useful line between good and evil magic.

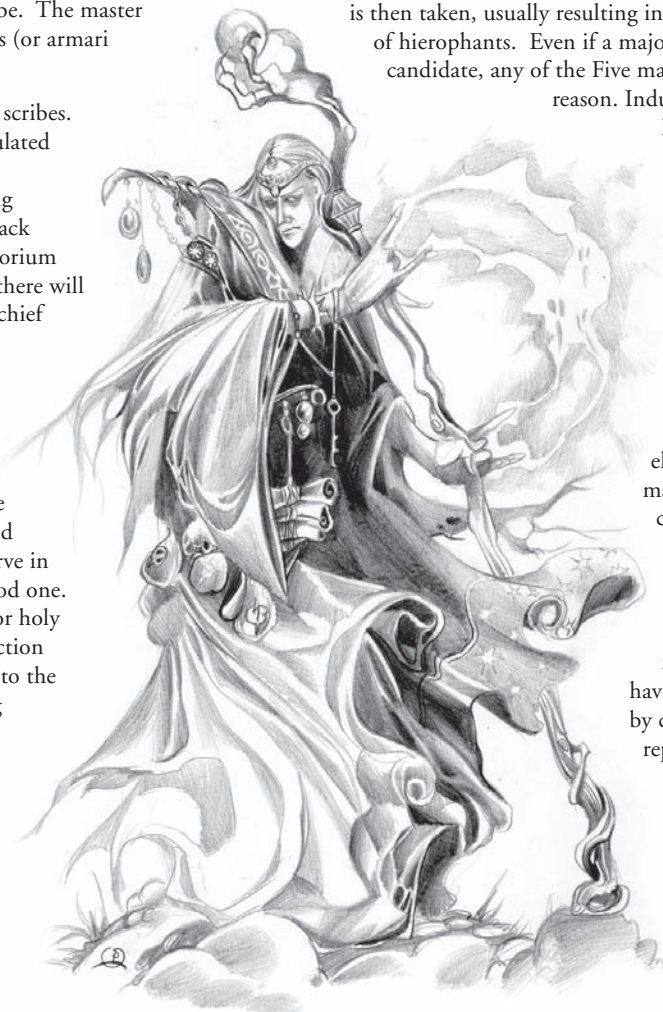
An arcane spellcaster who worships Tinel and grows in power and prestige will eventually be approached by the hierophants about joining the order. The order has a council at least once every three years to discuss matters of magical law and to induct new members. One invited to join the order is told of the location of the meeting and given enough information to scry and teleport there. If one is incapable of getting there by this method, membership is unlikely. When the council convenes, the prospective member explains why she desires to join the council. Membership has real privileges, including access to the order's secret scholarship about the nature of magic and a vote on the council. After the candidate has spoken, council members who wish to may ask questions; a vote is then taken, usually resulting in her induction into the council of hierophants. Even if a majority of the council votes for the candidate, any of the Five may veto her induction for any

reason. Induction requires one to take the 1st level of the prestige class, which is usually all any hierophant takes. A hierophant is addressed as "great lord" or "great lady" and introduced by full title.

The order is headed by five of its most powerful members, called the Five. When one of the Five dies or passes out of existence (or turns himself into a column of light or whatever else happens to the most powerful mages in the world), the council convenes immediately and elects a new member of the Five.

The choice is usually obvious, but sometimes the election becomes quite rancorous. The remaining four of the Five do not have veto power, and ties are broken by contacting the member being replaced (these are powerful mages, after all – death is a surmountable obstacle) and having her choose. Becoming one of the Five requires one to take the 2nd level of the prestige class, and only one of the Five can do so. The Five are addressed as "your eminence" and introduced following this format: "Her Eminence, the Hierophant Amraila, Member of the Council of Five of the Scriptoriums of Tinel."

The Five oversee the councils and determine when and how to enforce the laws set down by their meetings. This happens less often than the annual festivals the hierophants organize; the order rarely concerns itself with low-level mages using evil magic. They figure they'll meet their end eventually. The hierophants exist more to set law than to enforce it, and the Five are only aroused when someone both profoundly powerful and profoundly evil arises.



The hierophants are the most powerful good arcane spell casters in the world and dress however they like.

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Table 516: The Hierophant

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus Feat, Comprehend Magic, Greater Magic	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Bonus Feat, Master Magic, Staff Status-based Progression	+1 level of existing class

Prestige Class: The Hierophant

“The artist does not use every color; the poet does not include every word. Magic is just as surely a divine art, so why do some believe they should use every spell they might command? It makes only for ugliness and noise, as sure as a song with every note.” So say the hierophants, the powerful divine order of mages that is as old as the scriptoriums themselves (perhaps older). The hierophants form a great council of powerful arcane magicians who agree on reasonable laws and limitations for the use of arcane magic, such as bans on demonology and diabolism. The council is only open to those who are already quite powerful in the magical arts, but most Tinelite mages and apprentices willingly adhere to the laws they set out. Essentially, it is the council’s job to determine the will of Tinel as it pertains to the use of arcane magic – an awesome responsibility – and any member of this prestige class is a part of that council. The council is led by five incredibly powerful mages, called simply the Five. They oversee councils and make sure that the laws are enforced.

The order requires that its members be powerful users of arcane magic, so generally only bards, sorcerers, and wizards join the order (with wizards being the most common). However, the order came to a determination many years ago that the most powerful inceptors should join in council meetings; it is therefore possible for a cleric with the Magic domain who is able to cast 9th-level divine spells to take one level in Hierophant. No cleric has ever sat as one of the Five, a tradition unlikely to be broken. Other classes that do not cast arcane spells simply cannot join this holy order.

Hierophants are the voice of responsibly cast magic around the world. Good mages, or at least mages who believe there is a limitation to what one should do with magic, are often members of this order. The powerful wizard in his tower who has an abiding love for Tinel is likely a hierophant. Like most mages, though, hierophants are solitary; it is rare to see two powerful hierophants together, unless there is an impending council meeting. For the months leading to council, hierophants seek each other out, debate the upcoming issues, and lobby for votes.

Abbreviation: Hie
Hit Die: d4.

Requirements

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

Feats: The hierophant must have any five metamagic or item creation feats.
Tinelite: The hierophant must be a practicing Tinelite.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 6th-level arcane spells or 9th-level divine spells with the Magic domain.

Vow of Obedience: The prospective hierophant must swear to obey the laws set down by the Five and the council of hierophants.

Clean Record: One must never have violated the laws of the hierophant council and gotten caught.

Class Skills

The hierophant’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (all skills taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the hierophant prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Hierophants gain no proficiency in any weapons, armor, or shields.

Comprehend Magic (Ex)

Admission to the order of hierophants means learning the secrets of magic as a divine power of the universe mastered by Tinel. The hierophant becomes so in tune with the very power of magic that she is under the effects of the following spells permanently (as though she has cast the spells and followed them with a *permanency* spell): *detect magic*, *read magic*, and *see invisibility*. This costs no experience and cannot be dispelled; she has achieved a higher degree of understanding.

Greater Magic

The hierophant is tapped into the universal power of magic. Spells she casts are simply better than those cast by lesser mages. When determining the hierophant’s caster level for dispelling purposes (either when the hierophant’s spell is being dispelled, or when the hierophant is dispelling), the hierophant adds her Charisma modifier (if positive) to her caster level. This does not affect any other aspect of the spell – only its relative power for dispelling purposes. If the hierophant is dispelling, she still may not exceed the maximum bonus allowed to either dispel (+10) or greater dispel (+20). Her charisma modifier is added to *mord’s disjunction* as a percentage chance to destroy an antimagic field, and added or subtracted to the chance of destroying an artifact (at the hierophant’s discretion) – 1% per point of modifier.

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Master Magic

The Five possess ancient tomes of wisdom written when the world was young and the mortal races first learned to use magic from Tinel himself. These secrets are considered exceptionally dangerous, and none but the Five are allowed to study them. There are two effects of gaining this powerful knowledge:

- The hierophant gains a permanent +5 competence bonus to Spellcraft
- The hierophant adds *counterspell* to his spell repertoire. Unlike most spells, *counterspell* is available in each level of magic he can cast. The hierophant may cast the *counterspell* of the appropriate level to counter any spell of that level. So, if the hierophant has a 3rd-level *counterspell* memorized and recognizes that an opposing mage is about to hit him with a *lightning bolt* (after making a successful Spellcraft check as with normal counterspells), the hierophant may simply cast the 3rd-level *counterspell* rather than having to cast a *lightning bolt* spell in counter. The hierophant may memorize as many *counterspells* as he has available spell slots per level. The level of *counterspell* required is determined by the level of the spell for the hierophant, not the caster. A higher-level *counterspell* cannot be used to counter a lower-level spell – they are from different spheres of magic. Obviously, this makes the Five incredibly dangerous to other mages.

Spellcasting

A hierophant continues training in magic. Thus, when a new hierophant level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also

gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of hierophant to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Staff

The Five each bear a staff of great power. As our existence is a quest for Truth through the use of our five senses, each staff corresponds to one of these senses. The Five Staves are detailed in Chapter XI.

Status-based Progression

Only a hierophant inducted into the Five may take a second level of the hierophant prestige class.

Bonus Feats

At both 1st and 2nd levels, the hierophant may choose a bonus feat from the following list: Empower Spell, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Scribe Scroll.

A hierophant must still meet all prerequisites for a feat, including spellcaster level.

God of Death and Rebirth

The Sacristies of Mormekar

Mormekar (MORE-muh-kar) (Quiet, Fearful, the Deliverer, the Shadow, the Grim Wanderer, the Last Guide, Death)

Myths

The Gold Must Fall

It is said of the Grim Wanderer, whom some men know as Mormekar the Deliverer, and others know only as Death, that he cares for nothing. It is said that the Last Guide neither relishes his duty nor bates it, but simply performs it – for it is his duty to bring death to all dying things, and to renew the life of those chosen to be reborn.

But those who seek truth more deeply know that there is one thing for which Mormekar the Shadow cares; those who examine the world in autumn, when all things change from fair to dark, know what moves the heart of Quiet Mormekar – it is his love for Morwyn the Merciful, his wife.

Yet this is a love that must be stymied every year. Long ago, when Mormekar first appeared in the world, when Terak and Tinel murdered one another and destroyed Eliwyn, the Grim Wanderer came to love the Queen of Heaven, whom men call Morwyn. Together they begat a son, Maal, who was then the first child ever born of womb and is now the Judge of Souls. In those days

death was rare, and Mormekar was not so icy in temperament. But it could not last, for Terak was reborn and had won Morwyn's heart long before the arrival of Mormekar. She took Terak to husband also, and he became her King in Heaven, not Mormekar the Shadow.

Indeed, who could blame the fair Queen, for Mormekar is dark and grim; he does not laugh and knows little joy. The bridal bed was not warm, and there were few delights in their household, even when Maal was young and playful.

It was not long before Morwyn could no longer navigate the treacherous difficulty of a hall with two husbands. For when she smiled to Mormekar, Terak grew wrathful, and when she showed affection to Terak, Mormekar grew miserable. After some time, she told her two husbands that she would spend half of each passing year with them in turn – for six months, Mormekar would be her husband, and for the following six, it would be Terak. This suited all three and saved much conflict.

Yet the first time Morwyn left Mormekar and took Terak back to her side, the Last Guide grew more miserable than he had ever been. It was as though his heart had been cleft in twain, and he wandered the wide world in sorrow. At last, his sorrow overcame him, and he began to destroy the most beautiful

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The grim wanderer is a mournful figure, as filled with sorrow as those he touches. He is usually shown morose.

things he could find. It just so happened that at this same time, Korak the Hammer Hand had been sent on his impossible tasks by Thelnye to prove his love for her. He had coated all of the leaves of all of the trees in the world with a thin layer of gold, and as Quiet Mormekar wandered from place to place he saw his sorrow mocked by the beauty of the world painted gold.

So it was that Fearful Mormekar touched all of the trees and made the golden leaves fall to earth. Soon, the animals of the world fled from him, for they feared his terrible touch. In that time many fantastic creatures were destroyed by Death's touch and have never been seen again – like the cat with a thousand heads and ten thousand tails, or the snake Korak had made that had grown so large it surrounded a mountain and had begun to eat its own tail. The whole world, or that part with any sense, hid away from Mormekar the Shadow; before long even Alimus, who pulls the sun around the world each day, was frightened and stayed away. Soon everything was covered in ice and snow and darkness.

Would that Mormekar's fearful sorrow possessed him but once. Sadly, it comes over him every year. Just when the leaves of the trees begin to change themselves to gold in memory of the fair treatment they received at Korak's hands long ago, Morwyn leaves Mormekar for Terak. At that time the Grim Wanderer begins his journey through much of the world, changing autumn to winter, and all with sense grow careful, for Death has no mercy then. But when Morwyn takes her first husband back, the spring is rekindled, and Death has Mercy at his side once more.

Associations

Mormekar is the god of death, rebirth, the dead, the dying, those who seek to destroy the undead, those seeking rebirth, and the reborn. Among beasts he is associated with vultures, worms, coyotes, and other creatures that feed on carrion. His strongest association among all beasts is with the crow. Among mystical creatures, he is often associated by the ignorant with undead – but the undead are anathema to him. He is actually tied to the phoenix, the bird that dies, is consumed by the fire of rebirth, and is reborn. In the burning flame of the phoenix, one can see Mormekar's face.

He is worshipped by all people – including some who know nothing about the gods of the tree. The power of death touches all who are mortal. Worship is not gratitude, however, and most are quite wary of the power of Mormekar, avoiding his temples if at all possible. Yet all who die, when they can be, are brought to a temple of Mormekar for final rights to ease their passage to the land of Mormekar's son, Maal. In any case, it is not a popular church, and few join its holy orders. No single class is regularly associated with Mormekar, nor is any one class less likely to have his worshippers than any other.

Alignment

Mormekar is neutral.

Representations

Mormekar is shown in icons as the tallest of all the gods, but willow-wand thin. He is cloaked in black and bears a staff of charred wood (the last remnant of Eliwyn before she was reborn). It is never clear what mortal race he is most like, for his face is rarely shown completely. His skin has the pallid color of the dead, and his eyes are a colorless white.

In symbols, Mormekar is shown by his burnt staff – or simply a charred piece of wood. This is a recollection of the pyre upon which the gods were burned, his staff, and the fire of death and rebirth he wields. When a simple symbol of Mormekar is needed, folk often use a smear of soot.

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Purpose

Mormekar is a being of pure duty with one chink in his armor – his love for Morwyn. He is fond of his son and sees him regularly as he bears the dead to Maal's Kingdom, but he cannot be bothered to join Maal in arguments with the other gods. He cares nothing for the conflicts of Heaven, cares nothing about mortals (as long as they respect his authority), and cares nothing about the wars between good and evil, for he sees it all as a mere winking of the eye. All things die – he knows that better than any – and so too will the world die in the end. How it dies, why it dies, when it dies – none of these things are his concern. Until that time comes, he will perform his duty, claiming the dead and ushering the reborn back to earth.

It is well known to all those who concern themselves with the legends of the gods that Mormekar's love for his wife is all-encompassing. Over the years, some have sought to convince death not to take them, for they too know such love; it never works. Or if does, none know of it.

While Mormekar pays no attention to the political wrangling of the gods, there is one issue (other than Morwyn) about which he shows passion. The creation of undead is an insult to him, a vile act that violates the sanctity of death. He charges all those who worship him to oppose the efforts of necromancers and others who would spawn undead.

Servants

Mormekar is a lonely figure among the gods and has no servants. Prayers to him are heeded by Camael and others of the angelic host. There is no room in his wanderings for companions or servants.

The Church

Church Description

The sacristies of Mormekar, where the Mormekim (MORR-muh-kim) worship, were founded in their current form by a visionary justice of Maal. Named Alonzo d'Eriq, the justice claimed to have been visited by the Grim Wanderer himself. Mormekar told this Maalite of his deep displeasure, for the mortal races had come to lose respect for death. While they wondered at birth, the marvel for which his wife Morwyn is regularly praised, they hid from death. They had celebrations of the deceased's life and then left the body to the lowest members of society – at that time gravediggers and crypt-keepers usually came from the dregs of the mortal races.

To make matters worse, the mortal races had given rise to fiends who violated the sanctity of death by raising up the spirits of the departed and the bodies of the dead.

This lack of respect had made Mormekar's duties more difficult to perform, first and foremost because many who died had no idea that they had passed. The god of the dead had to personally inform them, leading them physically to Maal's kingdom. Worse, many of them were arising as undead at the hands of these foul necromancers.

D'Eriq was charged with the foundation of a new church in Mormekar's name. It would see to the passage of the dead by performing a series of rites over the dead given to the Maalite by the Grim Wanderer himself. It would wander the world and give rest to the undead. It would remind all mortals that, just as surely as they are unified by birth, so too are they united by death – the only two things they all share.

The Maalite swore he would spread these lessons, and he was true to his word. He wandered to the four corners of the world, teaching all who would listen the rites of the dead and warning the fearful of Mormekar's wrath. For Death had left d'Eriq, upon whom he founded his church, with words of warning: If his duties were made any more difficult by this lack of proper respect, he might prematurely claim the lives of all mortals or refuse to return the reborn to the earth. D'Eriq swore to Mormekar that this would not be necessary, and the Mormekim of today see themselves as the inheritors of that promise.

Church Structure

There are three orders of the sacristies, though only two have any involvement with the functioning of the faith. The ministers (the clergy) see to the dead and prepare them for their passage, and the obedient brotherhood (holy warriors) fulfills d'Eriq's promise to Mormekar by hunting and destroying the undead. The reborn, on the other hand, seek to right the terrible wrongs they have committed in life, and have little to do with the rest of the faithful.

There is no central structure to the faith, with each sacristy being run by consensus of the ministers: They all must agree on any decision affecting the entire sacristy. Each member of the faith is wholly independent, however, and may come and go as he chooses. No one gives orders. All know their duties and do not need such things.

The average sacristy has no more than three ministers and one obedient brother or sister. They are small churches, often little more than a hall with an altar and a massive brazier in the middle, with a small rectory in back. They are austere, grim places, as one might expect. Some of the older sacristies lie over sprawling catacombs, however, and these major resting places of the dead have as many as ten ministers and up to 20 members of the obedient brotherhood keeping the bodies safe from those who would violate them.

Doctrine

"If I do not do my duty to Mormekar, what am I? I could ignore Death's decrees as others do, I could pretend that death is beyond my ken as they do, but that would make me little more than a coward – perhaps less. I bear the burdens of duty, and all who would do what is right will follow in my steps."

– The fourth decree of the minister Alonzo d'Eriq

The Mormekim faith is one of duty, followed by few. While nearly everyone who worships the Gods of the Tree comes to the sacristies in death (or when their loved ones die), most folk prefer to leave matters of death to these strange folk who are so completely devoted to its ways. The donations given by the families of the dead more than fund the sacristies; indeed, because some people believe that the more generously they give the kinder Mormekar will be to their loved ones, the sacristies often have far more money than they can use.

The faith can be explained in three utterances, often repeated by the Mormekim. Mormekar reportedly made these three statements to d'Eriq long ago:

- Death is sacred. Administer to all those who have passed this rite I have given you, and you will be blessed.
- Death is sacred. Obey my command: Seek out those who violate that sanctity and destroy them.
- Death is sacred. When you come to my embrace, do not reject it.

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Alonzo d'Eriq was the first to administer the rite, thus founding the order of the ministers. He gave the order a 20-step rite for the preparation of the dead given him by Mormekar. The rite ceremonially connects the minister, the body of the deceased, and the spirit of the deceased, so that the spirit may be properly prepared for Mormekar. It should be performed within one day of death. The Mormekim believe that if this ceremony is not properly performed, it is possible the spirit will not make its way before Maal and will become one of the restless dead. In doing this, the Mormekim believe, perhaps arrogantly, they are the only mortals performing a proper and useful duty for the gods.

If a person dies and is unable to receive the rite, most clergy of the gods of the tree can perform a fair approximation. An approximation is not the rite proper, though, and many faithful request that their bodies be brought to the Mormekim if they die, even if they are far from civilization. Different societies have different notions about what happens after the rite – some burn bodies, others bury them. The rite is a preparation, not the entirety of the body's disposal.

There is more to the faith than the rite. The obedient brotherhood was formed to focus on the second utterance, though it is an edict all Mormekim obey. They live to stamp out the undead and those who would create the undead. Death must remain sacrosanct and inviolate.

The final utterance sets the Mormekim apart from other faiths of the pantheon: They expressly forbid any magic that brings a person back from death (raise dead, resurrection, or true resurrection) and will counsel their companions against the use of such magic. Because these spells require the consent of the dead spirit, it is impossible to raise a Mormekim unless he is willing to violate the tenets of his faith. Further, the ministers and the obedient brotherhood have access to divine spells from Mormekar that enable them to block abuses of these magics.

The Mormekim care very little, if at all, about mortal society or matters of good, evil, law, or chaos. They strive to be beings of pure duty, like their god. Their scriptures, prayers and everything else about their faith focus on death, not life, and it is often said (and justifiably so) that the Mormekim are more at home surrounded by the dead than by the living.

Common Prayers

The core of the Mormekim faith is the rite of the dead. The sacristies are the houses of the rite, where the ministers keep all of the materials necessary to perform it, including ointments, linens, incense, and scriptures. Administering the rite takes as long as four or five hours and includes chanting a long series of prayers, most of which are admonishments to the spirit of the deceased preparing it for the afterlife. One of the earliest chants informs the spirit that it has died, as apparently many do not realize this and become the wakeful dead:

*"I call upon you, (name of the deceased)!
Heed me this hour!
You have passed beyond living.
You are quick no longer.*

*The light has left your eyes.
The heat has fled your flesh.
Mormekar will claim you.
The final path is before you."*

Holy Days

There are no holy days, festivals, or celebrations among the Mormekim. They are a grim people.



Saints

There are no saints in the Mormekim faith, but martyrdom is an important part of their observance. Any of the Mormekim who die opposing the undead or the defiling of the dead are considered martyrs, and a special step is added to the rite for these folk. Sometimes Mormekim in similar distress call upon a martyr to protect them. For instance, Brother Astafis is a famous martyr who died trying to destroy a large cadre of vampires. Mormekim facing vampires may invoke Brother Astafis' name.

Mormekar's View of the Church

Mormekar is actually fond of his church, a rare attachment for the Grim Wanderer. As the Mormekim say, they perform a useful service for their god. The rite properly readies the dead for Mormekar, and their opposition to necromancy pleases him.

That said, fondness rarely extends into actual interference or guidance. Mormekar has little interest in actually speaking to his clergy or anyone else who worships him, except in the moment of their death. Unlike all of the other gods, he has no domain where his truly faithful may go, so there is no chance of standing at his side in the afterlife. He is a god of little warmth; those who worship him understand this and do not expect rewards.

Preferred Weapon

Mormekar wields his charred staff made from the remains of Eliwyn.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Ministers of Mormekar

The Order

The ministers perform the rite and keep the dead safe from deprivation. This is the whole purpose of their order; it keeps them quite busy, of course, as people are constantly dying. They have little

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interest in secular affairs (except for some rare exceptions) and most never leave their sacristy but to fetch supplies and bodies. Some make it their mission to wander the world administering the rite to people who cannot reach a sacristy. Others leave the safety of the sacristies to wage war against necromancers and the undead, pledging to destroy them all.

Titles

At 1st level, a prospective minister must go to a sacristy and take a one-year vow of silence, during which he tries to understand the stillness of the dead. During that year, he is educated in the rite. At the end of his vow he must speak the rite before any other words, and he must recite it perfectly and in its entirety. If he succeeds, he is made a minister. A minister is addressed as “Father” or “Mother” and introduced by full title. There is no higher level of status in the order.

Table 5-17: Ministers of Mormekar Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Minister	One Year Vow of Silence; Performing the Rite Perfectly

Domains

A minister may choose any two of the following domains for his divine spells: The Dead, Protection, and Destruction.

Spell Preparation Time

A minister prays for his spell at the “daily death,” when the sun goes down and light is gone from the world.

Alignments

Most Mormekim ministers are neutral. They seek to perform their duty for Mormekar and don't give two figs about mortal society. While they sometimes perform acts that most understand as good (such as opposing the undead), they don't do them because of a deep belief that necromancy hurts people and that's evil. They do so because it is their duty. This makes them seem quite lawful to most, but the ministers (most of them) have no interest in laws or rules. They don't even set out rules for one another about what it means to perform their duties – they do not give each other

orders and have no authorities in their churches. They are individuals wandering the world of the living seeking to do nothing but serve death.

A sizable portion of the Mormekim are lawful neutral and *do* care about structures and authority. They see that the Mormekim have a great deal of wealth and importance in mortal society, and believe the only thing keeping the faith from having a more profound impact is its lack of organization. With a proper structure, including a central authority, the Mormekim could spread their faith all over the world and into the halls of power, influencing secular society so greatly that perhaps there would be no more necromancy.

Another vocal minority is neutral good. These ministers are crusaders against the undead and wanderers who wish to extend the rite to those who may never receive it. They believe the withdrawal of the ministers into their sacristies allows much evil to be done in the world. They want to bring the mercy of Mormekar's edicts to all people.

A very few ministers are chaotic neutral. These strange folk came to the Mormekim because the faith is about as different from the rest of mortal society as one can get. They enjoy being outsiders concerned only with death, scoffing at “the quick.” Many of these ministers play to the prejudices most folk have about the Mormekim, dressing in black and speaking in mordant voices.

There is a cult of neutral evil Mormekim discussed in Chapter VIII. This cult rejects the utterances and actually reveres the undead and killing, making it the sworn enemy of the sacristies.

Holy Warriors: Obedient Brotherhood of Mormekar The Order



The ministers usually dress in black. Many put a daily smear of soot on their foreheads to remind them of their duty.

The obedient brotherhood lives to fulfill the covenant between mortals and Mormekar expressed by the second utterance, “Death is sacred. Obey my command: Seek out those who violate that sanctity and destroy them.” Unlike the ministers, the obedient brothers and sisters are not dispassionate beings of duty. They are filled with holy righteousness and stand in opposition to the pure evil of undeath. They are just as concerned with protecting the living from the ravages of necromancy as they are with preserving the sanctity of the dead.

They believe the utterances pertain to life as well as death. For instance, since death is sacred, it

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should not be brought on by something unholy like the undead – thus the living should be kept safe from the undead.

The obedient brotherhood is an order of wanderers and hunters who do little but seek out the undead. They are often part of adventuring groups, happy to go on missions that might not involve the undead, but always preferring war against undeath to any other adventure. They have no authority structure and are free to go wherever they will on their mission.

The order tends to attract rather grim specimens. Most of the obedient brotherhood are quiet, tend toward dark garb and whispering voices, and have childhoods touched by the ravages of the undead. There are exceptions, of course, and the order does not require a dark outlook. Where the order is absolutely consistent is that every last obedient brother and sister sees death as one of the two most sacred acts of the mortal races, the other being birth. The do not shy from the dead and the dying and, rather, wish to give them dignity.

Titles

At 1st level a prospective holy warrior of Mormekar must find an obedient brother or sister willing to train her. Together they pray for guidance from Mormekar, and if they both feel that Mormekar wishes for the candidate to become an obedient sister, she becomes one. She is then trained for one year in the rite (which the obedient brotherhood can also perform) and the secrets of destroying the undead. It's a very simple process. One is an obedient brother or sister all of one's life, and there are no higher titles in the order. A member of the obedient brotherhood is addressed as "brother" or "sister" and introduced by name followed by order: "Ming Tan, an Obedient Sister of the Sacristies of Mormekar."

Table 5-18:

Obedient Brotherhood of Mormekar Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Obedient Brother/Sister	One Year Training

Additional Class Skills

The obedient brotherhood's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Heal (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Knowledge (undead) (Int).

Domains

A member of the obedient brotherhood may choose two of the following holy warrior domains: Champion, Hunt, and Death.

Gift of Mormekar

Beginning at 3rd level, the obedient brother or sister can call upon *negative energy protection*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level, etc.). *Negative energy protection* is a spell-like ability for the obedient brotherhood.

Spells

1st level – *bless*, *bless water*, *bless weapon*, *detect return*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *invisibility to undead*, *magic weapon*, *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*, *delay poison*, *lesser restoration*, *consecrate*

3rd level – *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal mount*, *magic circle against evil*, *prayer*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *searing light*

4th level – *death ward*, *dispel evil*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *touch of return*, *restoration*, *mark of evil*



The obedient brothers are never far from danger, constantly seeking out and destroying the undead. They wear black.

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, the obedient brother or sister calls a special mount exactly as the paladin does. These mounts are usually dark colored or black.

Conduct

A member of the obedient brotherhood must not abide the defiling of the dead, which includes creating the undead or looting the bodies of the dead. They will oppose any who try to do so (with one exception – if the spirit of the deceased somehow gives permission for its body's belongings to be taken). They are not opposed to all magic in the necromantic sphere, only that which disturbs the slumber of death.

A member of the brotherhood will die rather than let undead flourish. A member of the brotherhood will administer the rite to any who need it. A member of the brotherhood will never knowingly commit an evil act or allow an evil act to be committed.

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There are a number of “undead hunting” prestige classes available in other d20 System sources. An obedient brother or sister may take such a prestige class and continue to advance in holy warrior levels.

Associates

Members of this order make excellent traveling companions. While they are monomaniacal about opposing the undead, they are otherwise completely free. The order commands them only to go forth and oppose the defiling of death, so as long as their companions aren't actually defiling the dead, they are perfectly pleasant company. They have no disposition toward chaos or law, so other holy warriors, rogues, barbarians, wizards, sorcerers, monks, druids – all make fine associates for obedient brothers and sisters. If they will aid the holy warrior in her quest against the undead, even better.

The favorite companions of obedient brothers and sisters are Morwynites. While the Morwynites protect life and birth, the Mormekim protect the dead and the dying. Together they make a formidable team.

Alignment

The obedient brotherhood is neutral good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

Mormekar is the god of rebirth as well as death. This rarely has any impact on mortal society, as those who are reborn have no recollection of their previous lives. There are those, however, who believe it is possible to influence one's rebirth – and even to be reborn in one's lifetime. Some who have led lives of unspeakable wickedness come to the sacristies of Mormekar pleading to be reborn so they might set their unforgivable acts to rights. These acts are usually crimes that are certain to result in eternal punishment in one of the infernal realms – consorting with demons and devils, murdering family, etc.

The person seeking rebirth prays nonstop for days, sometimes weeks, to all the other gods of the tree in hopes they might forgive her horrible crimes. During this time, the ministers bring her food and water but do not speak to her. At the end of this period, the penitent

rises and the ministers administer to her the rite. She then hurls herself into the massive brazier at the center of the sacristy, showing that she is prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for forgiveness and has become completely obedient to the will of the gods.

Usually, the penitent is consumed by the flames. Whether she is forgiven and reborn rather than punished for all eternity, none know, and yet the truly wretched still perform this terrifying ritual of self-sacrifice in the slim hope that they may be forgiven a lifetime of horrors. Once in a great while, for reasons known only to the gods, the fires do not consume the penitent. She rises from the flames and the ministers gather around her. They anoint her with three pure oils – one for birth, one for life, and one for death – and give her a new name. Under this new name she is set out into the world to right the terrible wrongs she did in her prior life. She is now one of the reborn, the third holy order of the Mormekim. She receives no special address, honorifics, or introduction, but may ask for the aid of any faithful Mormekim by saying simply, “I am reborn.”

Prestige Class: The Reborn

Warriors for redemption, the reborn rise from their own ashes and strive to mend the terrible deeds they committed in their previous lives. While many of them were once wizards or evil clerics, after the fire of rebirth sweeps through them, they are made into powerful figures sent forth to undo whatever horrors they have committed. Why the gods choose them and allow others to burn, none can say, but the reborn are the deepest proof that redemption is possible in the eyes of the gods.

Any class capable of committing grave and heinous acts might go on to be reborn. While the reborn take up blades in the name of redemption, it is possible for a wizard, rogue, sorcerer, or any other class to seek its redemption. The only classes that do not become reborn are those that by definition are good, such as the holy warrior.

NPC reborn are lone figures who are very personally involved with a quest or task. One might be seeking to destroy evil cultists and meet a reborn who used to be their high priest. They will aid any who seek to undo the evil they once wrought. That said, the reborn are incredibly rare, and it's profoundly unlikely that one will ever meet more than one in a lifetime – if even one.

Abbreviation: Mrb
Hit Die: d12

Table 5-19: The Reborn

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Reborn, The List, Cleansing Bonus Feat
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	List +2
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Bonus Feat
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Damage Reduction 1/-
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus Feat
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	List +3

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Requirements

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

Alignment: Must have been any evil and have undergone a change to any good prior to being reborn.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Worshiper of the Gods: Must give oneself over fully to the gods, abjectly and humbly.

Wicked: A reborn must have committed acts of unspeakable evil in her lifetime – eating babies, lying with devils, murdering her grandparents and feeding them to her parents... that sort of thing. Common thieves and those who have committed the petty evils of life are unlikely to go through the ritual of rebirth, and even if they did they would be consumed by the flame.

Class Skills

The reborn's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis) and Swim (Str). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each

Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the reborn prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Reborn are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, armor, and shields.

Reborn (Su)

The fire of rebirth actually changes a person. When the reborn emerges from the flame, her appearance may have changed to any possible appearance within the range of her race. Her hair color, eye color, the shape of her nose – any obvious physical appearance may have changed in the process. Many believe that the new face is one of someone killed by the reborn in her prior life. The reborn may also gain new abilities and lose others, fundamentally altering her personality.

The reborn rolls 1d10. She may add that number of points to any combination of her statistics, but must subtract an equal number of points from other stats. This is how a powerful and charismatic evil mage can go into the fire and come out a laconic but strong reborn.

The List (Su)

The first thing the reborn does after taking her new name is form a list of all the things she must do in order to right the crimes of her prior life. The items must be specific (e.g. “kill Claudio,” “destroy the temple of Akthoth,” “retrieve Willa’s soul from hell,” etc.). There may be as many or as few items on the list as she likes, but everything that can be done to make amends for her prior crimes must be listed, and the GM must approve the final list. One should be mindful not to make the list so short or easy that she will not have any fun completing all the tasks.

Whenever the reborn is performing a task on the List, she receives a +1 sacred bonus to all rolls. At 4th level, this becomes a +2 bonus; at 10th level, a +3 bonus.

When the Reborn checks off the last item on the List, one of two things will happen at the whim of the gods:

- 1) she dies, absolved of all sins; 2) she becomes as she was before the ceremony of rebirth, with her old name, old stats, and old appearance.

All levels of reborn are converted into levels of the class (or combination of classes) she was pursuing prior to being reborn; this includes rerolling hit points and repurchasing skills (clearly, one should hold on to a copy of the character in its state just before being reborn). Although she reverts to her previous form, she maintains all of her equipment and does not revert to her prior evil alignment. She is now cleansed of her evil and has been forgiven by all that is holy. She may begin her life anew. Neither of these possibilities happens often, as a reborn usually dies pursuing the items on her list.

Cleansing

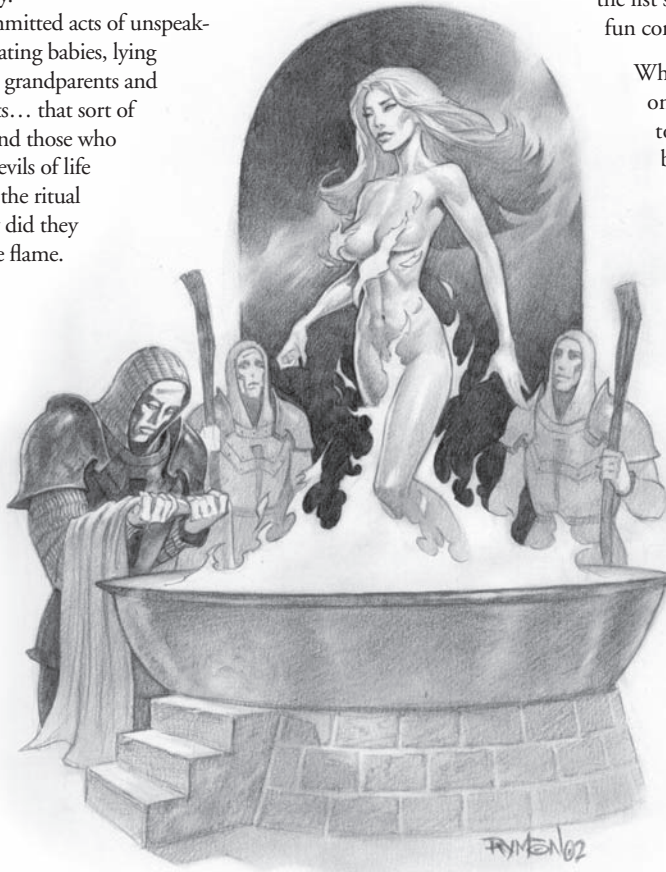
Being reborn through the fires of rebirth removes all magical and divine marks, curses, states, injuries, and other alterations from the penitent. This includes effects only removable by wish or divine intervention and those placed on the penitent voluntarily (such as those made permanent with the *permanency* spell).

Damage Reduction (Ex)

Late in her career, the reborn becomes so driven that she begins to shrug off damage. This works exactly like the barbarian's damage reduction ability gained at 11th level (see the *PH*).

Bonus Feats:

At 2nd level, the reborn gets a bonus feat, and an additional bonus feat at 5th and 8th levels. These bonus feats must be drawn from the same list available to fighters (see the *PH*). Unlike fighters, weapon specialization may not be chosen by a reborn as a bonus feat.



Reborn dress in whatever manner they deem necessary to accomplish their tasks. Many are attired as much unlike their previous life as possible.

Chapter VI: Practicing the Faith: The Gods of the Womb

About This Chapter

After the war of the gods of the tree and expulsion of *corpus infernus*, the gods of the tree joined in marriages that produced five children. The gods of the womb, though not as powerful as their parents (generally speaking), are nonetheless more popular among the mortal races, as they are far more concerned with the workings of mortal society than their elders. There are five gods born of the womb: Maal, the Judge; Darmon, the Traveler; Aymara, the Singer; Korak, the Maker; and Anwyn, the Homely.

Chapter VI ~ The Gods of the Womb

God of Law and Justice

The Courts of Maal

Maal (MAAL) (Steely Eyed, the Judge, Firstborn, Judge of Souls, King of Souls)

Myth

First Vengeance and First Law

Before the Compact, when Maal Firstborn's kingdom was new, before the Three Sisters emerged and Naryne became Queen of Souls, Maal decreed vengeance to be the first great crime.

Steely Eyed Maal sat then in judgment upon his great throne as he does now. His grey court was particularly bustling one day long ago, and his servants had difficulty holding back the throng. Eventually, a man in blue and white came to stand before the Judge of Souls.

"Speak your name and tell of your life," Maal's Voice demanded.

"I am Ceruill," the man replied, "a simple bard who was in love." Ceruill told Maal's court of his life, often relying on song or poetry to capture the moment. He had been the minstrel in the palace of a great and powerful king, wherein he had fallen in love with the king's daughter, Ophiel. Unfortunately for him, a neighboring prince named Faristel had also fallen in love with the princess, and had petitioned her father for her hand in marriage.

But the princess did not love Faristel. Ceruill's songs and poems had won her heart long before, and when her father told her of Faristel's proposal, she told her father of her abiding love for the court minstrel. The king had always loved Ceruill dearly and decided he would allow his daughter to marry for love rather than riches and politics.

It was arranged, and Ceruill and Ophiel had the most magnificent marriage the kingdom had ever seen. But Faristel was consumed with jealous rage. How could this dotard of a king choose a lowborn minstrel over a prince for his daughter's hand? He became increasingly convinced that the entire affair was a scheme, that Ceruill had cast the court under some sort of dire enchantment – an enchantment that would only be broken upon Ceruill's death.

The night after the wedding, Faristel and five of his men-at-arms broke into the chambers of Ceruill and Ophiel as they slept in each other's arms. Faristel bent down and woke Ceruill, whispering in his ear that he would save Ophiel and her father from the minstrel's foul magic. And with that, he plunged a blade into the bard's heart.

Ceruill's tale told, Maal's Voice bade him kneel for judgment. Maal the Judge pondered the story for some time and at last ordained, "Your heart has been rich with love, and you have brought beauty into this world. You shall abide in the fourth hall and here be blessed."

Ceruill was led away to the fourth hall to live out eternity in joy rather than be reborn. The next eight men to come before Steely Eyed Maal were either guards from outside Ophiel's chamber or Faristel's men-at-arms. It became clear that moments after Ceruill died, Ophiel's screams summoned the guards, resulting in a terrible, bloody battle.

Finally, Faristel came before Maal, his heart having been pierced by an arrow as he tried to escape. For his crimes, Maal sentenced Faristel to suffer for eternity in the third pit. And once this was done, Maal thought the tale done with.

Over the next days and weeks, more and more men came before Maal from the kingdoms of Ophiel's father and Faristel's. It seemed that Faristel's father had declared war on Ophiel's when word reached him of Faristel's death. More and more souls came before Maal, all killed because Faristel had slain Ceruill.

Eventually, Ophiel and her father both stood before the Judge of Souls. In her grief over Ceruill's murder, Ophiel had hurled herself into a river. Upon learning of his daughter's death, the king took his own life in misery. More of the king's subjects came before Maal then, for without a ruler, the nation was soon torn to pieces by its neighbors, leaving blood and fire in their wake.

When all was done, some fifty thousand souls had stood before Maal, all killed in a chain of events that began with one murder. It became clear to the King of Souls that some sort of order must be brought to the mortal world to prevent this sort of catastrophe in the future, and so he summoned before him the representatives of twelve great rulers. These wise men and women journeyed to the lands of the dead to stand before the throne of Judgment, whereupon Maal decreed:

"Blood for blood shall not be law, but lawlessness. If you should kill my brother, then I will call upon my lord's law for justice and shall not seek to avenge my brother's death with my own hand. I declare this day that no man shall have a right to vengeance, but all men shall have a right to justice."

The wise men and women bowed their heads, ready to take this decree to their lords, when Issama, the chamberlain of a great and powerful queen of the East, stepped forward. "Grave Lord Maal," she cried out, "What if my lord is a tyrant and shall not give me justice? Am I to allow this foul murder of my brother to go unavenged?"

The other eleven cringed, ready for Maal to lash out in fury. Instead, he was silent for a great while. At last he spoke: "You are wise, Issama, and you shall stand at my left when your time has come. Yes, you will allow this foul murder to go unavenged because on this day I, Lord Maal, judge and king of your mortal souls, swear this oath to my short-lived cousins: There shall always be justice. Though you may not see it in your time, though you may not understand its workings, you must trust in me – there shall always be justice, and no crime shall go unpunished. I shall take a dark view of anyone who should doubt me in this and let his sword drip with the blood of vengeance."

With that, Maal was silent, and the mortal races knew his great law: that a terrible and ancient doom lies on any who should seek to avenge a crime done against him. All must trust in the law and know that justice will prevail.

Over the years following this first edict, Maal summoned the servants of twelve great rulers before him to give to them laws several more times, in the end forming a great code from which the most perfect of mortal societies could blossom. But the rulers failed to live by the laws; they were eventually all consumed or destroyed by wars, and the laws of Maal were lost to antiquity. To this day, only the first law passed from Maal's lips to mortal ears is remembered, and it is still powerfully difficult for the mortal races to obey.

Chapter VI ~ The Gods of the Womb

Associations

Maal is the god of justice, law, the dead, the Land of the Dead, retribution, lawyers, magistrates, judges, and all others who make their living through the law or have a special love for law.

In the animal kingdom, he is associated with the owl, a bird said to know no partiality, sitting in judgment of the world from its bough. Among mystical creatures, he is associated with the sphinx, the first of which was born from one of his many adventures.

Maal is most popular among humans and dwarves, both of whom often have elaborately legalistic societies. Dwarves love him further because he was the first to delve into the earth and build a home. The King of Souls is also beloved of mixed races, particularly half-orcs who reject the chaotic nature of their orc brethren. This is because Maal's law applies to all equally and knows no prejudice. Regardless of popularity, all mortal races worship Maal, since they all come to stand before him in the end.

Alignment

Maal is lawful neutral. Law is everything to Maal, though his laws are perfect and wise and would be thought to be "good" were they the laws of any mortal realm.

Representations

When shown in icons, Maal is represented as among the tallest of the gods, thin, with long hair, adorned in shining black armor. When painted, he has steely grey eyes that pierce deep into men's souls. He is always represented with Justice, his sword, either held before him with the point toward the ground, or held aloft in his right hand, tip skyward. When pointed down it means that Maal has found someone guilty or unworthy, or that he stands in judgment. Upward means he is pleased by an act of righteousness. Because of this it is common to cheer a great deed by raising swords aloft, tips to heaven, even among those who are not adherents of Maal's church.

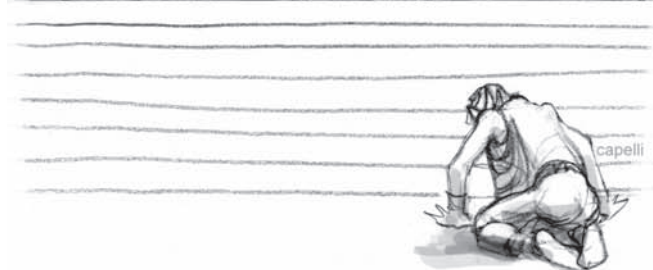
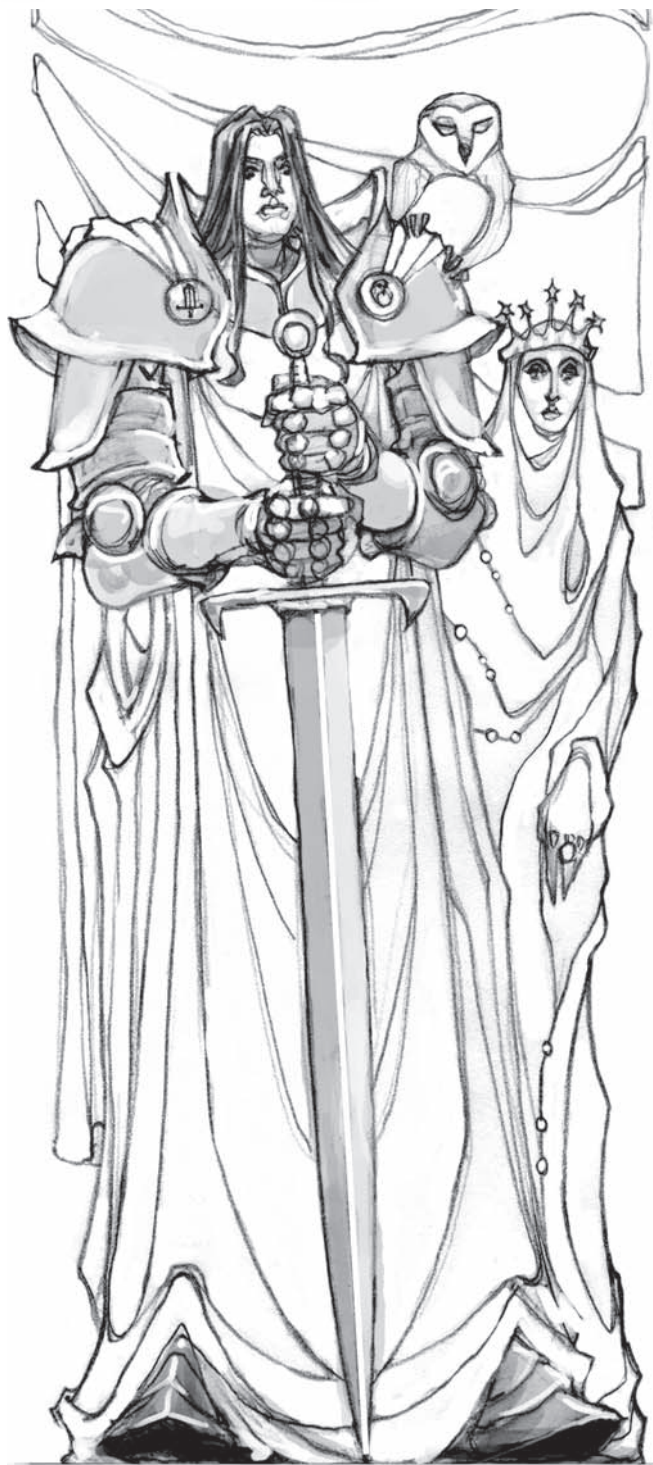
The symbolic representation of Maal is the sword Justice. Holy Warriors of Maal usually have a small silver sword, generally pointed upward, as their symbol. Clerics will often use this symbol, but sometimes use a sword lying sideways with an owl perched on its edge – this is Maal's owl, Wisdom, perched on the razor's edge of Justice. Because Justice was carved from metals created by the Nameless One, more expensive and formal symbols are crafted from the most exotic metals the faithful can find. The sword in these symbols usually has the word "Justice" carved into it in the cleric's native language. When no details or fine craftwork are possible, the symbol of Maal can be made as a simple line-drawing of a sword. This is a hasty symbol and is only used as a stamp, or when time does not allow a more formal symbol to be made.

Purpose

Maal stands in judgment of every mortal who dies. This is a profoundly important purpose, as it is through Maal that the final reckoning comes for all. While beyond good and evil himself, Maal determines whether a mortal has lived a good or evil life. He listens to the tales of their lives and then consults the black and white ledgers of their deeds recorded in Elysium and Gehenna respectively, deciding on one of four fates for mortals:

If they are truly evil, they are cast down into Hell, Gehenna, or the Abyss.

If they have led an acceptable life, but not distinguished themselves in thought and deed, they remain in his realm until it is time for them to be reborn.



Maal is often depicted with his queen, Naryne, standing or sitting in judgment of the dead.

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If they have been truly good (or have wrongly suffered terribly), they remain in eternal bliss in one of the four halls (see “Servants” below for details on the four halls).

If they have led a life of pure devotion to one of the gods, it is possible that god may ask Maal for the mortal’s soul to come to her realm.

As detailed in the myth above, Maal once set out laws for the perfect order of mortals. He is wise like his mother, Morwyn, and saw clearly how mortal societies could function in happiness. However, his laws were lost by mortals and evil was allowed to flourish. This makes Maal terribly weary and fills him with sorrow. He wants the mortal races to rediscover the ancient laws, but due to the Compact he cannot simply present them on tablets. This is vexing to the King of Souls, since he wants nothing better than for the mortal races to live in happy order.

The Compact also stymies Maal’s desires because it prevents him from enforcing justice directly, except in the most egregious cases when all gods agree that he must influence the mortal sphere. Because he swore to the mortal races long ago that justice would always prevail, given time, Maal must provide justice or be a liar – and so he steers his church and servants in the mortal sphere to bring justice to the world, in some cases righting ancient wrongs forgotten by mortals. When a group of adventurers happens upon the site of an ancient wrong that they might set to rights, it is said that Maal’s hand has subtly guided them there.

In addition to the judgment of souls and the enforcing of justice, Maal is also king over the land of the dead. Most of the duties of rulership, however, he has passed on to his wife, Naryne.

Servants

Maal’s kingdom is teeming with celestials; they aid souls in their transition from the mortal sphere to eternal life, guide reborn souls back to the mortal sphere, take chosen souls to new homes with their patron gods, and escort the souls of the wicked to the infernal planes. Chief among these many servants are Maal’s Four Riders, who sometimes were sent to the mortal sphere, where they appeared on great and terrible steeds enacting the will of their lord. Since the Compact, the Four Riders are rarely seen in the mortal world. The riders are also the wardens of the four halls, where rest the souls of those who are to live in eternal bliss for their great deeds. The riders are:

Issama, Counselor to the King

Issama stands to the left of Maal’s throne and advises the King of Souls on matters as varied as elven customs, legal loopholes, and contemporary marriage practices. She keeps herself exhaustively informed of all goings on in the mortal sphere. She rides upon a grey steed. Issama is the Warden of the First Hall, where rest those who are wise and good of heart.

Fratricide, Retribution of Blood

The only one of the Four Riders still regularly seen in the mortal sphere, Fratricide is sent by Maal to punish those who kill one of their own blood. The doom upon fraticide is as old as the gods’ fraticide, when Tinel and Terak slew one another and Maal’s father was born. While many who kill their own blood are left to be punished by mortal justice, on occasion, Maal sends forth Fratricide to punish such criminals – no one knows why those who are chosen receive divine justice when others do not. It is said that Fratricide fetches the criminal and hurls him bodily into the pits of Hell. Fratricide is not a single figure but an office inhabited by a living, loyal servant of

Maal for 100 years and a day, after which time the servant finishes out his mortal life, becoming one of the captains of Maal’s kingdom upon death. Fratricide rides upon a flaming, blood-red steed. Fratricide is, for the term of office, the Warden of the Second Hall, where reside those who have committed great acts of valor and loyalty. When Fratricide is abroad, the Hall is overseen by the captains, all of them former bearers of the mantle.

Remorse, Weeper for the Wronged

How Remorse came into Maal’s service is unknown, but her role in the kingdom of the dead is quite clear. When one comes before Maal who has been grievously wronged, Remorse petitions the King of Souls to right the wrong and give the wounded party succor. Essentially, Remorse is the petitioner for the most pathetic of the dead. Sometimes Maal ignores Remorse’s petition, but usually he responds by sending the soul before him to the Third Hall. Sometimes, the King of Souls is so incensed by the tale of sorrow he hears that he sends Fratricide to right the wrong (if it is a blood crime), or names a talesman to do so (see holy orders below). Remorse’s steed is black, and she is the Warden of the Third Hall, where reside those who have experienced such horrible pain in life that they need never return to the mortal sphere.

Maal’s Voice, Herald of the Court

If Maal’s Voice ever had a name, it is long forgotten, but it is said that he was once great among the div and was selected by Maal as his first servant. When Maal sits upon the Throne of Judgment, any word he utters is lasting law or judgment, so for lesser matters of the court, Maal’s Voice speaks for his master. He rides upon a white steed. Maal’s Voice is Warden of the Fourth Hall, where reside those who have brought great beauty into the world. Spells, such as *commune*, that allow a character to speak with Maal, are answered by Maal’s Voice.

Maal’s other servitor is Wisdom, his owl companion who sits on his left shoulder when he is in court. Wisdom is said to deliver messages from Maal to the prime material plane from time to time.

The Church

Church Description

The church of Maal, known as the court of Maal, is not a popular church in that it has only a few dedicated worshippers (called Maalites). This is due to the rigorous rules for its members. The court is powerful and prominent nonetheless.

In nearly every major city or center of government in human, dwarven, and mixed-race societies, there is a court of Maal. It is there that locals go to resolve thorny conflicts. In many cases, local governments rely on the courts of Maal to serve as criminal justice systems. Even in the (more common) cases where the government has its own trial system, leaders will often consult with leaders from the court to help resolve issues, particularly those involving powerful nobles. This is because the courts of Maal, and their representatives, are known to be unbiased and wise.

The courts of Maal are a large network of Maal’s faithful led by the central court of Maal. There the heads of the faith, called the Four Justices (see church structure below for more), issue edicts for the rest of the faithful about the legal policies of various nations, the goals of the courts, and the status of the search for the Sacred Laws. Maal gave the mortal races a series

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of laws at the end of the third epoch that, if put into action and followed, would make for a perfect, harmonious society. Sadly, all of those laws are lost except for the first: Maal's doom against vengeance. It is therefore the solemn mission of the faithful of Maal to recover these ancient edicts, which they call the Sacred Laws. It is their belief that if the Sacred Laws are ever recovered, it will mean a new age of enlightenment and peace for all. In all their years of searching, they have not found a single one, and they fear that it is diabolical or demonic influence that keeps them from their discovery.

The faithful of the courts of Maal do not speak of this mission to those outside the faith, though some from other churches know of it. While the faithful search, the courts maintain good secular relationships and uphold their duties as legal arbiters and counselors. The courts also have fine relationships with other lawful churches, including the Great Church, which sometimes calls upon the courts of Maal to adjudicate disputes between its members when an absolutely neutral third party is required.

Because Maal is the King of the Dead, the courts used to be the center for mourning and remembering the dead. Those roles have long ago been taken over by the Mormekim and the Narynath, but those who have lost a loved one still go to the courts to pray that the Judge of Souls will be kind to their beloved.

Church Structure

The courts of Maal have two great holy orders and a third order with few members, none of whom are actively involved in court matters. They

are: the order of justiciars (joo-STISH-ee-urz) (the clergy), the officers of Maal (holy warriors), and the talesmen (TAYLZ-muhn).

The courts have a central authority, the Four Justices, who are made up of the two highest justiciars and the two highest officers. The Four control the faith from a central court that is located in a small city, far from prying eyes.

The order of justiciars is divided into four levels of status: justiciars, high justiciars, prolocutors (pro-LOOK-yuh-tur), and two Justices. The officers are also divided into four groups: swords, shields, hands, and two Justices. The talesmen are only ever talesmen, and that not for long.

The activities of a court are overseen by its high justiciar. The clergy below him see to the court's judgments, and the officers see to their enforcement. Those justiciars who do not serve at a court mostly concern themselves with finding the Sacred Laws, and those officers not found at court focus on bringing justice to the world through the strength of their blades.

The average court has one to three high justiciars and eight to ten justiciars. There are usually five, ten or 15 swords (but almost always a multiple of five) and three to five shields. The prolocutors and hands are charged with wandering the world and spreading justice, so the most powerful members of the courts are rarely found within their walls.

Doctrine

"Though the world's injustices may fill the vessel of your heart with rage and hatred, though you may desire with all your soul to destroy those who have wronged you, remember that there is a true and greater law more perfect than any you might ever recite, more beautiful than you might ever hope."

– *The Writ of Maal, holiest screed of the courts of Maal*

The doctrine of the courts revolves around four principles: There will be justice; Maal's wisdom is infinite and lost to the mortal sphere; all people have a right to be judged; and those who deny any of these rights to others must be opposed.

There will be justice

Even before Maal's first declaration, there were laws against murder and taking justice into your own hands. If all involved in the tale of Ceruill and Ophiel had obeyed those laws, much suffering would have been avoided. While the Church of Maal understands that mortal laws are fallible (though they are lawful neutral mostly, they do not believe all laws are right simply because they are laws), they know that the law of Maal is infallible. Maal has promised that all crimes will eventually receive justice, so it is therefore a great wrong to commit another crime in an effort to see justice done. For instance, killing someone who has harmed your family because you believe it is the only way to receive justice is wrong – Maal has decreed it so, and you only prove that you lack faith in Maal and his promise. "Trust in Maal," the justiciars say, "for he is compassionate, and his justice will be done."

Maal's wisdom is infinite

Gods are simply able to see further and understand more than even the wisest mortal.

Maal understands society and the mortal spirit better than any king or holy leader ever shall, and so his laws, his earliest decrees, are by their very definition perfect. They were lost to the mortal races through ignorance and failure to follow them. Most in the courts believe they are not found now because of outside interference.

A few believe they will be found in sequence once the mortal races have mastered them in order. So, the second decree will not be recovered until all mortals understand and live by the first decree: that vengeance is wrong. These folk argue that Maal could give the mortal races the laws, even with the Compact, but will not because he does not want them ignored and lost again. There is debate as to how many decrees Maal gave the mortals, but most agree on 12 (one for each of the leaders to whom they were given, and the number needed for a tale – see below).

All people have a right to be judged

This is not just the belief that all people accused of a crime have a right to some sort of trial and should not simply be executed (which the courts do believe, so they are highly opposed to low justice, in which a noble is able to simply kill a peasant for a wrong or perceived wrong). While the courts certainly maintain that all in the mortal sphere have the right to some sort of trial, more importantly they hold



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that all people, no matter how evil, despicable, or seemingly outside of the mortal order, have a right to appear before Maal and receive their final judgment. They therefore abhor any magic that entraps the soul, destroys the soul, or prevents the soul from ever going to Maal (such as transforming oneself into a lich). They refer to all such magic as “anarchic,” and the officers tirelessly pursue those who use it.

Those who deny others these rights must be opposed

Be it a king who gives legal protections to the artisan classes and nobility but allows peasants to suffer, or a sorcerer who entraps souls in a magical well to power his spells, the courts oppose those who seek to deny others their right of law. The courts will at the very least oppose them in word, seeking to move the hearts of others against them. But in terrible cases (such as the sorcerer, or a kingdom that practices slavery), the courts are likely to take up arms against them. It is important to note, though, that the courts are not egalitarian. They certainly do not require that a kingdom treat all of its subjects equally, or that all laws be fair. It is very possible to have a lawful evil empire that the courts do not oppose, as long as all of its people have a right to some form of legal justice when wronged.

Common Prayers

The justiciars and the officers of the courts of Maal pray to their Lord often, particularly when they are in doubt of some path, or wonder if a decision they have made is wise. Most often common folk pray to Maal in three cases: when they are in need of wisdom to make an important decision, when they have been wronged and crave justice, and when one of their loved ones has died.

The prayer recited most fervently is called the Entreaty, and it is the cry to Maal for justice when wronged. While it is from the perspective of one murdered, its meaning is beyond any one crime and is said to stand for any crime committed against the mortal races. The Entreaty is not said lightly, as it is a solemn plea to Maal:

*“Father Maal, Judge of Souls,
King of the Dead,
Hear me in my need.
My blood runs in rivers,
And with it mingle my bitter tears.
I lay dying yet no crime have I done,
No man have I wronged.
My innocent blood I offer to you, Father Maal,
My angry tears are my libations;
I pray to you that those who wrong me will find Justice,
By your hand or another’s.
Let not my blood be washed away,
Let not my life be forgotten.”*

The Entreaty is said, usually, by one who knows who has wronged him and is desperately trying to control his rage and avoid taking matters into his own hands.

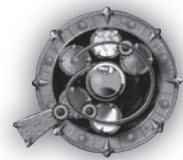
Holy Days

There are many minor holy days of courts of Maal, generally tied to days of remembrance of the dead. These are not universally celebrated by all courts.

The holiday that all observe is at the beginning of the year and is called the “day of offering.” On this day all people are expected

to come to the courts and pray to Maal to forgive them any transgressions they may have committed in the previous year. They accompany their prayers with an offering given to the wronged party. In cases where it is not possible to give the wronged party an offering, it is given to the court to be distributed to those

who have been wronged and have received no offering. It is essentially a day filled with tears and apologies. Many people go to the courts of Maal on the day of offering, including those who rarely pray to Maal, as it is considered one of the highest and most holy holidays of the gods of the tree. It is, after all, putting oneself into better graces with the King who will, in the end, determine the fate of your soul.



Saints

Saints are named by Maal himself when he judges souls. When those who have been tireless crusaders for justice come before Maal, the King of Souls will sometimes greet them by calling them saints. For instance, when Jerik, a hand of Maal who almost single-handedly toppled a goblin kingdom that had enslaved thousands, came before Maal to be judged, he knelt. The Voice of Maal greeted him by saying “Arise, Saint Jerik, and be judged.” In that simple pronouncement, sainthood was conferred.

On occasion one of the servants of Maal in the mortal sphere will learn in prayer that one of the fallen is now referred to as a saint. From that point onward the departed will be referred to as a saint by all faithful. In the example above, Jerik’s sister sought to commune with Maal to ask him for guidance some years after her brother’s death. The Voice of Maal told her when she completed the ritual that her brother, Saint Jerik, would thereafter be her guardian and aid in Maal’s kingdom. After that, all her efforts to commune were answered by her brother – and from this incident the courts of Maal learned that Jerik had been named a saint.

Due to the unique nature of the ceremony to become a hand of Maal, there have been living saints of Maal who have returned from the dead with their new title. Some also learn of their sainthood only to be later resurrected, though most refuse to be brought back. How many actual saints there are is known only to the dead. It goes without saying that those who are named saints by Maal reside in his kingdom in eternal bliss and are not reborn.

Maal’s View of the Church

Maal relies on his courts constantly. He has sworn that there will be justice in the world, and it is only through his courts that this justice may be enacted. As such, he regularly communicates through signs (and even direct messages delivered by his Voice or Wisdom) with the four justices, his prolocutors and hands.

Maal believes that his servants are just. He is saddened when some of them fail or do not understand the true meaning of justice. Those who are eager to mete out terrible judgments rarely climb in the hierarchy of his faith, for he makes sure the leaders of the courts know of his disapproval.

Preferred Weapon

The preferred weapon of Maal is his longsword, Justice, which he has wielded since the war with Kador.

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Holy Orders

Clerics: Justiciars of Maal

The Order

The justiciars are the clerical order of the courts of Maal. As an order, the justiciars keep the court systems operating, with the high justiciars overseeing the individual courts. They are looked to for their wisdom, good judgment, and counsel. The deepest purpose of the order is the recovery of the sacred laws, and this is what concerns most prolocutors, who are generally wandering powerful clerics seeking these ancient artifacts of their god.

A character may only become a justiciar after years of legal training. A character already very familiar with the law could become a justiciar without additional training, but otherwise a character would have to stop adventuring for two to four years while he learned the law to multi-class as a justiciar.

Titles

While forms of address for the justiciars are varied, they are all introduced by their name and position among the justiciars (e.g. “Wilhelm, prolocutor of the courts of Maal.”). However, when referred to without his name, a member of the order is called “a justiciar of Maal,” regardless of his personal title – or more formally, “a justiciar of the courts of Maal.” This is because the most important detail about them is that they serve the courts and can mediate disputes, not their relative importance; they are representatives of the faith and their order first, individuals second.

A 1st-level justiciar is usually kept very busy. There are several low-level justiciars at even the smallest court, as running one involves a fantastic amount of work. Given that most courts hear daily petitions from local people asking for resolution of disputes, intercession in cases of injustice, and other serious requests, the justiciars have a lot to do. In all things, they operate as assistants to the high justiciars, and are expected to be completely obedient to their superiors. It is rare for a 1st-level justiciar to adventure far from home, but it does happen on court business (and otherwise). It is considered acceptable for a justiciar not suited to minding the matters of the courts to go forth and work for law abroad. A justiciar is addressed as “honored justiciar.”

At 9th level, a justiciar is made a high justiciar and might be given authority over a court. In major population centers, there are several high justiciars in a single court. They form a council, working together toward decisions, but one justiciar is granted authority over the court by the Four

Justices (usually the highest-level justiciar present) and is understood by all to be in charge. A justiciar becomes a high justiciar automatically when he is trained for his 9th level and need not petition any higher church officials, but must petition the Four Justices in order to run a court. Petitions sometimes takes a great while to grant, with some justiciars waiting as long as five years for an assignment to their own parish. If a high justiciar is able to build a court with his funds, or funds he has raised, he will be granted authority over the court automatically. High justiciars are addressed as “lord justiciar” or “lady justiciar.”

At 15th level, a justiciar is hailed as a prolocutor and is considered above working on day-to-day matters such as operating a court. Prolocutors wander the world, questing for the Sacred Laws, visiting distant lands, and seeking to bring law to the world by speaking the will of Maal to any who will listen. Prolocutors are believed to speak for Maal; when they declare something unjust, anyone with a shred of sense listens. Some prefer not to wander, but the Four Justices intercede and instruct the prolocutor to put aside his mundane labors and go forth to do Maal’s work abroad. It is rare that this admonishment is required. A prolocutor is addressed as “most honored justiciar.”

When one of the two Justices from the order of justiciars steps down or dies, one of the prolocutors is called to sit upon the council of the Four Justices. The call is mysterious, and those who have been called do not discuss it, so little about it is known. Apparently, they simply know that it is their time to be one of the Four Justices. It has never happened that more than one prolocutor answers the call. It is assumed that Maal picks the Justices. In the past, the

call has not seemed to heed concerns such as level or power. There have been cases of justiciars sitting among the Four Justices just months after being named prolocutors. Interestingly, the call occasionally appears to tell one of the Justices to step down. A Justice from the order of justiciars is addressed as “supreme justiciar” and introduced so: “Supreme Justiciar Mord, one of the Four Justices of the courts of Maal.”



Justiciars wear official garments appropriate to their culture, clearly marking themselves as officers of the Maalite courts.

Table 6-1: Justiciars of Maal Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Justiciar	Two to Four Years Training
9	High Justiciar	None; Receiving Control of a Court Requires; Edict of the Four Justices
15	Prolocutor	None, but Must Stop Running a Court
15+	Justice	Death or Resignation of One of the Two; Justices from the Justiciar Order; The Call

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Domains

A justiciar may choose any two of the following domains for his divine spells: Protection, Law, Justice, and the Dead.

Spell Preparation Time

Justiciars must prepare their spells either just as they arise in the morning or just before they go to sleep in the evening. The meditation must be either the first or last part of their day, for in this way they spend their day thinking on Maal and his laws, or contemplate his ways in their dreams. Many justiciars like to alternate week to week.

Alignments

There are only two major alignments among clerics of Maal – lawful neutral and lawful good. Lawful neutral justiciars are the largest contingent of the courts. Their foremost concern is with finding the 12 laws of Maal. While their complete dedication to legality makes them excellent judges, they often allow unfortunate outcomes, as they feel the preservation of the law is of paramount importance. Because of this, in cases where someone has broken the law but has done so for a good or very understandable reason, the lawful neutral justiciars will still condemn the criminal, uninterested in vague concepts such as “right” or “context.” It is very common that these justiciars will be told that they do evil by adhering to law so completely; they respond that the person who does not follow law to the letter for some short-term good is likely doing a profound evil in the long run.

The lawful good justiciars are much beloved, for it is their belief that law exists to better the lives of people. They are the “live and let live” sort, associating themselves with goodhearted people who, perhaps, bend the letter of the law to achieve great good. While they themselves do not stray from the law, and while they certainly try to explain to such people the importance of maintaining law, it is not at all uncommon to find a lawful good justiciar adventuring with chaotic good heroes. Such justiciars are paragons of virtue, seeking to aid others through their wisdom, strength, and example: They do not lie, do not swear, do not strike others in anger, and do not raise their voices – all in all, they seek to be exceptional figures of morality, temperance, and wisdom – as Maal is. Lawful good justiciars typically do not rise far in the court system, and it is rare for one of their number to sit as one of the Four Justices.

There are lawful evil clerics who call Maal their lord. Likely receiving power from an infernal power rather than the god they proclaim, these deluded few believe that all of life is misery and that they are saving people from that misery by sending them to Maal. The clerics of this secret and blasphemous order are discussed further in Chapter VIII.

Holy Warriors: Officers of Maal

The Order

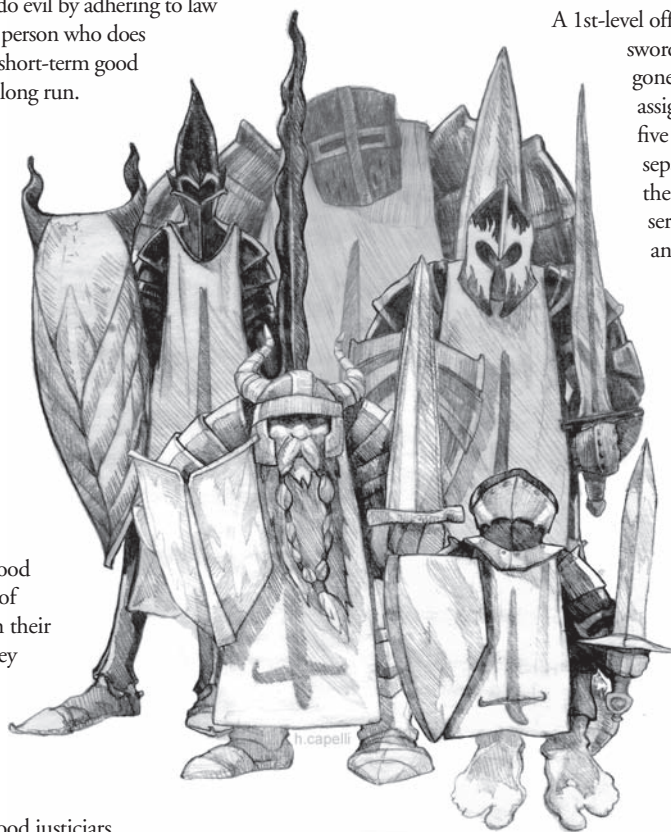
It is one thing to pass judgment or to demand that the law be followed – it is quite another to enforce that judgment and those demands. The officers of the court of Maal are the embodiment of Maal’s sword, Justice. When criminals must be pursued, when judgment must be backed with force, the officers are there performing their duty. They do so because of an abiding belief that laws make the world better for everyone. It is not possible to become an officer if one secretly harbors a perverse pleasure in punishing people or has too much love for her authority. The officers are selected by Maal himself, it is said, for their goodness of heart and their courage to do what must be done.

Titles

Swords, shields and hands are all introduced with title preceding name, followed by “an officer of the courts of Maal.” So a shield named Gwaithin would be introduced as “Shield Gwaithin, an officer of the courts of Maal.”

A 1st-level officer of the court of Maal is called a sword and addressed as “sword.” Having gone through exhaustive training, swords are assigned to serve courts. There are generally five swords at every court, each given a separate duty for the maintenance of law in the area (such as, “You, Sword Pavel, will serve as bailiff of this court, keeping order and escorting criminals in and out. You, Sword Hellyne, will serve as bodyguard to the young justiciars whenever they journey in the city and abroad.”) One thing is very clear about these assignments: The swords serve and obey the high justiciar of the court, and when their duties include aiding and protecting junior justiciars, they are to obey them too.

More mystical members of the court system refer to each sword as a “finger,” with each of their duties codified to the duties of the fingers of the hand (the sword who serves the bailiff is like the thumb, the anchor of the hand; the sword who helps victims in finding and prosecuting their attacker is like the index finger, which indicates evil, etc.). This is an old-fashioned way to think of such things. What remains of this mystical thought is that when all five swords of a court are sent out to capture a particularly dangerous criminal, they are called a “fist.” The courts found in large cities will have several fists and even a few unassigned swords; particularly promising swords are actually allowed to go on adventures not lofty enough for shields but serving the courts of Maal – such as protecting a wandering young justiciar. These “unsheathed swords,” as



The officers of Maal are clearly marked by their white tabards with the red upturned sword. They tend to dark, heavy armor.

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they are called, are the envy of other young officers of the court and are usually the very best of the order, allowed to wander because it would be wasteful to shackle them with bureaucratic work at a court.

After serving many years as a sword, the officer is expected to go forth and protect people. At 7th level, the sword is administered a test by the high justiciar of her court. The test is mystical in nature and often involves strange visions and mysterious questions. Taking all day, the high justiciar casts the *test of souls* spell (see Chapter XI) on the sword and delves deeply into her very being, reaffirming that she is ready for independent service to Maal, protecting the innocent and preserving the right to law of all those she encounters. If the GM and the player do not feel like role-playing this lengthy test, the officer may instead make a Charisma check (DC 10), with a competence bonus equal to her level (+7). A roll of 1 does not automatically fail this test, so it is only possible to fail if the sword has a Charisma modifier of +2 or less. If the sword fails, she may never become a shield and must begin taking levels in another class – though she maintains her status and powers as a sword of Maal. It is no great shame to fail the Test; it is said that Maal simply desires to see the tested remain a sword. Once a shield, the officer is expected to fight against lawlessness and anarchic magic, guided by Maal himself. While shields still obey commands from high justiciars and, certainly, any edicts set down by the Four Justices, their lives are no longer subservient to a single court and they are expected not to be involved in day-to-day legal affairs. Often several shields band together and form orders – though these are culturally specific and left to the GM. A shield is addressed as “shield.”

At 15th level, the shield has no doubt survived many incredible adventures and helped countless downtrodden folk. When she reaches this level, she must make the journey, no matter how far, to the Court of the Four Justices. She is tested by the Justices to see if she is ready to be a hand of Maal. This time the *test of souls* spell takes 15 hours and culminates in the ultimate question – is the shield prepared to stand before Maal? If the shield acquiesces, she is given a drink of deadly poison. Upon her death, she goes before Maal for judgment. Four days after her death, the Four Justices gather around her body and she is brought back from the dead (she does not lose a level, either because they cast *true resurrection* or because she has been protected by *save soul* – see Chapter XI). While no officer who has been through this speaks of her time in Maal’s kingdom, it is clear that it is excruciating to return...

Resurrection spells only work on willing participants and, by the time one is a 15th-level officer of Maal, the rewards of the afterlife must be rich indeed. The officers choose to put those awards aside and walk once more in this imperfect world – so profound is their desire to better the lot of the mortal sphere. It does happen on occasion that one refuses to return, though such occasions are spoken of sadly. Once she is brought back, the shield is made into a hand of Maal (because it is said she is now the sword, shield, and hand of the King of Souls on earth) and is presented with rich gifts by the Four Justices. She is now a living agent of Maal’s will and is expected to lead armies, topple evil kingdoms, slay terrorizing dragons, and do other epic works of heroism in the name of law and justice. A hand is addressed as “grim lord” or “grim lady.”

When one of the two justices from the officer order dies or steps down, a hand is called to sit upon the council of the Four Justices. The call is mysterious, and those who have been called do not discuss it. Apparently, they simply know that it is their time to be one of the Four Justices. It has never happened that more than one hand answers the call. It is assumed that Maal picks the justices. As with the justiciars, the call does not seem to heed concerns such as level or power. A justice from the order of officers is addressed as “supreme lord” or “supreme lady,” and introduced so: “Supreme Lady J’oinelle, one of the Four Justices of the courts of Maal.”

Table 6-2:

Officers of the Court Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Sword of Maal	Ten Years Training or Weapon Focus (longsword), 5 Ranks Religion
7	Shield of Maal	Pass the Test of Souls
15	Hand of Maal	Journey to the Court of Four Justices; Must Stand Before Maal and Return
15+	Justice	Death or Resignation of One of the Two Justices from the Order of Officers; The Call

Additional Class Skills

Officers of the court of Maal must be skillful investigators and legal officers. They understand human nature and speak capably to the wise and the simple alike.

The officer’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha) and Sense Motive (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

The officer may choose two of the following holy warrior domains: Champion, Justice, and Death.

Gift of Maal

Beginning at 3rd level, the officer can *discern lies* once per week, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level, and so forth). *Discern lies* is a spell-like ability for officers.

Beginning at 12th level, her Gift of Maal allows the officer to place a *mark of evil* (see Chapter XI) on a criminal once per week, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Mark of evil* is a spell-like ability for officers.

Spells

Officers receive the following spells, almost identical to the paladin’s spell list:

- 1st level – *bleed*, *bleed water*, *bleed weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic weapon*, *protection from evil*, *protection from chaos*, *resistance*, *virtue*
- 2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*, *delay poison*, *zone of truth*
- 3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *discern lies*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal mount*, *magic circle against chaos*, *prayer*, *negative plane protection*
- 4th level – *mark of justice*, *death ward*, *dispel chaos*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *restoration*

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Mount

At 5th level officers call a special steed to them. Usually black, the officers' steeds are powerful and carry them on their tireless duties. Unlike paladins, officers of Maal rarely use their horses for mounted warfare, instead seeing their steeds as companions on their endless quests for justice. Few officers of Maal are experts in mounted combat.

Code of Conduct

Officers of Maal must not lie, cheat, or in any way knowingly allow an injustice – great or small – to be done. The exception is tragedy, where an injustice will occur no matter what the officer does. In such cases, the officer must endeavor to minimize the damage to the innocent. Officers of Maal must obey the laws (when legitimate) and must work to bring legitimate law to the lawless. Officers of Maal must oppose anarchic magic or anything else that seeks to take away the rights of the living to stand before Maal. If an officer of Maal ever knowingly violates this code, she immediately loses all special class abilities.

Associates

Officers of Maal tend to be most interested in goodness in their companions. They do not expect everyone they know to be tireless champions for law and the rights of the downtrodden. However, they will immediately stop associating with anyone who uses anarchic magic, and will not associate for long with those who flaunt just laws. A rogue who ceaselessly violates the laws of a corrupt city counsel in an effort to overthrow their tyranny, while using methods the officer might not use herself, is certainly an appropriate companion.

Alignment

Officers of Maal must be lawful good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The courts of Maal are really only two orders – justiciars and officers, the judges and the enforcers of the law. But those in the courts refer from time to time to a third order, the talesmen. In ancient times, when Maal delivered his first laws to the mortal races, in some cultures criminals had a right to a trial before a jury. Whenever a jury needed to be convened, the lord of the area would issue a “writ of tales,” or an order commanding all those capable to appear at the lord’s court and serve as a jury member.

Once those who could had responded to the writ, lots were drawn and 12 talesmen, or jurors, were selected to hear the case.

While the writ of tales is rarely used any longer, there are still talesmen. From time to time there is a crime so profound that many of the gods, or even all of them, cry out for justice. It may be a crime that has been somehow hidden from the gods for millennia through powerful magic, or it may be a recent atrocity committed against the worshippers of several of the gods (a major city wiped out by an evil sorcerer, for instance). In such cases, the gods will petition Maal for justice, demanding he find an impartial champion, or several such champions, to right the wrong. These champions must not be religious servants of any of the gods (i.e. clerics, holy warriors, or any prestige class that receives divine powers from one of the gods). When an appropriate champion is selected, Maal sends her a writ of tales through one of his servants. If the champion accepts, she becomes a talesman, and the courts of Maal throughout the Prime Material Plane consider it their duty to aid her in any way possible. A member of the order receives no titles, and no one but members of the courts is likely to even know what a talesman is. When seeking aid from the courts, a talesman need only say “I serve the writ,” and whatever she may need will be provided.

Prestige Class: Talesmen of Maal

A talesman is an already powerful mortal who has agreed to serve the gods in a single epic quest for justice. She is given a mission by one of Maal’s servants, usually something enormously difficult and deadly, and remains a talesman until her death or the quest’s completion (through success or failure). One becomes a talesman by receiving a writ of tales, a divine document that details the injustice and what must be done to set it right. It is brought to the chosen agent by a servant of Maal (usually his owl, Wisdom). The prospective talesman has three days to accept the writ, and indicates her agreement by reading a phrase found at its bottom. Once read, her decision is irrevocable. At the end of the three days, if the phrase is unread, the writ disappears. The prospective talesman may receive a writ for a different quest months or years later (after all, how many appropriate and very powerful candidates can there be in the world?); it is considered absolute folly to reject Maal’s writ more than once. Despite that, the writ is very clear that the offer may be freely accepted or rejected, and rejection will have no consequence. The benefits of serving as a talesman are great, but the consequence of failure is the disappointment – and even wrath – of the gods. One way or the other, though, serving as a talesman is accepting a mission of battle, war, blood, and death in the name of righting a wrong so terrible as to move the gods themselves. No one has ever served as a talesman more than once.

Table 63: The Talesman

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+1	+2	+2	+2	Quest-based progression, Damage reduction, Spell resistance, Ability bonus, Change Nature	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Quest-based progression, Damage reduction, Spell resistance, Ability bonus, Protective Aura	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+3	Quest-based progression, Damage reduction, Spell resistance, Ability bonus, Divine Wrath	+1 level of existing class

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Talesmen are selected for their exceptional skill and prowess. When Maal selects a talesman it is because he believes the chosen agent will be able to succeed in her quest, not because he believes she is the most pure of heart or pristine of character. Powerful fighters, monks, sorcerers, wizards, and rogues are the most common choices for talesmen, though which class will be chosen depends highly on the nature of the quest. Characters with divine powers granted by the gods cannot be talesmen: A talesman must be independent of the gods' squabbles and politics and must be singularly focused on fulfilling the writ. Even paladins and clerics of the Great Church are exempt. Rangers and barbarians are less common choices than fighters, and druids never consent to serve as talesmen as it violates their own codes. Evil characters, for obvious reasons, will not be chosen to serve as talesmen.

The life of a talesman is usually isolated and lonely. The quests most often require a single adventurer, wandering the world alone tracking down the threads of the crime and seeking to right the wrong. In particularly terrifying cases, where the criminal or criminals hunted are vastly powerful, Maal may issue the writ to an entire adventuring party, perhaps retired after years of slaying dragons and wiping out kingdoms of evil. It is most likely that an NPC talesman will be encountered alone, perhaps seeking help in fulfilling some small part of her quest. They usually have a haunted look to them; they are singularly driven, the will of the gods at their backs (and hanging over their heads). If one encounters a party of talesmen, it is an indication that something very bad has happened.

Abbreviation: Tal
Hit Die: d12.

Requirements

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

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Patron: Must not have divine powers.

Right for the Job: Must be exceptionally skilled in an area necessary for the righting of this particular injustice. If the wrong can be righted by someone stealing a powerful ring, then destroying it by, say, hurling it into a volcano (just a totally random plot device off the top of our heads), it is likely that Maal will select an exceptionally gifted rogue. Because the requirement is so entirely based on the specifics of the wrong, there is no one path to receiving a writ of tales. However, those picked must be powerful enough that the gods themselves have noticed them. They must, at the very least, fulfill *one* of the following requirements: **Base Attack Bonus:** +13. *or* **Skills:** Hide 16 ranks, Move Silently 16 ranks. *or* **Spellcasting:** Able to cast 7th-level arcane spells. A character that lacks at least one of these three signs of exceptional power and skill will certainly be killed horribly on the talesman's quest and will not be selected.

Class Skills

The talesman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (any pertaining to quest) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Search (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Use Magic Device (Cha). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the talesman prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Talesmen gain no proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Spellcasting

A talesman continues her training from prior classes. Thus, when a new talesman level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in the spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, etc.). This essentially means that she adds the level of talesman to the level of some other spellcasting class she has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly. If she has previous levels in more than one

spellcasting class, she chooses which one she will continue to advance in when she takes her first talesman level.

Quest-Based Level Progression

A character must gain levels as a talesman and no other class as long as she continues to pursue the quest she has been assigned. Once justice is done, no further levels in talesman may be taken. If the quest is not complete by the time the character has finished three levels and is ready to move onto another class, she is considered to have failed and loses all abilities gained from the talesman class, retaining only the additional spell levels, base attack bonuses, saving throw bonuses, and skill points. If she does succeed in her quest, she retains all of the special abilities gained from the talesman class except Change Nature. This is her reward from the gods – they have improved the very fiber of her being. No matter what, no character may take more than three levels of talesman. Because only high-level characters



Talesmen come from all walks of the adventuring life and have no uniform; nor do they wear holy symbols.

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with a great deal of experience can become talesmen, it is possible for a character to be issued a writ long before they're next able to go up a level and that they will complete the task before they even take a 1st level of this prestige class. GMs should thus ensure that the quest is epic enough for the character to gain at least one level.

Change Nature (Su)

As long as the talesman is on her quest, her very nature is changed by the gods for the purposes of all spells and magics. Regardless of the character's alignment, she is considered without alignment for detections, protections (cast against her), and other magic – the exception being any items that were in her possession prior to becoming a talesman (see below). This ability makes it so that even if the talesman is chaotic good, she is unaffected by *protection from chaos*, *protection from good*, and anything else that targets alignment. She is not even considered neutral. She has no alignment for such purposes. The character in no way changes her behavior (other than pursuing the quest singularly) and may continue to behave as though she has alignment. This change is purely for purposes pertaining to magic and spell-like effects. Also, for purposes of magic that affects a particular race or racial designator, the talesman is considered without race or plane, so spells like *charm person* have no effect on her. An outsider with spell-like abilities that affect creatures from the Prime Material Plane will be unable to affect the talesman, as she has no such designator. Again, this is only for purposes of such magic, and the character doesn't actually change race or even appearance.

Change Nature affects magic items, except those in the talesman's possession before accepting the writ of tales. This eventuality is actually explained in the writ, so the character can gather up all the items that might be affected by this before reading the acceptance passage. Once the talesman completes her quest, this ability is gone, as are all of its effects.

Damage Reduction (Su)

To aid her on her quest, the gods improve the talesman's body, making her harder to hurt – particularly by mundane means. At first level she gains damage reduction of 10/+1. At second level it becomes 20/+1; at third level, 20/+2.

Spell Resistance (Su)

Because the talesman is doing the gods a service, they protect her with a divine aura against petty magics. At first level she gains Spell Resistance of 5 + her Charisma modifier. At second level it becomes 10 + Charisma modifier; at third level, 15 + Charisma modifier. This spell resistance will continue to increase if the talesman's Charisma modifier increases. If the talesman has spell resistance from another class, it stacks with this spell resistance.

Ability Bonus (Su)

With each new level, the gods grant the talesman spontaneous new powers and insights to enhance her for her quest. At every level the talesman gains a +1 inherent bonus to the ability of her choice. No character can have more than a +5 inherent bonus to a single ability, but such bonuses are only granted by the gods themselves and supremely powerful magic.

Protective Aura (Su)

At 2nd level the talesman is surrounded by a divine glow whenever attacked – even if she is surprised. The Aura grants two powers: +6 armor bonus to AC (which does not stack with armor if the talesman wears it) and an additional +4 sacred bonus to AC.

Divine Wrath (Su)

At 3rd level, the talesman may call upon the wrath of the gods once a week. Divine wrath instills the talesman with a power terrifying to behold. She gains temporary hit points equal to 3 times her character level and a +10 bonus to her Strength and Constitution. The hit points gained from the additional constitution are lost last in battle, unlike the temporary hit points. She may hold onto the wrath for 3 rounds + her character level. A talesman may only call upon the gods' wrath against foes that the gods oppose – devils, demons, undead, the criminals against whom the writ of tales has been issued, etc. Calling on Divine Wrath to smite a peasant or a goblin is likely to achieve some divine wrath, but not the sort the talesman might hope for. During the righteous frenzy of Divine Wrath, the talesman may not cast spells of any sort. Divine Wrath may not be used in conjunction with any similar abilities that temporarily enhance Strength and Constitution, such as Barbarian's Rage.

God of Travel, Wealth, and Joy

The Houses of Darmon

Darmon (DAR-mahn) (Silver Tongue, Clever, Wily, Merry, the Traveler, of the Many Faces, the Laughing God, Master of the Road, Lord of the Ways, Champion of Heaven, the Golden Messenger)

Myth

The Might of Wits

In a past age, when it was common to meet those whose bloodline was intermingled with the gods', there was an elven princess named Mirien who was said to be fairer than any mortal ever born. She was descended from Aymara, and that goddess' features shone in her face more clearly than in any of her ancestors.

When the time came for Mirien to take a husband, all the gods watched with interest, for she was no common mortal. Her beauty would fill legends, they all knew, but she also had her foremother's talent for art; to hear her sing was to hear a sound more fair than the heavenly choirs. When Mirien's mother began greeting suitors for her daughter, Aymara declared the princess her special ward, and that whosoever was worthy of her hand would be blessed, and so too would the union.

Each of the gods, inspired by Aymara's announcement, decided to take one of the mortal suitors as a ward as well, and the issue of Mirien's marriage

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became a great competition among them. As the suitors presented themselves to Mirien and her parents, Morwyn proclaimed, "Let us all agree then – whomever's ward proves worthy of Mirien's love proves also that his sponsor is the best among us; for let it not be said that all the gods looked on and let the fairest mortal ever born take the hand of any but the worthiest among men." To this all agreed: whose ward was granted Mirien's hand would be named the Champion of the gods, the greatest of their number.

By this time, the Three Sisters had been found, and Darmon Silver Tongue was full in love with Canelle, the fiery one of the three; the Master of the Road had developed with her a constant and insistent competition. It was mere moments after Morwyn's proclamation that Canelle beat her chest and shouted, "Then my ward shall win her hand, for all of us know that I am the greatest among the gods! What test has been devised that I cannot master? What contest of skill or speed has been set down in which I am not the victor?" While her braggadocio won her no favors among the rest of the gods, it only made Darmon the Traveler love her more.

Wily Darmon knew that the only way to Canelle's heart was to best her. They had played at a thousand games of prowess and skill, and she defeated him time and again. She refused to play him at games that he might win – games of wit and chance – and he was certain that if he ever bested her she would finally see him as worthy. And so he pledged to win Mirien's hand for his ward.

While the others selected their wards for beauty, wealth, nobility, or strength, Darmon, clever Darmon, went to the side of a lad of low birth and weak frame named Rinalde Wolfcall. Rinalde was disliked by most in his village, for while they were strong and toiled in the fields, he was wily and determined ways to perform his labors with minimal effort. While the others were brave in times of war, he was keen-eyed and full of tricks; while others took up arms, he observed, learned, and studied.

And so the Lord of the Ways came to whisper into Wolfcall's ear of the fairest lady ever born. He arrayed Rinalde in rich robes of purple and crimson, and gave him a circlet to wear on his brow as might a prince of a far-away land.

Picking up the clever lad in his mighty hand, Darmon Silver Tongue bore his ward to Mirien's kingdom in time to strive for the lady.

Now, the story is long of the many challenges and contests the suitors faced. A great tournament was held with splendid deeds and stupendous feats, culminating in the withdrawal of Morwyn's ward, who decided in his wisdom that he and Mirien were not a fit match. By the end of it, all the gods' wards had been eliminated but for those of Terak the Mighty, Canelle the Swift, and Darmon the Traveler, who in the final contest would face the champion of Mirien in a personal challenge.

Before the contest began, though, Morwyn and the other gods whose wards had been eliminated declared thusly: that the remaining three might not grant their wards special powers or skills for this last contest. The suitor that won would have to do it on his own. And while Merry Darmon thought this unfair, to change the rules of the game, neither Terak nor Canelle minded, for they were sure of their wards' impending victories.

When Mirien's champion strode onto the tournament field, the people of the kingdom cheered, and Mirien's mother, the Queen, rose. "Behold! Sir Edrikul, whom none have ever bested!" Edrikul stood a hand higher than the others and wore armor that was grim and black, his face obscured by a great helm with the likeness of a dragon atop it. The Queen declared: "The champion of my daughter shall challenge each suitor!"

And so Edrikul came first to Lord Morgan, ward of Terak, known to be the mightiest man alive. Morgan had slain a bear with naught but his hands when he was still a boy. "Lord Morgan, it is known to all that you are the mightiest man alive, and so I shall challenge you to a contest of might!"

At this the crowd gasped, and Lord Morgan laughed. "I accept!" the haughty lord cried. Sir Edrikul responded at once, gesturing to a great hoist at the edge of the field, used for lifting armored men onto their horses. Its load was obscured, and at Edrikul's signal a squire removed the cover to reveal an awesome anvil, as though made for giants.



Darmon, the god of joy, is friend to all good people – in the mortal world and beyond. He travels farther than any other

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Maal and Darmon

The Darmonite freedom of organization drives other churches to distraction, particularly the courts of Maal. While Maal and Darmon are companions and boon friends in many epics, many Maalites do not treat Darmonites warmly, assuming them to be lawless vagabonds. The court's official position is that each house must be judged on its own merits, and houses that give succor to thieves and lawbreakers will receive no special treatment from the courts simply because they claim to worship Darmon. Needless to say, the Darmonites and the Maalites are less warm to one another than their patrons, particularly chaotic neutral houses and lawful neutral courts. Still, most Darmonite houses are pained by the mistrust shown by the Maalites and seek to remedy it – they too are ill pleased with the wild, thieving adherents of Darmon.

“Lord Morgan, this anvil was made for the King of the Cloud Giants long ago, and its weight is as great as a hill. For the challenge each of us will lie under it unarmored and have it dropped on his chest. The mightiest of the twain shall be able to lift it off. You are first.”

Morgan stared at this terrible, black anvil and blanched. “This I refuse, for it is not strength you seek, but murder!” at which the crowd laughed and jeered. And so Terak’s ward was bested without even beginning the contest.

Next Sir Edrikul approached Canelle’s ward, Donivere the Great. Known throughout the lands as the greatest sportsman who ever lived, Donivere could strike the mark with his bow from a mile away and then sunder the arrow with a second shot. He had once outrun a horse on his feet for a bet, he was so swift. “Donivere, who is called Great,” Edrikul pronounced, “you are the greatest Bowman who ever lived, and also the swiftest of feet. And so I challenge you to a contest of speed and archery!”

Now, Donivere was no fool, and had seen the last challenge, so he hesitated. But with no choice, he eventually muttered, “I accept,” and the crowd cheered. At this Sir Edrikul clapped his gauntleted hands, and a great bow of yew was borne out to him by two squires, which Edrikul drew back and strung.

“This is the mightiest bow in the kingdom, made by our greatest craftsmen. Each one of us will draw it and fire an arrow at the back of the other. The contestant must outrun the arrow shot from the bow. He that lives shall have the lady Mirien’s hand. You shall run first.”

Donivere thought something of the like was coming and, shaking his head in disgust, walked from the field without a word. At this the crowd booed and then laughed merrily, but Rinalde Wolfcall was not pleased. When Sir Edrikul approached him, Rinalde spoke first: “A challenge of wits, Sir Edrikul, for I have proven myself wily? I accept.”

Edrikul nodded and clapped again. Great and tall men of the Queen’s guard came onto the field with huge, keen blades and surrounded the two. “You and I shall engage in a war of words, Rinalde Wolfcall,” the Champion of Mirien said, “regaling the Queen and all others with the worst insults each of us may conjure. We shall each of us tell the whole of the assembly what a base and vile creature we think Mirien to be, casting on her the most insidious attributes of perfidy imaginable for the entertainment of these, her most loyal guards.” Sir Edrikul indicated the tall men with great swords. “You are first.”

All eyes were now on Rinalde Wolfcall, every member of the crowd leaning to observe what he would say. The hands of Mirien’s personal bodyguards, each of whom loved her more than life, tightened on their blades in preparation for a stream of outrages. But rather than walking away from this task that meant sure death, Rinalde began to speak. “I have seen Mirien many times in this tournament, and I have observed that she is the envy of gold, and that starlight seeks to emulate her beauty.” At this the crowd gasped, amazed, for surely this was no way to win a contest of insults. And yet Rinalde continued for a full hour, losing a magnificent encomium to the princess’ many fine qualities. Some of the greatest

poems to love ever writ were composed that day, on that ground, as words tumbled from Rinalde’s lips in song and verse, all hailing Mirien as the finest lady to ever grace the mortal world – and all said in earnest, for Rinalde had come to love the lady from afar with a passion unyielding. And when he concluded, the crowd laughed, for clearly this supposedly clever man had lost this contest of wits and been proven a fool.

But in a moment, the crowd hushed as Sir Edrikul raised his hands. All waited for the great knight to cast the pettiest insult at the princess to win the contest, for any ill word would win this challenge. And yet, he said nothing, instead unfastening his helmet and lifting it up. Spilling forth from under Edrikul’s helm were two things – long golden hair and tears. For Edrikul was in fact princess Mirien in great armor that made her tall and terrible, and Rinalde’s words had pierced her heart more surely than any barb or dart. Without a word, the armored princess embraced Darmon’s ward and kissed his lips, for as Rinalde had fallen in love with her from afar, the words of the wily suitor had won her most worthy heart.

When the two were wed, the other gods bestowed golden laurels on Darmon of the Many Faces to signify him Champion of the Gods. For he and his ward alone knew that sometimes, in order to win, you must lose.

Associations

Darmon is the god of travelers, tricksters and rogues, joy, laughter, good fortune, trade, merchants, diplomacy, messengers, jesters, scouts, rebels, and thieves.

In the animal kingdom he is associated with the fox, the otter, and the kestrel -- the cleverest beasts of land, water, and sky. Among mystical creatures, he is associated with the djinni, who were once among the div confined to the pillar of fire. Darmon once went to the fire pillar and found those div of good heart who were wrongly imprisoned; these he transported to the pillar of the air, where they rule to this day. These powerful beings love Darmon and are fond of his followers.

Because Darmon has walked among the mortal races more than any other god, and in the early days was able to reveal himself when he did so, he is the most universally popular of the gods. All races engage in the crafts he taught them. If there is one race most fond of Darmon, though, it is the humans, who are most enamored with his ways.

Alignment

Darmon is chaotic good.

Representations

Darmon is called “many faced” because he has always disguised himself to walk among the mortal races. Every race shows him as one of their own in icons, generally a very handsome young male with

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laughing eyes. He always wears golden laurels on his brow, bears his short blade Laughter's Sting, and wears his cloak of the heavens.

Representational tokens for Darmon are extremely symbolic. A circle of gold, filled in, is all that is necessary to represent Darmon, and many merchants use this symbol to signify their trade. Those who wish to wear holy symbols of Darmon usually wear a large, round gold coin. When in haste, one need only paint a gold circle, though it is considered most fitting to fill it in.

Purpose

Like his sister Aymara, Darmon is a preternaturally happy god. He tells jokes in Heaven and when walking among mortals, and seeks to improve the lives of everyone he meets by supplying them with a bit of delight. However, his love of golden things and beautiful objects is irrepressible, and he has taught this love to the mortal races, calling the mercantile trades "the finest of the arts."

In the early days, Darmon gave the mortal races many of the basic tools necessary for civilization – writing, keeping time, crop rotation, sailing, trade, riding, the making of compasses, and many other useful tricks and trades. He usually did this with his cousin Korak, who at the same time taught the mortal races useful skills such as sewing, weaving, making steel, and building arches. They both did this out of love for the mortal races, and this love has not diminished with the ages; though Darmon is delighted by mischief, is happy to see horrible things happen to bad people (or even people who just think too much of themselves), and has never had a problem with mortals violating all sorts of laws, his dominant feeling toward the mortal races is a deep and abiding love. He would see them thrive.

Darmon seeks a world free of stuffiness, free of useless restriction, a world filled with wealth, joy, good food, magnificent song, and, most of all, laughter. It is very hard to get him to be serious, to put away his tricks and fun, but when he is serious he can have the same fierce temper as his mother, father, and sister. He sides with his parents in great matters of conflict between the gods, but like the other young gods, he is less interested in conflict than the elders. He is endlessly inquisitive and loves to see and learn new things, prizing above all the freedom to travel and move.

Darmon is messenger of the gods, so he is often charged by the others to go to the mortal sphere and retrieve someone or deliver a decree. This is less important since the Compact, but of all the gods, Darmon is the most likely to be met by a living mortal.

Servants

Darmon has 1,000 servants in the heavens, each of whom run messages about the Prime Material Plane and beyond. Because Darmon is entrusted with messages, he often relies on his servants to bear notes from god to god. His closest companion – other than Korak, Maal, and his sister, all of whom are dear to him – is Ix, his silver fox. Darmon delights in watching Ix infuriate Metteron, the golden lion of Terak.

The tales of Ix tricking Metteron into countless humiliating positions are well loved and told to children for entertainment.

The Church

Church Description

The churches of Darmon are called the houses of Darmon, or just as often among the Darmonite (DAR-muhn-ite) faithful, the house, e.g. "are you going to the house for services?"

The houses of Darmon are littered about the landscape, with few of them particularly grand. Some of them are still banks (the art of banking was begun by the houses, though now there are many banks not affiliated with the Darmonite faith). There is absolutely no central authority to the houses. In fact, even the spiritual leaders are rarely ordained or properly educated. Instead there is a vast oral history of the faith, many books with aphorisms and tales about Darmon's travels among the mortals, and even secrets recorded nowhere and passed from teacher to student, generation to generation.

The houses serve as a meeting point for all those interested in the teachings of Darmon. They sponsor fairs, teach languages and other skills, offer counsel and advice, sell items both wondrous and mundane, and resolve disputes among those who cannot, for whatever reason, seek dispute resolution through legal channels. This often means that the houses are havens to thieves, which regularly brings them into conflict with actual legal authorities, particularly the courts of Maal.

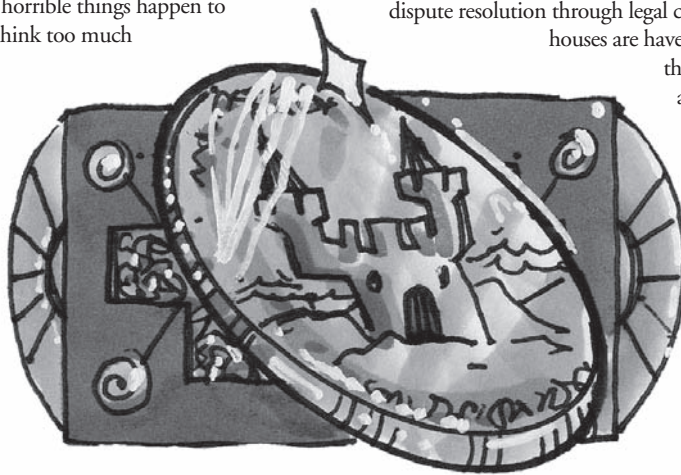
The most commonly used function of the houses, though, is as a communication network. Because it is so easy to found a house (simply get a community of dedicated Darmonites together, erect a structure, and elect a high wayfarer), there are houses criss-crossing the civilized world.

For a modest fee, the Darmonite houses will send a message from one house to the next, and from that house on to another, until it reaches its destination. This makes the Darmonite houses a center of communication. Usually runners carry the messages, but the houses also train carrier pigeons and other message-bearing birds to carry small notes, or use magic to send messages when possible.

Church Structure

Long ago, Darmon told the founder of the house system, "Never give one man or one woman absolute authority to control what is most important to you, for such control will someday deny you the freedom I wish for you." From this simple phrase, the house system was created – a system whereby the faith is practiced and promoted, but there is absolutely no central authority.

The Darmonite tradition is one of debate and constant re-examination. The members of a house decide who will serve as its high wayfarer (addressed as "high wayfarer" and introduced by title,



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including the location of the house: “High Wayfarer Vynald of the Wittenburg House of Darmon.”). The high wayfarer names learned men and women from the house as wayfarers (addressed as “wayfarer” and introduced in the same fashion as the high wayfarer), and these people all serve together as spiritual leaders for those who come to the houses. Should those who are members of the house determine they are no longer satisfied with the leadership of the high wayfarer, they may vote to strip her of her title. No high wayfarer from one house is greater or more important than any other, and no member of the faith, no matter how senior or powerful, may order another into service. Decisions are made on a broad scale when high wayfarers from area houses congregate to debate religious matters. They do this often; the Darmonite faith is not a finished thing, and is always expanding.

Table 6-4: Wayfarers of Darmon Titles

Title	Requirement
Wayfarer	Chosen by High Wayfarer; Usually Knowledge (religion): 4+ ranks
High Wayfarer	Elected by Majority of Congregation. Position Lasts for Life, Unless Voted Out Usually Knowledge (religion): 12+ ranks

The Darmonite faith is not evangelical, precisely, but those who practice it can't help but try to offer others guidance through the teachings of Darmon. Most of the Darmonites believe that all places of a reasonable size should have at least one house (and perhaps several), as the worship of Darmon, and the debate of his teachings, is the most useful of all the religions. “What use is dogma to a person with a really thorny issue?” they ask. “Teach a man to think for himself, and you've *really* improved his life.” So the houses work to help nearby communities build their own houses, and aid them in their first few years of operation with money, advice, and even by sending them spiritual leaders. Other than this, the houses are not terribly active politically, and really have no need to be. They are well funded by travelers donating money and asking for Darmon's blessings on road, or rich merchants tithing and donating property for the house's upkeep and growth. They also receive a good deal of funding from their message services.

The three holy orders of the Darmonite faith are clerics, heroes, and runners. The clerics and the runners are often involved deeply in local house politics and debates; the heroes are by nature a wandering order concerned more with adventure and travel into the unknown than with the affairs of one town or another.

The average house has about 80 members, ten of whom are wayfarers, and one high wayfarer. Many houses have no clerics present, but those that do have at least two, and often as many as 20 for large houses in major urban areas. Houses that are on important roads will have at least six runners in residence, though they are often out delivering messages.

Doctrine

“Each one of us is as different as the many faces of coin in the world. To judge one man by the actions of another is as foolish as valuing one coin by the weight of another.”

- High Wayfarer Vexx Dragonsaddler's interpretation of Darmon the Traveler's oft-recited statement, “I am not gold; I am more valuable yet.”

It is not uncommon for someone seeking advice from a high wayfarer to ask his question and have her respond, “That is a very good question. What do you think is the right thing to do?” The Darmonites encourage free thought, self-reliance, and wit. Those Darmonites who are serious

about the teachings of their god understand that life is too short to be miserable, that joy and laughter should be dominant in one's life, and that resolving conflicts through understanding and debate is infinitely preferable to violence. They think of trade and diplomacy and the many other teachings of Darmon as the best ways to experience as many cultures and meet as many people as possible in one's short life. They crave new experiences, new understandings, and new awareness.

Slavish devotion to dogma is unheard of among them, and will be laughed at and scorned if practiced. All agree that Darmon wants them to be free, happy, and prosperous, but beyond that the faith is as varied as the houses that observe it. If one were to try to categorize a universal Darmonite doctrine, it could best be described with four principles: debate, aphorisms, names, and freedom of organization.

Debate

The Darmonite faith is a constant quest for self-discovery and insight into the secrets of the spirit. While on the surface, and as practiced by most casual participants, it is a simple religion that teaches mutual respect, love, joy, and freedom, beneath that and the endless debate of its elder practitioners is a quest to understand the countless teachings of Darmon of the Many Faces. Sometimes, the learned members of the faith seem to enjoy thorny questions more than they do good answers, and it is hardly uncommon to find a group of Darmonite elders debating some particularly obscure issue well into the night over many, many goblets of wine.

Aphorisms

The Master of the Road had thousands of encounters with mortals before the Compact. In that time, he offered mortals many tidbits of advice, each meant to enlighten them on matters of trade, love, happiness, career, and fidelity with the gods. Many of these sayings are captured in writing, many are not, but the Darmonite practitioners who are truly serious about the faith debate their meaning for hours upon hours, endlessly discussing why the Lord of the Ways chose this word over that, this phrase instead of the other. It is this principle of the faith that most easily transfers from house to house; all Darmonites delight in learning a new saying of Darmon's and discussing its meaning.

Names

To better understand Darmon and his teachings, the more mystically inclined Darmonites take on new surnames at various times in their lives. These new names are either based on or duplicates of the many names that Darmon has taken while walking the earth. In her youth, Krys may be called Krys Boneblade because legends say Darmon called himself “the Blade of Bone” when he taught her people how to fish. At some point in her life, Krys will come to understand why Darmon took that name – perhaps she will see a bone in an ancestor's skeleton that looks like a blade, and understand that Darmon was saying that all things die, and we should not fear it. Perhaps she will have some other epiphany. But she will seek an understanding of this name for much of her life. When she has it, she will take on another name. This is a bit like the way the Tinelites approach their visions.

Freedom of Organization

Debate and taking on new names are important to most Darmonites, but not all. Many simply see the religion as a system by which to justify their poorly lived lives. Thieves often understand Darmon's teaching as “Have a good time, live fast, die young.” This is a complete misunderstanding of the Champion of Heaven, but without any centralized authority, there is no

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one to crack down on such misuse of Darmon's name. Indeed, the freedom of the houses to determine their own structure and beliefs is the very heart of the faith, but it means one is just as likely to find a high wayfarer who preaches that "the rich have had too much for too long, and it's time they get what's comin' to 'em," as a high wayfarer who preaches that "we are all of us brothers and we should strive together for joy and mutual benefit." The former is fairly common in more chaotic locales (in the city of Freeport, for instance, Darmon's house worships him as the god of pirates), making the Darmonite faith fairly unpopular with lawful authority figures.

Common Prayers

The worshippers of Darmon do not engage in common prayers as most religions do. As the religion is based on the nearly limitless aphorisms of Darmon, the Darmonite version of prayer usually involves the recitation of one such aphorism followed by vigorous debate – with one's self or with a group – about its meaning. The practical effect for a player is that a Darmonite character will be regularly spouting sayings from Darmon, so one had best be on one's toes when playing such a person.

Here are some sample sayings of Darmon to give players and GMs an understanding of the ease with which they may be created:

- "Do not use three words when you need only one: 'Yes.'"
- "We paint our houses different colors for a good reason."
- "No number is the best. Three builds better than two, two loves better than one, one thinks better than three."
- "Wait for the good, seek out the bad."
- "A man is not a rocking horse."
- "Wheat is better than dust, but dust is better than nothing."
- "No matter what the wicked say, I always know my mother loves me."
- "Do not seek what you do not want."
- "There are twelve houses in the river. They will all sink in the end."

Holy Days

The last day of the calendar year is a day of enormous importance to the Darmonite faith. It is usually celebrated with an elaborate festival. Because Darmon actually taught the mortal races about time and helped them to set down their various methods of keeping time, the last day of the year is a time to remember this and other gifts from the Master of the Road.



The festival is usually accompanied by a parade. Local children perform dances in the parade to commemorate Darmon's various gifts to the mortal races. Usually the festival celebrates a gift particularly important to the local populace (a seaside community might commemorate the gift of sailing, for instance).

What is interesting about these festivals is that many of Darmon's gifts involved skills and practices for which he is not the god. For instance, he introduced the idea of crop rotation to the mortal races, but Rontra is the goddess of farming. It is quite common to have a community that overwhelmingly worships a god other than Darmon most of the year turn out and celebrate the Laughing God at the end of the year. In small towns that lack a house of Darmon, these celebrations are organized by the clergy of the other god's church.

Saints

All mortals are saints. This is a fundamental belief of the Darmonites – that within everyone is the ability to be someone great. "You spend your lives whittling away at your better selves," Darmon once said sadly to a man repenting for a life of evil on his deathbed, and this aphorism is an important bit of the Darmonite faith. There is no need to beatify the truly good, for they have only lived up to their potential.

While not a church of cowards, exactly, the Darmonite faith is not exactly a proponent of martyrdom or glorious death. Darmon was once encountered at an oasis by a nomad who had wandered the desert in a quest for enlightenment. When the nomad asked him what is necessary for a good life, Wily Darmon said, "Live. Laugh. Love." And when asked which of these was most important, Darmon said, "This above all else: Live." It is therefore outside the faith to pay great homage to how one of the faithful died. Instead, they celebrate the lives of their greatest names.

Darmon's View of the Church

Generally, Darmon is not terribly interested in religions, and among the gods he has the least need to be. He is celebrated in every culture and prayed to by all those who travel. The houses are only a fraction of the worship he receives from the mortal races, as even those who are steadfast worshippers of other gods pay him respect and homage.

That being said, he does help those who worship him and looks after them a bit here and there. Whenever he walks among the mortal races, he is sure to have discussions with one of his worshippers, and will even go to a house to join the debate of something he said an age before. He is fond of his worshippers, and wishes to see them succeed, but rarely if ever issues edicts commanding them on great quests or urging them to holy war.

If ever some pressing threat came up against the general happiness and health of the mortal races, though, Darmon would not hesitate to use his worshippers as powerful agents to stem the tide of such evil. He actually started supporting clerics and holy warriors, providing them with great power, at the urging of his beloved sister, Aymara, who reminded him that Asmodeus is a grave threat to all joy and would have a dark and miserable world were he able. So he supports these holy orders with power, always keeping in mind that he may need to call upon them in the future to commit great deeds for the good of all mortals.

Preferred Weapon

Darmon spent a great deal of time with his mother's creations, the Titans, and learned as many tricks from them as they did from him. He once bet the King of the Titans that the greatest smiths of his people could not make a weapon powerful enough to cut apart a mountain but small enough to fit in his pocket. The King ordered it done, and the smiths slaved away, night and day, to make it so. They would have failed, but Darmon's cousin, Korak Hammer Hand, decided to play a trick on Darmon. Masking himself as a Titan, Korak helped the other smiths to make Laughter's Sting, a tiny blade (tiny for Titans) that was mighty enough to level a mountain. When the King of the Titans presented the shortsword, Darmon lost the bet and had to serve for one hundred years as the King's throne, bent on hands and knees to take the Titan's weight day and night.

When Darmon found out what Korak had done he was at first furious but then, laughing, demanded his cousin repay the hurt with labor.

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Master Korak agreed, and Darmon made him craft 10,000 gems of fire, silver, and adamantine. And so Korak mined the silver and the precious adamantine from deep in the earth and worked his most spectacular creations. When the gems were done, Darmon slipped them in a pouch and went to the mighty halls where Urian the Wind Lord resides. Asking the Sky King to drink with him, Darmon produced a bottle of his mother's wine. The two drank through the night and, by the end of it, Urian was asleep in his hall.

Seizing the moment, Wily Darmon slipped out into the night and stole 10,000 stars from the heavens, replacing them with the gems of Clever Handed Korak's devising. These stolen stars he sewed into his cloak, making his cloak of the heavens, which he wears to this day. Ever since then, Urian has hunted down these gems that are not stars and, when he finds them, he bashes them out of the sky. As they fall they leave a trail of silver and fire – a shooting star. Sometimes they hit the earth, and when they do there is nothing left of them but the adamantine, which is why the mightiest of metals can be found deep in the earth and also sometimes falling from heaven.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Wayfarers of Darmon

The Order

The order of clerics is fairly new in the grand scheme of things, as Darmon has only recently begun giving powers to clerics and holy warriors (see god's view of the church above). Like anyone else of importance of the faith, clerics are called wayfarers. It is impossible to be a cleric of Darmon and not be a wayfarer – if the high wayfarer of a cleric's house decides to strip the status from him, he may simply leave and go to another house, where he will be acknowledged immediately as a wayfarer. (If asked "what class are you" or "what are your skills," they call themselves clerics of Darmon to distinguish themselves from other wayfarers.)

Any wise high wayfarer prizes Darmonite clerics because they keep and recite the more mystic traditions of Darmon. While any member of a community who has studied the sayings and teachings of Darmon and has a keen mind can be a wayfarer, the clerics actually know the special invocations Darmon

taught the first clerics to receive and cast divine spells.

The clerics know and can recite (or at least several together can) all the countless names of Darmon. The quest to take on and understand one of those names is usually given to one of the faithful by a cleric, not by a normal wayfarer, and guidance is provided by a cleric on the way to interpret the name and its bearer's experiences. This most mystical aspect of the faith is the province of clerics, and so too are the more secret aspects of the religion.

The clergy of the Darmonites believe that in all of his many meetings with mortals, Darmon was setting out an elaborate code to understanding the very nature of the universe – all the dimensions, the existence of the Nameless One, the purpose for all existence. They believe that were one to truly understand all of the sayings of Darmon, one could then see the world with what they call "the Golden Sight." With the Golden Sight, one could know all things, understand all tongues, travel anywhere, speak with the gods, and know the universe for what it really is. So the clerics of Darmon are on a constant quest to assemble aphorisms of Darmon and interpret them.

This work of the clergy of Darmon is a religious secret, and is known only to clerics of Darmon – not even other members of the houses know that the clerics believe there is a great and mystical combination of the sayings of Darmon. If everyone knew, the reasoning goes, then many would seek to stymie the efforts. While it's unlikely one would be killed if one learned the secret, it's not out of the realm of possibility.

Titles

Clerics of Darmon have the same titles as other members of the houses. They are automatically wayfarers, as mentioned above. If a house has the choice between a cleric and a non-cleric for its high wayfarer, it will almost always choose the cleric. While there are no rules stating that the most powerful cleric who is a member of a house must be its high wayfarer, it is incredibly uncommon that it happens any other way.

Should a not-very-powerful cleric move to a small community with an established non-clerical high wayfarer, however, there is no reason to believe the community will suddenly oust its perfectly good leader in favor of an unseasoned one. In general, a cleric needs to be 9th level or higher before houses start radically restructuring themselves to accommodate the cleric's presence.



Darmon's clerics rise quickly, and many are high wayfarers of their own House before they are old. They're smooth talkers and snappy dressers.

Domains

Clerics of Darmon may choose any two of the following domains: Chaos, Good, Knowledge, Luck, Trickery, and Travel.

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Spell Preparation Time

Clerics of Darmon may prepare their spells just before or after a journey or expedition. That means they cannot walk for a few hours (or adventure in a dungeon), stop, learn spells, and then keep going. They must pray for their spells right before they start a day's activity, or right after finishing.

Alignments

The most common alignment for Darmonite clerics is chaotic good. These kind souls wander the world, or work with a particular house, seeking to advance the prosperity of all people, gain in wisdom, help others learn what they might learn, and further the eternal clerical quest for spiritual enlightenment through the collection of Darmon's aphorisms. Chaotic good clerics of Darmon are often adventurers, ministering to likeminded free spirits who seek travel, joy, life, adventure, and happiness over orderly doldrums.

There are many neutral good clerics of Darmon in the world as well. These clerics are quite likely to serve as wayfarers and high wayfarers in houses, particularly in large mercantile cities and ports. The neutral good clergy take most seriously the actual gifts of Darmon, seeking to help people to understand one another. They are diplomats, language experts, and traders, often working to resolve disputes between merchants. Such clerics are absolutely in love with the many splendid differences between all the races, and are ceaselessly fascinated by people. They love learning and exchanging knowledge.

Finally, chaotic neutral clerics of Darmon are almost as common as chaotic good clergy, though they are less likely to be found in major cities. Such clerics believe that Darmon's chosen people are rule-breakers, liars, thieves, pirates – the people who live life on the edge and seek new ways of seeing things by disobeying. Such clerics travel far and wide, ministering to the bandits in the woods, the rebel armies in the mountains, even the assassins and murderers found in dark places throughout the world. Good and evil are of little import to these clerics. They focus instead on the wisdom one can attain by flaunting rules. They are wild experientialists, trying as many new things and activities as they can, no matter how repugnant.

Holy Warrior: Heroes of Darmon

The Order

The heroes of Darmon are usually detached from any political structure, including that of their own houses. While many are wayfarers, in deference to their gifts from Darmon, the way of the heroes is to abandon attachment to any one place or people and instead travel the world seeking new places, new adventures, and new glories.

Heroes are taught their skills by other heroes. Essentially, when one heeds the call to take up arms in Darmon's name, one must find a hero and ask her for training. Heroes only take on one such companion at a time, and the companion acts as the hero's squire, keeping her horse, polishing her armor, and cleaning her weapons.

The goal of a hero is to do great things in the name of the mortal races. It is simple enough, and it leads to a life of terrific adventure, terrible danger, and fabulous wealth. While the hero embraces these things, they are not the point – the hero strives do good. The Darmonite faith

is quite supportive of adventurers and the impulse to go forth and fight monsters, delve dungeons, win treasures, and conquer evil. The hero can be best understood as a perpetually blessed adventurer.

Like all members of the faith, heroes maintain a profound love for debate, and do argue over the many sayings of Darmon as fiercely as anyone else. They have the gifts of Darmon and are excellent speakers, diplomats, and wily traders. Rather than blessing travelers, as the clerics do, heroes *are* the travelers, and possess all the skills necessary to lead lives on the road.

Titles

A hero has no titles, and does not even like to be called a "hero of Darmon." Because the Lord of the Ways has not paid much attention to the holy orders of his houses, the heroes have no reason to think much about what Darmon wants from them specifically, or to ask him for guidance in any specific situation. Instead, they strive to live as Darmon would live were he a mortal. They wander, teach people, seek knowledge, smooth over conflicts, slay beasts, trick bad people, make fun of the pompous, etc. They are perhaps the least obviously "holy" of all the holy warrior orders (though the joyous brotherhood is certainly the most vulgar), and yet they receive power from Darmon because they live as he would live, purely devoted to him and his ways. They wear his symbol, speak his name in their private prayers, and live to serve him. They simply believe that service to Darmon does not involve much dogma or guidance from their god.

Because they do not like to be called "heroes of Darmon," usually a hero of Darmon is addressed as "Sir" or "Dame," followed by her name. This is not a knighthood bestowed by any temporal power, but rather a knighthood in Darmon's order of arms.

Table 65:

The Heroes of Darmon Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	None. Addressed as "Sir" or "Dame" followed by their names.	Ten Years Training or 1st Level Character with 1+ Rank in Knowledge (religion) and One Year of Training

Additional Class Skills:

The hero's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha) and Diplomacy (Cha). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

Heroes may choose two of the following Holy Warrior domains: Travel, Mind, and Champion.

Gift of Darmon

Beginning at 3rd level, the hero can ensure *freedom of movement* once per week, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level, etc.). *Freedom of movement* is a spell-like ability for heroes.

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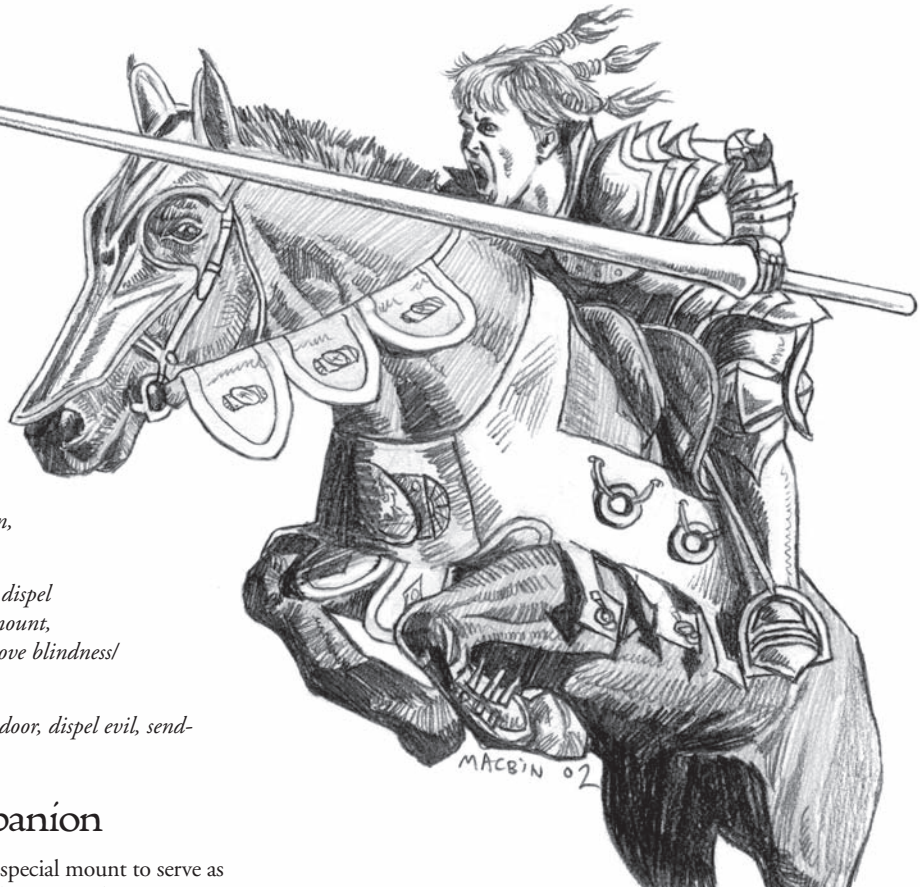
Spells

1st level – *bless, bless water, bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, magic weapon, protection from evil, read magic, resistance, rope trick*

2nd level – *remove paralysis, resist elements, whispering wind, delay poison, undetectable alignment*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds, tongues, dispel magic, greater magic weapon, heal mount, magic circle against evil, prayer, remove blindness/deafness*

4th level – *cure serious wounds, dimension door, dispel evil, sending, holy sword, neutralize poison*



Mount/Animal Companion

Beginning at 5th level, the hero may call a special mount to serve as companion on his travels. This is almost always a warhorse (or pony, in the case of small heroes), but at higher levels, with the GM's permission, the hero may call more exotic mounts – the swifter the better.

Conduct

The hero must live a life worthy of that name. The code of heroic conduct is as follows:

Valor

Fight the good fight against the darkness; protect your companions and strangers alike; take the vanguard into danger, and the rearguard from it.

Joy

Live your life as completely as any life may be lived; sponsor beauty and laughter with your wealth; contemplate delight, not despair, happiness, not horror.

Unity

Build the congress of mortality, do not take from it; ease conflicts and act as mediator; form fast and lifelong friendships; lead others to live their lives more for their friends and family than for themselves.

Wealth

Protect the wealth of the good people of the world; take away the wealth of the dark things; celebrate the wonders of prosperity, but do not become obsessed with your own wealth – for you may lead a wealthy life, but your other duties are more important.

While heroes eschew noble titles, they are still paragons of virtue, dressing in shining mail, fighting evil and serving as examples to all.

Should a hero start turning down adventures, or start refusing to help people or do good deeds, she will lose her abilities. A hero who knowingly does evil will also lose her abilities until she can properly atone.

Associates

Heroes prefer a balanced party of companions for their adventures. Although powerful heroes are often found riding alone with their squires, pursuing great adventures, younger heroes form fast friendships with other adventurers, particularly: another warrior, a rogue, and a spellcaster. Think of the perfectly rounded adventuring party of four people; the hero wishes to be one of the four.

Alignment

Heroes must be chaotic good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

There are three orders blessed by Darmon, all of which receive divine powers from him. The clerics and heroes are the two most obvious, and anyone looking at a member of either holy order would know immediately that they are blessed by a god. Less obvious are the runners. Bruised and tattered from their travels, drinking in cheap

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Table 66: The Runner of Darmon

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	—Spells per Day—			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0	Fast Movement	0	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+0	Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC); Expert Traveler	1	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Bonus feat	1	0	—	—
4th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Cont. Travel	1	1	—	—
5th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked)	1	1	0	—
6th	+4	+5	+5	+2	Bonus Feat	1	1	1	—
7th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Perfect Follow	2	1	1	0
8th	+6	+6	+6	+2	Indefatigable	2	1	1	1
9th	+6	+6	+6	+3	Bonus Feat	2	2	1	1
10th	+7	+7	+7	+3	Unshakable, Uncanny Dodge (+1 against traps)	2	2	2	1

alehouses on the way, telling bawdy tales to stevedores on the docks, the runners hardly seem divine.

However, they are especially blessed by Darmon. As the Master of the Road is the messenger for the gods, so the runners are the messengers of the mortal races. They wish to emulate their god in his many travels, in his constant jesting, in his lust for life, but most importantly in his perfect record: In all of recorded history, there is no tale or myth that shows Darmon failing to deliver a message. The Champion of the Gods has followed men to the depths of Hell to deliver messages from the gods – and so too will the most powerful runners travel, if necessary, to carry their word.

Prestige Class: Runners of Darmon

Found wherever people worship Darmon, the god of travel and messenger of Heaven, the runners of Darmon are society's most skilled messengers. In a society that lacks mass communication, messengers are important and crucial members of the world. Necessary for war, diplomacy, commerce, and any other mortal endeavor waged across a vast expanse, message carriers are viewed with suspicion in some places (bringing the evils of the outside into secluded areas) and revered as heroes in others. Runners of Darmon care little for how they are viewed and, instead, live to carry their messages wherever they must go. This turns out to fit well with a life of adventure, as many runners take messages off to faraway places and go on side quests with their companions while they're there.

Rangers and rogues usually make the best runners, but any class with a love of travel may take on the task of service to Darmon. It requires a devotion to walking in Darmon's footsteps, though, so it is highly unlikely that a cleric or holy warrior of another faith, a druid, or a monk will take on the role. It is also not a terribly lawful profession, though certainly a lawful character could fulfill all the requirements. However, lawful-minded folk tend to stay away from such individualistic professions.

NPC runners are found all over, and are often met in the strangest places. They will find the recipient of their message, no matter where he or she may be – even trekking into dungeons to deliver. Most

younger and less experienced runners are found in houses and perform simple “hop” deliveries, in which they take a message from their house to the next one on its route to delivery. Runners are instantly identifiable by their common uniform – all runners wear cloaks in the likeness of Darmon's cloak of the heavens; they are usually midnight blue with bright pieces of glass sewn in or silver stars painted on, but some runners actually affix gemstones to their cloaks to represent the stars.

Abbreviation: Run

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

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

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Endurance, Run.

Darmonite: Runners must be active members of a house.

Languages: Runners must know at least three languages other than Common.

Ride: 7 Ranks.

Handle Animal: 7 Ranks.

Special: To become a runner, the character must first make a difficult delivery as assigned by his house. If he fails in this task, he will not be admitted to the order.

Class Skills

The runner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (region, geography, etc.) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Pick Pocket (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read Lips (Int), Ride (Dex), Scry (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Use Rope (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.

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Class Features

All of the following are class features of the runner prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Runners are proficient with shortswords, all simple weapons, and light armor, but gain no proficiency with shields.

Fast Movement (Ex)

The runner has a speed faster than the norm for his race by +10 feet when wearing no armor, light armor, or medium armor (and not carrying a heavy load). For example, a human runner in studded leather armor has a standard speed of 40 feet. Normally, humans have a speed of 30 feet. His speed when taking the double move action is 80 feet (rather than 60), and his running speed is 160 feet (rather than 120). This ability stacks with the fast movement abilities of barbarians and monks.

Spells

Beginning at 1st level, a runner gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the runner must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a runner with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Runner bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the runner's Wisdom modifier (if any). When the runner gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 1st level, the runner gets only bonus spells. A runner without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. The runner's spell list appears below. A runner prepares and casts spells just as a Darmonite cleric does.

Continuous Travel (Su)

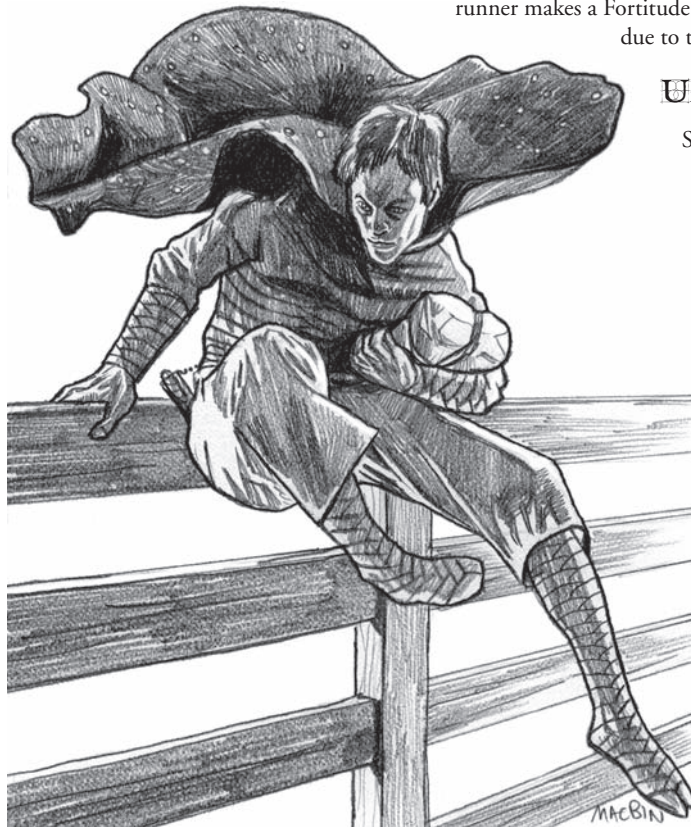
The runner is exceptionally good at long-term travel, but there are times when his skills fail him and he will be exhausted by continuous travel, as will his mount. At such times, his faith carries him through and Darmon gives him strength. The runner may continue to hustle for a number of hours equal to his runner level without taking subdual damage, but must rest for as many hours as he has hustled when he is done. When making a forced march, the runner may add his runner level to his Constitution checks.

When mounted, the runner's Darmon-lent strength transfers to the steed as well. While the mount does take regular damage while forced marching if it fails its Constitution checks, those checks do not automatically fail. Instead, the steed makes the checks with a bonus equal to the runner's

class level. When hustling, the horse does not take regular damage, but instead can hustle itself into exhaustion. This is not a power of the steed, but a power of the rider – if another person rides the same mount, it suffers from normal penalties for hustling and forced marching.

Indefatigable (Su)

The runner is so filled with Darmon's glory that he can travel tirelessly for seemingly limitless periods of time. Whenever the runner makes a Fortitude save for exhaustion of some kind due to travel, he adds his class level.



Runners wear comfortable travel gear. Their only symbols of office are their deep blue cloaks of the heavens.

Uncanny Dodge

Starting at 2nd level, the runner gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to even be aware of it. At 2nd level and above, he retains his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.)

At 5th level, the runner can no longer be flanked, since he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. This defense denies rogues the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack the runner. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least four levels higher than the runner can flank him (and thus sneak attack him).

At 10th level, the runner gains an intuitive sense that alerts

him to danger from traps, giving him a +1 bonus to Reflex saves made to avoid traps.

If the runner has another class that grants the uncanny dodge ability, add together all the class levels of the classes that grant the ability and determine the character's uncanny dodge ability on that basis.

Bonus Feats

At 3rd level, the runner gets a bonus feat, and an additional bonus feat at 6th and 9th level. These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Spring Attack, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Ride), Skill Focus (Handle Animal), Track, Weapon Focus. A runner must meet all prerequisites for a feat as listed in the *PH*, including ability score and base attack bonus minimums.

Expert Traveler (Ex)

The runner has been everywhere and knows everything there is to know about being on the road. He receives a +2 competence bonus to all of the following skills: Ride, Knowledge (geography, region, etc.), Intuit Direction, Profession (traveler, etc.).

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Perfect Follow (Su)

With the help of Darmon, a 7th-level runner can be nearly certain to track down the recipient of the message he bears. If the runner possesses some piece of information about the recipient that uniquely identifies her (like a unique name or a childhood memory), or an item that belongs to the recipient, it is as though the runner has cast a *locate creature* spell with the recipient as its subject – though the spell has a duration of “until the message is delivered” and has a range of “the entire plane.” Unlike the spell *locate creature*, Perfect Follow is not broken by running water or *polymorph*. It is still fooled by *mislead* and *nondetection* and will not function if the subject is on a different plane.

Unshakable (Su)

No method short of wish or miracle can obscure the target of the runner’s Perfect Follow from him. If the intended recipient of the message is on another plane, the runner knows it and knows which plane (though that is all; he must get to that plane to track the

recipient down). *Mislead*, *nondetection*, and any other spell that “throws off the scent” has no effect on the runner.

Runner Spell List

Runners choose their spells from the following list:

1st level – *comprehend languages*, *endure elements*, *obscuring mist*, *detect secret doors*, *expeditious retreat*, *feather fall*, *message*, *mount*

2nd level – *animal messenger*, *locate object*, *see invisibility*, *daylight*, *magic mouth*, *cat’s grace*, *darkvision*, *endurance*, *knock*, *resist elements*, *whispering wind*

3rd level – *create food and water*, *haste*, *phantom steed*, *speak with dead*, *speak with plants*, *water breathing*, *water walk*

4th level – *air walk*, *dimension door*, *fly*, *freedom of movement*, *sending*, *tongues*, *leomund’s tiny hut* (called *darmon’s hut*), *screaming*

Goddess of Love and the Arts

The Dyceums of Aymara

Aymara (ai-MAR-uh) (Sweet, Lovely, Fairest, the Golden, the Singer, Sister of Song, Jewel of Heaven, Lady of Love)

Myths

Love’s Conquest

Long and long ago, there was a powerful king called Aragos. It was said that Aragos, having once known love and happiness, and having lost it, became the greatest enemy of love and beauty that ever lived. He outlawed all forms of happiness and delight in his kingdom, declaring music and dance to be treason, love to be an illegitimate cause for marriage. All unions were to be arranged by the parents of the bride and groom, and all celebrations were to be sanctified with silence.

The gods found these decrees troublesome, but none more so than Sweet Aymara, who found the two things dearest to her banned in one of the most powerful mortal realms. All of the other gods saw her distress and many were moved to right this wrong, for there is no one more loved by the gods than Aymara the Golden, the Jewel of Heaven.

Darmon visited Aragos’ kingdom first and learned that none but the king could alter his dread policies. Aymara’s brother whispered to counselors and nobles, but none had the power to change the law, no matter how swayed they were by Darmon’s words. As Aragos’ patron, Majestic Naryne paid him visits in his dreams and told him to move from his path, that nothing good would come of it in the end. But Aragos refused, and convinced Naryne that it was his right as king to make such laws – for they were not stripping from his subjects any of the rights granted them by the gods.

By the end, most of the gods had come to Aymara and told her there was little they could or would do to change Aragos’ path – not least of which were her parents. Tinel and Zheenkeef both saw Aragos’ foolish decisions

as the sort of folly that yields greatness. “How will men know inspiration if they are never laid low? Contented lives rarely sow the seeds of invention,” her mother declared. “Heroes are born of dark times, and dark times are made by such men. Are we as gods to save the mortals from their follies and their splendor?” her father asked. And soon the other gods agreed, telling her that in this case there was no real harm done; after all, it was only music and love being denied his subjects, and all would be righted in the end.

The Sister of Song grew cold toward her family, a rare thing indeed. Aymara the Golden said softly, “I do not wonder at this, for all of you are jealous of my skills in music and love, the greatest powers that exist.”

Uproar arose from the hall then, with some of the gods shouting in outrage and others laughing at Aymara’s absurd claim. Only Darmon and Morwyn were silent, for Darmon loves his sister well and would not see her so basely mocked, and Morwyn felt in her heart that her lovely niece might have the right of it. Once the laughter and shouting grew still, Morwyn, gentle Morwyn, put her hand on Fairest Aymara’s cheek and said, “Oh, loveliest of children, you speak wisely I deem, for indeed love and compassion are the most powerful of things. We forget this and think love a luxury, like bathing in pure water, when indeed it is the water itself, without which all things must shrivel and die.”

This was too much for many of the gods, and soon Terak rose up from his throne and declared, “Love is a fine thing, it is true, but the strength of flesh is greater by far. I will break this king, this Aragos, and show you what is strongest!” And though it set him against his own daughter, Tinel could not allow Terak to make this claim unopposed. Magnificent Tinel stood and declared, “Knowledge is greater than any fist, learning keener than any blade! It is within the mind that the greatest power is locked. I will show this king his folly and you will all know I speak true!”

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And so the gods assumed mortal forms and descended to Aragos' kingdom. The full family of the gods came one day to open court, a grim and bleak affair, for Aragos had forbidden laughter and all spoke in humble whispers before him. But when the chamberlain called upon Terak in his mortal form, the King of Heaven strode forth and spake not softly. "Usurper of love!" he named Aragos. "You will lift your laws, or by my axe you will suffer. I shall destroy half your kingdom with a single blow, and with each following blow destroy another half, and then another, until you yield this folly! Look upon me and tremble!" And Terak suddenly cast off his mortal form in part and revealed himself to be a shining lion of white and gold. There could be no mistaking him. All in the court knew Terak walked among them, and they trembled. But Aragos was unmoved.

"You are as clever as you are mighty, Terak, Marshal of the Heavens." Aragos bowed his head. "I will slaughter one hundred oxen in your name, and burn many bolts of silk. But this thing you ask I will not do, for by your threat you prove it empty. You will destroy half of my kingdom at a time, then another half, then another, until you leave only a nib, but in so doing you reveal that you know the madness of destroying a thing to save it. You threaten to destroy in such a manner that there will always be half of something left, betraying that you do not desire to destroy my lands at all, for otherwise you would threaten to destroy them all. And if you do not wish to destroy them, what good is your strength to change me? For I will not change short of being destroyed."

"Then I will kill you alone to save your kingdom!" declared Terak.

"For being a lawful king who cares for his people?" Aragos asked. "I would think not! Let the haughty scribes and scholars say what they will about Terak the Mighty, he is no fool. You desire to see law and fairness prevail, and you know I am not evil. You will not kill me, for to do so will tell history that Terak is capricious and careless. I love you too well to believe you would be such as that..."

Terak then grew silent for a long while, but at last he blessed Aragos, saving face by laughing. "'Twas a test I gave this hour, Aragos, and you have proved worthy! You show you love me well, and I have no quarrel with you," Terak declared, and so departed. He was not gone but a moment before a wandering wise man appeared before the king.

"You have shown that might is useless against you, great king, but I wonder if reason will prevail. For your decree is wrong!" But Aragos was wise and knew this was Tinel who stood before him. The two argued the fairness of Aragos' law for many hours and, at last, Tinel conceded the point. Aragos showed the Keeper of the Keys that pain is only possible when one has something to lose. Joy in all its forms, particularly love, gives one a powerful thing to lose and, therefore, leads to the greatest pain. While it might not be kind of Aragos to outlaw music, dance, and love, it was certainly fair – for he was saving his people from pain and was no hypocrite. He had closed off his heart to joy also.

The two brothers bested by a mortal, the gods looked on in wonder. For Aragos had proven himself great among the mortals, and not the small-minded tyrant they had assumed him to be. But then from the back of the hall came a singing, glorious to the ear. And the court parted to reveal the fairest maiden any had ever beheld. She sat in one of the attendant chairs in the corner; in her lap was a silver lyre with a shell of lapis and chalcedony. She sang a wordless tune and her voice filled all who heard it with joy – except Aragos. He rose in his seat and commanded the guards to stop her singing, but they could not, for they were entranced by her glorious voice. So Aragos went to her side to stop her himself, but when he drew close and gazed upon her, he too fell into a deep enchantment. The ice that once covered his heart was shattered, and he was soon sore in love with this maiden fair. She was, of course, the Lady of Love herself.

The song completed, Aragos fell to his knees and placed his head in the lady's lap. He wept there for forgiveness, and she gave it to him. At once, he lifted his bans. When the word was sent out that his proscriptions against song, dance, and love were quit, Terak and Tinel protested. "You have proven nothing, Aymara, for you enchanted him with song and love!" Terak grumbled and, for once, his brother Tinel agreed.

"And you were fair when you threatened to kill him and destroy his kingdom? Ah, but it is no matter, for it is not in Aragos that you will see the true power of love and music. Look out now, Father and Uncle, at the people of this land. Free now of their king's tyranny, will they take up arms to overthrow him in bitter rage, as you might, Uncle? Will they gather to debate a new government and new laws to replace the old, as you would, Father?"

Of course, they did neither. For the many who had once played instruments of music went to secret holds where their gambols and viols and harps and gongs had been hidden away those many years. And when they beheld them, they wept with joy, and then gathered them together and made a great music that filled the entire kingdom. Even young folk who had always lived without music knew how to dance, delighting in the sounds of the instruments, and on every face was a smile. Aymara then accepted the apology of her father and uncle, for they saw then that hers had proven a greater power in this struggle. And to them she said, "Anyone may kill, Uncle, but if the heart is set, death holds no fear. And though I love you, Father, one cannot argue with reason for love, for love is beyond reason and there is no reason for it. All hearts, lovely and hardened, may delight at music, even those that have been set against it for many years. And from music's glory arises love, the most precious of things."

Looking at Aragos, they knew it was true. For though he had professed a deep hatred for music for many years, he was now deep in love with this maiden who had played so sweetly on her lyre. And Aymara saw him then as the great king he might be, for he had stared unmoved at the white and golden lion of Terak and argued unflinching with the keen mind of her father. So she took him to husband and they gave one another three strong sons and four fair daughters. And each of them loved music.

Associations

Aymara is the goddess of love, music, passion, romance, marriage, lovers, musicians, artists, and bards. She is associated with all aesthetic delights, and her name is spoken first by those who see the arts as the greatest achievement of the mortal races. Curiously, Aymara did not bring music and dance to the world – her mother did – but none surpass Aymara's skill in the arts, and it has never been Zheenkeef's interest to watch over artists.

Among animals, Aymara is associated with songbirds of all varieties, particularly the nightingale. She is closely tied to the pegasi among mystical beasts, riding a silver pegasus herself; the only appropriate steed for the most beautiful of the gods is the most beautiful of beasts.

Aymara's worship is extremely popular among the elves and, in olden days, she was thought to be their mother and father. The elves will still sometimes refer to her as mother, and even show her from time to time in the comely shape of a male elf. The other races revere her, especially at weddings, but she is not particularly popular among dwarves, whose artists are usually adherents of Korak and makers of clever and beautiful works of the hand. Among all the gods, Aymara is the only one regularly associated with the Shee, the last of the div races remaining on earth. It is often said that she tarries in their woods, which are now fairy woods, and many dryads, naiads, pixies, and sprites have reveled under the moon with the Lady of Love.

Alignment

Aymara is chaotic good.

Representations

In icons, Aymara is usually shown as the most beautiful woman the artist can imagine (and therefore is always of different races in depictions, for an elven artist is unlikely to find a human or dwarven woman fairer than an elven). She is nearly always depicted with golden hair, for she is remembered as Aymara the Golden, but occasionally her hair is dark and it is her skin that maintains a golden burnish. She is very tall and always dressed in the finest courtly attire of the era. Usually she is shown with a lyre under her arm or in her lap as she plays and sings for the delight of others. Many images show her singing so sweetly that even the rocks weep.

In symbols, Aymara is represented with musical instruments of gold or silver. Usually it is a silver lyre like the one she plays in so many legends. However, it is fairly common for her clergy to wear a small version of the instrument he or she plays, so a flautist might wear a small silver flute around her neck, a harpist a golden harp, etc. In haste, though, one always uses the lyre, the most universally recognized symbol of Aymara. When inscribing it on small surfaces, the lyre is stylized with a few sketched lines.

Purpose

Aymara is a true patron of the arts and desire. As the myth above tells, she cannot abide a place where music is not heard and where love is shunned. She desires to make a world safe for love and delight and art. But she knows that the world is not so happy a place that all people can spend their days in revelry, so she is realistic about this desire. Aymara seeks to remind the mortal races that in beauty they may find hope, and in love and music they may be reminded of why they persevere through difficulties.

Those who seek to ease pain through beauty are especially blessed by Aymara, and she will often make her blessing manifest by filling their lives with love and delight. However, she also sees deep into the artist's temperament and knows that the best among them may require sorrow to make their greatest art. She has been known to oblige, providing the tragedies and afflictions of the accursed for some of the mortal races' greatest artists, resulting in the saying "as unhappy as a singer." It is her belief that the great art that often arises from these sorrowful lives will do such long-term good that one lifetime of pain is a worthy trade. Besides, these artists end up well rewarded upon their deaths, abiding with her in Heaven or in the Fourth Hall of Maal's kingdom.

Aymara is certainly mercurial, and her favor will fall upon and depart from mortals with equal alacrity. She is very emotional and has a longing for true and immortal love. From time to time she believes she has found a mortal couple that has such a love and heaps blessings upon them, only to see them quarrel over nonsense and strip them of her blessings. Tales of such star-crossed lovers fill countless comedies and tragedies.

If there are two emotions in which she is constant, it is her love of her family and her hatred for Kador. She believes, rightly, that Kador, who is now Asmodeus, plots to destroy the kingdom of Heaven. Because of this, she remains forever vigilant and even has an order of mortals loyal to her who watch over matters diabolical, always prepared for a war against Hell.



Aymara is the goddess of beauty as well as the arts, and her representations change with mortal ideals of beauty.

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Servants

Aymara has many servants, all of whom love her perfectly, for she inspires awe and love in all who behold her.

The Chorus of the Birds

In a great aviary of pearl and silver, high in the kingdom of Heaven, there live ten thousand birds. Each bird was, in mortal life, a great singer – usually one who led a miserable life and was thereby inspired to create magnificent art. Now the birds sing all day in such glorious harmonies that even the angelic choirs wonder at them. Aymara will sometimes send a member of the Chorus to earth to visit a singer and inspire him – though this is not as common as claimed by the bards, who constantly declare that they learned their latest song from a bird of the Chorus.

Arathelle

A silver pegasus, Arathelle is Aymara's steed in the vaults of Heaven as well as on the rare occasions that she descends to earth. Arathelle is a wise and lovely beast, able to call other pegasi to her side and to communicate with all manner of steeds, including the unicorns. Her coat and mane are silver, as though spun from the very metal of the earth, but her eyes are deep as wells containing the insight and wisdom of the ages. There are legends of heroes favored by Aymara who were saved from the brink of death by Arathelle, swooping down from Heaven and carrying them to safety.

The Seven

Aymara's seven children by Aragos are patrons of musicians: Aragoth, Barawyn, Celedynne, Dariun, Erylwyn, Fionali, and Geromul. They correspond to the notes of the musical scale, the seven rhythms and the seven types of instrument: reeds, drums, horns, flutes and whistles, cymbals and gongs, plucked and struck strings, and bowed strings, in that order. It is said that they visit composers and players and aid them in the forming of songs. Just as the Chorus of the Birds does not visit half so many singers as claim to have seen them, the Seven do not aid nearly as many musicians.

The Church

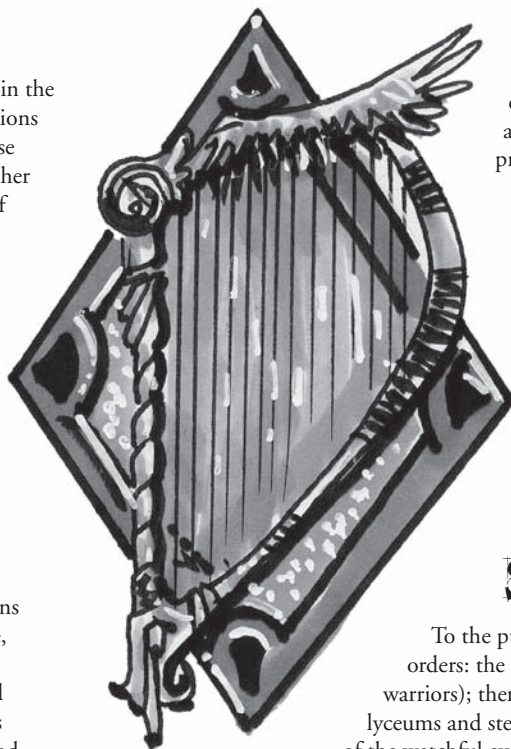
Church Description

The lyceums of Aymara, where the Aymarans worship, are places both sacred and lovely. Popular among those dedicated to Aymara and others, the lyceums play host to concerts, plays, dances, and other performances. In major cities there are events in the lyceums almost nightly; there are few finer performance halls.

The worship of Aymara is enormously popular, though there are few who dedicate themselves to her wholly. Because she is the goddess of love as well as the arts, most people come to her lyceums at least once in their lives to pray to her when they believe they have found love. The lyceums play host to most marriages as well. While those sworn to only one of the gods in the pantheon (or members of the Great Church) are likely to get married in those other churches, most folk get married at a lyceum or a Rontran foundation. After all, Aymara is the goddess of love and can bless a union and keep its heart, while Grandmother Earth is the wellspring of fertility. At either church, the other goddess is invoked regularly during the ceremony.

On the surface, the Aymaran faith exists to promote love and the arts. It gives money to artists who are worthy of regard, holds festivals in its halls, praises love, and unites couples under its roof. However, the Aymarans are not content to merely celebrate beauty

– they know that efforts must be made and dangers must be faced to make and keep the world safe for beauty. It is this effort that lies at the heart of the Aymaran agenda. While the lyceums are used to promote love and art, the holy orders of the faith work abroad, opposing the enemies of love and beauty, just as Aymara did in legend. Much of this effort is focused on opposing the work of Kador, who is now called Asmodeus. That is the deeper, more abiding purpose of the Aymaran faith: to oppose Hell and all of its works. For if there is one being in all the sphere who Aymara hates, it is Kador.



Church Structure

To the public eye, the Aymarans have two great holy orders: the fair fellowship (clergy) and the aesthetes (holy warriors); there is a third, secret order that controls the lyceums and steers them in their war on Hell, called the order of the watchful eye.

To most peoples' knowledge, the lyceums are controlled by the fair fellowship, who are divided into two groups: singers and celebrants. The aesthetes are the "active" order (and have only one level of status), working against the enemies of beauty. But beneath the surface, church funds and resources are siphoned off to the watchful eyes, who are divided into four levels of status: unsheathed blades, tireless sentries, songs unsung, and unblinking eyes. While the unblinking eyes, heads of this secret order, do not concern themselves with the day-to-day functioning of the faith, they do issue commands to the fair fellowship and the aesthetes when necessary. The order is kept secret to protect its members from Hell and its minions. For who would suspect that the happy and joyous Aymarans, who seem content to live out their days singing and dancing, have been secretly sharpening their blades for war with Hell for as long as their church has existed?

The average lyceum has at least 12 singers and two celebrants in residence. Aesthetes rarely reside at lyceums. One or all of the fair fellowship in residence may be part of the watchful eye, as may any number of the parishioners.

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Doctrine

"In all the history of the world, hatred and ugliness have never held sway for long. Not once. Though for generations some vile tyrant may seem unassailable, in the end, love and beauty have always prevailed. We must simply hold faith in our hearts in what is good, and its victory is assured in the end."

– Celebrant Andivae Corallyn on the occasion of her 230th birthday

While Andivae's statement may not have been true for the entire world (indeed, there may be evil empires that have stood the test of time of which she was never aware), her statement holds in it the heart of Aymaran philosophy. These are not a people who rage against the ugliness of the world. Rather, these are a people who preserve beauty.

The Aymaran church is a place of celebration and joy, art and creation. If you were to spend all your time in the confines of a lyceum, you might never suspect that there is misery and ugliness in the world. They do not dwell on such things, seeking instead to keep the lights of delight, love, and art burning brightly against the outside darkness. Each person, in exploring the greatest expressions of beauty she can make, serves to make the world better. The works of most will be forgotten as soon as they are made, but the mere act of making something beautiful, expressing your inner light, makes the world better. The Aymarans believe there is no higher or better force in the world than the individual striving for love and beauty.

So it is that the average Aymaran sees herself as a part of a historical struggle with evil, where her part of the battle is to simply create, appreciate, love, and be loved. Their faith is focused inward and is based on self-exploration and creation because, they believe, by being people who bask in beauty, they oppose the forces that would cover the world with hate and ugliness. "I am a soldier of love," is something often said by such people when criticized for their lack of militancy against evil. In general, theirs is a docile faith; their ruminations are on fair things, not on darkness.

But beneath this seemingly passive outlook, the Aymarans do have a militancy to them. In the deep places below the lyceums, in secret conclaves, they plot and plan their unending war on Hell. Long ago, the elders of the Aymaran faith determined that they could do the most harm to Asmodeus and his machinations if their movements against him were made in secret. Let the more lawful churches march out to war in their shining armor; the Aymarans would use the shadows to their advantage against evil. If the forces of Hell believe that the Aymaran faith is nothing more than meek and happy singers and players (and it is not clear that Hell does believe this), then the agents of the Aymaran faith's deeper motives might move more freely, might strike harder and deeper when they do strike, might better resist the forces of Asmodeus.

The Aymaran faith opposes Hell for two reasons: First, because Aymara has never forgotten the damage done by Kador to her family and hates him with a perfect hate; second, because the desires of Hell are to put the narrow-minded and the ugly into power over all. Their agents would ban beauty, would crush delight. They would have a world covered with productive peasants, enslaved to duty, part of teeming nations of the blindly loyal. This philosophy is directly counter to that of the Aymarans, and it must be opposed.

Common Prayers

The daily prayer of the Aymaran faith says a great deal about their outlook. Each Aymaran strives to accomplish the points enumerated

in this prayer each day, every day. This prayer is typically sung or chanted in the morning upon waking.

*"Sister of Song, guide me this day.
I seek the glory in my heart,
I seek the beauty in my soul,
I seek the love never ending;
Help me to find what I seek.*

*"There is a song in all things:
I will hear it, I will hear it.
There is love in all things:
I will find it, I will find it.*

*"Fairest Aymara, grace unending,
Show me the perfection that eludes me,
Lead me to the pure places of the earth,
Bring me to the unity of all that is best."*

Holy Days

Lords and nobles with a sense of the artistic, or who wish to present themselves as artistically savvy, often work with the Aymaran faith to promote great artistic festivals. These range in size and importance based on the wealth and prominence of the sponsoring noble. They take place primarily in spring and summer, though on occasion they happen in the autumn. These festivals, called Aymaran Festivities in general, but given very particular and often grandiose names in specific, nearly always include the sponsor's name at the end of their titles (e.g. The Worthy Festival of the Five Perfect Blossoms in Spring; Lord Pembroke Callington sponsor). There are many bards who make their living traveling from festival to festival and striving for the prize purse.

Aymaran Festivities are the most common Aymaran holy days, and local celebrants sanctify them in their opening and closing. No more than once every 15 years, a great council of celebrants may convene and determine that the time has come for a Bardic Championship. At such times, the celebrants have word spread to the four corners of the civilized world, telling bards of all races that the Championship is pending. It takes two years from announcement to commencement, and at the Championship bards compete in contests of composition, playing, singing, drama, and comedy. The winners are proclaimed the greatest bards of the civilized world, blessed by Aymara, and are bestowed beautiful silver medallions to mark their victory. A Bardic Championship is considered a profoundly holy time for Aymarans, and they come from all around to witness such grandeur.

Saints

Saints in the Aymaran faith are usually great artists. An artist can only be beatified posthumously, after a life of producing great artistic works. A saint is named by a council made up of the fair fellows of at least three lyceums. Such councils are called by a unanimous vote of the fair fellows of one lyceum, and it is usually called by the lyceum where the artist in question worshipped.

The process of beatification involves a massive festival of the artist's works. The council gathers at the sponsoring lyceum and the works are displayed or performed over a week or two (depending upon how large the body of work is). At the end of the festival, the council must unanimously agree to beatify the artist. Should they do so, that artist is henceforth referred to as a saint whenever her name is mentioned.

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Aymara's View of the Church

Aymara is proud of her church, though she seems to have more interest in its public face than in the secret order of the watchful eye. While she does clearly hate Asmodeus, and does come to the aid of the members of this secret order, she sees her church at its best when it is promoting beauty, not when it is fighting.

Aymara has difficulty understanding the mortal need to struggle with something. It is of course true that Hell is a great evil and Asmodeus is the greatest evil of all, but why can her faithful not be content with the joys and delights made possible in art? She gives them great power to protect those who pursue lives of beauty, and they make her proud, keeping artists and their works safe; yet her faithful do not rest and simply make art themselves. While she admires their courage, persistence, and faith, she also knows that their struggle, waged in secret, may take them closer to the darkness than is healthy. After all, spend too long studying the ways of the beast so that you might destroy it, and you yourself may become the beast.

While Aymara would prefer her church to pursue only love and beauty, this does not mean she tries to move them away from the path of the watchful eye. She admires the fervor of their desire to oppose evil; she simply worries as might a mother.

Preferred Weapon

In the wars against Kador, Korak made a light blade for Aymara with which she struck quickly while spinning and dancing. She called the blade "Sorrow's Song," since while wielding it she heard the music of warfare and found it the most sorrowful sound she had ever heard. But even in war, Aymara heard music, danced, and was beautiful. Sorrow's Song is a rapier, and many of Aymara's followers, particularly the watchful eyes, seek to learn the song she heard in that great war so they might better oppose evil.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Fair Fellowship of Aymara

The Order

The fair fellowship is a beautiful order. This is best seen in their titles: singers and celebrants. As a group, they focus on love, song, and celebration. The amount of song and celebration varies by culture. Dwarven lyceums may stand out because the clergy smile on occasion.

Elven lyceums are even more filled with song and delight than the average elven household – quite an achievement.

A member of the fair fellowship who is hit with tragedy tries to rally against the darkness with delight. However, it is not unheard of for a member of this order to simply lose the mirth necessary to be a member. Such unfortunates simply wander away, pursuing other interests until their hearts are once more gay. The fair fellowship is not a place for the grim, conniving, heavy-hearted, ponderous, or sad. Such folk will not find their way into the order in the first place, and they certainly would not climb far if they managed to slip in.

This is not to say that there is no room for seriousness among the fair fellowship. Tragedians, dramatists, balladeers, and epic poets who deal with very serious topics are all welcome in the order. There is only a problem when

sorrow has so infected a person that he can no longer compose or work.

Note: Fair fellows do not receive Profession as a class skill, but instead receive Perform (Cha). They sing their spells and otherwise focus on performance over any other profession.

Titles

Most members of the fair fellowship are called singers and addressed as "kindly brother" or "kindly sister." They are introduced by full



In ceremony, the fair fellows wear robes of white and crimson. When they travel, they happily wear armor.

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title. Becoming a singer does not take much time; it only requires the proper mental attitude. At 1st level, a prospective member of the order is taught all of the traditional Aymaran songs of reverence and worship. This takes a few months, but is not taxing. Upon induction into the order, singers are usually charged with spreading delight, love, and beauty in the world. They go abroad, learning songs of distant cultures and performing dramas for people in remote lands. Those singers who remain at their lyceums assist the celebrants with day-to-day ceremony and tasks.

At 7th level a singer becomes a celebrant in a splendid ceremony of song and comedy. The ceremony culminates in a performance by the celebrant or of the celebrant's work, after which he is lifted on the shoulders of the faithful and carried around the lyceum three times, then bathed in a fountain (or a great cauldron of cool water if there is no nearby fountain). This represents the legendary return of Aymara to Heaven after she converted one of the forefathers of the dragons to the path of good. In that return, she rode around Heaven three times on Arathelle's back and then bathed in the river divine at the foot of the Heavenly mount.

After the bathing, the fair fellow is proclaimed by all to be a celebrant, at which time he rises from the water and takes on a new name. The name is from a famous song, play, or poem, or may even be a musical instrument, a type of music, or a dramatic device. Celebrants take names based on the area of the arts that most interest them. The new name is placed before the celebrant's birth name, and she is henceforth referred to with both names (such as Andivae Corallyn above, named after the famous comedic rascal, Andivae, but maintaining her birth name, Corallyn). The celebrants are world-renowned artists and critics of art. In them bards have loving patrons, and those with a tale to tell have a ready audience. They are addressed as "fairest brother" or "fairest sister," and are introduced by full title.

To the eyes of the world, there is no higher authority in the Aymaran faith than the celebrants, who do not have a hierarchy based on level. All celebrants are equal and decide matters by unanimous consent; when this is not possible, they will rely on simple majority rule. Most celebrants stay within a lyceum, which is controlled (on the surface) by a council of all resident celebrants.

Table 67:

Fair Fellowship of Aymara Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Singer	Three Months Training; Love of Art
7	Celebrant	Major Performance

Domains

All spells cast by a fair fellow with a verbal component are either sung or chanted. Somatic components often include dance. Fair fellows may choose two of the following domains: Chaos, Good, Inspiration, and Beauty.

Spell Preparation Time

Members of the fair fellowship prepare their spells in the morning and do so by singing or chanting prayers.

Alignments

Most fair fellows are chaotic good. They do not think much of elaborate systems of governance. Most authority is threatened by the raw honesty of real art and, even if it is not threatened, these fair fellows are all for testing the limits. If a line is drawn, they will cross it artistically, and they strongly believe the lyceums are places for such expression. They are dedicated to good, though, and do not seek to promote evil in their art. They desire for all people to be free and happy, and to live lives filled with abundant love. Since these desires aren't fulfilled by mortal societies, they seek to uplift people towards these goals using art. That is the purpose of the lyceums – to be places of freedom and goodness where each person can explore what he needs to achieve love. Outside the lyceums they seek to promote art and love in all people they meet, convincing peasants to sing and dance, nobles to recite poetry.

Some fair fellows are neutral good. These folk are far less interested in the somewhat rebellious artistic streak that is common among Aymarans. They also do not focus their attention on each person's individual quest for joy. They are interested in art and love as pure notions. They want the world to be filled with great art, so they go to great artists and help them. They want the world to be filled with love, so they find people who are afflicted by hate and try to help them free themselves of hate's bondage. While most fair fellows believe it sensible to wander the countryside teaching farmers to dance, the neutral good members of the order are more focused in their pursuits, finding the places where they can do the most good and dedicating themselves to their work there.

A vocal minority of the order is chaotic neutral. These fair fellows focus on revelries – of art and of love. They perform bawdy comedies, drink heavily, sing ribald songs, and proposition anyone they find appealing. They believe that Aymara is best represented by lives free of modesty and convention, and that all people should experience physical love, song, and dance on a regular basis.

Holy Warrior:

Aesthetes of Aymara:

The Order

The aesthetes are the fairest of all holy orders in the churches of the pantheon. Always attired in shining mail or fine cloth, wearing garland wreaths of roses and lilacs, the aesthetes are shining champions of love and beauty. They compose poetry, play lyres and harps, sing as they ride across the lands, laugh loudly, and delight in the company of all good people. Their horses are often covered in gaily ringing bells, and their shields usually carry the blazon of a singing harp or other happy image. The aesthetes seek out the places in the world where beauty is threatened, or lost, and they fight – and sometimes die – to make sure that beauty prevails. Tireless opponents of ugliness and wickedness, members of the order are driven by very personal understandings of their duty to Aymara. Some spend their lives seeking out the lost poetry of destroyed empires; others accompany a single great bard, keeping her safe. They are the guardians of beauty, each determining for herself what that means.

A prospective aesthete simply receives the call. There is no accounting for it, as with other holy warrior orders. Such a person must find another aesthete to train her in the secrets of the order. This process takes one year of traveling together and doing great deeds in the name of beauty and love.

The order has absolutely no power structure, and the aesthetes report to no one (though most will accept direction from the watchful eyes

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if necessary). Theirs is a solitary order, and it is very rare to see more than one aesthete at a time unless one is being trained by the other.

Titles

At 1st level an aesthete receives the title of aesthete, which she maintains for the rest of her days (unless she should fall from grace). They are addressed as “fair sir” or “fair dame,” and introduced by full title. A newly made aesthete is given a token either by the aesthete who trained her or by a celebrant who observes her induction to the order. The token is an instrument, a poem, a song, a play, or another symbol of artistic endeavor, and is hers to protect for all her days. This is purely symbolic, but the aesthete carries the token with her at all times so that the beauty is always close to her. This serves as a constant reminder of her duty.

Table 6&

Aesthetes of Aymara Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Aesthete	One Year Training; Bestowal of a Token

Additional Class Skills

The aesthete’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraisal (Wis) and Perform (Cha). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

Aesthetes may choose two of the following holy warrior domains: Creation, Guardian, and Emotion.

Gift of Aymara

Beginning at 3rd level, the aesthete can call for *fair light* (see Chapter XI) once per week, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level, etc.). *Fair light* is a spell-like ability for aesthetes.

Spells

Aesthetes may choose from the following spells:

1st level – *bless*, *bless water*, *bless weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *charm person*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *magic weapon*, *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *shield other*, *delay poison*, *enthrall*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal mount/animal companion*, *magic circle against evil*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *remove blindness/deafness*, *sculpt sound*

4th level – *cure serious wounds*, *death ward*, *dispel evil*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *legend lore*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, an aesthete may call either a noble steed, usually silver-maned or dark as the twilight, or a beautiful celestial songbird animal

companion. The choice is the aesthete’s and is usually based on her personality and her artistic endeavors (if she calls a bird, it receives the “speak with master” ability). At the GM’s discretion, an aesthete may call a pegasus mount at 7th level if she does not call a mount or animal companion earlier in her career.

Conduct

The aesthetes must stay true to herself and her love of art and beauty. The credo is fairly simple:

- If you may make the world more beautiful, do so;
- If your life and your toil may protect or recover a work of beauty, give it freely;
- If love is opposed or stymied, do all you can to be its champion.

An aesthete who knowingly violates this simple code, actively destroys beauty, goes out of his way to oppose love, or commits a knowing evil act, will lose her abilities until she atones.

Associates

Aesthetes are quite fond of bards and often make them their companions. Some aesthetes actually become the personal companions and bodyguards of particularly renowned bards, as mentioned above. Aesthetes, like most Aymarans, are fond of the faithful of all the gods of the tree since the Aymaran faith has universally positive relations with the other churches. For this reason, aesthetes are happy to travel with members of other churches. Aesthetes aren’t particularly interested in the companionship of those who are terribly uncouth or hateful and certainly won’t accompany petty thieves who wish to steal and hoard works of beauty; in fact, aesthetes oppose such folk.

Alignment

Aesthetes must be chaotic good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The third holy order of the lyceums is the order of the watchful eyes, whose members refer to each other as “the watchers.” The watchers are unified in their opposition to Hell and all of its works, serving as more dangerous foes to Hell than even the most pious holy warriors.

The watchers know what most good warriors don’t seem to care about particularly – there is a real difference between the evil powers of the dark planes. Demons seek to destroy, consume and wallow in vice, but devils, led by their horrid and ingenious mastermind, seek control. Hell moves to make Asmodeus king of the universe, which he believes is his rightful place, and has a plan – a unified, continuous plan that it has pursued for millennia. Someone must oppose it, and it is for this that the order of the watchful eye was formed.

The watchers train themselves to hear the angelic choirs and to sing notes in harmony with the crystalline ringing of the celestial sphere itself; they learn to dance in war to the song of the blades, just as Aymara learned in the wars against Kador. These are Hell’s secret and implacable foes, and they control the lyceums to gather information on diabolical activities. They are spies, whisperers, wanderers, and artists, all feeding a central network that keeps track of Hell’s plan.

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Whether Hell knows of the secret society behind the lyceums, none but its minions can say. Certainly, Hell has never waged open war against the church, and the watchers still believe they move in secret. Someday, though, and perhaps someday soon, it is inevitable that this struggle will come to a head and the world will learn who has formed a more ingenious plan – the watchers or the watched.

Because it is a secret society, there are many levels of status among the watchers. Those at lower levels know they serve a higher authority, know that the heads of the order are called the unblinking eyes, but they have no idea where these heads reside or who they might be. While there are titles among the watchers, they are for reference only. For example, the unsheathed blades are called “blades.” No one would ever say “I’m Blade Kobor!” However, a message from one of Kobor’s superiors to another might say “we have ten blades ready to move. Blade Kobor has infiltrated the abbey.”

At 1st level, a watcher is considered a member of the unsheathed blades, referred to as “blades.” She is watched closely in case she is actually a diabolical plant in the organization. Becoming a blade requires being nominated by a sentry and likely means that one has been watched for at least a year by other members of the order. The induction usually involves the prospective member of the order being kidnapped by friends and acquaintances who are in the order and taken to a safe location. There, she is asked about her faith, her notions of Hell, and her hopes and aspirations. She then undergoes a *test of souls* (see Chapter XI). At last, she is told about the order in general terms and offered an opportunity to join this, the most important cause any mortal can serve. If she refuses, magic is used to make her forget the conversation ever happened. If she accepts, she begins her training and becomes a low-level operative for the watchers, ready to be directed by the order with a moment’s notice. The highest-ranking member of the order she knows is one tireless sentry, the person who gives her orders.

After years of worthy service to the order, the cleverest and most useful members of the order (5th level) are made tireless sentries, referred to as “sentries.” Essentially the bureau chiefs of a geographic region, the sentries watch over the blades and disseminate orders to them, passing on information to the song unsung above them.

Not until a watcher is 7th level does she begin to learn more about those who control the order. She is summoned to one of the many secret enclaves of the unblinking eyes, the heads of the order. There she is told the identity of other key members of the order in her region and is given control over a large number of operating cells – sentries and the blades beneath them. At this meeting, she is named a song unsung, referred to as “songs.” Songs operate with a good deal of autonomy, sifting through intelligence reports and determining what activities must be taken in the region. She reports to one or two unblinking eyes above her and also regularly attends planning meetings of high-level officials of the order.

The heads of the order, the unblinking eyes, are a council of seven who plan the Aymaran war on hell. They are referred to as “eyes.” Membership to the council is granted by a unanimous vote of the sitting eyes upon the death or retirement of one of the other eyes. The council oversees all operations, making sure the order remains secret and planning the war on Hell. It rarely meets in the same place, preferring instead to communicate by magical means. Eyes must be 10th level watchers.

One need not advance in status in the order to take continuing levels in the prestige class. There are adventuring members of the order who never advance past blade yet are 10th-level watchers. One must be

willing and able to commit to the duties of overseeing the order to advance in status.

Table 6-9: Watchers of Aymara Titles

Minimum Prestige Class Level	Title	Requirement
1	Unsheathed Blade;	Nomination by a Sentry; Agreement to Join
5	Tireless Sentry	Agreement to serve
7	Song Unsung	Agreement to serve
10	Unblinking Eye	Agreement to serve; Unanimous Admission by Other Unblinking Eyes

Prestige Class: Watchers of Aymara

The watchers are members of one of the oldest secret societies of the gods of the tree, the order of the watchful eyes. Dedicated to the opposition of Hell and all of its works, watchers learn to tap into the perfect music of the sphere that is Hell’s exact cosmic opposite. While devils draw on the power of Hell and Asmodeus’ power of fire, the watchers draw on beauty and the pure sounds of freedom and happiness that deny Hell authority. Powerful enemies of Hell, they remain secret because they believe they can do more good tracking Hell and working against it subtly than by riding out *en masse* against Asmodeus’ minions. Besides, there are a lot more devils than there are watchers, so it is a mission that bears caution.

Many watchers are fair fellows and aesthetes of Aymara (aesthetes may multi-class as watchers without penalty), but the watchers look to the congregations of the lyceums as well. Many of the order’s most powerful members are bards, rogues, sorcerers, and others who value song and pay homage to Aymara. It is rare (though not unheard of) for members of other gods’ clergies to join the watchers, and it is quite unlikely for druids and monks to join the order.

The watchers are rarely seen as watchers openly. They do not wear symbols of office or refer to their order, though they do have a series of seemingly innocuous invocations that identify them to one another, particularly when strung together (e.g. “I hear the music clearly today!” responded to by “What does it tell you?” answered with “Aymara’s song is in every good person’s ear,” answered by “Indeed. I hear it clearly”). If you meet someone who identifies himself as a watcher, it means one of two things: The person is lying or you are about to be inducted into the order. Behind the scenes, however, the watchers often move good people toward struggles with Hell, for instance by hiring adventurers to investigate devil-infested ruins and bring back information.

Hit Die: d8.

Abbreviation: Woa

Requirements

To become a watcher, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Feats: Weapon Finesse, Expertise.

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Table 6-10: The Watcher

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Discern Diabolical Power	
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	War Song +1	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Irrepressible	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Countersong (Sp)	
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Untemtable	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	War Song +2	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Beauty's Blade; Countersong (Su)	
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6		+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	War Song +3	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Song of Imprisonment; Countersong (Ex)	

Aymaran: A watcher must worship Aymara, either as her principal deity or as a favorite part of the pantheon.

Perform: 10 ranks.

Vow of Secrecy: A watcher must agree to keep the order secret and to die to protect that secret.

Induction: A watcher must be nominated to join the order by someone who is a tireless sentinel, meaning she must have friends or acquaintances in the order.

Class Skills

The watcher's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Innuendo (Wis), Intuit Direction (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (Hell) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Pick Pocket (Dex), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (infernal), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the watcher prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Watchers are proficient with simple weapons and the rapier, light and medium armor, and shields.

Spellcasting

A watcher continues training in magic. When a watcher achieves levels 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before he added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). When determining spells per day and caster level, add any other single spellcasting class levels (multi-class cleric/mages must choose which class they continue to gain spells in) to the number of watcher levels that receive an additional +1 level (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9).

Discern Diabolical Power (Ex)

The watchers have spent centuries studying devils and learning their powers. They attune their ears to the sounds of Hell's blasphemies and begin to hear infernal power as a horrible dissonance, drawing on the awful music of Hell. They can learn the sounds of Hell's powers and identify them when they hear them again.

If a watcher spends a move-equivalent action studying a devil (in combat or outside of it), she can discern one of the special powers it is either currently using or has just used. If it is a spell-like (Sp) ability, she need not spend the move-equivalent action but may simply make a Spellcraft check (DC 15). If it is an extraordinary (Ex) or supernatural ability (Su), the action must be spent and she must make a successful Knowledge (Hell) check (DC 15). If the check succeeds, the watcher has identified a power and has learned to hear its sound. She will recognize that power in the future, when used by the same devil or by another. A watcher PC should make a list of all of the diabolical powers she has ever identified. A watcher may not discern more than one power a round, even if several are in use. A watcher must be able to see and hear a devil to use this ability, and must be aware that she is watching a devil.

War Song (Su)

The watchers learn to dance to the music of war, fitting in and out of combat and harmonizing with the battle sounds. Their blades begin to glow and vibrate with the song, granting them a +1 sacred bonus to hit. The song is the pure sound of good at war, the sound of angels in struggle, and serves as the cosmic opposite to outsiders (evil), granting the blade a +1 bonus versus their damage reduction. This stacks with other powers that provide bonuses versus damage reduction. War Song only works with a rapier; it is the only blade that properly emulates Aymara's song of battle.

At 6th level, the bonus to hit and the bonus versus damage reduction increase to +2. At 9th level, they are raised to +3.

Irrepressible (Ex)

At 3rd level, the watcher has learned the many terrible ways of devils and ceases to be strongly affected by them. She now adds her watcher level to Willpower saves against infernal powers such as fear, charm, and illusion.

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Countersong (Devils) (Su)

Once per day per watcher level (plus any bard levels), a watcher with 13 ranks in Perform who has achieved the 4th level of the prestige class may begin to sing with the voice of the angelic choirs, countering the powers of devils. Just as younger watchers attune their ears to the vile sounds of Hell, hearing diabolical powers as dissonance, more experienced watchers begin to hear the sounds of love and beauty, the voices of angels, all around them. A watcher can harmonize with those Heavenly sounds and cancel out the musics of Hell with which they are familiar. The countersong against devils affects all devils within 30 feet while the watcher is performing. She may perform the countersong for 10 rounds. Its effects do not linger when she stops performing. Countersong (Devils) follows all the same rules for performance and actions while performing as other bardic music, and counts as one use of bardic music if the watcher has other bardic music abilities. Levels in watcher do not give bards additional uses of other bardic music abilities.

At 4th level, the countersong cancels out any spell-like abilities (Sp) that the watcher has observed a devil casting using her “discern diabolical powers” ability. She need not have observed *this* devil using the spell-like ability, only *any* devil at *any* point in her career. Thus, a watcher who has personally witnessed a devil cast *invisibility* includes those terrible sounds in her countersong, making it difficult for any devil caught in the countersong to draw on the powers of Hell to cast *invisibility*. The watcher must roll a Perform check higher than a spell’s DC to counteract its effects. In cases where no DC is provided for a devil’s spell-like abilities, the devil must make a Willpower save versus a DC of the watcher’s Perform check to successfully use the ability. The countersong has no effect on the infernal ability to summon reinforcements, which is too complicated a cacophony for a simple countersong to drown out.

At 7th level, the countersong cancels out any supernatural abilities (Su) that the watcher has observed a devil using at any point in her career. The watcher must roll a Perform check higher than the supernatural ability’s DC to counteract its effects. In cases where no DC is provided for a devil’s supernatural ability, the devil must make a Willpower save versus a DC of the watcher’s Perform check to successfully use the ability. This countersong has no effect on the following supernatural abilities: see in darkness and telepathy.

At 10th level, the watcher’s countersong begins to completely sever the devil from its home plane, leeching it of any cohesive strength

and power. Even the basic powers that make it a devil begin to come undone in the face of this song, rendering the devil little more than an ugly pile of flesh. The countersong cancels out any exceptional abilities (Ex) that the watcher has observed a devil using at any point in her career. The watcher must roll a Perform check higher than the exceptional ability’s DC to counteract its effects. In cases where no DC is provided for a devil’s exceptional ability, the devil must make a Willpower save versus a DC of the watcher’s Perform check to successfully use the ability. The countersong has no effect on the following special qualities of devils: damage resistance, fire and poison immunities, cold and acid resistance, and spell resistance.

Untemtable

At 5th level, the temptations of devils begin to sound like screeching dins to watchers. An erinye shrieking in your ear is not very seductive.

The watcher receives a +20 circumstance bonus to any Willpower save made against a diabolic temptation method (gazes, charms, or the fallen celestial’s probe soul ability – see *Legions of Hell*). Any effort to persuade the watcher to do something she does not want to do is likely to fail.

Beauty’s Blade

At 7th level, the watcher has learned to make her rapier (and only a rapier) vibrate with the very voice of Aymara at war. The echo of the song made by Aymara ages ago when she fought Kador still reverberates around the sphere, and if one dances with it, so will one’s blade. Whenever the rapier strikes a lawful evil outsider, it does an additional 1d6 holy damage. This stacks with other holy damage, such as *holy* or *bane* enchanted weapons.

Song of Imprisonment

The most powerful watchers may use one of their daily instances of countersong (or bardic music) to sever any outsider from the music of other spheres. She floods the area with the most perfect and beautiful music, binding all who hear it to the songs of the mortal sphere. No outsider within 30 feet may open gates, plane shift, summon creatures from other planes, go ethereal or in any other way change planes or bring beings from other planes to the prime material. Magic that uses the power of other planes (negative or positive energy, shadow or dream magic, etc.) continues to work as normal. The song lasts for ten minutes or until the watcher stops singing, whichever comes first. Unless the watcher has lived for a year and a day on another plane and learned its music, she may only use this ability while on the prime material plane.



Watchers wear no outward symbols of their affiliation as the secrecy of their order is of utmost importance.

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God of the Forge and Artisans

The Guildhalls of Korak

Korak (COREack) (Lord of Wrights, Grand Wright, Forger of Souls, King of the Crucible, Master, Hammer Hand, Clever Handed)

Myths

A Dwarven Legend

For the first thousand years of the dwarven race's history, all of our peoples were united in a great city. It was built in a fabulous series of caves, each hall more lovely than the last. It was at the end of the thousand years that the caves began to shake and shift. The dwarven fathers thought themselves under attack, and many fled. After some time it became clear that our city was not built in caves at all, but in the head of Korak, the Forger of Souls.

To His eternal glory, the Grand Wright was not angered that these small folk had built homes in His head while He slept, and He did not smite them. Rather, He waited for all to depart from the caves of His mind, and then assumed a form in the likeness of our forefathers. Walking among us, He taught us many cunning secrets and gave us many blessings. He aided us in building new homes and taught the dwarven people the names of all of the gods, blessing them each – but blessing most especially His beloved sister, Anwyn, who had awoken Him from His slumber. He showed us how to respect the Wellspring of Life, Rontra the Earth, and how to respect Her as we built new homes deep in the deep places. He took us on great journeys to each of the great mountains, and introduced us to the other races, and even to His cousin, Darmon, who showed the dwarven peoples the wonders of trade.

At the end of this golden age of the dwarven people, when one of the Lords of Good walked in our midst, the Lord of Wrights, Korak Hammer Hand, turned His thoughts back to His family. One day, He decided to part with the dwarves. At His farewell He gave the dwarves three stones of incredible power that He had forged in our fires, and a promise more precious than any stone – that some day He would return to teach us new ways. To this day, we await the return.

All For Love

Some time after Grand Wright Korak departed from the dwarves, he came to the aid of his half-brother Maal, building for him a magnificent subterranean realm where all the dead might be judged and live on if they were not reborn. He set down in that realm a great forge fire in which flawed souls might be remade at the pleasure of the gods. Though it is rare, from time to time, Korak will go to his half-brother's realm and mend a broken spirit.

After building Maal's realm, Clever Handed Korak returned to the mortal world and began to travel with his cousin, Darmon. Both went in disguise and taught the races of mortals many secrets, such as the making of steel and the secret of arches. The Lord of Wrights came to be very fond of both his half-brother and his cousin, bringing them together on many adventures. Though they were the sons of an ancient conflict, their mothers in opposition so often, Master Korak helped forge a friendship between Maal and Darmon that lasts to this day.

And so it was that the three came to quest together, hunting for a wife for Maal, and they were known by gods and mortals both as the Three Companions. In this quest, they came upon the Three Sisters, and Korak Hammer Hand fell madly in love with the guardian of the trees, Thellyne the Huntress. There are many tales of his efforts to woo the lady of the wood, but the grandest is the tale of the seven impossible labors.

After many years of wooing, Thellyne the Huntress determined a way to be rid of Korak. She set him to perform seven impossible labors to prove his love. If he succeeded, she would marry him. Master Korak readily agreed. She asked him first to make the woods of the world more beautiful, and so he journeyed far and wide, coating every leaf of every tree in a thin layer of gold. This is why leaves turn gold every year, to remember Korak's journey, and it is why thin layers of metal applied to a surface are called "leaf" by craftsmen.

For the next labor, he was to make her a present that would show that his love was never ending. Thinking on this, he made in his forge a perfect ring of gold – for rings have no beginning and no ending. Though she did not accept the gift, it is still the gift given upon marriage as a sign of never-ending love.

Next the Huntress asked the Grand Wright to find her a creature that travels neither by walking on land, nor swimming in water, nor flying in the air. So Master Korak went to the mountains and found one of the great dragons. From this dragon, whose name was Ouroboros, he took away the legs and the wings, so that it could only slither on the ground to move. He called the new creature a snake. But Thellyne was not pleased with the creature and said she wanted it to be a different color.

So for his fourth labor, the King of the Crucible taught the snake to change its skin, and so to this day snakes shed their skins in remembrance. No longer needing it, Korak left the snake to its own devices. It retreated to its former mountain home, where it eventually grew so big it began to gnaw on its own tail. There are many legends about the ultimate fate of Ouroboros the serpent that we will not concern ourselves with here.

For the fifth labor, Thellyne pointed to a sad-looking creature that raced around in a circle, looking lost and upset. A moment later a wolf came and gobbled the miserable creature up. "Those beasts, the turtles, are the fastest in the world and are dear to me. They would be happy, but they keep losing their homes. Make for them a home with no door that will keep them safe and that they will never lose." Master Korak thought on this and decided to make them a shell that they might carry on their back as he had seen snails do. He had trouble hitting upon the right shell, though. First he created one for them from lapis and chalcedony, but it was too valuable and would not keep the turtles safe, since everyone would want to steal them. This shell he gave to his cousin, Aymara, and from it she fashioned the first lyre, upon which she plays to this day. The next shell he made was of steel and adamantite, but it was too heavy for the poor little creatures. This he gave to Thellyne's sister, Canelle, and she wears it to this day as a breastplate. Finally, he crafted a shell like the shells of the

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sea, coloring it green like the wood because he knew the color would please Thellyne. He placed these new shells on the turtles' backs, and they were safe and never again lost their homes. But the shells were heavy, which is why the once speedy turtles are now so ponderous.

For the sixth labor, now despairing that Korak would actually complete all of the labors and she would have to marry him, Thellyne demanded that Korak bring her the most beautiful thing in the world. This labor took him many years, for the Lord of Wrights had seen many beautiful things on his travels and could not say which was most beautiful. At last, talking to his cousin Aymara, he determined what it was and returned to Thellyne, empty-handed. "I bring you my love, for love is the most beautiful thing in the world," he told her, and she wept, for she knew it was right.

It was therefore time for the final labor to be decreed, and a weeping Thellyne did not know how to be free from her obligation. And so for the final labor, she asked Master Korak to give her what she most desired. Beholding her there, weeping, the Lord of Wrights knew that she most desired her freedom from their bargain. And so he gave it to her, thus completing the seven impossible labors, but not winning Thellyne's hand. For that he continues to strive, proving his love for the Mistress of the Wood whenever and however he may.

Associations

Korak is the god of smiths, artisans, carpenters, masons, and laborers of all variety. He is the champion of the dwarven people, god of hard work, and defender of cities and other great symbols of mortal endeavor.

In the animal kingdom he is associated with the ox, the mule, the horse, and other beasts of burden. The strongest of his animal affinities, however, is with the bull, whose strength can be harnessed by those who treat it well, and whose horns await those who treat it ill. Among mystical creatures, most people associate Korak with creatures that appear to be made from metal, particularly the mighty gorgons and metallic golems. None of these associations are as strong as his connection with bulls, though.

Among the races, Korak, like his cousin Darmon, is universally popular. All mortal races make things with their hands, build monuments to their societies, and form wonders from metals and gems. Among the mortal races, though, the dwarves hold him dearest, for it is Korak that taught them the many wonders of their crafts.

Alignment

Korak is neutral good.

Representations

When shown in icons, Korak's appearance changes from culture to culture. Because he, along with his cousin Darmon, traveled among the mortal races in disguise and taught them many tricks and wonders, each of the races represents him as one of their own. He is always shown to be powerfully muscled, with a great smith's hammer in his hand, and deep, black eyes like coal. In some statues and paintings he wears glittering armor as he did in times of war long ago. The elves most often show him holding up some fantastic creation – a swan made of silver, or a crown of pearl and emerald – while the dwarves usually choose to represent him toiling away at work.



Before Korak's blood mingled with his Aunt's, he was entertained by simple pleasures. Scant years later, he taught the dwarven forefathers their skills.

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The representational symbols of Korak are interchangeably the hammer or the anvil. Sometimes they are together; sometimes there is only one or the other. When this symbol must be made in haste, or is being used as a small stamp on an object (such as the bottom of sword handle), it can be rendered with a few quick sketchy lines.

Purpose

Korak is the greatest builder of the sphere, and his accomplishments with metals, stone, and wood rival even the creations of the Nameless One. He seeks to make perfect things – weapons, homes, halls, even furniture – and is tireless in his effort to do so. However, he is distracted from his work by his constant efforts to woo Thellyne, the goddess of the hunt.

Though he is from the lawful side of the family of the gods, Korak slumbered for many years with the chaotic blood of his aunt Zheenkeef coursing through his veins. This has made it as though he is from both sides of the family; he has no patience for the petty struggles of his parents and their siblings, often staying out of such conflicts or calling for peace. It is perhaps this very neutrality that makes him such a popular god among all of the mortal races.

From time to time, Korak will visit his half-brother, Maal, in the Kingdom of the Dead, and there he will reforge a few souls that have potential but have continually led flawed lives, even after being reborn several times.

He places them in his great crucible there and bangs out the flaws from their spirits with his mighty hammer. In doing so, he makes great heroes and renowned leaders. One who walks an especially extraordinary path in life, be she a great hero or a noble ruler, is often said to have been “formed in the King’s Crucible.”

Most of the time, however, Korak is found in Heaven with his family, the Lords of Good, making for them wondrous things of the richest materials. On his throne in the City of Gods, he watches over those who work with their hands and seek to make great and useful things.

Servants

At all times, Korak has five apprentices working with him in his forge; these are his five principal servants. These apprentices are recently passed followers of Korak who serve in his smithies – in Heaven and in the land of the dead – for 100 years. To serve there is the great honor many of Korak’s followers hope for in death, reciting over their labors, “If my hand is steady and my work is true, then I shall some day stoke the fires for the Grand Wright.” After serving in this capacity, the apprentices go on to be journeymen in the heavens, making wondrous artifacts for the gods. There is no Master in Heaven of such crafts but Korak.

The five apprentices are named after the parts of the forge: Bellows, Fire, Hammer, Anvil, Tongs. For the century in which they serve, they lose any other identification and do naught but perform their

function. It has happened that a great artisan is taken before his time and, when called back in ceremonies of resurrection, refuses to return because he has become one of Korak’s apprentices. If one reaches this level in Heaven, it is entirely unlikely that one will agree to be resurrected.

The Church

Church Description

The churches of Korak, called the guildhalls of Korak (or among its members the Halls of the Grand Wright), are where the Koraketh worship. They are incredibly popular, and nearly every artisan who observes the worship of the gods of the tree is a member of the guildhalls. Most who make their living through works of the hand (see below) consider their guildhall their “home” church, even if they regularly pay respects to other members of the pantheon. The guildhalls are a cornerstone of every community.

The guildhalls, and the entirety of the Koraketh faith, exist to *do*, to work and make things on earth. The guildhalls aid those that need advice in massive projects, offer supplies when possible, provide mediation between artisans in professional disputes, make sure apprentices aren’t abused by their masters, and work with local authorities on public works.

The Koraketh have little interest in political struggles and anything else that might distract them from their work.

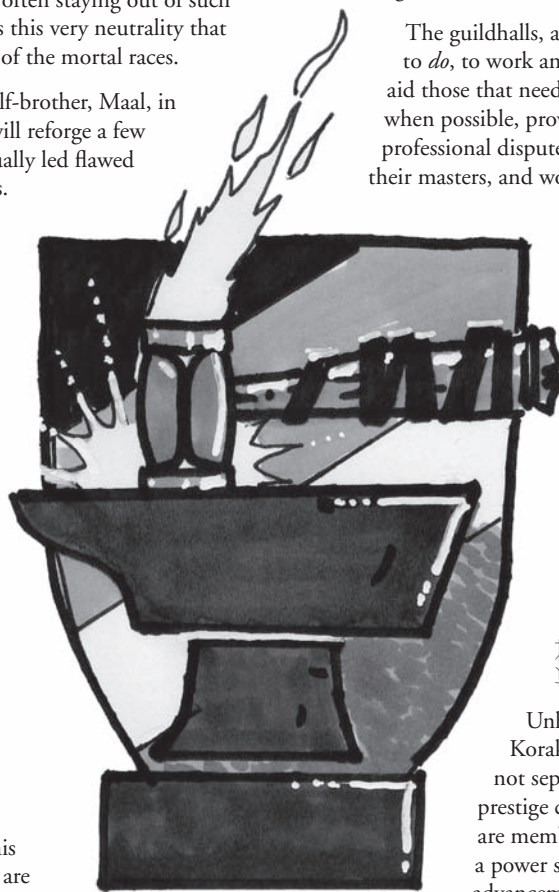
Because they dedicate themselves to actual work in their community and are intimately involved in the goings-on of local artisans, the Koraketh are so popular that in many towns there are not individual guilds for coopers, thatchers, masons, smiths, and other artisans. Instead they all meet within the guildhalls of Korak, which happily makes space available for such purposes.

Church Structure

Unlike most other churches of the gods, the Koraketh are not divided by class. There are not separate orders for clerics, holy warriors, and prestige class (artificer) members. In fact, all three are members of the same orders, each order having a power structure based on skill rather than level advancement.

The Koraketh have four holy orders, three of which know no boundaries from guildhall to guildhall, and one of which is concerned only with the authority of individual guildhalls. The three main orders of the guildhalls are the makers, the builders, and the masons. Those who oversee an individual guildhall are members of the fourth order, the guildmasters.

There is no supreme authority of the guildhall system. That position is reserved for Korak himself, referred to in this capacity as the Grand Wright. There are individual heads of the three main orders, but they gain no authority by their positions. Rather, they are simply



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acknowledged throughout the guildhalls of the land to be the greatest in their crafts.

Here's how it works: Anyone, whether divinely powered or not, can climb in status in the three main orders as long as they are skilled craftspeople. Each of the three orders is concerned with a different area of artisans' pursuits:

The Holy and Revered Order of Makers

The Holy and Revered Order of Makers is made up of smiths of all sorts (particularly gold and silver smiths), jewelers, armorers, weaponsmiths, fletchers, and others who make single crafts for the use of heroes and common folk. They believe that the individual's tie to beauty is one of Korak's greatest gifts, and that people should be adorned in jewelry, don the finest armor in battle, and wield the greatest weapons in war.

The Holy and Revered Order of Builders

The Holy and Revered Order of Builders holds coopers, tanners, carpenters, woodworkers, thatchers, farriers, furriers, shipwrights, wheelwrights, and others whose skills are used in the maintenance of a community. It is by far the largest of the three orders. In general, if the skill is useful to keep a town running, its practitioners will join the builders. They believe that Korak's greatest gifts to the mortal races were the simple arts necessary to survive and thrive; they take great pride in making commonplace things beautiful.

The Holy and Revered Order of Masons

The Holy and Revered Order of Masons comprises stonemasons, sculptors, locksmiths, glasscutters, and others whose skills are necessary to build massive structures meant to glorify a kingdom or a god. It is by far the smallest of the three orders. In general, if the skill is useful for a city or for the building of a magnificent or glorious structure, its practitioner will join the masons. They believe that Korak's lessons are best poured into the construction of magnificent temples, halls and castles to better glorify his gifts.

All three of the main orders follow the same structure:

- A person with 4 ranks in a craft skill in the area with which the order is concerned (see Table 6-11) is no longer an apprentice and is fully inducted into the order, called either "maker," "builder," or "mason." He is addressed by that title (e.g. "Maker Jason") and introduced by full title.
- With 8 ranks, the craftsman is considered a master and is so titled, either "master maker," "master builder," or "master mason." He is addressed by that title (e.g. "Master Maker Jason") and introduced by full title.
- With 15 ranks, the craftsman becomes accepted by all as one of the great craftspeople of a large area and is considered a Grand member of the guild, called either "grand maker," "grand builder," or "grand mason." He is addressed as "Illustrious Master" and introduced by full title.
- At 20 ranks of a craft, it is possible to unseat the current head of an order (see holy days below) and become the supreme member of the guild. The head of the order is either the "supreme maker," "supreme builder," or "supreme mason." He is addressed as "Most Excellent and Venerable Master," and introduced by full title.

One cannot be a member of more than one of the three major orders (makers, builders, masons), even if one has the appropriate skills. Once a character has chosen an order, he must stay in it or go through a complex initiation of rejecting his old order and joining his new. In any given guildhall, the highest local member of each order is considered its head. If there are no particularly powerful or revered members of the order locally, they will look to a nearby higher-up member of the order for instruction when needed.

The three orders maintain equal status in a guildhall, but even their most powerful members do not determine local guildhall policy. While each order may make policies and religious law for its own members, every guildhall is an independent body, overseen by the local head of the fourth order of the faith, the guildmasters.

The guildmasters come from any of the three other holy orders of the Koraketh. They are members of the faith who wish to lead their local guildhalls in matters spiritual and mundane. One's titles as a member of one's original order are kept and used in conjunction with one's guildmaster title, and it is allowed for one to continue to rise in one's order after becoming a guildmaster. Only those who receive divine powers from Korak may become guildmasters. The rules are:

- With 11 ranks in at least two crafts, each from a different order, a reasonably powerful cleric, holy warrior, or artificer (see table 6-13) may become a wright. The head of a small guildhall, a wright works to coordinate the efforts of all three holy orders and to offer the local communities use of the hall. He is essentially the leader of the faithful and the spokesman for them. A wright is addressed as "brother" or "sister," no matter what his other order titles may be, and this address is always right before his name. Therefore, Grand Maker Jason, upon becoming a wright, is simply addressed as "Brother Jason." This is to reflect that he is putting aside his status among the maker order to focus on his duties as a wright. When introduced formally, however, he maintains all of his titles and is announced as "The Illustrious Master, Brother Jason, Grand Maker and Wright of the Guildhall of Korak."

Table 6-11:

Areas of Concern for the Four Holy Orders of the Guildhalls of Korak

Guild	Craft Skills Represented
Makers	Crafting Items for Adventurers, Soldiers, or Personal Adornment: Armorsmithing, Goldsmithing, Silversmithing, Bowmaking, Gemcutting, Weaponsmithing, Jewelrymaking, Fletching
Builders	Creating Community Improvements and Useful Items for Day-To-Day Living: Blacksmithing, Bookbinding, Carpentry, Cobbling, Leatherworking, Painting, Pottery, Weaving, Tailoring, Net Making
Masons	Creating Large Monuments and Lasting Structures or Other "Fancy" Skills: Locksmithing, Sculpture, Stonemasonry, Trapmaking, Architecture, Calligraphy, Runemaking
Wrights	Skills from at least two of the other three orders

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- With 16 ranks in at least three crafts, one from each of the three orders, a wright may become a master wright. The head of a large (or even huge) guildhall, this is the highest a wright can ascend, no matter how prominent. A master wright is addressed as “wise brother” or “wise sister.” Like the wright, he maintains all order titles for formal purposes and is introduced in the same fashion.

It is important to note that none of these orders are exclusive – you do not have to be a member of an order of Korak in order to be a town smith, nor do you have to be in an order to worship Korak. These are people who actually live to do service for others as members of the holy orders of the guildhalls of Korak. They are particularly devout people and are not the norm; they offer spiritual guidance to the normal artisans of their community and do not seek to take their place. It is also worth noting that one need not pursue a divinely powered class to join the three main orders – there are many dwarven fighters and elven wizards found high in the guildhall orders. Only divinely powered individuals may serve as guildmasters, however.

Table 612:

Maker, Builder and Mason Titles

Minimum Craft Skill	Title	Requirement
4	Maker, Builder, Mason	Must Have Skill Ranks in Column 1 in Any One of the Skills Mentioned in Table 6-11 (or Another Appropriate Skill at the GM's Discretion)
8	Master Maker, Builder, Mason	Must Have Skill Ranks in Column 1 in Any One of the Skills Mentioned in Table 6-11 (or Another Appropriate Skill at the GM's Discretion)
12	Grand Maker, Builder, Mason	Must Have Skill Ranks in Column 1 in Any One of the Skills Mentioned in Table 6-11 (or Another Appropriate Skill at the GM's Discretion)
20	Supreme Maker, Builder, Mason	Must Have Skill Ranks in Column 1 in Any One of the Skills Mentioned in Table 6-11 (or Another Appropriate Skill at the GM's Discretion); Must Have Won Grand Festival or Be Elected by Others

Table 613: Guildmaster Titles

Minimum Craft Skill	Title	Requirement
11	Wright	Must Have Skill Ranks in Column 1 in any Two Crafts Favored by Different Orders; Must Have at Least 4 Levels as a Cleric, Arcstone, or Artificer of Korak (or Any Combination of the Three).
16	Master Wright	Must Have Skill Ranks in Column 1 in Three Crafts, One from Each of the Three Orders; Must Have at Least 9 Levels as a Cleric, Arcstone, or Artificer of Korak (or Any Combination of the Three).

The average guildhall has 20 to 30 active members of each of the orders, though few actually reside at the guildhall, and one wright who is in residence. The wright is usually a cleric, and there are usually two other clerics in residence as well as one or two arcstones. Artificers usually have their own abodes but most guildhalls have one or two local artificers on their membership rolls.

Doctrine

“It is the fool who believes himself above work. It is the greater fool who works to no purpose.”

- from the sermons of the Most Excellent and Venerable Master, Wise Brother Grathor Twicecut, Supreme Maker and Master Wright of the Guildhalls of Korak.

The guildhalls of Korak preach creative and useful work above all else. The Grand Wright, they say, has little tolerance for the lazy. Each order has its own interpretation of Korak's teachings, but all three agree quite firmly that he loves those who live by the toil of their brows and has little patience for those who sit back and let others do for them.

The guildhalls also hold, however, that one must not build for no purpose, or simply for the pleasure of building. It is easy to manipulate one who lusts to build and create into doing evil. One must consider who will use the creation or who will live in the impregnable tower. Those who make and build must be ever vigilant that their creations do not fall into evil hands. Because of this doctrine, many worshippers of Korak dedicate themselves to the liberation of fallen holy sites, the cleansing of overrun ancient cities, and the restoration of lost homes. There are also those of the church who live to protect the great works of past artisans to ensure their safety from the hands of evil.

In day-to-day life, the worshippers of Korak follow these simple laws:

- Never be hesitant to dirty your hands in labor, no matter high you rise, no matter how noble you are acclaimed to be. Every day, work.
- Do not hoard beauty. If you hold the magnificent work of artisans, let others behold it when it is safe. (There is no sense among the worshippers of Korak that it is wrong to hide valuables while traveling. But misers who hoard great works of the hand so that only they may see them are wicked.)

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Works of the Hand

“Works of the hand” is the most common phrase among the Koraketh to describe what they revere. For a time many religious scholars sought to extend the meaning of building and artisanship to structures made purely of magic, as well as more metaphysical constructions like culture. And while the Koraketh certainly enjoy exploring the metaphysical meanings of “building,” they came to be dissatisfied with the regular aspersions cast on what such scholars began calling “petty crafts,” like blacksmithing.

Before long, the Koraketh came to discuss their church in terms of the works of the hand – those things actually made by the hands of mortals: buildings, tools, weapons, etc.

- Always endeavor to aid goodhearted people with your labor whenever it is useful.
- Demand that your brother be paid fairly for his labor. Pay those who study with you a fair wage, even your apprentices.
- Do not hold any into service against their will – either past their time of contract, or as slaves – for to take a man’s labor is as grave as to take his life.
- Protect beautiful works of the hand. Glories that have been crafted must be guarded against all those who would trespass against them.

The doctrines of the three orders are easily explicated, as they only add to the core beliefs of the Koraketh. The Orders have never before fallen into conflict, and it is unlikely that they will any time soon:

- The Makers believe that all those with skill are called upon to do great things, and to aid those who seek to do greatness. They are the “order of heroes,” and are called such with reverence by the other orders. They make items for champions, and also make the artifacts of the greatest beauty.
- The Builders believe that the most lasting labors are those that build a people. They celebrate the achievements of the common person, and seek to aid simple artisans in labors such as shoeing horses, building gates, sewing sails, and other pursuits that keep society humming. They are the “order of the commons,” and are called such with reverence by the other orders.
- The Masons believe that all people, common and heroic, are emboldened and enriched by great monuments. The Masons seek to build towering monoliths, magnificent temples, and glorious palaces so that the lives of mortals might be filled with wonder and reverence. They are the “order of kings,” and are called such with reverence by the other orders.

Common Prayers

The most common prayer to Korak is said daily by nearly all of his worshippers upon waking and is called simply the Morning Prayer:

*“Master Korak, guide my Hand,
Give me strength to lift,
Precision to join,
Fortitude to labor.*

*“Master Korak, guide my Eye,
Grant me insight to plan,
Knowledge to understand,
Wisdom to teach.*

*“Master Korak, guide my Heart,
Lend me courage to fail,
Patience to continue,
Hope to succeed.”*

Another common prayer is said by an apprentice when binding himself to a master:

*“King of the Crucible, smile on me!
The first master among us was your apprentice;
I follow now, as my master did before me.*

*I swear to obey,
I swear to work,
I swear to serve,
I swear to learn,
And when I am a master,
I swear to teach.*

*I bind myself to this oath in your name, Master Korak.
May your blessings be upon me.”*

The apprentice’s master follows it with an oath of his own. When it is done, the two are bound until the apprentice is ready to become a journeyman.

Holy Days

Nearly every small community and culture has some version of a holiday to celebrate the work of laborers. These culturally specific holidays are celebrated and often led by the local guildhalls and serve as the usual holy days for the Koraketh.

Once every ten years the Koraketh celebrate their high holiday, the Great Festival. At this time Koraketh from around the world meet in a location, determined by the heads of the three orders, for a grand competition. The location is picked as much as two years in advance, and many of the world’s greatest artisans attend – even those who are not members of holy orders, for it is a celebration of artisanship.

There are three main prizes awarded at the festival: the Golden Laurels in Making, Building, and Masonry. While makers, and usually builders, are expected to bring their entries to the Great Festival, those whose entries are magnificent castles, monuments, or other great structures must provide for magical means to present their creations to the panel of judges (which is usually accomplished through scrying, but occasionally through teleportation or other magical travel).

The judging is done by a panel of 11 impartial elders of the faith who are not competing themselves. The heads of the three orders must compete, because the winner of the Golden Laurel in each competition is made the head of that competition’s corresponding order. It has never happened that the winner is not already a powerful member of the Koraketh faith, likely a comment on the “impartiality”

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of the judges. In general, the Great Festival ends up being three great competitions between the head of each order and the second most skilled member of his or her order. The works presented at the festival, even those not likely to win laurels, are all spectacular.

There are several lesser awards presented at the Great Festival, generally meant to praise less accomplished artisans who have achieved great things with limited resources, but all eyes are on the contest for the Golden Laurels. If the head of an order should die or fall from grace or otherwise leave his duties prior to a Great Festival, the heads of the other two orders hold an election for the new head. All guildmasters around the world are expected to send in one vote cast by all of the members of the order in question found at their guildhall. The elected head of the order holds the position until the next Great Festival, where it must be defended as normal.

Saints

Saints in the Koraketh faith are remembered at the Great Festival in the “Roll of the Saints.” Every ten years, members of the faith, living or dead, are added to the list by a unanimous vote of the three heads of the orders. The three decide on the names of those to be beatified before the festival and add their names, and the new additions are made public only by this reading. There is the famous story of old Saint Dorrik Threehelms, who worked through the night on his piece for the festival and missed his own beatification the following morning by sleeping through it.



People are named saints because of truly exceptional deeds, not because of their skill with crafts. Saints are remembered for cleansing particularly splendid ancient elf or dwarf homes of evil taints, recovering magnificent artifacts, or saving important and beautiful locations from onslaught.

Those who die defending such locations and creations are remembered as martyrs locally, though martyrdom is not a church-wide title, nor is it considered especially key to warm regard in Korak's eyes – any who defend such items are beloved to Korak; one need not be martyred.

Korak's View of the Church

Korak is quite fond of the guildhalls, and it is to them that he goes when he walks the mortal sphere, wooing Thellyne. Although the Compact forbids him from directly teaching his faithful or giving them great powers to pursue his ends, nearly all of the gods deal with their churches in signs and portents, symbols and guidance. Korak chooses to deliver that guidance personally, often coming to a guildhall as a blind old man, or a young artisan hoping to be taught a lesson or two. In this fashion he observes the Koraketh and teaches them lessons through parable.

What is clear is that Korak dearly loves those who live to serve artisanship and works of creation. The Koraketh serve, in the mind of Korak, the highest calling that any mortal can – the works of the hand. Therefore, the most powerful of the Koraketh can certainly expect to receive aid from their god in times of need, and it is a certainty that the Forger of Souls is watching over them and their missions.

Preferred Weapon

Korak wields a forge hammer that is as heavy as a mountain. Those who follow him represent this by wielding any kind of hammer – warhammers, light hammers, even hooked hammers. There are some who have specially made greathammers. These hammers, often called

mauls or bludgeons, are absolutely enormous heads of metal on thick wooden shafts and are useable only by the strongest combatants. They are wildly inefficient and are used by zealots, not tacticians.

Greathammer

Size: Large, **Cost:** 40gp, **Damage:** 2d6, **Critical:** x3, **Weight:** 45 pounds, **Type:** Bludgeoning

Holy Orders

Clerics of Korak

The Order

Clerics are not their own order in the guildhalls of Korak. They are members of the three main orders, like all of the other artisans. However, they have a special tie to Korak due to their superior wisdom, and are able to call upon him for divine power. This makes them especially revered members of their orders. This results in the clerics of Korak usually rising in their order's leadership, as most look to them for guidance.

Most wrights and master wrights are clerics, skilled at calling on the divine power of Korak to aid all those of their guildhall.

To become a cleric of Korak requires a special apprenticeship. One who desires to be a part of the Koraketh clergy must find an established cleric willing to teach him. He then learns from his new master both a trade that any apprentice might learn, such as blacksmithing, and the religious rites necessary to cast divine spells and serve as a spiritual leader of a guildhall. This process generally takes as long as any apprenticeship might: five to eight years. An established character who seeks to become a cleric of Korak may do so in a dramatically shorter time, as long as he is already skilled in a craft. If he is not, he must learn a craft as well.

Titles

Clerics of the guildhalls have no special titles.

Domains

Clerics of Korak may choose two of the following domains: Earth, Fire, Forge, and Good.

Spell Preparation Time

Koraketh clerics pray for their spells in the mornings, while other artisans are laying out the tools of their trades and preparing for the day of work ahead. This usually means dawn, but they may receive spells a little later than that if necessary.

Alignments

The clergy of the guildhalls, while universally good, generally vary in temperament along the lines of the orders. The most common alignment for clerics of Korak is neutral good, and these members of the clergy believe that they should use their gifts to help the common people in whatever way is necessary. If the people of the town where their guildhall is located need a new millstone, the neutral good clerics aid in the making of the millstone; if they need new hoe blades and wheat sickles, the clergy work at the forge to make farming implements. Such clergy take great pride in common work and

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common labors, and many spend their entire lives in very rural areas helping the most humble of folk to thrive against adversity. Because this outlook most closely matches the work of the order of builders, neutral good clerics are usually a part of that order.

Chaotic good clerics of Korak are known for their individualism, heroism, and tireless adventures. Some of the greatest saints of the Koraketh have been chaotic good, for in their wild adventures hither and yon they have liberated magnificent artifacts from the clutches of evil. Such clergy focus on the good a single person can do in life, and seek to perfect their own skills as well as improving the skills in labor of others – one student at a time. Their work and adventures are made greater by the presence of powerful magic items, such as shields and weaponry, and this reason among others draws chaotic good clerics to the order of makers more than any other.

Lawful good clerics of Korak are quite common because most dwarven clerics of the Grand Wright are lawful good. In the most general terms, these clerics hold that the works of the hand in stone and steel will outlast even the strongest and wisest of the mortal races. They strive to work with others to build lasting monuments to goodness – great cities, magnificent works of beauty, powerful artifacts – that will stand as beacons to future generations that goodness prevails over evil, light shall always triumph over darkness. This attitude brings many lawful good clerics of Korak to the order of masons, but some of the greatest makers of all time have been lawful good.

Holy Warrior: Arcstones of Korak

The Order

The arcstones are named after the secret of arch building, imparted by Korak to the mortal races long ago. They live to defend and recover great artifacts, magnificent structures, and important monuments. The order seeks to maintain and preserve the works of the hand against outside forces, just as the keystone of an arch takes all of the outside pressures on the arch and helps it to hold its shape.

Most communities with major monuments, fantastically old structures, or powerful artifacts can expect to have several arcstones

around helping to keep these treasures safe. Arcstones also organize expeditions to cleanse long-lost cities, recover corrupted temples, and retrieve lost works of beauty and powerful artifacts.

To become an arcstone requires a special apprenticeship. One who has received the call finds another arcstone and learns from her both a trade that any apprentice might learn, such as blacksmithing, and the secrets of the arcstones – combat, divine rites, and legends of artifacts to be recovered. This process generally takes as long as any apprenticeship might: five to eight years. An established character who receives the call may learn all that is necessary to become an arcstone in a dramatically shorter time, as long as she is already skilled in a craft. If she is not, she must learn a craft as well.

Titles

Like clerics of the Koraketh, arcstones do not have their own titles, though when asked what they do in the guildhalls, they call themselves arcstones (there isn't even a name for the Koraketh clergy).

Additional Class Skills

Arcstones focus on learning about the works of the hand, and the most learned of them are as skilled as bards in reciting the histories of lost elfhomes and forgotten artifacts. The Knowledge (lost treasures) skill pertains to legendary things and places that were lost or destroyed in the near or distant past.

The arcstone's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are

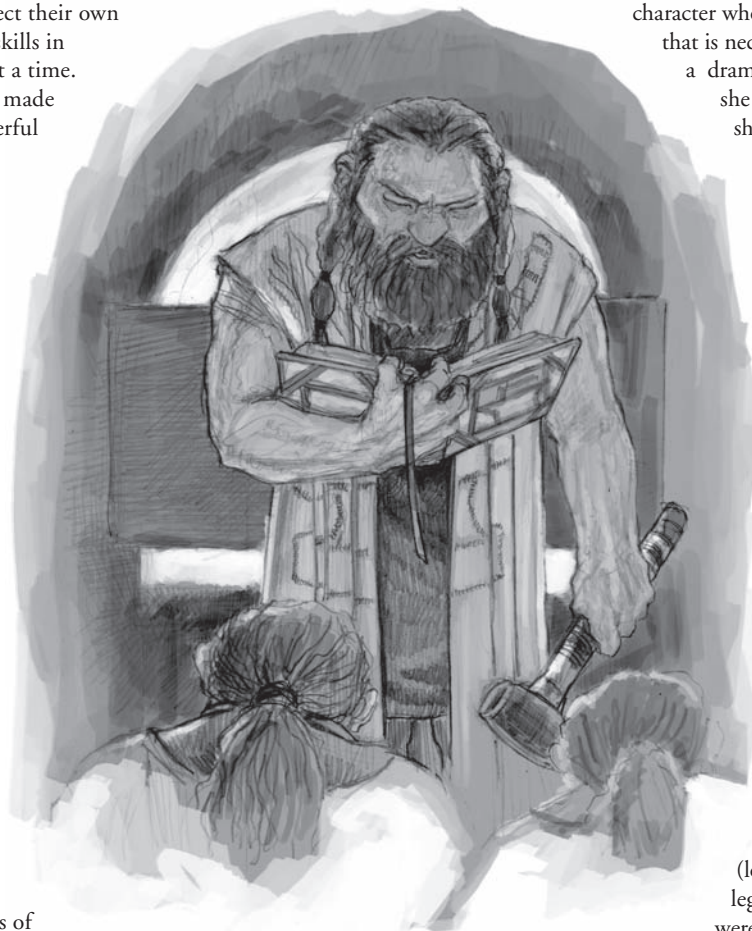
Appraise (Int) and Knowledge (lost treasures) (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Domains

The arcstone may choose any two of the following domains: Earth, Guardian, and Creation.

Gift of Korak

Beginning at 3rd level, the arcstone is able to disperse curses with a touch, as so often the works of the hand she seeks to retrieve have been cursed. Once per week she can cast *remove curse*, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Remove curse* is a spell-like ability for arcstones.



Most of Korak's clergy dress so that they are ready to work at any moment, but don ceremonial robes at times of duty.

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Beginning at 12th level, her Gift of Korak allows her to make her touch quite powerful against evil magics. She can combine her ability to *remove curse* with the ability to *dispel magic* (with a caster level equal to her class level). She can cast *remove curse* or *dispel magic* alone with this ability or cast them together, all as a single standard action. The arcstone must be touching her target to use this ability. She continues to gain uses of these abilities as she advances in levels (five per week at 15th level, six per week at 18th level). *Remove curse/dispel magic* is a spell-like ability for arcstones.

How this works: At 18th level, the arcstone has 6 weekly gifts of Korak. She can use one weekly gift to cast *remove curse* or cast *dispel magic*. She can use two weekly gifts to cast *remove curse* and *dispel magic* as a combined power in a single action.

Spells

1st level – *bless, bless water, bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, magic weapon, protection from evil, read magic, resistance, virtue*

2nd level – *endurance, find traps, make whole, resist elements, shield other*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds, dispel magic, glyph of warding, greater magic weapon, heal mount, locate object, magic circle against evil, obscure object*

4th level – *death ward, dispel evil, divine power, freedom of movement, hallow, holy sword*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, the arcstone is able to call on a special mount, which she uses to journey from place to place in her constant quest to protect and retrieve works of the hand. This is usually a great warhorse, though with the GM's permission at 7th level an arcstone may call upon a Celestial Bull to ride into combat.

Conduct

The arcstones are usually pillars of their community, spending almost their entire lives in one area acting as defenders of something beautiful and valuable. They are active in guildhall affairs, aiding local artisans and pitching in on large projects. Arcstones who are likely to be found adventuring, though, are tied to no land or guildhall. Instead they pursue a tireless quest for the reclamation of ancient wonders. Some arcstones dedicate their entire lives to cleansing a single dwarven hold lost to orcs

centuries before, or doggedly pursue one artifact until they are old and frail.

The arcstone must follow the doctrine of the guildhalls carefully, but must also preserve the sanctity of great works of the hand. An arcstone must never allow a great work (a temple, an artifact, etc.) to fall into evil's hands, and will fight to the death to avoid it. If it should happen, the arcstone must atone and seek to recover the item, or lose her arcstone abilities.

Associates

Because of the peculiarity of their mission, the most common class with which arcstones associate is the rogue. There have been several famous rogue and arcstone pairings, with the two hunting down and recovering artifacts. Arcstones often find that rangers make particularly useful companions as well.

Arcstones will not adventure with those who are willfully destructive or have no respect for the beauty of

places and things. They are rarely found

with evil companions, but may work with greedy, evil sorts in their quest to protect or liberate works of the hand – as long as their companions aren't actively committing evil deeds. Like any holy warrior, they do not abide wickedness.

Alignment

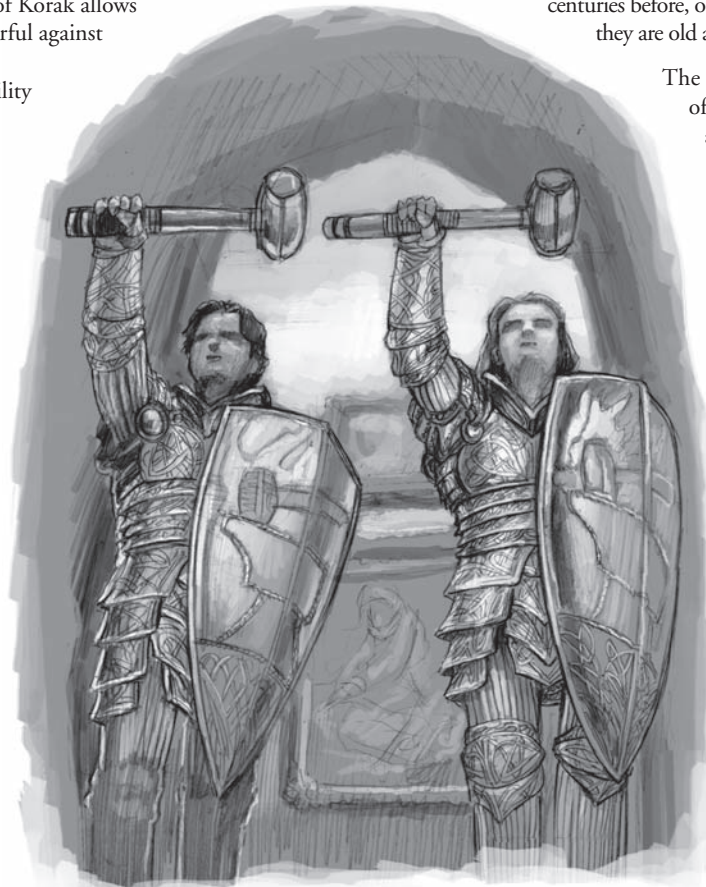
Arcstones must be neutral good.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

While there are no classes tied specifically to the holy orders, there are classes tied specifically to the faith. Only a worshipper of Korak may become a cleric of Korak or an arcstone. Similarly, a worshipper of Korak who channels his devotion to Korak into his crafts may become an artificer, the prestige class of the church.

Artificers are members of the three holy orders like everyone else and, because they are such skilled artisans, they often climb the ranks of the guildhalls quickly. Renowned for their amazing skills with item creation and structural engineering, artificers are much sought after by anyone wishing to purchase the skills of a truly masterful craftsman.

Like the other two classes of the Koraketh, artificers maintain no separate titles.



While not all arcstones are relegated to guard duty, they all wear armor and carry arms of the finest craftsmanship.

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Prestige Class:

Artificers of Korak

Just as clerics can channel the energy granted them by the gods into divine spells, and holy warriors can channel that energy into physical prowess, the artificer receives energy from the heavens to pour into the items he crafts. Able to inscribe holy runes, enchant items with divine power, and call upon celestial aid for particularly powerful projects, artificers are known around the world as the most powerful divine craftsmen in the Prime Material Plane.

Artificers are often clerics or arcstones of Korak who are focusing their talents for a time on pure craft. Arcstones may continue to gain levels as arcstones after taking artificer levels. Fighters and wizards are also common classes for artificers, as the prestige class is a continuation in many ways of their other interests. Truly, any character with a deep and abiding love for craft who worships Korak can be found as an artificer, though this makes it highly unlikely that druids or clerics to other gods will embrace the path.

NPC artificers can be found in a range of conditions, from the local blacksmith's shop working on something miraculous out back, to opulent forges covered in powerful runes with beves of apprentices running about on errands. Powerful artificers are boons to entire nations, for the power of the items they produce is legendary and can make the difference between victory and defeat in times of war. Such artificers are treated almost as nobility, receiving lavish respect from within and without the guildhall system.

Hit Die: d8.

Abbreviation: Art

Requirements

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

Patron: Must worship Korak, though not necessarily to the exclusion of other gods. If the character is a member of the guildhalls in good standing and follows the tenets of the Koraketh, he may certainly worship the other gods of the tree as well.

Craft (armorsmithing or weaponsmithing or blacksmithing): 9 Ranks

Craft (carpentry or masonry or trapmaking or locksmithing): 9 Ranks

Knowledge (architecture and engineering): 5 Ranks

Spellcraft: 4 Ranks

Master of Craft: Only highly skilled artisans may become artificers.

The character must have made no fewer than 5 Masterwork items.

Vow of Service: An artificer swears to serve the common good of the mortal races with his creations, promising never to knowingly allow one of his creations to fall into the hands of evil. This does not mean they keep track of all of their creations, but when a guy called "Vuxkizz, Devourer of Souls" comes into an artificer's shop asking for an elf-bane sword, the artificer is sworn to answer "no," no matter how rich the offer.

Class Skills

The artificer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Alchemy (Int), Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Knowledge (arcane) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (architecture and engineering) (Int), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha), and Use Rope (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the artificer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Artificers are proficient with simple weapons and the warhammer.

Artificers are proficient with light armor but gain no proficiency with shields.

Spellcasting

An artificer continues training in magic. Thus, when a new artificer level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain most other benefits a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic and so on); the exception is item creation feats. This essentially means that he adds the level of artificer to the level of some other spellcasting class he has, then determines spells per day, caster level, and item creation feats available accordingly.

Table 6-14: The Artificer

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Exceptional Craftsman (3rd level)	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Bonus feat, Master's tools	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Hold Enhancement	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Exceptional Craftsman (6th level), Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Master Craft	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Learn Spell, Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Exceptional Craftsman (9th level)	+1 level of existing class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Craft Relic	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Bonus feat, True Craft, Exceptional Craftsman (12th level)	+1 level of existing class

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For purposes of making magic items using the various craft feats, the artificer gains special abilities that add to his caster level. For example, a 7th-level fighter/4th-level artificer would be normally be considered a “4th-level spellcaster” for purposes of Craft feats (since Fighter is not a spellcaster class and he only has 4 levels of artificer, a spellcasting class). This means he could not take the Craft Arms and Armor Feat, which requires that the character be a 5th-level spellcaster. However, due to special artificer abilities (see below), he is considered a 6th-level spellcaster and may take the Craft Arms and Armor feat, and may use it to create items with up to a +2 enhancement bonus (one may only craft bonuses equal to one-third the character’s spellcaster level). The artificer level is cumulative with any other spellcaster levels, so a 7th-level cleric/4th-level artificer would be considered a 14th-level spellcaster – just short of the necessary 15th level to craft +5 equipment.

Bonus Feats

At 2nd level, the artificer gets a bonus feat, and an additional bonus feat at 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th levels. These bonus feats must be drawn from the following list: Skill Focus (Craft*), Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, and Forge Ring.

An artificer can select feats marked with an asterisk (*) more than once, but it must be for a different Craft skill each time. An artificer must still meet all prerequisites for a feat, including base spellcaster level (either in artificer levels or combined levels of artificer with other spellcaster classes).

Exceptional Craftsman (Ex)

The artificer is capable of feats of skill that would leave most craftsmen in awe. Whenever the artificer’s level is important for any craft check – either magical or mundane – his artificer level is counted as though it’s the number in parentheses for the Exceptional Craftsman ability. That means a 4th level artificer is considered a 6th level artificer (because he has the Exceptional Craftsman (6th) ability) whenever his level comes up for craft purpose: He may take craft feats that require the modified spellcaster level, any magic items that ask for his caster level are made with the modified level, etc. He may not buy more ranks in skills than 3 + his actual level, however,

even craft skills. Exceptional Craftsman has no effect on spellcaster level for the purposes of the Learn Spell ability (see below).

Hold Enhancement (Ex)

Any masterwork item the artificer makes can be inscribed with special runes and symbols of the gods so that it holds divine enchantments for double duration (such items cost twice the normal price in GP – both for the item and the masterwork component). For instance, a 15th-level arcstone with such a masterwork sword casts *holy sword*. Normally the spell would last for 15 rounds (1 per level of caster), but because the sword was made by an artificer using the Hold

Enhancement runes, the spell lasts for 30 rounds. While the artificer can make such items for other churches, these are holy markings and inscriptions on the items and they have no effect on arcane enchantments to the item. The markings may be made a part of a structure to hold divine enchantments with a duration, making the building time twice as long and the material costs for the area with the markings twice as high. Also, the markings are quite obvious, and anyone making a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) will know their purpose.

Master Craft (Ex)

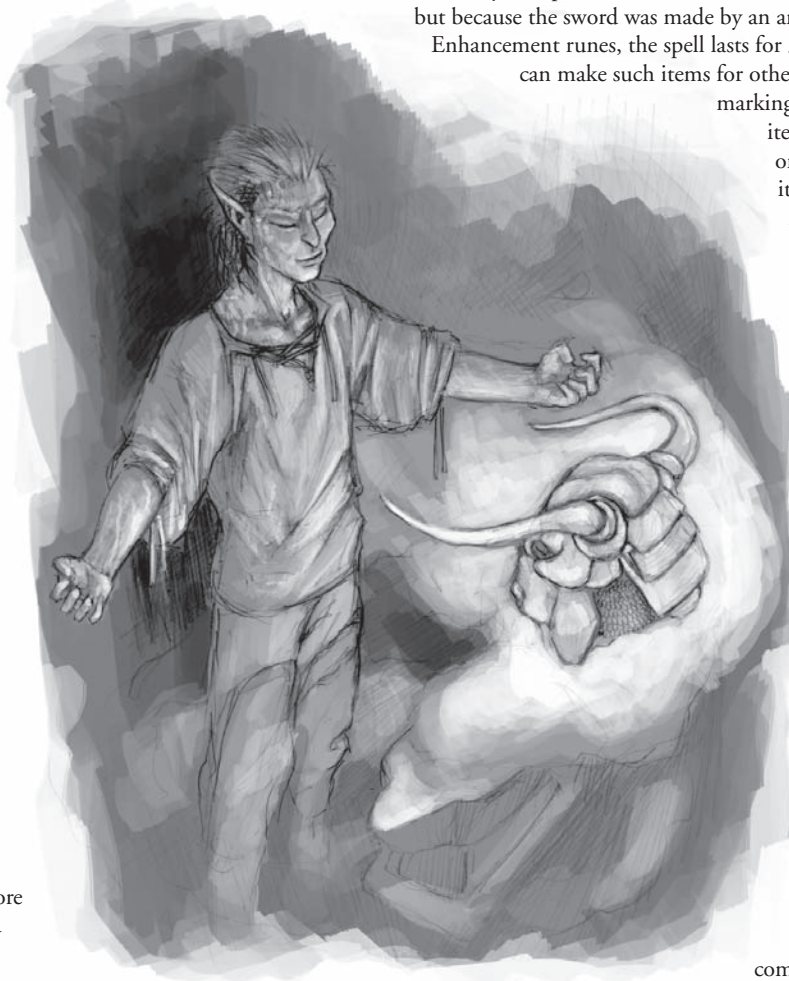
The artificer picks one of his Craft skills (such as armorsmithing or leatherworking) in which he particularly excels, having fully mastered its intricacies. Henceforth, he receives a +4 competence bonus on all rolls with that Craft.

True Craft (Ex)

After years of study, the artificer has learned to comprehend the pure and divine form of one of his many Crafts. He understands it in his very soul and is capable of inhuman feats of work with it. He is as Mozart with music, as Michelangelo with sculpture, an artisan of immortal skill. He picks one of his Craft skills to be his “True Craft,” and henceforth receives a +8 competence bonus on all rolls with that skill.

Master’s Tools (Ex)

If the artificer crafts masterwork artisan’s tools, he can actually make master’s tools instead. Master’s tools are specially designed for the artificer himself and are merely masterwork tools in the hands of any other craftsman (so they cannot be bought). They supply a +5 circumstance



Artificers wear holy symbols in public and will even wear ceremonial robes when necessary, but they prefer the privacy of their shops.

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The Role of Women

One of our favorite things about fantasy games is that one need not role-play history's stifling roles for women. In the real world, nearly every society at the technological level assumed in a d20 game had highly divided roles for men and women. While many women had real power as the keepers of the home, there are not many heroic epics about great women warriors slaying dragons. Fortunately, real-world history has little to no bearing on games, and we can play great women warriors who slay dragons.

However, one of our favorite things about mythology is that women, in many myths, keep the secrets of the home. Theirs is the province of delight and comfort, and it is the wife, the homemaker, who knows and passes along the history of the family (including its recipes and secrets) to her daughters. There is something warm and wonderful about this arrangement, and Anwyn and Morwyn, in this book, are meant to honor this old way, the secrets and powers of women. We do *not* include talk here of wives and mothers as homekeepers in an effort to imply that this is the only role for women in a fantasy world. That's boring.

bonus to all craft rolls made in the craft in question. An artificer must make himself a set of tools for every craft he practices, down to master's tools for weaponsmithing and master's tools for armorsmithing. While normal masterwork artisan's tools are valued at 550 silver pieces and are high quality items (DC 15) for purposes of Craft checks, the master's tools are valued at 1000 silver pieces and are superior items (DC 20). They are made using either the craft itself, blacksmithing, or woodworking/carpentry – whichever skills make sense.

Learn Spell (Sp)

Given a scroll or other copy of a spell, the artificer can learn any arcane or divine magic that a wizard or cleric of his spellcaster level could cast. He can only learn the spell for the express purpose of enchanting magic items. For instance, a 6th-level cleric/6th-level artificer might not be able to learn and cast *fireball*, which is a 3rd-level arcane spell. His spellcaster level is 12, however, and were those wizard levels they would be high enough to learn and cast the spell. If the artificer gets a scroll of *fireball* or a spell book with *fireball* inscribed in it, he can learn the spell to create a wand of fireballs or other magic item that uses the fireball power. He knows the spell for this purpose for the rest of his life and may cast it in item creation as long as he prepares it in a spell slot of the appropriate level. If the artificer is not a spell caster, he is granted a number of spell slots for this purpose equal to those of a cleric of his level (without domain spells) and prepares these spells in the same fashion as a cleric of Korak.

To learn the spell, the artificer must make a successful Spellcraft check with a DC of 15 + the level of the spell. Whether successful or not, the magic of the scroll is dissipated in the learning process.

Craft Relic (Su)

At 9th level an artificer may begin his life's work: the creation of a holy relic. A relic, for these purposes, is any item or work with at least +9 worth of enchantments, which requires at least a 27th-level spellcaster. While this is impossible under normal circumstances, since the time and effort required are simply too much for the mind and body of a mortal to endure, the artificer is so tied to the divine power of Korak that he calls upon the power of the angels themselves to aid in this one sacred task.

The first step to creating a holy relic is the planning and creation of the tools necessary. The artificer determines what he wants to create, gathers all of the powers necessary to bring such a splendid thing into existence, and then forges the tools he will need. The tools to create a relic are magic items in their own right. They are valued at 10,000 silver pieces and are DC 30. In crafting the tools, the artificer

must cast all of the spells he intends to use to enchant the relic itself. When the tools are done, they act as master's tools, granting a +5 circumstance bonus. Relic tools may not be used for any purpose other than creating one specific relic.

The second step is to create the masterwork item or masterwork structure to act as a vessel for the relic power. This is done like any other Craft process. The artificer uses his relic tools for this process.

The third step is purification. The artificer must prepare himself for the epic task of creating a divine relic. He goes on a pilgrimage to the site of an artifact of Korak – for instance, one of the three gems of the dwarven fathers, or an item crafted by an artificer of yore. If the world has grown so dark that all of the great artifacts of Korak Hammer Hand are lost, the artificer must recover one. Once in the presence of an artifact, the artificer fasts for one month, praying before the artifact day and night. During this fast he is allowed only one sip of water a day. If the artificer is properly devout, he will live through this fast, sustained invisibly by the angels themselves. An artificer with a Charisma modifier of 0 or less will not make it through the fast, lacking the spiritual tie to the heavens necessary to sustain him. If he makes it through the fast, he is imbued with the power of Korak's servants and the angelic host. Such an artificer is said to be "filled with the spirit," and is ready to make his relic. As much time as the artificer requires or desires may pass between the creation of tools and vessel and this step, and there is good reason to put off the purification – when it is done, the artificer must go directly into an undisturbed period of creating the actual item.

The fourth step, the creation of the holy relic, must begin within one month of the purification or the artificer will lose the spirit. An artificer "filled with the spirit" gains the power of the angels for divine creation and may add three times his Charisma modifier to his spellcaster level to determine how powerful a relic he can create. There is no upper limit to the number of powers or abilities the divine relic can possess. The only limitation is that the relic's market value may not exceed 210,000 GP. The artificer is also granted a number of temporary experience points equal to 500 x his Charisma modifier. These temporary points are only usable to counteract the experience cost of creating the item. The GP value and experience cost of a relic is determined like any other magic item, and the DC is 40. Holy relics created by artificers are divine items and all their powers are designated as divine, even if they are based on arcane spells. An artificer may only create one such relic in his lifetime. The relic is considered an artifact of the Koraketh and has all of the special powers associated with artifacts, including the greater difficulty of dispelling.

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Goddess of Home, Hearth, and Servants

The Hearths of Anwyn

Anwyn (AHN-win) (the Homely, the Blessed, Goodlady, the Fire Keeper, the Plentiful, Lady of the Feast, Giver of Gifts, Smiling Lady, Bright Lady, Heavenly Maiden)

Myth

First Fire

When the mortal races first awoke from the fruits of the trees, they had the fire of life, but not the burning fire with which to keep the dark and cold at bay. Nights were cruel then, and this was a bitter lack.

The gods took pity on them, and sent Darmon to all the mortal races but the dwarves, who were hidden away then at the edge of the world inside the head of Korak. To each of the four races that he found, he gave fire, but each race lost it as soon as it was given. While they had received the fire, they did not know how to make it for themselves – or how to contain it. In many cases it raged wildly, lighting forests and kindling their huts, and they had to flee. In other cases, it simply blew out. In all cases, they could not bring back the flame.

So the gods bade Darmon bear the flame to them once more. Again, it was lost nearly as soon as it was given. A third time Darmon the Traveler walked among the mortal races to give them fire, and a third time it was lost. The gods were at a loss, for these poor peoples were likely to die without fire and certainly would never thrive and make wonders.

It was then that Goodlady Anwyn offered to bear fire to the mortal races. The gods argued against this, for Anwyn, called the Heavenly Maiden, was the youngest of them. She was perfectly innocent and had never been apart from the other gods. After much debate, they all acquiesced, and Anwyn the Fire Keeper went to the mortals and began to teach them how to make and keep fire. In her journeys, she came across her sleeping brother and awoke him – but he would not rise up and asked that she leave the fire beside him. So it was that Korak gave fire to the dwarves, but it was borne to them by Anwyn.

Her brother awakened, the Smiling Lady made her way to the other races. She showed them how to make their homes comfortable and how to properly prepare foods so that they were not poison to their weak forms. She instructed them on the many perfect cuts of meat that do not rupture the inner organs and ruin the fruits of the flesh. She showed them how to harvest food that grew untended from the earth, such as berries and fruits and nuts, and how to prepare these things in many wonderful

ways. Eventually, she found her way back to her brother and joined him in instructing the dwarves, so that they too learned these lessons. It was for these many teachings that the mortal races call her the Giver of Gifts, Anwyn the Blessed, and many other names of honor. And in their temples erected to her glory, they place hearths at the center, watched over by the manacles of her faith, burning the finest cuts of meat there in sacrifice to her splendor. At the harvest every year, all people, whether dedicated to one god or all of them, bear gifts to her temples and present them at the hearth in memory of those gifts she gave – for truly, Goodlady Anwyn was the savior of all peoples.

But she was also savior of the gods – or at least of their comfort. Before her descent to give the mortals fire, the Lady of the Feast was least among the gods, much by her own design. For the Giver of Gifts does not desire power or greatness, as do others, and her heart swells to its fullest when she is of service. So it was that Anwyn the Homely was both a god and chief among the gods' servants, seeing to their house, their hearth, and their comfort, and she did so gladly. But when she departed from the heavens for so brief a time, the other gods did not know how to attend to the hearth, for all, deep in their hearts, were afraid of fire, the province of their great enemy, Kador. And so they appointed Shalimyr, lord of the waters, to tend to the hearth -- for who is better to safely handle fire than the god of water, fire's bane?

It took no long time for Shalimyr to douse the fire of the hearth, and soon after the halls of the heavens grew chill and bleak. The gods were quite cross with Grandfather Ocean, yet none of them could rekindle the flames. Before long, they were desperate for fire and called out to Anwyn, but the Smiling Lady was not to be found, so intent was she on her lessons and service with the mortals. In desperation, they fetched the sun from the skies and brought it to their halls to keep themselves warm and happy, enshrouding the earth in an unearthly darkness, which mortals remember to this day. It was not an eclipse, as happens when the sun and moon wrestle. Indeed, the sun was simply gone from the sky, and all on earth trembled.

Taking this as a sign that not all was well in the heavens, Anwyn the Plentiful returned and rekindled the hearth from the sun's fire. It was then returned to the heavens, and the mortal races rejoiced in Anwyn's name, for she had given them fire and returned to them the Sun. They called

An Important Note

Most folk know of Anwyn and her church as a happy home to servants, home-keepers, and those who see to the comfort of others. The first myth that follows, along with her various names, associations, and representations are all common knowledge (except for the parts marked 'Secret'). Everything else in this section should be considered a secret if your GM chooses to play with the church history presented here. Either way, if you are a player, make sure to ask your GM before reading this section, even if you are playing a member of the Anwynite faith. **Your GM should read this section before you do.**

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her the Bright Lady, and burned many offerings in her honor, as she had instructed them. And in the heavens, the gods too rejoiced, for Anwyn, least among them, was the only one unafraid of the fire.

Secret History

When the hearths of Anwyn were first kindled, Anwyn the Plentiful smiled on her servants and gave them many gifts. Many of these were consumed with time or passed from hand to hand and have become obscured in history. But two of these gifts remain to this day – a great feasting table that might sit some two hundred men and women, and a golden drinking horn that her faithful servants called the cornucopia. It is said that magnificent foods poured from the cornucopia as surely as wine from a lesser horn, and to eat them would cure any hurt and soothe even the most savage breast.

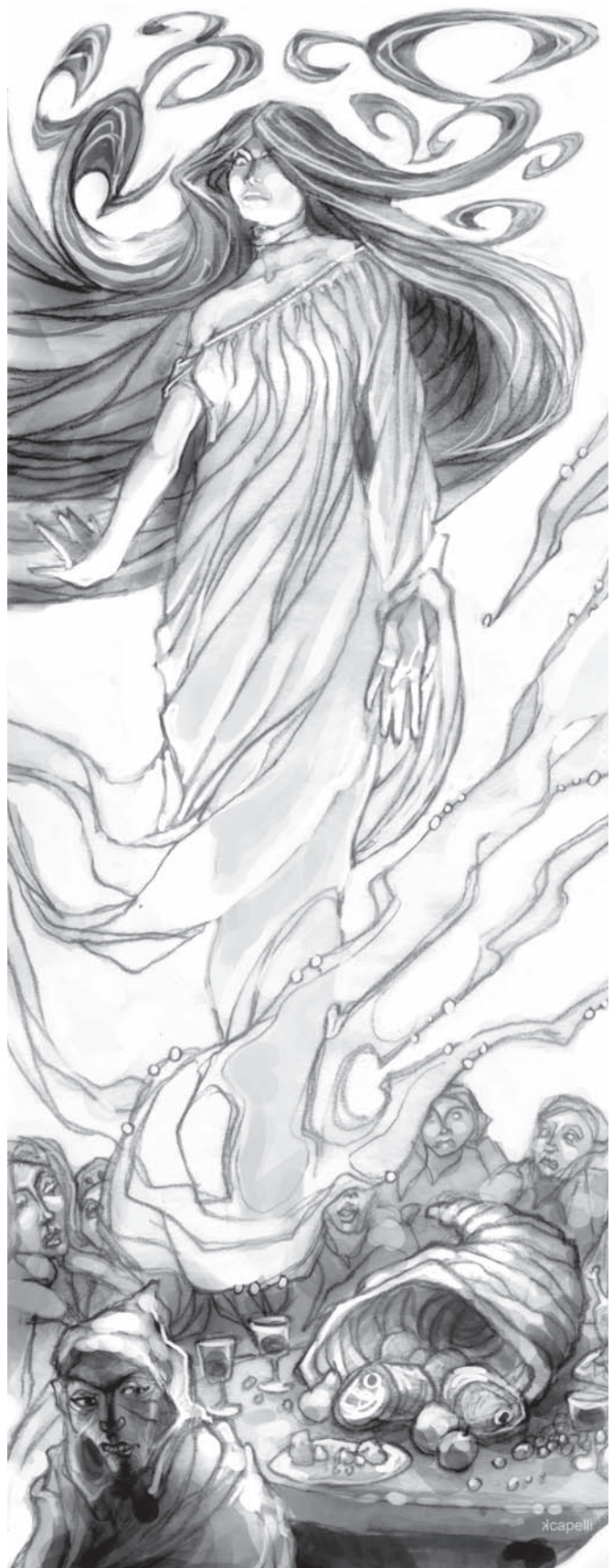
Years passed, and the great feasting table became the center of her greatest temple. At it, the highest of her faith would gather and debate many matters, both secular and spiritual. And they would feast on the food from the cornucopia as they did so, and all hearts were merry. Yet as the years passed, the very highest of her faithful began to take her gifts for granted, for indeed, is not Anwyn the most giving of all the gods? And is it not always the way with those who give gladly that they will give to the ungrateful long after they should? For years, the greatest among her faithful ate the food of her cornucopia, collected the annual offerings of the many folk who visited the temples, took payment for their blessings and healing, and gave little in way of thanks or offering to the goddess in whose name they did all this. The day came when Anwyn could no longer bear it. On that day she appeared before the mightiest of her faithful, standing in golden robes at the center of the great feasting table. “Ungrateful whelps!” she pronounced them, and she made the cornucopia grow barren. “Your hearts have no love for me. You know only love of food and wealth, and are not worthy of my service.” No longer would she heed their prayers or aid them until they made atonement and changed their ways.

When she left them to consider this, the clamor rose at once. Many of them began at once to tear their rich clothing and to pray for forgiveness. But the chief among them, Supreme Manciple Mitallis, called out, “We have tasted the fruit of the cornucopia! Have you any doubt that, should we make atonement, even then she will deny us such splendor again in our lifetimes? We have built a great church, one revered by all common people, and she would take it from us! But she has signed to this Compact, as have the other gods, and she may not interfere in mortal matters overmuch. We are her church; we are her agents. Let us ignore her! Let us make bargains with others... for if she will not feed us, others shall!”

And so it was that Mitallis and the others agreed and, calling to the darkest infernal power, made the cornucopia flow once more. They continued to take annual offerings at harvest time in the name of Anwyn, but unknown to the common folk they served Asmodeus, the highest of Hell. Asmodeus delighted in this perversion of such an important church and, by terms of the Compact, the Anwynites were protected from the wrath of the gods – for they were now highly effective agents of Hell serving to tempt mortals.

So it has continued to this day. When a good-minded person joins the Anwynite faith, her superiors slowly work to convert her to the path of greed and gluttony that is now the way of Anwyn’s “disciples.” Should they be unconvertible, they usually disappear when on church business, or are shunted off to some wilderness temple.

The only folk so unaffected among the Anwynites are the halflings. The main body of the Anwynite faith has managed to isolate the halfling hearths, keeping from them the truth of the rest of the faith. And, if any of the good-hearted halflings suspect their brethren, there is no sign of it.



Anwyn delivers her warning to her manciples, stripping them of the glory of the cornucopia. Sadly, they made other arrangements.

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Associations

Anwyn is the goddess of the hearth, the home, housewives, servants, peasants, and small folk of all variety. She is associated with comfort, contentedness, and the warm happiness of a good life, whether wealthy or low.

In the animal kingdom, she is associated with domesticated dogs, which are the servants of men that best love the hearth. In some cultures, those that do not keep dogs, she is associated with the domestic cat, which also serves mortals by keeping their homes and farms free of mice. But many find this association absurd, as cats are too aloof to be linked with the Giver of Gifts. Among mystical creatures, she is associated with blink dogs. It is said that these dogs were taught much by Anwyn long ago and serve her to this day.

Goodlady Anwyn is most beloved of halflings, and in many of their communities she is the only god with a full temple in her honor. But all people revere the Lady of the Feast, for she taught them to keep fire and to make offerings to the gods, then saved them all from darkness perpetual. She is most beloved among women who keep homes, for it is Anwyn who keeps their families safe and happy, she who makes even the simplest meal a feast.

Secret

Her church is joined most often by common women without dowries seeking better lives, but evil speaks in quiet whispers that spread across the land. Those of dark hearts often know that the Anwynite faith is a secret refuge for their sort, and they are drawn to its service.

Alignment

Anwyn is lawful good, like her mother.

Representations

Anwyn is shown in icons as a lovely lady in a well-kempt and simple dress. She has flowing black hair like her mother's, and eyes that are most often made of some bright and sparkling stone; it is said that the light of the hearth can be seen in her eyes. Usually, Anwyn the Plentiful is drawn or carved as a stout maiden with a magnificent bosom and a glorious smile, but some cultures show her instead as a thin lady with the downcast eyes of a servant, yet the smile remains; she is remembered by all for her warmth.

In symbols, Anwyn is represented by a warm fire surrounded by a circular stone hearth. In more complex symbols, her faith is sometimes shown with a dog or child curled up next to a fire. This is not common at churches, but is often seen on the signs of taverns or other businesses involving food and/or comfort (for instance, an inn called "The Goodlady's Rest" might have a dog curled by a fire on its sign). In haste, her faith may be represented by a flame rising out of a flattened circle: This is usually only for small surfaces or when one needs to scrawl an easy-to-make symbol. Usually her manacles wear elaborate golden symbols of fires contained within silver hearths.

Purpose

Anwyn seeks the pleasure and happiness of her family and the peoples of the earth. She has no desire for gain or glory, though she receives the annual harvest offerings and sacrifices of the common folk

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gratefully. She takes delight in the small kindnesses of mortals, putting less stock in the great acts of heroes than in the simple goodness of the baseborn. She alone among the gods spends her time watching the deeds of the basest of mortals, and she has long believed that when and if the mortal races must finally come to reckon with the evils of Hell and the Abyss, their salvation will come from among the common folk and not from a great hero.

Servants

Anwyn is herself a servant among the gods, or so she sees herself, and so she keeps no servants of her own. However, tending to the home and happiness of the gods of the heavens is a difficult task and requires many hands. In this, she oversees the labors of many of the angels, particularly those led by archangel Camael, who is the attendant to the throne of the gods and looks over those angels who tend to the home of the gods. Anwyn, with their aid, makes sure the home of the gods is comfortable and happy. Should Anwyn need to send a message to one of her servants on earth, she will call upon one of the angels or send it herself.

The Church

Church Description

The hearths of Anwyn, as the temples of the Anwynites (AHN-win-ites) are known, are incredibly popular among all the races. While they are not frequented by high people seeking greatness, or lords seeking guidance, the smallfolk of the world go there for rest and counsel. Even in good realms, where the nobility is kind and the merchants sell rainbows, the life of a servant is not easy. Toil wears on a person, and servants from all lands go to the hearths for strength and succor.

Similarly, women who keep homes for their husbands and children (or husbands who keep homes for their wives and children in some cultures) find the labors of their lives difficult, no matter how necessary or loving. These people also go to the hearths to renew their strength and to rekindle their resolve.

The hearths in most communities are not only holy places, but communal kitchens. They have great ovens where folk may bake their breads and prepare dinners for their families. This creates a buzzing community around the hearths, where women, children, and servants gather around, discussing politics, gossip, and other matters great and small – all for free or for a small donation of flour or finished bread. The hearths are usually built so: a great and high-ceilinged hall with a large hearth at its center, where offerings are burned. Before the hearth is a great stone altar (marble in richer communities) that is always arrayed with food, candles, and wine. Around the edges of the hall, there are large stone ovens for baking and great soup cauldrons for communal stews. They are warm places, and comfortable, with little fringe or ornamentation. They are not high holy places, but places that revere the common acts of human life.

That is the public face, and in halfling communities the only face. Connected to the common hall where people gather to do their cooking and burn their offerings are the living quarters of the manciples, the clergy of Anwyn. In halfling communities, these manciples are good-hearted folk who see to the welfare of the smallfolk who seek the hearth for comfort. They maintain many secrets of cooking and comfort, and they teach the faithful the ways of the home. A servant or homekeeper who has not been instructed by her mother or others, for whatever

reason, will find no truer friend or teacher of the arts of service and homemaking than a manciple of Anwyn.

But in the shadows cast by the light of the hearths outside halfling communities, evil lurks. When all the worshippers have gone, many of the so-called servants of Anwyn slip from her sacred halls and kindle great bonfires in the thick and dread woods. There the manciples dance about the red light, naked and painted in the blood of infants stolen, still suckling, from the breasts of paupers. Under the raging light of that fire, they partake in unspeakable rites of blood and sacrifice to Asmodeus. For what could be more fitting than this: The servants of the hearth receive their true strength from the master of the fire. Indeed, Anwyn is a usurper in their esteem, who tends to the fire of heaven that rightfully belongs to Asmodeus, whom they call “King of the Universe.”

In their blasphemous rites and in their daily duty, they seek to undermine the societies in which they serve. And what better place could they choose for such purpose than the hearths, where around them servants, so often ignored by their masters, gossip about the goings-on in the houses of the high and lofty? There are no better ears to own than those of a servant if you seek to work mischief, and unknown to the servants of the world, their ears are owned by Asmodeus and his followers. Worse, the followers of the King of Hell are not hungry, bloodthirsty madmen. They are cunning, careful, and they bide their time. Because of this, they never mix their true mission with their role as manciples. They faithfully serve their community. They deal with their flock honestly and with charity, appearing to the world to be the good-hearted clergy of Anwyn. When they do act in the name of Asmodeus, it is through agents that do not know whom they serve. And they do act. They assassinate, burn and destroy; they steal, rape and ransack, all to destabilize the good elements of society. And their actions are often targeted to achieve the most evil through the knowledge they gain by listening to the servants who visit the hearth.

There is likely no greater source of damage to good in the world than the subversion of the hearths of Anwyn, and the gods allow it because it is part and parcel of the Compact. The manciples who serve Asmodeus are not ensorcelled by the King of Hell. They are not forced into service. They choose the dark path and do evil by their own free will. And though it is a source of great sorrow to the gods, Anwyn chief among them, that the service of them could be so corrupted, they know, as Maal has said many times, that in the end there will be justice.

Church Structure

“Mysteriously,” there is only one holy order of Anwyn remaining: the manciples (MAN-suh-pull), who are the clergy of the hearth. Long ago, many of the holy warriors of Anwyn, the hearthkeepers, were sent off on a variety of incredibly deadly missions by the Supreme Manciple, and died thereby. Others died in their sleep, or were found killed by evil assassins. Eventually, the order was dead, a memory of a better past. Without remaining hearthkeepers to find and train those who receive the call, those who would become hearthkeepers are usually turned away or, worse, join the manciples, where they are eventually corrupted or killed. Many of those called are halflings, and they are sent back to the uncorrupted hearths of their homes to serve as warrior guards or servants there – but they cannot take the oaths of the hearthkeeper order, which is dead.

The other former order of Anwyn was the goodwives. The keepers of countless secrets of the home, of cooking, of comfort, of medicine and wisdom, the goodwives were officially declared a dead order

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by a Supreme Manciple not long ago, and folded into the order of manciples. The Supreme Manciple's edict declared the order unnecessary, taking the secrets of the goodwives into the manciples' keeping. The remaining goodwives were either made into manciples and sent to uncorrupted hearths, or offered comfortable homes in which to retire. They were treated regally and, while many objected strenuously to the disbanding of their order, there was nothing they could do to oppose it and no mistakes made to reveal the true motive for the edict.

To the public eye, the structure of the manciples, the sole remaining order, is simple enough to understand. There is the Great Hearth, the central place of her worship, where the feasting table and the cornucopia are kept, which is located in an old and major city. There

sits the Supreme Manciple, who oversees the church and the order, which is divided into four levels of status: manciples, high manciples, elder manciples, and the Supreme Manciple. The high manciples are charged with controlling individual hearths, while the elder manciples and the Supreme Manciple himself reside at the Great Hearth.



Secret Structure

The secret structure of the hearths is quite different, with nine circles of power just as there are nine circles of Hell. The evil members of the hearths call themselves "the order of the secret flame" when they refer to themselves, and there are those who do not know about the evil that has corrupted the hearths that *do* know of a secret society in the hearths by that name.

The order has a "cell" structure, which means that its members know only of those in the order one level above them and those directly below them within their hearth. Therefore, if the order is ever compromised locally, the damage is limited. The full system of "circles" is not known to most of its members, as no level of membership knows that the corruption extends higher than one level above him, though most suspect. When the order gathers to perform its dark rites, they are masked, and all of the lower-level members believe that many of the others present are from outside the church, and from other groups that worship Asmodeus, never dreaming that nearly everyone else in their church is similarly corrupted.

The structure of the order of the secret flame is as follows:

- Those in the first circle of the order do not know of their position, as they are just "likely candidates" for corruption, being observed by those in the second circle.
- Those in the second circle are "recruiters" for a cell. They watch the younger members of the hearth in which they serve, looking for likely candidates for order membership, passing on their identity to the head of their cell (a member of the third circle). However, they do not know the full extent of what they serve. They are told that long ago, Anwyn realized her family

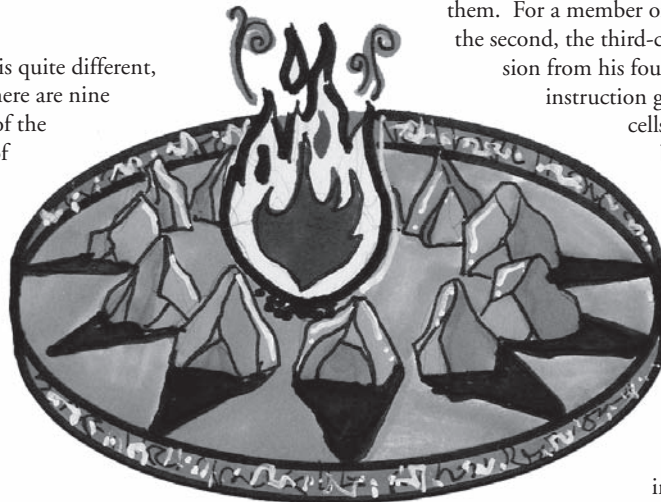
had wrongly deposed Kador, and so she made a pact with Asmodeus, the true master of the fire. Anwyn seeks to release Asmodeus from Hell, they are told, and so they still pray to her for powers – powers actually granted them by Hell. Being recruited into the order's second circle is a slow process, sometimes taking many years. During that time, if it becomes clear that the candidate will not become evil and will not serve, she is either left to live in ignorance or, if too far in the process to be left alone, killed. The Great Hearth maintains a few remote hearths where none in service but the high manciple know of the rot at the heart of the church. Most corrupt members of the hearths never rise beyond the second circle, and it is here that the petty corrupt manciples may be found – great, fat oafs who are attracted to the path of gluttony and greed and have not the discipline to partake more than a little in a conspiracy as vast as the order.

- A third circle member is usually the head of a recruiting cell, though he is often a "listener," sitting in the hearth and listening in on the conversations around him. Such order members know only the identity of the fourth-circle member from whom they receive instruction (and who they believe is the head of their order) and the second- and first-circle members beneath them. For a member of the first circle to be recruited to the second, the third-circle member must receive permission from his fourth-circle overseer. This structure of instruction goes all the way up (and prevents two cells from recruiting the same member, betraying the greater conspiracy).

- A member of the fourth circle may have several recruiting cells reporting to him, or several listeners, and is responsible for performing small missions for the order (through outside agents). When one is raised to the fourth circle, the true nature of the order is revealed, and the member begins praying to Asmodeus instead of Anwyn.

- A member of the fifth circle learns that the order contains many members of their hearth and believes that the entire order is headed by his sixth-circle overseer. A fifth-circle member is in charge of one task or another within a hearth. So a hearth might have a head of recruitment, a head of listening, etc. The fifth-circle members all know that there are other fifth-circle members in their hearth, and they often meet under the instruction of their sixth-circle overseer, though masked so they may not identify one another. They all know their sixth-circle overseer, though: It is their high manciple.

- One must be a high manciple to be raised to the sixth circle, overseeing all order activities of his hearth. A sixth-circle member knows that the order has reach beyond his hearth, having been admitted into the circle by the previous high manciple before his death. Should a high manciple die suddenly, his seventh-circle overseer comes to the hearth and raises his proper successor. A sixth-circle member believes his seventh-circle overseer is the true head of the order and believes that this person is so powerful, he can "pull strings" with the Great Hearth to determine local high manciples. A sixth-circle



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The Halfling Church

Many years gone by, the Supreme Manciple and his council determined that most of the halfling worshippers of Anwyn would never come to heel. They decided that eventually the wisest among the halflings would come to learn of the corruption at the heart of the church. They also knew that there was no easy way to kill all of them.

By edict, the Supreme Manciple removed the halfling hearths from the Great Hearth's authority. Pronouncing the halfling ways of worship distinct from the other hearths, the Supreme Manciple named the high manciples of the halfling hearths the chiefs of their own version of the faith. Most halflings saw this as a great honor, but the wisest among them found it curious and began to wonder what secrets might lay at the heart of the Great Hearth. For many years they have secretly sought to learn what motive the Supreme Manciple had for sundering the halflings from the Great Hearth, including asking Anwyn herself. Anwyn has never told them the truth directly, believing that if this war is won following the strict laws of the Compact (all mortals deciding their own path in the struggle), the more good will come of it. What the investigations of the halflings have yielded should be determined by your GM as, obviously, this can be a major campaign hook.

The leaders of the corrupt church of Anwyn know that some day their reckoning will come, though many believe it will come just as Kador is freed from Hell and they will prevail. They also know, for a fact, that their reckoning will come at the hands of the true worshippers of Anwyn, for it has been foretold by the wisest among them. The halfling faithful are those true worshippers. The Supreme Manciple and his council therefore keep close tabs on the halfling hearths, undermining them secretly whenever they can. Whenever they isolate a halfling with a corruptible heart, they recruit him to one of the dark hearths and slowly convert him to the wicked path. Once fully converted, those so corrupted are returned to the halfling hearths to work mischief from within, though slight and slow mischief, for the halflings are clever.

member knows that some other regional high manciples are members of the order, but does not know which ones.

- A seventh-circle high manciple is usually the high manciple of a powerful hearth, overseeing all the other local high manciples. They believe their eighth-circle overseer is the head of the order, an elder manciple who is slowly managing to corrupt the entire faith.
- All elder manciples are eighth-circle members and, unlike the lower-level members of the order, know all of the other members of their circle. Should anyone ever track the conspiracy to the eighth circle, any one of its members would gladly die or be tortured before revealing that corruption reaches higher than he. These men and women are devoted in mind, body, and soul to Asmodeus, and are as thoroughly evil as any mortal can be. More importantly, they are completely lawful, making them terrifyingly dangerous. There is no bitter in-fighting or wild power grabs – they are more orderly even than the Hell they revere. They work together, making their order strong, all in service of their Master, Asmodeus, whom they seek to bring back to his rightful place in the heavens. They receive orders directly from the Supreme Manciple.
- There is one ninth-circle member, and he serves Asmodeus directly. The Supreme Manciple is cunning, powerful, and evil to the core. He or she is, without a doubt, the single most important servant of Asmodeus on earth (though perhaps not the most powerful), working at the head of Asmodeus' most damagingly powerful cult. The Supreme Manciple is also, like the rest of the Great Hearth council, completely lawful and subservient to the King of Hell. He is, therefore, far more reliable a servant than any of the actual lords of Hell. Because of all this, the Supreme Manciple often receives direction directly from Asmodeus, and may actually interact with him more often than most in Hell.

There are a few members of the Anwynite clergy who are not part of the conspiracy. Every now and then, one of these innocents will start to suspect something, or even see something they should not. Unfortunately for them, they are surrounded by the enemy and rarely live

for a full day after reporting suspicions. Even the wisest of such folk are not safe – for perhaps they come to believe the conspiracy has infected their entire hearth and they keep quiet, biding their time to report their suspicions to the council of elders. Such wise men and women die the same as the others. The luckiest of the incorruptible end up shipped off to one of the remote hearths before they can get into trouble. Those who are not sent off or killed are too dimwitted to be dangerous to the conspiracy.

Doctrine

“Glory be to the servants! Praise to the mothers, toiling in the pre-dawn dark! Hallowed be the wrinkled hands that work lands they own not. For without these hands and their toil, all would cease. Yet they work. They work for love, they work for duty, they work and they sustain us, and they never receive praise. No statues are erected in their name. But in the hearths we build them statues of bread. We pour them offerings of wine and burn the flesh of beasts in their names. Inside the hearths, the least are Kings and Queens, and we sing great songs in their names.”

– High Manciple Tobius Featherboffin, from “How Shall I Know Thee?”

To the world, the manciples present a fairly simple doctrine, quite old, that is based on the core teachings of Anwyn. This has altered little in thousands of years, and is the doctrine of the halfling hearths:

Service and Humility

Through service to others, we make ourselves holy. Through care for others, we are ourselves cared for by greater and more loving powers than any on earth. The most treasured people are those who give their lives in the service of others, for love or for money.

Quiet Joy

There are those who believe that joy is to be found in drink, or carnal pleasure, or other wilder delights. But the wise know that it is in the simple things that true joy may be found – the companionship of family, a warm home, friendly conversation. This is the sort of living in which real joy may be found.

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Food

Our ancestors are remembered in our prayers and in our family rituals, but they are felt most keenly in our food – family recipes keep them in our memories. There are spice blends and ways of preparing foods that are older than any written record, preserved from generation to generation, in which we can feel as though our hands are moving in unison with the hands of our grandmothers. The preparation of food together, the sharing of recipes, is one of the most cherished and hallowed activities of the Anwynites.

Charity

There are those who can no longer care for themselves, or who do not have enough to eat. Feeding such folk is a great and blessed thing. This sort of charity is given out daily at the hearths.

The Secret Doctrine

The corrupt church follows the following doctrine, mostly an elaborate justification of their betrayal:

Humility

The mortal races are mere reflections of the gods. The pride of mortals is but a pale thing compared to the pride of the gods, who rejected their rightful lord, the King of the Universe, and cast him into Hell. This is the heart of their belief – that Asmodeus committed no crime, that he was usurped by the ungrateful and weak. They merely seek to reinstate him in his glory. To prepare the world for this, all people must learn to be humble, for if they resist him, he will destroy them (as is only proper). All people must be humble before the King of Hell, who will become, in the end, the lord of all creation.

Power

Asmodeus will give power to those who serve him faithfully when he comes into his rightful authority, but those that seek more power than they deserve will be cast from the face of his glory. Until the day comes, one must serve faithfully.

Readiness

The day of reckoning will come when the conspiracy of the Anwynites is revealed. All members of the secret order must be ready to defend themselves when that day comes – and to kill anyone who may learn of the conspiracy to prevent the day from coming before the appointed hour. They hope to delay the reckoning until the return of Asmodeus is inevitable, at a time when being his servants will put them on the winning side. Because of the doctrine of readiness, many of the Anwynites learn the arts of warfare and battle, with some even becoming expert assassins.

Loyalty

This is the most important doctrine for the preservation of the secret order; the members of the conspiracy are all completely loyal to their overseer and the order. They will die before betraying their fellows. They obey all orders without question. Any who fail to evidence proper loyalty, no matter how powerful or talented, end up dead, so this is a necessary trait. It also makes the conspiracy incredibly dangerous, as it works together with precision and efficiency. They believe that it is precisely because the gods bicker all the time and work for their own agendas that they are less deserving than Asmodeus. Proper cooperation and loyalty is the only path to greatness, and it is this cooperation that makes them stronger than the followers of the gods, who share their gods' weakness for bickering.

Common Prayers

Anwynite celebrations are sanctified by pouring a glass of wine (called the Gift of Zheenkeef, but accepted by most as the best libation to the gods), breaking a loaf of bread, and lighting a candle. All three are necessary for proper ceremony, and most smallfolk celebrate in the Anwynite fashion at least once a week. During the ceremony, three blessings are invoked, usually by the woman of the household, but any may say them:

At the pouring of the wine:

*"Praise be! Praise be!
For we have lived through the darkness,
For we have survived the cold!
Praise be! Praise be!
For the Goodlady Anwyn has aided us,
And we may drink this libation in her honor."*

At the breaking of the bread:

*"Smiling Lady, smile down on us,
For we break this bread in your honor!
Bread cannot rise without warmth,
Bread cannot bake without fire,
We break this bread that we have because of you.
Smiling Lady, smile down on us,
And know that we are grateful."*

At the lighting of the candle:

*"Bright Lady, kindler of hearths,
We light this fire in memory,
For without you, there would be no fire,
Not in heaven, nor on earth.
Bright Lady, keeper of hearths,
We thank you for the flame!"*

Holy Days

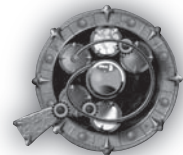
The week after harvest is the primary festival of the Anwynites, and it is from this festival that the hearths (and the conspiracy) have grown wealthy. The festival of Anwyn comes fast on the heels of the Rontran harvest festival. People from all over the region come to the hearth and make offerings to Anwyn, many of which are burned, but most of which are put into the hearth's larders. Farmers bring great wagons filled with food, while lords bring great treasures to ensure the continued prosperity of their lands.

This is done not to ensure a good harvest, for Anwyn is not connected to the ways of farming. It is done to ensure that the harvest will keep well, that the food prepared from it will be nourishing and delicious, and that the winter following will be warm and comfortable. It is also done to pay homage and show thanks for bringing fire to the mortal races. In any respect, it is a time when the hearths bring in great wealth.

The festival is marked with much feasting, prayer, and constant burning of offerings in the central hearth. The manacles are careful to burn only items that give off a sweet odor, so the hearth smells deliciously of food for miles around.

Saints

There is no sainthood in the Anwynite faith, as the faith reveres humility and common folk over heroes and glory. Even the most



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pious and charitable of Anwynites go without being marked as saints, as such praise is considered unseemly.

Anwyn's View of the Church

Anwyn mourns at the evil that has taken her church, but she does nothing to root it out. She, more than any of the gods, puts her faith in the Compact and believes that it is not only necessary to let the conspiracy run its course, but will be the source of great good in the end. Rather than toppling her church with her own hand, which she might do with the acquiescence of all the other gods (the Compact allows a god to act against it if she does so with unanimous consent and, indeed, who would gainsay her?), she works subtly and through her most low and simple servants. A time will come when the simplest of her worshippers will rise up, guided gently by her hand, and overthrow the evil that infects her church.

The conspirators believe that someday the high manciples of the halflings will root them out and therefore watch them carefully. But one of evil's primary failings has always been arrogance, and it is through the conspiracy's failure to take note of the least of the Anwynites that it will fall. Until that time comes, Anwyn keeps a careful reckoning of all the wrongs done in her name, and undoubtedly plans to make some final restitution when this evil is at last lifted from the world.

Preferred Weapon

Anwyn carries a staff with her at all times, shod with iron, with which she can prod the embers of the hearth and move the logs and kindling. For this reason, the preferred weapon of her clergy is a quarterstaff.

Holy Orders

Clerics: Manciples of Anwyn

The Order

"We inherit willing lambs, ready for the slaughter. Our secret order will thrive in this church and, truly, this is why we were chosen for this destiny by the King of the Universe."

– Supreme Manciple Mitallis when the Great Hearth Council swore to serve Asmodeus

The manciples are now the only order of the Anwynite hearths, with the other orders destroyed through treachery and other machinations. There is nothing to the hearths but these folk who, among members both corrupted and not, are quite lawful. Orders from superiors are usually obeyed without question, and the determination of who is superior to whom is quite easily made by power level. Therefore, if two manciples are discussing something and one is third level, the other fourth, the lower-level manciple will defer to the higher, even if they both have the same title.

This sort of clear obedience grows from the church's accent on service, humility, and obedience, but it has served the conspiracy well. The Supreme Manciple can move uncorrupted clergy around and issue slightly odd edicts without fear of question. Further, in other churches, one might expect that the uncorrupted clergy, sensing their outcast status as they are all shipped off to remote hearths, might make a political play to split from the Great Hearth, or might try to receive representation on the Great Hearth council. But the lawful nature of

the order ensures this will not happen. Instead, they go willingly and obediently and, if they question the reasons for their exile, they keep those questions to themselves.

Titles

There are four positions one may hold in the hearths, two of which are held by only a rare few – and those only among the corrupted.

At 1st level, a petitioner may become a manciple, addressed as "friend" and introduced by full title. The word "manciple" means steward, servant, or even slave, and the role of the manciples is indeed to serve their flock. They tend to the hearts and souls and small hurts of the peasantry, wives and house servants who come daily to the hearths to prepare meals or pray. They are taught to be caring, excellent listeners, and outwardly loving of even the most base of their congregants. Anyone may become a manciple, and the training time is limited. It requires saying oaths of obedience to the hearths. Even goodhearted people are still accepted, though if they are too good and too wise, they will not live long, or they will be shipped away quickly, "to learn."

At 9th level, if a manciple has proven clever, loyal and, in the case of the non-halfling hearths, completely devoted to Asmodeus, he may be made a high manciple. A high manciple oversees an entire hearth and all of its operations. Should a non-corrupted manciple from one of the remote hearths reach 9th level, he will not be made a high manciple, no matter how great his achievements. This may be the cause of a good deal of speculation on his part. A high manciple is addressed as "goodfather" or "goodmother," which used to be the address for the goodwives. When that order was disbanded, the Supreme Manciple gave their titles to the high manciples to "preserve" the traditions of the goodwives. High manciples are introduced by full title.

Among the halfling hearths, a high manciple may be named by the unanimous consent of three other high manciples. Once a halfling is so named, he may found a new hearth, take over an existing one, or wander as he sees fit. There is no higher authority among the halflings than a high manciple, so such clerics are masters of their own fate.

At 14th level, a truly wicked soul among the high manciples who has served in the 7th circle of the conspiracy (see church structure above) may be named by the Supreme Manciple to come to the Great Hearth and join the council as an elder manciple. The great feasting table there has room for hundreds and has never been close to filled, for it is rare for the clergy to rise to such heights. Therefore, there is no reachable upper limit of elder manciples; one may be named to such a position at the whim of the Supreme Manciple and need not wait for another elder to leave a vacancy. Elder manciples are addressed as "beloved master" or "beloved mistress" and introduced by full title.

When the Supreme Manciple dies, his body is spitted and cooked over the Great Hearth. The council of elder manciples feasts on his flesh, ritually taking from him the power he was lent by the King of the Universe. As they chant to Asmodeus, their chins covered with the grease of their former leader's roasted flesh, they receive the instruction of the King of Hell himself. One of their number, summoned by Asmodeus, climbs up onto the feasting table, where he or she ceremonially fornicates with each of the elder manciples in turn. For an act of debauchery, it is actually quite staid; the parties involved remain as fully garbed as possible and chant incantations to Asmodeus as they perform the deed. When this is done, the one who rose up is decked in the raiment of the Supreme Manciple. Babies born of this ritual are raised as faithful servants, unless they are born of the Supreme Manciple herself (sometimes the Supreme Manciple is a man,

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impregnating female elders, sometimes it's the other way around). Such babes are sacrificed to Asmodeus a week after their birth; they are hurled into the Great Hearth out of fear of their potential – there is no more powerful blood than that of a child so conceived, and it is believed that such a child could bring the ruination of the entire secret order because it would be uncontrollable.

The Supreme Manciple is addressed as “hallowed lord” or “hallowed lady” and introduced by full title.

Table 6-15: Manciples of Anwyn Brides

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Manciple	Minimal Training; Main Church: Usually Some Severe, Corruptible Character Flaw, Like Gluttony.
9	High Manciple	Halfings: Agreement of Three Other Manciples; Main Church: Loyalty to Conspiracy
14	Elder Manciple	Selection by Supreme Manciple for Mysterious Reasons; Possibly Chosen by Asmodeus
14+	Supreme Manciple	Chosen from Ranks of Elder Manciples; Hand-Picked by Asmodeus

Domains

The following domains are available to good Anwynites, or those who are not good yet are not fully inculcated in the conspiracy: Home, Good, Law, Protection, and Fire.

The following domains are available to those Anwynites who secretly serve Asmodeus: Evil, Law, Trickery, Protection, and Fire.

Such clerics *must* take the Trickery domain, and they receive a different bonus ability than others taking the Trickery domain. They receive the “Anwynite Appearance” ability, which makes them appear to be an Anwynite for the purpose of any spells cast against them. Their alignment will always appear to be lawful good, their faith will always appear to be Anwynite, etc. This ability may be overpowered with a dispel magic, though it acts as though cast by a caster equivalent to the manciple's level plus 5 (to a maximum of 20). This is in appearance only, however, and they still suffer from spells that affect evil (such as *protection from evil*).

Spell Preparation Time

True Anwynites prepare their spells directly following a meal – either morning or evening. They must have bread, wine, and a candle for this meal and without them may not prepare spells.

Servants of Asmodeus prefer to prepare their spells at night, just after sunset, but they may prepare spells at the traditional time to prevent suspicions.

Alignments

Good Anwynites can be of any of the following alignments: lawful good, lawful neutral, and neutral good. There are few lawful neutral

Manciples who are not corrupted, as usually they are of the “following orders” variety and the skilled recruiters from the conspiracy can slowly work their hearts to evil.

Most of the surviving good manciples are lawful good, as are most of the halfling Manciples. They believe fully in the Anwynite doctrine of service and the praise of the lowest over the highest. They take great joy in serving their flock.

The neutral good clergy are most interested in the community aspects of the Anwynite faith. They delight in sharing meals and tales with the congregation. They are most often the best recipients of old family recipes and enjoy little more than sharing such old knowledge. There are many halfling Anwynites of this alignment.

Those lawful neutral manciples not converted are usually killed, for they are the sort of people who seem approachable by the conspiracy but end up feeling the conspiracy is lawless. Such folk usually try to report their recruiter to disastrous effect. Those who survive are usually dimwits who are lawful neutral because they cannot think for themselves and must be ordered around, understanding only raw authority. Such folk are used by the conspiracy, but never let into its secrets.

Among the conspirators, to rise one must be lawful evil. The conspiracy has the most success in converting lawful neutral manciples, but there are certainly those of evil hearts who come to the hearths, attracted by the wealth of the place, the constant eating, and the ease of the life. These folk are most often neutral evil or chaotic evil and must learn the discipline necessary for the order, or face the ultimate price.

Everyone who reaches the level of high manciple or greater is lawful evil.

Holy Warriors:

Hearthkeepers of Anwyn

The Order

The hearthkeepers were protectors of the hearths. Happy warriors who delighted in story and song, they made sure that all who came to the hearths were safe. Often a congregant would come who was being beaten by his master, or a wife by her husband, and the hearthkeepers would see to the problem.

The order is now dead, all of its members slain long ago. Obviously, it would be a fun campaign hook to bring back the hearthkeepers, and we therefore supply little information here. Your GM should make up the details – discovery of them would be most of the fun of such a game.

Alignment

The hearthkeepers were lawful good.

Prestige Classes

and Other Orders

The other order of the Anwynites was the goodwives. They were keepers of family secrets, genealogists, experts in common medicines, midwives. The goodwives were useful women and keepers of women's lore, but they too are gone now. Any who would be a goodwife must become a manciple now and, thus, put her life in the hands of the conspiracy.

Chapter VIII: Practicing the Faith The Three Sisters

About This Chapter

The last three gods to join the Lords of Good, the Three Sisters' origins are shrouded in mystery to most. We recommend you not read this section unless your GM gives you the okay, or you plan to play a follower of the Three Sisters. Unlike the other gods, the Three Sisters share one church, but it is divided into three areas, one for each goddess. The Three Sisters are: Naryne, the noble; Canelle, the swift; and Thellyne, the huntress. This chapter first explains their joint church, the triads, which has its own holy order, and then the section of the triad dedicated to each goddess.

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The Goddesses of Familial Unity

The Triads of the Sisters

About the Triads

Though they are radically different in sentiment, the Three Sisters are most often worshipped in a joint temple, called a triad: one structure that houses the ceremonies and worshippers of the three faiths.

Sometimes there are small shrines or chapels dedicated to one sister, but if you find a large temple with a dedicated altar to one goddess, it is almost inconceivable that there will not be altars to the other two on the premises. The clergy and holy warriors of the Three Sisters are wanderers or are tied to duties away with from the triad, leading to a peculiar power structure for the three faiths. Each triad is led by a

cleric of one of the Sisters who, while overseeing a triad, becomes a cleric of all three goddesses (see below).

This close relationship between the clergy is an echo of the relationship of the goddesses themselves, who awoke together by the banks of a great river and have been fast companions and loving siblings ever since. While they squabble, as all the gods do, they aid one another in the matters of the sphere. The legends of the Sisters' awakening and their eastward journey across the world from their birthplace is at the heart of the triad philosophy, and is the spiritual mystery that inspires the triad's shared holy order: the Unity.

WARNING

Potentially secret material after this point.

The beginnings of this legend can be a secret from most people if your GM likes. Make sure your GM reads this section before continuing! Keeping this legend secret to all but the worshippers of the Three Sisters means making the three primary evil gods a secret. We like this kind of thing – you may not. In either case, since the Three Brothers are not mentioned in the “public” myth of the Great Sage Matalou, we marked this section secret to keep the option open to the GM.

Myths

The Waking of the Sisters

We do not know why the Sisters awoke, but they did. Some believe they arose because they were needed. Others believe the Nameless One created them for some secret need. Others say that the quest of the Three Companions created the Sisters, and yet others say that the Sisters were mortals who cast a spell to become gods – which worked, but was so powerful they lost their memories.

Whatever the reason, the Sisters awoke there by the water's edge. Which river it was is lost to antiquity, though some say it is the oldest river still left to the world, unchanged by the cataclysms of the ages. As the Sisters stirred from their slumbers, they found they were not alone; with them were three Brothers, as alike in form to the Sisters as to one another.

There was no mistaking that all six of these new gods were born of a family, for in nose, hand, eye, jaw, ear – all the common markings of family likeness – they were alike. But in disposition, they could not be more hateful to one another. The Sisters argued about all manner of things, but found in one another the common bond of charitable hearts. The Brothers, however, warred with one another instantly, there by the shore of the river, each wishing to prove himself strongest.

In those early days, all the siblings came upon their names in the wind, or the sound of the water, or in a passing feeling – and those siblings most like one another, male to female, found that their names were alike. This was the cause for some small wonder, but also for some unhappiness, for these siblings quickly learned that they disliked one another.

The dark-haired Sister with the keen eyes and the noble mien found that her name was Naryne, which was like the tall rocks that looked down on the river valley. But the dark-haired Brother with the cruel gaze and the powerful shoulders called himself Naran, which was like the rocks that blocked the entrance to the same valley. These two were often in debate about the nature of the world. While the Sister believed that rules should determine who is right and that the rules should be made for fairness, the Brother believed that those who are strong should make the rules, and the rules should be obeyed as long as they are strong.

The golden-haired Sister with the careful manner and skill with all sort of woodcraft called herself Thellyne, which signifies ‘gentle wind,’ and so she was. But the straw-haired Brother, with the red cheeks and the constant appetite, called himself Thellos, which signifies ‘hungry wind.’ The Sister believed that nature provided, and should be respected for its gifts, but the Brother believed that nature's bounty should be plundered and taken, for that was why it was there.

The Sister with the red hair, swift feet, and strong arms called herself Canelle, which sounded to her like the swiftest animal the siblings saw there by the river cradle. The red-haired Brother, though, with his pointed teeth and angry growls, called himself Canarak, which sounded to him like the fiercest of the animals they knew. The Sister of this pair believed that she should perfect herself, mastering all manners of skill so that she might be the best she could be, but her Brother believed that he must be strong and swift so as better to destroy any who might come into conflict with him, and he delighted in cruelty.

Before long, the Brothers determined that their struggles were pointless. They would divide all the lands of the world among themselves, and

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each Brother would take the Sister most like him to wife. Once they did this, they and their children would make war on each other, as it should be, until only one Brother remained, ruler of all creation.

But the Sisters were not party to this plan, and they were more clever than their fierce Brothers. They heard their Brothers planning their rape and an eternal war, and this did not sit well with them. They made the Brothers fall into deep sleep one night by slipping nightshades into their evening stew. When the Brothers were fully asleep, the Sisters fled the riverside and ran eastward across the world. They discovered much of the world in that journey, and came to know its people, its lands, and its creatures. They did not teach the mortal folk any tricks, for they knew none. Instead, they learned from the mortals, and wondered at the many skills these small and weak folk had for surviving. There are 3,333 tales of their journey to the East, during which time they formed the most perfect bond of sisterhood, which we still revere to this day.

At last, they came to a lovely pool on the eastern edge of the world from their Brothers' river, and there they abided for some time until, at last, the Three Companions came upon them and fell in love with them. While only Naryne returned the affection, marrying Maal, the Sisters were at once admitted to the heavens and made a part of the family of the gods. While the gods certainly know of their wicked Brothers, it is not known if the Sisters have ever again stood united against their siblings since that ancient parting. Many fear the war that will come to pass should the gods and the Brothers ever cross paths.

Associations

The triads are home to the three faiths of the Sisters, each with its own outlook and holy orders. Most paying a visit to a triad seek the altar of just one of the goddesses. But together, they are associated with familial unity and the bond of cooperation. This is explained further in **Doctrine**, below.

Alignment

There is no dominant alignment of the triad. Each sister has her own alignment.

Representations

The triads are filled with tapestries, each depicting one of the 3,333 tales of the Sisters' journey to the East. Each sister is shown in the likeness described in her church section below.

When the triad is shown using symbols, however, one uses three rings intersecting; each is meant to represent one of the crowns of the three Sisters, who are individually represented by their crowns. One ring is red (for Canelle, the Red Sister), one is black (for Naryne, the Dark Sister), and one is gold (for Thellyne, the Fair Sister). Each of the three altars at a triad has this three-circle symbol over it in

conjunction with the individual symbol of the Sister whose altar it is. The top circle is the color of the Sister in question.

When in haste, the three-circle symbol is quickly etched without color.

The Unified Church

Church Description

The triads are places of quiet worship and are not very popular. Their facilities are available to the worshippers of any of the three sisters, but there are few of those. Most triads are found only in major population centers, particularly capital cities or other areas where nobles might be found. The noble worshippers of Naryne keep the triads in operation with generous donations that go to all three faiths. Some cultures

that revere sport over other recreations have large and popular triads where people come to pray for their favorite athletes, donating generously to Canelle's portion of the church.

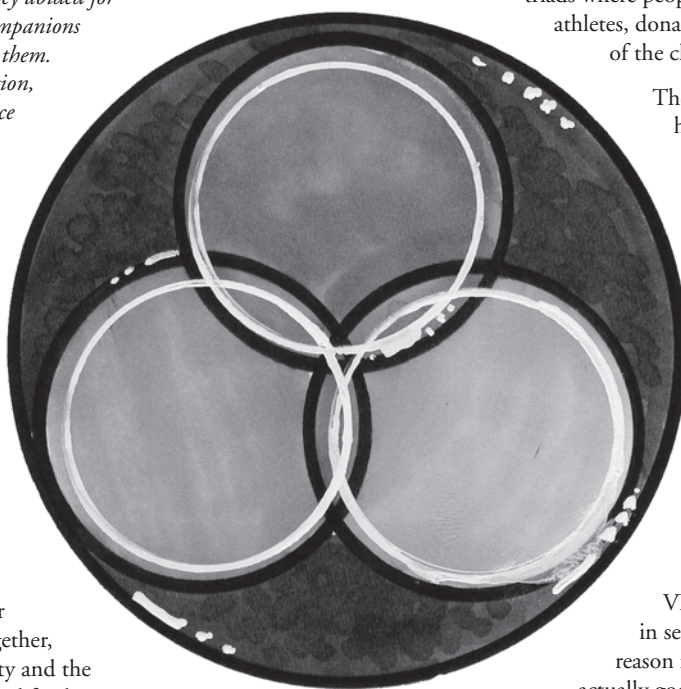
The average mid-sized city, though, has little need for a temple to the Three Sisters, and most of their worshippers must resort to visiting the Great Church, which keeps their altars connected in the traditional fashion.

By keeping the story above secret, it is assumed that the triads think of the Three Brothers as metaphors, not gods. In their recounting of the journey, they say that the Sisters awoke by the river and there "confronted and rejected evil." As is explained in Chapter VIII, the Three Brothers have acted in secret for centuries, so there is no reason for scholars to believe that they are actually gods. Anyone actually studying the faiths of the Sisters would be able to uncover this tale, only to have the Brothers explained away as metaphors for the Sisters' rejected and discarded shadows.

Church Structure

Because the triads are not terribly popular and because the clergy and holy warriors of the Sisters are usually off adventuring, protecting remote wildernesses, or advising kings, it is simply impossible to have a high-ranking member of the clergy of each of the Three Sisters present at every triad. Instead, the three churches have a long-standing arrangement in which any cleric of a Sister may serve as a "variegate priest" or "variegate priestess" for a period of no less than one year and no more than five years.

A variegate priest puts aside the trappings of the goddess he has served and wears robes of three colors: red, gold, and black. He oversees a triad, determining its position on local matters both secular and religious, offering spiritual counsel to worshippers of any of the three faiths, and seeing to the training of all three clerics – in



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sum, acting as a cleric of all three goddesses. A variegated priest is addressed as “revered father” or “revered mother” and receives a peculiar introduction. Baxus, a seneschal of Naryne, becomes a variegated priest and takes over the triad of Riverside; he is thereafter introduced as “Revered Father Baxus, the Variegated Priest of the Riverside Triad,” making no reference to his service to Naryne.

Because it is hard enough to find a head of a single triad, there is certainly no central authority to triad structure in general. A variegated priest is the highest authority of a triad, yet has no authority over the individual clergy or holy warriors of the three goddesses.

The variegated priests induct members into the one holy order of the triads, the Union. From time to time, three people will come to a triad seeking to be bound together as brothers and sisters, their fates and lives tied together as surely as the fates of the Sisters were. If the variegated priest believes their intentions are true, he can induct them into the order of the Union (see below), after which they are so bound.

The average triad has one variegated priest in residence and a few holy warriors and clergy of the individual altars who come in from time to time. There are also various acolytes and students in residence, but they do not perform religious functions.

Doctrine

“What did they teach us on this eastward journey, the journey from childhood to adulthood, the journey from sleeping to waking, the journey from doubting to knowing? The Three Sisters, blessed are their names, showed us that no great thing is done alone. Without the breath, the eye does not know what it sees and the arm knows not how to act. Without the eye, the breath is lost and the arm goes astray. Without the arm, the breath and eye are impotent, filled with knowledge, silently observant, but unable to act. We must have difference, they taught us. We must see the world cast in different lights – one dark, one red, one gold – but we must do so together, or we are lost.”

– An interpretation of the Journey to the East by Reverend Mother Grywin Estalla, Variegated Priestess of the Eastwatch Triad

The three faiths of the Sisters are very different, and are explicated later in this chapter. When looked at together, though, they revolve around the Journey to the East. There are thousands of tales of the adventures of the Sisters on that journey, and few (if any) can recite them all. But at their core, they focus on the ways in which the sisters learned to be unified, working together despite their differences. The mystical interpretations of these tales are many, but the most important form the core doctrine of the triad:

“Each of us requires balance of desire to control, desire to observe, and desire to act.”

In tale after tale, the Sisters were divided along these lines: Naryne wished to set down rules and tell the other sisters what to do; Thellyne wished to stay hidden and observe, collecting information before acting; and Canelle wished to wade into every situation and act on it. The triads see these as the three impulses that live in each of us; only those who find a balance between the three can find happiness.

“For every person, there are two more who form perfection.”

Others look at the world in terms of twins and lovers: For every person there is one perfect companion who forms the second half to make him or her whole. The triads believe that this is likely so in matters of love, but in the great adventures and most difficult struggles of life, each person is completed by two others. Perhaps those two will never be found, perhaps they are family, but truly propitious unions come in three.

“We will find paradise when heaven, earth, and the underworld are unified.”

It is no coincidence that at the end of the great journey, the Three Sisters became divided. Canelle now resides on the mountain of Heaven beside the other gods, Thellyne still wanders the earth, and Naryne sits beside Maal in the land of the dead. The sins of the mortal races, their distance from the gods, and their desire to do evil has required this separation of Heaven, earth, and the Underworld. Because mortals do evil, they must be judged by Maal and kept in a separate place. Because mortals do evil, the gods must separate themselves from the sphere and abide by this Compact. Until all mortals obey the gods and seek the union of the three spheres in harmony, there will never be peace.

Other Readings

There are many other readings and interpretations of the Journey to the East, all revolving around threes and divisions of three, but from these the faith is best understood. Very few people worship the Sisters in the form of the triad, but most serious worshippers of any one of the Sisters at some point come to study the journey and its interpretations. Any seeking to become a variegated priest or priestess must contemplate these matters at length.

Common Prayers

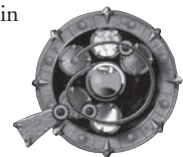
There are no real prayers common to the triads. The closest equivalents to prayers are recitations of one of the tales of the journey.

Holy Days

The three disparate faiths of the Sisters are unified in two holy days.

The first is celebrated early in the year and is called “Waking Day.” It is the celebration of the waking of the three sisters by the riverbanks, and their eventual rejection of evil and departure from those banks. Waking Day is observed in a day of silent contemplation followed by a presentation, made by children, of the stories of the journey.

Later in the year, the faithful observe “Ascension.” This is the observance of the day when the Sisters were embraced into the godhead, made Lords of Good. On the Ascension, the faithful make many sacrifices to the Sister they worship (or all three), praying for forgiveness and guidance so they might be more holy. In the evening, there is a celebration featuring dramatic recreations of the journey, often quite lavish, culminating in the “Meeting,” when the Three Companions and Three Sisters met.



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Holy Orders

Clerics: Variegated Priests of the Triads

The Variegated Priests

To become a variegated priest, one must already be a 7th-level cleric of Naryne, Canelle, or Thellyne. One must have trained for at least six months (but usually at least a year) with clerics of the other two sisters; at the end of this time, the candidate is administered a test by all the clergy of the triad he seeks to lead. The woodwardens come in from their woods, the red masters return from their athletic training circuits, and the seneschals descend from the palaces where they serve. The candidate is grilled for several hours on all three religions, at the end of which all the clergy cast blind votes. Should a majority believe the candidate appropriate, he is named a variegated priest.

A variegated priest may serve up to five years, as explained above, and oversees the triad. The advantage to becoming a variegated priest is simple – the cleric gains an additional spell domain (and the accompanying power) from any of the three faiths of the Sisters (though alignment-based domains are limited by his alignment; a chaotic cleric cannot take the Law domain). This new domain applies to all past and future cleric levels. He continues to take cleric levels as a cleric of the god he serves; variegated priest is not a prestige class.

Prestige Classes and Other Orders

The prestige class of the triad is the Unity, which is a class that must be taken by three people. When three people believe they are united in fate, as surely as the Three Sisters, serving as a balance to one another, they may go to a triad and seek to be inducted into the Unity. The Unity has no formal titles, and its members have no status within the churches of the Sisters. In fact, they need not be particularly devout worshippers of the Sisters.

Becoming part of a Unity means agreeing to tie yourself to two other people in the eyes of the gods. The variegated priests are able to perform an ancient ritual that does this, at the end of which the three members of the Unity are, for all intents and purposes, family. The triads perform this ritual because they believe it is in the forming of such unions that the perfection of the mortal races will be achieved and paradise will be realized. They require that the bond between the three is real (performing a *test of souls* to make sure they're not simply looking to become more efficient adventurers, for instance, but are actually soul mates), but that is all.

When the ritual is complete, the three emerge as a Unity. They take on a new name that all three share to signify their new familial bond – and indeed, they are all now family by blood and in the eyes of the gods, having been mystically transformed into brothers and/or sisters. By becoming a Unity, the three live out the mystery of the Journey to the East. One becomes the breath, as Naryne is sometimes called, the speaker for the three; one becomes the eye, as Thellyne is known, the observer for the three; and one becomes the arm, as Canelle is called, the actor for the three. As they explore their bond, it becomes stronger, and they begin to be capable of miraculous deeds together.

Just as the Three Sisters underwent thousands of adventures in which their differences were their strength, members of a Unity also learn to capitalize on their variety.

Prestige Class: Unity of the Triads

A Unity of the triads requires three members: the breath, the arm, and the eye. Together they form a family, whether they were born as one or not. They learn to hear each other's thoughts, to share experiences, to support one another in the darkest times. Some of the world's most heroic adventurers have been parts of Unities, waging war against the darkness with no allies but each other – and that was all they needed.

Balanced groups usually become Unities, with a wizard, sorcerer, bard, or cleric becoming the breath; a rogue or ranger becoming the eye; and a fighter or barbarian becoming the arm. It is highly unlikely that a member of one of the more individualistic classes will become part of a Unity, so monks are rare additions. Holy warriors, who can put nothing above their duty to their god, are also unlikely members.

Unities are found together, always. In becoming one, each member binds herself to the other two in life and death. NPC Unities can be powerful adventurers who have formed a family over the years and trust each other more than anyone or anything else on earth. It is a dramatic step to become part of a Unity, and not one taken lightly – the variegated priests will not allow it to be.

Below are the requirements and powers of each member of a Unity. The powers they all receive are explained at the end.

The Breath

The breath speaks for the Unity, learning to understand and control people – as a leader and a lawmaker – and to comprehend the world for her sisters, just as Naryne did on the Journey to the East.

Abbreviation: Ubr

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become the breath of Unity, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Feats: Leadership, Iron Will.

Diplomacy: 4 ranks.

Sense Motive: 4 ranks.

Knowledge (any): 8 ranks.

Bound by Fate: The breath must truly believe she is bound by fate to the eye and the arm; they must all be as close as family.

Three Are One: To become a breath, one must be with an eye and an arm who fulfill all the requirements for their prestige classes as well. All three form the Unity at the same time – it's not something the others can join over time.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 3rd-level spells.

Class Skills

The breath's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int),

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Diplomacy (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Scry (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, and Spellcraft (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features for the Breath

All of the following are class features for the breath prestige class:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

The breath gains no proficiency in any weapons, armor or shields.

Spellcasting

The breath of a Unity continues training in magic. Thus, when a new breath level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before adding prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of breath to the level of some other spellcasting class she already has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Touch

As with a master and a familiar, the breath can deliver touch spells through the arm or eye. When the breath casts a touch spell, she can designate the eye or the arm as the “toucher.” (The Unity has to be in mental contact through the Bond at the time of casting in order for this to work.) The arm or eye can then deliver the touch spell (including casting it upon themselves) just as the breath could. As normal, if the breath casts another spell before the touch is delivered, the touch spell dissipates.

The Arm

The arm acts for the Unity, learning to stand in the path of danger, slay foes, and take blows intended for her sisters, just as Canelle did on the Journey to the East.

Abbreviation: Uar

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become the arm of Unity, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Armor Proficiency (Heavy).

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Bound by Fate: The arm must truly believe she is bound by fate to the eye and the breath; they must all be as close as family.

Three Are One: To become an arm, one must be with an eye and breath who fulfill all the requirements for their prestige classes as well. All three form the Unity at the same time – it’s not something the others can join over time.

Class Skills

The arm’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal

(Cha), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features for the Arm

All of the following are class features of the arm prestige class:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Arms are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all weight classes of armor, and shields.

I Stand For You

The arm is protected by her bond to the eye and the breath, often standing in the face of danger for the other two. As long as the Bond of Unity is open, she may always use the highest saving throw bonus of the Unity for any saving throw rolls. She does not gain the benefit of her companions’ special abilities (such as Uncanny Dodge) or magic items, only their raw saving throw bonus (base + stat mod). She may add any of her special abilities or magic items to this.

Bonus Feat

At 2nd and 4th level, the arm may select a bonus feat from the same group as a fighter. The arm cannot, however, select weapon specialization as a fighter can.

The Eye

The eye observes for the Unity, learning to see details others miss, to hear the sounds others ignore, and to protect her family with her observations, just as Thellyne did on the Journey to the East.

Abbreviation: Uey

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become the eye of Unity, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.

Feats: Track, Alertness.

Spot: 8 ranks.

Listen: 8 ranks.

Search: 8 ranks.

Bound by Fate: The eye must truly believe she is bound by fate to the breath and the arm; they must all be as close as family.

Three Are One: To become an eye, one must be with a breath and arm who fulfill all the requirements for their prestige classes as well. All three form the Unity at the same time – it’s not something the others can join over time.

Class Skills

The eye’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Animal Empathy (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intuit Direction (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (geography, local area, etc.) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read Lips (Int), Ride (Dex), Search (Int),

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Table 7-1: The Breath

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	The Bond of Unity	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Touch	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	One Body	+1 level of existing class

Table 7-2: The Arm

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	The Bond
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Bonus Feat
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	I Stand For You
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus Feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	One Body

Table 7-3: The Eye

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	The Bond of Unity
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Sneak Attack +1d6
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Uncanny Dodge, See Through Me
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Sneak Attack +2d6
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	One Body

Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), Use Rope (Dex), and Wilderness Lore (Wis). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features for the Eye

All of the following are class features for the eye prestige class:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Eyes are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light and medium armors, and shields.

Sneak Attack

If an eye can catch an opponent when he is unable to defend himself effectively from her attack, she can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Basically, any time the eye's target would be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC (whether he actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), the eye's attack deals +1d6 points of damage. This extra damage increases by +1d6 points every other level (+2d6 at 4th level). Should the eye score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

It takes precision and penetration to hit a vital spot, so ranged attacks can only count as sneak attacks if the target is 30 feet away or less.

With a sap or unarmed strike, the eye can make a sneak attack that deals subdual damage instead of normal damage. She cannot use a weapon that deals normal damage to deal subdual damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual -4 penalty, because she must make optimal use of her weapon in order to execute the sneak attack.

An eye can only sneak attack living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Additionally, any creature immune to critical hits is similarly immune to sneak attacks. Also, the eye must also be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach a vital spot. The eye cannot sneak attack while striking at a creature with concealment or by striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

If an eye gets a sneak attack bonus from another source (such as rogue levels), the bonuses to damage stack.

Uncanny Dodge

Starting at 3rd level, the eye gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before her senses would normally allow her to even be aware of it. At 3rd level and above, she retains her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. (She still loses her Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.)

If the eye has another class that grants the uncanny dodge ability, add together all the class levels of the classes that grant the ability and determine the character's uncanny dodge ability on that basis.

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See Through Me

Once per day, the eye can allow the breath and arm to see through her eyes and hear through her ears for 10 minutes per prestige class level. She may use this ability at any distance, but only if the Bond of Unity is open. Her senses do not take over those of the breath and the arm; they are a secondary sight and secondary hearing that may be ignored if they wish.

If the eye is subjected to gaze or sonic attacks while allowing the other members of the Unity to experience what she sees and hears, they also suffer from the attacks. However, they all save against the attack with the highest saving throw bonus of the Unity's members.

Class Features for the Unity

All of the following are class features for all three Unity prestige classes:

The Bond

When the ceremony to form the Unity is completed, the three members become forever tied to one another. Any magic or other means to determine bloodline or heritage will determine that the three are siblings, even if they are of completely different races. For this reason, the Unity is not entered into by romantic partners and a friend – it is a purely familial arrangement.

Beyond becoming siblings, the three actually become connected by an invisible bond. If the Unity is looked at using True Sight, the breath is connected by a dark cord to the other two, the eye is connected by a gold cord to the other two, and the arm is connected by a red cord to the other two. These cords function like the silvery cord of an astral projection and can only be severed by similar means.

The members of a Unity may speak with one another telepathically through the Bond and experience a general sense of the emotional state of the others, though they do not share any actual senses. The Bond connects them across any distance and even across planes. At any time, a member of a Unity may close her Bond with the other two for any

reason. A closed Bond means that the members are not connected at all – not even when looked at by True Sight. If a member of the Unity dies, her Bond with the other two closes.

If a Bond is closed for one year, due to death or any other reason, the other two members of the Unity suffer an immediate loss of a level. They may take no further levels in the Unity prestige class, though they continue to have all the powers of their existing levels with one another. This even happens if one of the members dies of old age. If the member whose Bond was lost to the other two is still alive, she loses two experience levels at the end of the year.

One Body (Su)

When the Bond between the three members of the Unity is open, they add all their hit points together into a pool. Whenever one of them takes damage, the points are removed from the pool. Any effects that raise one member's hit points (healing, temporary hit points,

Barbarian Rage, etc.) raise the hit points of the pool. When the pool goes to 0, all three members of the Unity are disabled. When the pool is negative, all three are dying, but all make stability checks each round while the pool loses only 1 point per round. At -10, all three die (unless one of them has an ability that increases that number. Multiple abilities stack if it makes sense.)

If one member of the Unity dies through means other than hit point loss (Massive Damage, old age, poison, petrification, etc.), his remaining hit points are removed from the pool. This can bring the pool to 0 or negative numbers, having a deleterious effect on the other members of the Unity.

If a member of the Unity chooses to close the Bond (i.e. it's not closed because she just died or got petrified), she reduces her hit points by the number of

points of damage the pool had suffered when she closed it. This could kill her, so caution is wise.

All three members of a Unity must have the One Body power for it to be in effect. Even if two members of the Unity have it, it has no effect until the third reaches 5th level of the prestige class.



The arm, eye and breath of a Unity have no special uniform, but each wears the three-crown symbol of the union.

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Goddess of Nobility

The Dark Sister

Naryne (nah-REEN) (High, Glorious, Lady of Ladies, Queen of Queens, the Breath, the Noble, Queen of Souls, the Dark Sister)

Myths

The Line of Kings

During the Journey to the East, Glorious Naryne formed the Breath of the Three, blessed may their names always be. She was calculating and wise, and saw things as they were, speaking the truth. So it was that she agreed to marry Maal, the King of Souls – she saw such a union as a benefit to her family. The marriage united the Sisters with the Lords of Heaven, assuring their place in the world.

Once they were so united, her thoughts went to the mortal races she had observed in their great journey. In their folly, the mortals warred with one another, the strongest among them seizing power from the weakest. This notion, that strength was the only requirement for authority, had but recently led to the downfall of Iblis; Naryne reckoned it would one day be the downfall of the mortal races if she did nothing to educate them. Having married Maal, she would now be queen of these mortals when they died, and she felt no small responsibility to improve them. They needed law and leadership, and this she could provide as she had provided for her sisters.

And so she walked among the five races once more, and Maal was lonely in the realm of the dead, for his new bride was not with him. But he had his mother's wisdom and was not jealous. He knew his wife sought to bring law to the mortals, and he knew that all would be well.

After many years, High Naryne had searched the highs and the lows of the lands. She had supped with the simplest dwarven craftsman and the mightiest human warlord. Following rumors and rumors of rumors, she found the best among the mortals – the wisest, the kindest, the fairest, the cleverest, sometimes even the strongest. These mortals she went to with one hundred crowns of gold and said, "You bear my blessing to be kings and queens of the mortal races, for you are worthy of these crowns. Should anyone question your right, remind them that in the world below, where all of your kin must go in the end, I am queen, and I shall not look kindly upon any who would seek to usurp these crowns from your heads."

So it was that Naryne, the Lady of Ladies, became the Queen of Queens, for she began the lines of nobility that, in some places, survive to this day. Even where those who maintain thrones have no relation to those first monarchs, all who wear crowns call upon Naryne as their protector and advisor. She is worshipped by nobles alone, for she is their personal god,

and it is she who makes their blood, and their rightful thrones, protected by Heaven. And when she returned to the land of the dead, Maal was pleased, for he saw that the lady he loved was not only fair: He knew then that the Queen of Souls was just and wise, like him. He foresaw then that, though their union would never be fruitful with offspring, they would rule well together for all eternity. And so they have.

Associations

Naryne is the goddess of nobility, royalty, kingdoms, leadership, rulership, kings, queens, and nobles. She is the founder of the order of nobles among the mortal races, some of which endure to this day. She is also associated with the dead and the departed as their queen.

She is associated with different animals in different cultures, depending on the animal with which nobility is associated (one culture may think the lion the "king of beasts," so they would associated Naryne with a lion; another culture might find the eagle "most noble among beasts," and so associate her with the eagle).

Most commonly, however, she is associated with the swan, for that is the animal her own church uses, and is rightfully thought the queen of all beasts. Among the mystical creatures of the world, Naryne is most closely associated with the dragon, for dragons are the greatest, oldest, and most powerful of all living creatures. The color of dragon depends highly upon the culture invoking Naryne.

There are two primary groups that do homage to Naryne – first, and most ardently, those of noble blood. Though there are few of them, they have wealth and make the faith of Naryne, and the triads where it resides, powerful and opulent. Nobles who are rich and important enough have a chapel dedicated to Naryne in their castles, palaces, manses, etc.

Those lacking the importance and wealth to have a personal Narynite altar (and accompanying clergy) support the triad in their home city with generous donations.

Outside of the nobility, Naryne is prayed to by those seeking to remember and do service for one of the long dead. For instance, if a peasant's family holds, traditionally, that her grandmother was admitted to the third hall of the land of the dead when she died, that peasant would pray to Naryne when remembering her grandmother in prayer. This is because, though Maal is King of the Dead and the Judge of Souls, it is Naryne who rules over the afterlife, and all souls



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Naryne rides her swan chariot into battle against one of her brothers, a rare event but a cataclysmic one.

fall under her noble dominion. Any class that might have someone of noble blood in it is perfectly fitting for a worshipper of Naryne (so it is rare that barbarians worship her).

Alignment

Like Maal, Naryne is lawful neutral. She is more interested in the orderliness and proper succession of noble lines than in any one instance of good or evil.

Representations

In icons, Naryne is painted as a tall and glorious queen, as tall as her husband, with dark hair and piercing eyes. She wears a crown and royal robes. In her hand she holds a scepter, the symbol of her authority in Heaven, earth, and the land of the dead. On her crown are mounted five shining stars, each of which she won from Urian in disguise on the great journey.

In symbols, each of the three sisters is represented by her crown. For Naryne, a gold crown bearing five shining stars is the most common symbol – it is the marking indicating her shrines and is over her altar in the triads, and it serves as part of the heraldry of her most faithful worshipers. This is often simplified to just a golden crown, or a simple drawing of a crown with stars on it. In general, though, these simpler versions of her symbol are only made on small surfaces, such as the hilt of a weapon. The members of the holy orders of her church wear rather elaborate symbols for use during ceremonies and day-to-day functions.

Purpose

Naryne has two primary interests: maintaining the legacy of royal bloodlines and ruling the land of the dead. Because of the Compact, she is not able to go to the mortal races uncloaked and declare new rulers when an old line dies out, so there are many rulers who are in no way the ones she would have chosen. She does sometimes go in disguise at a time of succession in an effort to indicate her choice, but because everyone involved in a succession is aware that Naryne's blessing is key, many forge such evidence, making up "visions of Naryne" that are indistinguishable from the actual indications of Naryne's choice. As often as not, Naryne's choice does not ascend to the throne.

Because it is now difficult for her to influence the mortal world, Naryne focuses on offering guidance to those rulers who seek her out – there are many – and offering guidance to her faith so that it will properly support the nobility. Naryne is far more concerned with rightful succession than she is with any one ruler being a good or bad monarch. A righteous noble who overthrows the rightful king because that king is a tyrant will receive no blessing from Naryne. As she sees it, a great and noble line will, of necessity, have a few poor rulers. It is all of history that is her concern.

Most of her attention is spent on the land of the dead. She rules over the kingdom that Maal built; all of its attendants and celestials answer to her – even the four wardens who serve Maal answer to her. Unlike the marriage of Zheenkeef and Tinel, where secrets abound, or Morwyn's two marriages, in which the affections between husband and wife are often faint, Maal and Naryne are boon companions. Their love is unquestionable, their union the strongest of all the heavens, and their loyalty to one another unshakable.

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Servants

Naryne has an ebony chariot drawn by twelve giant swans. The chariot bears her from the land of the dead up to Heaven and sometimes even to earth (though she usually visits the mortal realm in disguise). The twelve swans all speak and know every mortal and immortal tongue of history, for the spirits of the dead tend to them. The swans are: Inixos, Yaili, Marit, Oona, Pilai, Weili, Uxos, Darila, Marila, Tani, Sa'ool, and Jeini. Every one hundred years, each swan is allowed to assume mortal form and walk in the mortal world for a year, unburdened by her duties. All of them appear as powerful and beautiful bards, deep with wisdom, for they know nearly every tale of mortal history. In their time on earth, the swans of Naryne often marry and bear children, only to abandon their mortal progeny and return to the land of the dead. But the separation is never long, for all mortals must come to Maal and Naryne's kingdom eventually.

Naryne's other key companion is her seneschal Wahilla, who was the fairest and wisest of all the mortals the Sisters met on the eastward journey. Wahilla was a halfling maiden, whom folk of all races came for miles around to sit with and take counsel from. It is said by some that she was the wisest mortal ever to live, for she saw as clearly as the gods themselves – what course lay before a man, what his true desires were, and where lay his greatest fears. When Naryne returned to the mortal world after marrying Maal, Wahilla was old and childless, so Naryne could not make her queen of all the world, to whom all other kings and queens would do homage, as she had intended. Instead, she came to the old woman's side and revealed her true form. Wahilla wept and said, "I knew when I first saw you, in those days of my youth so long ago, that you were not made of mortal stuff. You have been the star that guided my heart all these long years, and I have missed you." The goddess and the old woman wept then in one another's arms, and from that moment Naryne could not bear to be parted from her. So it is that Wahilla never died, but rather was taken to Heaven bodily, where Morwyn – as a wedding gift to Naryne – healed the ancient halfling of age and affliction. The two have never since been separated, and Wahilla's counsel guides Naryne as the counsel of all great seneschals guides their rulers. So it is that many seneschals make offerings to Wahilla as well as the Dark Sister, for they would have some of Wahilla's great wisdom.

The Church

Church Description

The Narynites occupy the dark altars of the triads and the richly appointed chapels dedicated to Naryne in the palaces of kings. It is a religion populated almost entirely by those who support it: Almost everyone in its holy orders is of noble birth. It is often said that noble-born children who do not stand to inherit turn to the clergy, and so they do, many of them serving one of the other gods of the tree. But many nobles are raised and educated by the Narynite cleric serving their parents – and so they turn to his or her church, the one dearest to them from their youth, when it is time to join the clergy. Even nobles' bastard children join the Narynites for a place of importance.

To be sure, there are common folk in the ranks of the Narynite faith, but these are few. Most of them are holy warriors, called by Naryne to serve for reasons known only to her. Many assume these are great

nobles reborn from the land of the dead as commoners, returning to their proper status in their new life.

In general, the Narynites are a people of service; they are the companions and advisors of nobles. If they have a noble to serve, they are rarely found at their triad altars. Most of the clergy are perfectly happy never stepping into a triad, preferring to be part of the clergy of a private chapel in a noble's castle. In those cases, a noble usually builds altars to all the gods; the main one is consecrated to Naryne, the patron of nobles, and all are overseen by a cleric of Naryne.

Because the Narynites are rarely found at the triads, when common folk come to the dark altar looking for an intercessor to help them pray to an ancestor in the land of the dead, the service is generally performed by a variegate priest.

Church Structure

There is no central structure to the Narynite faith. In fact, unlike all of the other faiths of the gods of the tree, the Narynites serve a secular authority more strongly than their church. The clergy of the Narynites are called seneschals, and they live to advise the nobility and see to proper succession whenever they can. The holy warriors are called the swan knights, and they live to protect and serve the nobility – usually tying themselves to one noble in particular.

In their service to nobles, it is easy for the Narynite holy orders to become disassociated from the triads, which is one of the many reasons the variegate priests are necessary.

Doctrine

"I knew a man who many called wise who said to me, 'Kings exist to take from common folk. How will there ever be freedom when we have kings?' I called upon the powers given to me by the Dark Sister to make this wise man sleep, and in his slumber I bound his hands and took him to the docks, which are kept peaceful and tidy by the order of our king, may the Lady smile on him. There I woke this fellow who many account wise. Before he could protest, I said, 'In a land without a king, there would be slave ships here on the docks, and I could have sold you to them. How can there ever be freedom in a land without kings?'"

– from "A Life of Service," by Seneschal Ualda Ionese

In the Journey to the East, Naryne distinguished herself from her sisters with wisdom, intellect, and command. She was the advisor to her sisters and their guide through the treacherous paths that required thought and moral reasoning over physical brawn or nimble fingers. When she returned to the mortal world, her followers believe, she coalesced all she had learned into a single order – the line of kings and nobility.

Nobility is what is best in people. Each person but the basest villain has some nobility in her heart, but those who have been entrusted by Naryne to lead the mortal races in life are part of the greater order of the mortal races; they are granted the nobility of the Queen of Queens, the nobility of insight, leadership, and judgment that all mortal societies require – or they descend into squabbling, murder, and mayhem.

The Narynites seek out and serve the noble. In its rawest form, this means emperors and queens of massive landmasses, but it can also mean dukes of city-states, landed knights, or even lord governors of

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far-away colonies. Any who are of noble blood and serve in a noble position are potentially the chosen of Naryne. Certainly, there are nobles not worthy of their titles – petty, wicked, greedy – but the Narynites serve them too, trying to guide them to the just path. They look at nobility as a long line, not as a group of individuals; as long as the line endures, it is better than a world in chaos.

This is an important point to the faith: The gods have left the world to its own devices, and now they watch it to see how the mortal races will do. The world is a wicked place, and its inhabitants, left to themselves, will become dark and evil monsters, brutally killing one another and taking what they desire. Only nobility, in the hearts of people and in the form of noble-born leaders, stands between a society at peace and this darkness. The mortal races must have order or they will turn evil.

Most practicing Narynites are either nobles or members of the holy orders serving them. However, many who make a life of service to nobles (chamberlains, heralds, footmen, handmaids, etc.) also worship Naryne. The faith tells them that they serve the highest calling: the promotion of nobility in all mortal hearts.

Common Prayers

At the ascension of a new king or other high noble, a great book of prayers is opened that contains scripts only read for the nobility. The following prayer is read just before the crown is placed on the noble's head:

*“Once there were one hundred crowns of gold,
But we no longer have the crowns.
Once there were one hundred kings and queens,
But they have all of them long ago died.
Once we were visited by the Queen of Queens,
But she has long since quit this wicked world.
Yet you are charged,
In the name of Naryne, the Queen of Souls,
To remember the crowns,
To remember the first chosen,
To remember your Queen.
Though they are gone,
They are not forgotten.”*

Holy Days

The holy days of the Narynites are the two days celebrated by all three faiths of the Sisters.

Saints

A saint among the Narynites is someone who has done a historic deed in the preservation of the true order of nobility. If someone were to recover one of the one hundred crowns and give it to her king, she would be named a saint by all Narynites. If a proper ruler were overthrown by rebels and then put back on the throne by a small group of dedicated followers, those followers might all be recognized by the local Narynites as saints. The magnitude of the deed determines how likely it is that someone will be revered as a saint, but for it to be a long-lasting and significant title, the deed must be truly spectacular and assure the strength of a noble line for a long while.

Martyrs are those who die protecting their noble lord; in this, the Narynites have an excellent way to inspire honor guards, telling them they will receive much honor from their new queen in the land of the dead if they die for their charge.

Naryne's View of the Church

Naryne has little time for her church, tending as she does to the land of the dead. As it is, the holy orders of her faith have more in common with Wahilla than with her. She appreciates that there are mortals seeking to make sure that the lines of nobility she established long ago endure, and she does what she can to aid them without violating the Compact. However, she does think they are a little too obsessed with the fact of noble birth; after all, the 100 she selected long ago were not of noble birth but of noble heart. Some of her followers understand this, but they are not important to her faith.

Preferred Weapon

Naryne is shown wielding her scepter against evil, though on the Journey she used magic and wisdom to protect her sisters. Regardless, her preferred weapon is the scepter, which her followers often imitate with a mace.

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Seneschals of Naryne

The Order

The seneschals are the advisors, protectors, and educators of the nobility. Any serious noble has a consecrated Narynite seneschal at his side. Becoming a seneschal requires about three years of education by another seneschal in the mysteries of Naryne, the religious ceremonies of her faith, and knowledge of all religious matters (to better serve as an educator).

A seneschal ties himself to a bloodline or a household for his lifetime (an elven seneschal, for instance, may end up serving generations of a line of human kings). They swear to protect the members of the bloodline, to educate their children, to give them spiritual advice (including education and advice in the ways of all of the other gods of the tree), and to make sure that in times of chaos, proper succession is assured. The seneschals are guardians of family relics and artifacts that prove the right of those they serve to occupy their thrones.

Many seneschals adventure and travel across the world. Those that do either go at the side of an adventurous young noble, or have not yet tied themselves to a noble line and seek one out. A few look for the lost 100 crowns, or signs of families that still possess that ancient and most noble blood. It is fairly common for a seneschal of noble blood to end up in service to his own family, so one that needs to seek out a line to serve usually either seeks a more highly stationed family or has a conflict with the sibling who has inherited.

Titles

A seneschal maintains the titles he is born with and continues to be addressed by any titles already held. Since most seneschals are already nobles, this may include “sir,” “lord,” “duke,” or even “prince” (and all of their appropriate feminine counterparts). He is introduced

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as “a consecrated seneschal of the Narynites” before any noble introductions, such as “defender of the third march.” In the rare case that the seneschal has no noble blood, he is addressed as “master,” a non-noble indication of respect.

Table 74:

The Seneschals of Naryne Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Seneschal	Three Years Training; 4+ Ranks Knowledge (religion)

Domains

Seneschals may choose from any two of the following domains: Law, Knowledge, and Protection.

Spell Preparation Time

The Narynites prepare their spells at the first light of dawn, when their service begins.

Alignments

Most seneschals – nearly all of them – are lawful neutral. They are concerned only with proper service to the nobility, caring little about whether the particular noble they serve is good or evil, wise or foolish. They seek to guide the nobles they serve to wisdom, but if they fail, it does not instill within them a crisis of confidence; they continue to serve faithfully and loyally, knowing that just the service is enough and is necessary.

Some seneschals are lawful good. These rare and happy few either seek out the wisest and finest nobles to serve, tying themselves only to the greatest examples of nobility among the mortal races, or never attach themselves at all. Those that remain unattached wander the world seeking out the 100 crowns and the 100 bloodlines, believing that if the crowns and the first chosen bloodlines could be restored to the mortal races, a time of great peace could prevail. Many of them end up attached to Maalites seeking out the lost Sacred Laws. There is a mystical belief that the crowns and the Laws will be found together.

There are also lawful evil seneschals, and they are just as active members of the Narynite faith as the lawful good. These rare and unhappy few seek out the most powerful and selfish nobles and attach themselves, teaching their masters how to bleed more from

their people, crush their enemies, and ensure the dominance of their bloodlines. They believe that nobles only deserve the name if they are strong and prepared to do whatever it takes to maintain law, including murder, torture, war, and other outward signs of tyranny.

Holy Warrior:

Swan Knights of Naryne:

The Order

The swan knights of Naryne, most of them noble-born, live to protect and serve one of noble blood. This need not be a person who sits on a throne. Many are tied to children, keeping them safe through youth

and adulthood, traveling with them, teaching them martial matters. Essentially, the swan knights are sacred bodyguards to the nobility, sworn to give their lives to keep their charges safe. One becomes a swan knight by heeding the call (which, like all holy warriors, is mysterious in origin) and finding an established swan knight for training. Because most swan knights are nobles already, this can be as simple as receiving training from a knight already in the household. Once one becomes a swan knight, one relinquishes all claims to noble titles (including the protection of a swan knight, if one had such). Training takes about five years, though this is almost all martial training, so an established PC could become a swan knight very quickly if she received the call.

The swan knights, also unlike the seneschal, do care who they serve beyond the mere fact of nobility. Swan

knight seek out the most noble rulers in the world, and will only serve those they deem to be truly good. This could mean their charge is the one good child of an otherwise greedy and wicked family. This could mean that there are several swan knights serving all the members of a glorious and noble family. The darker the lands, the more common evil is in the hearts of noble and common alike, the less likely one is to see a swan knight.

To see them, though, is to behold the very flower of chivalry. Wearing helms ornamented with the white swans of Naryne, laden with shining armor and shields, the swan knights are as fair as they are dangerous. They are the protectors of what is truly noble in the hearts of mortal men and women, and they will die before letting that fair light be extinguished.



Seneschals live to advise the nobility and their queen, Naryne. They do not dress ostentatiously, humbled by their duty.

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Titles

A swan knight is addressed by whatever titles he may already bear as a noble (as most are born into noble families) and introduced as a “sworn knight of Naryne.” Some believe that the order was originally called the “sworn knights,” and that over the years this drifted to “swan knights,” though there is no evidence of this.

In the rare case that a swan knight has no noble titles, she will be addressed as “dame” (or “sir”) at the very least.

Table 75:

The Swan Knights of Naryne Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Swan Knight	Five Years Training

Additional Class Skills:

The swan knight’s additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), and Heal (Wis).

Domains

A swan knight may choose any two of the following holy warrior domains: Leadership, Guardian, and Champion.

Gift of Naryne

Beginning at 3rd level, the swan knight can send a *helping hand* once per week to guide the noble she serves to her, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. Unlike the spell, this helping hand can only be sent to the noble the swan knight serves and never takes longer than 1 minute to find that noble, no matter how far away he is within the 5-mile radius. The swan knight can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Helping hand* is a spell-like ability for swan knights.

Beginning at 12th level, her Gift of Naryne allows her to *heal noble*, having the same effects as the spell *heal mount* but affecting the one noble to whom the swan knight is sworn, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances



Swan knights are sworn protectors of just monarchs. They are classic knights in shining armor, living for their kings and queens.

in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Heal noble* is a spell-like ability for swan knights.

Spells

The swan knight may choose from the same spell list as the paladin.

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, the swan knight calls a special mount to join her in her service to the noble. Sometimes (at the GM’s discretion), a swan knight can call a mount associated with the heraldry of the noble line she serves. For instance, if the heraldry of the prince she protects is a griffin rampant, at 7th level, she might be able to call a griffin instead of a horse.

Conduct

The swan knights must seek out the noble in the hearts of all they meet and protect what is best in people. While they are sworn first and foremost to serve one noble and keep him or her safe from harm, they also must seek to keep nobility in general safe. They define nobility more broadly than the seneschals, as what is best in mortal hearts.

A swan knight must not knowingly allow her charge to be maimed or killed, must not willingly do evil or allow evil to be done, and must not turn a deaf ear on the pleas of those who are good of heart. A swan knight must not offer her services to someone who is only noble in blood and not noble in spirit (any non-good noble). Should she violate any of these codes, she will lose her holy warrior abilities.

Associates

Swan knights are always in the company of a good noble and will associate with whomever that good noble chooses to associate with. While they may advise their charges to steer clear of evil companions, if the noble chooses to travel with such folk, the swan knight will too, keeping her charge safe from them.

Beginning swan knights who have not yet found a noble to serve (or older swan knights whose charge has died without issue) will choose companions who can best help them meet good-hearted nobles. They are quite driven about this as, without a noble to serve, they consider themselves to be pointless.

Alignment

Swan knights must be lawful good.

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The Goddess of Victory and Strength

The Red Sister

Canelle (cuh-NEE) (Hall, Swift, Fleet-footed, Triumphant, the Victorious, the Red Sister, the Runner of Heaven, the Arm)

Myths

The Lonely Runner

On their eastward journey, each of the Three Sisters observed something in the world that became dear to her. For Swift Canelle it was the many games that mortals had developed in their short time since emerging from the fruits. She came to love games and their many contests of strength and speed.

Once the fate of the sisters became tied to that of the gods of the tree, Tall Canelle passed her time among mortals more often than among the gods. This was for two reasons – first, Darmon’s passion for her perplexed and annoyed her, making time among the gods irksome to her; second, she found herself happiest when testing her archery, speed, and might against mortals. Soon, though, this passion for competition among mortals dissipated, for she never found a challenge. As her power waxed, it seemed the skill of mortals waned: As the years accumulated, the mortal races diminished in power, length of life, and skill. But what they lost individually, they gained collectively, for their numbers swelled and they filled every land.

When Canelle the Victorious had lost all hope of ever being challenged by a mortal again, there arose from the East a great champion. No one knew his name; he was called only The Lonely Runner, because when he ran a race, he left the field so far behind that he crossed the final line completely alone.

Seeing an opportunity at last to be challenged in some meaningful way, Canelle entered herself into a great tournament held by the archons of the West’s largest city. The finest athletes of the five races had all come to compete for the prize – a hart, five hands high, made all of gold, from antler to tail. Though the tournament grounds were littered with champions, only two had any chance of winning: the Lonely Runner and the Runner of Heaven.

The first contest was one of archery, and each achieved perfect marks. This pattern held true; in every following contest, they both achieved the highest possible scores. At last, the competition was to be decided by the final race. None of the other competitors even took to the field, for none might win but this strange Easterner and this red-headed giant of a woman. The crowd roared as the two walked onto the field, and all fell silent when the flag fell.

Fleet-footed Canelle and the Lonely Runner left their starting positions more swiftly than arrows for their marks. Side by side they shot around the field, neither giving the other an inch. Absolute silence reigned throughout the crowd. Around and around the runners went, and still they were elbow to elbow, breath to breath. As they reached the finish mark, neither sped past the other, and they came across the line at the same moment.

“We will run again!” Canelle demanded at once. “A month from now, a year... We will run again and will know who is best!”

But the Lonely Runner hunched over and panted and could not speak for some time – for he had run his greatest race and was but a man. When at last he could, he spoke: “Great lady! I shall run again with you if you command it. But should we run again and again and again, it is sure to go sore against me, in the end. I may run at your side for another year, or many years, but in the end I will age, and you will not.”

At this, Triumphant Canelle was amazed, for mortals did not yet worship her and her sisters, and her name was not known or remembered in the temples of the earth. The Lonely Runner saw her face and remarked, “Indeed, milady, I know who you are, for you raced my father’s father before I was born, and he told me of you – the Red Lady who will run against only the best, defeat them, and then disappear. My father told me that you come to teach us humility, to remind us that no matter how great we think we are, there is one better. But as I grew greater in skill and speed, I learned the truth – you come for the challenge. They call me the Lonely Runner, and so I am, for I have not been challenged in many years, and my heart is heavy with misery. I have spent all my days becoming the best, and it is a lonely path. You have given me joy this once, for you have challenged me, and I hope I have returned the delight – but if you race me again, some day you will be victorious over an old man, and your joy will be gone again.”

And Tall Canelle knew he was right; someday she would outrace him, not because she was better, but because she was immortal. And so she left him there without a word and went to one of the great houses of Urian. The lord of the heavens was not sure what to make of these three sisters who had come into his family so suddenly, but he heard Canelle’s pleas and agreed.

So it was that Canelle the Victorious returned to the mortal realm and found the Lonely Runner. Taking him by the hand, she led him into the heavens, and placed him among the stars. There he can still be seen, running across the night skies. The race between him and Swift Canelle has been preserved for eternity, for he will never age.

Associations

Canelle is the goddess of victory, athletics, competition, raw physical strength, glory, running, games, athletes, and competitors. In the animal kingdom, Canelle is associated with horses, the swifter the better. Among mystical creatures, she is strongly associated with the hippogriff, which is both swift horse and soaring eagle. No finer beast lives to symbolize victory.

All mortal races play sports and games, and therefore all have some reverence for Canelle. However, most of her worshippers are humans, who have a particular obsession with sport. Still, Canelle is invoked

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The red sister often rode against the remnants of Kador's forces before the Compact. She delights in the challenge.

by any in need of victory, including in battle, so her name is often mentioned in prayers along with Terak's. Canelle is worshipped most often by fighters, barbarians, rogues, and others who make their way by virtue of physical prowess. It is rare to see those who follow more cerebral pursuits, such as wizards, espousing the faith of Canelle.

Alignment

Canelle is chaotic good.

Representations

In icons, Canelle is shown as a very tall woman (though a little shorter than Naryne) with perfect musculature. She is usually lightly armored in a breastplate of steel and adamant, or wearing the garb appropriate for a sport popular with the artist's culture – perhaps wrestling, running, jousting, or chariot racing. Indeed, she is often shown behind the reigns of a chariot with four snorting chargers rearing up, about to leap into a full gallop. In all portrayals, she is red-haired, and often wears some item of red clothing too, for she is the Red Sister. On her brow she wears a wreath made of leaves, usually laurel, holly, or another thick, waxy leaf that holds its shape well. This is the symbol of athletic victory because, like such victories, crowns of leaves are impermanent and their value is purely one of honor.

As all three sisters are represented by their crowns, Canelle is symbolized with the wreath of leaves. Some of her clergy actually wear such wreaths about their brows rather than hanging from their necks. This would be considered ostentatious if the cleric in question were not a great athlete. Most are. The wreath is rarely simplified, as such symbols are fairly easy to draw or actually make out of local materials. But in cases where haste is necessary or a symbol is needed on a very small surface (like a sword pommel or ring), the wreath is drawn as the bottom half of a semi-circle.

Purpose

There are ways in which Canelle is most similar in outlook to Terak. Both revere strength and physical prowess. But where Terak puts his faith in the strength found of unity, or strength used for the preservation of society and law, Canelle believes that through individual effort and prowess the greatest good is done. She is wholly individualistic, often arguing with her sister Naryne that promoting the strength of law and nobility robs the individual of the ability to achieve her best. All people must be free to pursue their own paths to personal physical perfection. If such perfection is achieved, great good will follow, for there will be no weak to need protection. Canelle finds most of the lawful gods arrogant, wanting to impose their laws and orders on people so they will be encouraged to be weak – if you offer someone protection long enough, he loses all incentive to be strong.

In her interaction with mortals, Canelle values bold physical action over cunning or calculation. She loves the competitive spirit, the drive to personal greatness. But there is great good in her also. She represents the nobility of the competitive spirit, and cannot abide those who desire victory at any cost. Those who cheat or ruin others for their own glory earn her deepest animosity. While she has little tolerance for weakness, she understands that there are some who simply cannot be strong. She has no tolerance for malevolence, considering it the deepest sort of weakness. Put simply, she values strength not only of the body, but also of honor and character, and encourages it in her followers.

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Servants

Canelle is the most individualistic of all the gods. She has no servants in Heaven, and considers the need for such to be a weakness. She does, however, rely on the archangel Camael, as do many of the other gods, to make sure that prayers to her are heard.

Though she has no servants, she does raise horses. It is said that the limitless stables of Canelle hold the greatest steeds in the sphere. There are legends of Canelle gifting one of her celestial steeds to particularly devout followers. While there are too many of these horses to name, they are all keenly intelligent, strong, and swifter than the wind. Canelle's most faithful servants find themselves elevated to grooms in her stables after their death.

The Church

Church Description

The Canellan (cuh-NELL-uhn) faith is practiced by those who seek personal perfection. It is fairly popular, though few actually seek out its clergy for advice or guidance. After all, personal perfection is a private process for most, and they develop a personal relationship with Canelle, praying to her in the mornings before their labors of self-improvement. That said, there are many who seek Canelle's aid to overcome personal weaknesses: Someone who has been maimed or made lame in an accident is likely to seek Canelle's aid to be strong once more. Those who require victory, in massive athletic competitions or in battles, might also seek the aid of the Canellan faith.

But none of these instances are common enough to form a strong church, and like the other Sisters' faiths, the red altars of Canelle are often quiet and ignored, tended to by a lone variegated priest.

The triad altars are the most commonly found Canellan places of worship, but most athletic venues will have a small shrine or altar dedicated to Canelle for the athletes to pray at prior to competitions. These altars are often before a statue of Canelle and the Lonely Runner racing. Most Canellans do not require even these altars, since they believe their bodies are temples to their goddess.

Church Structure

There is no central structure to the Canellan faith. Indeed, there is no structure at all. The two holy orders of Canelle are the red masters (clergy) and the purified (holy warriors), both of whom deal with the world from such highly individualistic points of view that it is impossible for them to muster any sort of structure or chain of authority. The red masters train and guide those seeking personal perfection, and the purified seek to achieve it.

Becoming an anointed of the Canellan faith requires seeking out a red master and receiving training in the ways of either order. Once training is done, one may do whatever one believes is right; there are members of the holy orders of Canelle that have not stood before a red altar since they were inducted into their order.

Doctrine

"When the Red Sister comes for you, will you be ready? Will you run your greatest race? Or will you plead for another chance? There is only one race, and you are running it now."

– The Red Master Rindon, "Make Ready Your Soul"

While the story of the Journey to the East is at the heart of the triads, the story of the Lonely Runner is the core of the Canellan faith. It echoes many of the adventures of the three sisters, or Canelle's part in those adventures, and brings the lesson of them to the forefront: Mortals die, but they can live before they do. Put simply, though the flesh of the mortal races is always fading, and though all will die in the end, within every person there is the potential to be almost godlike in strength, speed, and power.

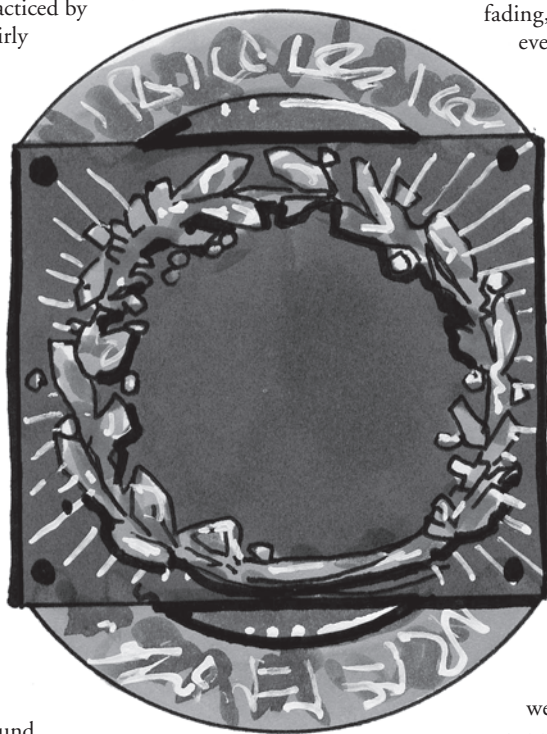
This is not a hubristic belief – the Canellans do not preach becoming gods or becoming greater than the gods. They believe that if a person strives his entire life to perfect his physical being, he will be able to experience the divine, to feel in touch with Canelle and the other gods, just as the Lonely Runner felt in that one race where he ran step-by-step with the swiftest god of Heaven.

The gods are responsible for the mortal races and desire for each person to achieve his potential; to reject the desire of the gods is the worst kind of folly. Canelle watches over us all, guiding us toward victory, toward personal perfection, so that we might please her and the other gods by running our swiftest race. This is why we are on this earth – to come as close to perfection as our weak forms will allow, making ourselves into sacred temples to the gods.

When all people achieve this perfection, there will be peace and joy on earth. It is not difficult to see that the cause of most evil is craving things without the willingness to work for them, coupled with the hoarding of things by those who have them. If everyone were physically perfect, if everyone had everything he needed within himself, there would be no need for greed or for desire. Liberation achieved by the divine perfection of self is the goal of the Canellans.

On the way to personal perfection, all Canellans must obey these laws:

- A Canellan must daily work to improve his body;
- A Canellan may not imbibe spirits (beer and ale are fine) or smoke tobacco or other intoxicants;



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- A Canellan must always obey the rules of fair competitions and contests;
- A Canellan must never “throw” or otherwise willfully lose a competition for any reason;
- A Canellan may not gamble on or against himself in any competition

Common Prayers

The runner’s prayer is said just before a competition of any kind:

*“Red Sister, arm of the Three,
Lend me your strength.
Fleet-footed Canelle, runner of heaven,
Lend me your speed.
I run to please you;
By your grace, victory is mine.”*

Holy Days

All three faiths of the Sisters share two holy days, explained above.

Saints

Sainthood and martyrdom are ideas alien to the Canellans. A person who achieves personal perfection needs no worldly recognition as a saint; she is celebrated in Heaven.

Canelle’s View of the Church

Canelle is almost as involved with her faith as Shalimyr is, but in such a manner that it does not violate the Compact, as her involvement has next to no effect on the world. She sends her horses to earth to race against her faithful, appears herself to compete against them (though in disguise), tests their resolve on their paths of personal perfection, and in other ways watches and tests the Canellans constantly. Powerful members of her faith have certainly had run-ins with Canelle – either through signs or by meeting her personally in disguise.

The reason she is so involved with her faith is because her faithful actually understand her. She *does* want mortals to achieve personal perfection, and she looks forward to more races like the one she had with the Lonely Runner (though there hasn’t been one since). She finds her followers endlessly fascinating and entertaining.

Preferred Weapon

Canelle is shown with two weapons: a bow nearly as tall as she is and a long spear. She never uses the bow for any purpose other than target shooting, however, and so her preferred weapon is said to be the long spear. Her followers simulate this with any kind of spear.

Holy Orders

Clerics: Red Masters of Canelle

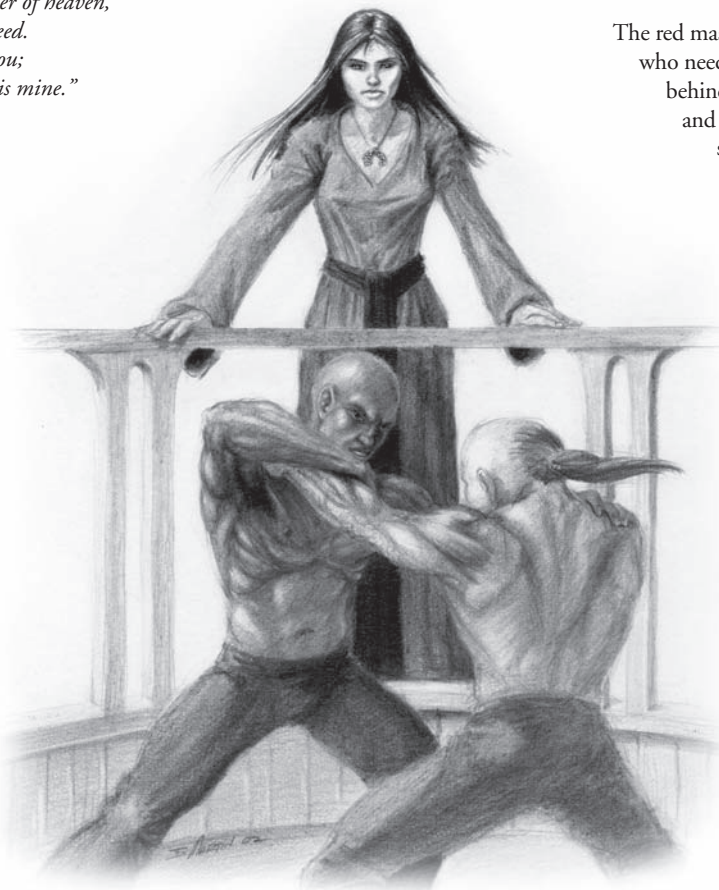
The Order

The red masters train, guide, and inspire those who need or seek victory. They are the power behind great athletes, advisors to leaders, and supporters of the perfect (or those seeking to be). Red masters must have already excelled in personal pursuits, so very few are young. In order to act as a red master, one must have achieved greatness in one’s own right, so most members of the order are older, putting aside their own pursuits and seeking instead to pass on their wisdom to others.

To become a red master, one must have won a major victory of some kind at one point in life (a great athletic contest, a major battle, etc.). One then receives training from a red master (though tracking one down can be quite challenging, which takes a year, perhaps less.

Titles

At 1st level his students address a red master as “teacher” or “master”, and this is the title he maintains for the rest of his life. A red master is introduced without this address as a “red master of the Canellan altar.”



Red masters will wear whatever garb appropriate when competing themselves, but must always wear robes of red when officiating.

Table 7-7: Red Masters of Canelle Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Red Master	Achieve a Great Victory; One Year Training

Domains

Red masters may choose from two of the following domains: Strength, Luck, Chaos, and Good.

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Spell Preparation Time

Red masters prepare their spells after their daily routine of physical perfection (essentially their morning workout).

Alignments

Red masters are most commonly chaotic good. These red masters seek out those who can be elevated to greatness and, by achieving that greatness, affect the most change for good in mortal society. For instance, a great athlete who can serve as an example to many mortals should be educated to be great. By seeing this athlete achieve victory, many more will be inspired to strive for personal perfection. These red masters rail against any effort to force people into societal roles or deprive them of opportunities to achieve their potential. For instance, a society that is strongly divided between nobles and serfs requires that the serfs work all day in the fields growing and harvesting food for the society. Such serfs stand little chance of achieving their potential, and must be free to leave the fields and seek personal perfection. The more restrictive the society, the more ardently it will be opposed by red masters. There have been several victorious peasant revolutions inspired and supported by cadres of red masters seeking to aid those peasants in achieving personal and spiritual perfection.

Neutral good red masters, only slightly less common than the dominant group, take a step further in striving for the betterment of those in traditionally limited societal roles. These red masters lead massive groups of people in efforts to achieve personal perfection – they organize schools and gymnasiums, traveling to the countryside and educating the generally unhealthy peasants in ways of personal perfection. It is their belief that the order should focus on raising as many people as possible toward physical betterment. Many fighters from rural settings first realized they possessed physical prowess beyond the common labors of farming when a neutral good red master came to their community and educated all who would listen.

Chaotic neutral red masters care less about the betterment of the people than they do about contests and victory. They are the ultimate competitors and adjudicators of competition. These red masters oversee gladiatorial competitions, delighting in the struggle between mortals, revering the raw act of competition and the thrill of victory. These red masters train and bless gladiators and pit fighters, even those that are enslaved, believing that by participating in such contests they come closer to divinity than free men could.

Holy Warriors: Purified of Canelle

The Order

The purified are holy warriors, called by Canelle to achieve personal perfection and, in their quest to constantly improve and purify their bodies, struggle against evil. The core of the order's belief is that their bodies are temples to Canelle, that they are walking vessels of holiness, and they are charged by Canelle to use that power against evil things that seek to harm and destroy the potential of the mortal races.

The purified have no formal structure and, like the red masters, once inducted into the order they are free to go and do whatever they like in their efforts to live up to the ethos of the order. To become purified, one who receives the call must track down a red master and be trained in the ways of personal purification, which takes three years of physical training and education. The purified perform a daily ritual of strength training, prayer, and ablutions, which they believe keeps them pure and holy in the name of Canelle.



Titles

At 1st level, one of the purified becomes a pure brother or sister. She is addressed as “pure sister,” and introduced by full title. This is the only title the purified will ever have, as purification is considered far more important than status or titles.

Table 7-8: Purified of Canelle Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Pure Sister/Brother	Three Years Training

Additional Class Skills

The purified's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Jump (Str) and Swim (Str).

Domains

The purified may choose any two of the following domains: Might, Body, and Champion.

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Gift of Canelle

Beginning at 3rd level, the purified can *remove disease*, as per the spell, once a week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level). *Remove disease* is a spell-like ability for purified.

Beginning at 12th level, the purified can *neutralize poison* once per week, as per the spell, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 15th level, three times per week at 18th level). *Neutralize poison* is a spell-like ability for purified.

Spells

A purified may choose her daily spells from the following list:

1st level – *bless, bless water, bless weapon, create water, cure light wounds, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, magic weapon, protection from evil, read magic, resistance, virtue*

2nd level – *bull's strength, endurance, remove paralysis, resist elements, delay poison, undetectable alignment*

3rd level – *cat's grace, cure moderate wounds, dispel magic, greater magic weapon, heal mount, magic circle against evil, remove blindness/deafness*

4th level – *cure serious wounds, death ward, dispel evil, freedom of movement, holy sword, restoration*

Mount/Animal Companion

At 5th level, the purified calls a special mount to serve her. If she is particularly blessed by Canelle and waits until 6th level, she can call a celestial warhorse from Canelle's stable. This warhorse is sent directly by Canelle and will serve the purified faithfully until she dies and comes to reside in Heaven, serving as one of the grooms in Canelle's stable.

Conduct

The purified must constantly strive for personal perfection, performing her daily ritual. But this personal perfection must be for a reason – she must seek out and oppose evil with the power she gains through her pursuits. If she willfully fails (by her own choice) to perform the daily ritual of strength, prayer, and purification, she cannot use her abilities until the ritual is performed. A member of the purified must abide by the laws of the Canellan faith and must not knowingly use her strength and power to commit evil or allow evil to be committed. She is a vessel of holiness; if she doesn't act like one, she loses her special abilities until she atones.

Associates

The purified enjoy the company of all good people. They do not care much about the attitudes of their companions toward law or chaos, but they do not abide the company of evil.

Alignment

The purified are chaotic good.

Goddess of Woodcraft, Nature, and the Hunt The Golden Sister

Thellyne (the EBEN) (Eight-footed, Keen-eyed, Silent, the Huntress, the Archer, the Fair Sister, the Eye, the Woodland Guardian)

Myths

The White Hart

Long after the Three Sisters were welcomed into the family of the gods, long after Korak had pled his troth to Thellyne the Archer and been rejected many times, long after Silent Thellyne had welcomed the druids into the grove of Eliwyn and chosen to live on the earth rather than in the heavenly sphere among the other gods, the Fair Sister won the horns of the White Hart.

Word of the Hart had spread to woods across the land, and nearly every hunter that revered Thellyne the Huntress pled to her to set before him the White Hart of legend. From old men who had felled a thousand stags to young huntresses new to their bows, all desired to win the horns and hide of the Hart. The legendary creature was said to stand ten feet high at the shoulder, and 15 from the tip of its great horns. It had been seen in only fleeting moments and was the loveliest game beast that ever lived.

Of all the hunters of the world, only one did not hunger in her heart to win this beast's hide. Her name was Nayariel, and she was born and raised in a great elven wood. It was said that none of her race had a keener eye, and there had never lived elf, man, or any other who was as perfect a shot with a bow. Nayariel was known to be the greatest hunter of her day, perhaps the greatest ever, and she did not wish to still the great White Hart – for she and the Hart were the same.

In her youth, Nayariel had asked a great wizard to help her become the greatest hunter that ever lived. The wizard obliged by transforming her into every game beast under the sun. Before long, she knew their ways, their thoughts, their very souls, and she possessed the keen insight necessary to lay low any beast. But the wizard did not tell her that for the rest of her life she would transform magically back into the beasts. As time went on, Nayariel found herself less and less in the form of rabbit or fox or wild hen. In time she became only the great White Hart. She traveled across the world looking for some means to lift this curse – for the wizard who had granted this 'gift' had disappeared. In her travels, she continued to transform, thus spreading the legend.

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In time, a great field of hunters from around the world assembled in an ancient wood where the Hart had last been seen. Indeed, Nayariel had hidden herself away there in hopes that none would find her. Every day she prayed to Light-footed Thellyne to spare her and lift from her this curse, but the Woodland Guardian did not do so, for she had other plans for the White Hart.

The great mass of hunters, which included some legendary heroes from all the mortal races, descended on the wood, sending their hounds before them and beating the brush to call out the White Hart. Some noted that all the world's greatest hunters but Nayariel were there; but if they thought much of this, it did not slow their progress. After a day of hunting, they set camp, sang songs, drank beer and mead, and slept the sleep of the innocent.

But in the night, Thellyne appeared in dream to the hunters. She showed them a vision of the White Hart, pierced in the heart by an arrow – and where it was pierced, a river of tears sprang forth. The river flowed into the sea, and where it passed trees on the way, they hung their boughs low in sorrow, and when it met with the great sea the waters turned red with blood. On the morrow, those of the hunters who were wise, including the great heroes among them, turned from the path. Ulfik the Wise, a renowned hunter and champion, declared to the others, “This way is folly! For The Fair Sister shows us we must not hunt this beast, and any who kill it will bring great sorrow to the world!”

But some of the hunters did not listen, and they continued on, lusting for the horn and hide of the Hart. That afternoon, they saw their quarry, for Nayariel was transformed into the fair White Hart and ran before the hunters. Their hounds gave chase as the field of hunters loosed their shafts upon her. It was not long before the White Hart staggered and fell, pierced by a dozen arrows. When the hunters came to the Hart, they cheered and blew their horns. And when they cut open the Hart to dress it, inside they found the body of Nayariel, pierced with a dozen wounds.

It was then that Thellyne stepped from the woods before them. “I have forsworn you this beast, and yet you slew her. You are not faithful to me – you are dogs. Worse, you are snarling wolves, hungry for blood, and you will know this poor child’s curse for the rest of your days!” And with these words the hunters who slew the White Hart were transformed into wolves for a time; and so they were transformed again with every full moon. Thus were the first werewolves born, and their evil persists to this day.

Though Nayariel was killed, Silent Thellyne took her spirit as a companion, for great hunters need companions to help them beat the bushes and dress their quarry. As for the precious hide and horns of the White Hart, Thellyne and Nayariel dressed and tanned the hide so that Thellyne the Huntress might wear it as a cloak. They hollowed out the head, so that Thellyne might pull it over her brow like a helm; when she does so the great white horns jut out before her to serve as a reminder to all of her followers that they must never kill the fairest beasts merely for the sport of it.

Associations

Thellyne is the goddess of the woods and woodcraft (including hunting, trapping, and tracking), woodsmen, hunters, rangers, and all others whose lives rely on, or revolve around, the woods. She is associated with the creatures of hunting – hawks, dogs, horses – but is associated most closely with the stag and the hart, the greatest of all beasts for hunting. Among mythical creatures, she is associated with the unicorn, which she helped create when she first met the druids.

All races that love the woods love Thellyne, which means she is not terribly popular with dwarves. Elves are particularly fond of her, but so too are the humans, halflings, and gnomes who reside by or in wooded regions. Rangers and barbarians are her most frequent



Thellyne the Huntress stalks the pathways of the primeval forest she loves and protects.

Chapter VII ~ The Gods of the Womb

The Loner in the Unity?

Throughout the material relating to the Three Sisters, Thellyne is referred to as shy, individualistic, and uninvolved with the other gods. And yet, she is also part of a tight unity with her sisters. This contradiction is at the heart of the faith of the triads. The Sisters live apart, in the three main realms of the gods – above, in Heaven; on earth; and below, in the land of the dead. The Sisters have wildly varied worldviews – Canelle focuses on the strength of the individual, Naryne on leaders, and Thellyne on the isolation of nature. Yet, despite their differences, they are loving sisters, forever bound to one another in the Unity. So it is with the mortal races and all good creations: We may be as different as the Sisters in form and temperament, but in the end, we are all united.

worshippers. Some druids revere her over Eliwyn, though that is rare. It is highly uncommon to find those who are most interested in cities, high culture, or refined learning worshipping Thellyne.

Alignment

Thellyne is neutral good.

Representations

In icons, Thellyne is shown as shorter than the other two Sisters. She has long golden hair, often knit into a long braid or left flowing behind her. She wears clothes to blend into the woods – greens and browns – and a long white leather cloak attached to a great helm formed out of the skull of the White Hart. From this helm protrude the enormous white horns of that mythical beast. She is usually represented as elven. On her back or in her hand is her great yew bow, Gwedryl, which means the True Seeker.

In symbols, Thellyne, like her sisters, is represented with her crown – in this case a pair of great, white horns. Those faithful to her will often wear a pair of actual horns about their necks or affixed to their helms, though they may use a painted symbol. Sometimes the symbol is the full image of a stag or hart.

Purpose

Thellyne is known as the Woodland Guardian by mortals and gods alike because she places the woodlands and nature above other concerns. She observes the classical notions of the hunter – respect for the woods, love of the animals, gratitude to those creatures that give their lives to the hunt. She has little interest in the conflicts of mortal society; the conflict between law and chaos bores her. Rather, she loves the calm and beauty of the wood and opposes any evil that would destroy it.

That being said, Thellyne also opposes any organized efforts of good people to ruin the natural woods. Unless she is shown proper respect and appeased with sacrifice, it is unwise to clear woodlands, no matter how noble the reason.

In general, Thellyne remains neutral in the conflicts of Heaven. She remains in the earthly sphere and, while she adheres to the Compact, it is said she can be found in the deep woods of the world. Most assume that Thellyne associates with the powerful druids in the grove of Eliwyn, hidden from all but a few mortals, or that she abides for long stretches of time among the fey in their fairy woods. Regardless, she is an elusive and private goddess. While she does provide powers to her clergy through some cosmological method that is mysterious even to the wisest scholars and theologians, it is rare that a prayer to her is answered. She keeps her own counsel and spends her time in the woodlands.

Servants

Thellyne's sole companion is Nayariel, though there are legends of her being attended to by dryads and naiads. In general, however, it is Nayariel who accompanies Thellyne on her hunts and shares her fire; on the rare occasion that the woodland goddess becomes involved in mortal or heavenly affairs, Nayariel performs tasks for the goddess. Nayariel is a fair elven maiden who still has the skill of the greatest mortal hunter ever to live. She may transform herself into the shape of any natural beast at will, sometimes even becoming the White Hart once more.

The Church

Church Description

The “church” of the Thellynites, if it deserves so lofty a name, is a loose amalgamation of her clergy and holy warriors, all of them more comfortable when alone in the woods than when in the company of other people. The golden altar to Thellyne in the triads is almost always unattended except by a variegate priest, as the triads are usually found in the cities Thellyne's clergy abhor.

While Thellyne is quite popular among trappers, hunters, and those who live in the woodlands, these are poor folk who do not make her church rich or prominent. Hidden away in the woodlands are small shrines erected in her honor, either by the common folk who worship her or by her wandering clergy. Very simple in appearance, these small shrines are altars made from natural outcroppings and boughs of trees that form into shelves. They are found in the serene and lovely places of the woods, and dark things do not dare disturb them.

Church Structure

The Thellynites have two holy orders: the woodwardens (the clergy), who protect the woods from dark powers and minister to those who live in the woodlands, both man and beast; and the hallowed hunters, who hunt down evil creatures and outsiders that defile those woods. Often a single woodwarden and a single hallowed hunter ally to protect a wood, and this alliance, called a greenbond, is the closest thing to a “structure” that the Thellynites possess.

There is no central authority to the Thellynite faith, and no one member is entitled to command another member. In the cases of greenbonds, the more senior of the pair is usually its leader, but this is not a hard and fast rule. When one is indoctrinated into one of the holy orders of the Thellynites, one is free to pursue whatever path one deems necessary, much like the Canellans.

Chapter VIII ~ The Gods of the Womb

Doctrine

“There was nature before the Eye opened. Trees grew tall before the Fair Sister ever stirred. Our lady reveres a power greater than she and older than she, and so too must we. It is the fool who believes himself greater than nature, and folly has its price.”

– Woodwarden Hillace, “The Fair Sister Speaks”

The Thellynites believe the lesson of the White Hart is easy to understand, though perhaps difficult to fully accept. As the mortal races grow in power, it is quite easy to assume that their power is greater than any force on earth. But just as the Three Sisters gained power on the Journey and yet still saw that there were forces greater than they, so too must mortals learn to respect the forces of the earth. Nature is older than the mortal races and more powerful than mortals will ever be, and so the Thellynites seek to follow the laws of the wood: silence, natural cycles, caution, and respect.

Silence

Anything worth observing is soft and quiet. The Thellynite must learn to be still, to listen, to observe rather than to act. All of the best things in the world are so subtle that should one traipse and trammel through life, one would miss it all. The Thellynites sanctify celebration with silence, and their religious ceremonies often involve more listening than speaking. They are an observant people, much like the Sister they serve.

Natural Cycles

Even the most powerful mortal will die someday, and his flesh will be consumed by the worms and turned to dirt. If we come to believe we are above the cycles of nature, we are fools and will be destroyed. There is more power in the little animal that knows its place than in the great wizard who believes he can break the natural order. Because of this doctrine, the Thellynites oppose those who seek to break the cycles of the world (alter the seasons, live forever, etc.).

Caution

The woods teach dangerous lessons. If you assume you are safe, the woods will send a bear to eat you. If you assume the ground beneath you is hard, the woods will send quicksand to consume you. A Thellynite must always show caution, must not assume he knows his surroundings, even if he's been there a thousand times.

Respect

Thellynites demand respect for the ancient places of the earth. This mostly means woods, but also means ancient caves, mountains, and other natural places. They oppose any who show disrespect or, worse, seek to destroy these places in some foolish or wicked belief that they are superior to these natural wonders.

Key to all of this is the premise that the natural cycle they revere is good. The Thellynites believe that left to its own, the natural world would grow into perfection and goodness. However, there are many evil forces, both mortal and unnatural, that seek to undermine the goodness of the natural cycle; the Thellynites exist to oppose those forces.

Common Prayers

The most common Thellynite prayer is silence. The length of the silence is determined by the holiness of the occasion. Sometimes a group of Thellynites will sit silently in the woods for an entire day, simply listening to the sounds of nature.

Holy Days

The Thellynites celebrate the same two holy days as the other faiths of the Sisters, listed above in the triad section.

Saints

There is no sainthood or martyrdom among the Thellynites, who see every member of their faith as simply part of the natural cycle. To glorify one is as absurd as glorifying a particular summer or spring. While others would believe a person noteworthy for her individual great deeds, the Thellynites see her as part of a chain of people who made it possible for her to commit those great deeds.

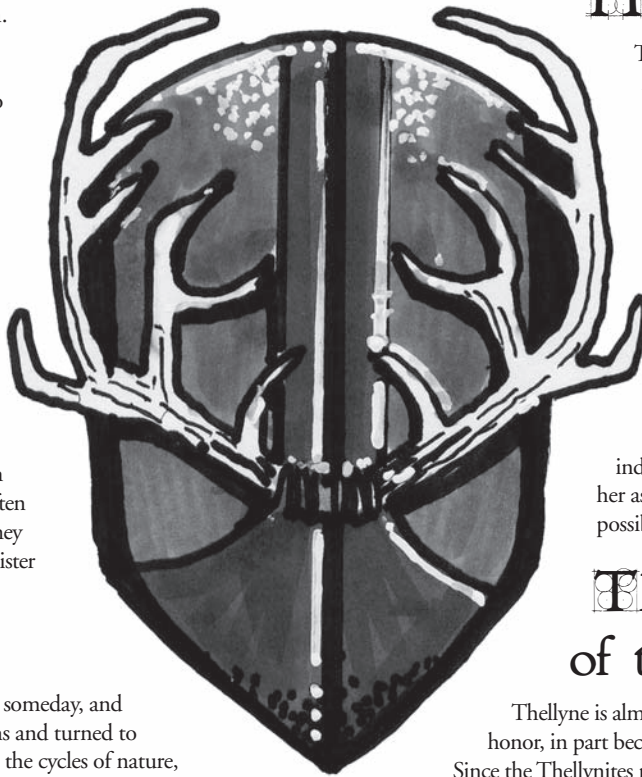
Thellyne's View of the Church

Thellyne is almost unaware that there is a church in her honor, in part because the church is barely in her honor. Since the Thellynites revere nature and the natural order so highly, seeing Thellyne almost as an exemplar of proper deference to nature, they invoke her name in prayer less than most other churches invoke their gods' names. This is exactly as Thellyne likes it. She is perhaps the most humble of the gods (though Anwyn has a strong claim to the title) and loves nature and the woods more than she loves herself.

While Thellyne is happy to make sure those who worship her and her deference to the woods receive powers, she rarely visits them or offers them personal guidance. However, powerful members of her faith stand a chance of meeting her in the deep woods, since she still wanders the earth. These meetings are rare, though those recorded by her followers always seem to go well; Thellyne loves those who respect the woods, and she smiles on her followers, granting them gifts if she meets them by happenstance.

Preferred Weapon

Thellyne won her bow, Gwedryl, on the great Journey to the East when she drank the blood of 12 dragons. This gave her pure sight; she found the bow, invisible to her sisters, hanging before her in a forest glade.



Chapter VII ~ The Gods of the Womb

Holy Orders

Clerics:

Woodwardens of Thellyne

The Order

The woodwardens wander the world in their youth seeking a wood that needs a guardian; when they find one, they take up residence under its boughs. There they serve as guardians of the people and animals that call it home. Among some primitive or woodland societies, a woodwarden may be the spiritual leader of an entire people; unlike druids, their order does not require reclusive behavior. They are clergy, after all, and seek to minister to like-minded folk in groups small or large. In remote areas, their only congregants may be the animals, but they serve nonetheless, seeking to keep dark things from the woods they protect.

There are woodwardens who never settle on a single wood, instead adventuring around the world, seeking out the enemies of nature and opposing them. While they are rare, they are not considered odd by other Thellynites.

To become a woodwarden, one must find an established member of the order and become her apprentice, often spending four or five years learning every subtle nuance of woodcraft and the lessons of Thellyne. It can take as brief a time as two years. When the training is done, the new woodwarden is inducted by being taken to the most remote corner of the woods and stripped of all possessions. He must find his way back to his master. When he does he is named a woodwarden and is master of his own destiny.

Titles

At 1st level, a member of the order is called a woodwarden and is addressed as "warden." On the rare occasion that one is introduced formally, this address is dropped and the woodwarden is introduced as "a woodwarden of the Thellynites." This title will be the woodwarden's for the rest of his career, as the Thellynites have no authority structure or levels of status in their orders.

Table 7-9: Woodwardens of Thellyne Titles

Minimum Cleric Level	Title	Requirement
1	Woodwarden	2-5 Years Training

Domains

A woodwarden may take any two of the following domains: Good, Animal, Plant, and Protection.

Spell Preparation Time

The woodwardens prepare their spells in the pre-dawn, just as the birds begin to sing.

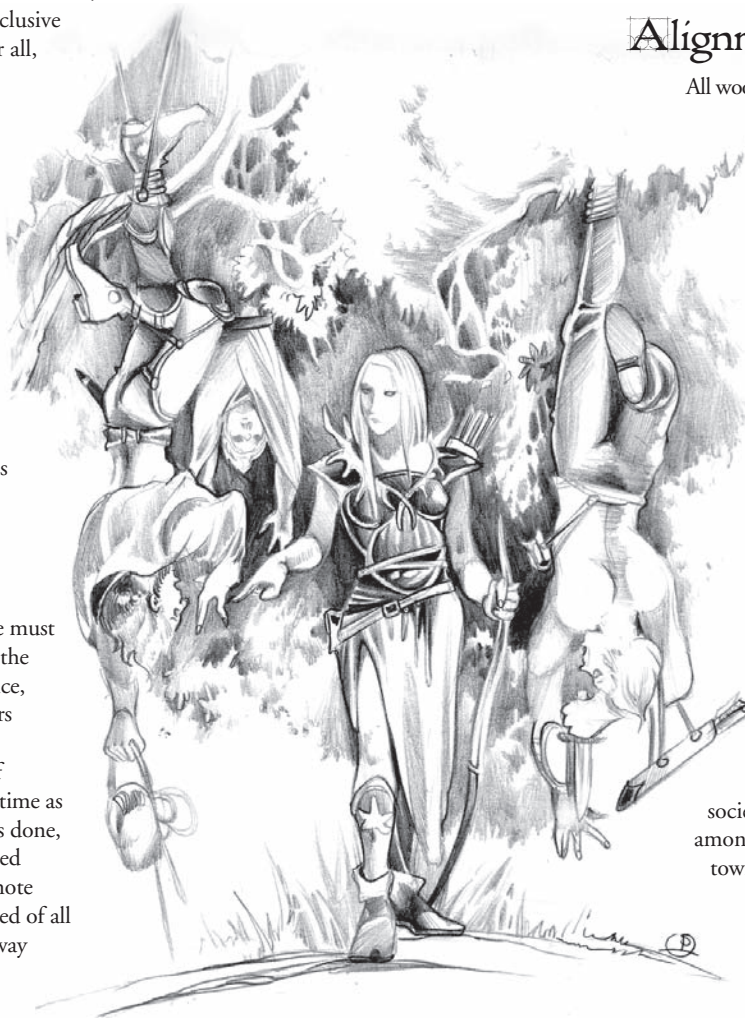
Alignments

All woodwardens share the same basic tenets: that the natural world should be protected, the people and animals that reside therein served, and the laws of the Thellynite faith observed. The differences between the three alignments of woodwardens are based on where they choose to practice.

The majority of woodwardens are neutral good. They seek to protect the larger woodland homes, wherever they may be. They will wander far and wide looking for the largest and most splendid woodlands where they can serve, seeking to do the most good.

Lawful good woodwardens seek out woods near mortal societies. Taking up residence, often among the people of neighboring towns, they seek to educate the people that live near the wood of its importance. Many of these woodwardens minister to towns of loggers, teaching them how to properly respect and replenish the trees, never clearing too deeply.

Chaotic good woodwardens seek out either the most remote woods they can find or also take up residence near mortal societies. Those who live near mortal societies seek to dissuade the nearby folk from touching or damaging the woods in any way. This can actually lead two woodwardens into conflict, as the lawful good woodwarden teaches the people that respect and use of the wood is part of the natural order and the chaotic good woodwarden actively opposes any effort to use the wood.



Woodwardens have no common uniform other than the antler holy symbol they all carry. They dress for the woods.

Chapter VII ~ The Gods of the Womb

Holy Warrior: Hallowed Hunters of Thellyne

The Order

The hallowed hunters are very much like good rangers, seeking to drive off evil creatures from the woods they protect. Indeed, hallowed hunters have no surer allies in the world than good rangers. Unlike rangers, however, they receive their powers not from nature itself but from Thellyne, and in doing so they draw upon the very power of the hunt. While not as great in woodcraft as the rangers, this power makes the order powerful hunters, and they often lead expeditions of good rangers against dark creatures that seek to defile the woods.

When one receives the call to become a hallowed hunter, one must track down a member of the order. If that member agrees to take the candidate on as an apprentice, the training can take as long as eight years as the two travel together and the young hunter-to-be learns the secrets of the woods. In some cases, a ranger receives the call and requires only training in the ways peculiar to Thellyne. This takes only six months.

Once trained, the hallowed hunter is free to go wherever she believes she is needed, as there is no authority structure within the faith to gainsay her desire.

Titles

At 1st level, a hallowed hunter is called a "hunter" or "huntress" and is addressed as such. She is introduced by full title. This is the only title she will ever bear, as the order has no levels of status or authority.

Table 7-10:

Hallowed Hunters of Thellyne Titles

Minimum Holy Warrior Level	Title	Requirement
1	Hunter/Huntress	Eight Years Training or 1 st Level Ranger and Six Months Training

Additional Class Skills

The hallowed hunter's additional class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Intuit Direction (Wis) and Wilderness Lore (Wis).

Domains

The hallowed hunter may choose any two of the following domains: Hunt, Creation, and Travel.

Gift of Thellyne

Beginning at 3rd level, the hallowed hunter can call for *protection from elements*, as per the spell, once per week, with a caster level equal to her class level. She can use this ability more often as she advances in levels (twice per week at 6th level, three times per week at 9th level, etc.). *Protection from elements* is a spell-like ability for hallowed hunters.

Spells

The hallowed hunter may choose her daily spells from the following list:

1st level – *bleed*, *bleed water*, *bleed weapon*, *create water*, *cure light wounds*, *detect poison*, *detect undead*, *divine favor*, *endure elements*, *speak with animals*, *protection from evil*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

2nd level – *remove paralysis*, *resist elements*, *speak with plants*, *delay poison*, *snare*

3rd level – *cure moderate wounds*, *control plants*, *dispel magic*, *greater magic weapon*, *heal animal companion*, *magic circle against evil*, *tree shape*, *remove blindness/deafness*

4th level – *cure serious wounds*, *tree stride*, *dispel evil*, *freedom of movement*, *holy sword*, *neutralize poison*

Animal

Companion

At 5th level, the hallowed hunter calls a celestial animal companion, usually one accustomed to hunting, like a hound or bear. The animal companion receives all the benefits of a mount.

Conduct

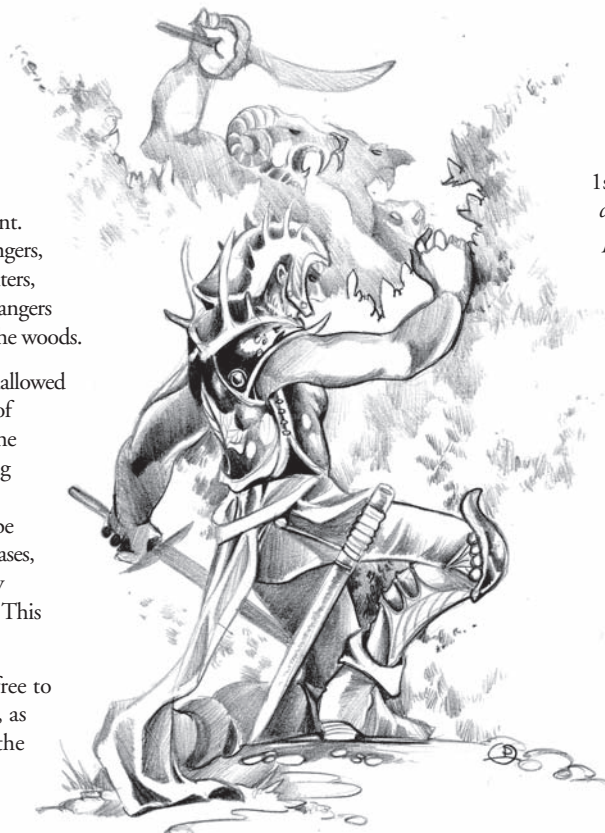
A hallowed hunter must serve as the protector of the woodlands and must not knowingly allow evil to take over the natural places if her opposition might prevent it. The hunter may not knowingly do evil or assist in the commission of evil. If the hunter violates this code, or the doctrine of the Thellynites, she loses her abilities until she atones.

Associates

Hallowed hunters keep the company of those who love the woodlands, particularly rangers and woodwardens. While they will happily join company with others who are good, they do not stray from the woodlands often and have no real desire to spend time in cities or towns. Like all holy warriors, they will not long abide the company of those who do evil, and will actively oppose those who seek to destroy or harm the natural world.

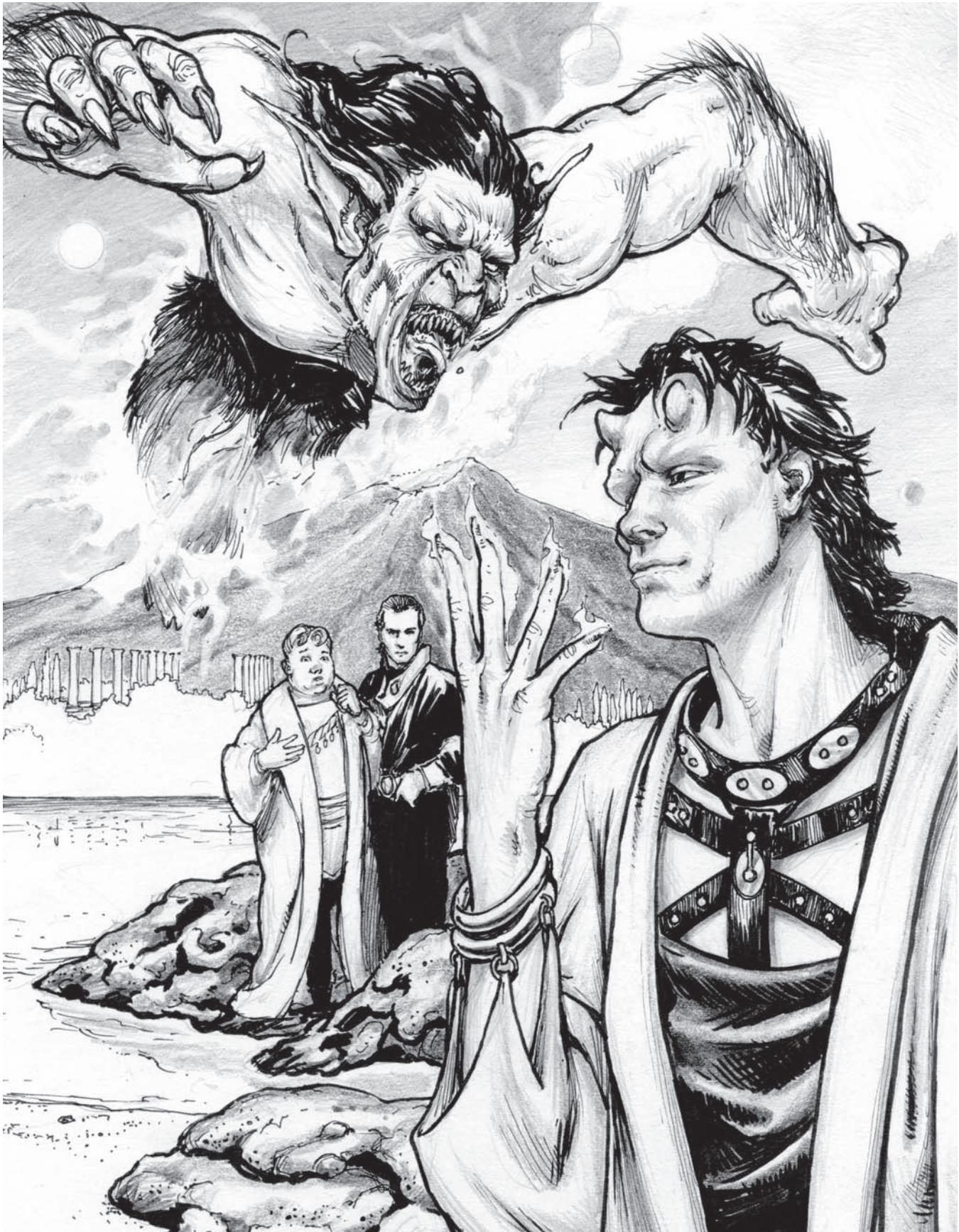
Alignment

Hallowed hunters must be neutral good.



Like their brothers, the rangers, hallowed hunters dress to blend into the woodlands and to fight. They tend to greens and browns.

Chapter VIII ~ Putting Your Faith In Evil



“The Fierce Brother sought to rip out Asmodeus’ heart. This struggle went poorly for Canarak.”

Chapter VIII: Putting Your Faith in Evil

About This Chapter

In this chapter we provide the four central evil churches and several evil “sects” of the established churches from Chapters III-VII. Some will, no doubt, be surprised at the paucity of our offering for evil characters. It is fairly standard in mythologies created for games to provide nearly as many evil gods as good gods, the idea being that many players like to play evil characters and that evil is sexier than good.

Be that as it may, we feel the existence and order of evil gods should be mysterious to most people – even those who are good clergy. After all, people don't openly worship the god of eating babies. No one reveals to the rest of the tavern that they are actually a high priest of the god of killing grandmothers and slaughtering puppies – no one, that is, except for the supremely confident (or supremely stupid).

That's because mortal cultures, unless they've become highly perverted (like big pirate cities), do not like to think of themselves as evil, nor does obviously vile evil benefit the average person. Banal evil that benefits the individual, like common greed and selfishness, does not require worship of an evil god – one is certainly able to worship a good god and do evil and petty things. Even if a town has a high percentage of nasty people living in it, the majority of the populace will be artisans, merchants, and other common folk. What do these people have to gain from a life of worshipping the god of pederasty? Why would these people donate money to build a big temple in the town square to the Unseeing Horror that Consumes Souls – and even if they didn't donate money, why would they let it stay there?

Any god who is openly identified as a “god of evil” is not likely to receive many converts, and any church that proclaims itself evil is likely to get thrown out of town by an angry mob – or worse. For these reasons, we have separated the few evil churches we provide into this chapter, and we recommend it only be read by those playing evil characters or – if no one in a campaign is evil – by the GM alone. It's more fun if you don't know what evil has in store for you.

Chapter VIII ~ Putting Your Faith In Evil

Structure of the Evil Faiths

The evil faiths provided in this chapter do not receive the kind of lavish detail we've provided the primary churches in Chapters III-VII. There are a few reasons for this: 1) This book is intended to be useful for any campaign, and we know that a lot of GMs prefer to flesh out their own evil conspiracies; 2) Green Ronin offers a fair amount of evil already, in *Legions of Hell* and *Armies of the Abyss*, and not coincidentally those books complement this one nicely; 3) while some people do play "evil campaigns," our experience is that most divinely powered characters are aligned with good, or at least non-evil, gods. Yet there's a lack of really useful information for those characters, so we wrote this book. Our intention has always been to provide a "good-leaning" book, and this chapter provides useful information to flesh out enemies for your religious characters that fit within the cosmology. There are no prestige classes or holy warriors provided in this section.

The sections of this chapter are broken down as follows:

The God

Myth

The section regarding the four main evil churches begins with a myth, while the cult section does not. After that, the structure is mostly the same:

Name

The name of the god and common titles applied to him or the name of the cult.

Alignment

The god's alignment or the alignment of the cult.

Representations

How that evil god is represented or how that cult represents itself with secret symbols.

Purpose

The goal of the god. This is only provided for the four main evil gods. This also lists what the god's primary areas of concern are.

Church or Cult Description

What the followers of the god or cult call themselves and where they congregate, as well as what they call their leaders or clergy.

Church Doctrine

The core beliefs of the followers of the god or cult, including their secular goals.

Preferred Weapon

The preferred weapon of the god or cult. For heretical cults, if the preferred weapon is the same as that of the mother church, this section is left out.

Holy Orders

Cleric Domains

The spell domains for clerics of the god or cult. In the case of cults, this is only listed if different from those of the main church.

Cleric Alignments

Where applicable, a listing of the various clerical beliefs based on alignment.

Spell Preparation

Time

When clerics of this faith prepare their spells. This is only listed for cults if it's different from the spell preparation time of clerics of the mother church.



Symbol of Asmodeus



Symbol of Canarak

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The Evil Gods

There are four main evil churches in the mythology of the gods of the tree. The primary evil faith is made up of the worshippers of Asmodeus, who was Kador. But each of the Three Brothers, as mysterious in origin as their Three Sisters, has a dark church consecrated in his name. Much to the sorrow of good-hearted folk the world over, these four wicked faiths have a secret alliance of sorts, skulking together in the thick of night to perform their hideous crimes...

It is up to your GM how much anyone in "respectable" society knows about these churches. They could be a complete secret, or the common enemies of all good people in a war that has been raging for a thousand years. Either extreme or anything in between will work. This myth is written from the perspective of evil worshippers.

Myths

Four Pillars of Evil

When the Three Sisters and Three Brothers awoke by the river, the gods of the tree knew nothing of these new beings. But Asmodeus, King of the Universe, sees farther than any other and knew at once of their awakening. When the Three Sisters fled from their brothers, Canarak, Thellos, and Naran thought to give them chase.

"I want them, the smell of them. I want to keep them forever," greedy Thellos said, licking his lips, and his brothers agreed – but then a voice held them fast.

"I would be cautious, if I were you," the Dark Lord Asmodeus said as he emerged from the shadow. His horns shone in the moonlight, and the Brothers knew that this was a figure of great power.

"What's it to you, pus-face?" vicious Canarak snarled, but Asmodeus the Great only laughed, for he liked the spirit of these brothers and saw in them the key to his re-ascendance to glory.

So it is that Asmodeus told the Three Brothers the secrets of the world – of the Nameless One and the war of the gods; of Hell and the Abyss; of the tree of life and the gods born of it, who had betrayed him. He told the Three Brothers that these gods would surely embrace their sisters, make them a part of their family, and make war on the Brothers. The Perfect One told these three newborn gods that the only path to safety for them was to trust in the largesse of the King of the Universe. He would keep them secret; he would keep them safe.

This did not sit well with Canarak, who thought this little-seeming thing of a man was a liar and a weakling. So the Fierce Brother hurled himself at Asmodeus, seeking to rip out the heart of Fire's Father. This struggle went poorly for Canarak, who Asmodeus lit on fire and hurled into the river. The savage hand was then still, having found respect for the Dark Lord.

Thellos also needed convincing. The Hungry Brother asked Asmodeus what the three would gain if they trusted him. The King of the Universe showed the

Feasting Maw the glories of Hell, with its golden-spired whores' balls and its delights of blood and flesh. "This man will show us great pleasures, brothers!" Greedy Thellos declared, and he too was won over by the lord of Hell.

But Naran, Lordly Naran, was never easily swayed, and his heart never lightly moved to a new course. "I mistrust you, Asmodeus who was Kador. You seek a throne that has been denied you; when you have it, you will cast us aside. I see this clearly." Indeed, the Piercing Eye, as Naran is called, saw correctly.

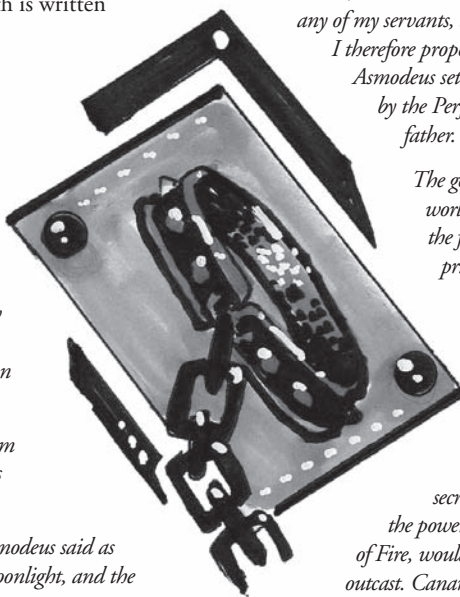
"You are wise, Naran, and you speak truly," Asmodeus said with a smile. "All that you see before you, above you, below you, is mine. It is my right, my domain, and I do not wish to share. Yet, you three are mightier than any of my servants, and should I win my throne, it will not be alone. I therefore propose a bargain, for share I must." So it was that Asmodeus set out the dark pact, the only agreement ever made by the Perfect One with any power short of the Creator, his father.

The gods born of the tree are myopic and think only of the world of mortals; this Asmodeus knew well. They treat the four great pillars upon which the universe rests as prisons for the div, as strange outlandish places that do not matter short of their support of the sphere. Yet they are the foundations of existence, and should they be ruled by these four great and assembled powers, the reign of the gods could not last long. Therefore, the King of the Universe proposed to the Three Brothers that each of them seek control of one of the pillars, working in secret through followers mortal and otherwise, to gain the power of the very roots of existence. Asmodeus, the Father of Fire, would seek control of the fire pillar where the div were outcast. Canarak would take the raging pillar of water. Thellos would gain the pillar of air, where the winds are as hungry as he; Naran would win the pillar of earth, strong and lordly.

They agreed that when the pillars were won, the four would wage war on the gods, at the end of which Asmodeus would be given Heaven and would be named King of the Universe. Canarak would take his power to win over the demons of the Abyss. Naran would be placed in command of Hell in Asmodeus' stead, and Thellos would wander the earth, sating his unholy hungers.

This is the dark pact. For generations the four pillars of evil, as we call them, worked to unearth the secrets and powers necessary to gain control of the pillars of the universe. On the eve of their victory, the so-called "Lords of Good" imposed their Compact on the order of the sphere. While the Three Brothers were not a part of this Compact and may continue to work freely and in secret, all four were bound to work their greatest deeds through the mortal races.

Because of this Compact it is the way of things that we, the mortal races, are the key to success for all divine powers – our faith, our prayers, our blood, our souls fuel their might. So it is that we must aid the four pillars of evil in their quest to topple the wretched whelps of Heaven; when we do, we will be kings of the earth, lords of all we survey, servants to four great powers that deserve our obedience. These four are strong and worthy, and they must rule. They will rule.



Symbol of Naran



Symbol of Thellos

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God of Lies, Power, and Fire

Asmodeus

(The Perfect One, King of the Universe, the Great, the Dark Lord, Fire's Father)

Alignment

Asmodeus is lawful evil.

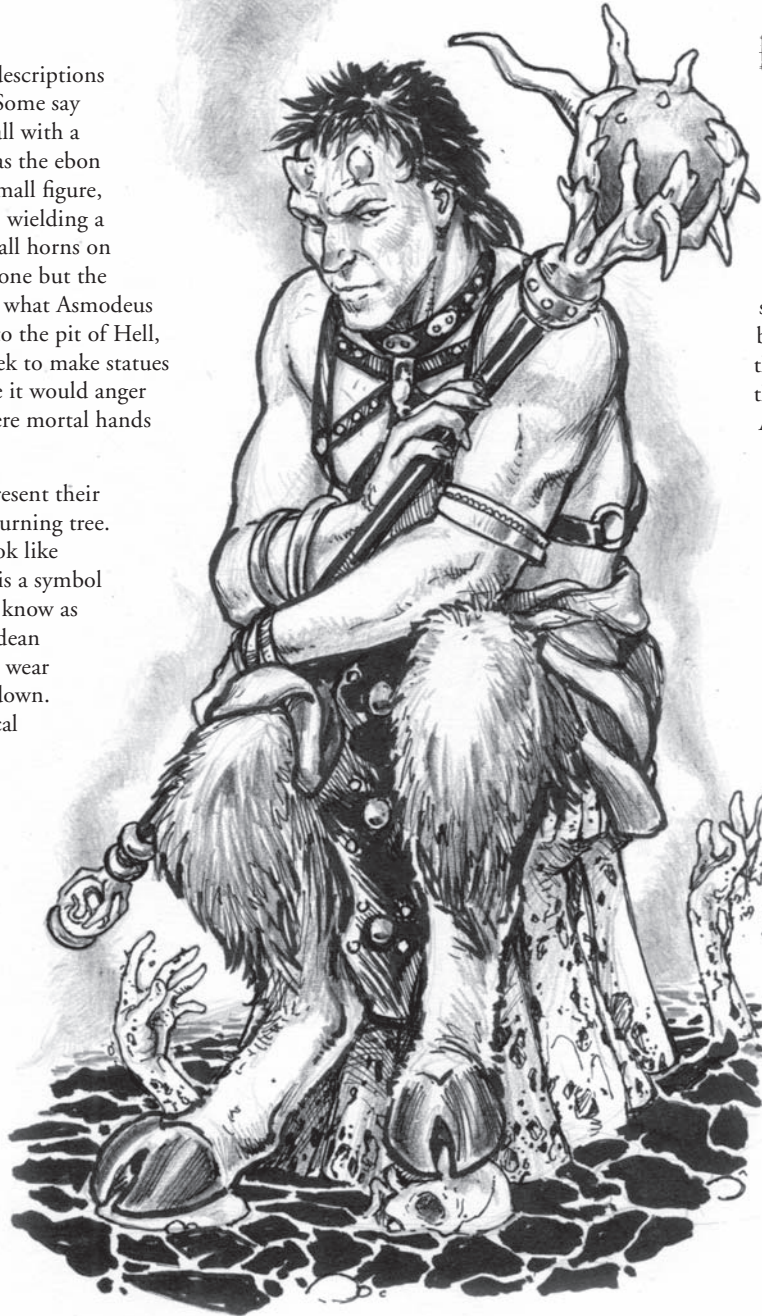
Representations

Asmodeus is rarely seen, and descriptions of him are generally fanciful. Some say he is a being 10,000 leagues tall with a tail of fire and horns as black as the ebon midnight. Others say he is a small figure, robed in red and deepest blue, wielding a scepter of might, with two small horns on his forehead. The truth is, no one but the mightiest powers of evil know what Asmodeus looks like since he was cast into the pit of Hell, and his worshippers do not seek to make statues in his likeness, for they believe it would anger the King of the Universe if mere mortal hands sought to cast his form.

The faithful of Asmodeus represent their church with the symbol of a burning tree. The tree is usually made to look like Eliwyn, the Tree of Life. This is a symbol that all people, good and evil, know as the fearful brand of the Asmodean cults, and his followers do not wear it openly lest they be hunted down. Most Asmodean cults have local and secret symbols that reveal themselves to each other and no one else – for instance, one group might wear what looks like a military medal, easily explained as such to the unsuspecting but clearly broadcasting their affiliation to other members of that organization.

There is only one such Asmodean symbol that is universal: Any Asmodean worshipper in distress can strip a holly branch (or similar branch in lands without holly) of all its bark and carry it in his left hand. Recognizing this symbol, another Asmodean is to say to the person bearing the branch, “Are

you in distress?” to which the branch-wielder says, “I have lost that which is mine.” This is a rarely used and highly secret way for an Asmodean in a foreign culture to find like-minded followers when in dire trouble.



“The lord of lies, the father of evil, the master of malfesance, Asmodeus is the central figure of evil, the greatest opponent to good.”

Purpose

Asmodeus is the lord of Hell, but unlike the other lords of Hell, he has a purpose that goes far beyond power in that foul place. He is the god of fire, of those wrongly usurped, of power for power's sake, of lies and of revenge. He believes himself to be the king of the universe, the rightful heir of the Creator, the Nameless One. All that is good is his enemy, for it has no right to exist without his blessing. The Lords of Good sit on his thrones because they betrayed him, and his hate for them is limitless. He would topple the heavens, destroy all established orders of goodness, and rule the sphere. He is a ready sponsor to all those who seek to do evil in the name of power or revenge for betrayal, usurpation, or other wrongs, perceived or real. Asmodeus is the father of deceit and is the greatest liar in the universe, capable of deceiving even other gods (short of the wisest among them: Morwyn, Naryne, Maal, and Naran).

Asmodeus has a direct goal for his mightiest followers and most trusted worshippers – the conquest of the plane of fire in his name. Any powerful worshippers of Asmodeus will be directed toward this goal. Because of the Compact, Asmodeus can only gain real and meaningful control of the pillar if mortals give it to him.

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The Church

Church Description

The Asmodeans are the oldest evil religion on the earth, their beliefs dating back to the div. In the earliest days of the mortal races born of the tree, some mortals uncovered ancient div tomes detailing the secrets taught to them by Fire's Father.

In memory of this, the Asmodeans all take on secret names fashioned after the names of the div. They get these from ancient scrolls listing the div followers of Kador. In Asmodean functions, they refer to each other only by these secret names.

They call themselves the ancient and secret brotherhood of the first fire, naming their places of worship "pyres," for at the pyres they seek to burn away weakness, sentimentality, and any attachment to the trappings of so-called "good" culture. It is rare to find a permanent structure housing a pyre, though in evil empires and places that openly allow the worship of Asmodeus, the pyres are magnificent temples with golden minarets (Asmodeus is a jealous and angry god, and his worshippers are always careful to show him the utmost respect). These are the exception to the rule, however; as the "enemy of all that is good," as Asmodeus is often called, his worshippers must hide themselves away and practice only in the dark of night, lest they be hunted down and destroyed.

The pyres have no central world authority, as sustaining such a thing would be quite difficult in secret. Each pyre is usually led by its highest-level pyromancer (cleric). These men and women are driven servants of Asmodeus who lead local worshippers to secretly commit evil acts in the name of their dark lord, including missions far from home. The sole unholy order of the pyres, the pyromancers are the supreme authorities of the faithful, but they must not grow too full of themselves. Powerful pyromancers receive instruction from Hell directly and are kept in line by the servants of Asmodeus. Weaker pyromancers learn of their failures swiftly, killed in the night by other pyromancers or by the creatures of Hell. A pyromancer is addressed (in private) as "Great Father" or "Great Mother." Pyromancers, like other worshippers of Asmodeus, must keep their identities secret in good societies, which means they will not cast spells when any non-Asmodean can see. One becomes a pyromancer

by becoming a member of the Asmodean faith (for whatever reason) and demonstrating talent for it. One is then trained by another pyromancer, which takes about two years.

The conspiracy at the heart of the Anwynite church is in no way connected to the pyres, by design. Though the heads of that conspiracy are of course aware of the pyres and their deeds, they keep them at a distance so as not to compromise their secret order.

Church Doctrine

"Do not speak to me of what should be. Do not tell me of the injustice of the wicked or the terrors of evil. Injustice rules every house! Your so-called goodness suffocates the world! Your gods are criminals; your priests and priestesses are whores and whoremongers who belch lies from their pulpits."

- The Pyromancer Horatio "Krafalimus abu Hazan" Gorrik on the hour of his execution



The pyromancers, when in full regalia, tend toward red, black and gold. Many wear masks.

The Asmodean faith revolves around the "Great Wrong," or the "Wicked Injustice," as they call the toppling of Asmodeus from the palace in the skies by the Lords of Good. To the Asmodean mind, it is clear that Asmodeus is the rightful king of the universe, who has had his authority stripped from him wrongly. Extending this to his worshippers, one can see the kind of people attracted to his faith – those who feel they have been overlooked, wronged, usurped, denied their rightful power and authority. It is a home to the formerly mighty who have been actually toppled and to sniveling narcissists who feel they've never been given their proper due. Asmodeus promises real power, revenge for these wrongs, and the respect of all the people who have wronged them.

This promise comes with a cost. The Asmodeans tie their souls to Fire's Father and agree to do anything, no matter how wicked or awful, to receive this power. Part of

the pyre philosophy is the burning away of attachment and sentiment

until there is nothing but desire for power and obedience; most new worshippers have to cast their infant children into the pyre, kill their loved ones and drink their blood, or commit similar hideous acts of willful evil to show they will willingly serve the Dark Lord.

As a day-to-day doctrine, the Asmodeans preach a path both lawful and deeply evil:

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Obedience and Humility

Asmodeus, whom they serve, is the greatest power in the universe, and they must serve him without question. If a pyromancer commands you to do a deed in the name of the Dark Lord, you do it without question. If you are a pyromancer, you must obey any pyromancer mightier than you.

Power Without Question

Life is a tiny little thing. The only way to really live is to attain great power. With power, you can live on, you can control, you can crush those who oppose you. But there is no room for questions with power; whatever you must do to attain power, you will do, unless it is counter to the will of Asmodeus.

Good is Weak and False

By their very definition, good powers and good people are weak and worthless. They can only attain power by theft. And yet they lie to themselves, hiding behind false doctrines like “honesty” and “honor” while using cowardly means to achieve what they desire. The Asmodean will do anything for power: He will lie, cheat, beg or steal, but will never allow himself to be weak, pretending to himself that he believes in false doctrines like “valor.” The Asmodean is honest with himself, even if he is false to the rest of the world.

Preferred Weapon

The preferred weapon of Asmodeus is a flanged sword. His followers wield flanged blades of any sort – from daggers to greatswords.

Holy Orders

Cleric Domains

The pyromancer may choose any two of the following domains: Law, Evil, Trickery, and Fire.

Cleric Alignments

A pyromancer of Asmodeus must become lawful evil. While it is possible to begin learning the ways of the pyres while neutral evil or lawful neutral, by fourth level one must come to obey the word of higher pyromancers (become lawful) and give oneself over completely to the evil ways of Asmodeus. Otherwise, one will cease to gain levels as a pyromancer.

Lawful evil pyromancers seek to spread the faith and serve Asmodeus. They build recruitment systems, contact Hell regularly for instructions, train new pyromancers and worshippers, and in every way conceivable act like an evil virus in good societies. At higher levels, they work toward the goals of the four pillars, researching the plane of fire and assembling mighty expeditions of evil adventurers to work toward the conquest of that plane. It is at the GM’s discretion what progress has been made on this in the time since the signing of the Compact.

Spell Preparation Time

Asmodean clerics prepare their spells during sundown, when the setting sun looks like a bonfire on the horizon.

God of Destruction, Violence, and Rage

Canarak

(the **Pierce Brother**, the **Savage Hand**, **Vicious**)

Alignment

Canarak is chaotic evil.

Representations

Canarak is a tall, almost feral figure with long red hair, matted and caked with dirt and blood. His mouth is filled with sharp teeth and his hands hold two wicked, curved blades. He is never shown in armor; he is usually naked, ready to pounce on a foe.

The symbol of his worshippers is a humanoid hand with bestial claws. This is the symbol that even good people will recognize as the sign of Canarak (if they’ve heard of him). In secret, the Canaraketh wear a series of specifically positioned animal fangs that any fellow worshipper will recognize instantly.

Purpose

Canarak is the god of violence, rage, bloodlust, carnage, brutality, savagery, and murder. He is only happy when he rages and destroys. He has no great plan or idea. He has spent the years since his

awakening by the river seeking out like-minded earthly races and leading them in battle, appearing as one of them. In this way he has become the favored god of most of the chaotic evil races of the world. The orcs, for instance, see him as a powerful orcish god-king who will lead them into the final battle against the pathetic dwarves and elves. He drives these races on under hundreds of names and in hundreds of shapes, but his followers among the five mortal races know him for what he is: the father of destruction and blood lust. Canarak is not bound by the Compact and is able to influence mortal events directly – though he must be careful, lest he bring down the wrath of Heaven on his head; the Compact does not protect him either.

Canarak keeps himself secret and works to fulfill the dark pact with the Three Brothers because, like many mad pack animals, he is actually loyal to his family and seeks to ascend to power with his brothers. Of course, if that ever comes to pass, he will likely turn on even his own brothers. For now, though, he is driven toward the conquest of the pillar of water so that Heaven might be toppled and the Abyss might become his personal domain.

Though he is chaotic evil, there is no alliance between Canarak and the Abyss. He seeks to conquer the demon princes and make their

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home his own, meaning that there is no love lost between the followers of these two powers.

The Church

Church Description

The forms of Canarak worship are seemingly infinite, as the evil humanoid races worship him under countless names and guises. As with all three brothers, we concern ourselves here only with worshipers of the five mortal races who know his true name and identity.

The Canaraketh have no established order and rarely even meet for religious “services” – if they can be called that. It is a highly chaotic faith; each worshiper of Canarak believes that if she is strong enough she will be at Canarak’s side when the pillars are conquered and the end times come. They strive for personal connection with Canarak, which they experience in the thrill of destruction and murder.

When they do meet, the Canaraketh call their places of worship – usually secluded glades or hidden underground temples – abattoirs. They are places of slaughter and carnage. Most religious services revolve around a captured innocent being stripped bare and put into the center of the abattoir, where the worshipers fall on her and rip her apart with their hands and teeth. The Canaraketh are an awful and horrifying people.

These ceremonies, and inductions of new worshipers (which usually involve cannibalism), are overseen by the clergy of Canarak, the reavers. A reaver receives no special address, and his authority is only respected as long as he is powerful and dangerous. Old and frail reavers are torn to pieces by their fellows.

Church Doctrine

“You shudder with delight when you rip open a foe’s belly with a well-placed blow. So do I. The difference between you and me is that I embrace it. I am alive! What are you?”

–The first question to a prospective convert of the Canaraketh

The beliefs of the Canaraketh are easily summarized:

Canarak is the joy of slaughter

The delighted rush and thrill you feel when seeing a foe’s head explode after you hit it with a mallet – that is Canarak. He is with you in those times, and the only way to feel close to him is to continue to feed that appetite for death and mayhem.

Canarak will destroy your enemies

If you please Canarak, he will aid you in the destruction of all those who oppose you. And in the end times, he will have you at his side when you destroy all that you hate.

All that is established must be destroyed

Canarak is denied his rightful position in the heavens and must hide and consort with the worthless and mongrel races. So too must his followers (and indeed, the Canaraketh will make alliances with chaotic evil humanoids to serve their aims). This will only cease when all lies in ruins and flame.

Most Canaraketh are madmen and the insanely evil, but his faith has appeal to those who feel powerless and wish to see established



Canarak is called the fierce brother, as there is little reason in him.

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orders overturned. There are even some bookish worshipers of Canarak who seek the destruction of established ways of thinking.

Preferred Weapon

Canarak is always shown with curved blades of various sizes. His worshipers simulate this by wielding kukri, scimitars, and falchions.

Holy Orders

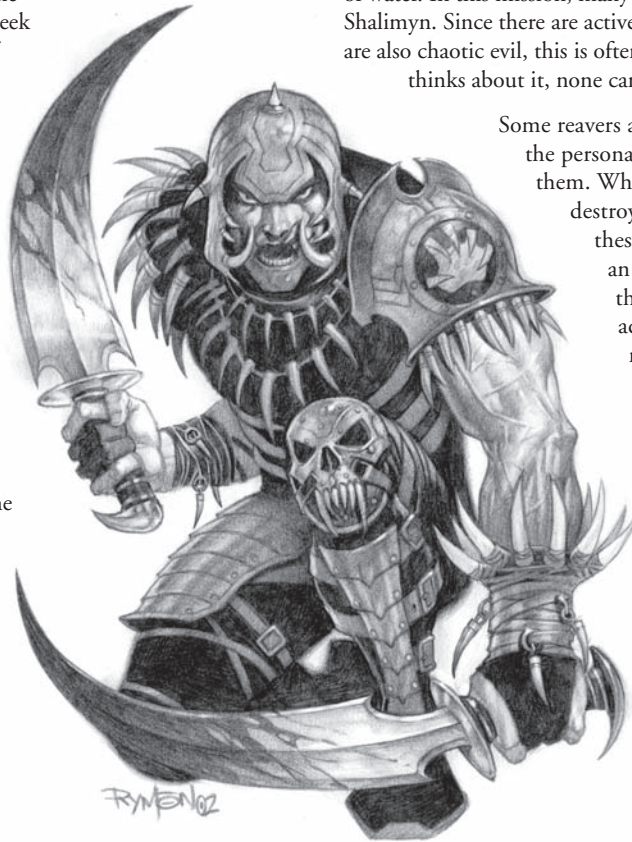
Cleric Domains

The reavers may choose any two of the following domains: Chaos, Evil, Destruction, Water, and War.

Cleric

Alignments

Most reavers, and indeed most Canaraketh, are chaotic evil. These madmen and destructive miscreants seek the toppling of everything established, with one peculiar exception. High-level reavers focus on Canarak's conquest of the pillar



Reavers like to go lightly armored so they may remain mobile. Wild warriors, they are that most dreaded combination: dangerous and insane.

of water. In this mission, many of them ally themselves with the Shalimyn. Since there are active members of the Shalimyn basins who are also chaotic evil, this is often a fruitful friendship; what Shalimyr thinks about it, none can say.

Some reavers are neutral evil and care only about the personal power that Canarak provides them. While most of the Canaraketh seek to destroy simply for the sake of destruction, these reavers will happily work within an established order if it will give them power and might. This includes adventuring with good people, which most reavers will not do.

There are a few Canaraketh reavers who are even willing to do good things. They are the chaotic neutral followers of the Fierce Brother, and they seek only to undermine and destroy established orders – even evil ones. They are against anything established, fighting just as fiercely against lawful evil empires as against lawful good ones.

Spell Preparation

Time

Reavers prepare their spells at midnight, when the prior day is destroyed by the new.

God of Greed, Gluttony, and Desire

Thellos

(the Hungry Brother, the Feasting Maw, Greedy)

Alignment

Thellos is neutral evil.

Representations

Thellos is shown as a fat god with a pig-like nose, sandy hair, and watery blue eyes. He is usually shown surrounded by a feast and a mountain of gold.

His faithful represent themselves with a gaping maw: a wide-open mouth with a lascivious red tongue dripping with desire. This is a secret symbol not known to any good folk but the greatest scholars. The symbol most know for Thellos is rarely used any longer: a fat old man suckling at the breast of a gaunt and impoverished woman. This was painted on the banners of his worshipers in ancient times when they marched openly.

Purpose

Thellos is the god of gluttony, selfish desire, greed, and lust (for things and people). He is purely selfish. He desires to make himself fatter, wealthier, happier, and mightier by any means. He does not care who he must steal from or what he must do; he will do it to improve his situation. There is no sharing for him, no sense that there can ever be enough. He wants to fulfill his desires.

Like Canarak and Naran, Thellos appears in many guises, appearing to the neutral evil humanoid races of the world as one of their own. The goblins see him as the fat goblin lord who will lead them to the land of milk and honey, where they will no longer have to fear bigger creatures.

Thellos is part of the dark pact to improve his situation, but if he thought he could better himself by allying with the lords of good, he would. He has no concepts of loyalty, love, or anything else decent.

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However, for now he strives to conquer the pillar of the air to gain power. He hides most often on the Prime Material Plane, where he fulfills his appetites with his followers and others. He is not bound by the Compact and often appears directly to those who worship him, personally influencing mortal affairs.

The Church

Church Description

The Thellosh, as his worshipers call themselves, congregate in what they call the halls of pleasure. More than one brothel or gambling house hides a secret Thellosh temple. In these depraved halls, the Thellosh hold gluttonous feasts and mad orgies. They also work together toward the economic dominance of their faith. There are several trade consortiums secretly controlled by Thellosh interests, wicked men and women who have dedicated themselves to Thellos in an effort to gain immense wealth.

The halls of pleasure are overseen by a council of the wealthiest members. One actually buys into the position, in return for which one receives a percent of all of the house's investments. The houses invest in illicit activities and legal ones, all in secret. Members of the council often murder one another to cut down the number of shares, though a hall of pleasure itself is considered neutral territory. The council sets the buy-in price, which usually increases with time. Not all of the money goes to the council members; much of it goes to further the investments of the halls and expand the secret Thellosh influence. Many thieves' guilds are secretly overseen by a Thellosh council, and the faith is enormously popular with thieves who find the local Darmonites too goody-goody.

Serving on these councils, or aiding them in their efforts to dominate economies, is the uncharitable brotherhood. The clergy of the Thellosh, the uncharitable brotherhood seeks to extend the power and selfish splendor of the faith by recruiting new members and strengthening existing ones. It is forbidden for one of the Thellosh to harm an uncharitable brother, no matter the potential for personal gain. An uncharitable brother is addressed as "uncharitable brother" or "uncharitable sister."

Church Doctrine

"Everything that I might have, I will have. Why should I not take what I can while I can? What use is charity? The only reason anyone helps anyone else is if they stand to gain; that's the way of the world. At least I have the sense to admit it."

— Uncharitable Brother Forist Timberlane

The doctrine of the Thellosh is simple: Do whatever you can to improve your position. Murder, cheat, lie, or tell the truth. Save the little girl from the fire, set the fire that kills the little girl. It's all the same, as long as it results in the improvement of your personal position. The faith attracts the most selfish people in the world with its simple premise: We owe others nothing. We get where we get by our own talent, skill, and power, and if I have more than someone else, it's because I deserve it. Charity is for idiots. The poor would destroy us if they thought it would get them ahead, so destroy the poor before they get the chance.

Most of the Thellosh have little interest in their faith except for how it will improve their lives. The most pious actually care about Thellos, believing that being rich in him is greater than any other riches.



Thellos is the patron of the greedy and the gluttonous. One would be hard pressed to find a pettier god in all the spheres.

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They serve the greed of others to glorify Thellos; these are the truly dangerous members of the faith, not so easily manipulated by their own greed. They seek to conquer the pillar of air in their master's name.

Preferred Weapon

Thellos famously wields a blind man's cane, stolen because he wanted a walking stick. His followers simulate this by wielding quarterstaves and clubs.

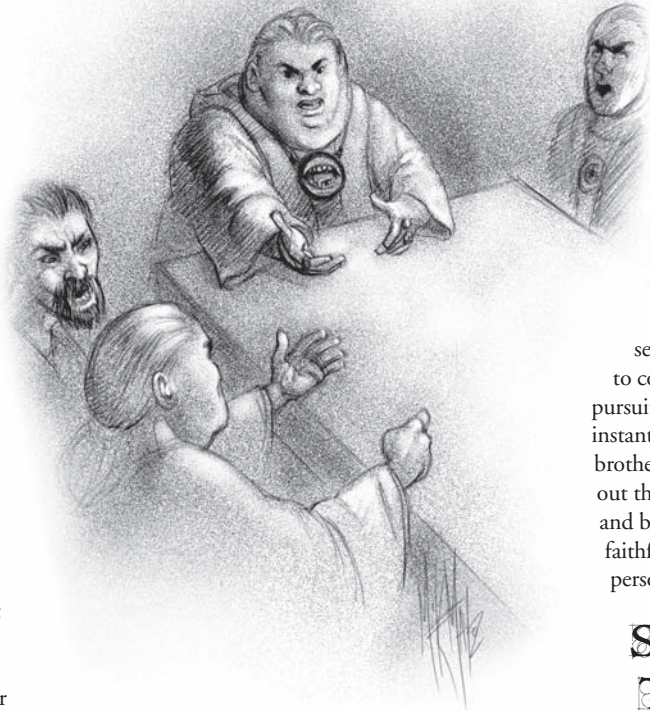
Holy Orders

Cleric Domains

An uncharitable brother may choose any two of the following domains: Evil, Air, Travel, and Trickery.

Cleric Alignments

Most uncharitable brothers are neutral evil. They strive to improve their personal positions while also aiding the growth of their halls. Most seek the wealth necessary to buy a seat on the local council, followed by domination of the council and greater wealth and personal prestige. All this is an effort to sate their eternal hungers and lusts; they are very selfish people.



The uncharitable brothers are not people of action, making them all the more dangerous. They work evil in back rooms and must be exposed.

A few uncharitable brothers are lawful evil; these are perhaps the most dangerous additions to a hall of pleasure. They are different from most Thellos, but since they are uncharitable brothers, they won't

be killed for it. They seek to serve their council and hall in any way necessary, thinking more of the well-being of the organization than their own well-being. They will stoop to any level of depravity to further the goals of the hall.

Even fewer members of the order are chaotic evil. These unhappy clerics take resentment to a new level; while they are willing to serve their council for a while, they eventually become convinced that the whole hall should exist to serve them and their desires. They refuse to cooperate or exhibit any patience in the pursuit of their desires, instead demanding instant gratification. These uncharitable brothers, when powerful, usually wipe out the council members of their hall and become depraved monarchs over the faithful, building halls dedicated to their personal pleasure.

Spell Preparation

Time

Uncharitable brothers prepare their spells at the height of night, usually three hours after sunset.

God of Tyranny, Pride, and Cunning

Naran

(the Wise Brother, the Piercing Eye, Lordly)

Alignment

Naran is lawful evil.

Representations

Naran is shown as an imperiously tall man with long dark hair, clearly a twin to Naryne. His gaze is piercing, like Maal's, but he does not seem so lordly as Maal. He has a wicked sneer and usually leads a thousand slaves on black chains.

His followers represent him with a metal collar attached to a black chain. This is the symbol of the slavemaster, and many of his worshipers make their way by capturing and selling slaves. This symbol is well known to good folk who oppose the works of Naran. Those in need of a secret symbol of Naran wear black metal rings on all their fingers, connected by chains. This is a secret symbol known

only to followers of Naran, explained away by its wearers as a foreign piece of jewelry.

Purpose

Naran is the god of cunning, tyranny, pride, slavery, plots, villainy, and conspiracies. He is the leader of the Three Brothers, and he seeks to move them into a position of world dominance. He trusts Asmodeus only as far as the dark pact, knowing that its terms will not be violated. However, once the dark pact is fulfilled, he fully expects the self-proclaimed King of the Universe to betray him and his brothers. For this reason, Naran fights and plans a multi-tiered war: He stays hidden, manipulating the mortal races toward evil; he moves to take control of the earth pillar; he plans to topple the gods of the tree once the pillar is taken; and he makes plans to destroy Asmodeus once that war is won.

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Naran is capable of planning so carefully because he is the most cunning of all the gods. He is perhaps as wise as Morwyn, if not wiser, but where she turns her wisdom to good, his is directed toward pure malevolence and control. He is the lord of plots and plans.

Naran, like his brothers, manipulates the lawful evil humanoids into believing he is their personal god. To the hobgoblins he appears to be a great hobgoblin general god, leading them into the great war in which they will come to rule the world. Among mortal followers, though, he is known to be the patron of those who wish to use strength to control others.

The Church

Church Description

The Naranath regularly attend services, either publicly (in evil homelands) or in secret places of worship. In either case, their temples are called redoubts; they are both places of prayer to the Wise Brother and highly defensive structures should the Naranath need to defend themselves. In societies that practice slavery, Naran is worshiped openly as the patron to slavers, and usually slave sales take place on the footsteps of the redoubts.

Each redoubt is run by the highest-ranking member of the local clergy. As with all the evil faiths, the Naranath cannot have a worldwide organization, not only because of the difficulty of issuing orders, but also because it would become the universal target of every good power in the world. The clerics of the Naranath are called overseers. They oversee not just the faithful, but also any plans of control or authority that the redoubts are part of. In good societies, this might be the undermining of an expedition against a slaver colony; in evil societies, it might be overseeing the redoubt's slave trade business. An overseer is addressed as "redoubtable lord" or "redoubtable lady."

The Naranath are a cunning and proud people, and any slight to their honor or power is likely to be met with a slight ten times more cunning or, if it is to their benefit, a fight. They are cautious, though, and will bide their time.

Church Doctrine

"The weak must be protected? If it weren't so dangerous, it would be laughable. The strong must be servants to those who need their aid? The very idea is against everything nature tells us. Does the

strongest lion serve the weakest? Do the eagles feed the mice? I am strong, and I will not serve the weak. I will take what I want and do what I will, and damned be he who stands in my way!"

– The Naranath Declaration of Duke Farvan Ulgost

Naran teaches his followers to look for weakness, seize opportunities, and be strong. Unlike the Thellosh, the Naranath do not practice a selfish religion. They believe that the strong must rule, and so they are obedient to those who are stronger than they, wishing to be in control with them. They work together to build up the strength of the Naranath, recruiting converts with promises of power and working closely with various infernal cults. If Asmodeus is the King of the Universe, the Naranath see themselves as servants of the Prince. But someday, the Prince will be King.

The Naranath preach that cunning, self-control, and control of others are all equally valuable and necessary. For instance, many Naranath are high-ranking officials in good governments simply biding their time, waiting to seize authority and power. They will happily wait out lesser positions, keeping their desire for power in check until they hit upon just the right moment to pounce.

While the faith has no worldwide organization, all high-level Naranath are visited personally by their patron, and he directs their actions. Of the Three Brothers, he has the tightest control of his faithful, all in his efforts to rule the pillar of earth, the first of several steps toward greatness.

Preferred Weapon

Naran wields a mighty three-headed flail. One head burns with the fire of desire for power and the heat of a cunning mind. One head moves with the weight and ponderous strength of self-control. The third head crackles with lightning of the oppressor's whip.

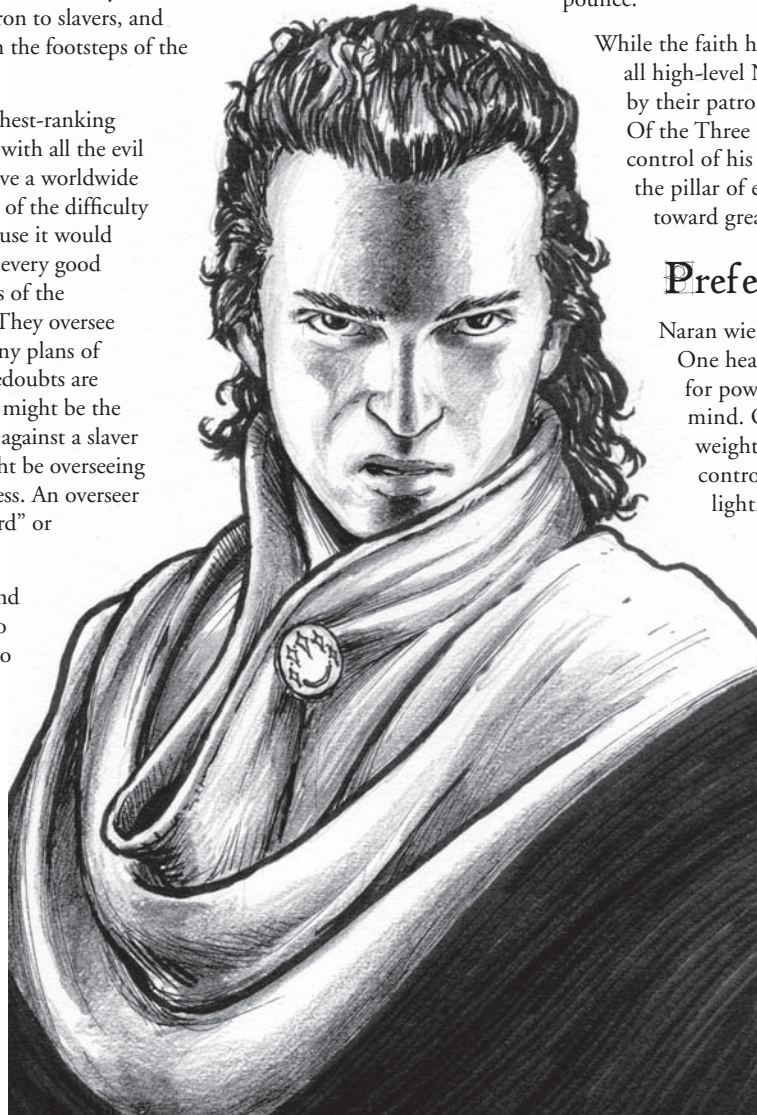
Holy Orders

Cleric Domains

The worshipers of Naran may choose any two of the following domains: Knowledge, War, Earth, Law, and Evil.

Cleric Alignments

Almost all overseers are lawful evil. They work closely with the



Naran is the god of tyranny, pride, and cunning. He would enslave the world were it within his power.

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members of their redoubt, using the resources of the faithful to build a lasting organization and to build their power base. They put their faith over their own well-being because they know they will be rewarded for it in the end. There is nothing to which these wicked men and women will not stoop in the name of their faith.

Some overseers are neutral evil; they see themselves as part of a large power structure that will keep them safe and build up their personal power and prestige. These selfish overseers, many of whom skim money from their redoubt's operations, do not last long. If they grow too high in power and continue to manipulate their church for personal gain, they are killed by Naran himself and made an example of.

Evil & Heretical Cults

Many of the gods in Chapters III-VII have evil worshippers. Some of these followers are heretics (see Chapter XI for the Heretic Feat), but many more are wicked people who exploit one of the dark interpretations of their god's doctrine.

While the Narynites, Shalimyn, and Tinelites allow evil clergy to participate openly in their churches, most of the other churches do not. So these evil worshippers have formed secret cults; their fiercest foes are the established clergy of their faith. In the case of an evil cult, these are clergy who are only one alignment shift from the alignment of their god. They almost certainly receive their powers from the servants of their god for some reason that baffles religious scholars. Heretical cults are two alignment shifts from their god and likely receive power from some other power – either another god or one of the infernal powers in disguise. No one can be sure. Whether a cult is evil or heretical is indicated below.

Cults have only one alignment, meaning that the clergy of those cults and all of their members are of the same alignment.

Cult of the Bloody Blade

Evil Cult of Maal

Alignment

This cult is lawful evil.

Representations

The cult represents itself with Maal's longsword Justice dripping with blood.

Cult Description

Long banned from the courts of Maal, these people believe that justice cannot be served by the faint of heart. There are crimes that must be dealt with in the most brutal and merciless manner possible – and if a few mistakes are made along the way, Maal's wisdom is infinite.

The members of the cult of the bloody blade are a profound disappointment to other members of the courts of Maal. They are generally justiciars who showed too much zeal in the prosecution of the wicked, becoming wicked themselves. Outcasts, they hold their own courts in hiding, often hauling the accused blindfolded into court to respond to secret evidence. The courts have their own officers, usually paid evil warriors who are happy for the money, but sometimes actual

A rare few Naranath overseers are lawful neutral. These worshippers only develop in evil nations that have a strong presence of the Naranath in public. They believe that the law of the land is "might is right," and so they seek to enforce that law without prejudice. They take no pleasure in this, but simply believe they are doing their duty. The overseer who sees to the slave trade, which he knows is cruel but thinks is the unchangeable fact of his culture, is an example.

Spell Preparation Time

The Naranath prepare their spells at the rise of dawn, when the conquering sun shatters the weak darkness.

fallen officers who have also become overzealous. These warriors form into fists (fives) and go after criminals that need to be punished.

The cult of the bloody blade is actually quite powerful in some evil cultures, serving as their only form of justice.

The cult tries to follow the exact same power structure as the courts of Maal, even having three "Justices" who claim to be the central authority of the entire cult. How they keep in contact with the many tendrils of the outcast cult is unclear, but it is clear that all of the cult's members, especially these false justices, are considered the enemies of the courts of Maal; the mother church is their most implacable foe.

Cult Doctrine

"All have the right to justice; some have more right than others."

– Justice Willem Baneblade

The classic inquisitor who hurls a woman into the water to see if she's a witch – if she floats she is; if she sinks and drowns, she's not – is a member of the cult of the bloody blade. These evil men and women are so convinced that they know what is right and just, they will go to any extent to enact it. They believe the ends justify the means, and will brutally murder children if they believe those children have been "infected" with the criminal element.

The cult of the bloody blade is unconcerned with evil outsiders, undead, and other obviously evil powers. In fact, they might even make bargains with such powers. Instead, the cult believes that the greatest threats to the mortal races come from

within, in the forms of lawlessness and anarchic magics. They will happily torture and mutilate a known thief in an effort to track down his "ringleader." They have no pity for criminals and, should they accidentally kill an innocent in their hunt for the guilty, believe that Maal will apologize for them.

Preferred Weapon

Like other Maalites, the cult prefers the longsword.

Cleric Domains

The justiciars of the cult may choose two of the following domains: Law, Evil, Death, and Justice.



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Cult of the Bounded Rod

Evil Cult of Terak

Alignment

This cult is lawful evil.

Representations

This cult prefers to represent itself with the fasces, but to distinguish itself from the lawful neutral worshippers of Terak, the cult uses a wooden rod bounded with five bands of iron as its symbol. Most evil worshippers display both symbols.

Cult Description

In areas of racial strife, usually where members of two of the five races fight against each other, the cult of the bounded rod is not far away. The members of the cult see themselves as full members of Terak temples being kept outside the faith for a while as it rids itself of its absurd lawful good members.

The soldiers of this order usually meet in secret, but in areas rife with evil or racial conflict, they speak publicly and build temples with the bounded rod symbol prominently displayed.

There is no central order to the cult, but it operates along the same lines as the main temples, with each temple headed by a commander. Because the cult is outcast and small, a commander is the highest figure in the cult and there is no council of commanders.

Cult Doctrine

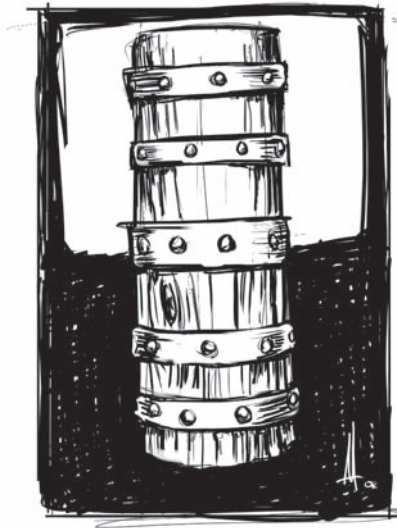
"I will wear the five symbols; I will wear them with pride. I will give the tithe; I will give it with pride. I will treat my body well; I will treat it with pride. But I will not pretend that I am brother to the elf if I am a man. He is what he is, and I am what I am, and we shall not seek to bring our ways together – our separation will make us stronger."

– The first oath of a new member of the cult of the Bounded Rod

The cult embraces the doctrine of the Teraketh except for one thing – that all races are brothers. The cult believes that the greatest misery has come upon the mortal races when they have commingled, and that the only path to pleasing Terak the Mighty is the separation of all five races into distinct groups. Each race is like one of the bands of iron – they never touch, but together they make the rod stronger.

The cult is split into five distinct bands – one for each race – though the halfling and gnome bands have very few members. Among humans, dwarves, and elves, there is a strong appeal to racial purity, and many young people gravitate toward this cult, seeking to promote the purity of their culture and the rejection

of corrupting influences; for instance, dwarven members speak only dwarven and often refuse to go into mixed-race or other-race cities.



different bands of the cult will work together, will not share members. Their goal is to undo racially mixed societies and to lead all five races to return to racially pure homelands. They do not hesitate to resort to violence toward this end, beating and even killing those they feel are the worst enemies to the purity of their race. The dwarven merchant who happily trades with elves is likely to get a beating from a roaming band of dwarven cultists. A half-orc caught alone by human cultists is likely to end up dead – likely after hours of torture, “to set an example.” All these cults rely on greed and hatred to spread their message, their hearts on cruel evil.

While on the surface, cultists seem very respectful and kind to members of their own races, underneath they are nothing more than bullies and murderers seeking to impose their point of view on others. Lawful good members of the

Teraketh consider these cultists to be the worst sort of heretics and oppose them adamantly.

Preferred Weapon

The cultists prefer axes, like the rest of the Teraketh.

Cleric Domains

Cultists may choose from the following domains: Lawful, Evil, War, and Strength.

Cult of the Icy Breath

Evil Cult of Mormekar

Alignment

This cult is neutral evil.

Representations

The cult represents itself with a jagged shard of ice.

Cult Description

Wandering the world and meeting in hidden places – caves carved into temples, catacombs of lost cathedrals, dungeons from ancient kingdoms – these cultists celebrate the horror and splendor of death. They pray to Mormekar, the only power that matters, calling for his might to enter into them. They raise the undead, and

their mightiest members become lichs. Why Mormekar grants them power is a mystery that none of his followers can comprehend, and most refuse to believe that he does.



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Cult Doctrine

"I will do only one thing that matters in my life, and that is die. It is a gift I give you now, your death, for you will feel his icy breath before I."

– The ceremonial utterance of an assassin of the icy breath

The cult of the icy breath is a world apart from the sacristies. While they too believe that death is sacred, they do not accept that the undead are a violation of death's sanctity, nor do they believe that resurrection or other life-restorative magic is wrong. They believe that death is the only significant and beautiful thing of which the mortal races are capable. They celebrate it and bring others to it – with or without their permission.

If a cultist meets a man imprisoned, he kills him to set him free. If a cultist finds a hungry child, he kills her rather than feeds her. The cult of the icy breath believes that death is the highest state any mortal might aspire to, but they make the sacrifice of continuing to live for a while so that they might help others across.

Only when all mortals are dead, when every one of us has felt the icy breath of Mormekar, will all mortals be happy and Mormekar free of his awful duty. Therefore, these cultists seek to kill as many people as they can before they die. They will work through whatever means they can to achieve that – a general can get a lot more people killed than a thug, for instance, so they are not opposed to working by methods both lawful and chaotic.

Obviously, the rest of the Mormekim oppose these maniacs fervently.

Preferred Weapon

A quarterstaff, like the others.

Cleric Domains

A minister of the cult may choose two of the following domains: Evil, Death, and Destruction. Unlike other ministers, they rebuke undead and spontaneously cast inflict spells, not cures.

Cult of the Bloody Libation

Evil Cult of Zheenkeef

Alignment

This cult is chaotic evil.

Representations

The cult shows itself with the image of five babes, one from each race, drinking the blood of a jackal struck with five wounds. This is simplified to the image of a bleeding heart.

Cult Description

They wander the woods holding wild orgies, drinking wine until they are sick, and summoning creatures of the Abyss to dance with them beneath

the moonlight. They have no established order and congregate under each full moon, called to their meeting spots by some unseen force. There they commit acts of debauchery that shame the name of their goddess; but they are committed in her name and with her power nonetheless.

Cult Doctrine

"I see her when I think I will die from drink, not when I show caution and temperance. Could there be any clearer sign of her will?"

– Apostle Migudrum Ophellus



The grape is like the blood of the mother of madness. It is there to nourish her children, and we do her a disservice when we do not drink to our fill and beyond. The cult believes that the most holy thing any person can do is engage in the worst kind of excess. Their belief is easily understood in this addition to the Vintner's Creed (which they continue to follow and observe with this addition, despite their outcast status from the main church): "If there is a line drawn by society, Zheenkeef wants you to cross it. You honor her when you do so. If they tell you it is wrong, it is right."

So it is that these wild cultists engage in madness, murder, and carnal atrocities of the worst kind, all in the name of their god. This includes consorting with demons, who they believe are the children of Zheenkeef's womb.

While most apostles from the main church cannot be bothered to oppose or embrace the cult, most Zhenkefans find them utterly distasteful and will not have them as part of their vineyards. However, in some societies, the cult makes up the main body of the Vineyard and actually *is* the established Zhenkefan church.

Preferred Weapon

The morningstar.

Cult of Everlasting Night

Heretical Cult of Urian

Alignment

This cult is chaotic neutral.

Representations

Members of this cult represent themselves with a moonless night shining with 12 stars, one for each generation since the "revelation" (see below).

Cult Description

They congregate at night at makeshift shrines built by moonlit pools. The cult of everlasting night has no central authority, but its powerful members communicate with one another on their tireless quest to fulfill the revelation.



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Church Doctrine

"I have seen the Sky Father, and he has commanded me to kill him."

– The opening words of Skylark's Song Ionus Poin's revelation

Perhaps he was mad, but Ionus Poin, born 12 generations ago, claimed in vivid detail to have seen the Sky Father, Urian, in a dream. Urian told him that in 16 generations, the sun and moon would come to earth and destroy all of the mortal races. The only way to stop this holocaust was to destroy the very sun and moon in the sky – by means of prayer, magic, and powerful pacts with outside forces, these two parts of Urian must be destroyed.

This doomsday cult does not seek out evil, nor does it seek out good. It does not wish to harm anyone, nor does it seek to do something particularly helpful. Its entire effort is bent toward the destruction of the sun and moon. Many of its members are insane wizards seeking great enough power to actually accomplish such damage, though it seems unlikely they will ever achieve it. Who gives these bizarre heretics their power, none can say. What is clear is that they are utterly mad.

The cult believes it must keep its mission secret to avoid an all-out panic, but should someone come across their plans, they will not kill them to preserve the secret; the cult isn't evil *per se*. It's more a bunch of religious zealots with the shared delusion that they can actually blow up the sun and the moon.

Preferred Weapon

The cultists prefer to wield hammers, which they believe they might use to knock the moon out of the sphere.

Cleric Domains

The clerics of the cult, who call themselves skylark's wings and songs, much to the chagrin of the mother church, may choose two of the following domains: Chaos, Night, and Destruction.

Cult of Possession

Heretical Cult of Darmon

Alignment

This cult is chaotic evil.

Representations

These cultists represent themselves in the same manner as other wayfarers, with signs of wealth – particularly the gold coin.

Cult Description

Because the houses of Darmon are controlled by their members, there are heretical clerics of Darmon who encourage evil congregations to commit acts of escalating wickedness in the name of Darmon. These cults are located in houses of Darmon, wear the same holy symbols, utter the same aphorisms as other Darmonites, and rarely refer to themselves as part of a cult. It is only upon studying their actions that one can see that they are evil, and profoundly so.

It is likely that the house of Darmon in the city of Freeport, which was established to revere and protect pirates, is actually run by heretics of this cult.

Cult Doctrine

"Will you buy your way into heaven?"

– utterance of Darmon

These heretics, taking a rhetorical comment by the Champion of Heaven, have formed a cult based on the accumulation and preservation of wealth. Unlike the Thellosh, they will not use any method to accumulate it, but instead preach theft over all. Their logic is simple: They believe that each year, the 1,001 wealthiest people to die are allowed to buy their way into Heaven.

Since the members of this cult wish to be among the wealthiest people, they must take from others and protect their wealth so they do not lose it before they die. Once they are dead, their wealth must be buried with them and kept with them until the end of the year, at which time someone else can steal it – and more power to them!

One of the only rules among the brigands of this cult, who believe they are stealing their way into Heaven, is that the Houses of Darmon are sacred ground and no one may be robbed or harmed within 100 feet of one. Beyond that, it is every man for himself.

Cleric Domains

Heretical clerics of this cult may choose two of these domains: Chaos, Evil, Trickery, and Knowledge.

Spell Preparation Time

These clerics prepare their spells at sundown, when the thieving hours begin.

Fiendish Clerics

In the d20 system, an important decision for a GM to make is whether a cleric can receive powers from an outsider who is not a god. The default answer is no, so it is assumed by most that the lords of Hell and the demon princes cannot provide clerics with spells.

We think they can, so much so that we provide a cleric-like class for worshipers of the demon princes in our book *Armies of the Abyss*. Called thaumaturges, they receive power from the demon princes and *Armies of the Abyss* provides full details on 21 such abyssal patrons, from Abaddon to Vepar.

We also believe that each of the eight lords of Hell that serve Asmodeus (see *Legions of Hell*) should have their own clerical cults with their own agendas. Sadly, while *Book of the Righteous* is a huge book, we lack infinite space. So we will provide descriptions of those eight cults as a "web extra" to this book on our website after its publication. Be sure to visit us at www.greenronin.com to get a write-up of the eight cults of the lords of Hell.

Chapter IX ~ Campaigning



Uriel, having convinced the Lord of Secrets to return arcane power to the mortal races, bears to them the sacred ark of magic.

Chapter IX: Campaigning

About This Chapter

You now have a complete mythology and churches for all of the gods in that mythology, including a few of the evil ones. Now we provide some ideas for incorporating these rules into a campaign world – from top-level concerns, like alignment, to nitty-gritty specifics, like geographical locations and adventure hooks. Obviously, nothing we provide in this chapter *must* be incorporated into your campaign in order to properly use the material in this book. This chapter provides suggested hooks to integrate the mythology into your campaign.

The mythology and churches we've provided carry with them some pretty serious campaign-affecting specifics (that there is a Hell and it is ruled by Asmodeus, for instance). This chapter provides even more ways to tie the contents of this book into your world. If you're looking for the exact opposite – ideas on how to use just parts of the material – flip on through to the next chapter.

Chapter IX ~ Campaigning

Alignments

The meaning of alignments in the d20 system often shifts from player to player, which is fine because they are an effort to capture the outlook of people – and as we all know, people change outlooks often.

But alignments as metaphysical concepts should be constant, because in the d20 system they are also representations of cosmic forces in a perpetual struggle with one another. Because of this, it is important to define the alignments not from the eyes of a single person, but as eternal concepts. After all, a god is above the petty concerns of the average individual; he's not chaotic good because he just doesn't like the pressure of rules. For a god, alignment represents an outlook on how the universe should be structured, what should be valued in mortal societies, and what should be opposed and wiped out from the world.

Of course, as we explain in Chapter III, sometimes gods do things that would seem evil from a mortal perspective in pursuit of these principles – for example, Terak kills his own son to teach him a lesson (and because his son asks him to, in a sense). From the eyes of a mortal, this might seem evil; but from the eyes of an immortal, who knows that mortal life is fleeting and that the life of the soul is all that really matters, it may be no more severe than a spanking. For this reason, the alignments of the gods represent conceptual leanings more than they do compasses for individual behaviors.

With that in mind, here is what the alignments mean from a more cosmic perspective – particularly from the view of the gods of the tree. A religious philosopher who has studied the gods of this mythology might interpret the alignments like this.

Lawful Good: "Charity"

There must be an established order to things, with leaders and followers, kings and commoners. The role of those at the top is to protect those below them and aid the weak when they are in need. The role of those at the bottom is to work, obey their lords, and live happy unremarkable lives in peace. Lawful good deities see the world through the eyes of righteous authority and benevolence. It is expected that most people will live small, uninteresting lives – that's good. The alternative, as has been shown in earlier epochs, is a life touched by war and death. The more protected the common person is, the more blissfully unaware of evil, the greater the success of good. To make this possible, a few must lead dangerous, bold lives. These powerful few, who risk their lives to protect the little people or bear the weight of crowns, stand at the pinnacle of goodness.

Neutral Good: "Hope"

The mortal races have free will; many use that free will to pursue self-aggrandizement at the expense of the happiness, and sometimes even the lives, of others. The mortal world is awash with wickedness, but the neutral good perspective is that there is always hope for the redemption of the wicked and the betterment of all. Person by person, deed by deed, the world is made better. The Neutral good deities want a better world where all people are equal and live in harmony and peace. They hope those ends will be achieved through good deeds on the small and great scale, and they therefore consider all goodness worthy, for it represents hope.

Chaotic Good: "Freedom"

The individual is the most powerful force in the world. The moment you turn a person into a face in the crowd, his wonder ceases and his ability to achieve greatness and do great good vanishes. Within every mortal, there is the secret to making a better world.

Anyone who wishes to quash that creativity, that spark, is either a tyrant or a misguided fool who thinks it is possible to make rules that apply to all situations. It is not possible, and the chaotic good deities know it. They therefore strive for the liberation of the minds and spirits of all people, and believe that the ideas of a peasant, and his dreams and yearnings, are no less valid than those of a king.



The fervor of worshippers leads them to create all sorts of devotional objects. This seashell emblazoned with Shalimyr's symbol is an example.

Lawful Neutral: "Order"

All of the mortal races are comprised of petty people. Left to their own devices, mortals would live in a squalid world of darkness and misery. They must be given rules and instructions, like children, so that they know how to behave and how to build societies. These rules must be expertly crafted, and if followed they will make for utopia. Lawful

neutral deities believe in rules and structures that are more important than specifics, more perfect than anything achievable in their absence.

Neutral: "Detachment"

All of existence was created in a moment with the utterance of a single word. All of it will disappear in a moment with the utterance of that same word. Everything in between is fleeting and illusory. The lives of mortals, of gods, of everything is a tale that will be over in the winking of an eye compared to the vast, infinite emptiness that surrounds it. Neutral deities know this and are utterly detached from the struggle.

Chapter IX ~ Campaigning

They perform their duty, their cosmic function, because it is their role in the play, but they refuse to believe that there is any salient difference between good and evil, law and chaos, or that the end of existence will come out any different if one side or another is dominant.

Chaotic Neutral: "Change"

From stagnation comes oblivion. The world is a test, or a dream, or a challenge, and the only way to fail is to be boring. Think of the world as large empty box into which you have been thrown. You can sit, doing nothing, or you can exert every influence, perform every act you can imagine, do everything you can think of to escape the box. And if escape is impossible, at the very least you can help yourself to forget about the box for a while. Change is the only path to discovery. Overthrowing established orders, rethinking long-held positions – these are necessary to pass the test, to still be around when the dream ends, to win the challenge. Chaotic neutral deities know this and seek to be ever-shifting, changing the rules whenever possible in hopes of new discovery.

Lawful Evil: "Tyranny"

All of existence is filled with scared, pathetic fools. If you give control of the world over to the gods born from the tree (mortal societies aren't even worthy of discussion) you are left with anarchy. Only the strongest and smartest should control things, and all who serve them should obey unconditionally. This is the way the world was intended to be from the very beginning and, inevitably, it is how it will be in the end. The lawful evil powers are certain that they are the rightful rulers of it all.

Neutral Evil: "Greed"

In a sense, this is the pettiest of the evils. It doesn't matter whose side you are on, who wins conflicts, or what you have to do. Come out on top in the end. You don't need to have the most power or be exalted above all others. But if you're in a better position at the end than you were when you started, no matter what means it took to get there, you've done well. Neutral evil powers are the most easily manipulated and won over because they are so predictable. They want simply to improve their positions.

Chaotic Evil: "Brutality"

The lustful appetites of the Chaotic Evil powers have no end. Hunger for blood, for wanton pleasure, for destruction – nothing will ever sate it. There is no higher purpose driving the chaotic evil powers. Such powers are the absence of reason, the embodiment of urge. They will destroy and consume and corrupt for eternity.

Gods by Alignment

Alignment is obviously very important to religious characters and their gods. They determine a character's worldview, as well as her disposition toward other characters, gods, and creatures. Many of us determine what sort of character we want to play – class and alignment – before we start worrying about such fine details as religion.

With this in mind, we've broken the religions in *Book of the Righteous* down according to two important factors in Table 6-1. Running down all of the possible alignments, we list which gods have that alignment

as their "base" alignment, and then which gods a character of that alignment is able to worship and still be within one alignment shift of the god's "base" alignment. This is important because a cleric can only worship a god within one alignment shift of her own, and may not be neutral unless her god is. So a lawful neutral cleric can only serve as clergy for a lawful good, lawful neutral, or lawful evil god. In Table 6-1 we handily list all those possibilities.

Disposition of the Churches

In this section, we explore the relations of the churches to one another throughout the world. This helps players and GMs to understand the prevailing feelings of the faithful toward one another. Obviously, the GM can determine that any one of the churches has a different attitude toward another than what we have provided in this book. *Book of the Righteous* assumes a fairly civilized society where outright armed conflict between the churches would not be tolerated – either by the religions' members or by political authorities.

However, given the history of the gods and the volatility of mortal societies, it is certainly believable that one church might be engaged in a longtime war with another. Throughout human history, there have been bitter religious conflicts between and within societies, so it is certainly sensible to place such a conflict within your world. Perhaps one nation has Zheenkeef as its patron, another Morwyn – or one is a nation of warriors loyal to Terak, the other Tinel, and their religious differences have brought them into armed conflict for centuries. Each accepts that the other's god exists and is powerful, but they see the other as heathens who worship wrongly. Remember, the peculiar nature of a polytheistic religion is that it is uncommon for someone to say "this god in the pantheon does not exist." Rather, conflict arises from how one of the gods is worshipped, or how much importance is put on that god's practices. There are so many different kinds of religious conflicts possible between well-meaning people, we are sure GMs will be able to dream up countless reasons for war in the name of the gods should they so choose.

We have tried to lay out guidelines that will do as little "world defining" outside of the churches as possible. Our guess is that many people will find *Book of the Righteous* useful as an add-on to an existing campaign. Perhaps your religious characters have never really had a sense for who their gods are and what they stand for – you can just throw the mythology of the gods of the tree into the world and you have an instant church structure, set of beliefs, and doctrine for every religion. However, it would be risky to just make up a conflict between the churches without thinking it through, so if you don't have time to really closely integrate the religions of *Book of the Righteous* into your world, we recommend using the following chart as a default when questions come up. Remember, this is for the interactions between the churches, not the gods (though they are influenced by the relations of the gods).

The table is to be read from left to right and explains how the church on the left feels about each of the churches above.

Key (pertaining just to the members of the church whose line you are reading. It is possible that these feelings are not reciprocated):

H – Openly hostile. Members of the faith are more likely to attack the faithful of this church on sight than talk. Devout members are willing to die opposing the work of this church.

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Table 61:

Gods and Churches by Alignment

Alignment	Gods of This Alignment	Possible Churches for Clerics of this Alignment
Lawful Good	Morwyn, Terak*, Anwyn, Rontra	Morwyn, Terak, Anwyn, Rontra, Urian, Korak, Thellyne, Maal, Naryne, The Great Church
Neutral Good	Urian, Korak, Thellyne	Urian, Korak, Thellyne, Morwyn, Terak, Anwyn, Rontra, Darmon, Aymara, Canelle, Mormeka, Tinel, The Great Church
Chaotic Good	Darmon, Tinel*, Aymara, Canelle	Darmon, Tinel, Aymara, Canelle, Urian, Korak, Thellyne, Shalimyr, Zheenkeef
Lawful Neutral	Terak*, Maal, Naryne	Terak, Maal, Naryne, Morwyn, Anwyn, Rontra, Mormekar, Tinel, The Great Church, Naran
Neutral***	Mormekar, Tinel*, Eliwyn**, The Nameless One**	Mormekar, Tinel
Chaotic Neutral	Shalimyr, Zheenkeef	Shalimyr, Zheenkeef, Darmon, Aymara, Canelle, Mormekar, Tinel, Canarak
Lawful Evil	Asmodeus/Kador, Naran	Asmodeus/Kador, Naran, Terak, Maal, Naryne, Thellos
Neutral Evil	Thellos	Thellos, Naran, Canarak, Mormekar, Tinel
Chaotic Evil	Canarak	Canarak, Thellos, Shalimyr, Zheenkeef

* Due to a very real schism in this god's outlook, he is considered to be two alignments.

** This god provides no powers to clergy, and is therefore not listed in column 3 of this table.

*** Clerics may not be neutral unless their deity is also.

Table 62: Church Attitudes

	The Great Church	Nameless One	Eliwyn	Rontra	Urian	Shalimyr	Terak	Morwyn	Zheenkeef	Tinel	Mormekar	Maal	Korak	Anwyn	Darmon	Aymara	Canelle	Thellyne	Naryne	Kador	Canarak	Naran	Thellos
The Great Church	X	N	N	F	W	W	F	F	S	W	W	F	F	F	W	F	W	W	F	H	An	An	An
Nameless One	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Eliwyn	N	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Rontra	W	N	F	X	F	W	W	A	N	N	N	W	F	F	W	F	N	F	N	H	H	H	H
Urian	W	N	W	A	X	W	W	A	W	W	W	W	W	W	W	F	W	F	N	H	H	H	H
Shalimyr	S	N	W	N	N	X	S	S	A	W	N	S	W	N	F	F	F	F	An	H	S	H	An
Terak	W	N	N	W	W	W	X	A	S	An	S	W	A	A	S	F	F	F	F	H	H	H	H
Morwyn	W	N	N	W	W	W	A	X	S	An	S	W	A	A	S	F	F	F	F	H	H	H	H
Zheenkeef	W	N	N	W	W	W	A	X	S	An	S	W	A	A	S	F	F	F	F	H	H	H	H
Tinel	W	N	N	W	W	W	A	X	S	An	S	W	A	A	S	F	F	F	F	H	H	H	H
Mormekar	W	N	N	W	W	W	A	X	S	An	S	W	A	A	S	F	F	F	F	H	H	H	H
Maal	F	N	N	F	F	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Korak	F	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Anwyn*	F	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Darmon	W	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Aymara	F	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Canelle	W	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Thellyne	W	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Naryne	F	N	N	W	W	S	W	F	S	N	F	X	F	F	S	F	W	W	A	H	H	H	H
Kador	H	S	An	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	X	F	F	F
Canarak	H	N	N	H	H	W	H	H	S	H	N	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	W	X	A	A
Naran	H	N	N	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	N	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	F	X	A	A
Thellos	H	N	N	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	N	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	F	A	A	X

* This line represents the attitudes of true Anwynites. For conspirators, use the Kador line.

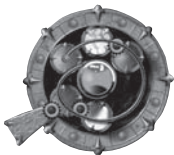
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- An** – Antipathy. Members of the faith have an absolute mistrust for this church. The faithful will not happily adventure with people from this church and may pepper their speech with insults and taunts when talking to them.
- S** – Suspicion. Members of the faith look upon adherents of this religion with caution, skepticism, and care. They would travel with such folk and even befriend them, but are likely to think of such friends as “exceptions to the rule.”
- N** – Neutral. Members of the faith have no positive or negative prejudices toward worshippers of this god.
- W** – Warm. Members of the faith are openly warm and receptive to members of this church. They view them as good people with whom they have something in common, though they are not particularly closely aligned. They will happily travel with such folk.
- F** – Friendly. Members of the faith see the worshippers of this god as their friends and people with whom they share much. They will take the words of such people seriously, and they will offer them aid if possible. There is no question they will travel with such folk.
- A** – Allies. Members of the faith see this church almost as an extension of their own. They will gladly attend the religious services of this church and find them almost equal to their own church's services. They view leaders of this church as authority figures to be respected as highly as the leaders of their own church.

Geographical Integration

In Chapters III-VII, there are several areas of the text that call for “world specifying,” which are marked with the symbol at left. For example, there is the old city where the Great Cathedral of the Great Church is located. If you have a fully defined campaign world, you should pick an appropriate city for this cathedral if you want to integrate the mythology and its churches into your world.

But Chapters III-VII provide only church-based landmarks that should be defined in your game world. The mythology in Appendix I references many locations that can also be placed in your campaign world, if you like. What follows is a list of such locations, and a few that don't appear in any of the myths in this book but might be quite nice to place on your map anyway.



Grove of Eliwyn

Hidden away from all but the most powerful druids, Eliwyn is in a sacred grove protected by Rontra the Earth and Thellyne the Huntress. From what myths say about the place, it's near a seashore, but little else is known about it. Of course, the world has been through so much upheaval since Eliwyn first grew that the grove may now be on top of a mountain or in some other unlikely location. All that's certain is that mortals can't find it unless something remarkable happens.

Birthplace of the Titans

Somewhere in the world is a deep, still pool by which Zheenkeef sculpted the Titans, and where she and Shalimyr first lay together.

River Valley of the Brothers and Sisters

The Three Brothers and Three Sisters awoke at the edge of a river in the middle of a river valley surrounded by great rocks. That valley is said to be far in the West. Many have searched for this river valley, and indeed it may be a place of great power for the followers of the siblings.

Mountain Pool of the Sisters

The Three Companions found the Three Sisters in a mountain pool singing to one another. The pool is said to be far in the East. This pool is sacred to all six gods and their followers.

The Underwater Palace

The palace of the Nameless One built in the sea may be an important location if your campaign ever takes the players deep below the waves.

Temple of Rebirth

This ancient temple of Rontra, high in the mountains, has been there for a thousand years (at least), and contains an ancient library. If you do not want to have this temple in your campaign, and are playing as though the Great Sage Matalou's treatise was written long before the time of your campaign, it could easily be long destroyed.

Ruins of the Mountain Palace

The Nameless One built a palace at the top of the tallest mountain; it was destroyed in the war between Terak and Tinel. It is easily possible that these ruins no longer exist, but if you like, you could put them in your campaign world.

Entrance to Maal's Kingdom

It's a fairly common mythological theme for mortals to journey to plead with the lord of the dead for a life back. If you would like to have such an event in the history of your campaign world, or even in the course of your campaign, you might want to place a legendary entrance to Maal's Kingdom on your map.

Entrance to Hell

Similarly, you may want to have a place in your world where the gates to Hell can be found. These gates would be locked to any but a god or similarly powerful figure, but may play an important role in your campaign somehow.

The Dark River

Instead of an entrance to Hell or the Land of the Dead, or in addition to them, you may want to have a place on your map where mortals can find the Dark River that flows through the Great Sphere and comes to the Land of the Dead, the Abyss, Gehenna, and Hell – and even goes on to flow through Elysium and Heaven. The Dark River need not flow through the Prime Material Plane if you'd prefer not.

Landing Places of the Fruits

Three of the fruits of Eliwyn were hurled across the world by Zheenkeef. The places these fruits landed can be placed on the map if you like, and might be sacred places to each of the races in question.

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The three stones crafted for the forefathers of the dwarves by Clever Handed Korak are long since lost.

Carason

The site of the ancient struggle between Morwynites and Zhenkefans might still be a city today.

Battle Grounds

There are several mythical battles in the mythology, including multiple clashes between Tinel and Terak. You might pick several places on your campaign map where titanic struggles occurred and mark them by odd geological phenomena or powerful magical effects.

Halls of Urían

Urían has four great halls where the winds are caged. It is possible, if you like, for a mortal to find one or all of those halls and meet the winds.

Birthplaces of Heroes

There are a few heroes mentioned in the mythology, meaning mortals who end up becoming immortal servants to the gods. Examples include Terak's son Aerix, Maal's advisor Issama, and Thellyne's hunting companion Nayariel. The earthly homes of these people, if preserved, would be major landmarks and holy places.

Aragos' Kingdom

It might be a lot of fun to have a kingdom in your world that is the historic home of Aragos, the king who outlawed music and happiness

and went on to repent and marry Aymara. Such a place might now be a place dedicated to Aymara, or perhaps it has fallen on dark times.

The Cathedral of Truth

This Tinelite Scriptorium houses the tome of 30 questions asked of Gian ben Gian. Much about the gods is said to be revealed by this tome, but only the most important religious leaders are allowed to peruse its contents

Incorporating Mythological Elements

When plugging the myths into your campaign, you can do a lot more than simply have clerics and temples of the gods dotting the landscape. You can include symbols of the gods in numerous settings – for instance, a tavern that uses a reference to one of the gods in its name, indicating to the players that the proprietor is one of the faithful. These references go beyond simply using the holy symbol of the god. One can also rely on the animal affinities of the god, or words tied to the god.

In real-world myths, interactions with the gods are rarely direct. A hero doesn't often meet someone on the road who glows brightly and says "I am your god!" Instead, interaction with gods is often had in dreams or through symbols. You might have a Teraketh cleric hunting Asmodean cultists dream of a golden lion swallowing a fire – though that might be a little obvious; the point is that it is possible to use any element of the god's church or myths to represent the god in your campaign. You need not rely just on the material provided in the "Representations" sections of Chapters III-VIII.

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Campaign and Adventure Hooks

Book of the Righteous is filled with little hooks and ideas for adventures, as well as huge ideas that can span an entire campaign. Depending on the religions your PCs follow, there will end up being many permutations of religious-themed adventures available to you. We list here a few campaign-spanning ideas and a few single adventure ideas for your convenience, but each of your players will also have personal campaign hooks based on her faith. A Darmonite character will always be seeking to understand the name she has chosen, a Maalite will always be seeking the Sacred Laws, etc.

You might find that if you give your players rumors of very difficult adventures, they will pass on them and instead tell their church hierarchy about the rumor. We've discovered that many players, once part of a very defined church hierarchy rather than the nebulous one we all usually play with, start relying on that hierarchy. This is fine and should be encouraged. However, you should feel free to start putting pressure on the players through that hierarchy as well, perhaps sending them on quests that they would not dare go on otherwise.

The biggest difficulty will be when the players want to drag along a large contingent of their fellow church members to help them on such quests. For instance, a group of PC Maalites may know they are about to fight a dragon hoarding an artifact of the faith, and may ask the Court to send a couple fists with them to dispatch the evil beast. There are two ways to handle this if you don't want to give the players a bunch of henchmen from the church: You can have the church hierarchy tell them the aid is simply not available (though you'll need to keep this fact consistent – don't have 20 holy warriors from that same temple show up during the next adventure to save the day), or you can have the church hierarchy (perhaps in the form of a powerful priest) simply tell the PCs that they are fated for this task. The great thing about religion is that people can simply be fated for things – it is the will of the gods, and dragging along henchmen is shirking your fate and may anger the gods.

Adventure Ideas

- The players happen upon an ancient temple to one or more of the gods, likely gods they worship, which was long ago desecrated by followers of Hell. In the temple's catacombs is the burial place of a great holy warrior of the faith, whose remains have been desecrated and whose soul the desecrators have trapped there. Her remains might be surrounded by terrible immortal guardians, always making sure her spirit cannot escape;
- The players find a stronghold of one of the Three Brothers and must wipe it out, discovering along the way the true history of the Three Sisters and the Three Brothers;
- The players meet a town that has been deluded by a false priest (or several false priests) posing as holy men of the gods. They must pull down these false priests and prove that they are false. They can't simply declare them false, as the town is more likely to believe the priests they trust, and those priests will certainly say the players are lying if accused;
- The players happen upon an evil humanoid temple and discover, after wiping them out, that the evil humanoids worship one of the Three Brothers under a different name;
- The players get an opportunity to recover one of the artifacts of the gods, such as one of the three gems Korak gave to the dwarven forefathers. The artifact is in the hoard of some insanely hard to defeat monster, but the retrieval of the artifact makes them heroes. This could be a campaign focus;
- There is a fairly common evil humanoid (such as an orc warlord) in the region who has grown incredibly powerful; he is reputed to have unbelievable strength and is wiping out all his foes. In their quest to destroy this orc, the PCs soon discover that he is drinking blood from a pool that collects in his cave home through a strange old fountain. The cave is an ancient temple of one of the many evil powers and, through whatever means you like, the players trace back the source of the fountain – a servant of one of the gods that has been chained there for eons and is constantly being pricked by the fountain mechanism, causing her blood to flow into the pool. A titan or unicorn are both very appropriate subjects of this torment. The players must free the tormented servitor;
- An invading fleet is approaching the PCs' country. They must find one of the houses of Urian and convince him to unchain one of the winds against the fleet – or they must unchain the wind without his permission and risk his wrath;
- The adventuring party, likely high-level and old friends, is approached by a disguised servitor of a god or goddess. The being will explain to the PCs that they are needed to aid in a struggle of great importance between his master (or mistress) and a dark lord of a distant land. The party is sent to recover a lost relic, possibly kept in the horde of some ancient and terrifying evil, to help turn the tides of war. Gradually it will become clear that the players are acting on behalf of a god, and that the battle is raging between Heaven and the Abyss, with mortal agents acting as its soldiers;
- A holy relic is being transferred from one church to another across a great distance. The PCs must defend it against bandits and the forces of evil that seek to take it;
- The players must speak to the gods in Heaven directly, since spells to commune are not reaching the ears of the Lords of Heaven and religious leaders wish to discover why not. The players must track down one of the many locks to Heaven and somehow open it;
- The PCs encounter the nine apostles of Zheenkeef from Corason, who still wander the earth accursed, and must help them make restitution and be at peace.

Campaign Ideas

- A group of mad cultists are trying to collect all the sounds of the Nameless One's name so they can end the world. The sounds are distributed across the world – in texts, bells, mountain halls, and other mysterious places. The players must stop them. Along the way, they'll find themselves allied with the powers of good and evil both, as everyone has a vested interest in stopping the word from ever being uttered. In the end, a major power of Heaven, Hell, or the Abyss turns out to be behind the cult;
- The players seek to find the lost laws of Maal and must cross the world tracking clues and hints of clues in their quest. Whether they find them all, or even one of them, is up to the

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GM, but along the way they are certain to be opposed by the powers of Chaos, both good and evil;

- The players unravel the secret of the conspiracy infesting the church of Anwyn. They must track the conspiracy to its source and destroy it, a very difficult matter and one few will be willing to help them with;
- The signs point to the ripening of the fifth and final fruit. It is a time of great change in the world, and Hell and Heaven begin to war on earth. The players must find the fruit and protect it so that Heaven can prevail. In the course of their journeys they discover the reason for Kador/Asmodeus' obsession with the fifth fruit, which is bound up in the second prophesy of the Nameless One;
- The players, all low-level religious characters of some kind, are assigned by their churches to serve as the spiritual advisors to a small settlement forming in the wilderness. The players help shepherd the settlement from a tiny outpost under assault to a thriving town with temples to each of their gods;
- One or more of the players are deeply religious Urianath and go on a quest to discover the lost secrets of the order of the griffins and to bring the order back;
- The players are drawn into the plans of the Aymaran order of the watchful eye. The time of struggle between the Aymarans and Hell is approaching and the players must prepare for and win a war with Hell;
- Over the course of the campaign, good people lose all power over fire, then air, then water.... the players discover that the

pillars of these elements have been taken over by Asmodeus and the Brothers and must stop the followers of Naran from gaining control of the pillar of earth. If they fail, it spawns a war of the gods in which the players become heavily involved;

- Shalimyr has decided that the mortal races are wicked and it's time to flood the earth, wiping out all but the properly obedient. This pitches the gods into internecine conflict, and your players must work to oppose Shalimyr's aims or to aid them.

Perks

You better believe that the very first thing your players will want when they become part of an organized faith is perks. The reasoning is pretty simple: "I am a cleric of Terak. The Teraketh have magic axes; gimme a magic axe. Why wouldn't you? I'm out risking my life for the temples daily, I should have a magic axe. Give it!"

It's actually a fairly compelling argument. If you don't mind giving your players perks, feel free. However, there should be give and take. The players should be expected to give all the wealth that they don't need for survival to their churches. That includes taking shares of magic items from their party, even when they don't need them, to donate to the vaults of the church.

The faithful PCs who are neck-deep in perks from their churches may also be neck-deep in the religious equivalent of bureaucracy. If the Teraketh Temple, for example, gives the PC Teraketh soldier a magic axe and 20 healing potions for free before his adventure, it means the soldier is essentially adventuring for the Temple. His superiors will



"In commemoration of the battle against the hordes of evil, fought in 276 and won by Terak's grace."

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want to know every detail of the adventure when he returns, and will be quite upset if the PC hasn't looked after the Temple's interests when it comes to divvying up treasure, particularly if some of the soldier's companions represent interests counter to the Temple's and are allowed to walk away with important magic items that the soldier had a legitimate claim to.

The PC who goes to the trough of his church should soon learn that life is a lot simpler for the more chaotic-leaning clergy, who have no real hierarchy to call upon for perks.

Regardless, we recommend that:

- A church should always be willing to sell magic items to members of its own holy orders at cost;
- The clergy that actually reside at a church should be willing to cast any spells for holy order members for free or at cost (if there are costs), unless there are extenuating circumstances;
- A church should request that a PC who has extra magic items or extra money donate these items to the church. The clergy can be fairly prying about a fellow church-member's possessions, especially if the PC has been receiving perks;
- Should a member of a holy order want a spell cast on one of his companions, the caster should demand money from the recipient or even some sign of devotion to the caster's god.

This grows more complex if the requested recipient of a church's generosity is of an opposing ideology. For instance, a Teraketh soldier may have befriended a like-aligned Tinelite armarius. That armarius is killed in a region without a Tinelite scriptorium. The soldier takes his friend's body to the local Teraketh Temple for a *raise dead* spell. Were it the soldier who had been killed, it is likely the spell would be cast free of charge (unless extenuating circumstances prevented it). However, as fond as the PC soldier may be of his armarius friend, it is highly unlikely he will be able to convince a fellow soldier to call upon the power of Terak to bring a servant of his rival back to life. The argument from the PC soldier to do so would have to be incredibly compelling. In a less extreme case, the casting soldier might bring a friend of the PC's back to life for free only if, for instance, the dead friend has done great service for the Temple or saved the life of the PC soldier.

One way or the other, the perks of a church member do not usually extend to his friends, no matter how close they are.

Jus Cogens

In the real world, we have a notion of *jus cogens*, crimes so bad that every nation condemns them; no matter how much you want to, you cannot make an agreement between nations that embraces such a crime. In our world, these crimes include genocide, slavery, piracy, and attacking a diplomat.

We've found that it's fantastically useful to establish such a set of laws for a game world. Essentially, the gods may have a set of taboos that everyone religious knows they must not violate. Players find it handy to know what is considered unquestionably evil. This way, when they encounter someone committing such a crime, they don't have to ask "is that evil in our world?"

We recommend that if you don't have the time or desire to define the *jus cogens* rules for your world, you use the following list or a modified version of it. This is a list of behaviors that all people who worship the

gods of the tree acknowledge as evil by definition (and which the gods in Chapter VIII likely embrace):

Slavery, Incest, Genocide of one of the five mortal races, Attacking an anointed member of the clergy of one of the gods of the tree unprovoked, Killing a member of your own family, Consorting with demon, Consorting with devils, Creating the undead, Destroying a soul, Imprisoning a soul, Cannibalism, Desecrating a temple to one of the gods of the tree, Denying the existence of one or more of the gods of the tree

We haven't included any laws that are commonly understood as wrong, like murder or theft, as some of the gods and their faithful might argue that people commit these crimes without being pure evil (one of the Shalimyn might find some murders justified, while a Darmonite wayfarer may argue that many thefts are acceptable). The above crimes are ones that any of the faithful would agree mark a person as willfully evil. How the various followers of the gods respond to the discovery that a person is willfully evil is another matter entirely.

You might wish to add or remove behaviors. It would be reasonable to determine that all of the faithful in your world agree that torture and the use of poison are evil. Then again, you might feel that the Shalimyn, Zhenkefans, and many Darmonites have no problem with these behaviors (which is why we did not include them on the list). In making such a list of "universal evil," you do a great deal to codify the moral outlook of your world, something that many players find extremely useful.

Evil Races

It is particularly useful to define whether or not yours is a world in which certain humanoids are, by definition, evil. For instance, some people like to play in campaigns where orcs and goblins have thriving cultures with which the players interact. Others like to establish that orcs and goblins are evil by definition and must be opposed in all things.

We usually say all savage humanoids (orcs, goblins, bugbears, hobgoblins, etc.) are evil by definition, but that might be quite counter to the feel of your campaign. Either way, it will be an important question to answer for your players – what kinds of creatures they can kill "guilt free." For instance, a lawful good holy warrior happening upon a hut with goblin infants has a decision to make – kill them or let them grow. In a world where goblins are, by definition, evil, he should kill them. In a world where all races are redeemable, he should not. Your players will want to know what their religions say about this sort of dilemma, as they are likely to come up in a lifetime of adventuring.

Heteretical Teachings and Blasphemy

You may desire to have a world where heresy is a major issue. While heresy has been a major issue in many real-world cultures, it is not a necessary assumption of a religion. The difference between heresy and the list of evil acts above is that heresy is a belief or pronouncement counter to the establishment's teachings about the religion. The list of evil acts above are just as likely to be punished in the afterlife or by a celestial servant of a god as they are by a mortal servant to the gods. Heresy, on the other hand, may not offend the god it pertains to at all.

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For example, a cult may rise that professes that Terak is actually a lion. They may believe that his core form is not like that of men at all, and when he first emerged from the fruit, he was like a lion standing on its hind legs. They might represent Terak as a lion-headed figure in statues and paintings. We could see some fantasy worlds where this wouldn't matter at all. People might find it an interesting belief and agree to live and let live. We can also see worlds where such a teaching may be decreed heretical, and the members of this cult that sees Terak as more animal than man rounded up and burnt at the stake. In either world, we can't see Terak minding the idea of his appearing as a lion because, at the end of the day, he is beyond mortal comprehension – whatever physical image they wish to see him in is fine, as long as they pay him the proper respect.

How your culture and the powerful churches of your world treat dissent is an important decision. Keep in mind that there is a difference between blasphemy and heresy (or at least *we* think there is). Heresy is a crime against the earthly establishment that bears the name of the god, disagreeing with their beliefs about the god, but doing so out of faith in the god. Blasphemy is actually insulting, defaming, or slurring the god in question. The two biggest examples of blasphemy made their way onto the calvalcade of evil above: destroying or desecrating a temple and denying the existence of a god. In our opinion, all religious characters should agree that blasphemy is evil (remembering that in a world with multiple pantheons, you need not deny the existence of the other pantheon, or try to destroy its works, in order to worship your own).

What Horn, Faith?

While we have provided a fairly exhaustive description of all the gods' churches, there is actually quite a bit we have left to you so as not to intrude on the definition of your game world. There are some key elements your players will likely have questions about as they step into their roles as religious characters in thoroughly defined religions:

How popular are the various churches in the regions where your game takes place?

Your players will want to know exactly how popular their church is in their local area, in the area where they grew up, and in neighboring areas. This should be fairly easy to define, but it absolutely helps a role-player to flesh out her character; if she has assumed the worship of a god that no one else in her region cares about, it says a lot about her character.

Where are the major centers of worship in the region?

This will be of paramount importance to your players. Where are the churches, great and small, in the area? If there is a small chapel in the players' base of operations, is there a greater church in the nearby city? This will include potentially rival churches – your players will want to know what the religious landscape is like in the area where you set your game because it lets them know where their superiors are and what their options are for moving up as they gain in prestige.

Who runs the churches?

This will be an early and profoundly important question for your religious characters. If they are playing characters whose church has a supreme authority, they will want to know where that supreme

authority is in the world and what his or her name is. More importantly, they will want to know the names of the local leaders of the faith, from their immediate superiors to the highest-ranking local church official. This really helps them feel a part of a living, breathing faith.

How do people interact with the faith?

In the church sections, we give some suggestions as to how people usually perceive the faith. This is meant in general terms and cannot possibly replace specific thought about the way a church is perceived and interacted with in a specific culture or locality. Your players will want to know what their status is locally as clergy or holy warriors. They will want to know if they are expected to administer religious rites. They will want to know if people are likely to come to them for spiritual advice. Perhaps their church, which is defined in its chapter as being highly popular, is actually fairly unpopular in this region for some reason. Your players will want to know why – and if they're really on the ball, how they can turn such perceptions around.

What are services like?

We have actively avoided spelling out in too much detail how church services for the faiths work (do the clergy stand on a pulpit and speak in an ancient tongue that none of their congregants can understand? Do all of the faithful sit in a circle, everyone speaking when they feel moved to?). This is in part because we have rarely seen games that approach this sort of detail, but also because it actively defines the way your players must role-play their characters, which we have no interest in doing. If you want to take your campaign into the church and actually explore religious rites and ceremonies, we heartily encourage it. Enjoy making up the exact procedure of a Darmonite wedding ceremony. If you're proud of your creation and want to share it with the world, come to the Green Ronin website and post it to our forums.

How do people choose between all of the churches, and why?

This is the hardest question of this book, and we have avoided answering it. Essentially, if you think about a world with a complete pantheon and churches for each of the gods in the pantheon, as well as one for the pantheon in its entirety, how on earth does a person decide to become a member of one church over another? And why does a person make such a decision? We have some clear explanations for this in Chapters III-VII; smiths are likely to worship Korak over any other god, artists are most likely to worship Aymara, etc. But wouldn't a smith who isn't terribly pious (and there are always such people in the world) just worship all the gods and make offerings to them whenever appropriate? Why tie oneself to a specific church? We can't answer this because it is, essentially, a matter of culture. We have no idea what the world of your game is like, but answering this question will help quite a bit in defining its interaction with religion. Perhaps the central kingdom of your game has worshipped Darmon and Aymara for generations, considering them its patron gods. In such a place, most people will be members of one or both churches (it's possible for people to be faithful members of two or more churches if you want it to be) and the reason for their faith is obvious; they were raised that way and have never imagined questioning it. The point is, this is something for you to define for your players, if you wish, and it is one of the strongest steps in tying the religion to your game world.

Chapter X: Do It Yourself

About This Chapter

If this book were only useful to people just starting a campaign, it wouldn't be very useful at all. Most of us already have an existing campaign and, in that campaign, an existing set of gods. Whether those gods are just names and domains (or "portfolios," as they are sometimes called) – like Thor, god of thunder – or fairly developed gods with existing churches, it may be difficult to transition those existing faiths into the faiths of this book. In this chapter we provide a number of ideas for changing or integrating the contents of this book.

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Cosmological Implications

Perhaps it goes without saying that a complete mythology bears with it distinct implications for your campaign's cosmology. If you already have a cosmology defined for your campaign, you may find it impossible to directly incorporate the material in this book without some modifications. In this section, we spell out some of the broader cosmological implications of the mythology. The rest of the chapter provides some ideas for modifying the material to work around elements that do not jibe with your cosmology.

In the following list, we provide a breakdown of all the major cosmological elements in the mythology. Using this list as a reference can help you isolate any conflicts.

- The universe was created by one creator god;
- The elemental planes (earth, air, fire, water) are four pillars;
- The known universe is an enormous sphere supported by the four pillars;
- Inside the great sphere is the mortal world (including the sky), the land of the dead, the mountain of Heaven, Elysium, Gehenna, the Abyss, and the nine planes of Hell;
- All of these planes are contained in their own spheres (see Chapter II for a diagram), except the Abyss, which is burrowing out into the infinite;
- Between all these spheres is the astral space;
- The material plane is contained in a great crystal sphere formed of positive and negative energy;
- The material plane coexists with the ethereal and shadow planes;
- The creator god made the first living creature of the sphere, called Kador, who turned evil and is now lord of Hell under the name Asmodeus;
- The creator god left the sphere and was never heard from again;
- There is a tree of life with five fruits from which the pantheon's four main gods were born;
- The tree's roots touch the center of the earth and its branches reach to Heaven;
- There was a race that populated the earth before any of the "player character" races, called the div (essentially, genies);
- It is possible for the spirit of a dead person to be reborn;
- Kador/Asmodeus almost destroyed the world and the gods;
- There is a Hell with nine layers ruled by Asmodeus;
- There is an Abyss with infinite layers ruled by the demon princes;
- There are two opposing planes, Elysium and Gehenna, where all mortals are watched and their deeds recorded – all good deeds are recorded by the guardian angels of Elysium, all evil deeds by the daemons of Gehenna;
- There is a land of the dead where two of the gods rule, with one of them judging every soul that comes before him;
- Mortals, upon their death, can: be sent to Hell, Gehenna, or the Abyss for eternal punishment; reside in bliss in the halls of the dead or await rebirth in those same halls; or ascend to Heaven to live beside their gods;
- The div rose up against the gods and have been cast into the pillars, imprisoned there for eternity;
- Many of the good div who served the gods were elevated and are now the celestial host: angels, archangels, and major servants of the gods (like demi-gods);
- The mortal races were also born from fruits on the tree of life, making mortals and gods "cousins";
- The gods did not create any of the races and there are no "racial" gods;
- Elves are descended from the div and are essentially the same race as fairies – but where fairies have chosen to maintain their immortality and lose their free will, elves have chosen free will in exchange for mortality;
- The pantheon of the gods has no evil gods in it. They are either good or neutral, and they are opposed to the evil gods, devils, and demons;
- The pantheon has agreed to a Compact that subjects them to several laws;
- Mortals have completely free will and may live however they want, receiving guidance and temptation from the agents of Heaven and Hell;
- No one god rules over all the others;
- No one god may interfere directly with mortal affairs;
- When a mortal worships a god it gives that god power;
- When a mortal follows the teachings of a god, even without formal worship, it gives that god power;
- When mortals do evil, it gives Hell and the Abyss power;
- There is an unripe fruit still hanging from the Tree of Life, and no one knows what will happen when it ripens;
- If the name of the Creator is ever spoken again, it will end the universe.

There is a lot more detail to the mythology, such as the origins of all the races, where dragons and orcs came from, etc. But these parts of the mythology can be discarded without altering the fundamental core of the mythos. The elements listed above are "key" parts of the mythology, and you will likely need to do some rewriting or use other fancy footwork if you don't want one of these points in your game world. In the rest of this chapter, we include many suggestions for just such fancy footwork.

Standard Cosmology

Over the years, people have developed a fairly standardized cosmology for fantasy campaigns, which we have tried to adhere to in many ways. But let us explore this book's key departures and ways to pull this mythology back toward that standard.

Essentially, alignment is the universal designator for most standard cosmologies. The Prime Material Plane is surrounded by different

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planes for each of the many alignment possibilities. In this standard, the seven kingdoms of Heaven usually comprise the lawful good plane. Hell is simply the lawful evil plane and devils merely represent the lawful forces of evil. In this system, the neutral good and chaotic good gods have their own planes and are likely disconnected entirely with the gods of other alignments.

In the standard cosmology, when people die, their souls go to the plane that is appropriate for their alignment. In our cosmology, they all go to Maal's Kingdom, at least at first, and there are no planes for alignments like chaotic neutral or neutral good.

If you want to have a standard cosmology with a plane for each alignment, we recommend one of two options:

Two Aspect Theory

If you would like the gods appropriate to each alignment to reside in planes of that alignment, we recommend that you institute the following cosmological set-up; perhaps as your characters grow in power they can come to theorize the existence of these additional planes, and prove it in their planar travels.

The great thing about being a god is that you can be in two places at the same time. In the "two aspect" scenario, the gods are two-faced (literally). One face is their "personality": names, relations with one another, and family structures. The other face is their "power": the raw forces they represent. For example, Terak's personality is the blustering King of the Gods married to Morwyn; his power consists of the raw forces of Valor and War.

In such a cosmology, the gods reside in two places. In personality, they dwell in the three planes where gods reside in the mythology (Heaven, earth, and the land of the dead); in power, they also reside in a more pure form in a plane that is the raw stuff of an alignment's force. Of course, because Terak and Tinel are both subject to deep schisms, they alone would be present as "powers" on two planes instead of just one. In this scenario, your world would have all of the following planes (keeping in mind that we're not offering names for or descriptions of the new alignment planes as, we assume, you will want to provide them):

- Prime Material: The earth, sun, moon, stars, and seas are all in the prime material plane. It has no alignment (it is neutral) and is the home in personality to Thellyne, Rontra, Urian, and Shalimyr.
- The Underworld: The home of the dead and the Kingdom

of Maal, the underworld has the four halls of final judgment and the grey places where the dead await judgment. It is also neutral. It is home in personality to Maal and Naryne.

- Astral Plane: The dark parts of the great sphere between the planes where there is, essentially, nothing. This plane is neutral.
- Lawful Good: The seven-cited mountain of Heaven is the central home to the gods. It is the peak of goodness and the "natural order" of the universe. This is where nearly all of the lords of Heaven live in personality, sitting on their thrones in the great palace at the peak. This is the place that mortals mean when they say "Heaven." It is home to the powers of: Charity and Mercy (Morwyn), Valor and Honor (Terak), Home and

Service (Anwyn), Life and Growth (Rontra). Morwyn may be "Queen of Heaven" because the home of the gods is her home in both personality and power.

- Neutral Good: The halls of virtue, the hallowed fields, Elysium. Whatever you wish to call the neutral good plane, it should be a place of pure kindness, creation, and joy. It is where the guardian angels reside and watch over all mortals, recording their deeds of good. It is home to the powers of Creation and Labor (Korak), Nature and Natural Beauty (Thellyne), and Benevolence and Nurturing (Urian).

- Chaotic Good: The domain of celebration and glory. Most standard cosmologies tie this plane to Valhalla or some other real-world mythological place of hunting, drink, song, and wild splendor. However you wish to establish the plane of pure chaotic good, it should be home to the powers of Travel and Tricks (Darmon); Art, Song, and Love (Aymara); Knowledge and Learning (Tinel); and Competition and Strength (Canelle).

- Lawful Neutral: The clock-work plane. This is often a plane of perfect order, planning, and structure. However you wish to represent it, it would be home to the powers of Justice and Law (Maal), Unity (Terak), and Nobility and Order (Naryne).

- Neutral: The grey places. Usually a land of mists and nothingness as far as the eye can see, the neutral plane is often a gateway to all the other planes. It is the home to the powers of Death (Mormekar) and Secrets (Tinel).
- Chaotic Neutral: The shifting places. Usually a place of non-stop chaos, where the ground changes and moves under your feet and entire landmasses float off into nothingness in the winking of an eye. It is home to the powers of Madness and Inspiration (Zheenkeef) and Change and Destruction (Shalimyr).



Just as our sins are recorded in Gehenna, so are our good deeds recorded in the great white ledgers of Elysium.

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Maal and Naryne are the king and queen of all souls. All but the most wicked or most blessed will come to their domain in the end.

- Lawful Evil: Hell. The nine planes of Hell are home to the highly structured punishments and horrors that await those who have lived lives of selfish tyranny. Ruled by Asmodeus and the eight lords who are his subordinates, Hell is home to the powers of: Lies and Power (Asmodeus) and Pride and Tyranny (Naran).
- Neutral Evil: Gehenna, the dark horrors. However you want to define this plane, it is a place of pure evil. It is where the daemons watch over the mortal races and record their evil deeds in black ledgers. It is home to the powers of Greed and Gluttony (Thellos).
- Chaotic Evil: The Abyss. Home to demons, this plane is a place of constantly shifting power, war, and destruction. The Abyss is home to the powers of Murder and Bloodlust (Canarak).

With this structure, your players have multiple planes they can travel to without requiring a re-writing of the mythology. You can even determine that Maal sends the dead who most typify a specific alignment and are not to be reborn to the appropriate plane (thus sending the most chaotic evil mortals to the Abyss and lawful evil to Hell as written, but also sending chaotic neutral to the chaotic neutral plane, whatever it may be).

A possible twist on this scenario is that the planes listed here that are not mentioned in the mythology were created by the various gods whose powers call them home. For instance, the plane of chaotic good was built by Darmon and is a place where the gods of chaotic good reside when not in the palace of the gods with the other Lords of Heaven. This way, the plane is home to the “power” aspect of the

god at all times and the “personality” aspect of the god some of the time. You would need to decide what that means, exactly, in your game world.

Planes Outside the Sphere

The other fairly simple way to introduce more planes without having to rewrite the mythology is to say that the Nameless One did, in fact, create more spheres when he left this one. From this perspective, you can have limitless planes. In fact, since the Abyss has actually broken through the sphere and is spiraling out through the emptiness, it is quite possible that the demonic plane has actually tunneled into another sphere of the Nameless One’s creation, acting as a bridge between the two spheres.

Using this scenario, the players, using planar travel, might reach the locked gates of Heaven, Hell, the Abyss, the land of the dead, or the ether and still be in the sphere. They might go to one of the pillars (the elemental planes) and thus journey just outside the sphere to connected planes. But it may be within their power to travel from this sphere and into another, and thus see alternative Prime Material Planes, with their own gods and the various planes that accompany them.

Objective to Subjective

Reading Appendix I, you will find that it is written from an “objective” point of view, meaning that we state the Great Sage Matalou is right about these things and it has been proven. While he does not know the answers to some of the mysteries raised in the

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mythology, those questions he can answer he answers with the truth.

The simplest way to use the material of this book in its entirety without having to make any significant modifications is to simply tell your players that the GSM is wrong about many things. It is easy enough to position the mythology of Appendix I as an ancient and outdated one. This positioning makes a great deal of sense out of any inconsistencies between the mythos and your pre-established cosmology.

This shift does not help with the church sections, however. In Chapters III – VIII, some of the god-specific myths make use of elements that may conflict with your established campaign setting. For instance, you may have already told your players that there is no afterlife; in such a case, the church of Maal, particularly the myths of the god upon which it is based, would make little sense. You can continue to incorporate the church into your world under the idea that their “objective” beliefs are perhaps wrong; while your players know there is no afterlife, it’s a matter that’s up for debate. The church of Maal, in the example given, would become a deluded group of people (to your and the players’ knowledge, but not to the certain knowledge of the people in the campaign world) who believe that their god, who is really just the god of justice, rules over a non-existent afterlife.

The beauty of religion and mythology is that people believe things that are utterly contradictory. One group might say there is no afterlife, another say there is; only the gods themselves can say which is right, and gods aren’t always forthcoming about such things. So if you want to leave the churches as written counter to established cosmology, it will work in most cases. If, however, you want to make something contradictory to a church’s faith a universally known and acknowledged fact (for instance, everyone in the campaign world knows there is no afterlife) then you will actually have to make the church either prophetic or heretic. By that we mean that the church either: a) knows something no one else knows; or b) insists on believing something that is absolutely counter to fact (like people alive today who think the world is flat). In either case, most people’s esteem for this church would be decreased greatly (the more outrageous the belief, the lower the esteem).

Names

One of the easiest ways to use the material of this book in a campaign that’s already started is to simply change the names of the gods and their servants to match those you already have. For instance, if you have a cleric who worships Cycrikkal, the god of magic, and you’ve merely alluded to other gods in Cycrikkal’s pantheon, it should be very easy to use this material. Change Tinel’s name to Cycrikkal, change the names of the other gods to names appropriate to your game world (or leave them as they are), and away you go.

However, you may find that the names of the gods presented here do not fit with the kinds of names you have in your campaign. For instance, if you’ve populated your world with Jeans and Alains and Marcells, it would be very odd to have a group of gods whose names are in no way Gallic. For this reason, we provide some explanation of the system we used to name our gods below:

We’ve used two methods for naming the gods and their servants in *Book of the Righteous*. Asmodeus and his servants, the archangels, and the div are all based on real-world mysticism that has arisen

from the religions of Abraham (Christianity, Islam, and Judaism). This may seem odd, given that we made everything else up. But these legends have become part of the fabric of the d20 system. Everyone expects to oppose devils, and everyone expects that those devils might be headed up by Asmodeus. Everyone expects that the gods are served by angels, and that those angels are headed up by archangels. For this reason, we have kept names that are strongly influenced by ancient languages from Rome and what we now call the Middle East. Just as one might see a griffin or a centaur in a d20 game and not wonder what those two creatures from Greco-Roman myth are doing in this world, we believe one might see Asmodeus without wondering why medieval mysticism has encroached upon an otherwise entirely fantastic world.

Beyond devils and angels, we have relied on what we can best describe as “fantasy naming conventions.” These are names that do not have a meaning in any real-world language, that are generally European in sound use (they don’t rely on tonality or clicks and glottal stops), and that can be easily spelled out in English. We all have fantasy characters with names like the names of our gods: Alaric, Karentellak, Morik, Rimel, etc. We have adopted some naming conventions similar to real languages like Gaelic in an effort to evoke feelings; for instance, we use the fake suffix “wyn” to signify femininity and the suffix “ak” to signify masculinity. The idea is to make names that sound like they come from the same language. We named Zheenkeef in a series of sounds dissimilar to all of the other gods, and using the exotic “zh”-sound, because it helps to set her apart.

It should be very easy, therefore, to create a new list of names that follow these sorts of rules but are more fitting with your game world. For instance, if you have a dominantly Germanic-sounding world (with cities called Arkenheim or Bernbad), then you will likely want to change the names of the gods to more Germanic phonemes – perhaps even names in German.

Existing Pantheons

However, you might have a very complete set of gods already named, in which case you might want to keep that list of gods and merely use the churches and mythology (altered where appropriate to your campaign) under those names. In such a case, it might be useful to know which of the gods from this book match up with gods from other general fantasy pantheons. Chapter II provides a sizable list of popular pantheon portfolios and the names of the gods from this book that fit under each portfolio.

If you’re using the pantheon listed in table 3-7 of the *PH*, it certainly does not rule out the presence of other gods. If your characters have been worshipping the god of magic under a different name, you can keep that name and introduce the rules for the church of Tinel to that character’s church, while also introducing to the game world healing halls of Morwyn (or whatever you choose to name her). In general, we have found most campaigns do not dwell much on religion, so it should be fairly easy to insert these gods without radically altering the world. However...

Complete Religions

What if you already have a very complete game world with a thorough religion with hundreds of gods and several myths? Or what if you’ve already established that the culture your PCs are from is monotheistic?

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No matter how much you like the mythology in this book, it will be a challenge to work it into the world, right?

Not necessarily so. Below are some ideas for incorporation:

The Past Returns

Put your characters in the middle of a story line where the old gods are coming back, or information of them is returning. In the case of a game set in a monotheistic society, perhaps all the people have been worshipping just one of the gods of the pantheon or, worse, Asmodeus masquerading as a good god. Over the course of the game, through visions and lost documents and destroyed temples from the ancient times, the characters find out about the old religion and the old gods found in this book. Some of them may even become founders of new churches to these rediscovered gods. Players love to end up at the center of their religious organizations.

Or, in a situation with a large number of existing gods, the players may discover that the material in this book represents the old names for some of those gods. The hundreds of other gods (perhaps the various lesser deities of the pantheon) are names given to their servants and the angels over the years. The PCs find out the true names and true pasts of the gods, bearing wisdom to the rest of their people.

In any of these cases, the Past Returns scenario will likely leave most of the information about the churches and how they are set up (including prestige classes and holy warrior classes) unused. However, if you include this information in the discovered artifacts of the past, you give your PCs the really exciting challenge of rekindling these orders. For instance, there could be few more exciting roleplaying hooks for the fighter who has worshipped Ignak, god of war, all his life, than to discover the real name of Ignak is Terak, to uncover the old ways of worshipping him, and to reestablish the order of his crusaders, becoming the first such holy warrior in a thousand years. Most players like that sort of thing.

The Friendly Foreign Culture

Most campaign worlds have several continents and several nations. The easiest way to introduce your PCs to the information in this book is through a mouthpiece for one of those foreign lands. Perhaps they journey to a far-off continent and see the gleaming temples of Terak, Tinel, and Morwyn in the city square. Perhaps they encounter a bard from a distant land who tells them “in my land, your gods all have different names...”

In any case, you can tweak little details here and there to make the similarities between the gods of this book and the existing gods in your campaign obvious to the characters. Through this mechanism they can discover all sorts of lost lore about their gods (such as the creation myths and other stories spelled out in Chapters II through VIII and Appendix I) and decide what to do about this new information over the course of the campaign. Perhaps they keep the name they have always used for the god of magic, but they start telling the myths about Tinel using that name. Perhaps they even adopt the name and holy orders they found in the foreign land. Regardless, they get a great sense of discovery and wonder as they find new details about their gods that their elders in the church presumably do not know.

The Warring Foreign Culture

Perhaps your campaign revolves around a culture that worships three gods – the god of snow, the god of fire, and the god of darkness – and there’s really no easy way to incorporate the highly disparate mythology of *Book of the Righteous* into your players’ world. However, you like the mythology and want to use it somehow. The easiest way to do this is to have a society that worships the gods of the tree attack your PCs’ culture (or vice versa). This way you have an enemy with a thoroughly thought-out cosmology and religious structure, one that the PCs can learn to exploit, destroy, or even respect.

The Joining of Mythologies

In the real world, when you look at mythology you can see places where conquered cultures were added into the myths. If the mythology in this book were being analyzed, an anthropologist might determine that the Three Sisters were once gods of a land that was conquered by or joined with the land of the people who worshipped the gods of the tree. So the Three Sisters were added into the pantheon to keep the newly conquered people happy, and legends were made to explain how the Three Sisters came to be a part of the other mythos.

It is quite easy to use this principle in your game world. Suppose that the kingdom to which the PCs belong gets swallowed up by another kingdom through political marriage, war, or other means. To keep the people from uprising, the new rulers do not simply impose their religion. Instead, they add the religion of the new lands into their own. This can lead to some real fun as you make up myths explaining how the gods of your characters’ lands become a part of the gods of the tree. Usually, the more friendly the joining of cultures, the more important the role of the new gods. By this logic, the Three Sisters would have come from a culture that was conjoined with the religion in a very friendly manner. A conquered culture might find their gods as handmaids to Morwyn, or hunting companions to Thellyne, or in a similarly subservient position that explains that their gods exist but are nowhere near as powerful as the gods of the conquerors.

The Waning Mythology

You may have characters who already worship a completely different set of gods from the ones in this book and you want to incorporate this book into your world *and* you want to incorporate its material into the region where your players live. However, you don’t want to make the gods that already exist in your campaign part of this mythology. Our recommendation is the Waning Mythology gambit.

Book of the Righteous focuses on the idea that this is a central religion for the people who believe it. The conflicts are between churches of the mythology, and there is a sprawling Great Church to which many, or even most, people belong. It is quite easy to say this was the case some thousand years before the time of your campaign, but since then the mythology of the gods of the tree has waned. People who still worship them follow the “old ways” and are considered archaic bumpkins. This can make for some very interesting conflicts between your religious characters and those who worship the old gods, as the followers of the gods of the tree will try to re-elevate their pantheon.

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Gods From Another Dimension!

If your game world involves a great deal of planar and dimensional travel, there is a very fun way to introduce the gods of the mythology into your game. The Nameless One has likely created many universes, and it is quite plausible (as d20 plausibility goes) that travelers might journey from their own material plane, crossing from one of the Nameless One's spheres to another. On your characters' journeys, they might come to a plane where these are the dominant gods – and they might even attract the gods of the tree into the PCs' home plane.

This works particularly well if you have a campaign set in a universe where darkness is prevailing. The PCs can actually go to a better plane, where the gods of the tree have managed to make things peaceful, and try to bring good gods back to their home to help repair the damage.

Single Gods

You may decide that you like one or two of the gods, but you don't buy in to the whole mythology. This is fairly easy to work with. None of the gods require connection to the book or to each other (though in some cases they're tightly integrated with others). You'll have to do a little bit of rewriting in a few cases to decouple the gods. The myths of many of the gods allude to or directly include other gods. It should be fairly easy to pair them with other gods in your world. For instance, if you just take the Korak section and want to add Korak into your existing pantheon, all you have to do is rename Thellyne in the opening myth of Korak's church section to one of the goddesses in your pantheon. Away you go.

What should not require any rewriting is pulling the church structures of the religions out of this mythology. Perhaps you like the way that the Temples of Terak are structured, including their titles and

prestige class and core philosophies. These hardly ever require that you use the entire mythology. They do sometimes make reference to elements of the mythology; in the Teraketh example, the temples are highly influenced by the legend of Aerix. You can either keep the myth specific to that church or rewrite it – but it is never the case that a myth is absolutely necessary to the core structure or function of a church.

Racial Gods

At Green Ronin we don't like racial gods. Never have, never will. The nature of the d20 rules implies that the gods are real (since they provide powers to their followers), which implies that a person can actually find out the true nature of the gods. Gods are extremely powerful and have dominion over key aspects of the world (the winds, music, etc.), so it seems likely to us that, while races would have different names for their gods, they'd eventually discover that the god they revere because he's great at, say, the forge, doesn't belong to them alone – he is the god of the forge, period. Point being, it actually seems highly limiting to us to be god of the dwarves when you could be god of all smiths – both in terms of usefulness as a god and interestingness of your church. We also note that there's rarely a "god of humans" in lists that include racial gods, thus implying a faith where humans are at the center and the other races are on the fringes.

Therefore, we don't have racial gods. Rather than naming Aymara the goddess of the elves because she's good with music and love, we say she's goddess of music and love. Obviously, we've written a mythology to defy the idea of racial gods as well. None of the gods created the races. Often "racial mythologies" are derivative of the Pygmalion myth: The god of the



Canarak is patron to all who love the taste of blood, the lust for death. Some of his most dedicated followers are among the orcs.

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dwarves carved the dwarves out of stone, creating them to be like him, and that's why he's the god of the dwarves.

If you are not like us in regard to racial gods, and we appreciate that not everyone agrees with us, we have a very simple solution. The myths presented in this book are all written from mortal perspectives. It would not be hard to have the dwarves, for instance, disagree with everyone else's representation of the creation myth. They might believe that the fruit that hit Korak had been turned into a stone by Zheenkeef's blood and that Korak then carved that stone into the shapes of little men in his image, creating the dwarves by his own hand. They might believe Eliwyn doesn't even exist, and may have some entirely different creation myth. It's in your hands. The point is, it would be quite simple to have most people believe that Aymara is the god of all art, while the elves themselves know that she's not only the god of art, she's actually the creator of the elves as a people.

The extreme way to create racial gods is to say that the mythology in this book is the "human mythology," essentially adhered to only by humans and a few members of the other races. The humans insist that they know how and why all the races were created, that there are no racial gods, and that when the other races refer to their gods, they're actually referring to the human gods under different names. This is extreme, but it makes sense out of completely different mythologies and explanations for the creation of the races existing concurrently.

Altering the Churches

Perhaps you intend to use most of the material in this book, but you've already established that the god of magic is lawful good and has a completely different church structure from the Tinelites. This is fairly easy to resolve, actually.

As we say in Chapter III, the gods themselves are really beyond alignment. While Tinel may seem chaotic good or neutral most of the time, perhaps to one select group of favored people he appears to be lawful good – or to some group he loathes for an ancient wrong they did him, chaotic evil. The point is that different ways of worshipping him may have grown up all over the world.

For this reason, it is fairly easy to alter the information about the gods and keep the rest of the mythology intact. Very few of the gods *must* be the alignment they are assigned. Obviously, Maal has to be lawful and Zheenkeef has to be chaotic, but beyond that it's fairly open season. Feel free to tweak, to tell your players to ignore sections about the gods' outlooks – or to rewrite them. It should not fundamentally alter the myths.

In addition, none of the churches absolutely rely on the holy orders as spelled out in their chapters. If you don't like the holy warrior class, just don't use it. Instead, think of the holy warriors of each church merely as fighters (in lawful good cases, paladins, and sometimes rangers or barbarians) who are the "swords" of the church. Perhaps you don't like one of the prestige classes. Simply cut it out.

Altering the churches becomes a little more complicated if you want to remove one of the two main orders entirely. If you want the church to have no clerics or no warriors, be sure to examine the power structure of the church and rethink it. As it stands, almost all of the churches rely on high level-clerics, high-level warriors, or both to run church affairs. This obviously isn't possible if one such order doesn't exist at all.

If, as in the case above, you want Tinel to be lawful good and his church to work entirely differently than stated in the book, you might have fun with one of the scenarios above from the 'Complete Religions' section. It can be quite amusing to have your character who worships Tinel of law and light encounter a foreigner who worships Tinel the uncaring and evil. Such fights might be among the most interesting you can provide a character, as the stakes are quite high.

Altering the Mythology

There are several key features of the mythology that may not work with the way you've formed your world or your cosmology. We'll get to the cosmological changes in a little bit. But let's first approach some of the most important features of the mythology that may need tweaking:

The Single Nemesis

A lot of fantasy mythologies have a large pantheon of evil gods. Sometimes that pantheon is exactly as large as – or even larger than – the pantheon of good gods. The mythology in this book, however, focuses around a single, incredibly powerful evil god who is now the lord of Hell. While there are also the Three Brothers, they are not a primary part of the mythology. We've actually included the Three Brothers to serve as an example of how easy it is to add in more evil gods. Just give them a connection to some part of the mythology and slide them in with the understanding that their followers are "evil churches" that have been hidden away throughout history – until now.

If you want to have a world divided between the gods of good and the gods of evil, it is possible within the context of the mythology presented in this book. Essentially, we recommend you create a second mythology, the one espoused by the evil gods and their followers, which provides an entirely alternative explanation for the creation of the world and the mortal races. The idea is that the struggle between the good and evil gods is not just a struggle for the mortal world, but a struggle for history; whose idea of creation will prevail? The strange thing about gods and creation myths is that it might be the case that both myths are right or both are wrong, but in the end the winner of the war determines which is "truth" and which is "lies." If there are some small crossovers between the two mythologies (like the history up until the fruits first ripen), even better.

Lack of a Patriarch

Most traditional pantheistic legends that have survived the ages (Greek, Norse, Finnish, etc.) revolve around the stories of a single, powerful king of the gods. In many it is said that the king is so powerful he could destroy all the other gods together, thus commanding complete obedience. We offer a matriarch who is likely one of the weakest of the gods (though clearly the wisest) and whose power is only legalistic. This doesn't present the same masculine-centered power as a lot of mythologies.

We've done this because we've built the mythology around the wonderful peculiarities of the d20 system. For instance, d20 features creatures from all world mythologies, so we have our gods connected to that strange variety of creatures. Similarly, d20 explicitly states that there is no gender limitation on any profession (a woman is

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just as likely to become a fighter as a man). We feel our mythology helps reflect such a world, which would be quite a bit different in feel from our real-world past. However, you may want a world more like Earth's past, where gender lines are more restrictive. In such a case, you might want a strong god of the dominant gender. In such a case, we recommend using either Morwyn or Terak and eliminating the portion of the mythology where Morwyn declares that no god shall ever be the leader of all the others. If you want an utterly dominant matriarch, then Morwyn becomes the Queen of Heaven in actuality and commands all the other gods, most of whom she raised. If you want an utterly dominant patriarch, when Morwyn married Terak he became King, and now rules over Heaven in name and deed.

The Compact

The point of the Compact is to keep the gods from showing up all the time in the game world. We've left a lot of "squishy" rules there that are not thoroughly spelled out (it can be violated if all the gods agree, sometimes a god blows it off, etc.) so as to leave your hands untied when playing with the gods. However, the main point is that the gods aren't just descending from Heaven and solving problems. Aristotle had an expression for that (which you've likely heard), *deus ex machina*, or "god from the machine." It was a reference to Greek dramas that worked their heroes into an impossible conundrum, only to have a god descend in a chariot and resolve all the problems with the wave of a hand. Aristotle complained that this is the worst possible way to resolve a story – and he was right, especially where roleplaying games are concerned. We've included the Compact to make sure that your players know they can't expect the "air strike of the gods" when things get really bad.

However, you might really like games where gods walk among mortals and kill bad people with a wave of their hands. If you want that tone, a sort of "time of heroes," then you might want to have the gods break the Compact. We recommend that you either have the gods determine that they must abandon the Compact because Asmodeus has been cheating and evil has grown too powerful, or that you have the gods come to this conclusion over the course of your campaign. That way, you can have the Compact shattered as a result of something your PCs do (or witness), and can actually change the tone of the world. The strangeness and wonder of a world where the gods walk among men will be far more evident to your players if they've gotten used to a world where the gods stay in Heaven.

The Great Church

Perhaps one of the more "controversial" elements of the churches presented in *Book of the Righteous* is the combined church of the pantheon. This is not a very common device in fantasy RPGs, especially in worlds where there is already a large pantheon. Usually a single unified church shows up in a monotheistic religion. However, we've added the Great Church because it makes sense to us that eventually the faiths would coalesce into a single religious group. This is in part influenced by our observation that a lot of GMs in a pantheistic setting have altars to each of the gods under a single roof in the center of the towns where their games are set.

However, the interaction between the Great Church and the other faiths (the tacit conflict over influence) may not be the sort of religious conflict that interests you, or the idea of a Great Church in general may not be to your liking. No matter what your feeling on the subject, we've very intentionally kept the Great Church separate from

the other faiths and from the mythology in general. If you don't like an aspect of the Church, change it, or if you want to axe the idea entirely, feel free; such a cut will not hurt anything else in the book. If you do so, simply play paladins exactly as written in the *PH* – holy fighters who are not tied to any one god. Clerics who do not choose a specific god should be played exactly as written in the *PH* too.

Adding Gods

We included the Three Sisters in part to show how easy it is to add additional gods. There are several ways to approach adding to the pantheon, and all of them require essentially no changes to the material supplied in this book.

Existing Demi-Gods

Suppose you have a character who worships the god of the moon, and you don't want to change that to worship of Urian, who is the god of the moon, the sun, and everything else in the skies. You will note that there is already a legend about the moon in the book, with Faro pulling the moon across the heavens. It is completely reasonable to say that Faro, though not as powerful as Urian, is powerful enough to provide clerics and holy warriors with divine powers.

If you like, you can then define a church of Faro, write some myths about him, and away you go. You have a "god of the moon" with a foundation in the broader mythology. Most of the gods have servants listed in Chapters III-VII under the "Servants" heading, any one of which can be turned into a demi-god that provides divine powers.

New Gods

Like the Three Sisters, the gods may easily have met and befriended other gods over the years, as suggested above in The Joining of Mythologies. As opposed to the suggestion in that section, you could determine that another set of gods joined the mythology long, long ago.

All this requires is that you make up a church and a series of myths about the new god or gods, and that you provide one or two myths explaining how the new gods came to be a part of the gods of the tree. While we recommend that you do this for gods with different provinces than the existing gods, you could even have gods with overlap. For instance, Canelle and Terak have some overlap, in that both are gods of physical strength. However, they also have a number of unique features, starting with alignment and continuing on to their focus on aspects of strength. Similarly, you might choose to have a god of magic with a very different profile from Tinel. Having two gods of something fairly specific, like hunting, might make less sense and bears some scrutiny.

Something that happens quite often in real-world myths is that the children of a major god are gods of some sub-set of that god's province. For instance, if you want to have a specific god of soldiers, it would make a great deal of sense to say one of Terak's children by a mortal woman is now a god – the patron of soldiers.

The gods as we have provided them cover a broad swath of divine provinces. It would be quite easy to subdivide their areas of concern, creating less powerful demi-gods somehow tied to the more senior god. All you have to do is make up the demi-god and create the connection. That part is actually quite fun; trust us on this one – try it and you'll get hooked.

Chapter XII ~ Additional Rules



Holy warriors are the sure enemy of all that is evil. They may have different ways of waging their war, but they all share good hearts.

Chapter XII: Additional Rules

About This Chapter

A complete religion in the d20 world requires the addition of some rules. In general we have endeavored to work with the core rules set out in the *PH*, but it is necessary to provide a few additional domains, as well as some religion-specific spells, items, creatures, and powers.

While we have tried not to bombard the reader with a whole new set of rules to learn, we have departed from the *PH* in one very significant regard. We have taken the paladin and turned it into a new core class called the holy warrior. Rather than a class with a single set of special abilities, like the paladin, the holy warrior is a warrior type with varying abilities based on chosen domains and god worshipped.

At the beginning of this chapter, we detail the holy warrior. Following the holy warrior, we provide a few new feats for the faithful and one new skill. We then go on to provide additional clerical domains (with accompanying Granted Powers). We note that there are numerous d20 resources available with new domains included; we recommend reviewing all available domains with your group, if other sources have some that you feel would be appropriate to one of the clergy in *Book of the Righteous*. You certainly won't break anything if you give domains from other books to the clerics in this book.

After the domains, we provide new spells, some of which are available only to members of specific churches, but most of which are available to all clerics. This leads to new magic items that rise from the religions, including artifacts.

The chapter closes with several new encounters and monsters, including some of the more important servants to the gods. There's even an archangel, much to the chagrin of evil PCs everywhere.

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Holy Warriors

In the *PH*, it is suggested that every church in a religion has holy warriors. While paladins are spiritual warriors unfettered by any single god or ideology, other than goodness, the churches have crusaders in their own right, championing the causes near and dear to their god. It is further suggested that each of these types of holy warrior be playable as a prestige class. We suggest here an alternative: The holy warrior of each church is an available starting class that can be extended out to 20th level. Based on the paladin and the cleric, the holy warrior is essentially a paladin who can choose special abilities from domains, just as the cleric can choose spells from domains.

In fact, the holy warrior class can create an exact duplicate of the paladin if the Champion and Guardian domains are chosen and Remove Disease is granted as the Gift of God. Different combinations of domains will produce very different characters, but all of them should be about as powerful as a paladin – which is to say, quite.

Example: Pavel wants to play a holy warrior of Maal, called an officer. A starting officer may choose two domains from the available list of Champion, Justice, and Death to determine what abilities he will have as he advances in levels. Pavel chooses Champion and Justice and looks up the special abilities on the domain chart. Like the paladin, he begins at first level with four special abilities.

The GM must decide if the holy warrior class is open to starting characters. If the GM is uncomfortable with this idea, it is quite easy to turn the holy warrior into a prestige class. Simply stop it at 10 levels and require the following:

Optional Requirements

(Only if holy warrior is *not* a starting class, though you might wish to use these requirements for characters wishing to multi-class into holy warrior):

To qualify to become a holy warrior, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment Same law or chaos leaning as her god, but always good.

To dedicate oneself to pursuing the improvement of the world in the name of your god, you must be good. While many churches have warrior orders where neutrality is an option, they are not blessed by their gods with such power as the holy warriors, who stand out as beacons of goodness in each god's name. Therefore, the only possible alignments for holy warriors are lawful good, neutral good, and chaotic good.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Patron: Must be an active member of her church in good standing.

Knowledge (religion): 5 ranks.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 1st-level divine spells.

This will require starting holy warriors to have achieved at least four levels in other classes, making holy warriors far more rare and powerful in their earliest adventures. It will also reduce the spectrum of religiously powered characters at very low levels.

Whether your GM wants the holy warrior to be a prestige or core class, here is all the information you will need to play one:

In Their God's Service

In great cities they can be seen walking in pairs, discussing the politics of their order or weightier matters. They stand guard at temple doors. They relentlessly pursue the enemies of their church and blasphemers against their gods. They are the warriors of the gods, the orders dedicated to the protection and advancement of the faith through strength of arms. While clerics speak to the gods and channel their will through spells, the holy warrior honors her god through deeds and strength. Her connection to her god is far more private than the cleric's – she does not perform religious ceremonies, she rarely leads churches, and she seldom advises the faithful on matters of sin and redemption. But beware her wrath, for when she and her order face the enemies of the faith, she is indeed terrible to behold.

Adventures

The specific philosophy of each holy warrior order toward adventure is defined in the individual church sections of Chapter III, under the **Conduct** description of the holy warrior class in question. However, all holy warriors serve their god first and foremost – it is their defining characteristic. It is therefore not possible to find a holy warrior out on an adventure for petty personal gain. Everything a holy warrior does is in service to her god. Service takes many forms and can even include treasure hunts; however, if an adventure is directly counter to the will of her god or church, she will not go.

Characteristics

The holy warrior is defined by her radiance of authority and holiness. She is, for whatever reason, one of her god's chosen people. She is made strong by the power of her god, and is able to channel that power to achieve ends both great and small. Holy warriors of the various churches have quite different abilities, granted to them by their patron deity based on their faith's ethos. However, all holy warriors are able to turn undead, and eventually all holy warriors receive an animal companion from their god to aid them in their quests. Most often this companion is a mighty steed.

Creating Holy Warrior Prestige Classes

A common device for prestige classes targeted to clerics is to grant them an additional spell domain. We have included no holy warrior-targeted prestige classes in this book (because our goal is to offer prestige classes to the faithful outside of the divinely powered classes), but one could certainly make some. If you would like to define a powerful order within one of the holy warrior orders, an easy way to do that is to give the prestige class a third holy warrior domain. You should be careful about this, though. The holy warrior domains are much more powerful than clerical domains, providing three powers each.

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Alignment

To receive such great blessings from a god, a holy warrior's outlook must be in tune with the divine – more so even than a cleric's. Holy warriors are always of the same law or chaos tendency as their god. However, the purpose of a holy warrior is to do good in the name of her god, and therefore all holy warriors are good, even if their god is neutral in the good/evil spectrum. Therefore, holy warriors may only be lawful good, neutral good, or chaotic good. Should they deviate from this path and change alignment, they lose all of their powers.

Religion

Holy warriors are singularly devoted. People who don't care much about religion and assume an "I don't bother the gods and they don't bother me" attitude find holy warriors annoying at best, dangerous at worst. They are wholly dedicated to the teachings and service of one god – and often gods want things that don't make sense to mortals. The exception to this singular devotion is the paladin; as the holy warrior of the pantheon, she is dedicated to goodness in general, and need not follow the strictures of a single deity.

Background

Holy warriors are born, not made. Whether a paladin or an ascetic of Shalimyr, there is no way to "decide" to become a holy warrior. In all cases, one feels a compelling call to dedicate oneself wholly to the life of devotion and holiness necessary. The actual training involved in each church's order of holy warriors is explained in each church section.

Races

All races feel religious devotion, but some are less likely to feel the call to the path of the holy warrior – particularly those of less warlike nature. Halflings and gnomes are rarely holy warriors; elves, more attuned to magic than melee, are also less likely to take up the sword in the name of religion. The broadest spectrum of holy warriors is made up of humans and half-elves. In some orders, however, there are a large number of dwarves and even a few half-orcs.

Other Classes

Holy warriors' companions vary as widely as holy warriors themselves. It is certainly a common sense rule, though, that a holy warrior is unlikely to choose companions that scoff at the gods, commit acts directly opposed to the holy warrior's faith, or consort with enemies of the gods such as devils and demons.

Game Rule Information

Holy warriors have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Charisma is the key stat for most holy warrior special abilities received through chosen domains. Strength is important for a holy warrior, as she will often find herself in combat. A Wisdom score of 14 or higher is required to get access to the most powerful holy warrior spells; a score of at least 11 is required to be able to cast any holy warrior spells.

Alignment: The same lawful or chaotic leaning as patron deity; always good.
Hit Die: d10



The shining captain may be seen from across the battlefield, making her a commanding presence... and an excellent target.

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Class Skills

The holy warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Ride (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *PH* for skill descriptions.

Every order of holy warrior receives two or three additional skills as class skills. These skills are listed in the church section.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the holy warrior.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency

Holy warriors are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor (heavy, medium, and light), and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket, and Tumble. Also, Swim checks suffer a -1 penalty for every 5 pounds of armor and equipment carried.

Gifts of God

Every three levels, starting at 3rd, a holy warrior receives a special gift from her god – usually a spell-like ability useable once a week. In many cases, the holy warrior receives one ability at 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, then a new ability at 12th, 15th, and 18th. The actual gift is detailed in each church section relating to holy warriors.

Domain-Based Special Abilities

Every holy warrior chooses two domains, based on her god's ethos, from a list of such domains. She then receives special abilities tied to those domains. Each domain provides two abilities at 1st level, and a more powerful ability at 2nd level.

For example, the paladin receives special abilities from the domains of Champion and Guardian. The power lists for those domains are as follows:

Champion: *Detect evil, lay on hands, Smite Evil* (2)

Guardian: *Divine Grace, Divine Health, Aura of Courage* (2)

Abilities followed by (2) are received at 2nd level. Abilities not followed by a number in parentheses are received at first level. For a complete list of domains and special abilities, see Table 6-2.

Spells

Beginning at 4th level, a holy warrior gains the ability to cast a few divine spells – the list of available spells varies from order to order. To cast a spell, the holy warrior must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so a holy warrior with a Wisdom score of 10 or lower cannot cast these spells. Holy warrior bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a Difficulty Class of 10 + spell level + Wisdom modifier. When the holy warrior gets 0 spells of a given level, such as 0 1st-level spells at 4th level, the holy warrior gets only bonus spells (as per *PH* Table 1-1: Ability Modifiers and Bonus Spells). A holy warrior without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level.

The holy warrior's spell list is given with the description of the individual order in Chapter III. A holy warrior has access to any spell on the list and can freely choose which to prepare, just as a cleric can. A holy warrior

Table 11-1: The Holy Warrior

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells Per Level			
						1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	4 Domain abilities	—	—	—	—
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	2 Domain abilities	—	—	—	—
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Gift of God, Turn Undead	—	—	—	—
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1		0	—	—	—
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Special Mount/Companion*	0	—	—	—
6th	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	Gift of God	1	—	—	—
7th	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2		1	—	—	—
8th	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2		1	0	—	—
9th	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	Gift of God	1	0	—	—
10th	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3		1	1	—	—
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3		1	1	0	—
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	Gift of God	1	1	1	—
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4		1	1	1	—
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4		2	1	1	0
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	Gift of God	2	1	1	1
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5		2	2	1	1
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5		2	2	2	1
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	Gift of God	3	2	2	1
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6		3	3	3	2
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6		3	3	3	3

*This may be postponed for more powerful mounts, at the GM's discretion.

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prepares and casts spells just as the cleric of that church does (though a holy warrior cannot use spontaneous casting to substitute a *cure* spell in place of a prepared spell).

Through 3rd level, a holy warrior has no caster level. Starting at 4th level, a holy warrior's caster level is one-half her class level.

Turn Undead/Extra Turning

Holy warriors turn undead exactly like the paladin; they may purchase the Extra Turning feat.

Special Mount/Companion

Upon or after reaching 5th level, a holy warrior can call an unusually intelligent, strong, and loyal steed or animal companion to aid her in her service to her god (see the paladin's Mount section on page 43 of the *PH* for details). In the case of an animal companion, it is usually a noble celestial bird of some kind. It's typically a heavy warhorse in the case of a steed. Small holy warriors will receive a warpony when calling for a steed.

The type of mount or animal companion is discussed in the individual order sections of Chapters III - VII. However, all mounts and animal companions receive the special abilities spelled out in the paladin's Mount sidebar of the *PH*. Simply follow the chart on that page.

Should a holy warrior's mount or companion die, she may call for another one after a year and a day. The new animal has all the accumulated abilities due a mount or companion of the holy warrior's level.

Code of Conduct

Each church's order of holy warriors has its own code of conduct, discussed in the church section. However, there are some universal principles to the holy warrior class, including paladins. A holy warrior does not blaspheme against the gods, even gods for whom her patron does not care. What is and is not blasphemy is sometimes tricky, and it should not be considered an infraction of the code if it's not clear. Walking into a temple to one of the gods of the tree and smearing it with blood and feces is a clear case of blasphemy.

A holy warrior does not consider herself better than the gods. Utterances like "Terak is a fool!" will not come from a holy warrior's lips. They are reverent and respectful of the gods, even if they do not like a particular god's followers or the actual ethos of the god in question. The exceptions, of course, are the evil gods, like Asmodeus; all holy warriors oppose them tirelessly.

Associates

This varies enormously based on the holy warrior's order. In general, holy warriors associate most closely with people who are the chosen of their god. Certainly holy warriors will adventure most readily with clerics from their church or allied churches.

It is hard to find a holy warrior who gladly associates with evil folk, or those who are openly blasphemous or scornful of the gods. While some do not mind such companions when they're useful for achieving the holy warrior's lofty goals, holy warriors are, by definition, very religious, good-hearted people. They are defenders of the faith and do not like to associate with those who believe that faith foolish.

However, most holy warriors will travel with folk who are not terribly devout. Whether they will seek to convert their companions – or help them to see that the gods are active in the world and worth worshipping – depends very much on their holy order and individual temperament.

Multi-Class Holy Warriors

Being a holy warrior is a life's calling. It is not possible to intersperse one's training and work as a holy warrior with other pursuits. Therefore, one may not gain levels in any other class or prestige class while gaining levels as a holy warrior. If one does gain a non-holy warrior level, one may never gain additional holy warrior levels and is considered to have put aside her absolute devotion to life as a holy warrior. While she maintains those abilities she already has (as long as she maintains her code of conduct), she will never grow more powerful in the eyes of her order or her god.

There are rare exceptions to this rule – prestige classes meant specifically for holy warriors (or paladins). Any prestige class in other sources that says paladins who take the class may continue to take paladin levels is available to holy warriors as well, as long as the holy warrior meets the requirements and the GM agrees. There are also prestige classes in this book in which holy warriors from a specific church may multi-class without penalty. We advise your GM exercise caution in this matter, though – many sources we've seen are fast and loose with the "paladins may take this prestige class without penalty" clause; the paladin, and by extension the new holy warrior, is a very powerful class. Its inability to multi-class is one of its best checks and balances.

Ex-Holy Warriors

Any holy warrior who actively violates her order's code of conduct or commits herself to blasphemy against the gods loses her spells, her domain-based special abilities, her gifts of god, and even her special mount or animal companion. These abilities will only return if she properly atones – and the difficulty of that atonement should be commensurate to the severity of the transgression. It should never be as simple as going to church and having a cleric cast a spell.

Holy warriors, under some circumstances, may change their allegiance from one god to another. This is almost unheard of, and it usually involves the gods themselves. For example, Egrynne serves Mormekar, but has become obsessed with stopping an evil empire ruled by necromancer kings. Egrynne is driven not only by her loathing for their violation of the dead's sanctity, but also by her desire to mete out justice on behalf of the thousands of innocent people the necromancer kings have wronged. Mormekar may send an angel to Egrynne to tell her that the time has come for her to serve his son, Maal, for she has become too attached to life and justice. There is little response to such a decree but to accept it, and Egrynne becomes an officer of the court of Maal. Egrynne has not violated Mormekar's law and is not being punished. However, she is no longer serving him in her heart, and he passes over the bonds of her service to his son, knowing that she will serve him well.

It is even more rare for a holy warrior to go from serving one god to another on an opposite end of the ideological spectrum. For instance, for a holy warrior of Morwyn to start serving Zheenkeef would require truly remarkable circumstances, and would almost certainly result in Morwyn and her followers looking negatively on the change.

When a holy warrior changes gods, she is able to pick two new domains based on that church, receive new gifts and gods, and either call back her steed/animal companion or gets a new one, depending on the circumstances of the first one's departure. She retains nothing of her previous order – no holy symbols or items given her by her church. Everything must be returned to her old order. To do otherwise risks the enmity of her former order and perhaps even the wrath of her former god. It's best to be polite about such departures.

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Table 11-2: Domain-Based Special Abilities

Domain	Abilities
Champion	<i>Detect evil, lay on hands</i> , Smite Evil (2)
Fire	Fire Ken, Rebuke Fire Elemental, Energy Resistance (fire) (2)
Earth	Earth Ken, Rebuke Earth Elemental, Damage Reduction (2)
Water	Water Ken, Rebuke Water Elemental, Energy Resistance (acid) (2)
Air	Air Ken, Rebuke Air Elemental, Energy Resistance (cold or lightning) (2)
Justice	Gaze of Justice, Shield of Righteousness, Righteous Fury (2)
Life	Hand of Life, <i>lay on hands</i> , Abundant Life (2)
Guardian	Divine Grace, Divine Health, Aura of Courage (2)
Might	Unyielding, Feat of Strength, Warrior's Heart (2)
Compassion	<i>Confer blessings, healer's aid, sacrifice</i> (2)
Travel	Relentless Runner, Winged Feet, Tireless Traveler (2)
Hunt	Silent Stalker, Tracker, Dead Shot (2)
Mind	Impervious Mind, <i>clarity</i> , Insight (2)
Body	Divine Health, Towering Stature, Temple of Flesh (2)
Leadership	Battle Cry, Shining Captain, Aura of Courage (2)
Freedom	Slip Bonds, Indomitable, Overthrow Tyranny (2)
Creation	Divine Inspiration, Cherished Bond, Creation's Guardian (2)
Death	Turn Undead, Save Soul, <i>counterspell: necromancy</i> (2)
Emotion	Untamable Heart, Charming Demeanor, Aura of Hope (2)
Magic	<i>Read & detect magic</i> , Spell Resistance, Aura of Antimagick (2)

Special Abilities

(All abilities based on Charisma modifier only account for the modifier if positive):

Abundant Life (Su)

The holy warrior is considered to have a number of "positive levels" equal to her Charisma modifier. Positive levels only exist to counteract negative levels, as well as the ability drain done by some negative energy creatures. When the holy warrior is given a negative level – for any reason – she loses one of her positive levels rather than taking the negative level. Each positive level can only counteract one negative level, but can also counteract several points of ability loss. Whenever a negative energy creature's attack causes the holy warrior's abilities to be drained, the entire attack is cancelled out by the loss of one positive level. For example: A holy warrior with a +6 Charisma modifier is fighting a wight and a shadow. The shadow hits her and causes her to lose 4 strength points. She counteracts this attack with the loss of one positive level. The next round the wight hits her with a critical, causing the infliction of 2 negative levels. In order to counteract this, she must lose 2 positive levels. Lost positive levels are regenerated after a night's rest.

Air Ken (Ex)

The holy warrior is intimately familiar with the element of air. She gains the Auran language for free and gains some of the pure power of air. Like air, she has the ability to dart to and fro, seeming to be in many places at once. The holy warrior receives the Improved Initiative and Dodge feats, even if she does not meet the pre-requisites.

Aura of Antimagick (Su)

Connected as she is to the divine power of magic, it is very difficult for those who pervert magic to evil to affect the holy warrior and her

allies. Whenever the holy warrior makes a saving throw against magic from an explicitly evil source (e.g. an evil spell-caster or evil magic item) she may add her Charisma modifier to her saving throw. All allies of the holy warrior within 10 feet receive a +2 sacred bonus on such saves. This bonus does not affect saving throws against magical effects from neutral or good sources triggered by evil forces. For instance, an evil wizard using a perfectly ordinary wand of fireball will not activate the aura, as it is not a perversion of the power of magic; a magic item must be explicitly evil for the aura to activate against its magic, no matter who wields it.

Aura of Courage (Su)

See the paladin class in the *PH* for details. Note: If the holy warrior has more than one instance of Aura of Courage, the radius of its effect and the bonus provided to those near her are multiplied by the number of instances of the ability she has.

Aura of Hope (Su)

The holy warrior exudes the happy bliss of her god, setting the hearts of her companions at ease. All allies within 10 feet of the holy warrior receive a +1 morale bonus to all saving throws and attack rolls. While the aura does not provide these bonuses to the holy warrior herself, who is already suffused with the hope of her god, she does become completely immune to all forms of fear (as with Aura of Courage), magical or otherwise.

Battle Cry (Su)

As a move-equivalent action, the holy warrior can release a powerful cry that summons up the very power of her god. In the round following the cry and all rounds of this combat thereafter, the holy warrior and all allies within 10 feet gain a bonus to their initiative equal to the holy warrior's Charisma bonus. For obvious reasons, it is not possible for the holy warrior to use this ability when surprised.

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Charming Demeanor (Ex)

The holy warrior exudes friendliness; everyone but the most hard-hearted or evil-minded person likes her. This is actually a manifestation of her holiness and piety – she simply glows with the emotional power of her patron. She receives Bluff and Diplomacy as class skills and applies her Charisma modifier as a bonus to all rolls of these skills (in other words, when using these skills, her Charisma modifier is added twice). She may also buy the Famous feat (see below) two levels earlier than normal; if she ever takes the feat, she receives a bonus equal to half her holy warrior level to all Famous skill rolls.

Cherished Bond (Su)

Many holy warriors care more about the world beyond the mortal veil than earthly concerns; they focus their lifelong work on life after death or the realm of the heavens. This holy warrior, on the other hand, is strongly tied to the mortal world and the power of creation – both creations of mortal hands and the work of the Creator, which is abundant throughout the mortal sphere. Her bond to what is real makes her nearly impervious to illusion and other tricks. Whenever the holy warrior encounters a magical effect that may be disbelieved (usually illusion spells), she is automatically granted a Willpower save against it even before she interacts with the effect, as though she disbelieves it. She receives a bonus equal to her Charisma modifier on the saving throw and is automatically considered to have taken a 10 on all such rolls; she may roll if she would like a chance at a higher result (but must take the result of the roll, even if lower than 10). This ability has no effect on spells that seek merely to obscure the real (such as *invisibility*) or spells that draw on illusion but do not seek to trick the senses (like *hypnotic pattern*). In general it affects all types of illusion that work against the senses except for Shadow illusions, which are like actual creations. If she succeeds in the saving throw, it does not mean that the illusion is dispelled; her allies may still be affected by it.

Clarity (Sp)

With a touch, the holy warrior may cut through anything altering the mental capacity of another, removing insanity, confusion, charm, loss to intelligence or wisdom, or other mind-altering effects for one round per holy warrior level. At the end of this time, if the effect on the touched person is permanent or has remaining duration, it returns. However, if it is an effect for which a negating saving throw was possible when it first took hold, the touched party receives an additional saving throw at the end of *clarity's* duration, this time with a bonus equal to the holy warrior's Charisma modifier. *Clarity* may be used

on naturally occurring effects, such as drunkenness, exhaustion's effect on mental clarity, or natural insanity. However, the affected party does not receive a saving throw at the end of *clarity's* duration and, instead, reverts to his original state. *Clarity* does not aid those affected by alterations to their emotional states (barbarian rage, fear) or perceptions (illusions, blindness, deafness).

Confer Blessings (Sp)

With a touch, the holy warrior may grant the boons of her god to another. The touch grants the person touched 1 temporary hit point per holy warrior level, which last for 24 hours or until lost. Also, the touched party receives a +4 morale bonus to saving throws versus fear effects for a number of minutes equal to her holy warrior level. A holy warrior with this ability may use it once per day per holy warrior level.

Counterspell: Necromancy (Sp)

Once per day per holy warrior level, the holy warrior may begin chanting prayers to the powers of the dead. Her prayers appeal to the sacredness of death and solemnly condemn any who would violate that sanctity. As long as she continues to chant, any of her allies within 10 feet times her holy warrior level receive mystic protection against necromantic spells. The allies receive a sacred bonus to their saving throws equal to the holy warrior's Charisma modifier against all necromancy spells. In cases of necromantic spells against which saves are not usually allowed, the holy warrior's allies receive saves (with the standard DC of 10 + caster's applicable modifier + spell's level), though without the additional sacred bonus. The saving throws must be made using the appropriate type of save; Will for mind-affecting magic, Fortitude for direct physical affects, and Reflex for area or ranged spells.

The counterspell is most powerful, however, against any necromantic touch attack that seeks to destroy life by perverting the power of death. It affects the following spells when cast by evil divine or arcane spellcasters: the cleric Death Domain's "death touch" ability and the spells *death knell*, *slay living*, and *destruction*. When the evil spellcaster touches his target, his blasphemy catches up to him and the spell is reversed, affecting the caster instead of the target. For example, an evil spellcaster casts *destruction* and touches the holy warrior's companion while she is chanting the necromantic counterspell. The spell is reversed onto the evil spellcaster, who fails his saving throw – killing him instantly and destroying his body. Evil never pays.

The holy warrior may move and perform free actions while chanting the counterspell prayers, but may not fight or cast spells. The counterspell confers all of its benefits to her as well as her companions.

Table 11-3: Domains by Church

Church	Holy Warrior Domain Choices
Great Church	Champion, Guardian (or any two)
Urian	Champion, Air, Freedom
Rontra	Earth, Life, Creation
Shalimyr	Champion, Water, Body
Morwyn	Life, Guardian, Compassion
Terak	Body, Leadership, Might
Zheenkeef	Freedom, Mind, Emotion
Tinel	Magic, Mind, Guardian
Mormekar	Champion, Hunt, Death
Maal	Champion, Justice, Death
Darmon	Travel, Mind, Champion
Aymara	Creation, Guardian, Emotion
Korak	Earth, Guardian, Creation
Naryne	Leadership, Guardian, Champion
Canelle	Might, Body, Champion
Thellyne	Hunt, Creation, Travel

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Creation's Guardian (Su)

Once per day, the holy warrior may take a defensive stand to protect the creations aligned to her god. Because creation takes many forms, the kind of thing the holy warrior may use this ability to defend will vary based on her god – holy warriors of Korak use it to defend great buildings or magnificent artifacts of steel; holy warriors of Aymara use it to defend great sculptures, gifted artists, and other works of beauty; holy warriors of Rontra might use it to defend a farm community or a place of great natural beauty. All holy warriors may use this power to defend temples or other sites sacred to the gods.

When Creation's Guardian is activated (a free action), the holy warrior may not move from where she stands. She defends this spot fiercely for the next 3 rounds + her holy warrior level. During that time she may add her Charisma modifier (if positive) to her Strength, Constitution, and all saving throws. She also gains a +4 dodge bonus to her AC.

The increase in Constitution may increase her hit points; these hit points go away at the end of Creation's Guardian. They are not lost first like temporary hit points. During Creation's Guardian, she may not move from the spot she is defending, though she may voluntarily choose to end the ability. The saving throw bonus stacks with other domain additions to saving throws, such as Divine Grace, but the holy warrior may not use this ability with similar warrior bonuses like Barbarian Rage or Warrior's Heart. All of her attention must be focused on the defense, and during the defense she is constantly uttering prayers to her god. Because her god provides her the strength, she is not tired at the end of Creation's Guardian; however, because she is in a state of powerful concentration on defense and prayer, she may not cast spells that require verbal components or do anything else that involves speech.

Damage Reduction (Su)

Once per day for a number of rounds equal to 3 + her holy warrior level, the holy warrior gains damage reduction 2/+5. Activating damage reduction is a free action. In the case that the holy warrior has more than one instance of damage reduction, when she activates this power she simply adds 2 to the amount of her damage reduction for the duration.

Dead Shot (Su)

Once per day, the holy warrior with this ability may call upon her god to aid her in a nearly impossible missile shot. She may add her

holy warrior level to the attack roll of a single arrow (or other missile weapon) shot, and her Charisma modifier to the damage roll. This ability may be used with enchanted or enhanced arrows or missiles.

Detect Evil (Sp)

As per the spell in the *PH*.

Divine Grace (Su)

See the paladin class in the *PH* for details. This ability is the peak saving throw enhancing ability for holy warriors and, unless otherwise noted, does not stack with other holy warrior abilities that add to just one saving throw (such as Unyielding).

Divine Health (Su)

See the paladin class in the *PH* for details.

Divine Inspiration (Ex)

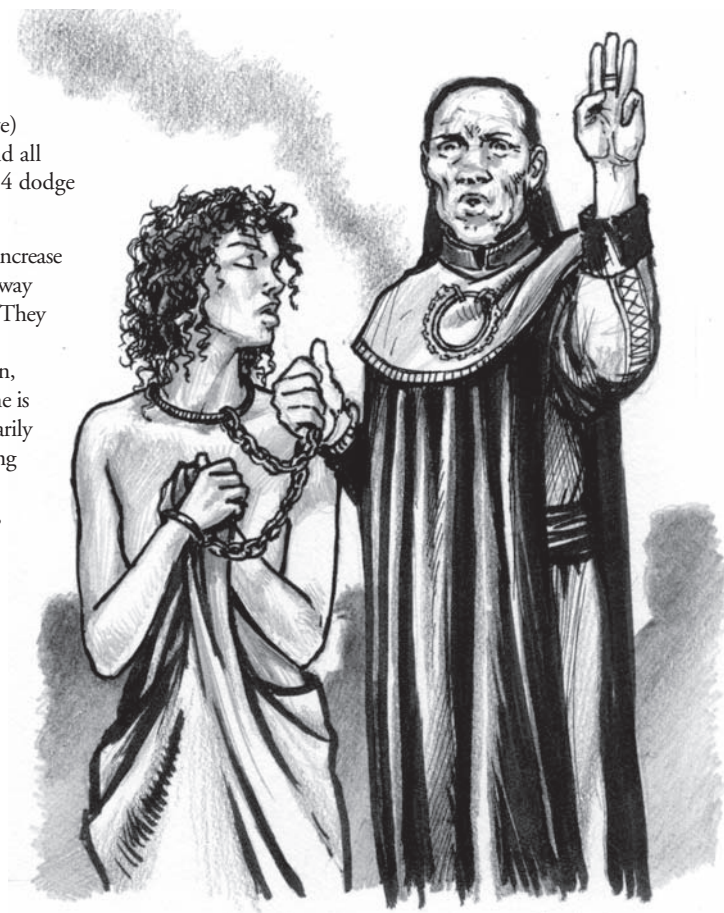
The holy warrior is inspired by her god or goddess in acts of creation and in the celebration and preservation of creation's beauty. The holy warrior picks two skills from the following list, but she must pick skills that are among her class skills. She henceforth adds her Charisma modifier as a sacred bonus to all rolls she makes using these two skills. Further, she receives 4 additional skill points to apply to the two skills however she chooses, though neither skill may exceed the maximum rank for her character level. The skills she may choose from are as follows:

- Profession (farming), Profession (any pertaining to woodcraft or creative pursuits), Wilderness Lore, Knowledge (nature), Appraise, Perform, Craft (any)

The additional skill ranks are not lost if the character loses her holy warrior powers, but she loses the sacred bonuses.

Earth Ken (Su)

The holy warrior is intimately familiar with the element of earth. She gains the Terran language for free and gains some of the pure power of earth. Once per day, the holy warrior may harden herself to all blows. For one round her armor class receives a natural armor bonus equal to



The overseers of Naran hunger for power and take great pleasure in exhibiting it.

for her character level. The skills she may choose from are as follows:

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her holy warrior level, and her skin takes on a rocky hue. Activating her hardening powers is a free action.

Energy Resistance (fire/cold/lightning/acid) (Su)

The holy warrior may ignore much of the damage done to her by the selected energy – natural or magical – including dragon's breath. Each day she ignores the selected kind of energy damage equal to her Charisma modifier times her holy warrior level. This ability may not be activated voluntarily and automatically affects the first such damage of the day, even if the holy warrior expects much worse later that day. If the first energy damage she sustains does not do enough damage to deplete her resistance, she uses the rest on the next attack, and the next, until her resistance is fully depleted for the day. After all of her resistance is used, she takes damage from the selected energy normally. For example: A 10th-level holy warrior with a 16 Charisma (+3 modifier) and Energy Resistance (fire) may resist a total of 30 points of fire damage a day. She is hit by a flame arrow, which does 14 points. This leaves her with 16 more points of resistance. The next round, she is caught in a fireball, which does 26 points of damage. She resists the first 16 and is out of resistance, taking the remaining 10. For the rest of the day, until she rests, she takes fire damage as normal.

Holy warriors with Energy Resistance (cold or lightning) must choose one or the other when they take the ability.

Feat of Strength (Su)

Once per day, the holy warrior can call upon her god for strength, enabling her to commit a feat of strength that lasts for one round. A feat of strength of this sort has one of two effects (whichever is more beneficial): Either the holy warrior's total Strength modifier becomes +6, or the holy warrior receives a bonus to her Strength statistic equal to her level plus her Charisma modifier. A 13th level paladin with a Strength of 14 and a Charisma of 20 performing a feat of strength would have 32 Strength for a round (13 for level + 14 for base Strength + 5 for Charisma modifier for a total of 32). Activating this power is a free action.

Fire Ken (Su)

The holy warrior is intimately familiar with the element of fire. She gains the Ignan language for free and gains some of the pure power of flame. Once per day, she may make a flaming attack. Her weapon, hand, or other method of attack bursts into flame for a round, causing an additional 1d6 plus her Charisma modifier in damage. Obviously, this damage does not affect creatures immune to flame. The flaming attack lasts for a full round, so all attacks made with the weapon for that round do the extra damage.

Gaze of Justice (Ex)

The holy warrior gains a piercing stare that sees deep into the mortal heart. Gifted by her god, the holy warrior is able not only to better perceive peoples' intents, but also to make those with guilty consciences feel that they are caught and judged. The Gaze of Justice grants the holy warrior a bonus rank in both Sense Motive and Intimidate (though the character may not exceed the maximum ranks for her level), each of which becomes a class skill if it is not already. The character also receives a sacred bonus to both skills equal to her Charisma modifier. The

additional skill ranks are not lost if the character loses her holy warrior powers, but she loses the sacred bonuses.

Hand of Life (Su)

When attacking an undead or negative energy creature, the holy warrior's hands or weapons are considered to be +1 for purposes of counteracting damage reduction. This only affects the undead and other creatures of negative energy. Further, once per day, the holy warrior may make her weapon flare with positive energy for a round, doing an additional 1d6 of holy damage to any undead or negative energy creatures she hits during that time – even those she hits with a missile weapon within 30 feet.

Healer's Aid (Sp)

Given a minute to prepare, once per day the holy warrior may call upon her god to aid the casting of any one healing spell – her own or another's. The spell automatically heals the maximum possible hit points, plus an additional 1 hit point per holy warrior level. For example, a 9th-level holy warrior with this ability seeks to aid her 9th-level cleric companion in healing a sorely wounded comrade. The two pray together for a full minute; at the end of the time, the cleric casts *cure serious wounds* supported by the holy warrior's *healer's aid* ability. The spell heals 42 hit points: 3d8 maximized is 24, plus 1 per cleric level of the caster (9), plus one per holy warrior level of the aid (9): 24+9+9=42. In the case that the holy warrior is aiding her own casting, her 1 hit point per level bonuses (caster and aid) stack.

Indomitable (Ex)

The holy warrior is a testament to stubbornness. Whenever she must make a Willpower save, she may add her Charisma modifier. This stacks with other holy warrior bonuses to her Willpower modifier, such as Divine Grace. Further, the holy warrior can never be forced by magic or other means to perform an act against her will. She may not be dominated or mind-controlled by any means and, while she is susceptible to *charm* and *suggestion*, if the casting party suggests a course of action counter to the holy warrior's desire in the slightest, she will not comply. She is completely immune to *geas* and *quest* unless placed on her by an agent of her god. It is recommended that the GM check with the player what her intentions are before having a party casting *charm* make a suggestion – this way there will be no question as to whether the suggestion is counter to her will.

Insight (Ex)

The holy warrior gains a mystical insight into any one thing of her choice. Essentially, her god provides her with the keys to fully understanding that thing – a skill or a weapon. She may choose one of the following abilities: She may permanently gain double her Charisma modifier as an insight bonus to a skill in which she has ranks; she may gain her Charisma modifier in skill ranks of a skill in which she has no ranks (and may, from that point on, purchase ranks in that skill as a class skill) – though she may not exceed the maximum possible ranks for a character of her level; or she may gain a +1 insight bonus to her attack rolls with any one weapon. If she chooses an insight bonus to a skill, it will increase or decrease if her Charisma modifier increases or decreases, but if she chooses skill ranks, they do not change. If she chooses the insight bonus to attack rolls, the bonus stacks with similar bonuses, such as weapon focus. The holy warrior need not pick the nature of the insight when she first receives this power; often the insight comes in the middle of an adventure when it is most fortuitous. Once the insight is chosen, however, it is permanent and may not be altered.

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Impervious Mind (Ex)

The holy warrior is immune to all effects, magical or otherwise, that directly alter her mind. She is immune to all of the following spells or spell-like effects that yield these results (not a complete list): *otto's irresistible dance*, *insanity*, *dominate person*, *feeblemind*, *mind fog*, *confusion*, *tasha's hideous laughter*, *hypnotism*, and *daze*. She cannot be driven mad by any natural force short of her god abandoning her. She cannot lose her memory, have a memory implanted, or in any other way have the integrity of her mind assaulted short of a god's will or a *wish* spell. She is not, however, immune to *fear*, *illusion*, *blindness*, *charm*, or other effects that play on her perceptions or emotions. If your campaign includes psionics, the holy warrior may be granted extraordinary defense against psionic attacks – at your GM's discretion.

Lay on Hands (Sp)

See the paladin class in the *PH* for details on this ability. If a holy warrior receives *lay on hands* from both of her domains, she may add two to her effective level for determining the number of hit points she can heal.

Overthrow Tyranny (Su)

Once per day, the holy warrior may call upon her god's will to smite tyrants for one round. When fighting a member of the forces of tyranny (slavers, corrupt guards, soldiers from a totalitarian empire, etc.), the Overthrow Tyranny power allows the holy warrior to add her Charisma modifier to all attack rolls and her holy warrior level to all damage rolls during the round. This ability only works against a tyrant or tyrannical forces the holy warrior is overthrowing and, as such, may only be used against those who are somehow oppressing members of the five mortal races (or half-breeds thereof), since these are the races over which the gods hold sway. In other words, while orcs routinely enslave goblins, it doesn't count. However, if there is an orcish empire enslaving and oppressing gnomes, this power could be used against orcs of the empire. If there is doubt in the holy warrior's heart as to the participation of the opponent in tyranny, the ability does not work. It will certainly work if the holy warrior is breaking up some act of tyranny, or is defending herself against such an act, like raising a mutiny on a slave ship onto which she has been impressed. It is a free action to activate this ability.

Read & Detect Magic (Sp)

Once per day per holy warrior level, the holy warrior may cast *read magic* and *detect magic*. She does this instantly and without components; otherwise, both powers work as the spells. She may cast the two spells at the same time or separately.

Rebuke (air, earth, fire, water) Elemental (Su)

The holy warrior may rebuke creatures from the appropriate plane exactly as a cleric of her level may rebuke undead. Unlike the Turn Undead ability, the holy warrior receives her full level for this ability. Because the rebuking does not involve negative energy, the number of times she may rebuke planar creatures and the number of times she may turn undead are from separate pools and the Extra Turning feat must be purchased separately for each kind of turning.

Relentless Runner (Ex)

The holy warrior is gifted by her god with an uncanny ability to carry messages and get places on foot. This ability grants the holy warrior the Run feat. Further, the length of time the holy warrior can sustain a run before making Endurance checks is multiplied by her Charisma modifier. Once she does make Endurance checks, she adds her holy warrior level to the check. For example: A 12th-level holy warrior with this ability, a 14 Constitution, and a 20 Charisma starts running down the road to warn a nearby town of an invading army approaching. Since she has the Run feat, she can run at 5x her speed. She can sustain this for 70 rounds (14 for her Constitution multiplied by her Charisma modifier of 5). After 70 rounds, she starts making Endurance checks at +12 (for her level). The difficulty of those checks goes up one per round, as normal.

Righteous Fury (Su)

Once per day, the holy warrior may call upon her god's righteous fury to smite the wicked for one round. When fighting a known criminal, the Righteous Fury power allows the holy warrior to add her Charisma modifier to her attack roll and her holy warrior level to her damage roll. This ability only works against a criminal the holy warrior is bringing to justice and, as such, may only be used against a being of one of the five mortal races (or half-breeds thereof), since these are the races over which the gods hold sway. Note: It is not enough that the opponent is evil. The opponent must be wanted for a crime. If there is doubt in the holy warrior's heart as to the guilt of the opponent, the ability does not work – it is not a built-in jury. It will certainly work if the holy warrior is in the midst of stopping a crime, or is defending herself against a criminal assault, such as robbery. It is a free action to activate this ability.

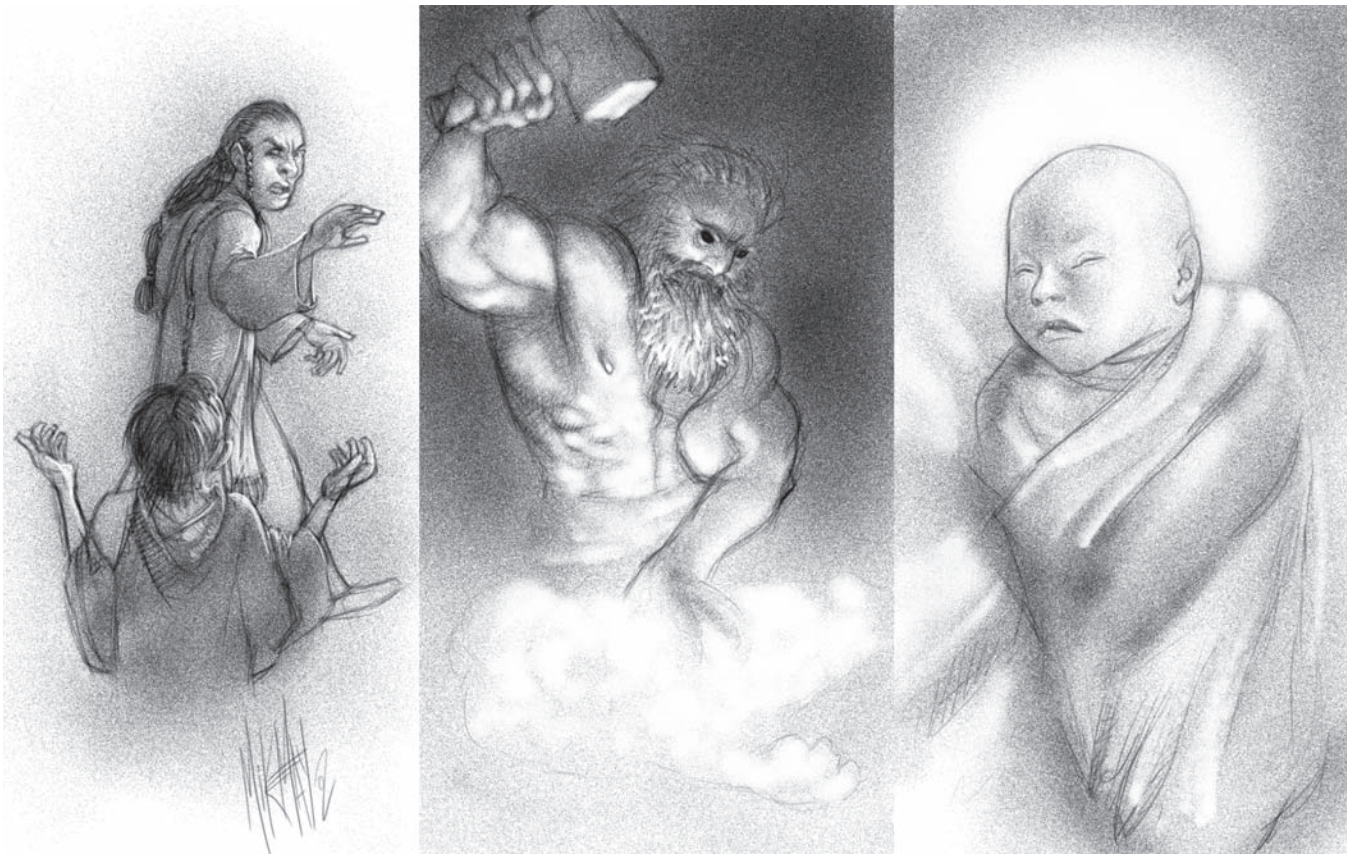
Sacrifice (Sp)

Once per day, the holy warrior may call upon her god to help her make a great sacrifice. As a standard action, the holy warrior may touch a wounded person and absorb his pain and injuries. The holy warrior may absorb up to as many hit points of that person's wounds as the holy warrior has max hit points, plus an additional 10 points. The touched person is healed that many points. For every two points of damage the holy warrior absorbs, there is a 1% chance that she will be overwhelmed by the target's pain and wounds and be knocked unconscious and reduced to -1 hit points. Of course, the holy warrior may choose to die by absorbing enough damage to take her to -10 or more. If the holy warrior voluntarily reduces her hit points to less than -1, she need not roll the percentile chance.

Even if the holy warrior is wounded, she may absorb up to her maximum hit points plus 10. Temporary hit points do not affect the amount of damage she can heal. A holy warrior with the *lay on hands* ability may combine it with *sacrifice*, with both abilities coalescing into a single standard action. The healing from *lay on hands* takes effect prior to any healing from *sacrifice*.

Example: K'tor has a maximum of 30 hit points. He is currently bleeding, with -4 hit points. A wounded holy warrior with this ability and a maximum of 50 hit points who is currently at 40 hit points sacrifices herself by touching K'tor. She may heal up to 60 points (her maximum hit points + 10; her wounds do not matter in this equation), but she cannot heal more damage than K'tor has maximum hit points. She heals 34, bringing K'tor to full health. She takes 34 points of damage in the process, which reduces her to 6 points, and has a 17% chance of being knocked out and reduced to -1 hit point. She rolls an 18 on percentile dice and narrowly escapes.

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The King of the Crucible can turn even the wickedest man into a saint should he so choose.

Save Soul (Su)

Any ally of the holy warrior's within 10 times her Charisma modifier feet of her is marked as protected and does not easily cross over into death. When a protected person reaches -10 hit points, he dies as normal, but his spirit does not depart his body. Instead, it remains there in a slumber. This also pertains to anyone slain by negative energy attacks that have given him too many negative levels or reduced his Constitution to 0. Such people are not possessed or turned into wights, shadows, or other undead. They instead die, awaiting salvation. The exception is any negative energy attack that also destroys the body. Without a vessel, the spirit will not remain.

When the body is subjected to *raise dead* or other spells that restore life, the spirit awakens and decides if it wishes to return to life. If the spirit chooses to return, it is without trauma and loses no stats or levels in the process. If no raising or resurrection is possible, or if the holy warrior knows such things are against her ally's wishes, she may release the spirit at any time. Sometimes the spirit will appear before the holy warrior and her companions in the moment of release, offering a final farewell, although these instances are unpredictable and rare. The spirit will remain attached to the body as long as it remains within range of the holy warrior and the body exists.

Shield of Righteousness (Su)

Whenever the holy warrior is in battle with known criminals, she is protected by her god's just will. As such, she receives a +4 sacred bonus to her armor class and all saving throws for the duration of the combat. This ability only works against a criminal the holy warrior

is bringing to justice and, as such, may only be used against a being of one of the five mortal races (or half-breeds thereof), since these are the races over which the gods hold sway. Note: It is not enough that the opponent is evil. The opponent must be wanted for a crime. If there is doubt in the holy warrior's heart as to the guilt of the opponent, the ability does not work – it is not a built-in jury. As with Righteous Fury, it will work if the holy warrior is in the midst of stopping a crime, or is defending herself against a criminal assault, such as robbery. Unlike Righteous Fury, this ability lasts for the entire combat, and there is no daily limit to its use: It is automatically in effect every time the holy warrior fights criminals.

Shining Captain (Su)

In great battles, the holy warrior seems to glow with the power of her god's authority. Her allies can see her from anywhere on the field and, if she is in vocal range, can hear her issue orders over any din of battle. Further, she inspires those who are under her command for the duration of the battle, and they may add her Charisma bonus to any morale or fear checks made during the combat. This bonus stacks with the bonus provided by Aura of Courage only if they are from separate sources (the troops are inspired by one holy warrior and stand in the Aura of Courage of another). When troops are inspired by multiple commanders (if their captain and general are both holy warriors with this ability, for instance), they are subject only to the highest bonus. The holy warrior may only use this ability when commanding a force of soldiers at least 50 times her holy warrior level, but only affects that many soldiers (so 20th-level holy warrior must be leading at least 1,000 troops, but only affects the first 1,000 no matter how large a force she leads, counted lowest hit dice first).

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Silent Stalker (Ex)

The holy warrior is an expert hunter and is blessed by her god with the skill of moving without a sound while stalking her prey. A holy warrior with this ability has access to Move Silently as a class skill (if not otherwise available) and receives a number of ranks in the skill equal to her Charisma modifier (though it may not exceed the maximum ranks for a character of her level). Further, when making Move Silently checks while in light armor or unarmored, the holy warrior may add her Charisma modifier to the roll as a sacred bonus. The additional skill ranks are not lost if the character loses her holy warrior powers, but she loses the sacred bonuses.

Slip Bonds (Ex)

The holy warrior cannot be contained by normal means; the power of her god makes her free from any but the most horrible restraint. She gains Escape Artist as a class skill, receiving a number of ranks equal to her Charisma modifier (though it may not exceed the maximum ranks for a character of her level). Whenever making an Escape Artist skill check, she may add her Charisma modifier to the roll as a sacred bonus. Also, whenever she is imprisoned or intentionally locked into some sort of confinement, she may use her Escape Artist skill to open the lock as though it were the Open Lock skill. She retains the Charisma modifier bonus on these rolls. Allies observing her when opening such locks will note that she is in a trance while doing so; she can't replicate the skill unless she is actually being held against her will.

Smite Evil (Su)

See the paladin class in the *PH* for details.

Spell Resistance (Su)

During the holy warrior's training, she learns every secret and mystery of a school of magic. During a three-day holy rite, she then calls upon her god for protection against that sort of magic. Holy warriors so empowered receive an SR equal to their holy warrior level against the chosen school; the SR cannot exceed 15 but does stack with other SRs unless a relevant other source states to the contrary.

Temple of Flesh (Su)

The holy warrior's body is pure and protected by her god as if a living temple. As she gains in power and becomes more and more of an instrument to her god, her body is protected from certain deleterious effects delivered by any force short of the most powerful magic (a *wish* spell) or divine/diabolical will. To determine her protections, consult this table. She receives all protections at and below the total of her holy warrior level and her Charisma modifier:

Table 11-4: Temple of Flesh Protections

H.W. Level + CHA Mod.	Protection
2	Immune to scarring, even that caused by acid, though takes damage normally
5	Immune to intoxication
8	Immune to natural poisons
11	Immune to mineral poisons
14	Immune to poison gas

16	No need for food
18	Immune to <i>polymorph</i> and <i>shapechange</i> – either by or against her will
20	Immune to petrification and disintegration
22	No need for drink
24	Immune to death from massive damage
26	No need to breathe

Tireless Traveler (Ex)

A holy warrior with this ability can go for many days without food, water, or rest, as she is kept alive and moving purely by faith. The holy warrior may go without sleep or water for a number of days equal to her level. She may go without food for a number of days equal to her Charisma modifier times her level.

Tracker (Ex)

The holy warrior is adept at hunting through any clime and can track man or beast. She gains Wilderness Lore and Knowledge (nature) as class skills and gains the Track feat for free. If Wilderness Lore and Knowledge (nature) were class skills to begin with, she gains 2 bonus ranks in each skill (though this may not exceed her total number of ranks possible for her level).

Towering Stature (Su)

When the holy warrior gains this ability, she mysteriously gains in size after each night's sleep over the following month until, at the end of that time, she is the maximum height for her species and comes to be of imposing and impressive stature. She gains a bonus to all future Fortitude saves equal to her Charisma modifier, the Toughness feat (giving her an immediate +3 hit points), and a +1 enlargement bonus to Intimidate, which becomes a class skill if it is not already. If the holy warrior loses her class abilities for whatever reason, she loses the Toughness feat, the bonus to her Fortitude save, and the bonus to her Intimidate skill, but she does not shrink back to her original height. Instead she loses the imposing appearance and seems drawn and gaunt.

Turn Undead (Su)

The holy warrior with this domain ability may begin turning undead at first level, where most have to wait until third. This means she turns undead exactly as a cleric. However, when she reaches third level and receives the "turn undead" power that other holy warriors receive, she may begin doubling her charisma modifier when rolling her turning damage. In addition, at third level, she gains a special turning function: retributive rebirth.

Whenever the 3rd-level or higher holy warrior with this ability turns undead and does enough turning damage to destroy the undead, she may instead call upon the spirits that once inhabited the now desecrated and undead bodies. If the person who raised the undead is in the area (one mile radius per holy warrior level) the spirits come into the undead vessels and then go to destroy the evil creature or spellcaster that has so desecrated their mortal vessels. The holy warrior may choose not to call for retributive rebirth, and indeed some holy warriors feel it is distasteful to so disturb the sleeping spirits. Yet others feel that it is the ultimate justice. An undead turned on its creator will pursue him doggedly until it is destroyed or he is. Once the undead's creator is destroyed, the undead itself turns to dust and

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the spirit returns from whence it came. The undead's creator cannot turn, or rebuke, or in any other way control the undead that have come for their revenge, but his allies may.

For example: A 10th-level holy warrior of Mormekar with an 18 Charisma faces 14 skeletons. The skeletons are guarding the door to a necromancer's tower and were created by him. She rolls a 17 for her turning check, for a total of 21 (a roll of 17 + her Charisma modifier of +4). This means she can turn undead up to 13 hit dice. Fortunately, the skeletons are not that powerful, at 1 hit die each. Rolling her damage, she gets an 11, for a total of 29 (11 + 10 for her level + 8 for her Charisma modifier times 2). Since the skeletons have a total of 14 hit dice, she has rolled enough to destroy them all. She chooses instead to call for retributive rebirth, with the spirits of the skeletons coming to take control of their bodies. The skeletons batter down the door of the tower, which is within 10 miles (1 mile times her holy warrior level of 10), and attack the necromancer, who is alone and cannot control his creations. When the holy warrior enters the tower an hour later, there is nothing left but dust and a dead necromancer.

Untamable Heart (Ex)

The holy warrior is immune to any magical effort to alter her emotional state against her will. This includes *charm*, *fear*, *suggestion*, *emotion* and *calm emotions*, but it extends to any other spell or magical effect in which the caster seeks to change the holy warrior's feelings (for instance, a succubus' seduction powers). The holy warrior may submit to these effects if she likes, such as *emotion (hope)*. Further, she is very practiced at keeping herself under control emotionally, and receives a bonus to her Willpower saving throw equal to her Charisma modifier against natural emotional effects (like natural fear of enormous creatures). The simple rule to follow: She is immune to spell-like and supernatural emotional effects, but receives only a bonus against extraordinary emotional effects.

Unyielding (Su)

The holy warrior's body does not easily yield to damage. She receives a bonus to all Fortitude saves equal to her Charisma modifier. In addition, she may continue to function at negative hit points equal to her Charisma modifier, and does not die until she reaches negative hit points equal to 10 or her holy warrior level (whichever is higher). For example: A 15th-level holy warrior with a 20 Charisma may continue functioning until she reaches -5 (her Charisma modifier) hit points – though she continues to bleed as normal. She will not die until she reaches -15 (her holy warrior level).

Warrior's Heart (Ex)

Once a day, the holy warrior may call upon her god to instill in her a kind of ecstatic religious frenzy, making her the perfect weapon. For a number of rounds equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier, the holy warrior receives a +6 bonus to her Strength and Constitution scores. In this religious ecstasy, she ceases to feel pain or to be concerned about her safety, and therefore suffers from a -4 penalty to her Armor Class. The benefit of this painless state, however, is that she may fight through any injury (including massive damage, against which she need not make a Fortitude save) until she is at negative hit points totaling 10 + her holy warrior level. When she reaches that much damage her mangled body can no longer maintain her fierce spirit and she dies on the spot; her body falls to pieces, having been kept together only by her religious fervor. Beginning the Warrior's Heart is a free action and the holy warrior may end it at any time. It is not a form of madness or rage but rather a kind of blissful trance, and therefore cannot be ended by spells such as *calm emotions*.

The increase in Constitution will increase her hit points by 3 per level; these hit points go away at the end of Warrior's Heart. The hit points are not lost first like temporary hit points, so one should exercise caution. The holy warrior may not use this ability with similar warrior bonuses like Barbarian Rage or Creation's Guardian. She is in an ecstatic trance of battle, and during it she is in constant contemplation of her god. Because the additional prowess is provided to her by her god, she is not tired at the end of the Warrior's Heart, but because she is in a state of trance, she may not cast spells that require verbal components or do anything else that involves speech.

Water Ken (Su)

The holy warrior is intimately familiar with the element of water. She gains the Aquan language for free and gains some of the pure power of water. She gains a sacred bonus to her swim skill equal to her Charisma modifier times her holy warrior level. She may also breathe

underwater once per day for a number of rounds equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier.

Winged Feet (Su)

The holy warrior runs as though carried by celestial wings. She gains a bonus +10 feet to her movement. She also ignores all armor penalties to movement for medium armor or lighter, and movement penalties for heavy armor are halved. Carrying a medium load does not slow her at all, but a heavy load will reduce her speed by 5 feet.



Some holy warriors make a point of flaunting the great swiftness lent them by their gods. The truly blessed need not brag, though.

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New Feats & Skills

The following feats are mostly useful for holy characters, but some are for general use. There are many other feats useful for divinely powered characters in other books, such as abilities that allow clerics and paladins to convert their daily turning powers into other effects. We've chosen not to add to that premise since it's available in other sources, but recommend *DotF* from *WotC* for a sizable list of such feats useful for any divinely powered character.

Table 11-5: Feats

General Feats	Prerequisite
Attached Soul	Cha 13+
Devout	-
Ear of God	-
Famous	Character level 6; Public recognition
Martial Instructor	Int 13+; Base attack bonus +5 or higher
Religious Scholar	-
Weapons Master	Base attack bonus +4 or higher
Special Feats	Prerequisite
Domain Specialization	Wis 13+ Cleric level 4
Free Thinker	Wis 13+
Heretic	-
Profound Faith	Cha 13+

Attached Soul (General)

For whatever reason, you are fiercely attached to life; your soul will stay in your body long after most would die.

Prerequisite: Cha 13+.

Benefit: You may be reduced down to an additional -5 hit points before you die. In the absence of any other special abilities, this means you would die at -15 instead of -10.

Devout (General)

You are completely dedicated to your god (or gods) and will not be swayed by the powers opposed to your faith.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to Willpower saves against any mind- or emotion-altering effect from a religiously opposed power. If you are an adherent of one of the gods of the tree, this will work against *charm* and mind-control powers from devils, demons, undead and/or clerics of the evil gods; if you are a worshiper of one of the evil gods, it will work against servants of the gods of good. The exact list of "opposed forces" should be worked up with your GM. This ability has no effect on spells or powers from forces that are not directly opposed to your god or gods (such as clerics of a foreign god you've never heard of).

Domain Specialization (Special)

This feat may only be taken by clerics. You may spontaneously cast spells from your clerical domains.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+, cleric level 4.

Benefit: A cleric who takes this feat may spontaneously cast the spells from one of his two cleric spell domains just as he spontaneously casts *heal* or *inflict* spells. See page 156 of the *PH* for rules on spontaneous casting.

Special: Under no circumstance may a cleric specialize in more than one spell domain.

Ear of God (General)

For whatever reason, you are watched over by your god's servants. When you are in dire trouble, you may appeal to your god for aid. Sometimes you will be answered.

Benefit: Whenever you pray in desperate times for a specific request, roll a d100. On a 00, you are heard. What effect your prayer being heard has is up to your GM, though the easiest rule to follow is that you will automatically succeed on your next roll.

Special: Your GM may wish to rule that all divinely powered characters, like clerics and holy warriors, receive this feat for free. This is a way for rogues, fighters, and others to also become "divinely favored."

Famous (General)

As you climb in the religious hierarchy or commit great deeds, people start to know you and treat you better. A person who has committed sufficiently important deeds or climbed high enough in her religious hierarchy may take this feat.

Prerequisite: Character level 6+, and you must have done at least one thing that makes you known publicly – write a great opera, save a town, become an archdeacon, etc.

Benefit: In a world where religion and great deeds are important, there comes a time in many adventurers' careers that everyone knows them. When you buy this feat, you become famous; as you climb in power and commit greater deeds, you may become more famous. The feat allows you to put points in the Famous skill, which becomes a class skill.

Normal: Without this feat, you may never gain ranks in the Famous skill.

Free Thinker (Special)

Free Thinker is only available to clerics. When you take this feat, you are freed from aspects of traditional church dogma and ritual, and may pray for your spells at any time of day.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+.

Benefit: With this feat, you may prepare divine spells at any time and any place. You must still follow the "Recent Casting Limit" rules as explained on page 156 of the *PH*. The effect of this feat is that you may ignore the "Time of Day" rules on the same page and may pray for spells whenever you like.

Heretic (Special)

You hold views deemed heretical by your church, but you still gain

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With the most profound holiness comes temporal status, often a temptation to any but the most devout in the clergy.

spells from your god. This feat is how heretical cults come into existence (see Chapter VIII).

Prerequisite: Cleric.

Benefit: The cleric may be two alignment shifts from a god's alignment and still receive powers from that god, but may not be the opposite alignment from the sponsor god. A heretic may be neutral if the sponsor god is one alignment shift from neutral.

Special: A heretic receives the same domains as other clerics of the god, but may not take alignment domains counter to her own. Whether the heretic is actually receiving power from the god he professes to worship is up to the GM. If your GM defines a heretical cult, you might receive different domains from the cult than from the usually church of the god (like the cults in Chapter VIII).

Martial Instructor (General)

You are skilled at training others in the use of weapons, and can even train normal people to become 1st-level fighters or warriors.

Prerequisite: Int 13+, base attack bonus +5 or higher.

Benefits: This ability has two effects: You can teach others weapon proficiencies and you can train anyone to become a 1st-level fighter or warrior.

Weapon Proficiency Training

You can train individuals or groups in weapon use. You must be proficient in the weapon you are teaching, and your students may be

any level. The training sessions are with one weapon in which the trainees are not proficient and you may hold as many training sessions per week as you have time for. Individual sessions take 2 hours. After seven training sessions, the trainee may use the weapon in which she has trained at a -2 penalty instead of the standard -4 nonproficiency penalty.

If the trainee continues to study with you thrice weekly for two months, she gains a temporary proficiency with that weapon. For every week of training missed, the student must train an additional two weeks to receive the temporary proficiency. Once the temporary proficiency is gained, the student may use the weapon as if proficient, but must continue to train with you once a month to maintain the proficiency. A temporary weapon proficiency lasts until the student has an opportunity to gain that proficiency (either by taking a level in a class that provides it or by taking a feat) or ceases regular training. For each monthly session missed, a trainee must take a weeklong refresher course as above to regain the temporary proficiency.

A group training session may include a number of people equal to your level times your Int bonus (if positive). The training session time increases to 3 hours.

1st Level Training

The Martial Instructor feat also allows you to teach someone the skills necessary to become a 1st-level fighter or, in the case of NPCs and based on the GM's discretion, warrior. You may have as many full-time students as your level. These students study with you three times a week (together or alone), every week, for one month – for a total of 12 lessons. It can be cut down to fewer sessions per week (thus

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extending the number of weeks of training needed), but there must be at least one session per week. These sessions take 3 hours.

The newly minted 1st-level Fighter/Warrior can only gain skills or feats that you have; the exception is she may maintain any skills and feats she had before the training. If you (or the students) go away, adventuring perhaps, every full week of training missed must be made up for with two weeks of additional training.

You may try to take on more students than your prestige class level. If you do so, you are not as focused, and all training sessions require a Profession (teacher) skill check with a DC of 10 + 1 for every student over the limit.

Profound Faith (Special)

Profound Faith can only be taken by clerics. You may not be the brightest holy symbol in the temple, but your faith is stronger than most. Just as holy warriors are able to draw on the raw power of their faith, you use your faith more than your wisdom to call for aid from your god.

Prerequisites: Cha 13+.

Benefit: You may use your Charisma instead of your Wisdom to determine what level divine spells you can cast and the number of bonus spells you receive. However, you continue to use your Wisdom modifier to determine everything else about your divine spells, such as the DC for saving throws against them.

Religious Scholar (General)

You are a leading expert in the study of one of the gods in the pantheon.

Benefit: You receive a +4 bonus to all Knowledge (religion) rolls about one god, his followers, his lore, etc. If you make a Knowledge (religion) roll with a DC of 20 when examining any religious artifacts, reliquaries, or magic items tied to that god's faith, you receive the same information as would be received with a successful casting of *legend lore* on that item.

Special: You may take this feat multiple times, each time pertaining to a different god in the pantheon.

Weapons Master (General)

You are a highly skilled warrior who can pick up any weapon and use it successfully.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +4 or higher.

Benefit: You suffer only a -2 penalty to use weapons with which you are not proficient.

Special: This feat may be purchased a second time, reducing the penalty to -1.

New Skill

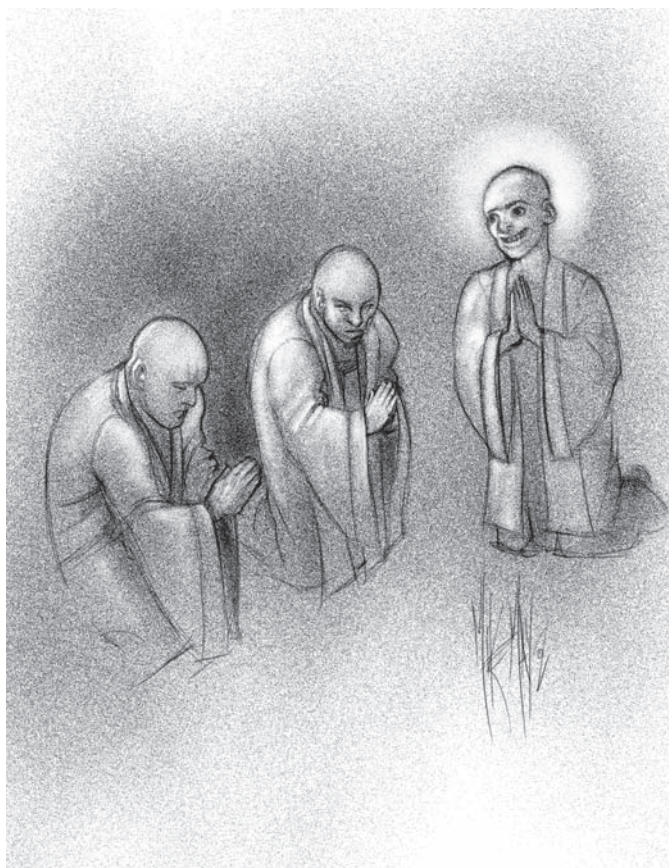
We have one new skill, which is tied to the Famous feat:

Famous (Cha; Trained only)

Use this skill to establish whether people have heard of you and what their attitude is toward your fame. The more ranks you have in this skill, the more likely people will have heard of you – either because you are a “big wheel” in one of the major religions or because you’ve committed some incredible act of goodness that fills everyone with respect and awe. You might even be famous simply because you are so talented – as a great bard, craftsman, or even warrior.

Check: Whenever your fame might matter (in any case where you might ask, “Doesn’t this guy know who I am?”), you make a Famous skill check. The DC is based on the likelihood of the person having heard of you (sample chart below). For every 2 points by which the DC is exceeded, the person’s reaction to you is improved by one step on whatever NPC reaction chart your GM may be using. If the GM is not using such a chart, follow this simple rule: The more you make the roll by, the more adoring the person will be. If you just narrowly make the roll, the person has heard of you but isn’t especially impressed.

Retry: You may retry the Famous roll only after you or someone else has spent at least a minute reminding the person of your many deeds. This retried roll only improves the NPC’s opinion by one step per 4 points by which the DC is exceeded – the full minute of braggadocio can’t help but make you look a bit like a ninny.



The gods do not always require great wisdom in their service. Sometimes beautiful and abiding faith is enough; sometimes it's needed above all else.

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Famous Table

DC	Situation
10	The NPC is a citizen of a town you saved from extinction last summer.
15	The NPC is a shopkeeper in the same province in which you've performed most of your greatest works or deeds.
20	The NPC is a visiting foreigner in your homeland, and hardly knows the culture.
25	The NPC is a citizen of a foreign nation that borders on your own.
30	The NPC is from another continent that has barely had contact with yours.
40	The NPC is from another plane of existence.
-15	Your name has not been mentioned and the NPC is going on sight.
+10	You were recently in local news (promoted to your position, saved the town last week, etc.).
+20	A bard just performed an epic about you in the same location the night before.

New Cleric Domains

The following new domains are mentioned in the cleric sections earlier in this book. Italicized spell names in the domain spell lists are spells that are new to *Book of the Righteous* and can be found later in this chapter. All other spells appear in the *PH* and *Pocket Grimoire Divine*.

Beauty Domain

Deities: Aymara

Granted Powers: This domain pertains to intense physical and artistic beauty; most of the spells present the subjects with such overpowering beauty that they are unable to properly function. You can perform a feat of beauty, which is a supernatural ability, to gain an enhancement bonus to your Charisma equal to your level. Activating the power is a free action; it lasts 3 rounds, and is usable once per day.

Beauty Domain Spells

1. **Charm Person.** Makes one person your friend.
2. **Hypnotic Pattern.** Fascinates 2d4+1 HD/level of creatures.
3. **Fair Light.** Bright light of day increases morale.
4. **Rainbow Pattern.** Lights prevent 24 HD of creatures from attacking or moving away.
5. **Mind Fog.** Subjects in fog get -10 Wis, Will checks.
6. **Mass Suggestion.** As *suggestion*, plus one/level subjects.
7. **Statue.** Subject can become a statue at will.
8. **Sympathy.** Object or location attracts certain creatures.
9. **Power Word, Kill.** A word so beautiful, those who hear it die.

The Dead Domain

Deities: Maal, Mormekar

Granted Powers: The cleric gains the *retributive rebirth* power; see "Turn Undead" in the holy warrior section.

The Dead Domain Spells

1. **Detect Return.** Detects the raised and resurrected.
2. **Consecrate.** Fills area with positive energy, making undead weaker.
3. **Negative Plane Protection.** Subject resists level and ability drains.

4. **Touch of Return.** Raise dead or resurrection is undone.
5. **Hallow.** Designates location as holy.
6. **Heal.** Undead lose all but 1d4 hp.
7. **Greater Restoration.** As *restoration*, plus restores all levels and ability scores.
8. **Greater Return.** All raised or resurrected creatures in area die.
9. **Imprison Soul.** Imprisons newly dead soul to prevent resurrection.

The Forge Domain

Deities: Korak

Granted Powers: This domain represents all crafts and works of the hand, not just smithing. You specialize in what is real and receive a +4 bonus on Craft checks and Willpower saving throws against illusions. You may spontaneously cast *make whole* with any of your domain spell slots (levels 1-9).

The Forge Domain Spells

1. **Animate Rope.** Makes a rope move at your command.
2. **Wood Shape.** Rearranges wooden objects to suit you.
3. **Stone Shape.** Sculpts stone into any form.
4. **Minor Creation.** Creates one cloth or wood object.
5. **Fabricate.** Transforms raw materials into finished items.
6. **Major Creation.** As *minor creation*, plus stone and metal.
7. **Move Earth.** Digs trenches and build hills.
8. **Symbol.** Triggered runes have array of effects.
9. **Greater Repair.** Mend and recharge magic items.

Home Domain

Deities: Anwyn

Granted Powers: Once per day you may designate a location "home" by lighting and tending a hearth there. The area within a 30-foot radius of the hearth is considered to be hallowed, like the spell, in the following ways: That area is guarded as if by *magic circle against evil*; all Charisma checks to turn undead gain a +4 sacred bonus, and Charisma checks to command undead suffer a -4 sacred penalty (spell resistance does not apply to this

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effect). As soon as the fire is out, the location is no longer considered hallowed. A hearth may be anything from a campfire to a full, stone hearth.

Home Domain Spells

1. **Rope Trick.** Up to eight creatures hide in extradimensional space.
2. **Anwyn's [Leomund's] Tiny Hut.** Creates shelter for 10 creatures.
3. **Anwyn's [Leomund's] Secure Shelter.** Creates sturdy cottage.
4. **Anwyn's [Leomund's] Secret Chest.** Hides expensive chest on ethereal plane; you retrieve it at will.
5. **Hallow.** Designates location as holy.
6. **Heroes' Feast.** Food for one creature/level cures and *blesses*.
7. **Guards and Wards.** Array of magic effects protect area.
8. **Anwyn's [Mord's] Magnificent Mansion.** Door leads to extradimensional mansion.
9. **Anwyn's Elysian Palace.** Door leads to palace in Elysium.

Inspiration Domain

Deities: Zheenkeef, Aymara

Granted Powers: Once per day, you can inspire courage, exactly as the bard ability (see page 28, *PH*). Perform is a class skill.

Inspiration Domain Spells

1. **Message.** Whispered conversation at distance.
2. **Enthrall.** Captivates all within 100 ft. + 10 ft./level.
3. **Afflatus.** +10 bonus to next perform or craft roll.
4. **Emotion.** Arouses strong emotion in subject.
5. **Greater Command.** As *command*, but affects one subject/level.
6. **Geas/Quest.** As *lesser geas*, plus it affects any creature.
7. **Insanity.** Subject suffers continuous *confusion*.
8. **Mind Blank.** Subject is immune to mental/emotional magic and *scrying*.
9. **Greater Afflatus.** +20 bonus to perform and craft rolls for 1 wk./level.

Justice Domain

Deities: Maal

Granted Powers: This domain pertains to the enforcement of just laws. You gain a free Martial Weapon Proficiency with longsword and Weapon Focus with longsword.

Justice Domain Spells

1. **Command.** One subject obeys one-word command for 1 round.
2. **Zone of Truth.** Subjects within range cannot lie.
3. **Bind Oath.** Subject is bound to an oath.
4. **Mark of Evil.** Blocks simple efforts to raise subject.
5. **Mark of Justice.** Designates action that will trigger *curse* on subject.
6. **Geas/Quest.** As *lesser geas*, plus it affects any creature.
7. **Destruction.** Kills subject and destroys remains.
8. **Sibboleth.** Damages everyone different from caster.
9. **Storm of Vengeance.** Storm rains acid, lightning, and hail.

Night Domain

Deities: Urian

Granted Powers: Darkvision 60'; If you already have darkvision, it becomes full color and you can see through the *deeper darkness* spell (or lower-level darkness spells).

Night Domain Spells

1. **Sleep.** Put 2d4 HD of creatures into comatose slumber.
2. **Darkness.** 20-ft. radius of supernatural darkness.
3. **Deeper Darkness.** Object sheds absolute darkness in 60-ft. radius.
4. **North Star.** Caster sees light of the North Star wherever he is.
5. **Dream.** Sends message to anyone sleeping.
6. **Moonbeam.** Beam drains strength and puts subject into comatose slumber.
7. **Constellation.** Enables conversation across any distance.
8. **Moonglow.** +4 AC, +4 resistance for group.
9. **Shooting Stars.** Deals 12d6 damage, heals 12d6.

Oracle Domain

Deities: Zheenkeef

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

Oracle Domain Spells

1. **True Strike.** Adds +20 bonus to your next attack roll.
2. **Augury.** Learns whether an action will be good or bad.
3. **Divination.** Provides useful advice for specific, proposed action.
4. **Scrying.** Spies on subject from a distance.
5. **Commune.** Deity answers one yes-or-no question/level.
6. **Legend Lore.** Learn tales about a person, place, or thing.
7. **Vision.** As *legend lore*, but quicker and strenuous.
8. **Discern Location.** Exact location of creature or object.
9. **Foresight.** "Sixth sense" warns of impending danger.

Truth Domain

Deities: Tinel

Granted Powers: This domain pertains to the never-ending quest for truth – including secrets. Sense Motive, Gather Information, and Innuendo are class skills.

Truth Domain Spells

1. **Detect Secret Doors.** Reveals hidden doors within 60 ft.
2. **Zone of Truth.** Subjects within range cannot lie.
3. **Discern Lies.** Reveals deliberate falsehoods.
4. **Scrying.** Spies on subject from a distance.
5. **True Seeing.** See all things as they really are.
6. **Analyze Dweomer.** Reveals magical aspects of subject.
7. **Greater Scrying.** As *scrying*, but faster and longer.
8. **Unveil Secrets.** Reveals all magical properties of subject.
9. **Fact to Fiction.** Reverses one event from the previous round.

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New Spells

For our spells, we've tried not to reinvent the wheel. The d20 System has many spells to choose from, as even a casual flip through *Pocket Grimoire Arcane* and *Pocket Grimoire Divine* confirms. If you want to have spells that are specifically named after the gods of the tree, simply rename the existing spells (Gust of Wind? How about Urian's Breath!). We decided to spare you a long list of spells like every other spell out there with new names. Instead, the spells we provide are either part of the new domains or are ones we think will be useful to religious characters and organizations. While it's certainly possible that some of these spells will be very similar to spells available in other material, we've tried to keep that to a minimum.

Afflatus

Evocation [Sonic]

Level: Inspiration 3, Clr 5

Components: V, DF

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 week or until discharged

Saving Throw: None

Spell resistance: Yes (Harmless)

An afflatus is a strong creative impulse, especially as a result of divine inspiration due to feeling the very breath of the gods. When you touch the subject of this spell, she feels the very breath of the gods, inspiring her to perform or create great works. She will receive a +10 bonus on her next Craft, Perform, Profession, or other creative or artistic skill roll. This roll must be made within a week, or the inspiration fades.

Anwyn's Elysian Palace

Transmutation

Level: Home 9

Components: V, S, DF, XP

Casting Time: 1 Action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You move yourself and one other creature to the great palace of Anwyn on the plane of Elysium (one of her many homes, though she is rarely present there). This palace is staffed by five solars: Atteretix (the body servant), Miallira (the handmaid), Rigar (the door warden), Ayalla (the chamberlain), and Yovarra (the chef). You arrive in the palace's atrium where, if the companion brought with you is hostile, it is set upon by these five solars.

You may leave the palace and return to the spot you left from at will. No mortal may reside within the palace for longer than 24 hours (the mortal vessel begins to deteriorate when too long in the presence of the divine).

Anyone spending eight hours or more within Anwyn's palace is treated to splendid feasts and perfect restfulness. This has all the following effects:

- All present are cured of any hurts, diseases, curses, and other deleterious magical or natural effects other than those put on them by a god.



To receive the afflatus is to experience the divine whisper of heaven's breath. It is the pure power of inspiration.

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- If the companion brought is dead, the solars use *true resurrection* to bring back such allies.
- The solars may be asked 20 questions with yes or no answers, as per the *commune* spell, during the stay.
- All divine spells are considered prepared after eight hours of rest within the palace without need for prayer or proper observance of “time of day.” The solars act as a direct conduit for the provision of these spells.
- For 12 hours after leaving the palace, all who ate and rested in the palace are under an effect equal to *bless*; they are also immune to magical *fear* and *hopelessness*.

There is a 1% chance that the caster will arrive at the Elysian palace while Anwyn is in residence. In such cases, if the caster is Anwynian, he may be granted an audience with his god. The GM must determine the effects of such an audience.

XP Cost: 5,000XP.

Focus: The ash from the central hearth of a consecrated holy site of Anwyn.

Bind Oath

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Language-Dependent, Mind-Affecting]

Level: Clr 3, Justice 3

Component: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent (see text)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

You are able to bind the subject to an oath that she voluntarily swears. No one can be forced to be bound to an oath with this spell, and any efforts to trick or coerce a person into so doing will result in the failure of the spell (you can't even threaten to put someone in jail unless they swear to be good).

During the casting, the subject agrees to be bound to an oath before the witness of the gods. Anything the subject says after the words “I swear to” is the oath. Anything prior to that is merely preamble and has no effect on the spell.

If the subject violates the oath, she suffers from the effects of *bestow curse* until she atones. Because she swore the oath voluntarily, the curse cannot be lifted by any means short of an *atonement* spell or divine intervention. Instead of *bestow curse*, the breaking of the oath may result in the loss of a series of powers granted as a member of a holy order (such as the white hands of Morwyn). This too cannot be undone by any means short of *atonement*.

Constellation

Evocation

Level: Clr 8, Drd 8, Night 7

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: See text

Target: One living creature under the stars

Duration: See text, Concentration

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You may perform this spell only while under the open night sky, which allows you to have a conversation with a subject using the stars as your conduit. At the beginning of the spell, you must trace the face of the recipient in the stars, pointing from star to star until you have a clear image in the mind's eye of a constellation in the subject's likeness. You then enter a trance, staring at this new constellation, and your face appears as a constellation in the heavens above the subject. Both you and the subject can speak to the constellations above you, and both will hear clearly as though seated next to one another. The conversation may last as long as there is starlight (dawn ends the spell). When the conversation begins, you exit the trance and may walk and act normally, speaking to the constellation for as long as you like, as long as you maintain concentration on its image; if you go indoors or underground, the spell ends.

If the recipient is not under the stars at the time of casting, or the stars are obscured from him by clouds, fog, or unnatural darkness when the spell begins, you can choose to exit the trance (ending the spell) or remain in the trance. You can remain in the trance until the subject is under the unobscured stars; once the conversation begins, clouds, fog, or unnatural darkness may obscure the stars without it affecting the spell – the light of the constellation continues to shine in the minds of both you and the subject. Naturally, this spell can only be used to communicate with someone on a plane of existence that has a sky containing stars. If you are disturbed during the trance while waiting, you awaken from it and the spell ends.

Blind creatures cannot be contacted by this spell. The subject must be able to see the constellation for contact to be made, but only a glimpse is necessary. If the subject is under the open stars, his eye is drawn to the constellation; he need not be aware that it is there. If the subject does not wish to be contacted, he may simply refuse to look at the constellation and the spell will end without you ever knowing that the subject has seen it.

You are unaware of your surroundings or the activities of those around you while in the trance. You are defenseless, both physically and mentally (e.g. always failing saving throws). Once the conversation begins, you may act normally. However, anything that happens to you or the subject that disturbs your concentration on the mental image of the constellation ends the spell.

Detect Return

Divination

Level: The Dead 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range.

Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

You can detect whether any living being in the area has ever been brought back from death by any means (e.g. *raise dead*, *resurrection*, *miracle*, *wish*, etc.). The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject:

1st Round: Presence or absence of those who have returned from death.

2nd Round: Number of people in the area who have returned from death, and who among them has returned the most times; if more than one person has returned the most times, it indicates the person who has returned the most by the most powerful means.

3rd Round: The number of times each returned person has returned from the dead and by what means.

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Note: Each round, you can turn to detect things in a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but one foot of stone, one inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or three feet of wood or dirt blocks it.

Fact to Fiction

Evocation

Level: Truth 9
Components: V, S, DF, XP
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: See text
Target, Effect or Area: See text
Duration: See text
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: Yes

Fact to fiction calls upon the power of truth to render that which is currently true, untrue. It works exactly as the *wish* spell's "undo misfortune" power, but it costs far less XP since it is much more limited in scope than a *wish* or a powerful *miracle*.

Fact to fiction can undo a single recent event. The wish forces a reroll of any roll made within the last round (including your last turn). The truth reshapes itself to accommodate the new result. For example, the wish could undo an opponent's successful save, a foe's successful critical hit (either the attack roll or the critical roll), a friend's failed save, and so on. The reroll, however, may be just as bad as or worse than the original roll, and the spell can only be used once on a single event. An unwilling target gets a Will save to negate and SR.

XP Cost: *Fact to Fiction* costs only 2,500 XP, but that is expended even if saving throws are made. The caster may add XP to the casting, pouring more of himself into the entreaty to the gods to reverse the unfortunate truth. For each additional 500XP spent, the caster receives an additional +1 sacred bonus to overcome spell resistance. For each additional 1,000 XP spent, the target receives a -1 sacred penalty to its Will save or a +1 sacred bonus on the re-roll.

Fair Light

Evocation [Light]

Level: Clr 4, Brd 4, Beauty 3
Range: Personal

As *daylight*, but the light must center on you. The fair light is just as bright as daylight, but it is filled with sparkles and pure luminescence, giving all who are good of heart cascading halos and all who are evil long gloomy shadows and dark outlines. These light effects not only clearly reveal whether the beings in the light are good or evil (unless their alignment is masked by any means), they also boost and decrease morale.

All good beings in the 60-foot radius of the *fair light* receive a +1 morale bonus to attack and save rolls. All evil beings in the light suffer a -1 morale penalty to such rolls.

As *daylight*, *fair light* counters or dispels equal or lesser darkness spells, such as *deeper darkness*.

Greater Afflatus

Evocation [Sonic]

Level: Inspiration 9
Duration: 1 wk./level

As *afflatus* except the subject enters into a long period of incredible creativity, creating works the likes of which the world rarely sees. She receives a +20 bonus to all creative or artistic skill rolls for a period of one week per caster level.

Greater Repair

Transmutation

Level: Clr 9, Forge 9
Components: V, S, XP
Target: One object of up to 100 cu. ft./level

As *make whole*, except the target can be missing significant pieces. If there is raw material of the appropriate type (stone for a stone wall, wood for a house, etc.), the spell uses the material to fill in the gaps. *Greater repair* will repair items that have been warped, burned, even ground to powder and melted, as long as the caster knows what they looked like in the first place. Even *greater repair* cannot mend items that have been disintegrated or vaporized.

If the item is magical and all of its pieces are present, *greater repair* will knit the magic item back together and restore its magic. The caster must spend the experience points that would be necessary to create the item in the first place. *Greater repair* will even restore charges to a magic item that is only out of charges (for the XP cost of creating a new item of the type). Finally, if the caster is seeking to mend an artifact – destroyed by *mord's disjunction* or other means – all of the pieces must be present, the caster must know the full history of the artifact (and must recite it prior to the casting), and even then stands only a 1% chance per caster level to mend the item. Any attempt to repair an artifact, even a failed attempt, costs a minimum of 15,000 XP. If the caster is willing to put his very life force into the repair of an artifact, no experience is spent; the caster dies and the repair is made. It is not clear whether this process actually consumes the caster's soul, but it is not possible to bring such a person back to life by any means known to mortals.

XP Cost: See above.

Greater Return

Necromancy [Death, Sonic]

Level: The Dead 8
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 30 ft.
Area: Creatures in a 30-ft. radius spread centered on you.
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

You utter a key phrase or scriptural passage, often "Go back! Go back! Thou shalt steal no further hours of life!" and all living beings in the area who have at any point died and returned to life by any means other than direct divine intervention (see *touch of return* for explanation) must make a Fortitude save or die. Those brought back by "minor" magic and those brought back more than once suffer penalties to their saves: If the subject has ever been brought back to life by the following spells, she suffers from the following sacred penalties (only the worst applies; these do not stack) to her Fortitude save:

<i>Reincarnate</i>	-8
<i>Raise Dead</i>	-5
<i>Resurrection</i>	-2

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If the subject has been brought back multiple times, here are the penalties. These do not stack with the spell penalties above, and only the worst of all these penalties applies:

2-3 Times	-2
4-5 Times	-4
6-8 Times	-8
9-12 Times	-16
13+ Times	-32

Even if the subjects make their saves, they suffer 3d6 points of damage, as the spell tears at their very souls.

A character who has been brought back from death by magical means is immune to this spell if he has undergone an *atonement* for violating the sanctity of death. Many good folk who are willing to be raised from the dead undergo such an *atonement*, explaining to the powers of death their need to return to life (an unfinished quest, love immortal, etc.) and undergoing an appropriate act of contrition.

Greater Transference

Abjuration

Range: Long (400ft. + 40 ft./level)

Level: Clr 4

As *transference*, but you need only see the subject to activate it, and the two of you can be quite far apart while maintaining the bond. Further, the subject receives a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 resistance bonus to Reflex saves. All saves you make for the subject receive a +4 resistance bonus, and you receive a pool of temporary hit points that are only removed when the subject is damaged equal to two times your caster level. A person can be the subject of only one *transference* (greater or normal) spell at a time. The caster of the *transference* may not himself be the subject of a *transference* spell.

Imprison Soul

Necromancy

Level: Clr 9, The Dead 9

Imprison soul has the same effects as *soul bind*, but, where that spell would be considered evil and anarchic magic by Maalites and Mormekim (it denies the subject trial before Maal), *imprison soul* calls upon Maal himself to judge and imprison the subject in the land of the dead; it can only be used on evil souls. Because the Compact states that evil souls are to be passed on to other realms, Maal can only imprison a soul in his realm if there is a mortal agent of the imprisonment and mortal means to end it. The gem in the spell (valued exactly as the gem in *soul bind*) is therefore the mortal ward on the prison. If it is broken, the prisoner is loosed to the proper plane for evil souls, where it may be resurrected or raised normally.

Unlike *soul bind*, the spell may be cast within an hour of the subject's death and the spell on the gem cannot be dispelled; the gem itself must be destroyed.

Mark of Evil

Transmutation

Level: Clr 4, Justice 4

This spell is cast and removed in the same fashion as *mark of justice*, but it has mostly lesser effects. Unlike the *mark of justice*, the *mark of evil* is invisible most of the time, so it is possible for the subject not to realize he

has been so marked (if he is unconscious while being marked, for instance). The *mark of evil* is a mar on the subject's immortal soul that has two effects, neither of them resulting in anything as nasty as the *mark of justice*:

First, anyone so marked who is in the area of effect of a *detect evil* spell is detected clearly in the first round of the spell. In fact, the person casting the *detect evil* sees the mark hovering over the subject's head, which clearly indicates that he is evil. The mark carries with it whatever clear information about the subject's crimes you wish to convey to others in a simple form; for instance it's common for necromancers to be given the *mark of evil* in the form of a runic "N." Later, if they are caught in a *detect evil*, the caster of that detect will immediately see that the subject has been caught and marked as a necromancer in the past.

Second, should the marked subject die, he may not be brought back for one year and a day. This is because the mark is clear on his soul in the land of the dead. Its presence weighs more heavily on him when he is judged than most transgressions recorded in his black ledger. When Maal judges someone with the *mark of evil*, the subject is kept in chains in the land of the dead for a year and a day, rendering it impossible to revive such a person with a *raise dead* spell – or any other spell – within that time. The mark is an indication to Maal that this person has been deemed a deeply evil criminal by his worshipers; in lands where execution is the common punishment for various evil crimes, the worst criminals are often given the *mark of evil* and then executed.

It is possible to be marked with both a *mark of justice* and a *mark of evil*. These marks must be removed individually. While the *PH* doesn't include *atonement* as a way to get rid of *mark of justice*, we think it should be one; *mark of evil* is removed by *atonement*.

Moonbeam

Evocation

Level: Drd 6, Night 6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft.+10 ft./level)

Area: Beam 5 feet wide and 100 ft.+10 ft./level long, starting at a point right in front of the character

Duration: 1 round/level or until all beams are exhausted

Saving Throw: Reflex and Will negate (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

For the duration of this spell, the character can use a standard action to create a gentle and soporific shaft of moonlight each round. The character can call forth one beam per three caster levels (maximum six beams at 18th level). The spell ends when its duration runs out or the character's allotment of beams is exhausted.

All creatures caught in the beam are lulled by the moonlight, causing them to grow weary immediately. A creature in the path of the beam must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or they become immediately fatigued, as after a Barbarian Rage (see page 25 of the *PH*); suffer -2 to Strength and Dexterity scores; and may not run or charge until the end of combat. The creature must then make a Will save or be lulled completely to sleep. Any creature who succeeded at its Fortitude save need not make a Will save to remain awake. Targets affected by the sleep effect are subject to all of the effects of the *sleep* spell (*moonbeam* has no HD limit, however).

Undead creatures caught within the ray are instead dealt 1d4 points of damage per caster level (maximum 20d4), or half damage with a successful Reflex save. In addition, the ray results in the forcible transformation of lycanthropes into beast form if they fail their Reflex saves.

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Moonglow

Abjuration

Level: Drd 8, Night 8

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 20 ft.

Targets: One creature/level in a 20-ft.-radius burst centered on you

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

The glorious glow of the moon surrounds the subjects, protecting them from attacks and granting them resistance to spells. This abjuration has three effects:

First, the warded creatures gain a +4 deflection bonus to AC and a +4 resistance bonus to saves. This benefit applies against all attacks, not just against attacks by evil creatures. Second, the abjuration fills all of the warded creatures with a sense of peace and ease. They receive a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls, ability checks, skill checks, and damage rolls. They are immune to *fear*, *hopelessness*, *despair*, and all other negative emotional effects. Third, any creature able to sleep that strikes the warded creatures with a melee attack must make a Willpower save or fall asleep, as per the *sleep* spell but against *moonglow's* DC and without maximum HD.

Focus: A small carving of opal in the shape of the full moon worth at least 750gp.

North Star

Evocation

Level: Drd 4, Night 4

Components: V, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: See text

Area: See text

Duration: 10 minutes/level

The caster calls upon the light of the North Star to shine down on him wherever he is. The light will shine through the earth, through water, through the most impenetrable darkness (natural or magical). Only the caster can see the light, which hovers just ahead of him, but he can navigate by it, always aware of which way is true north. The only place the light will not reach is to planes outside of the mortal sphere (e.g. it will reach the Prime Material, the ethereal, the shadow, positive and negative planes, but no others).

Rontra's Blessing

Transmutation

Level: Clr 1

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None (see text)

Spell Resistance: No

By touching the stomach of a willing female subject of one of the five mortal races wishing to become pregnant or already pregnant, this spell can have one of three effects:

First, if the woman is not yet pregnant, the spell renders her fully fertile, giving her the greatest possible chance of conceiving if it is possible for her to do so.

Second, if she is already pregnant, the spell blesses the pregnancy and ensures the child will be born healthy and the mother will live through the birth (barring external disasters).

Third, if the pregnancy has been caused or tampered with by an evil outside force, the unborn child may be healed of the taint. To determine whether you succeed in healing it, you make an exorcism check of 1d20 + 1 per caster level against a DC of 11 + the HD of the outsider. If you fail, the child is tainted until it is born, at which time other methods might be tried to cure it. Further efforts to exorcise it while *in utero* will kill it and the mother (and likely result in you losing your clerical abilities and being forever accursed by Rontra).

Shibboleth

Evocation [Sonic]

Level: Clr 8, Justice 8

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 ft.

Area: Creatures in a 30-ft.-radius spread centered on you

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

A shibboleth is a word that sets one group of people apart from another. In this case, the caster utters a single word, perhaps the name of his god, that has profound effects on those within hearing range who are different from him. These are:

If you are on your home plane, the shibboleth instantly banishes any extraplanar creatures within the area back to their home planes. They are different from you (from another plane) and must go. Creatures so banished cannot return for at least one day. This effect takes place regardless of whether the creatures hears the shibboleth, and will even effect extraplanar creatures aligned to you and your deity.

Creatures native to your plane who hear the holy word and are oppositely aligned from you in any way (e.g. if you are lawful good and they are chaotic or evil) suffer the following ill effects:

Shibboleth

HD	Effect
14 or more	Deafened
Less than 14	Blinded, deafened
Less than 10	Paralyzed, blinded, deafened
Less than 6	Killed, paralyzed, blinded, deafened

The effects are cumulative.

Deafened: The creature is deafened (see blindness/deafness) for 1d6 rounds.

Blinded: The creature is blinded (see blindness/deafness) for 2d6 rounds.

Paralyzed: The creature is paralyzed and helpless for 1d10 minutes, unable to move or act in any way.

Killed: Living creatures die. Undead creatures are destroyed if you are living. If you are undead, they are controlled.

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Shooting Stars

Evocation [Cold]

Level: Drd 9, Night 9

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range:

Area: 5 ft./level radius (S)

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None or Reflex half (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You call out to the heavens and a stream of stars shoots down from above, harming your foes and healing your allies. You must be below the night sky for *shooting stars* to work, though you need not see the stars to call them down. When you cast the spell, you designate the area of effect. This is where the stars will fall. You then call down eight shooting stars, which land in eight locations you designate within the area. When the stars hit, they give off a cold and radiant brilliance, which is beneficial to your allies and harmful to your foes.

Any creature directly below a falling star (in one of the eight spots you've designated) may make a Reflex save to get out of the way. Enemies struck by a star suffer 12d6 points of cold damage (save for half). Allies are healed 12d6 points.

Everyone in the area of effect not hit directly by a star is still touched by the brilliance of the falling heavens. Enemies in the area of effect suffer 3d6 points of cold damage (no save). Allies are healed 3d6 points of damage. An enemy escaping from under a star does not take the 3d6 on top of the initial damage unless the enemy uses Evasion (or similar ability) to escape the falling star entirely. Then he takes the 3d6, unless he manages to leave the area of effect entirely.

Test of Souls

Universal [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Clr 4

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Living being with a soul touched

Duration: 1 hour

Saving Throw: None (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This spell allows you to test the heart of a person. The subject must agree to be tested. If he refuses, the spell has no effect. When you cast the spell, both you and the subject are transported in your minds' eyes to a testing ground, where the subject undergoes a number of tests both metaphysical and metaphorical that reveal the subject's attitudes toward life, the gods, death, and more. You observe these tests and may even put the subject to tests of your devising.

The testing lasts for one hour, during which both you and the subject are helpless mentally and physically (failing all saving throws, for instance). If either of you are disturbed during the hour, the spell ends with no effect.

At the end of an uninterrupted hour, you discover all of the following information about the subject:

- True alignment
- General sense of his Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores (it doesn't return a "he has an 18 Charisma" but a "this person

is highly charismatic")

- Whether this person has the makings for a holy warrior of his or another church
- The true race of this person
- Whether this person has told you any lies for a number of hours prior to the casting equal to your caster level and, if so, what those lies were

The subject must be completely willing to undergo the spell. If you obscure the nature of the spell in any way, through lies of omission or inclusion, the spell will not work.

If you make a Wisdom check with a DC 15 + the target's HD, you are able to foretell one major detail about the life of the subject. This roll is modified negatively by level because the more powerful a person becomes, the more often their destiny shifts and changes, whereas the very young are still open books with some endings or events ahead profoundly clear to the trained eye.

Touch of Return

Necromancy [Death]

Level: The Dead 4

Touch of return works exactly as *slay living* but only affects those who have died and returned to life by any means other than direct divine intervention; i.e. *raise dead*, *resurrection*, *true resurrection*, *wish*, *reincarnation*, and even *miracle* – unless that miracle contacted a god directly and the god personally returned the person to life.

A character who has been brought back from death by magical means is immune to this spell if he has undergone an *atonement* for violating the sanctity of death. Many good folk who are willing to be raised from the dead undergo such an atonement, explaining to the powers of death their need to return to life (an unfinished quest, love immortal, etc.) and undergoing an appropriate act of contrition.

Transference

Abjuration

Level: Clr 3

As *shield other*, with some important differences. When you call upon the power of the *transference*, all damage or harmful effects (such as *charm*, *disintegration*, ability damage, or level draining) that affect the subject of the *transference* affect you instead.

The subject gains the same +1 deflection bonus to AC and +1 resistance bonus to saves as provided by *shield other*. However, the bonus to saves only pertains to Reflex saves; while the subject rolls Reflex saves when affected by a spell or anything else that he must physically escape (leaving you to suffer the consequences if he fails), you have to roll saves against any effects that require a Willpower or Fortitude save. For any spells or effects based on the target's hit dice or stats (like *sleep*), you use the subject's stats, not yours.

If the subject of the *transference* is affected by an area-effect spell that also affects you, two saving throws must be rolled and you can be affected twice (for instance, taking damage from a fireball twice).

As with *shield other*, if either party moves out of range, the spell ends. A person can be the subject of only one *transference* spell at a time. The caster of the *transference* may not himself be the subject of a *transference* spell.

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Magic Items

There are lots of excellent modifiers for making magic weapons and armor in other material that we will not seek to add to here. Instead, we provide some new minor and major artifacts tied to the gods of the tree and one new group of wondrous magic items – enchanted stoles.

These few select items are really meant as flavor – just a taste of some of the wondrous items that might come out of the mythology in this book. Obviously there are countless more that one could create to introduce into a campaign based on the myths. Since this book can't be infinite length, we thought it best to provide just a few.

Enchanted Stoles

This section represents a new class of wondrous magic items: enchanted stoles. A stole is one of the key parts of religious vestment – the long scarf, usually of silk or linen and embroidered with the symbol of the church, that is worn over both shoulders by clergy while officiating. Magical stoles offer great powers while also being fairly portable. They take up the vest or vestment magic item slot, but may be worn over armor or clothes. They are usually highly ornamented, but some, meant for adventuring and protection of the clergy on their travels, are simple linen with the symbol of the church on each end.

Listed on the table at the bottom of this page are some of the most common stoles and their market value. Crafting such items is fairly simple, but they must be blessed on the altar of a cathedral or major church to the god in question by a high-level cleric (who is usually the creator of the item).

While the wearer of one of these stoles need not be aligned to the god in whose name the stole was crafted, walking around sporting the vestments of someone else's priesthood may result in severe head trauma.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item; *Weight:* --.

Minor Artifacts

Many of these items (while not especially more powerful than normal magic items) are considered minor artifacts because they simply cannot be made by mortal hands and are quite rare.

Celestial Quill

These quills come from the feathers of the angels. They shine with the perfect light of Heaven. Any evil hand that has ever touched an implement or creature of Hell or the Abyss that touches one of these quills immediately withers as though suffering from *horrid wilting*, the evil party suffering an immediate 10d8 points of damage (no save); the hand becomes useless unless regenerated (see *regenerate* spell) or mended with a *wish* or *miracle*.

For those who can touch the quill without wilting, it is impossible to write an untrue word with the quill, no matter how one might try. Further, the quill always fills the cost requirements for scribing divine scrolls and is not consumed in the process. Even the most common ink and paper will yield a magnificent divine spell scroll with such a quill.

Caster Level: 19th; *Weight:* light as a feather.

The Leaves of Eliwyn

Eliwyn still grows in her sacred grove. Every one hundred years, she sheds her leaves, most of which are gathered by the druids who tend to her. Some, though, are carried away on the wind and reach mortal hands beyond. These leaves are imbued with life-giving and healing powers. In skilled hands, this power can be unleashed.

The leaves are large and oval, measuring about 12 inches long and six inches at the widest point. The top side of the leaves is deep green, while the undersides are a bright silver hue. When crushed, the leaves give off a sweet aroma and ooze a milky white sap. This sap can be

Enchanted Stoles

Name	Effect	Market Price
Stole of Sacrifice (Shalimyr)	Sustains wearer without food or water	2,500 gp
Stole of Inspiration (Zheenkeef)	+10 insight bonus to Craft and Perform	2,000 gp
Stole of Beauty (Aymara)	+2 enhancement bonus to Charisma, +10 insight bonus to Perform	6,000 gp
Stole of Heroism (Darmon)	+2 luck bonus to AC, saves	10,000 gp
Stole of the Wrestler (Canelle)	+4 enhancement bonus to Strength	16,000 gp
Stole of Nobility (Naryne)	+4 enhancement bonus to Charisma	16,000 gp
Stole of the Hunter (Thellyne)	+4 enhancement bonus to Dexterity	16,000 gp
Stole of Health (Rontra)	+4 enhancement bonus to Constitution	16,000 gp
Stole of the Judge (Maal)	+4 enhancement bonus to Wisdom	16,000 gp
Stole of the Sacred (Mormekar)	Grants negative energy protection while worn	30,000 gp
Stole of the Mage Guard (Tinel)	Grants SR 15	30,000 gp
Stole of Protection (Terak)	+4 deflection bonus to AC	32,000 gp
Stole of Healing (Morwyn)	Allows caster to recast any one healing spell up to 6th level once per day	36,000gp

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used to create healing potions by characters that have the requisite feat and spells. All potions made using the leaves will heal the *maximum* amount as per the spell description. Using the leaves in this way is difficult. One must make a Profession (herbalist) check at DC 20. If failed, the potions created will be standard as per the spell, but the leaf will be used up in the process. One leaf will make up to ten potions.

The leaves can also be used as topical agents to cure the sick or injured. Using the leaf with a successful Heal skill check, DC 20, will completely heal one person suffering from any wounds, diseases, poisons, or any other magical or natural deleterious effect just short of bringing them back to life or curing *insanity* or purely mental effects. Leaves can only be used once in this fashion.

Lastly, a leaf can be used to enhance the effects of the spells *raise dead* and *resurrection*. If a leaf is successfully applied topically (Heal check DC 25) in conjunction with one of these spells, the recipient will not lose a level or a point of Constitution. Leaves used in this way will be consumed after being applied.

Caster Level: 19th; Weight: --

Shield of the Fathers

These great shields from the church of Morwyn are quite ancient; though they were once plentiful, few real shields of the fathers remain. Most powerful faithful sons of Morwyn bear shields that look like these ancient artifacts, which have a distinctive shining white field with the silver tear of Morwyn set in its center. Worn by the first fathers of the Morwynite faith, these shields represent fidelity, servitude, and unparalleled dedication to duty. A real shield of the father is unmistakable, as its white field and silver tear are so pure that they can never be sullied or cracked by any means short of a *wish* or *miracle*.

Shields of the father are +5 large shields. The bearer is immune to all *fear*, *possession*, *command* and *charm* spells. The bearer will not easily shirk his duty to protect.

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 15 pounds

The Five Staves

The staves of the hierophants were forged by the founders of the sacred order of hierophants long and long ago. Every member of the order had a hand in their making, which is why they are so terribly powerful. They all look similar to one another, though each bears distinct markings that pertain to the sense to which it is aligned; just as the Tinelites seek to solve the mysteries of life through the use of their five senses, each of the hierophants (and her staff) represents one of those senses.

All five staves provide their bearer with an SR of 25 and allow the bearer to store up to 15 levels of spells. Beyond this, each staff may cast each of the following spells once per day:

- *teleport without error*
- *greater dispelling*
- *geas/quest*

Beyond these powers, the staves' sense-aligned powers are:

The Staff of the Scent

The bearer of this staff becomes so attuned to the scents of the world around her that she is able to detect subtle changes in her environment that no one else would notice. While holding the staff, the bearer is under the constant effect of all the following spells: *detect animals or plants*, *detect undead*, *detect secret doors*, *detect snares and pits*, and *detect poison*. She receives the Track feat and a +20 insight bonus to all wilderness lore rolls made for tracking purposes. Finally, she is

immune to any effect that attacks her smell (such as *stinking cloud* or natural musk attacks) and may cast *stinking cloud* and *cloudkill* from the staff once per day each.

The Staff of Sight

The bearer of this staff sees clearly and, while holding the staff, is under the constant effect of the *true sight* spell and may cast *clairvoyance* at will. Further, she receives a +10 insight bonus to all Search and Spot checks. Finally, she cannot be blinded by any means, is immune to gaze attacks, and may cast *eyebite* once per day from the staff.

The Staff of Sound

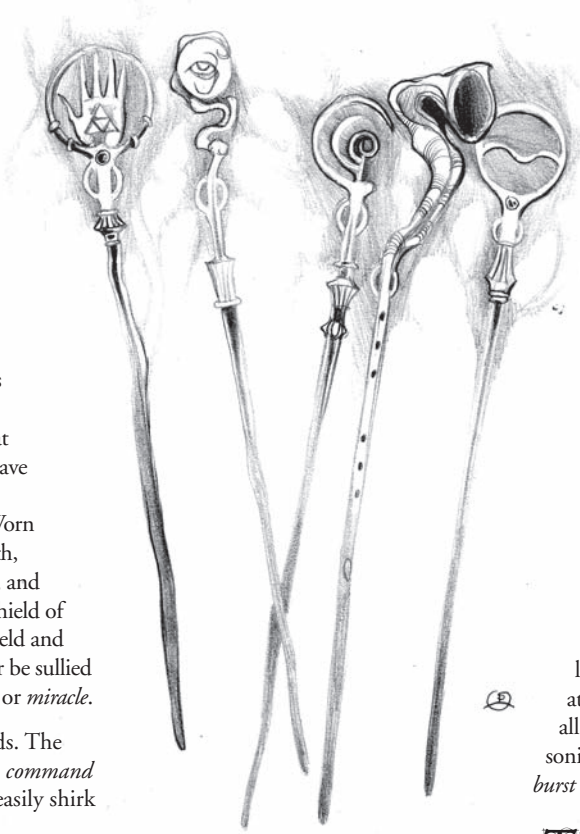
The bearer of this staff hears what few others do, is able to make out ultra-high and ultra-low frequencies, and may cast *clairaudience* at will. She receives a +20 insight bonus to all Listen checks. Finally, she is immune to all sonic attacks and may cast *sending* and *sound burst* from the staff once per day each.

The Staff of the Tongue

The bearer has an advanced palate, but is also a gifted orator. While she bears this staff she may go without food (though she must drink) and is under the constant effect of the *tongues* spell. She receives a +10 insight bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks. Finally, she is immune to all poisons and may cast *create food and water* and *heroes' feast* from her staff once per day each.

The Staff of the Hand

The bearer possesses remarkable tactile sensation. While she bears the staff she possesses a constant *spectral hand* and receives a +10 insight bonus to all touch attacks. She becomes incredibly adroit with fine manipulations and receives a +10 insight bonus on Disable Device and Open Lock checks, though she receives no training in either skill, so if



The five staves of the chief hierophants are among the greatest works of mortal hands.

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she does not possess some already, she may not use these skills. Finally, she may cast any single *bigby's hand* spell from her staff once per day (she may choose which one at the time of casting).

Caster Level: 20th; Weight: 5 pounds

Major Artifacts

The Ark of Magic

This is the golden ark in which the archangel Uriel bore magic back to the mortal races. It has been lost from the mortal races since the time of antiquity, but scholars believe it is still hidden somewhere in the mortal sphere. Legend has it that in the time of greatest need, when the mortal races will stand on the precipice of destruction, four great heroes will arise, bearing the ark.

The ark has four handles to bear it by. Classically, Uriel stood before four unnamed angels who were holding the ark by these handles. When these four handles are held, the ark provides the bearers with the raw power of magic. Each bearer must have one hand on the ark (usually holding the ark on his shoulder) for these powers to be available. This means that the bearer cannot move away from the ark by more than 5 feet.

While in contact with the ark, all bearers are under the effect of the *holy aura* spell.

The ark receives 1000 charges of magical power a day before it is dissipated; because it is the vessel of mortal magic, the power always returns.

When four people are bearing the ark together, they may agree to use any of the following powers at the cost of 50 charges each. Any one of the four may spend the action to cast these spells:

- *horrid wilting*
- *time stop*

The bearer on the front left, the handle of fire, may use any of the following spells at a cost of 10 charges:

- *meteor swarm*
- *delayed blast fireball*
- *sunburst*

The bearer on the front right, the handle of water, may use any of the following spells at a cost of 10 charges:

- *storm of vengeance*
- *cloudkill*
- *mass heal*

The bearer on the back right, the handle of earth, may use any of the following spells at a cost of 10 charges:

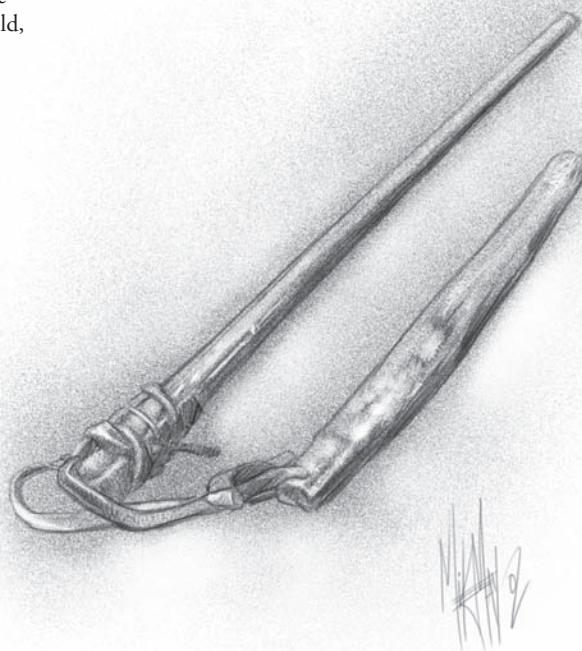
- *earthquake*
- *antimagic field*
- *regenerate*

The bearer on the back left, the handle of air, may use any of the following spells at a cost of 10 charges:

- *holy word*
- *whirlwind*
- *chain lightning*

With this ark, armies might be leveled and even the greatest foes toppled. However, tinkering with such powers can be dangerous to both the wielder and the world. Since the ark is the container that

bore the raw power of arcane magic to the prime material plane, if all the charges for a single day are used, arcane magic in the mortal world will cease to function until the charges have been restored. Further, there is a 50% chance that everyone touching the ark when the last of its daily power is drained will be utterly destroyed (as by the spell *destruction*, no save, no Spell Resistance). Some scholars hold that, should the ark be brought forth and its bearers defeated, it will mean the end of arcane magic in the world.



The flail of Rontra does not appear to be more than a humble peasant's flail at first glance.

The Flail of Rontra

Rontra gave this mighty weapon to her mortal worshippers long ago, before the forming of the Compact.

It is currently lost somewhere deep in the earth, its whereabouts known only to the Earth Mother herself. Legend tells that in time of need, when the land and its people are in grave danger, Grandmother Rontra will send

one of her chosen mortal worshippers on a quest to prove his worth. If successful, she will bestow upon him this dire flail, with the haft of purest silver and the chains on either end solid gold. The spiked balls are as clear as crystal, each bearing a sparkling light within. Although it appears delicate, the weapon is indestructible and powerful. But until the hero of prophecy wields it, scholars say it appears to be a common flail, as much like a farm implement as a weapon of war.

The flail acts as a +5 *holy, disruption* weapon. While bearing the flail, the wielder receives *negative energy protection* and *holy aura* as per the spells. The flail's wielder may cast the following spells from the flail once per day: *earthquake*, *shape stone*, *stoneskin*, and *transmute rock to mud* (or *transmute mud to rock*, at the wielder's discretion).

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New Creatures

Our focus with *Book of the Righteous* is not on encounters, but we thought it would be useful to see some of the servants of the gods. Any of these might be appropriate for *summon* spells or for *gates* by powerful clerics.

Animal Spirits

	Hanumanis Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic)	Pooka Small Outsider (Good)
Hit Dice:	8d8+8 (44 hp)	6d8 (27 hp)
Initiative:	+5 (Dex)	+6
Speed:	30 ft., climb 20 ft.	30 ft.
AC:	19 (+5 Dex, +4 natural)	18 (+1 size, +6 Dex, +1 natural)
(flat-footed):	14	12
(vs. touch attacks):	15	17
Attacks:	+3 chaotic quarterstaff +17/+12 or +15/+15/+10 (as double weapon)	Bite +6 melee
Damage:	+3 chaotic quarterstaff 1d6+5	Bite 1d6-1
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Spell-like abilities, staff mastery, weapon specialization	Bestow luck, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	Damage reduction 15/+3, low light vision	Damage reduction 10/+2, cold and fire resistance 10, low light vision
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +11, Will +7	Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +8
Abilities:	Str 11, Dex 20, Con 12 Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 13	Str 8, Dex 22, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 14
Skills:	See below	See below
Feats:	Dodge*, Expertise, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)*	Run, Skill Focus (heal), Track
Climate/Terrain:	Any land and underground	Any land
Organization:	Solitary or gang (2-5)	Solitary or pack (5-20)
Challenge Rating:	7	4
Treasure:	Standard	None
Alignment:	Always chaotic good	Always lawful good
Advancement:	9-24 HD (Medium-size)	7-18 HD (Small)

In the mortal world, animal spirits are plentiful – some malevolent, others benevolent. But the greatest animal spirits serve the gods directly, with two spirits particularly close to the gods.

These spirits embody the personality of a type of beast, but they are far more than the beasts they represent. Religious scholars believe they are the souls of mortals who felt so tied to animals that they asked to be reborn in animal form. Upon their death in that form, they become these spirits – with the personalities and intelligence of mortals (or even better, divine spirits) and the form of animals. Some of these divine creatures are elevated to almost godlike status. One might consider that the greatest among these spirits would be worshiped as a god by the common animals of its ilk, were they to understand such things.

Hanumanis

As mischievous as their monkey forms might lead one to believe, these spirits are clever, often quite funny, and closely tied with the chaotic gods, particularly Darmon. They are expert martial combatants, often relying on their staves to perform miraculous feats of melee. They cannot tolerate bullies of any sort, but they are most particularly the celestial foes of the rakshasas. Whenever one of the hanumanis can help a mortal against a rakshasa, it will seize the opportunity.

Combat

Hanumanis enjoy confounding their foes with spell-like abilities like *random action* and *tasha's hideous laughter*. When fighting rakshasas or other lawful evil opponents, hanumanis drop the playful act and use their chaotic quarterstaves with deadly precision.

Feats:*

Hanumanis receive Dodge and Weapon Focus (quarterstaff) as bonus feats.

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Skills

Balance +19, Bluff +11, Gather Information +, Jump +14, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +9, Search +10, Spot +9, Tumble +15, Wilderness Lore +9. Hanumanis receive a +4 racial bonus to Balance and Jump checks, and a +2 bonus to Bluff checks.

Spell-like Abilities

At will—*protection from law, random action, and tasha's hideous laughter*; 3 times/day—*change self, invisibility, and teleport without error*; 1 time/day—*chaos hammer, cloak of chaos, plane shift, and true seeing*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 11 + spell level).

Staff Mastery (Ex)

Hanumanis are experts with the quarterstaff. When a hanumanis fights with a quarterstaff, he is considered to have the Ambidexterity and Two Weapon Fighting feats, and he may use his Dex modifier instead of his Str modifier on attack rolls.

Weapon Specialization (Ex)

A hanumanis is specialized in the quarterstaff, as per the fighter class ability.

Pooka

A pooka is best understood as a rabbit spirit, but the truth is, pookas can be from any of the gentle woodland spirits. They are immensely charitable creatures, and the suffering of man or beast fills them with sorrow. Closely tied to Rontra, these gentle creatures are happy to come to the mortal sphere, usually invisibly, to aid the most unfortunate beings of the prime material. They usually travel alone, though in the outer planes they can be found in large groups, particularly in Elysium, where they like to observe the mortal world.



Combat

Pookas are peaceful creatures by nature and do not usually fight. When involved in a combat, they lurk invisibly, providing aid to those in need.

Feat

Pookas receive Run as a bonus feat.

Bestow Luck (Su)

A pooka can give some of its good luck to those in need. Each round, as a free action, a pooka can give a single creature within 60 ft. a +4 luck bonus to attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, and skill checks, or a +6 enhancement bonus to one ability score of the pooka's choice. The pooka always gives this aid to the creature in most desperate need of assistance. The benefits last for one round.

Skills

Balance +8, Concentration +6, Heal +12, Hide +13, Jump +9, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +8, Spot +9, Wilderness Lore +9. Pookas receive a +4 racial bonus to jump checks.

Spell-like Abilities

At will—*detect evil, discern lies, and improved invisibility*; 3 times/day—*cure light wounds, cure serious wounds, remove blindness/deafness, remove disease, remove fear, remove paralysis, and teleport without error*; 1 time/day—*cure critical wounds, heal, plane shift, and remove curse*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level cleric (save DC 13 + spell level).

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Handmaid of Zheenkeef

Medium-size Outsider (Chaotic)

Hit Dice: 14d8+42 (105 hp)

Initiative: +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

AC: 25 (+5 Dex, +10 natural armor)

AC (flat-footed): 20

AC (vs. touch attacks): 15

Attacks: Touch of chaos +17

Damage: Touch of chaos 1d100

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, touch of chaos

Special Qualities: Acid and electricity resistance 10, damage reduction 20/+1d6, immunities, SR 25

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +16

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 20, Con 17, Int 11, Wis 24, Cha 22

Skills: Bluff +20, Concentration +17, Innuendo +21, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +21, Search +14, Sense Motive +21, Spot +21

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Spell Penetration

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 12

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral

Advancement: 15-30 HD (Medium-size)

The handmaids of Zheenkeef do not make sense to a sane mind. Once mortal servants of the mother of madness, they are now so a part of her strange view of the universe that they are constantly shifting and changing, spouting nonsense one moment and profound wisdom the next.

In her desire to see the world change and be interesting, Zheenkeef often allows her handmaids to wander to earth. Since they do very little of actual practical consequence (they certainly don't go conquering nations), it rarely ends up violating the Compact. Instead, they topple existing orders then rebuild them, send people on quests that might have interesting repercussions, and generally promote chaos. Adventurers encountering a handmaid might find themselves needing to prove they are entertaining and interesting or suffer unhappy consequences.

When powerful clerics of Zheenkeef call for aid from their goddess, it often comes in the form of these bizarre heralds.

Combat

A handmaid of Zheenkeef is utterly unpredictable in combat. One round she might dominate the toughest-looking fighter and make him cry like a baby, and the next she might try to convince a wizard's familiar to seek the joys of freedom. The only thing certain is that she'll never take the same action in two consecutive rounds. That is far too boring for her chaotic mind.

Damage Reduction 20/+1d6 (Su)

The damage reduction of handmaids changes from round to round. At the start of each of a handmaid's turns, roll 1d6 to determine what type of weapon negates the damage reduction that round. The number rolled is the "plus" of magic weapon needed to negate the DR. On a roll of 3, for example, a +3 weapon is required.

Spell-like Abilities

At will—*mislead*, *polymorph self*, *polymorph other*, *protection from law*, *random action*, and *tasha's hideous laughter*; 3 times/day—*confusion*, *dominate monster*, *dominate person*, *improved invisibility*, *polymorph any object*, *teleport without error*, and *word of chaos*; 1 time/day—*chaos hammer*, *cloak of chaos*, *plane shift*, and *repulsion*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 14th-level sorcerer (save DC 16 + spell level).

Immunities (Ex)

Handmaids of Zheenkeef are immune to cold, fire, and poison.



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Touch of Chaos (Su)

Handmaids of Zheenkeef eschew weaponry. Instead they harm their foes with the dreaded *touch of chaos*, an infusion of magical power that twists and melts flesh, steel, and bone. This is a melee touch attack that inflicts 1d100 points of damage. A handmaid of Zheenkeef can only make one such attack per round, and no modifiers of any kind apply to the percentile roll for damage. It has no effect on incorporeal creatures.

Ix

Medium-size Outsider (Good)

Hit Dice: 16d8+48 (120 hp)

Initiative: +11 (+7 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 30 (+7 Dex, +5 luck*, +8 natural armor)

AC (flat-footed): 23

AC (vs. touch attacks): 22

Attacks: 2 claws +23 melee, bite +18 melee

Damage: Claw 1d6+1 and 1d4 temporary Int damage, bite 1d8

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Int damage, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Alternate form, celestial qualities, damage reduction 15/+3, fortune's blessings, SR 25

Saves: Fort +16*, Ref +20*, Will +16*

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 24, Con 17, Int 25, Wis 16, Cha 22

Skills: Balance +21, Bluff +22, Concentration +10, Escape Artist +14, Gather Information +25, Hide +19, Intuit Direction +15, Jump +22, Knowledge (Heaven) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +22, Move Silently +26, Search +14, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +14, Spot +22, Tumble +28

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse (claw, bite)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 12

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Chaotic good

Advancement: By character class



Ix shares his master Darmon's love of a good joke. The joyful silver fox of Heaven often journeys earthward to play a good prank, or simply to observe a new work of comedy. As comfortable in the guise of one of the five mortal races as in his true form, Ix will often aid adventurers and heroes through subtle means. He is renowned in legend for his love of riddles and games, and he will rely on these methods happily. When summoned by a *gate* or *miracle*, Ix usually responds if the caster is a valued servant of Darmon. When he does respond, he prefers to stay back and use his magical and stealth abilities. He rarely confronts a foe directly; he is, after all, a fox.

Combat

Ix never sticks around for a straight-up fight. If cornered, he inflicts Intelligence damage on his foes to make them even more susceptible to his ruses and tricks, or simply teleports away and comes back to haunt them later.

Alternate Form (Su)

Ix can assume any humanoid form, or revert to his own form, as a standard action. This ability is similar to the *alter self* spell cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, but Ix can remain in the new form indefinitely.

Celestial Qualities

Protective aura; fire resistance 20; *tongues*; electricity, cold, acid, and petrification immunity; +4 save against poison. See *MM* for details.

Fortune's Blessings (Su)*

Ix is blessed with good luck. He receives a +5 luck bonus to AC, which applies in all circumstances. He also receives a +3 luck bonus to all saving throws.

Intelligence Damage (Su)

Any opponent hit by one of Ix's claw attacks suffers 1d4 points of temporary Intelligence damage.

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Spell-like Abilities

3 times/day—*improved invisibility* and *teleport without error*; 1 time/day—*plane shift* and *power word stun*. These abilities are as the spells cast by an 18th-level sorcerer (save DC 16 + spell level).

Spells

Ix can cast spells as a 16th-level sorcerer, and favors illusion and enchantment spells. Save DC on his spells is 16 + spell level.

Metteron

Huge Outsider (Good)

Hit Dice: 25d8+150 (262 hp)

Initiative: +0 (Dex)

Speed: 50 ft.

AC: 42 (-2 size, +34 natural armor)

AC (flat-footed): 42

AC (vs. touch attacks): 8

Attacks: 2 claws +34 melee, bite +28 melee

Damage: Claw 1d10+10, bite 3d6+5

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Divine claws, pounce, rake, roar of courage, spell-like abilities, spells

Special Qualities: Celestial qualities, damage reduction 30/+5, SR 35

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +14, Will +19

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 17, Wis 20, Cha 18

Skills: Balance +15, Concentration +21, Gather Information +19, Intimidate +21, Intuit Direction +20, Jump +25, Knowledge (geography) +18, Knowledge (Heaven) +20, Knowledge (nature) +18, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Listen +20, Search +19, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +18, Spot +20, Wilderness Lore +20

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Expertise, Improved Critical (claw), Great Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

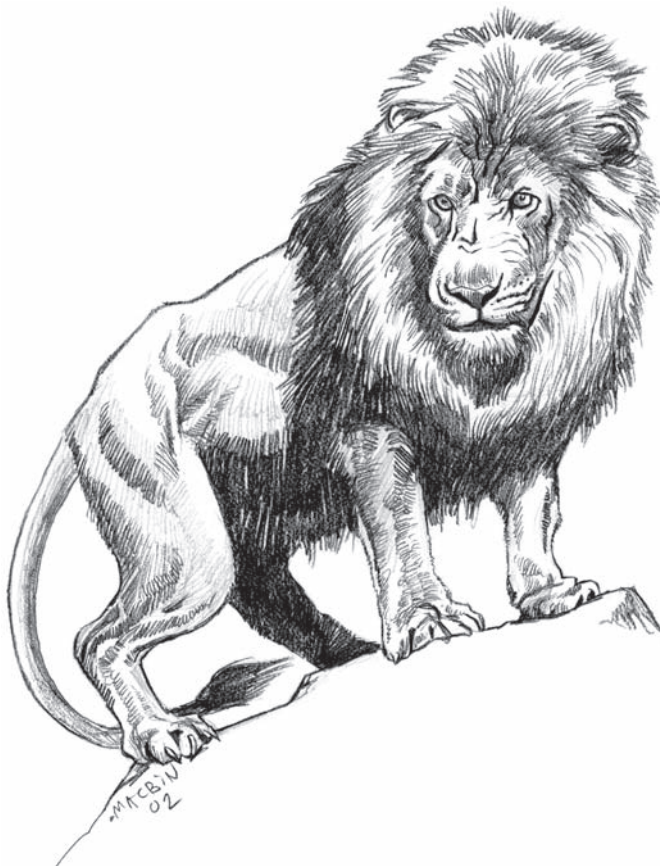
Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 23

Treasure: None

Alignment: Lawful good

Advancement: By character class



Metteron is the lord of all animals in Heaven, the greatest of their number, and father to some of the world's most noble beasts. He is the sire of the griffins and the lammasus.

Legends often have this great golden lion as the butt of the joke. Like his master, Terak, Metteron is prone to bellowing and bravado. But also like his master, he is an implacable foe to evil. Kindly, kingly, gentle to his friends, wise to his children, Metteron is truly an awesome sight for any mortal to behold. He can change his size at will; in Heaven he is as large as a mighty hill. On earth, he can appear to be a normal-size lion.

Metteron will often heed requests for aid from powerful clergy of Terak using a *gate* or *miracle* spell, and he has descended to earth on more than one occasion to turn the tide of a battle when summoned. He is a gracious champion for goodness at such times.

Combat

Metteron is a mighty combatant, and always rushes to where the fighting is the fiercest. Although he has access to many spells, Metteron likes to be in the thick of things once battle commences. He thus prefers spells he can cast on himself before combat, like *bull's strength* and *holy aura*.

Celestial Qualities

Protective aura; fire resistance 20; *tongues*; electricity, cold, acid, and petrification immunity; +4 save against poison. See *MM* for details.

Divine Claws (Su)

Metteron's claws count as *holy* weapons, dealing +2d6 holy (good) damage against all those of evil alignment. This applies to rake attacks (see below).

Chapter XI ~ Additional Rules

Pounce (Ex)

If Metteron leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, he can make a full attack even if he has already taken a move action.

Rake (Ex)

If Metteron pounces on a foe, he can make two rake attacks (+34 melee) with his hind legs for 1d10+10 slashing damage each.

Roar of Courage (Su)

Once every 10 minutes, Metteron can unleash a *roar of courage* as a standard action. All allies of Metteron within 150 ft. receive a +8 morale bonus on saving throws against fear and a +2 morale bonus on all attack rolls. These bonuses last for 1d4 minutes.

Spell-like Abilities

At will—*detect evil*, *discern lies*, *enlarge*, *fly*, *reduce*, and *see invisibility*; 3 times/day—*plane shift*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 14 + spell level).

Spells

Metteron can cast spells as a 20th-level cleric with the Protection and Strength domains. Save DC on his spells is 15 + spell level.

Phoenix

Gargantuan Outsider (Good)

Hit Dice: 20d8+160 (250 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 60 ft., fly 200 ft (clumsy)

AC: 23 (-4 size, +1 Dex, +16 natural)

AC (flat-footed): 22

AC (vs. touch attacks): 7

Attacks: 2 claws +26 melee, bite +21 melee

Damage: Claw 2d6+10, bite 2d8+5

Face/Reach: 20 ft. by 40 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Death throes, improved grab, shriek, snatch, spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 30/+3, darkvision 120 ft., magic circle against evil, plane shift, SR 21

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +13, Will +17

Abilities: Str 31, Dex 13, Con 27, Int 18, Wis 20, Cha 22

Skills: Concentration +31, Diplomacy +29, Knowledge (any) +27, Knowledge (arcana) +27, Knowledge (planes) +27, Listen +30, Move Silently +24, Search +27, Scry +27, Spot +30

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 19

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always neutral good

Advancement: 21-35 HD (Gargantuan); 36-60 HD (Colossal)



A phoenix is the world's most beautiful bird. Some believe it's somehow related

to the roc, but most believe phoenixes were born from the fire of rebirth when the gods Terak, Tinel, and Zheenkeef were burnt on a pyre of the remains of Eliwyn, the tree of life. Legend says that five phoenixes burst up from those flames, and the birds have changed little in the years since.

As most know, when a phoenix dies, it is consumed by the fire of rebirth. Supposedly, if one gazes into the flames as it burns, one will see the faces of the gods – one of the many reasons people seek these rare birds out. Within a day of consuming itself, the phoenix is reborn. Scholars debate whether this reborn phoenix is really the same one, but one thing is certain: Those who attack a phoenix unprovoked will find themselves haunted by its many reborn forms for the rest of their lives. Fiercely territorial, the phoenix does not look kindly on those who invade its home, and will certainly fight to keep outsiders at bay. This is particularly true when a phoenix has laid an egg. These eggs appear to be made of red gold and are among the most precious substances in the world; a phoenix egg can fetch 80,000gp or more on the open market, as it is believed consuming one will result in immortality. Unfortunately for egg hunters, phoenixes typically mate once every 100 years.

Chapter XI ~ Additional Rules

Combat

The phoenix almost always opens combat with its shriek. It will follow up with its spell-like abilities and claw attacks.

Death Throes (Su)

A phoenix can cause its body to explode in a blinding flash of light, flames, and smoke. This instantly kills the phoenix and deals 20d6 points of fire damage to all within 30 feet. A Reflex save halves the damage. For the next two minutes, the area is covered in smoke and white-hot embers. Any creature that remains in the area takes 4d6 points of fire damage per round (Reflex for half). The smoke obscures vision as the *fog cloud* spell. A phoenix very rarely utilizes this ability, and then only if it is faced with certain destruction.

Improved Grab (Ex)

To use this ability, the phoenix must hit with both claw attacks.

Magic Circle Against Evil (Su)

A phoenix has a continual *magic circle against evil* that affects a 20-foot radius. The aura can be dispelled, but the phoenix can create it again as a free action on its next turn.

Plane Shift (Su)

A phoenix can enter the material, ethereal, and astral planes. This ability affects only the phoenix. It is otherwise similar to the spell of the same name.

Snatch (Ex)

If a phoenix gets a hold on a creature four or more sizes smaller, it automatically deals damage with both claws each round its hold is maintained. The phoenix can drop a creature it has snatched as a free action or use a standard action to fling it aside. A flung creature travels 30 feet and takes 3d6 points of damage. If the phoenix flings it while flying, the creature suffers this amount or falling damage, whichever is greater.

Shriek (Su)

All creatures with less than 20 HD and within 30 feet must succeed at a Will save (DC 26) or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic mind-affecting fear effect. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to that phoenix's shriek for one day.

Spell-Like Abilities

At will— *blindness/deafness*, *blink*, *blur*, *continual flame*, *cure light wounds* (twice per day per individual), *find traps*, *fire shield*, *invisibility*, *misdirection*, *produce flame*, *pyrotechnics*, *remove curse*, *remove disease* (once per creature per day), and *remove fear*; 6/day—*cure light wounds*; 3/day—*color spray* and *polymorph self*; 1/day—*find the path*, *fire seeds*, *fire storm*, *mirror image*, *neutralize poison*, *reincarnate*, *veil*, *summon monster VI* (woodland type animals only), and *wall of fire*; 1/week—*incendiary cloud*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 16 + spell level). By spreading its wings and performing a ritual dance as a full-round action, the phoenix can cast the following: *dismissal*, *dispel evil*, and *dispel magic*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 16 + spell level). The following spells are always active on the phoenix. They can be dispelled, but the phoenix can activate them on its next turn as a free action: *detect evil* and *detect magic*.

Raguel, Archangel of Divine Retribution

Huge Outsider (Good)

Hit Dice: 66d8+528 (825 hp)

Initiative: +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 50 ft., fly 150 ft. (good)

AC: 42 (-2 size, +4 Dex, +25 natural armor, +5 *ring of protection*)

AC (flat-footed): 38

AC (vs. touch attacks): 17

Attacks: +7 huge *flaming burst*, *holy, keen greatsword* +86/+81/+76/+71/+66 melee or +5 huge *mighty composite longbow of distance* (+5) +73/+68/+63/+58/+53

Damage: +7 huge *flaming burst*, *holy, keen greatsword* 4d6+22 and 1d6 fire; +5 huge *mighty composite longbow of distance* (+5) 2d6+10 and slaying

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Arrows of slaying, smite evil, spell-like abilities, spells, thunder of Heaven

Special Qualities: Celestial qualities, damage reduction 35/+5, regeneration 20, SR 40

Saves: Fort +43, Ref +39, Will +45

Abilities: Str 40, Dex 18, Con 26, Int 20, Wis 30, Cha 30

Skills: Balance +70, Concentration +74, Gather Information +76, Intimidate +76, Intuit Direction +76, Jump +81, Knowledge (Heaven) +70, Knowledge (the planes) +70, Knowledge (religion) +70, Listen +76, Search +70, Sense Motive +76, Spot +76

Chapter XI ~ Additional Rules

Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Expertise, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Attack, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Sunder, Whirlwind Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Unique

Challenge Rating: 28

Treasure: No coins; double goods; standard items

Alignment: Lawful good

Advancement: By character class

When Iblis, chief among the archangels, fell, it was Raguel, his friend and the Vengeance of the Heavens, that broke him. When blasphemous cults have arisen, seeking the destruction of the gods or the order of the world, it has been Raguel who has descended upon them. His visage is both terrible and beautiful – he has the fairness of the angels, and is among the mightiest of the seraphs. But he also has the fearful might of the gods at his back. With his flaming sword he is a worthy adversary to even the mightiest evil.

It is quite rare for an archangel to be sent to aid the mortal servants of the gods, but any high-level cleric casting a greater *miracle* (one costing 5,000XP) in truly desperate need of incredibly powerful aid (and opposing a profoundly evil foe) may receive such aid from the Vengeance of Heaven himself.

According to legend, Raguel does not speak, and has not since his friend Iblis spoke the words that led to his fall. There are few mortals who know whether this is true.



Combat

Raguel attacks without warning and with overwhelming force. He often starts combat with the thunder of Heaven (see below), centering it upon himself and then attacking his dazed foes with his flaming sword of vengeance. Few beings can stand up to Raguel for longer than a few seconds.

Celestial Qualities

Protective aura; fire resistance 20; *tongues*; electricity, cold, acid, and petrification immunity; +4 save against poison. See *MM* for details.

Arrows of Slaying (Su)

Like the bows of his solar brethren, Raguel's bow creates a slaying arrow of any sort when drawn.

Spell-Like Abilities

At will—*aid*, *animate objects*, *commune*, *continual flame*, *dimensional anchor*, *greater dispelling*, *holy smite*, *imprisonment*, *improved invisibility* (self only), *lesser restoration*, *remove curse*, *remove disease*, *remove fear*, *resist elements*, *summon monster VII*, *speak with dead*, and *teleport without error*; 3/day—*blade barrier*, *earthquake*, *heal*, *permanency*, *plane shift*, *resurrection*, and *shapechange*; 1/day—*greater restoration*, *mass charm*, *power word blind*, *power word kill*, *power word stun*, *prismatic spray*, *symbol* (any), and *wish*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer (save DC 20 + spell level). The following abilities are always active on Raguel's person, as the spells cast by a 20th-level sorcerer: *detect evil*, *detect snares and pits*, *discern lies*, *see invisibility*, and *true seeing*. They can be dispelled, but Raguel can reactivate them as a free action.

Smite Evil (Su)

Raguel can smite evil as a 20th-level paladin ten times per day.

Spells

Raguel can cast divine spells from the cleric list and from the Air, Destruction, Good, Law, and War domains as a 20th-level cleric (save DC 20 + spell level).

Thunder of Heaven (Su)

Once per minute, Raguel can unleash the thunder of Heaven anywhere within sight. A cacophonous roar fills the air, and all those in a 50-ft. radius spread take 20d8 points of sonic damage (Fort save, DC 29 for half damage). Creatures that fail their save are also dazed for 1d4 rounds and deafened for 1d6 hours. See Condition Summary in the *DMG* for daze and deafness effects. Raguel is immune to the thunder of Heaven.

Appendix I: A Treatise on the Divine

About This Appendix

This appendix is a history of the gods, called *A Treatise on the Divine*, written “in character” by a famous sage. If you are planning to play a religious scholar, or if you are a GM wanting to introduce plenty of religious detail into your campaign, this section will be very useful. However, if you lack the time to get through it, everything else in this book should make sense without it if you read the Story and Cosmology sections in Chapter II.

In general, we recommend that this text be considered long-accepted truth in the game world – meaning that this book was written, in the game world, hundreds of years or more before the events of your campaign. The text is written as though many of its details are revelations, which, if the text is quite old, they would have been for your characters’ forefathers.

It is possible to make this a brand-new text. For instance, if you want to hit your players with a slew of revelations about the gods they hold dear – “No, your god didn’t create the world. He grew on a tree.” – that’s another potentially exciting way to use the text. It would add to your campaign a tone of apocalypse, as all of the world’s religions’ assumptions about their gods are turned upside-down. It also allows for some fun reversals of expectation: perhaps you would like to have the churches of the war god and magic god embroiled in a centuries-long conflict over which created the earth, only to discover that neither did.

The third possibility, and the most campaign-affecting, is to treat the mythology as though it is thousands of years old, lost in the mists of time. The churches have developed new and interesting assumptions about their gods, and now the players, on their quests, start uncovering snippets of this ancient text that radically alter the nature of faith in their world. This puts your characters in the middle of an enormously complex and political imbroglio – not comfortable if you just want to kill a few monsters and collect some treasure.

A Treatise on the Divine

by the Great Sage Matalou

Introduction

Speak in my voice, you gods, you lords of Heaven, for it is your tale I tell! Let my tongue grow dry, my eyes shrivel in my head if I lie!

Some men journey to the ends of the world in the name of Honor. Some men stand alone against a marauding army with nothing but a sword and a prayer in the name of King and Country. All I have done, and all I will ever do, is in the name of Truth.

Know this, my reader: What you read is true.

Though debate still rages among scholars regarding the true history of the gods, I can assure you that this history, and all the dark truths it reveals, is correct. I have walked into the jaws of danger time and again to discover the knowledge that you now hold. This is my life's work – my legacy – and what you read is the most accurate history of the gods that man will ever know.

Chapter I: First Epoch

Part One: The Beginning

I have assembled this history of the beginning of the world, the first epoch, from several old and forgotten texts. It will amuse you to know that the most valuable of these texts was bought from a junk merchant in the wretched town of Freeport for two silver. That tome was written in an ink I had never before seen (and have not seen since), perhaps the blood of a long-extinct beast. The book was easily over two thousand years old, preserved by some ancient magic.

After absorbing that book, after reading it over and over, I came to realize that it is for good reason that the beginnings of our world have been forgotten. Most of us believe that the principal gods as we know them, having always been, created our world. This is a comforting belief, for within it is the assumption we were not put here by random chance. The Great Sage Mordekai insists that we were put here as part of an elaborate game between the gods. The priests of Tinel believe that all of life is a test, an exam of sorts, for the time when we might rejoin the gods in the Heavens. There are countless explanations for our existence, but all of

them share one thing: the assumption that we were put here, that our world was created, for a reason. The truth is, I fear, far darker.

You see, there was a time when silence and darkness reigned. I do not mean silence as in the stillness of the forest when no bird chirps and no wind blows. I mean an absence of sound only possible in a universe yet to discover the very idea of sound. So too was it with the darkness – a void so complete as to deny the very existence of light. The nothingness was absolute and complete. In a sense, it was perfect order and peace. The emptiness was constant, without beginning or end.

And yet, the void did not last. In the darkness, something began to change. The tome I found in Freeport referred to this change as “Shachté,” which means “the moment before the dice decide which face to show.” I think we can best understand it as pure change and violence in the midst of that vast sea of silence and peace.

Though Shachté had no face or name, it changed the void. Silence and peace were now interrupted with tremors of searing light and shrieking noises. The tremors grew more frenzied, the peace and the violence tearing at one another, changing one another. Light and shadow were thus coupled, and sound and silence were joined as opposites, for until this struggle none of these forces had existed to be opposed. All of the positive and negative energies of the universe were made in that eternal moment, and in their creation, they were so infected with one another that rarely might one find a pure light without darkness or a pure sound without silence.

The war of creation continued, creating a maelstrom that flashed across the void, lasting for a million years – or for just the winking of an eye, for time had no meaning then. And then, all at once, from the intersection of silence and sound, a Word was formed; and in the heart of the storm, there coalesced an Image. In that moment, The Nameless One – so He must be called of necessity – created Himself by uttering the Word: His name.

You may doubt this to be true, dear reader. Please believe me when I say that I wish it were not so. I wish the universe came from the careful plans of our loving gods as we have always believed. But I have known since my youth that this is not true; our world was created in less than perfect circumstances. As an apprentice to the Great Sage Artonik Sellowyl I came across this passage in my research:

Other Beliefs About The Beginning

The Great Sage Matalou's discovery that the universe was created in a moment of chaos is not, in fact, the most frightening claim ever made by a scholar. In his widely distributed tome, *Gods or Monsters: An Investigation Into the Nature of Divinity*, the Great Sage Curfas asserts that the gods not only didn't create the universe, they came to our world from another place to try to prey on the weak-willed and convince the foolish to offer them worship.

Curfas goes on to assert that the universe was created by the mortal races, who were once powerful sorcerers. It is his assertion that the individual is all-powerful, if only he would throw off petty beliefs and take whatever he wants.

While the Great Sage Curfas' work is usually dismissed as the ravings of a madman, mere piffle compared to the well-researched findings of Matalou, there are some who find it very alluring indeed.

Appendix I ~ A Treatise on the Divine

*“Nothing is sacred
For something is from nothing made
And when the end of something comes
Only nothing will remain”*

Innocuous as it may seem, it was in a tome about the beginning of things. Reading this passage was the first time I'd encountered the notion of nothingness. No gods, no life, no existence. Even then I knew there had to be more to the beginning of time than we have always believed.

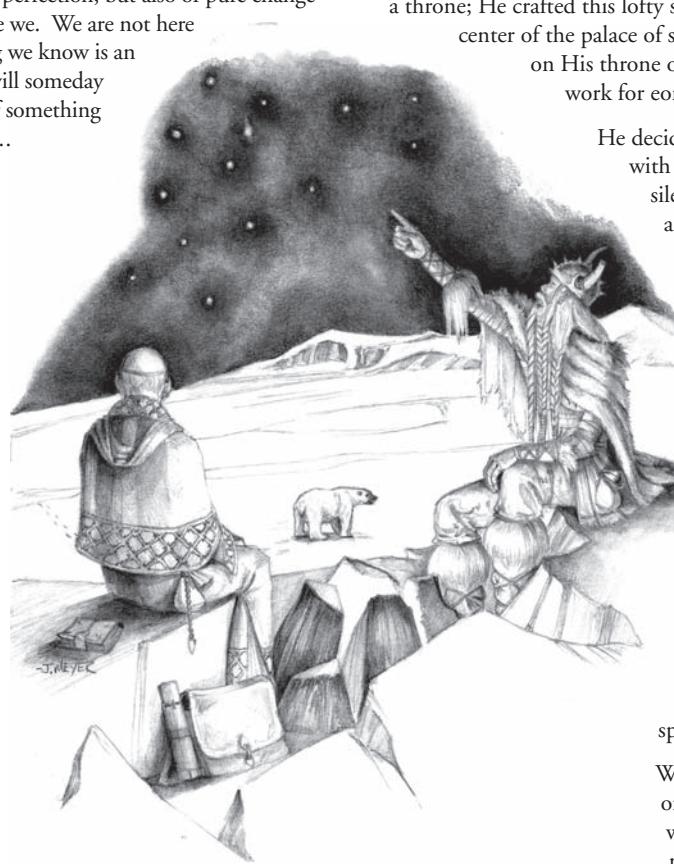
Perhaps the significance of the Nameless One's creation and this poem escape you. Let me explain. When the Nameless One created Himself in that moment of Image and Word, time began. Everything we know and hold dear began. But the roots of creation are in Shachté. The universe was created not from the perfect stillness of logic and peace, but from its clash with chaos and violence. The Nameless One, the creator of all, was a being born not just of perfection, but also of pure change and randomness. Therefore, so are we. We are not here by the plan of the gods; everything we know is an accident of creation, and all of it will someday come to an end. When the end of something comes, only nothing will remain....

Part II: Pondering

The book I purchased in Freeport told me nothing of what happened for much of the rest of the first epoch. It took me many years of following rumors of rumors and hints of clues to learn more. I had heard for years of a barbaric people from the frozen lands who denied the power of our gods and worshiped only one god. It took me years of looking for mentions of the Nameless One before I realized that their “one god” and the Nameless One are the same. I still laugh that it took me so long.

After learning from a fur trader who often journeyed in the frozen wastes that these barbarians call their god “He who will not be named” or other such permutations of “Nameless One,” I immediately journeyed to the wastes.

My travails there will be the subject of a different book, I am sure, but for now know that the truth was not easy to discover. After several brushes with death, I managed to befriend the Vola, or wise man, of one of the great tribes. Ulfhedin, as he was called, was an exacting taskmaster, and in return for the knowledge I sought I cleaned his house, chopped his firewood, cooked his dinner, and performed many other household chores. It was worth every moment. By night, Ulfhedin and I would sit out on the tundra by a fire, and he would tell me the stories of the Nameless One that he had learned from his



“By night, Ulfhedin and I would sit out on the tundra by a fire, and he would tell me the stories of the Nameless One that he had learned from his master.”

master, and his master had learned from his master's master, as far back as the beginning of memory. From Ulfhedin I learned the truth of the creation of our world, the birth of the gods we worship, and the terrible secret of Kador, the evil lord of fire, exiled by the gods.

“Before wolf had his howl and snow had her cold...” that is how Ulfhedin began every night's lesson. That is how I will begin this one. Before wolf had his howl and snow had her cold, the Nameless One created Himself. Surrounded by the void, of which He was the only interruption, He grew restless. At first He spent eons pondering His existence. How had He created Himself? How had He spoken His name before He was born? These riddles gave Him food for thought, but eventually, He grew weary of pondering.

He decided that He needed something to occupy His time, so He began to create. At first, He made a tremendous palace in the void. Crafted of light and sound, the palace filled the void with a great glow and swelling music. In this palace, the Nameless One made himself a throne; He crafted this lofty seat from the void itself. There in the center of the palace of sound and light sat the Nameless One on His throne of silence and dark, reflecting upon His work for eons more.

He decided that it was not enough to create with light and sound, or even darkness and silence. He decided that to truly prove and explore His power, He must create something entirely new. He began to work without rest in small, hidden rooms of His palace. He strove to create, to imagine forces beyond His comprehension. He created tools of light and sound to try and forge new existences out of darkness, to smelt light and silence. His labors were fruitless.

As He journeyed back to His throne, He was struck with inspiration. He had created Himself by speaking His name.

He understood at that moment that to create, He need only form sound to speak words – names.

With that, He spoke four great words of power. The speaking of those words alone took days, if days were measurable. After the speaking, four new forces lay before Him: fire, the power of life, or rather raw power itself; earth, the power of solidity, in attitude and function; air, the power of movement, in thought and form; and water, the power of change, within and without. With these four tools, the Nameless One knew that He could create anything He imagined. He left the palace, went out into the void, and looked about Him.

The emptiness was still all-encompassing, but He began to see an image of what would be. He saw a world covered with life, a crystal sphere contained in a greater sphere that was held up by four pillars of power. He would watch this world, and see it grow and change. And He knew that this image was truth.

Appendix I ~ A Treatise on the Divine

Chapter III

The Second Epoch

Part I: Creation

The Second Epoch, we have always been told, was the time that the gods created the earth and man. It is true that our world was created and populated in the Second Epoch – but the circumstances of creation, as I have learned, were far different from what we have always believed. It was in the Second Epoch that the Nameless One created our world and that from our world the gods, as we know them, were born.

Vola Ulfhedin told me that after seeing the Image of what would be, the Nameless One summoned to Him the fire He had created. Flame uncontrolled began to swell in the void, but He contained it and shaped it into a pillar. He did the same with earth, air, and water, and soon the four great pillars were arrayed before Him. Then, using the strength of the four pillars, He crafted a sphere. This great sphere is what we call our universe, our existence, and is supported by the four pillars. In this great sphere can be found our world, Heaven, Hell, the land of the dead, and everything else we know to exist. Whether the Nameless One has created other great spheres, other universes, we will never know.

Entering into the sphere, He saw that it was empty and needed a world. First He gathered up all that was contained in the sphere and forced it to the center. Once everything was there, He formed around the center places of His creation a perfect crystalline sphere made from the positive and negative energies of creation. Entering into this crystal, He cried out a litany of new words. With the words for fire and air, He created the suns, moons, stars, winds, and vapors by giving them names. These He bound to the crystal sphere. He surveyed what He had done, and determined that it was in this, the crystal sphere where He had placed the sky, that He would do His work. He strode to the center of His creation, where there was nothing but the air and the ether and the shadow, and there He used the words of fire and earth to name the mountains, hills, valleys, plains, and cliffs, dismissing ether and shadow to the corners of His making. Now the sphere had a place for the life He had seen, but life would not come without water. So, with fire and water He gave names to the oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and streams. He had before Him now a home for life – and, indeed, it is this center sphere of crystal that is our world.

In our world, He built for Himself three fortresses. From air, He built a castle in the sky; shaping earth, He constructed a palace at the peak of the highest mountain; and with water He crafted a keep at the bottom of the deepest ocean. For an eon, He wandered His world, until He became restless. Though the valleys, the moons, the rivers and all of His creations spoke to Him, they only answered when

spoken to, and did not have life as He hoped. He decided to create once more.

Rather than create a place or a thing, He created something new. Giving it arms, legs, body, heart, and mind, He called it Kador. To Kador He gave three gifts. First, He gave Kador life, so that Kador could move about like the Nameless One Himself. Second, He gave Kador will, so that Kador could do as he chose. Third, He gave Kador fire, the essence of life and vitality. From these three gifts, the Nameless One crafted for Kador a soul, and so it is today that only those with the three gifts have souls.

Of course, I was as shocked as you to learn all this, dear reader. Vola Ulfhedin swore it was so. Kador, the god at the center of the war of the gods, the only god ever to be cast out from the celestial host, that Kador was the firstborn of the gods. At first, I could not make sense of it. Eventually I learned, as will you.

Ill-fated Kador wandered about the world with the Nameless One, and He was pleased. Kador acted as he wished, and even surprised the Nameless One with his choices. And yet, the Nameless One suffered from restlessness once more. He enjoyed what the gift of will had done for Kador, and so decided to impart it upon all of His creations. He spoke to the mountains and the valleys, the suns and the seas. He gave them will and whispered to each a secret that set it apart. When He was satisfied that all of His creations would live as they chose, He proclaimed three prophecies.

First, He spoke to Kador alone. All of His creations listened, though, and overheard: “To you, Kador, first-of-will, I have given fire. Others like you will be born in this world, and to them you will give this gift.”

Noticing that others of His creations had listened, He whispered His second prophecy to Kador. None know what He said, but they noted that it took many years in the telling. Vola Ulfhedin believes He told Kador all that had passed before, and all that would come to pass, but there is no knowing. According to Ulfhedin, volas have debated the nature of the second prophecy for as long as there have been volas.

The third prophecy was spoken aloud to all the world. “When I spoke My name, I created Myself. When I spoke your names, I created you. When My name is spoken again, time will stop, and all names will be undone.” There can be little doubt from this prophecy why the volas call the Nameless One “He who will not be named.” Should He be named, the world will end. Until I learned of this, I foolishly believed His name unknown.

After speaking the third prophecy, the Nameless One left the sphere, and has never spoken again. Vola Ulfhedin believes He still sits in his palace of light and sound, upon his throne of silence and darkness, and watches the sphere. I believe the Nameless One has gone on to create countless other spheres and no longer remembers which was the first – or no longer cares.

What's in a Soul?

The order established by the Nameless One provided for three steps to forming a soul. A thing must have life, free will, and the fire of power. There are many things in the world that have only life but neither of the other two. There are many lesser races, including the animals and the wicked creatures of the land, that have life and free will. But very few beings have all three.

It is believed that the fire of power, entrusted to Kador to be passed on to other races, is necessary to separate the spirit from the body. Without it, when a thing with a spirit dies, its spirit dies with it. Kindled by the flame of power, the spirit is able to transcend the flesh and go beyond the body upon its death.



“Only a united earth, Kador told them, could defeat the upstart skies and waters. And so, the parts of the land united and became Rontra, the Earth.”

Part II: Birth

Vola Ulfhedin’s knowledge became sketchy after the Nameless One’s departing. He spoke of the gods we know and called them children. He said that as we are to them, so are they to the Nameless One.

He had given me much of the knowledge I needed for this treatise, but it was not enough. I asked how the gods were born. Ulfhedin told me to look no further than my own birth. The volas of the Nameless One had always denied the worship of our gods, he said, because the gods were our siblings, not our parents. He knew no more than that, but that was enough. I knew exactly what it meant. From his words, simple as they were, I had learned the history of the gods’ birth. I needed only evidence.

The journey south from the frozen waste was, of course, arduous. I was driven, though, by the thirst for knowledge. For me, knowledge is sustenance. When a man crawls dying of thirst in the desert and happens upon a caravan of strangely dressed people, he asks them for water. I ask them why they are dressed strangely. It is my nature.

Rather than return home, I set out for an ancient foundation of Grandmother Rontra, the Earth. The Temple of Rebirth, as it has been known for a thousand years, is a store of artifacts. More importantly, it is the location of one of the oldest libraries I know, and, yet more importantly, one containing a book I now desired very much to read. I believed this book might support my burgeoning theory.

Of course, you are wondering what my theory was. If the gods were not our “parents” as we have always believed, but our siblings, they too must have been born of Eliwyn, the Tree of Life. It seemed inconceivable. There had been five fruits, from which sprang the five races of man. I knew that. Everyone knows that. What I found at the Temple of Rebirth proved that to be mostly true – but there is so much more that we have not realized.

Buried in the library, I found what I was looking for. I had heard of a preposterous text therein that espoused heretical beliefs. A crumbling tome called “A Treatise on the Divine,” by an anonymous author, the book was known for its theory that the gods were born from Eliwyn. As tribute to the long-dead anonym, I have used the title.

The Treatise is written in a dead language. Because it was considered heretical, only choice passages had ever been translated. My efforts to translate were hindered because the author, bless his soul, had different names for all the gods and knew nothing of the Nameless One. It was difficult to tell where the Treatise ceased to be fanciful imagination and started to be useful history. I did the best I could and assembled, from the Treatise and other sources in the library, this complete history of our gods.

The story of the birth of the gods begins simply enough. Having overheard the Nameless One’s first prophecy, all the world knew that others like Kador would be born. Each part, in its vanity, wished to be solely responsible for that birth. The mountains tried to create life, and made only rocks. The rivers tried, and made only ponds. The stars tried, and made only comets. Alone, none of them could create, though they strove for eons.

Kador watched their efforts from his seat in the castle in the sky. At last, he too grew restless. He traveled down to the land, and spoke to the mountains, hills, valleys, plains, and cliffs. He used a conspiratorial tone, telling them that the skies and the waters were close to creating life. He whispered that they must unite or lose in the struggle. At first they resisted. “I will create life myself,” cried the

Suns and Moons?

A reference is made by the Great Sage Matalou to Urian being made of the suns and moons. In this myth he unites the suns, but not the moons. Yet you will note in Chapter IV a myth about Urian that implies the existence of only one moon.

We know that many folks like to have several moons in their fantasy worlds. We've tried to be as vague as possible about the unification of the moons. In the Chapter IV myth, it's easy to read the one moon mentioned there as the major moon in the cycle, in the case of multiple moons.

If you want to know how moons became moon (if your game world has only one moon) consider this: Urian united the suns and the moons and planned to give the fire to both so there would be warmth from both – but he used all of his fire on the sun, and this is why night is cold and dark.

valleys, and all the others echoed their cries. Kador insisted, though, that life would never be born of any one of them alone. Only a united earth, he told them, could defeat the upstart skies and waters. And so, the parts of the land united and became Rontra, the Earth.

Seeing that the land had united, and become one being – thus giving birth to life – the skies became jealous. The suns, moons, stars, winds, and air also united and became Urian, the Sky.

Realizing that their individual struggles to create life had left them behind the others, the oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and streams united and became Shalimyr, the Water.

Kador smiled. Surely, he was as responsible for the birth of these new lives as the Nameless One had been. He bore to each of them fire, saying, "I give you this gift of fire, my children."

Rontra put the flame in her soils, making her fertile. Shalimyr used the flame to rise up and create nourishing rain. Urian united the suns and made fire a part of the one sun so it would give off not just light, but warmth. Kador was pleased.

It is here that the Treatise speaks of the birth of the Tree of Life. On the shore where Shalimyr and Rontra met, Shalimyr impregnated Rontra with his waves. From Shalimyr's seed planted deep in Rontra's womb grew a tree they called Eliwyn. With Rontra's fertile soil, Shalimyr's nourishing rains, and Urian's warming sun, Eliwyn began to grow.

Urian took the responsibility of tending Eliwyn. As the tree grew, Urian noticed the tree bore five fruits. Seeing this, Kador came down from his castle. He proclaimed that the largest fruit on the tree belonged to him, and he meant to take it.

It is here that we begin to see Kador's evil. Of course, I have discovered the reason for his madness, but I have never discovered why he was obsessed with the fifth fruit. In all of my research, I can

find no explanation, though I have searched for years. It is here that I must apologize to you, dear reader, for it is here that my history is incomplete.

Kador told Urian, Rontra, and Shalimyr that he would pluck the fruit and tend to it himself, but they would not allow it. As he moved to take it, Urian blew him back with fierce winds. Shalimyr lashed at him with a great storm. Rontra opened a fissure a hundred leagues deep beneath his feet.

Defeated, Kador shook his head in disgust, and turned to leave. But before he did he spoke these words, writ quite clearly in the "Treatise of the Divine":

"Each of these fruits bears a new life. As I am the child of the Nameless One, so are you my children, and the children within the fruits my progeny also. As your sire, I have demanded my right, the largest of these fruits, for my own. Since you oppose me wrongly, I lay a curse upon the fruit. Rather than bear a strong young one, powerful like its siblings, this fruit will bear a thousand young. They will be born in my image and, as you have rebelled against me, so shall they rebel against you. I lay this curse, and upon the Flame that is mine, you know it is so." With that, he returned to his castle in the sky.

After he left, four of the fruits began to ripen. They contained children who began to speak amongst themselves and to their parents through the fruits' skins. The fifth fruit, the fruit cursed by Kador, remained silent. However, it began to bulge, growing much larger than the others.

As the four children grew, they would ask their parents whether it was time to come out. Always, Rontra would tell them they were not yet ripe. Urian would rock them at night with a low wind, and Shalimyr would sing them to sleep with the sounds of the waves crashing on the shore. They gave the children names as they grew.

The Death of the Great Sage Matalou

While it is true that the teachings of the Great Sage Matalou ultimately would go on to alter the perceptions of the faithful everywhere, his insistence on continually reminding his readers that the gods are all a bit tainted with madness did not sit well with his contemporaries. Even today, it is a point best not to belabor.

Soon after the publication of Matalou's A Treatise on the Divine, he was burned at the stake by a coalition of priests. They were threatened by his work but, even more importantly to them, found it to be the deepest sort of vile heresy. In fact, Matalou's tongue was cut out and his eyes were plucked from his head before he was burned, and these organs are preserved today as relics of the church of Tinel, which reveres Matalou for his courage in telling the Truth.

The Mystery of Morwyn

Morwyn alone among all beings in the universe has no flame and yet possesses a soul. This mystery is at the center of the Morwynite faith, which sees it as the purgation of all malice and rage through self-sacrifice. That Morwyn managed to do what no other being could is what makes her divine; contemplation of this, the ultimate act of charity, fills the lives of many of her chosen. If one emulates Morwyn's gentle ways and becomes truly divine, they believe, one need not possess the fire that rages in every heart.

One child, who would kick at the skin of his fruit with such force that all of Eliwyn would shake, they called Terak. The child who always asked questions about the world outside of his fruit, they called Tinel. One of the children sang along with Shalimyr every night, and danced within her fruit; her they called Zheenkeef. And the quiet one who only commented on the beauty of her fruit, or the loveliness of Shalimyr's song, they called Morwyn. The fifth fruit they did not name, for it looked ready to burst, and sound never issued from it.

Soon, the children were nearly fully grown. As Shalimyr sang them to sleep, Terak's kicking became more violent, Tinel's questions more insistent, and Zheenkeef's singing and dancing more wild. As she danced and Terak kicked, Eliwyn began to shake, until Shalimyr stopped singing and Urian told them to be calm. But it was too late. Zheenkeef's dancing did not stop, and Terak and Tinel's fruits fell from the tree early, with Zheenkeef's soon to follow. Tinel and Terak hit the ground and so were born at the same moment. Only Morwyn remained on the tree until her fruit was fully ripe, and then she fell, coming out of her fruit last. The fifth fruit remained, perhaps over-ripe.

Kador saw all of this and was pleased. He came down to the tree from his castle for a third time and spoke to the four young ones.

"Do not listen to him," Rontra warned, but Terak and Tinel ignored her. They demanded to know who he was and what he wanted.

"You four shall be lords of this world, but you will need fire. I give it as a gift. Allow me to give it to the eldest first and the youngest last."

"I am the eldest," Terak and Tinel said in unison.

"You cannot both be the eldest," Kador said. And with that seed planted, he gave fire to each of the four, starting with Tinel, and

moved to depart. However, before he did so, he plucked the fifth fruit from the tree. As soon as he did, it burst open. Springing forth from the fruit came a thousand burning children, and they began to run all over Kador's hand and arm. Terrified, Kador flailed about, hurling the children all over the earth. Against his will, though, these creatures took the gift of fire from Kador as they crawled over his arm, and thus had souls. According to the Treatise, these children were the div, which means "bright ones." As I discovered in my later research, the div are known today mostly by the names genie, jann, djinn, and efreet. But when they were first born they were divided into several great tribes – the powerful but rare Marid, the less powerful but plentiful Shaitan, and the silent Shee. The bright ones were meant to be one god, but were instead a race of fiery beings in the image of Kador.

I understand all of these occurrences, I believe, but one part confuses me. Why was Kador terrified? The div had been cursed by his own lips and were like him. He was the lord of fire, and yet he was frightened of a thousand fiery children? It is this mystery that I will research for my next work, though my heart tells me that his demand for the fifth fruit and his fear of its contents must come from the same source.

All of the gods, newly born and older, stared stunned as Kador fled to his castle. The

div children had been tossed to the four corners of the earth, where they began to grow and procreate in their many tribes. The Marid built huge cities and great palaces by the coasts, for they loved the water. The Shaitan dwelt in the deserts and the mountains. The Shee hid themselves in Rontra's caves and deep in the waters of Shalimyr's rivers and lakes. In fact, I will speak of the Shee very little from here, for they kept themselves secret and were not involved in most of the events of the Third Epoch. But the Marid and Shaitan grew great and plentiful across the earth. The Treatise has this to say: "The bright ones were the first race of the world. To them was given all of the world, but even that gift was not enough for their pride."



"Springing forth from the fruit came a thousand burning children, and they began to run all over Kador's hand and arm."

Appendix I ~ A Treatise on the Divine

Chapter III The Third Epoch

Part I: The Lesser War

Of course, some of the Third Epoch is well known. We all know of the first war of the gods. For much of the knowledge in this chapter, I must credit The Great Sage Laico's famous work, the Folio Divinicus. What young student hasn't been forced to memorize that dusty tome forward to back and recite its contents?

So, to those of you who've read the work, I apologize that parts of the following will be familiar. However, much of the third epoch is different from what we have long believed. For instance, none of the children of the gods were yet born during this epoch. The legend of Korak coming to his father Terak's aid against Tinel, a much repeated and beloved tale, is entirely impossible. Korak was not yet born. Also, the war did not begin over an argument pertaining to the div, as stated in the Folio. You may still be wondering why I spoke of the universe's dark beginnings earlier, of Shachté. It was during the Third Epoch that Shachté's effects were made clear, causing the lesser war of the gods.

When the gods were growing in the fruit, they were perfect beings. They were possessed of divine intellect and pure motivations. But Shachté took its toll. It is here, dear reader, that I must tell you history's darkest secret. The world was born of madness and destruction. The invasion of Shachté – the light breaking the dark, the sound shattering the silence – this was not creation; this was destruction. Perhaps it was both. Nevertheless, before the Nameless One's birth, the universe was perfect. His birth killed that perfection. And what does this mean, you ask?

All things that are born are doomed to die. All of existence will rot and decay. There can be no pure life or pure creation. It is all corrupted with Shachté. And what is most corrupted with that force? The Nameless One! The creator of all the things we know! The universe was born in madness, and to madness, sickness, and death it will always revert. The only thing that can be pure in our universe is Shachté itself, because creation and life cannot corrupt corruption.

And so these pure gods, these beings of sweet life and precious reason, were corrupted by Shachté while they grew on the tree, itself corrupted while growing from Rontra's womb, herself corrupted since the time of

her creation. When the gods came forth from their fruits, and the div came forth from theirs, both were already partially mad.

When Kador, now almost entirely mad from Shachté (for he was the first created, and therefore first stricken), came to the gods and asked them who would lead, it sparked the flame of madness within them. Terak and Tinel looked at each other, both knowing they could not allow the other to think he was older. So each immediately devised a plan to destroy the other. Zheenkeef knew that if both died, she would be eldest, and so planned to help them destroy each other. And Morwyn, gentle Morwyn – she did not know what to do.

To defeat his brother, Terak, the strongest among them, pulled iron from Rontra's womb and with strength and fire forged a weapon: an axe. To best Terak, Tinel, the most knowledgeable among them, melded his knowledge with fire to make a weapon: magic. Zheenkeef, who embraced Shachté and was the maddest among them, blended insanity and fire to make inspiration to help her destroy both brothers. Morwyn saw what her siblings did and declared that the fire would destroy them all, so she did nothing.

With weapons in hand, Tinel and Terak resumed the debate as to who was the eldest. Urian tried to intercede, but they would not listen. Rontra demanded that they cease their argument, but they ignored her. Shalimyr made no effort to stop them in their argument, for violence and hot temper are the ways of the waters.

Soon, Tinel and Terak's debate came to blows. Each demanded the other take back his preposterous claim that he was older. They ran about the world – through the rivers, over the hills, upon the winds – Terak swinging his axe, Tinel hurling his magic. For years they fought, while Morwyn begged them to stop and Zheenkeef ran between them, inspiring each with a newer and better way to destroy the other. Mountains were leveled by the forces of Terak's blows. Seas were dried by the strength of Tinel's magic. The palace built by the Nameless One upon a mountain peak was leveled in their battle. Before they fought, the world had been one land surrounded by oceans. Now the land itself was torn asunder by their struggle. Islands rose in the oceans; rivers disappeared. The one land was split into the many continents that cover the earth today.

It was during their struggle that the gods found the tribes of the Marid and Shaitan all over the world. Already, due to the insanity that is life, the div tribes were at war over who among them would be king of everything. The gods saw them as a useful tool, and dragged some of the div into their struggle. To a few of the Marid and Shaitan tribes, they gave great power, making them their personal armies. Tinel gave his folk among the div the gift of magic. With their powers, they

Are We Evil?

At the time Morwyn and the gods cast Shachté into Hell, the races of the earth were still inside the fruits of the tree (and Shachté was therefore cast out of them). It is believed by most scholars that this separation of Shachté from the world prevented all of existence from succumbing to the call of chaos, worsening gradually until the Prime Material became a place of constant war, fire, and torment. However, the world, including our forefathers and foremothers, was already affected by Shachté's taint and so was not wholly pure and good.

Because of this history, it is generally believed that any one of us might give in to the seed of darkness that has been a part of us since the beginning of time. It is for this reason that mothers kill their children, brothers kill their brothers, wars are fought over gold, and many other terrible deeds are done. However, just as it is possible to succumb to darkness, it is also possible to resist it, which is why there are so many great and decent people in history.

Without Shachté, perhaps we would never have known evil – but either way, we are not doomed to wickedness.

Appendix I ~ A Treatise on the Divine



“The blows shattered Eliwyn and landed on their intended targets, each brother killing the other.”

raged across the world crying out Tinel's name. Terak made some mighty beyond reckoning, capable of incredible physical feats. They descended upon the other div, slaying in droves, calling out Terak's name. Zheenkeef taught a few the tricks of genius, and these few built devices of mass destruction, leveling cities in the name of their god. And Morwyn, gentle Morwyn, she taught some div the ways of peace and reason. These few built great nations of loyal and happy followers, but when they would not fight in the war the others destroyed their nations.

The war swelled across the newly sundered world. Rontra could not take action, so pained was she by being ripped apart. So too were Urian and Shalimyr effected by the tumult. Their children destroyed, and they could do little but watch. The div pursued the war amongst themselves, while Terak and Tinel continued their cataclysm.

At last, when it seemed they had fought to a standstill, Zheenkeef realized how to kill her brothers. She told each to use Eliwyn, the tree, as a shield. Each took up a position behind it, Terak hurling his axe, Tinel lofting his magic. The blows shattered Eliwyn and landed on their intended targets, each brother killing the other. The splinters of the tree flew across the world, and where they landed, trees, plants, mosses, grasses, and flowers sprouted up.

Part II: Death and Rebirth

Morwyn looked at the corpses of her dead brothers in horror. Zheenkeef giggled with glee at the madness of it all. Urian, Rontra, and Shalimyr wept at the folly they had failed to prevent. In his haste in the air, Kador, who had remained silent during the war, smiled. And all across the earth, the div ceased their fighting. They had had their fill of killing. Those div who had been gifted by the gods came now to the foot of Eliwyn, mourning the results of their war and pleading for forgiveness. From the remaining stump of Eliwyn, a new being arose. Swathed in black, he spoke to the bodies of Tinel and Terak.

“I am Mormekar. In killing one another, you have created me. You are my fathers and my brothers and I have come to claim you.”

Mormekar is a god like no other. When the div killed each other, he came into being in some way that I do not understand. He was there beside each div who died, invisible, capable only of ending their time on earth. But with the death of two gods and the Tree of Life itself, Mormekar was given real life – if Mormekar can be said to live. He is death itself, the earthly avatar of Shachté's ultimate consequence.

Morwyn pleaded with Mormekar not to take Tinel and Terak, but he could do nothing. They were dead, and Mormekar's power was to take life away. He knew, though, that with fire, the essence of life, he could give them life again. And yet, he had no flame. Urian, Rontra, Mormekar, and Morwyn cried up in chorus to Kador, demanding he give the gift of flame to Mormekar.

I assume, dear reader, that you have never read or seen *The Cycle of the Tree*, the marvelous plays written by the Bard Alzhere. This is no shameful thing, as the cycle has not been performed for three thousand years. While the *Folio Divinicus* explains how Terak and Tinel are reborn, the Cycle, in fact, dramatizes it, and it includes many details left out of the Folio. For instance, in the Folio, Kador refuses to give flame to the gods to bring back Tinel and Terak. The Great Sage Laico declared that Kador was evil and pleased to see other gods dead, but the Cycle shows Kador's true reasons.

The Burial of Bodies

Because the fire of rebirth, given to Mormekar by Morwyn, was necessary for the rebirth of the gods, many cultures assume that the dead must be cremated. And yet others believe that the fire of rebirth is held by Mormekar and Mormekar only – if you burn a body, he cannot wash the corpse in the fire of rebirth, and your loved one will never be reborn. This is a religious debate with a long and toothsome history. The position of a character's culture on burial and burning is entirely up to the GM (keeping in mind that a history of burning bodies makes physical undead far rarer).

Kador: When I claimed the fruits as mine, did you not resist? When I asked for my due, did you not rebuke me? Ungrateful children will receive all the gratitude and favor they have given. Nothing will I give, and nothing will I do to aid any of you.

Rontra: Traitorous Kador, you are charged to give flame to those who would come. Fulfill your duty.

Kador: I am the keeper of the flame, Rontra the Earth, not you. I will decide its use, not you. What would you be, were it not for Kador? I am Kador the creator, Kador the father. I have wandered this world for an eternity, and if I had not seen fit to teach the earth to be Rontra, the skies to be Urian, the waters to be Shalimyr, you would not be. And yet, you seek to demand of me.

Urian: Do you so easily shirk the Great Father's edict?

Kador: He who is not and will not be named is gone. He has given me this world, and I have given you everything you have. Do not anger me, winds, or I will still you.

Shalimyr: As surely as the river meets the ocean, you will fall, Kador.

Kador: If I am to fall, than so shall you all. Fire cannot be bested, not by wind, nor rain, nor earth. Heed my words: If I see fit to take, you will give. If I see fit to give, you will take. That is all you need know.

Kador had become convinced that he was responsible for the birth of the gods and the div, and so refused to give them fire. In his increasingly crazed mind, his "children" had betrayed him.

With Kador's refusal to give flame to Mormekar, there was nothing to do but inter the bodies back to Rontra's womb. But Morwyn, gentle Morwyn, could not bear to let her brothers die. And so, she gave to Mormekar her own flame, which she had never used. Building a pyre from the stump of Eliwyn, Mormekar blended death and fire and made the flame of rebirth.

Terak and Tinel were consumed by the flames, which reached as high as the moon. Zheenkeef danced around the fire, laughing and singing, whirling and giggling. The chaos of the flames was so beautiful to her that she hurled herself upon the pyre and danced until she too was consumed, so tainted by Shachté had she become.

Soon, there was nothing left of the three young gods or the tree but ash. Morwyn looked at the ash and asked, "When will they be reborn, Mormekar?"

"I do not know," he replied, smearing a streak of the ash across his brow, "but my duty is done."

Saddened by the loss of her siblings, Morwyn fell to her knees before the remains of the pyre and wept. Three of her tears hit the ashes and Eliwyn sprouted forth from the ground, reborn. The tree bore five fruits once more, and at its base lay three crying babes.

Part III: Corpus Infernus and the Three Laws

The war between the young gods was over, with only Morwyn left alive. With Mormekar, the new god, at her side, she took up her three reborn siblings and descended to the Nameless One's keep in the ocean. There they raised the three babes while Urian, Rontra, and Shalimyr once more nurtured Eliwyn. While the three children grew, Morwyn and Mormekar were wed and begot a child named Maal. Often called Firstborn, he was the first god ever to be born of woman's womb. Meanwhile, Mormekar used the flame of rebirth to give new life to the souls of all the div who had died in the war of the gods – for there was not yet any method to judge them, and so they were all reborn upon their death.

While the children grew, Morwyn began to study what could have caused her siblings to fight such a vicious war. In her research, she traversed the div nations, already growing across the Sundered Remains of the Land. She found that the div who had not been gifted by the gods in their war had begun fighting again. Even without a reason to fight, without the gods telling them to, they were consumed with a desire for blood.

It was at this time that Morwyn called together those div who had been given powers by her and her siblings. With the aid of Mormekar, Rontra, Urian, and Shalimyr, she set these div beyond death. They were taught the great old songs, and some of the strongest were taught the old names that the first gods had learned in their youth. Div no longer, they were now the celestial host of the gods, their servants for all duties great and small. Chief among the celestial host were the seven Archangels, and chief among them was the Archangel Iblis. Morwyn set him to the task of dividing the celestial host into three great choirs. He did so, and there in the watery palace they sang the songs of the first days as taught them by Shalimyr.

With the host in place, Morwyn called upon the cleverest of the celestials, those who had been given power by Zheenkeef in the war, to help her discover the cause of the madness that seemed to have spread through the world, the madness that led to war and death.

By the time Terak, Tinel, and Zheenkeef were at last fully grown, Morwyn had discovered the source of the madness that had eaten at them. She had discovered Shachté's taint, and given it the name of the *Corpus Infernus*, roughly "the evil in the body," or "the enemy of the body." Upon the eve of her discovery, she summoned Mormekar, Maal, Tinel, Zheenkeef, and Terak to the foot of Eliwyn. There she spoke to all of the gods, including Urian, Shalimyr, and Rontra. This is one of my favorite plays in the Cycle of the Tree.

Morwyn: I am now both the eldest sister and the mother of this family, and you will attend me. Your war has torn our mother, the earth, asunder. Your war has dried our father, the seas.

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“Morwyn showed her siblings, her son, and her parents how to cast the Corpus Infernus out of themselves.”

Your war has caused our once gentle nurse, the air, to be filled with raging winds and storms. But you cannot be blamed. I call a meeting of the gods to set down laws.

Tinel: Of course I am not to be blamed, sister-mother. It was Terak that began the affair. And so, I gladly lend my hand to your laws, which I am sure will end in Terak's exile.

Terak: I'll squeeze your head like a pimple!

Tinel: You see? My brother is too violent for his own good. Let us cast him outside of the sphere and watch as he floats away, away, into the vast emptiness.

Terak: I'll make you eat your spleen!

Morwyn: Enough! We have been corrupted. None of you are to blame for your actions. You have lost the understanding that we live to create, not destroy.

Zheenkeef: I live to destroy.

Morwyn: You do not, sister.

Zheenkeef: I know. I was being scary.

Morwyn: Will you please listen to me? There is a black wickedness that suffuses everything. I call it the Corpus Infernus. It is responsible for your madness.

Shalimyr: Your siblings are not mad, Morwyn, only playful.

Morwyn: They are mad. They should not kill each other. I will prove what I say.

It is at this point that the troupe's illusionist would show Morwyn using her magic to open a door to Hell, the place she intended to imprison Corpus Infernus. After doing so, Morwyn showed her siblings, her son, and her parents how to cast the Corpus Infernus out of themselves. Then they cast it out of Eliwyn (and her fruits), the celestial host, and the div roaming the earth. Once exiled, the Corpus Infernus transformed into hundreds of horrible, deformed beasts. The gods named these creatures "demons," and the strongest of them, which are likened to the shadows and exact opposites of creation and all that is good, were called the qlipthoth. There were some qlipthoth that were made up of the darkness taken from within the gods themselves, and some of these beings exist today as demon princes, unbelievably dangerous, deadly, and mad to the core. To keep the world safe from their evil, the gods sealed all of these creatures in Hell – or so they thought

This done, the gods grew no madder from Shachté's taint. Zheenkeef became no madder, which is well. Her rebirth had cured her of the utter insanity that caused her to burn herself to death an age before, but left unchecked she might have gone utterly mad once more. On the other end of the spectrum, Maal had hardly been affected at all by Shachté by the time Morwyn discovered its undoing.

With *Corpus Infernus* imprisoned, Morwyn decreed three laws. She and her son, Maal, had spent the years of his youth discussing these laws; now, in the hour of his adulthood and the banishment of the degrading force into Hell, the time was ripe to bring the laws to bear. First, she decreed that the gods would never openly war amongst themselves. That is to say that the gods would never physically fight one another again. Tinel and Terak immediately began to plot how to use the div to best one another.

Second, Morwyn declared that the gods would use their power and strength to guide the div and the other beings now growing in Eliwyn's

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fruits. The div would be given charge over the earth and guidance from the gods. To this, Zheenkeef objected. “Why should we concern ourselves with these least and most boring of things?” she asked. Morwyn explained that the div and the others were their weaker kin, also born of the tree. It was their duty to protect their kin.

Third, Morwyn proclaimed that no one god would ever have absolute sway over all. As the eldest, it would fall on Morwyn to make many basic decisions for the gods, and to lead in times of strife. But all living gods would need to congregate at the foot of Eliwyn and agree in order to create any new law that would fundamentally alter the order of the gods.

The gods now had a structured order. However, all was not yet resolved. Confident that among themselves there would never again be such carnage, Morwyn knew that there was still a greater threat. Kador, utterly consumed by *Corpus Infernus*, still sat in the palace of air. Though he was quiet now, he would surely rise.

Part IV: The Fall of Kador, The Great War of the Gods

Of course, dear reader, we have all read the epic poems, heard the songs, and watched the plays about Kador’s fall. And, as you have no doubt realized, these are entirely inaccurate. They show all of the gods, including gods not yet born during this part of the third epoch, working together to best Kador with the aid of mortal races that had not yet awakened.

My research has shown me that the gods did indeed work together, but the war was far more involved than previously believed. Instrumental to the struggle was the celestial host. While the gods had empowered div in their war, so Kador had empowered his own minions. For years, he had hoarded his power and made plans with those he had transformed with his cunning and might. His disciples were as follows:

Lilith, the mother of beasts

Beautiful and cunning, from her womb sprang countless wicked things that made up Kador’s army.

Baal, the destroyer

Kador’s strongest servant, he was a crazed hunter and great warrior.

Dispater, the learned

The craftiest of Kador’s servants, Dispater learned from Kador the ways of great magic and was so powerful as to make even today’s mightiest archmages look like fools.

Mammon, the greedy

Kador gave Mammon the gift of hunger unslakeable. Mammon would never retreat from battle with the gods, for he desired to consume all the world.

Leviathan, the endless

Kador had always hated Shalimyr more than any other, and so he had made one of his servants into an endlessly expansive monster of the seas, in hopes that Leviathan might drink up the lord of the waters.

Mephistopheles, the mighty

Chief among Kador’s disciples was his student Mephistopheles. As the Nameless One had created Kador, so Kador sought to make a child of great power in his own image. Rather than making one of the div more powerful, Kador built Mephistopheles from his own essence, making an almost godlike being, wise in the ways of magic, strong in the ways of war, and every bit as evil as his father.

And so Kador sat with his six lackeys and the army of Lilith’s brood in the palace of air, waiting for the other gods to come for him.

After Morwyn explained the threat still posed by Kador, the gods made plots from their ocean keep to rise up and assault his walls. When their plotting was done, they struck. Zheenkeef let loose her

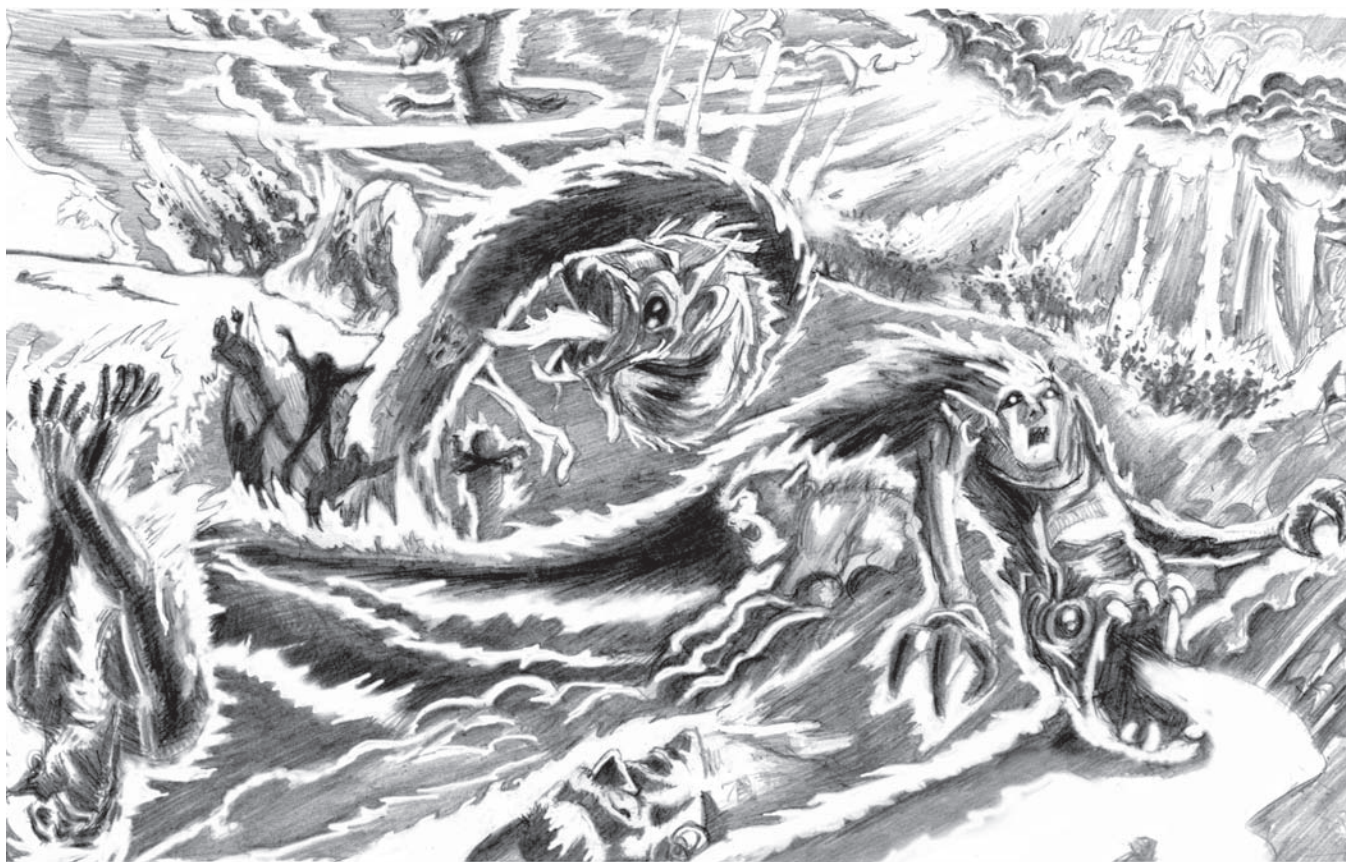
Hell and The Abyss

Hell, according to the mythology, was once ruled by the demons, which are made from the pure powers of chaos and evil that the gods cast out from themselves and the world. Devils are the brood of Kador and the corrupted div who followed him against the gods. Because they were trained and created by Kador to follow his laws and serve his tyrannical aims, they are creatures of pure law and evil.

When Kador and his followers were cast into Hell, they found that there were few demons left there. This was because the demons, in their constant expansion, wars, and shifting change, had quickly outgrown the structured nine planes of Hell – which, after all, had been constructed by the ordered mind of Morwyn as a prison for them. Led by their powerful forebears, the qliploth, the demons constructed great and terrible machines and burrowed out of Hell. They began to tear at the fabric of their prison, building great hives and mounds from their offal and other excretions as they went. They built layer upon layer through the astral emptiness until, at last, they came to the great sphere constructed by the Nameless One.

As war raged in the Prime Material between Kador and the gods, the demons worked their way through the very stuff of the sphere and out into the infinite emptiness beyond. For this reason, the Abyss the demons have built for themselves is infinite. However, they considered the Hell that was their prison the place for the weakest among them. And so, when Kador and his Devils were cast into Hell, they easily overcame the demons left there. The great hives and mounds left in the wake of the qliploth machines between Hell and the hole in the sphere became a brutal battlefield between demons and devils. Why the war between them began is a mystery. If there was a cause for war, it is likely long forgotten, though scholars suspect that even the multiverse is not big enough for two forces so profoundly evil, and a war between them is simply a natural inevitability.

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“Only a few of the div were safe, for they found shelter with the Shee tribes hidden about the earth. The rest were caught in the fire.”

ingenious engines of war that hurled Tinel’s magic over the walls. Terak struck at the gates with his great axe. Urian aided by pitching the castle to and fro in his skies. At last Kador came to the top of his walls.

“You dare defy me?” he cried. “I am your creator!” And with that the war was begun. The celestial host attacked the walls and was met with the spawn of Lilith’s womb – giants, trolls, goblins, and other evil races – which are today mere shadows of their might in the time of legends, for then they had the fire of power that their father, Kador, had given them.

The gods had believed Kador to be alone, and so were not prepared for this great onslaught. As the fighting raged, Kador and his six disciples began to hurl down fire and other assaults on the world. The gods, unprepared for this, fled from the flame to their ocean keep. But Rontra – who could not flee, as she is the earth itself – was scorched from top to toe by the vicious flames. Her forests were kindled, her mountains melted. Shalimyr’s great lakes were swallowed up by Leviathan in moments, so he could not put out the flames. Urian, expending all of his might, kept Eliwyn safe from the attacks. And, though the other gods were safe from the flame, only those div who found shelter with the mysterious Shee tribes were protected. The rest of the div were caught in the fire. Most were consumed, but some few were not destroyed by the conflagration. They were, after all, born in Kador’s image as he had prophesied, and their blood ran with fire like his. While they could not survive within the fire hurled down from the Heavens in any form they had known, the flames transformed them into great beasts of fire and energy. According to the original “Treatise on the Divine,” it is from this apocalypse, from these tortured div, that the forefathers of the dragons were born.

In the ocean keep, the gods and their celestial host (which had retreated from Lilith’s brood) regrouped. Zheenkeef began to bemoan their fate. “Their might is unstoppable. They’ll hunt us like dogs. They’ll kill us all. We’re doomed! Doomed to die like buzzing insects swatted by giant hands!” Morwyn was able to calm her and the rest of the gods. Her quiet reasoning led them to a new plan of action. When the fires above had finally burned out, they sprang into action.

This time, all of the gods assaulted the palace. Maal crafted for himself a sword made from metals he took from the palace – metals that had been made by the Nameless One. He called this sword Justice, and to this day it is his symbol. He and his father, Mormekar, assaulted the palace from the rear. From one side came Terak and his host, led by Iblis, wielding weapons of iron with which they tore at the walls. From the other side came Tinel and his host, bringing torrents of magic down from the sky, shattering the battlements. And from the front came the barrage of Zheenkeef’s machines, built by her celestial host, tearing the gates of the palace asunder. All the while, Urian showered the palace with lightning and Rontra assaulted it with stones. Shalimyr, meanwhile, sought to burst the Leviathan’s belly from within. Together, the gods broke the palace of the air. Morwyn strode through the sundered gates, and there found Kador and his followers smoking pipes and playing at dice. The army of Lilith’s brood was nowhere to be seen, for while the gods had plotted their second assault, the brood had descended to the land to find treasures in the dark places and caves of the earth. And so, Morwyn came upon Kador and his disciples alone.

“A delightful show you have put on, child,” said Kador with a thick, black smile.

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Why We Know This Is True

Long after the Great Sage Matalou's martyrdom in the name of the truth, the most powerful Armarius of Tinel's Scriptoriums at the time, Madrigan Yewstaff, was inspired one day to investigate the veracity of Matalou's claims. While his Treatise had been called heresy and blasphemy by most, it had nonetheless caused secret doubts to spread throughout the religious world.

It was Matalou's passages about the div that led Yewstaff to his discovery that the tome's claims were true. Expending a great deal of his church's wealth and his own power, Yewstaff performed one of the greatest rituals the church of Tinel has ever known. He summoned to their great cathedral the spirit of Gian ben Gian, the only div he knew by name. He bound the spirit so that it would speak only truth. He compelled the spirit to answer thirty questions. And then, with a council of his wisest inceptors, Yewstaff made the spirit tell him the true history of the gods.

The div lived in a time when the gods routinely walked the earth. As the caliph of his people, Gian ben Gian had supped with many of the gods himself, and learned at their feet all the creation stories they would tell him. And while the caliph's spirit wanted nothing more than to lie to Yewstaff and mislead the usurper races that had taken over the world that rightly belonged to him and his people, Yewstaff's ritual was too powerful and the Marid could tell nothing but truth.

After Yewstaff had finished his thirty questions, he made a proclamation to the leaders of the faith throughout the world. The Treatise on the Divine was true, every word of it. He declared the Great Sage Matalou a martyr of the faith and ordered that the record of Gian ben Gian's thirty answers be writ into only one tome and locked in the most secure hold of the Scriptorium, called the Cathedral of Truth. Often when one of the major religions chooses a new leader, she makes a pilgrimage there and reads the sacred tome.

It is said that Gian ben Gian revealed many hidden truths in his questioning – truths that most are not prepared to hear. But since the leaders of the assembled faiths came to read the text, few serious scholars have questioned the veracity of the Great Sage Matalou's claims.

"Kador, we cast you out. You are broken," Morwyn declared, and from behind her came the other gods, and the assembled celestial host, all standing to back her.

"Of course I am, girl. But I will not be broken alone." With that, Kador and his lackeys rose and began to call down flame to split the world and crack the crystal sphere of existence itself. "If you will not give me my due, we will all die!"

As planned, the gods together opened the portal to Hell. They and the host hurled their combined might at Kador. His arms and legs were broken with a sickening snap, hanging limp and useless at impossible angles. As this happened, the flame he had been entrusted with by the Nameless One was stripped from him and all of his followers. The gods placed the fire of power into Eliwyn and the five fruits she bore. The beings inside thus became complete beings with life, free will, and the fire of power. Lilith's brood, which had been given fire by their father, had it stripped from them, which is why even today the evil races of the earth lack souls.

With the fire torn from them, Kador and his six cronies were hurled back through the portal and banished to Hell. The power of the gods' banishing of Kador was so great that most of Lilith's brood was plucked from the deep places of the earth and hurled down with him. It is said by those who study such things that, once there, Kador was imprisoned for eons in a lake of ice at the bottom of Hell. Morwyn had hoped that he would be imprisoned and kept in check there by the demons she and the gods had cast out from themselves. Little did she know that by the time Kador was imprisoned in Hell, the demons had already left it with most of their strength to form the Abyss in which they now reside.

Together the gods rebuilt the castle in the air, proclaiming it and the ocean keep their realms. The land would belong to the children in the fruits Eliwyn now bore. And to teach the newborn children of the fruit all they needed to know about the world, the gods gave the surviving div the power and freedom to rule over the world as first among the races.

Part V:

The Prophecy Fulfilled

With Kador banished, and peace prevailing, the gods began to settle as rulers of the sphere. Tinel and Zheenkeef begot twins, Darmon and Aymara. Darmon was a cunning child who loved nothing more than to hear his mother laugh, and learned every trick the other gods would teach him. Aymara was the most beautiful of the gods, inspiring those around her to feel deep and abiding love. Morwyn took Terak as her second husband, sharing her time between him and Mormekar. By Terak she had twins, Korak and Anwyn. Korak was a happy child, strong and quick to laugh and play, but not very bright. Anwyn also had a pleasant demeanor, but she seemed to want to be taken seriously in her youth, perhaps because she was the youngest of them all.

As the gods and their children watched from their castle, the fruits ripened, but never fast enough for Zheenkeef. Years went by as the fruit grew heavier, and all the while the div built their kingdoms and grew in power and knowledge. Though most had been wiped out in the war against Kador, after thousands of years they had rebuilt in strength and numbers.

It came to pass, only a short time before the fruits of Eliwyn finally opened, that the div fulfilled Kador's prophecy that they would rebel against the gods. For generations, the Marid and Shaitan had been united under a single Marid caliph called Gian ben Gian. Gian ben Gian's court dripped with opulence, and his people were beloved by Tinel, for they had learned every trick of magic put before them.

One day, Gian ben Gian called together his counselors and the other great div leaders and asked them this: "Why do we continue to obey these gods in their palaces of air and water? They have had now two wars, and each time we have been nearly wiped out. I say that we take their palaces with our might and retrieve our birthright! We should be gods, not them! We were born of fire, not them!" And so the div made plans for a great war against the gods.

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Unfortunately for the div, Darmon observed all of this. Master of craft and guile, Darmon had spent a year and a day disguised as a servant to Gian ben Gian so that he might better understand the div. He immediately fled to the palace of the gods and told them what he had observed.

Of course, Gian ben Gian's reach far exceeded his grasp. His people were not half as mighty as he believed, and the gods were more powerful than he had ever dreamed. Rather than descending upon him themselves, the gods sent their celestial host, led once more by the mighty Iblis, to undo Gian ben Gian's plans. The div were wholly unprepared, and were utterly defeated when Iblis personally slew Gian ben Gian.

Having come to understand the complete ramifications of Kador's prophecy, the gods knew they could not allow the div to remain in the sphere, especially since the young races would soon be born and would likely be attacked and destroyed if the div were allowed to roam free. And so the gods banished the Marid to the pillar of water and the Shaitan to the pillar of fire outside the sphere where, one assumes, they remain today. As for the Shee, however, they had done nothing but remain in their fastnesses under the earth, in the forests and deep in the sea. They had never participated in a war, had built their own secret societies, and remained wholly peaceful. But the gods, fearing that Kador's curse would one day lead the Shee against them too, called forth all of these secret people.

It was the gods' decree that the Shee must decide whether to be stripped of the fire that coursed through their veins, and therefore their immortality, or to abandon the free will that was their birthright and be bound to the earth. Most of the Shee decided to be rid of the fire in their blood. These were set about the foot of Eliwyn and made to sleep until the fruits still on the bough came to ripen. Those who chose to be stripped of their free will were allowed to return to their homes in the secret places of the earth, where they remain today as the many water sprites and fairies of the wood, still bright ones but forever bound to the earth and unable to choose their lot in life.

Part VI: The Children of the Earth

A short time after the div were banished from the sphere, Zheenkeef was no longer able to wait for the fruit of Eliwyn to ripen. One day, while most of the other gods were deep in conversation and debate, Zheenkeef went down to the grove of the tree.

"What do you want, Zheenkeef?" Urian asked suspiciously.

"I want them to come out."

"Must you always be so impatient?" Rontra asked her.

Zheenkeef laughed and danced around the tree in response. Soon Urian and Rontra were dizzy from watching her. Seeing this, Zheenkeef ran up to the great roots of Eliwyn. Shalimyr lifted a wave to stop her, but then lowered it again. Zheenkeef had always been Shalimyr's favorite among the gods. Her mad ways reminded him of his own whirlpools and sea-storms and, indeed, he harbored for his granddaughter a secret love.

Once she knew she could play with the tree undisturbed, Zheenkeef began to ponder what to do first. It was then that she noticed the sleeping Shee all about the roots, and these she scooped up into her hands. "This should wake them," she said, and hurled them across the world into the great woods that had grown since the war with Kador. However, she did not rid herself of all of them, for some of the Shee were awoken by being lifted and, terrified, began to bite the hand that had lifted them.

Zheenkeef hopped up and down in pain and shook her hands wildly. The Shee she still held flew all over, some into the seas and others into the ground.

Of course, the Shee were no longer the Shee, for they had had their fiery blood taken from them and had been transformed into a mortal race. Those who landed in the woods are to this day known as the elders of the earth and are the longest lived of the races – for they are now called the elves. Those who flew into the seas are the magical sea-elves that sailors speak of in legend and song. And I believe that those who flew into the earth became the wicked drow, angered by their cruel awakening and forever embittered. Scholars of drow lore and history are certain to find my theory to be utter poppycock.

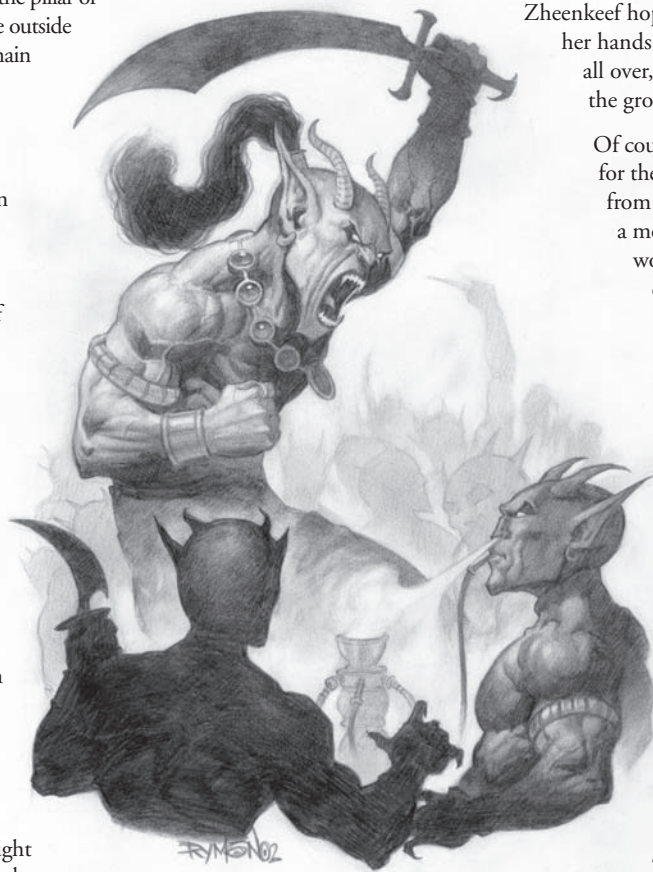
After ridding the tree of the Shee – now the elves – Zheenkeef determined it was time to see if she could throw the fruits of the tree as far as she had thrown the sleeping firstborn.

The first fruit she plucked became covered in her blood, for the Shee who had bitten her hand had drawn blood.

Zheenkeef hurled this fruit all the way to the mountains that marked the edge of the earth.

By pure happenstance, those mountains were the playground of simple-minded and pleasant-tempered Korak. On this day, Korak was playing his favorite game – lifting up mountains and seeing what was under them – when the first-plucked fruit came flying with terrible swiftness from across the world. Before the son of Morwyn and Terak had time to react, the fruit covered in Zheenkeef's blood hit him in the head, splitting open his skull and intermingling his aunt's blood with his own.

From this fruit sprang the dwarves, strong and dour, and they made a home in the head of the wounded and unconscious god. Some



"I say that we take their palaces with our might and retrieve our birthright! We should be gods, not them!"

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time later, Korak awoke with a splitting headache and the genius of Zheenkeef's blood. The simpleton son of the first mother began to teach the dwarves the secrets of mining and smithing and many other tricks. To this day, the dwarves hold Korak dearest among the gods for his aid.

But long before Korak awakened, Zheenkeef plucked a second fruit. Noticing that she was bleeding and that this fruit was covered in her blood, the goddess healed her wounds and licked all of her blood off the fruit. Then she lobbed it to the hills. In it were the gnomes, touched by the blood, hot breath, and warm tongue of Zheenkeef and, therefore, suffused with her inspirational madness.

The third fruit Zheenkeef kicked, because she grew tired of throwing. It landed in the cliffs, but bounced to the plains. This fruit bore the halflings, meant to be a tall and willowy race. However, the bounce had squashed them down to less than half their size and made them round.

From the skins of these three fruits sprang the animals and beasts of the world. Kin of the mortal races and the gods, they had life and free will from their mother, Eliwyn, but they never received the fire of power, which passed through the skins and into the mortal races. This is why the animals of the world have spirits but not souls.

The fourth fruit Zheenkeef decided not to throw at all. In fact, all the hurling and kicking of fruits had given her quite an appetite, so she gobbled it up. The fruit gave her a terrible stomachache, however, and she began howling in pain. The other gods heard and came to see what was the matter. When Morwyn and the others arrived, they found Zheenkeef leaning against the tree, clutching her belly and groaning.

"I shouldn't have eaten that," she muttered, and Morwyn, who no doubt agreed, rushed to her side and forced her to vomit the fruit back up. Sadly, the race that had been inside was now in pieces, and the gods could not determine what they were supposed to be. It was Tinel who came up with a plan for dealing with the disaster his wife had wrought. Each of the gods would take some part of the fruit and try to reconstruct it. When they were done, they would all meet back under the tree and put the fruit back together from the pieces.

As the gods departed, Zheenkeef noticed that there was one fruit left. Anticipating that she might win this little game the gods were playing by peeking at the contents of the last fruit, she grabbed for it. Rontra noticed this, however, and cried out. "No, Zheenkeef," she pleaded, "I entreat you. This fruit must be left upon the tree. It must be allowed to ripen."

Surprisingly, Zheenkeef obeyed and danced off, clapping her hands and turning cartwheels. No one knows what is in this fifth fruit, for it has never ripened. There are those who believe that when it ripens, it will herald the fifth epoch, the time of great change and endings. I, dear reader, am sorry to say that I simply do not know.

Part VII: The Fifth Race and the Three Sisters

And so, the family of the gods each took a part of the fourth fruit and reconstructed it in an image that he or she thought fitting. Terak pieced together a tall race of strong men with great beards and icy eyes. Morwyn molded a beautiful dark-skinned people in her own image, with green eyes and a peaceful wisdom. So it was with each of the Lords of Heaven (except Korak, who still slept, unnoticed by

the other gods, at the edge of the world). When the gods reassembled at the foot of Eliwyn, they realized that they had all rebuilt the fruit differently. Rather than trying to put these completely disparate peoples together into one group, the gods simply decided to place the new race with many faces all over the world.

Of course, this race would come to be called humans by the other races of the world. And while the work of the gods had made humans the most varied and adaptable of the races, Zheenkeef had digested a part of their essence, which is why humans are so short-lived and lacking the gifts possessed by other races. Further, because the gods spread them all over the world, humans have always been, and continue to be, the most plentiful of the races.

And so, with the races of the tree born at last, a time of peace prevailed. The children of the gods grew to maturity, and so did the races of the tree. They built temples to the gods, giving them a variety of names, but each race acknowledging their existence.

Among the young gods born of the womb, Maal Firstborn was the oldest, with a keen mind, a good sense of fairness, and his sword Justice. It was decided by all of the gods that he would be the judge of these new races. He would have a kingdom in the center of the earth beneath Eliwyn's roots where their souls would go if their bodies were properly buried or cremated. He would judge the souls to decide whether they would be reincarnated in a new form, or stay in his kingdom for eternity as reward for their deeds or punishment for their sins.

In building his kingdom, Maal sought out the help of his half-brother, Korak, who had grown to be nearly as strong as his father, and practical like his mother. Since the accident in his youth, Korak had proven to be a clever artisan. He crafted four great halls for the heroes who would remain in Maal's realm as reward, and many terrible pits and tortures for those who would remain to be punished. When he was done, Korak began to wander the world with his cousin, Darmon, and there taught the mortal races many skills and crafts, particularly those of the forge. Maal also asked his half-sister, Anwyn, to bless his hearth and home, for Anwyn had become quite skillful in the ways of comfort and contentedness. She had changed the gods' castle in the sky from an enormous, cold place of majesty to a warm and happy home.

For the children of Tinel and Zheenkeef, matters were different. They were both dreamers like their parents, and not so concerned with practical matters. Darmon, their son, often wandered on the land amongst the races of the tree, teaching them games and gambling. He also taught them the ways of commerce and trade (and the darker side of those endeavors – thievery and spying). Of Aymara it is said that there exists no being of greater beauty. Best loved by all the gods, Aymara spent her time sculpting and painting, playing music and singing. Consumed with a passion for beauty, she often traveled with her brother, observing the mortals and their arts. It is said that if her heart knows hate, it is only for Kador, who so ruthlessly manipulated her father into killing and death.

All went very well for gods and mortals for quite some time. The mortals grew prosperous and spread across the world into great cities and nations. Shalimyr allowed them to build crafts that would sail on his back, and they began to trade among themselves, forming great alliances. At the same time, the offspring of Lilith came out of their hidden places, and the forefathers of the dragons began to rise from their slumbers. It was the age of heroes, a time of the greatest adventures and tales, all of which are recounted in epic poems and songs that you have no doubt read or heard countless times. The

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various heroic epics from the earliest days of the mortal races actually took place during this time in the Third Epoch, not in the Fourth as is generally assumed.

During this time of great heroism, this golden age of the gods, Maal decided to hunt for a wife. He gathered his cousin Darmon and his half-brother Korak, and the three of them, remembered to this day as the Three Companions, went on a great journey across the sphere seeking a suitable wife for the judge of the dead.

One day the three gods heard the most beautiful singing they could imagine. Unlike the perfect voice of Aymara, this sound was three magnificent voices singing in harmony. Rushing toward the sound, the three gods came upon a mountain pool where bathed three maidens, each more perfect in form and beauty than the last. The three gods were smitten at once.

As you no doubt know already, these three maidens were the Three Sisters. No one knows from whence they came, but they were as different in temperament as they were beautiful. The tallest of them, Naryne, was noble in bearing, with a piercing gaze. Wisdom sat on her brow, and to hear her voice was to obey her command. The strongest of them, Canelle, was swift as the wind. She could best any man at wrestling, and was a champion at every sport. The slightest of them had branches and leaves in her hair. Thellyne preferred the company of the beasts and the birds to that of anyone other than her sisters.

When Maal, Darmon and Korak approached the Three Sisters to profess their undying love, the sisters' reactions were mixed. Thellyne ran from Korak, Canelle challenged Darmon to a fight (which she won), and Naryne was smitten, falling immediately in love with Maal.

While Maal and Naryne were soon married, the tales of Korak and Darmon wooing the other two sisters provide some of the most entertaining tales of the faith. In any respect, the Three Sisters were brought back to the water palace, where Morwyn and the others welcomed them into the family of the gods. To this day, however, no scholar or theologian has suggested a plausible theory as to where the Three Sisters came from. I consider it the principal failure of my lifetime that I too am left without an answer.

Chapter IV: The Fourth and Fifth Epochs

Part I: The Fourth Age The Woe of Carason

At last, my dear reader, we traverse well-known ground. My history of the fourth epoch is almost precisely the same as the history we have believed in for a thousand years. We all know of the Compact, and the last great conflict of the gods. Please forgive me as I repeat the material, but I must present it for a complete history.

The end of the Third Epoch was a golden time of peace and heroism. But peace could not last, for Morwyn's laws could not foresee the new conflicts of the gods. Those gods who were more chaotic in spirit wanted the mortals to fight, have adventures, and be free to wreak

havoc or do great deeds as their spirits dictated. For in doing these things, they would pay homage to these gods, making them more powerful. Those gods who preferred an ordered world wanted the mortals to be peaceful, build nations ruled by law, and create orders that would last through the centuries. And so, both groups of gods traveled among mortals to manipulate and command them. Many of the gods began to sire children with mortals, so that their progeny could act as the earthly agents of their will.

Of course, dear reader, on top of these difficulties, Terak and Tinel, the patriarchs of the two great households of the gods, continued to act out their ancient grudge through manipulation of the races of the tree.

Eventually these covert manipulations nearly destroyed the order of the gods. As Tinel and Terak had feuded for ages, so Morwyn and Zheenkeef had come to struggle. But the two sisters never fought in person. Instead, Morwyn's followers built great nations, and cast the worshippers of Zheenkeef out. Nations obseisant to Zheenkeef raided the homelands of Morwyn's followers. These struggles took place all across the world – except in a select few nations where all of the gods were worshipped equally.

In one such nation's capital, the city of Carason, two of Morwyn's priestesses were beloved. Sisters named Menara and Tora, they were known to walk among the impoverished and the infirm, offering succor. The nine apostles of Zheenkeef in Carason's great vineyard of the mother of madness grew jealous of the love Carason's people bore for Morwyn's priestesses. And so they devised a plan, independent of Zheenkeef, to ruin the sisters. It is important to note that the evil that followed was the work of mortal hearts and human design – there has never been any indication that Zheenkeef attacked Morwyn in this awful matter....

Tricking Menara and Tora into leaving Carason, two of Zheenkeef's apostles disguised themselves as the sisters. They then invited all of the elders and dignitaries of Carason to the healing halls of Morwyn for a great feast. When the feast was complete, the Zhenkefan apostles revealed that the elders of the city had been dining on the husbands and children of the two Morwynite sisters. "So great is our love for you and this city, that we have served you our own flesh and blood that you might prosper and know our love," the disguised apostles told them.

The elders of the city were so outraged that they burned the healing hall of Morwyn to the ground and then pulled out the foundation, stone by stone. They salted the earth upon which it had been built, and they even destroyed other shrines to Morwyn and all of her likenesses. The apostles of Zheenkeef who had masqueraded as Menara and Tora fled, and then returned as themselves, aiding in the destruction.

When the real sisters returned to the city, they were almost killed on sight. When they were arrested and discovered what had befallen their families and their temple, Menara died of sorrow on the spot. Tora broke her bonds, her rage was so great, and plucked out her eyes to stop her anguished tears. Her pain was limitless, but she did not die. Instead, Morwyn sent down one of her celestial host, and Tora was taken bodily to the Heavens.

It was this episode that almost brought down the Heavens. Morwyn, gentle Morwyn, was moved to a rage unlike any the others had ever witnessed. Upon the nine apostles of Zheenkeef she called down the most horrid of curses – that they should wander the earth forever, eternally hungry and festering with painful disease. But should any ever try to feed them, the apostles would erupt with sores and their

Appendix I ~ A Treatise on the Divine

skin would break open with terrible and grievous wounds. And should any ever try to heal their wounds or cure their disease, the apostles' eyes would erupt in flame and from their mouths would burst clouds of blood and stinging black nettles. And so the nine apostles of Zheenkeef wander the earth, terrified of any who are good of heart and might offer them the kind of succor that Menara and Tora once offered the poor of Carason.

Morwyn's wrath extended also to the elders of Carason, and to the city itself, for they should have known this trick for what it was. How could they imagine the gentle servants of Morwyn capable of such an atrocity? As she prepared to destroy the city for all of its indignities, its leaders pleaded with her in tearful prayer to spare the innocent of Carason and punish only them, for it was the elders who ordered these crimes against Morwyn's temples and shrines. To prove their faith in the matter, they burnt down the temple of Zheenkeef as they had the temple of Morwyn. It too they razed stone by stone, salting the earth beneath its foundation.

And when they were done, Morwyn forgave Carason its crimes against her, and punished the elders of the city only by turning them into dogs, for dogs are forever loyal and do not question their masters.

For her part, Zheenkeef was prepared to let the curse laid upon her apostles go without remark. They had committed grave atrocities, after all. But when Morwyn all but forgave the elders, the ones who actually destroyed her temple and ate the flesh of her priestesses' children, it was more hypocrisy than Zheenkeef was prepared to stomach. One night, when the gods were feasting, Korak was not among them. Zheenkeef said aloud, "I suppose you've fed me your son Korak as revenge for Carason, sister?"

This erupted into a terrible row, and before long nearly every god stood to one side of the argument. At last, Terak and Tinel, each on the side of his wife, moved to attack the other, their old grudge aroused like kindling in the fire. Only Aymara and Mormekar remained neutral during this struggle, and when they saw the two gods moving to attack each other, they leapt in their midst.

"What madness possesses you? Father! Uncle! Stand back!" Aymara shouted.

"Will you defy Morwyn's laws?" Mormekar demanded, staring at his brothers with his dead, black eyes. "Did she not revive you from death? Did she not lead you against Kador? Will you sunder what even Kador could not: the order of the gods?"

Tinel and Terak relented, but the conflict between the gods of law and chaos could not be so easily calmed. The gods decided that they needed a system to allow the mortals to choose their own paths. After all, they had free will and should be allowed to use it. The gods agreed to meet in fifty years at the foot of Eliwyn. Each god was to prepare a plan for the resolution of the conflict.

Part II: The Fourth Age The Compact

When the time came for the assembly of the gods, all had prepared a treaty to solve the dispute in a manner satisfactory to his or her goals. Zheenkeef suggested turning all of the mortals into furniture; "I believe the elves will make excellent credenzas," she declared, and the others ignored her. Rontra suggested that the mortals be declared entirely off limits to the gods and that they take the role of passive observers.

Debate upon the treaties lasted for years, no god giving quarter. Meanwhile, the mortal kingdoms grew and collapsed, only to be replaced by greater kingdoms, many of which were led by progeny of the gods. These kingdoms began to war among themselves, but the gods did not notice. For this time, no humans were judged, for Maal did not attend to his duties; but his father, Mormekar, continued to reap their souls and give them new life, reborn as infants. The mortals were abandoned by the gods, left to their own devices. They built great cities and leveled them. But still, none were punished for their misdeeds, or rewarded for their goodness.

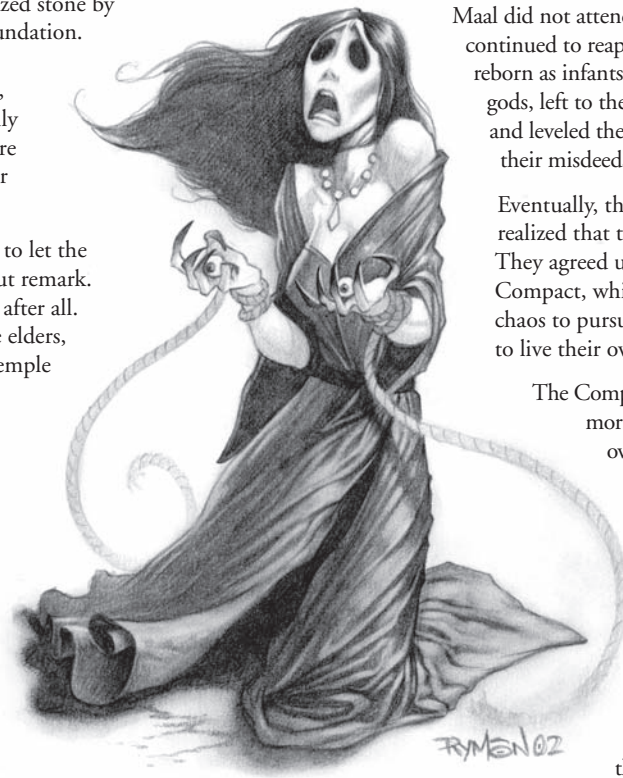
Eventually, the gods saw what was going on and realized that they needed to choose their course. They agreed upon an arcane document, called The Compact, which would allow for the gods of law and chaos to pursue their goals, while allowing the mortals to live their own lives.

The Compact set the gods apart from the mortals. They crafted for themselves their own plane, outside of the mortal sphere.

The new sphere contained a great mountain, with seven great cities as the mountain ascended; at the pinnacle of the mountain of Heaven was placed the home of the gods. In that city, the gods built for themselves a great palace from which to watch the events of the mortal sphere. No longer would they directly manipulate the mortals. Rather, they would receive power by mortals coming to them and worshipping them out of choice. They were allowed to speak only to those mortals who sought them out.

Maal's kingdom was taken from the underworld and removed from the mortal sphere as well. It was given its own sphere, and the gods made a long dark river that flowed from the mortal sphere into the land of the dead.

But this was not the most dramatic change. To the dismay of the other gods, Tinel logically demonstrated that any system in which the gods spoke to mortals, rewarding good deeds and punishing ill, denied free will. For if the mortals were allowed to know, for a fact, that the gods existed and that any who defied the will of the gods would be punished, it made the choice of wickedness so foolish as to be absurd: In this system a person was prohibited from choosing a wicked path by the threat of punishment from the gods, unless he was a fool willing to gamble that the mighty lords of Heaven would not notice his evil. A system was needed in which mortals had a reason to choose the evil path in order to give the good path meaning and to preserve free will.



"Tora broke her bonds, her rage was so great, and plucked out her eyes to stop up her anguished tears."

The Compact

If the gods still walked the world, having wars among themselves, it would be a very scary time to be alive. Thankfully, they long ago made an agreement to prevent this. Called The Compact, it is the agreement between the gods that keeps the world from exploding into religious warfare. Here are the basic rules:

- 1) The gods can't go to earth and influence major events as themselves. Taking over kingdoms, fighting wars themselves, and wiping out their favored servants' enemies are all prohibited.
- 2) The gods may go to the Prime Material in their earthly forms, simple avatars that look like people, and they may have cryptic effects on the world. They may offer advice, give small gifts, and give aid to their favored that will not have world-altering effects (it is acceptable to save the life of your favorite cleric).
- 3) The gods may, together, influence events and people directly. If all the gods agree, anything goes!
- 4) The primary way the gods influence the world is through their agents. All godly agents receive similar boons from their gods – so Morwyn's servants' divine spells are just as good as Zheenkeef's – and through these agents the gods' wills are enacted. The agents receive their spells through the celestial servants of the gods.
- 5) Celestials are allowed to descend to earth and aid mortals in times of need. They are set up in a great palace in the skies (which is not visible to mortals) where they listen to the prayers of mortals and aid those who are worthy – usually unbeknownst to the mortal.
- 6) Mortals may choose whatever life they want. Should they actually try to attack a god (through insanely mighty magic, for instance) that god is allowed to take whatever petty vengeance he likes. If a mortal opposes the gods as a group, it is possible the gods will agree unanimously to take action against that mortal (usually through Raguel, the archangel who enacts divine retribution).
- 7) All of the deeds of mortals are recorded by the guardian angels of Elysium and the daemons of Gehenna, good and ill.
- 8) When mortals die, they are judged by Maal. Those who are good (or not terribly bad) stay in Maal's kingdom awaiting rebirth as another of one of the five mortal races (no one believes you can be reborn as a tree or a frog). Those who are very good reside forever in Maal's kingdom in one of the four great halls. Those particularly favored ascend to the mountain of Heaven to serve there the god they served in life (or all of the gods, in the case of paladins and clerics of the Great Church). Those who are evil are cast down to Hell, Gehenna, or the Abyss for the pleasure of the devils, daemons, and demons there.
- 9) The devils, daemons, and demons are allowed to tempt mortals, just as the agents of the gods are allowed to try and steer them toward good.
- 10) Each god is individually strengthened by the deeds of mortals done in her service and prayer in her name. All of the gods are strengthened by acts of good. Therefore, it is to the advantage of the gods to promote goodness, but it is even more to their advantage to promote their own faith.

After much debate, they determined that this system would be temptation by the demons of Hell. The gods opened a portal there and demanded that the leader of the demons come to speak to them. It is here, dear reader, that we come to the shocking discovery I have made about this epoch. In the Treatise, there is an exacting description of this moment. As I said earlier, Kador's fall is not all that we have been led to believe. For when they demanded that the leader of the demons come to them, it was Kador that came to the portal.

When the gods spoke to him, calling him Kador, he demanded they call him Asmodeus, lord of Hell. He told them that there were no longer any demons in Hell, that he and his disciples had banished them. When Kador was cast into Hell, he took a new name and a new appearance. He cast out the demons and took the mantle of rulership of that place for himself and his "divils," a word the Treatise uses that has obviously become devils in our tongue. This is a grim revelation, for most of us had always been comforted by the notion that Kador was suffering in Hell with his followers – not ruling the place.

According to the Treatise, the gods withdrew at once from the portal. Having learned that Kador ruled Hell, they were prepared to abandon the Compact and come up with a different system, but it was Darmon

who convinced them all to continue as planned. Having traveled widely among the mortals, he had come to understand a fundamental principle of the wicked heart. "If we give something to the demons and something to the devils, they each shall want what the other has!" he told his family.

"Nonsense!" his father called it, but it was easy enough for clever Darmon to demonstrate.

"Father, when Kador offered fire to the eldest, you suddenly wanted to be the eldest, didn't you? You wanted it because your brother wanted it also – but until you knew he desired it, until Kador mentioned it, you did not care whether you were the eldest or not," Darmon observed, and his father could not help but agree. "So shall we trick Kador and the demons as Kador once tricked you."

So the gods spoke to Kador, who was now Asmodeus. To him they offered the right to tempt mortals and to win their souls should they walk the evil path. But this same offer they made to the demon princes, who they now found in their Abyss at the corner of the universe – and beyond. They told each that the other would have this right. Asmodeus could not let the demons have this power unopposed, nor could the princes of the Abyss allow the insufferable powers of Hell to stand alone in this regard.

Gehenna and Elysium

While the gods have an arrangement with the powers of Hell and the Abyss through the compact, the lords of Heaven know that those powers would be just as happy to destroy the Heavens as to cooperate with them. Gehenna, however, is a place of strange and dangerous alliances. The war of Hell and the Abyss rages across it and the daemons that call the place home fight in the war, but also serve a greater purpose in the Compact. They watch all mortals and tempt them to small sins – not the sort of sins of titanic evil that become legendary, like wiping out nations or defiling temples. Daemons are the small voices that tell a person to ignore a hungry man begging for alms, or the tiny lust that wells up in a good man's heart for his brother's wife.

The daemons go on to record each of the sins mortals commit in great black ledgers that are preserved until that person's death, then sent up the dark river to Maal's Kingdom for judgment. But just as a person is watched and tempted by the daemons, she is also watched over and guided toward goodness by the guardian angels of Elysium. Again, their influence does not lead to the great heroism of legend. They are the little voices that move us to charity when it is inconvenient, the small sighs in our heart that lead us to forgive those who harm us.

If you were to look at a mortal in the material plane with the eyes of a god, you would see a person in the middle of a pillar of light. As the pillar extends upwards, to Elysium, it becomes a white light; once it reaches that land of beauty, the pillar becomes a reflection of the mortal formed from pure light – it is this reflection the guardian angels watch and speak to. As the pillar extends downward, to Gehenna, it becomes pure darkness; once it reaches that scarred and putrid plane, it becomes a dark reflection of the mortal that the daemons watch and whisper to. The pillar works much like the silver cord that connects a person's astral form to his body, but it is invisible to all but the mightiest magic and cannot be severed, except by the will of a god.

And so they both agreed to the proposal of the gods, and thus did the gods create an order in which both evil powers were placed against each other and balance was maintained.

While that is true, Asmodeus was long in agreeing to the Compact. While the demon princes were at once moved to accept out of jealousy for the power offered Hell, Asmodeus knew that all was not what it seemed. Eventually he recognized the clever plan of Darmon, for even a god cannot trick Asmodeus, whose wicked mind still sees far. However, he understood that his only way back to power was to accept. The devils and demons were made a part of the bargain in a sort of agreed-upon war with Heaven. Their role is to tempt the mortals to the paths that lead to the undermining of law, order, fairness, freedom, and decency – this is known as the Lesser Temptation. In return, they are allowed to tempt mortals to give their souls to Hell or the Abyss in exchange for gifts of various kinds, the Greater Temptation. Furthermore, those who Maal judges unworthy to continue in the cycle of rebirth are no longer placed in the torture pits of his kingdom. These were left fallow when the Compact was made, and it was agreed that those deemed unworthy would be sent to Hell or the Abyss, their souls given to the devils and demons for suitable punishment. A soul given freely as part of the Greater Temptation provides the infernal planes far more power than a soul merely sent to them for punishment.

Maal did not close the pits of punishment with a light heart, for he saw that this new order had a great flaw. "We give Hell and the Abyss much power," he warned his family, "and we make it difficult for me to judge the acts of mortals. For indeed, they will be tempted to darkness, and they may do evil, but who shall record all their deeds? Before now, I have asked mortals to tell me of their lives, and I have known their words to be true, but now the truth may be obscured by the power of great evil. It is to Hell's advantage to make lies on the lips of the damned, for they will thus win souls, and with the souls, power. All deeds must be recorded. This I see."

The Gods agreed and sought out those of Hell and the Abyss that fit in neither place. The demons and devils had fought for long and long in the no-man's-land between their realms, and there, in the mounds of excrement and pools of blood, dwelt the outcasts of both of their societies. The gods sought these creatures out and with them they made a new and

more powerful understanding than that with Hell or the Abyss. These creatures would be empowered by Heaven to observe all souls, to tempt them to petty evils and malice, and record the sins of every man, woman and child in great black ledgers. The creatures agreed, and so it was that the no-man's-land was made into it a sphere of its own. Called Gehenna, it is the home of the daemons, and there they watch mortals and tempt them to the petty wickedness of day-to-day life. Every person has at least one daemon that watches her as she goes through life, and that daemon knows her darkest fantasies and most private thoughts. This is the whisper we hear to do ill, the whisper of the daemons, and it is made possible by the gods. And these wicked spirits record all we do that is wrong, so that Maal might receive a true reckoning when we stand before him.

But the gods are merciful, this we know, for they did not rest with the making of Gehenna. They also formed a sphere outside of Heaven, filling it with a plane of light and joy that they called Elysium. And there they placed a new order of the celestial host, the guardian angels, and these beings were charged with the same task as the daemons. So it is that each of us is watched not only by the whispering daemons of Gehenna, but also by the singing angels of Elysium. These angels remind us of our better selves in songs sung straight to our hearts, and just as our sins are recorded in the black ledgers of Gehenna, so are our good deeds recorded in the great white ledgers of Elysium. And when we die, Maal receives the ledgers of white and black and knows the truth of our lives so he may judge without fear of deception.

Part III: The Fourth Age The Fall of Iblis

While this order was wise, and has prevailed to this day, it did not sit well with all of Heaven. Some of the celestial host was placed in the palace in the air that the Nameless One crafted at the beginning of things and that once served as Kador's fortress. From there they would serve the mortal races and act as a conduit for their prayers to pass from the mortal sphere onto the choirs of Heaven and, in some cases, directly to the gods themselves. Chosen members of the

Appendix I ~ A Treatise on the Divine

faithful would be granted powers by the gods, and would receive the ability to call up miracles sent to them by the celestial host. Others of the celestial host were sent to Elysium to watch the mortal races for eternity and record their deeds.

When the gods told the three choruses of the celestials of this new order of things, most happily went about their duties. But a large group of the celestials became greatly disgruntled. Led by the first among the archangels, Iblis, these celestials wondered how the gods expected them to go from being soldiers at their side, their instruments of wrath against the rebellious div, their army against Kador, to errand runners and messengers for the lesser races. Iblis cried out, "I was first born, made of fire, and ye want me to bow before these, who are made of dust?"

The gods, who had always loved Iblis well, sought to reason with him. This was the highest calling, for all of creation had been about this moment, when the free will of mortals would allow greatness to unfold. But Iblis would have none of it, nor would a legion of celestials at his back, many of whom were ghaeles who had just returned from making war on the demons of the Abyss. None of these were willing to bow to the mortals, and they were certainly not willing to join an order that included Hell and the Abyss. They demanded that the gods allow them to reside in the newly made heavenly sphere and to spend their days singing. "This compact is folly," one of this rebellious host, who would later be known as Belial, observed, "for it makes us stand shoulder to shoulder with evil in the service of those who do not stand as high as our feet – they are gnats, these mortals you would have us serve." Iblis agreed, and said as much to the gods he had served.

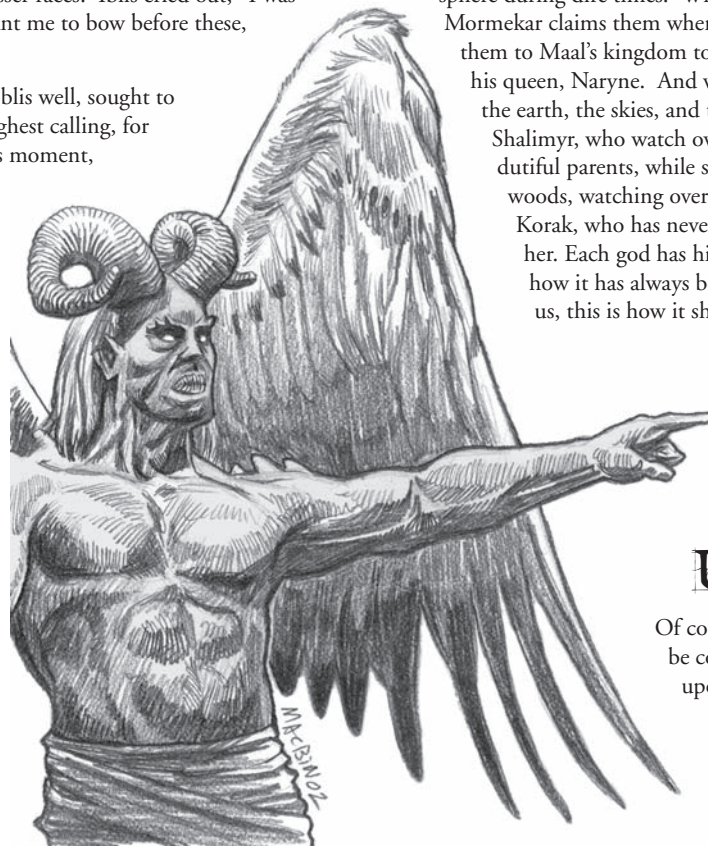
This was more than the lords of Heaven could bear. "You have overstepped yourself, Iblis, and you and all your rebels will be undone!" Maal called down, and he and the treeborn gods prepared to smite down every last celestial in Iblis' host. But Naryne stayed their hands. "If you strike them down yourselves, you allow others in the host to sit by idly and watch, without ever choosing for themselves how they would stand if asked. We can allow no such doubts among the host, for any who have learned to doubt us, or feel they are our equals, will surely rise against us someday."

And so, based on Naryne's wise counsel, the loyal members of the celestial host were set against the rebels and the servants of the gods fought a great war in the heavenly sphere. When all was done, Iblis and his compatriots were defeated and cast down into Hell, where it was hoped they might be punished by Asmodeus and his devils.

With the Compact in place and the rebellion quashed, the gods forever left the mortal sphere. And though they still return on

occasion as their earthly avatars, and still influence mortal events through their agents on the earth – the priests and holy orders of their churches – they do not directly interfere with the affairs of mortals. They leave the mortals to make their own choices, tempted by devils, demons, and daemons, swayed by their agents, and watched carefully by the celestial host and the guardian angels.

This is how our race now knows the world. Morwyn, Terak, Tinel, Zheenkeef, and Mormekar; their children Korak, Anwyn, Darmon, and Aymara; and one of the three sisters, Canelle, all sit on their thrones within their heavenly plane, only stepping into the mortal sphere during dire times. While they watch the races of man, Mormekar claims them when their time has come and sends them to Maal's kingdom to be judged, where he reigns with his queen, Naryne. And within the mortal sphere are the earth, the skies, and the waters, Rontra, Urian, and Shalimyr, who watch over the gods and advise them like dutiful parents, while shy Thellyne hides herself in the woods, watching over Eliwyn and occasionally visited by Korak, who has never given up his unrequited love for her. Each god has his place, each goddess hers. This is how it has always been in our time and, gods preserve us, this is how it shall always be.



"I was first born, made of fire, and ye want me to bow before these, who are made of dust?"

Part IV: The Fifth Epoch Undoing

Of course, dear reader, no history would be complete without speculation upon the future. For hundreds of years now we have heard talk of a coming fifth epoch. Some say it will be a time of great change, when the races of man ascend outside the mortal sphere, to explore and discover other spheres created by the Nameless One. Others say that in the fifth epoch, the Nameless One will be named, and all that is our world will be undone.

I cannot tell you what will happen in the future. I am a sage, not a soothsayer. And yet, I believe that a fifth epoch may well be coming and that it will be time of great change. I believe the fifth fruit left on Eliwyn will at last ripen, and perhaps Asmodeus will escape his bonds in Hell. It will be, I think, the third great apocalypse of mankind, but we will survive. We will always survive.

Chapter VII: Epilogue

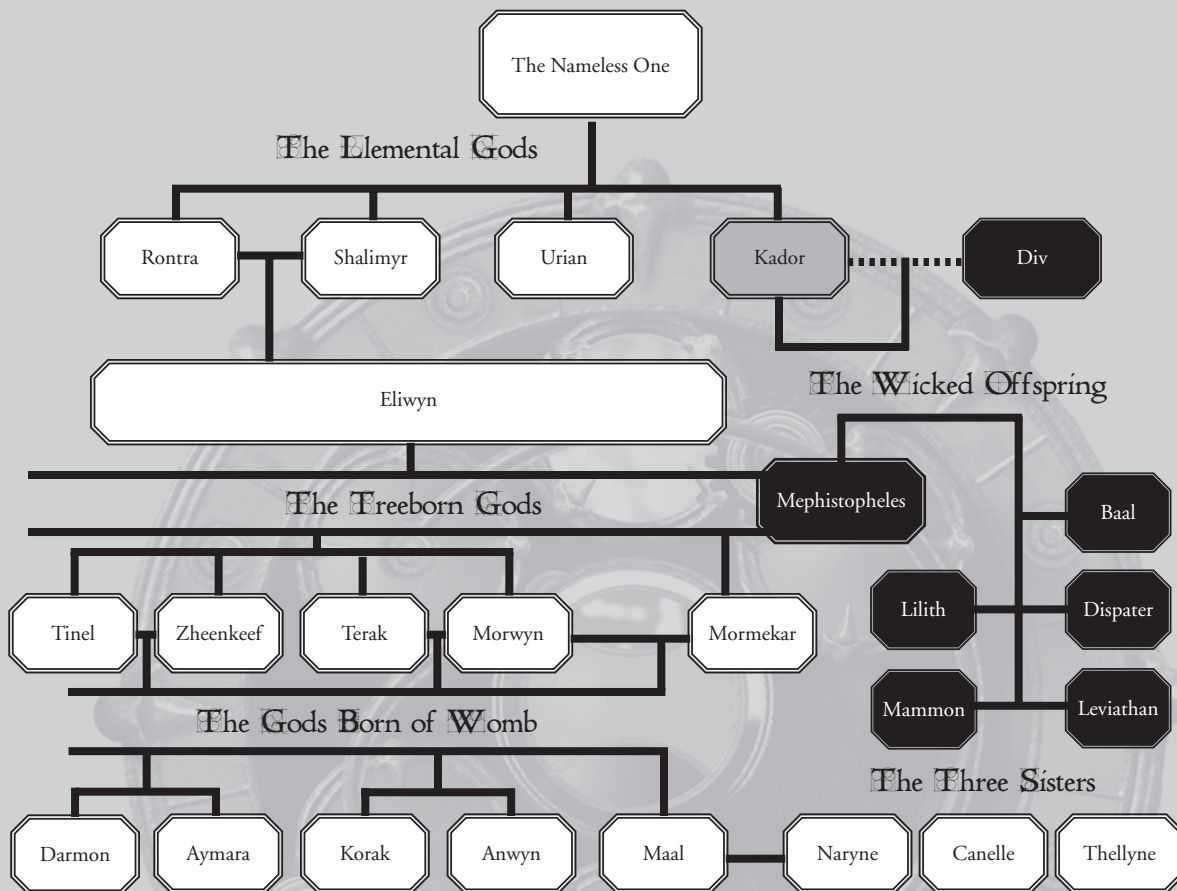
I hope that you have enjoyed this simple history. It is the fruit of my life's research. I imagine some of the revelations I have provided may well be shocking. I imagine many who have read this doubt its accuracy. Rest assured, dear reader, every word I have writ is truth. It is my life's pursuit; it is who I am. Without truth, a sage is little more than a talkative old man.

Appendix III: Gods and Races

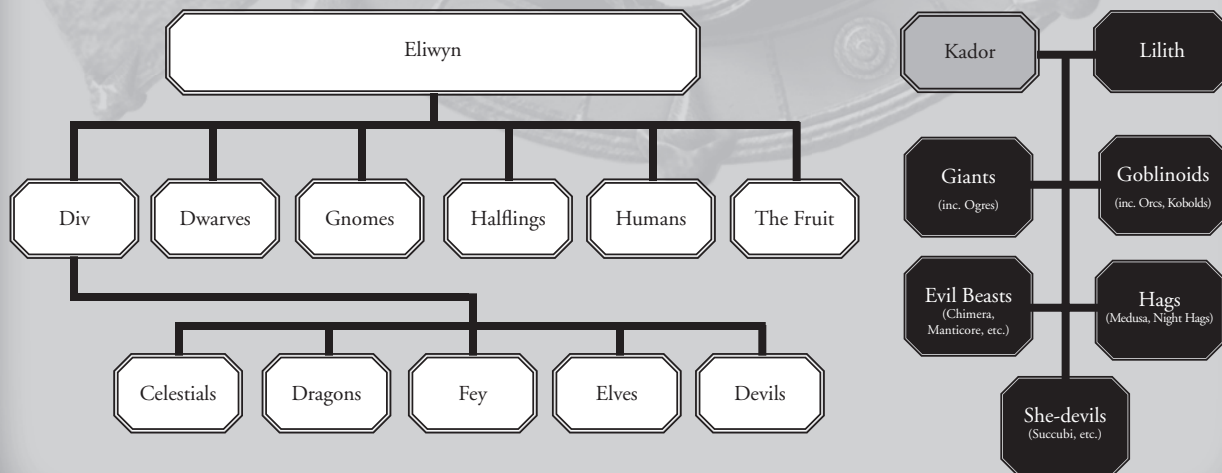
About This Appendix

Appendix II contains a genealogy of the gods and races, as well as a glossary of names and terms. For easy reference, the glossary explains nearly all of the names from throughout the book and defines several of the thornier pieces of terminology.

Genealogy of the Gods



Genealogy of the Races



Glossary

100 Crowns: The gift of Naryne to the first nobles of the five mortal races when she sanctified their bloodlines and named them rightful kings and queens. They are all thought to be lost.

1,001 Handmaids: See the Handmaids of Zheenkeef.

Aerix: Greatest of the mortal children of Terak, Aerix is the hero of many tales of adventure. He is also the central figure of a parable in which, craving a challenge, he asks his father to send against him a foe he could not best. The tale ends in tragedy. He now stands at his father's side in Heaven.

Air Pillar: A place of pure air and cloud; many clever creatures live here and seek to travel to the Prime Material Plane to learn and investigate. This is now the home of the good-hearted div, usually called djinni, who were liberated from the fire pillar by Darmon.

Alimus: Originally named Ali Mustafis bin Omar, Alimus was one of the two greatest athletes ever born of the div. He and his rival, Farouk al Ban, were promised places in the heavens by Urian and were granted them. Alimus drags the sun across the heavens with a golden cord every day, though he is sometimes drawn into conflict with his old rival, who drags the moon, and there is an eclipse as they wrestle.

Alonzo d'Eriq: The founder of the sacristies of Mormekar, d'Eriq was a justice of Maal visited by Mormekar. He was instructed to begin administering the Rite and to protect the dead from the deprivations of necromancy.

Anarchic Magic: The Maalite term for magic that destroys a soul or denies it its right to be judged before Maal.

Anvil: See the Five Apprentices.

Anwyn: Goddess of the hearth, the home, and contentedness, Anwyn is the youngest of the gods. She is noted for her quiet smile and gentle ways, like her mother, but also for her deep desire to preserve and protect the sanctity of the home, like her father. Anwyn is lawful good and desires a world where simple folk may live in peace. Her mother is Morwyn, her father is Terak and her twin brother is Korak.

Aragos: A mortal king who outlawed joy to save his people from sorrow. While the gods tried to change his mind to please Aymara, they all failed. Finally Aymara turned him away from his decree by winning his heart with song. She married him and they had seven children together, now called the Seven.

Aragoth: See the Seven.

Arathelle: Aymara's animal companion, Arathelle is a silver pegasus and the most lovely of all the beasts of Heaven. She is considered endlessly wise as well.

Arcane Magic: Originally called "arkane," this is the power of magic overseen by Tinel that was stripped from the world by him long ago and returned in the ark of magic. It is literally magic from the ark.

Ark of Magic: The vessel in which Uriel returned magic to the mortal races after Tinel severed them from it for the crimes of the Fourteen Wizards.

Askew: The morningstar of Zheenkeef is spiked with a thousand spears of fire. Its touch is said to drive the searing fires of madness deep into the minds of her foes.

Asmodeus: See Kador.

Astral Plane, The: When the Nameless One first created the Great Sphere, it was filled with shadow and ether. He pushed the shadow and ether into the center of the Great Sphere, forming from it what would become the Prime Material Plane. The rest of the Great Sphere was filled with the energy that was most like Him: stillness thrumming with the power of possibility. This energy has no substance, but forms the great expanse that is found between the spheres of existence contained within the Great Sphere. If a person leaves such a sphere, she will find herself in the vast emptiness of the Astral Plane, which has traces of light and sound and little else.

Aymara: The fairest of all the gods, Aymara is the goddess of love, music, and art. She is chaotic good, seeking a world filled with beauty and love. She cannot bear any measure that represses the natural affinity of the mortal races to love one another and celebrate life with art. For this reason, among others, she hates Kador more vehemently than any of the other gods and seeks his destruction, as he has always sown dissent and hatred and created ugliness. Aymara has been in love with many mortals, and long ago had seven children with a mortal king; they serve her to this day (see the Seven). Aymara's mother is Zheenkeef and her father is Tinel.

Baal: One of the most powerful warriors among the div, Baal became one of the servants of Kador and was the fiercest warrior of all. He is now a lawful evil lord of Hell.

Barawyn: See the Seven.

Barik-tharn: Known as "the Miner," Barik-tharn is the guardian of the treasures of Rontra's womb – silver, gold, gems, etc. He is also the force that warns miners when they delve too deep.

Beatitudes: The prayers all Shalimyn must say thrice daily.

Belial: A member of the rebellious host of Heaven who, standing with Iblis, rejected the command of the gods to serve the five mortal races. Belial served as an instigator of the rebellion and is now a lord of Hell, having surpassed Iblis in power and status.

Bellows: See the Five Apprentices.

Black Ledger: The book in which all of a person's misdeeds are recorded by the daemons of Gehenna that observe him. The black ledger is sent to Maal's kingdom along the Dark River when he dies, its contents read aloud at his judgment. The black ledger is sometimes called the Book of the Wicked or the Book of the Damned.

Black Scribe, The: Chief of the celestial order of the Scriveners, mute scribes who serve Tinel by recording history. Of all the Scriveners, only the Black Scribe speaks, and he conveys news to Tinel and orders to the Scriveners. He is called the Black Scribe for his rich robes of sable and ermine trimmed in silver, a symbol of his office.

Camael: Attendant to the thrones of the gods, Camael the archangel is the minister of Heaven and stands behind the Lords of Good. It is Camael who oversees all the workings of the gods' court and arranges audiences with some of them. As a servant and the most humble of celestials, Camael is the seventh and last of the archangels; yet, she alone is in the constant presence of the glory of the gods and is therefore accounted by some as first.

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Canarak: The god of bloodlust, wrath, and carnage, Canarak is the most feral of the gods. One of the Three Brothers, he has red hair and teeth that are sharp like fangs. He has an insatiable hunger for violence, and often influences his mortal worshippers to commit unspeakable atrocities. He secretly plots to take control of the pillar of water.

Canelle: The goddess of sport and victory, Canelle has fiery red hair and an equally fiery temperament. She is arguably the strongest of the gods in any game or test of skill. She is chaotic good, seeking a world where each person is able to find and achieve her personal best. Her sisters are Naryne and Thellyne. Darmon has loved her for over an age, but that love is unreciprocated.

Castle in the Air: Built by the Nameless One, the castle in the air is one of three ancient strongholds of the Creator. It was the fastness of Kador for most of the second and third epochs and then became the home of the gods after Kador's defeat. It is now the residence of those celestials who remain in the Prime Material Plane acting as intercessors for the faithful and providing them with their divine powers.

Cataloguers, The: These celestial servants of Tinel tend to his library, which contains every work written by mortal hands and all the records of the Scribes. Their chief is called the Grey Librarian.

Cathedral of Truth: The home of the tome that contains Gian ben Gian's answers to Madrigan Yewstaff's 30 questions. This tome proves the Great Sage Matalou was not a heretic, but apparently contains other disturbing revelations. It has never been copied and is only read by major religious leaders of the many faiths of the gods of the tree.

Celedynne: See the Seven.

Celestial Palace: The name for the palace of the gods. In the third epoch and the beginning of the fourth, this was found in the castle in the air constructed by the Nameless One. It is now at the summit of the mountain of Heaven.

Celestials: During the Lesser War of the Gods, Terak, Tinel, Zheenkeef, and Morwyn all gave great powers to their favored among the div to help them in the struggle. After the war, Morwyn took these div, far too powerful to coexist with their "unelevated" brethren, and made them into something more powerful and holy – the first celestials. They were formed into three choirs and taught the old songs that the world learned when the Nameless One first named all places and things. At the head of the celestials are the seven archangels.

Central Sphere, The: The central sphere, often called simply "the sphere," is where the mortal races live – and so much more. Found at the center of the Great Sphere of existence, the central sphere contains the Prime Material Plane, the planes of positive and negative energy, the shadow plane and the ethereal plane. In the earliest days it stood alone in the universe, surrounded only by the astral emptiness of the Great Sphere. Over the eons, though, the gods have created many other spheres around it, particularly Heaven, Hell and the land of the dead.

Ceruill: A bard whose marriage to the princess, Ophiel, enraged a prince named Faristel. Faristel murdered Ceruill on his wedding bed, setting off a chain of revenge killings that resulted eventually in the deaths of 50,000 people or more. This sorry tale led to Maal's first great law, a proscription on revenge.

Chorus of the Birds, The: An aviary of pearl and silver in Heaven contains these ten thousand song birds who sing together in perfect harmony. They sometimes visit mortal singers to inspire them.

Compact, The: The great understanding of the gods that they will not directly control the mortal races as this denies them their free will. Through the Compact, great matters are to be decided by mortals. The gods may influence these mortals to do their bidding through their agents (clerics and holy warriors, generally), just as Hell and the Abyss may tempt mortals toward evil. A god may only directly decide major events on the Prime Material if all of the other gods agree to allow it.

Corason: The sight of a terrible conflict between the followers of Morwyn and Zheenkeef that resulted in the death of the clerics of both churches and the destruction of the temples to both goddesses. This tragedy resulted in the Compact, as the gods came to see that the conflicts they were inspiring in their people could only lead to disaster.

Cornucopia, The: A gift from Anwyn to her followers that is forever overflowing with the most delicious feasts.

Corpus Infernus: Pure chaos and evil, Corpus Infernus infected all of the world, including the creator god, the tree of life, the gods of the tree and earth and Kador First-Born. Corpus Infernus is why there is evil in the world. When cast out of the world into Hell, it formed the demons. Corpus Infernus is sometimes called "Shachté," which is more accurately a term for pure chaos alone.

Dariun: See the Seven.

Dark Pact, The: This refers to the secret alliance between Asmodeus and the Three Brothers and their plan for world conquest.

Dark River, The: With the Compact, it became necessary for souls to travel from plane to plane, sometimes without guidance. So the gods created the Dark River, which flows through all of the planes of the sphere – and is even said to have a source in the Prime Material Plane. It is called the Dark River because it seems murky to most who ever travel it. However, as it approaches Elysium and the mountain of Heaven it actually becomes a bright river of light.

Darmon: The god of travelers, tricksters, rogues, joy, and laughter, Darmon is called the Champion of the Gods, because he once used his wits to best all of the other gods. He is the messenger of the heavens and it was he, in his many travels with Korak, who taught the mortal races many of their most useful skills. Darmon is chaotic good and believes that the gods and mortals should strive toward happiness and playfulness. His joy and laughter are as irrepressible as his fascination with, and love for, the mortal races. He is one of the Three Companions; on their great journey he fell in love with Canelle, who does not return his affections. His mother is Zheenkeef, his father is Tinel and his twin sister is Aymara.

Daemons: Created by the gods from the renegades of Hell and the Abyss, the daemons are charged with overseeing Gehenna – the buffer zone between Hell and the Abyss – and monitoring every mortal on earth. They do so by watching the dark reflection every mortal casts into Gehenna through the dark pillar. The daemons tempt people with petty villainies, whispering into the ears of their shadow forms. When people commit evil, the daemons record their misdeeds in the black ledgers.

Dark Pillar: Every person is surrounded by a pillar of light (usually seen only by the gods and their servants). As that pillar extends downward, it becomes pure darkness. It is through this dark pillar that each person casts a dark reflection of himself in Gehenna that is observed by the daemons there and through which the mortal is tempted by Gehenna's denizens.

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Demons: Born from the Corpus Infernus cast out of the gods and the tree of life, the demons were first imprisoned in Hell by Morwyn. The greatest of them were a race called the qliphoth, but the qliphoth created other races of demonic power, which overthrew them. Not content to remain in the ordered prison of Hell, the demons burrowed out and across the Great Sphere, eventually forming a hole in the Great Sphere itself and building themselves the infinite Abyss that spirals out into nothingness.

Devils: In the Greater War of the Gods, Kador made soldiers for himself in his struggle against the other gods. These soldiers were div given formidable powers by their lord. These elevated div are the forefathers of the race now called devils, a word that comes from Kador's name for them: divils.

Dispater: The cleverest of Kador's servants, Dispater was given great magical powers by his master. He is now one of the lawful evil lords of Hell.

Div: The first race of people born from Eliwyn, the div (meaning "bright ones") did not age and had blood made of fire. They had three tribes: the Marid, the Shaitan, and the Shee. The div learned much from the gods during their wars, and many amassed incredible powers for good and ill. Eventually, the div rose up against the gods and were nearly all outcast, save for the Shee, who became the elves and the fey.

Divine Magic: Powers provided from the gods to mortals through the conduit of the celestial host. An entire order of the host is dedicated to providing these powers to clerics, holy warriors and others. As part of the Compact, all divine powers are equal, which is why a senior cleric of a less powerful god is just as powerful as an equally senior cleric of a more powerful god – to do otherwise would provide a tacit inducement to worship the more powerful gods.

Dragons: During the Greater War of the Gods, in the first failed onslaught against Kador, the earth was bathed in fire. The gods escaped destruction, but countless div were killed. The fire transformed some into beings of pure flame and energy, the forefathers of the dragons.

Durgas: A human warlord who is the center of a Rontran parable instructing mortals to respect life and the earth.

Dwarves: Born of the first fruit plucked by Zheenkeef from Eliwyn reborn, the dwarves first awakened near Korak, who had been knocked unconscious by their fruit. Their first homes were in his head, and when he awoke he taught them all he knew of the smithy and other works of the hand. For this reason, Korak has always been dear to them. They are one of the five mortal races and Maal judges their souls upon their death.

Earth Pillar: A pillar filled with nothing but rock and dirt and the pure energy of the earth. The creatures that reside in the plane of earth rarely come to the Prime Material Plane, as they lack curiosity.

Eliwyn: The Tree of Life that sprouted from Rontra where she and Shalimyr met. Eliwyn bore five fruits, from which came the gods of the tree and the div. She was destroyed in Terak and Tinel's war and, when reborn, had five more fruits, from which came four of the five mortal races. She is now the neutral icon of the druids, but provides no powers.

Elves: The forefathers of the elves were members of the third tribe of the div, the Shee, who chose to give up their immortality and become one of the new races of the earth. Zheenkeef awakened them

by playing with their sleeping forms. She hurled the elves across the world, but some of them bit her hand, causing her to hurl them into the sea and the earth. They are one of the five mortal races and Maal judges their souls upon their death.

Elysium: With the Compact, a system was necessary to observe the good and bad deeds of all mortals. The gods created Elysium, where a "light shadow" of every living mortal walks about, cast by the pillars of light that shoot upward from all mortal souls. The light shadows are constantly observed by the guardian angels of Elysium (usually devas), who record all of their good deeds, great and small, in enormous ledgers that are delivered to Maal's kingdom when each person dies. The guardian angels also whisper to the mortals, guiding them toward decency and charity.

End Times, The: The term used by many to discuss the "inevitable" apocalypse. Many believe that someday the Nameless One's name will be spoken and the universe will come to an end or that the fifth fruit will ripen and the world will enter into another period of war as Asmodeus is freed of his bonds. Whatever the reason for their arrival, the End Times are not likely to be a cheery time.

Erikul: The central figure of a Shalimyn parable, Erikul was a pirate king who believed he was lord of the seas. Shalimyr drowned him for his hubris.

Erylwyn: See the Seven.

Ethereal Plane, The: Within the central sphere, the Nameless One gathered the energies that filled the Great Sphere when he first created it. Those energies, ether and shadow, were perfect but had no substance. Combining their strength and his own great words of power, the Nameless One created the Prime Material Plane. But the ethereal plane still co-exists in the central sphere with the Prime and the shadow, as it did in the first days. It is visible only using magic.

Evil Beasts: Gorgons, chimaeras, hydras, manticores and the other evil beasts of the world are said to have sprung from Lilith's womb. In the time of the Greater War of the Gods, they were the most dangerous part of Kador's army; today these beasts are less than half the size of their ancestors.

Eyes, The: Often called the Eyes of Tinel, these servants of Tinel are made up primarily of rooks and other animals. The Eyes go from the Prime Material to Heaven and back, reporting on all of the events of the sphere. They report their findings to the Scriveners, who take their notes to be catalogued by Cataloguers. The chief of the Eyes is called the White Whisperer.

Faristel: A jealous prince who murdered his rival for the princess Ophiel. This murder spawned a series of revenge killings that ended in the deaths of more than 50,000 souls. Because of this tragedy, Maal gave the mortal races their first great law – the proscription on revenge.

Faro: Originally named Farouk al Ban, Faro was one of the two greatest athletes ever produced by the race of the div. He and his rival, Ali Mustafis bin Omar (now called Alimus), were promised places in the heavens by Urian and were granted them. Faro drags the moon across the heavens with a mithril cord every night, though he sometimes rushes ahead and appears in the sky before Alimus has left. Occasionally, the two wrestle once more and there is an eclipse.

Fionali: See the Seven.

Fey: The forefathers of the fey were members of the third tribe of

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the div, the Shee, who refused to give up their immortality and their powers and chose instead to be bound to the earth – to lose their free will. To this day, the fey are more powerful than the mortal races, but they do not participate in earthly matters; they are forever tied to their homes and their functions.

Fifth Fruit, The: The Tree of Life, Eliwyn, has borne five fruits in both of her incarnations, and in both cases the fifth fruit has been the source of mystery. The first time, Kador tried to steal the fifth fruit and, when he could not have it, cursed the god within so that it became a race of fiery beings, the div. When Eliwyn was reborn, the fifth fruit never ripened and was not plucked early by Zheenkeef, so it hangs there still. What is inside, no one knows. There has arisen a strange cult that worships this mysterious fruit to the exclusion of the other gods called “The Cult of the Fifth Fruit.”

Fire: See the Five Apprentices.

Fire Pillar: Most of the div were exiled to the fire pillar, the plane of fire, which is a dangerous place of nothing but flames raging for eternity. Travelers beware.

First Epoch: The beginning of history, when the Nameless One created Himself and discovered the words for the four elements.

First Hall, The: See the Four Halls.

Five Apprentices, The: Korak’s servants are apprenticed to him for 100 years and then are named journeymen of the heavens. The apprentices are among the greatest mortal craftsmen, receiving the honored position after death. Their names while they serve are: Bellows, Fire, Hammer, Anvil, and Tongs.

Five Fruits: Eliwyn has borne five fruits twice. In her first incarnation, these fruits contained the gods Morwyn, Terak, Tinel and Zheenkeef and the fiery race of the div. After she was destroyed by Terak and Tinel, she was reborn with five fruits, four of which contained humans, gnomes, halflings and dwarves, the fifth of which is called the “Fifth Fruit” and has never ripened.

Five Symbols of Faith, The: The Teraketh believe all those devoted to the god of valor must wear five symbols at all times: a holy symbol, a vambrace on the right forearm (or a wristband), unshorn hair, a weapon, and the forelock from their hair when they were children.

Four Daughters of Shalimyr: Named Ocean, River, Lake, and Stream, these beautiful daughters of the sea help their father to oversee his enormous realm – the waters of the world.

Four Pillars, The: The elemental planes exist outside the Great Sphere, and even the gods who hold sway over the elements in the Prime Material do not control these pillars. They are the purest form of the energy they represent: Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

Fourteen Wizards, The: A council of wizards that sought to map Heaven and capture a god for their experiments. Their folly led Tinel to strip the world of magic for a time and to put up locks barring mortal travelers from Heaven unless they are brought there by a divine power.

Four Halls, The: Where those who have led exemplary lives reside in eternal bliss. The first hall contains those who are wise and good of heart and its warden is Issama. The Second hall is where those who have committed great acts of valor and loyalty reside; its warden is Fratricide. In the third hall abide those who have experienced such horrible pain in life that they need never return to the mortal sphere, and its warden is Remorse. The fourth hall is home to those who have

brought great beauty into the world and its warden is Maal’s Voice.

Four Winds, The: Called Rigyl (North), Ragyl (East), Wyndyl (South), and Wandyl (West), the four winds were divided between violent and passive. The North and East wished to destroy everything while the South and West fought against them to protect everything. Urian had to pluck them from himself to save the mortal races from their struggles. He now has all four chained in his four halls, releasing them when the world needs wind. This is considered the central sacrifice of Urian, who loves freedom above all else, yet imprisoned part of himself for the good of the mortal races.

Fourth Epoch: The current epoch; the age of mortals. During this epoch the gods formed the Compact, empowering mortals to determine their own fates based on the temptations of evil and the guidance of good.

Fourth Hall, The: See the Four Halls.

Fratricide: More an office than a person, Fratricide is a loyal servant of Maal who serves in this capacity for 100 years and a day. Maal sends forth Fratricide to punish those who kill someone of their own blood (a mother, father, sibling or child). Fratricide rides upon a flaming, blood-red steed and is, for the term of office, the Warden of the Second Hall.

Gehenna: Created by the gods on top of a battleground of demons and devils, Gehenna is the place of observation, where petty crimes are solicited and recorded by the daemons in their black ledgers. They are able to see these mortals through the reflection cast by their dark pillars. This is where neutral evil souls go when they have been condemned to punishment by Maal.

Geromul: See the Seven.

Gian ben Gian: The most powerful Marid leader of the div, Gian ben Gian declared that the div were more numerous and stronger than the gods. He led them in a war against Heaven, which was put down by the celestial host. Gian ben Gian was killed by Iblis in a duel.

Giants: The evil races of giants, like ogres and trolls and fire giants, are said to have been born of the unholy union of Kador and Lilith. Those members of the races that live today are a pale shadow of those that fought in the Greater War of the Gods against the celestial host.

Glin: One of two gnomes, the wife of the pair, credited with the discovery of wine, which was a gift to the couple for their hospitality to Zheenkeef.

Glor: One of two gnomes, the husband of the pair, credited with the discovery of wine, which was a gift to the couple for their hospitality to Zheenkeef.

Gnomes: The race from the second fruit of Eliwyn reborn, the gnomes were touched by the blood, tongue, and breath of Zheenkeef and therefore share in her inspiration. Their fruit was hurled to the hills, and this is where they made their first home. They are one of the five mortal races and Maal judges their souls upon their death.

Goblinoids: The goblinoid races, like orcs and goblins, are said to come from the union of Lilith and Kador long ago. They bear little resemblance to the terrifying creatures that Lilith mothered, having degraded over the years.

Golden Sight, The: A mystical belief of the Darmonite clergy holds that should one piece together all of the aphorisms ever spoken by Darmon to mortal ears, it would contain the secrets of the universe and one would be immediately granted the Golden Sight. The Golden

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Sight would allow one to see the universe with absolute clarity.

Greater Temptation: When a mortal has given himself over to the temptations of evil outsiders, it is possible for him to succumb to the Greater Temptation. This is the assignation of one's immortal soul to the evil outside forces. Usually a contract, it is through the Greater Temptation that a mortal agrees to become a mortal agent of one of the evil outside planes (usually Hell or the Abyss). After agreeing, the mortal's soul is completely owned by the evil power and will certainly be sent to its plane at death.

Greater War of the Gods: When Kador refused to give Mormekar the fire that was Mormekar's right, it became clear to the gods that Kador had become evil and was a threat to the earth. They attacked Kador in two great onslaughts, the first failing utterly and the second resulting in Kador's downfall. The war pitted the gods and their elevated div (the celestials), against Kador and his elevated div (the devils).

Great Hearth: The center of the main Anwynite faith. This is where the Supreme Manciple sits and where the magnificent round feasting table and the cornucopia may be found.

Great Sphere, The: The Nameless One first formed the four pillars, and then He placed this sphere on top of them. When He created the Great Sphere, it was filled with emptiness in the form of ether and shadow. He pushed the ether and shadow into the center when He created the Prime Material, filling the rest of the sphere with image and sound or, as most know it, the Astral Plane. Outside the Great Sphere is the infinite void. When one says "the sphere," it is usually a reference to the center sphere, the Prime Material Plane. Few but scholars refer to the Great Sphere.

Great Wrong, The: The Asmodean name for the toppling of Kador by the gods of the tree. It is also called the "Wicked Injustice."

Grey Librarian, The: So called for her robes of grey wolf fur trimmed in gold, this celestial servant of Tinel is the head of the Cataloguers. She is the only member of that heavenly order to speak to Tinel. She runs his library and makes sure he has whatever materials he needs in his eternal research.

Grifynne: The first eagle, and servant to Urian, Grifynne is golden and glorious with a wingspan as long as a mighty river and a cry that shakes the heavens. She is the mother of the griffins and the lamassus, which were fathered on her by Metteron, Terak's golden lion.

Guardian Angels: A special order of angels created as part of the Compact, the guardian angels reside in Elysium and observe the deeds of all mortals through their bright reflections cast by the pillars of light. They speak in whispers to all they observe, guiding them toward goodness and recording all of their kind deeds in the white ledgers.

Guide, The: An ancient woman with a lantern, this servant of Morwyn eases men and women into the wisdom of old age. The Guide lessens the trauma of becoming old and also comes, sometimes, to those who are about to die of age and tells them that they are in their final moments; this is how many manage to make amends for old hurts with their final breaths. Like other servants of Morwyn, she usually comes invisibly to those she aids.

Gwainlath: Often called the Shepherdess, Gwainlath is a servant of Rontra's who provides aid in dark times. When the land is being desecrated or otherwise misused, the Shepherdess makes subtle appeals to those responsible to change their ways. She is called the Shepherdess because she is the figure credited in most legends for

subtly herding those in danger out of trouble (e.g. folk who suddenly find shelter in a cave they never noticed before).

Gwedryl: Thellyne's bow made of yew. Its name signifies "True Seeker." It was with Gwedryl that Thellyne slew the Three Druids.

Hags: Some of the daughters of Lilith and Kador, the hags – medusas, night hags, sea hags, etc. – were beloved of their mother and, it is said, still have contacts with her and their sisters, the she-devils, in Hell. The Hags have today only the barest scrap of the power their foremothers had in the Greater War of the Gods.

Halfings: The race from the third fruit of Eliwyn reborn, the halfings were supposed to be tallest of the races, willow-wand thin. However, Zheenkeef kicked their fruit across the world and it bounced from the cliffs to the plains, squashing them to half their original size. They are one of the five mortal races and Maal judges their souls upon their death.

Hammer: See the Five Apprentices.

Handmaids of Zheenkeef: These are Zheenkeef's favored mortal servants who come to reside at her side on their death. They are constantly shifting and changing, and are sometimes even sent to the Prime Material to stir things up.

Heaven: In the fourth epoch, the gods set themselves apart from the world, building for themselves a magnificent home outside the Prime Material Plane. Heaven is a great mountain with seven shining cities on its slope as you ascend. An archangel (in general, a huge solar) watches over each of those cities. The spire of the mountain is where the city of the gods is found, and though it is at the top of the mountain, it is said to be infinite. At the center of this seventh city is the celestial palace, where nearly all of the gods sit on their thrones to debate and watch the Prime mortals.

Hefasten: The founder of the Great Church, Hefasten was an exiled scholar of Morwyn who was selected by the gods to settle an argument about a statue. The statue, which looks to whoever beholds it as though it is carved in his own likeness, now stands in the Great Cathedral that is home to the Great Church. He was the first Supreme Patriarch of the Great Church.

Heka: One of a pair of hyenas that accompany Zheenkeef. The two are part of the menagerie Zheenkeef keeps of all the creatures of the earth.

Hell: The nine circles of Hell were built as a prison for the creatures called demons. It is now ruled over by Asmodeus, once the god of fire and now the king of deception and lord of Hell. This is where lawful evil souls go when they have been condemned to punishment by Maal.

Humans: The race from the fourth fruit of Eliwyn reborn, no one knows what humans were supposed to be like, because Zheenkeef ate the fruit that contained them. All of the gods had to put the humans back together, and each god made them in an image pleasing to him or her, which is why humans are more varied in appearance than any other race. Zheenkeef digested some of the race's essence, however, so humans are the shortest-lived of the five races. They are one of the five mortal races and Maal judges their souls upon their death.

Iblis: Once the greatest of all the archangels, Iblis led the celestial host in war against Kador and against the div. But when he and the other angels were made servants to the five mortal races, he believed it was a terrible mistake – particularly the inclusion of the evil powers in the compact. His uprising was put down, and he is now one of the many lawful evil powers of Hell.

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Issama: As a mortal, Issama dared to question the decree of Maal. Maal deemed her question wise and made her his counselor upon her death. She stands to the left of Maal's throne and advises him on matters as varied as elven customs, legal loopholes, and contemporary marriage practices. She is the Warden of the First Hall.

Ix: The silver fox companion of Darmon, Ix is a joyful and mischievous creature. He is known to come to the aid of Darmon's followers. In legends he is either seen accompanying his master on a splendid adventure or tricking the blustering lion of Heaven, Metteron, into some highly compromising position.

Jibraill: The herald of the gods, Jibraill the archangel marches at the front of the Heavenly host. It is said that to hear her unmuted voice is to hear a music so perfect that the mortal heart will break with joy. She is second among the seven archangels.

Journey to the East: When the Three Sisters escaped their brothers, they embarked upon an epic journey across the world. They ended their famed Journey to the East, after 3,333 adventures, at a perfect pool on the eastern edge of the world. It was in this pool where the Three Companions discovered them singing.

Justice: Forged from the strange metals with which the Nameless One built his Keep in the Sea, Justice is the blade of Maal, wielded in the Great War of the Gods. To this day, Maal uses it when he sits in judgment of a mortal soul, raising it aloft for the worthy and pointing it downward for the damned.

Kador: The first creature created by the Nameless One, Kador was given dominion over fire and trusted to give it to all those that came after him. He was corrupted, however, and became convinced that he was the rightful king of the universe. Kador ended up in a war with the gods, resulting in his imprisonment in Hell. He is lawful evil and now goes by the name Asmodeus, the "god" of fire, power, lies, and vengeance. He has a secret alliance with the Three Brothers; as his part of the bargain, he plots to take control of the pillar of fire.

Keep in the Sea: Built by the Nameless One, this underwater keep was the redoubt of the good gods during the third epoch when they made war against Kador. No one is certain what it now contains, though many believe that Shalimyr has made it apart of his home that is drawn by his twelve giant whales. It is sometimes called the Underwater Palace.

King's Crucible, The: Also called simply, "The Crucible," this is the tool sometimes used by Korak to reforge the souls of those who are perennially wicked, but not so wicked as to warrant eternal damnation. It is believed that those so reformed become the noblest of mortals.

Korak: The god of the forge and physical labor, patron of the dwarves, Korak is one of the favorite gods of the mortal races. In his many travels with Darmon he taught the mortal races many of the practical skills, like smithing, that they use to this day. Korak is neutral good and believes that all people must work, by whatever method is available to them, to improve their world. Korak is one of the Three Companions; he is in love with Thellyne, but that love is unreciprocated. His mother is Morwyn, his father is Terak and his twin sister is Anwyn.

Kunar, Limmik: The first monk to achieve oneness with the universe and leave the Great Sphere (or so most assume). Many monks walk in Master Kunar's footsteps, seeking to emulate his success.

Land of the Dead, The: Originally found at the center of the earth in the Prime Material Plane, the land of the dead was set apart into

its own sphere when the gods formed their Compact. This is where Maal rules with his wife Naryne, judging all souls based on the white and black ledgers kept by the guardian angels and the daemons. See the entries on Souls and the Four Halls for the potential fates of the judged.

Laughter's Sting: A short sword crafted by the titans with the help of Korak to win a bet with Darmon. Because he lost the bet, Darmon had to serve for a time as the king of the titans' throne.

Lesser Temptation: The tempting by any evil outsider of a mortal in an effort to convince that mortal to do evil. The Lesser Temptation is the primary role of the evil outsiders (particularly demons and devils) within the Compact. It can lead to the Greater Temptation.

Lesser War of the Gods: The struggle between Terak and Tinel to determine which brother was eldest is called the Lesser War. At the beginning of the war, Zheenkeef determined that if she could get each brother to kill the other, she would become the eldest, and in the end she accomplished just that. The two gods murdered one another and Zheenkeef hurled herself on their funeral pyre, ending the whole sad affair. The three gods were reborn through the intervention of Morwyn and Mormekar.

Leviathan: Once one of the water-loving Marid, Leviathan was stretched and altered by Kador into a massive sea serpent large enough to swallow the oceans. He is now one of the lawful evil lords of Hell.

Light Pillar: Every person is surrounded by a pillar of light (usually seen only by the gods and their servants). As that pillar extends upward, it becomes pure light. It is through this bright pillar that each person casts a reflection of himself in Elysium that is observed by the guardian angels there and through which the mortal is guided toward acts of conscience and faith by the whispers of the angels.

Lilith: Often called "mother of beasts," Lilith was once a powerful queen of the div who was corrupted and transformed by Kador. With Kador she gave birth to many of the evil races of the world. She is now one of the lawful evil lords of Hell.

Lonely Runner, The: Likely the greatest mortal athlete ever born, the lonely runner was the only competitor ever able to match pace with Canelle. He is the center of an important parable of the Canellan faith. His form is now seen as a constellation in the night sky.

Maal: The god of justice, judgment, and the dead, Maal is often called "firstborn," as he was the first god to be born of the womb. Maal is lawful neutral and believes the world would be perfect if only it were structured around the perfect set of laws. He judges the souls of the dead to determine their fate, making him one of the most powerful gods. Maal is one of the Three Companions; on their great journey he found his wife, Naryne. His mother is Morwyn and his father is Mormekar.

Maal's Kingdom: See The Land of the Dead.

Maal's Voice: Herald of the Court of Maal, his true name is long forgotten. When Maal sits upon the Throne of Judgment, any word he utters is lasting law or judgment, so for lesser matters of the court, Maal's Voice speaks for his master. He is Warden of the Fourth Hall. Spells, such as *commune*, that allow one to speak with Maal, are answered by Maal's Voice.

Madrigan Yewstaff: A powerful inceptor of Tinel who put the Great Sage Matalou's claims to the test after his execution. Yewstaff summoned Gian ben Gian and questioned his spirit about the contents of Matalou's treatise. The results proved Matalou was not a

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heretic and were committed in a single tome. Those thirty answers are found locked away at the Tinelite Cathedral of Truth where only major religious leaders may read them.

Mammon: Power-hungry to the extreme, Mammon was a great div lord given great abilities by Kador, all of which he used in his efforts to accumulate more power and to destroy. Mammon is now one of the lawful evil lords of Hell.

Marid: Known for their love of the sea, the Marid were the strongest of the three tribes of the div. Some had hearts of pure good, and these became servants of the gods, but others knew little but pride and arrogance. It was a Marid chieftain, Gian ben Gian, who led his brethren in their disastrous uprising against Heaven.

Matalou, The Great Sage: The author of *A Treatise on the Divine*, Matalou was the preeminent religious scholar of his day. Unfortunately for him, like many preeminent scholars he was ahead of his time and was killed for heresy. He is now a saint of the scriptoriums of Tinel.

Menara: One of two beloved sisters and priestesses of Morwyn. She and her sister Tora were victims of a vile trick at the hands of the Zhenkefan apostles in their home city of Corason. The ensuing tragedy resulted in their Menara's death (and the death of her whole family) and the formation of the Compact of the gods.

Mephistopheles: A being created by Kador in his own image. Mephistopheles is quite powerful and every bit as wicked as his creator. He is now one of the lawful evil lords of Hell.

Mercy: Beloved servant of Morwyn, it is Mercy that lifts hate from men's hearts and leads them to spare their hated enemies. Mercy is

a beautiful maiden with flaxen hair in a white gown, like that of her mistress. Many who are affected by Mercy change at their very core, for to experience her touch is to feel as though a holy hand has reached straight into your heart.

Merfolk: Once a nation of seafaring humans, the merfolk's island nation was sunk by a nation of sorcerers with whom they'd made war. Shalimyr saved them from death by transforming them into people with gills, able to survive in the sea.

Metteron: The golden lion of Heaven, Metteron is the king of the beasts of Heaven and earth and the greatest animal in the universe. He is servant and companion to Terak and lies at the foot of his throne. He can be as high as a mountain or as small as an earthly lion. He is bold, quick-tempered and limitlessly valorous like his lord. With Grifynne, he is the father of the griffins and the lamassus.

Midwife, The: Called upon by women in the midst of difficult labors, this servant of Morwyn clarifies matters. Should the Midwife come invisibly to the bedside of a woman in a difficult labor, she may speed the delivery and save the woman's life. If this is not possible, she may at least take away the woman's suffering and let her die in peace. Most women call out to the Midwife and Morwyn in the midst of childbirth, even when they are not traumatic. The Midwife is said to be a heavy woman with broad hips and breasts heavy with milk. When an infant dies in the first weeks of its life, it is often said that she "nurses with the Midwife now."

Mika'il: Chief among the Archangels, Mika'il protects the downtrodden and is the champion of those in need. He was once a great div king who was elevated to great power by Morwyn and raised to be chief of the Archangels after the fall of Iblis.



"Beautiful and cunning, from Lilith's womb sprang countless wicked things which made up Kador's army."

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Miner, The: See Barik-tharn.

Mirien: An elven princess, reputedly descended of Aymara, who was both wise and fair, said to be the most beautiful mortal ever born. When she and her parents began to accept suitors for her hand, it was the occasion for a great contest in Heaven, with each god selecting a champion. Her selection of Darmon's ward, Rinalde Wolfcall, as her husband rendered Darmon the Champion of the Gods.

Mitallis: An ungrateful mangle of Anwyn who refused to change his greedy ways and brought others in with him in his rebellion. This had disastrous consequences.

Mormekar: The god of death and rebirth, Mormekar is an outsider, even among the gods. He is neutral and sees himself as a creature of duty, fulfilling a cosmic function – some even question whether he has free will. Mormekar is married to Morwyn and is the father of Maal.

Morwyn: The goddess of healing, mercy, wisdom and motherhood, Morwyn is the eldest of the gods born of the tree. She is their “queen” in that she leads them, but by her own law may not command them. Morwyn is lawful good and believes the universe is on a constant progression toward perfection. It will grow better as long as all people find charity and love in their hearts. Morwyn is married to Mormekar and Terak; with Mormekar she has a son, Maal, and with Terak she has twins, Korak and Anwyn.

Nameless One: The creator of the universe. The Nameless One created Himself by speaking His own name. If His name is ever spoken again, the universe will cease to exist. He has left the Great Sphere and has not been heard of in two ages.

Naran: The god of tyranny and pride, Naran thinks himself the prince of the universe, second only to Asmodeus. Some day, he will topple the king and rule the universe with his brothers at his side. One of the Three Brothers, he is the most visible, acting as open patron to slavers and tyrants the world over. Like Naryne, he has black hair and dark eyes. He secretly plots to take control of the pillar of earth.

Naryne: The goddess of nobility, primarily kings and queens, Naryne is the queen of the dead. One of the Three Sisters, Naryne is often called the Dark Sister for her black hair and dark eyes. She is lawful neutral and believes there would be a perfect world were all the mortal races to properly obey and follow rightly appointed nobility. Her husband is Maal and her sisters are Canelle and Thellyne.

Nayariel: The most skilled hunter who ever lived, Nayariel was an elf accursed so that she would transform into the shape of animals against her will. She usually became a beautiful White Hart, and all of the world's greatest hunters eventually came after the Hart for her magnificent horns. Thellyne sent them a dream not to kill her, but some disobeyed and Nayariel was killed. Thellyne transformed these miscreants into the first werewolves. Nayariel is now Thellyne's hunting companion.

Ophiel: A fair princess whose love for her base-born court bard, Ceruill, inspired one of her suitors, the prince Faristel, to the bard's murder. This murder spawned a series of revenge killings that ended in the deaths of more than 50,000 souls. Because of this tragedy, Maal gave the mortal races their first great law – the proscription on revenge.

Ouroboros: See The Serpent.

Palace in the Mountains: Built by the Nameless One, this great earthly palace was atop the highest mountain spire in the world. It was

destroyed in the Lesser War of the Gods, and its ruins have never been found. The world was changed during that war, and the remains of this palace may indeed be underwater now or below the earth, for the mountain upon which it was built was likely lowered in the struggle.

Planes of Positive and Negative Energy, The: When the Nameless One created the Prime Material Plane, He formed a perfect central sphere to contain what is mortal existence. Within that crystal were the two forces from which all of creation came to be: positive and negative energy. Called light and dark, sound and silence, life and death, all creation requires a balance of these two forces. So the central sphere is made of these two forces, and where they meet within the crystal there are huge and dangerous maelstroms. Few ever go within the crystal to one of these planes, but those that do find them terribly dangerous.

Poin, Ionus: Founder of the Cult of Everlasting Night, Poin believed he was visited by Urian and commanded to destroy the sun and moon. Since that time, members of the cult he founded, mostly harmless lunatics, have sought some method to actually obliterate the sun and the moon.

Prime Material Plane, The: The Prime Material is contained within the Central Sphere. Everything a normal mortal can see and touch is a part of the Material Plane – the sun, moon, stars, land and water. With powerful magic, a person can see the ethereal and shadow planes that coexist within the sphere with the Material Plane, and with even greater magic a person may travel outside of the sphere and to other planes.

Rafaail: The guide of the lost, Rafaail the archangel is the giver of charity from the gods. It is said that if the gods send a mortal aid, it is Rafaail who delivers it. Rafaail is charged with overseeing Elysium. He is third among the archangels.

Ragyl: The East wind, Ragyl is hateful and wishes to destroy everything he touches. Ragyl is now chained in the easternmost hall of Urian. See the Four Winds for more.

Raguel: The vengeance of Heaven, Raguel the archangel is charged by the gods to smite down those who have grown too high and think themselves equal to the gods, as well as infernal powers when they trespass on the Prime Material Plane for reasons other than the Compact. He is sixth among the archangels.

Remorse: Called the “Weeper for the Wronged,” no one knows how Remorse came into Maal's service. When someone comes before Maal who has been grievously wronged, Remorse petitions the King of Souls to right the wrong and give the wounded party succor. She is the Warden of the Third Hall.

Retribution: The pure ethic of legal justice that appeals to a higher authority and removes passion from punishment. Retribution holds that a person who commits a crime owes a debt not just to his victims but to the higher authority as well (the gods, the nation, the village, etc.). That debt must be repaid and must be extracted by an impartial authority. For instance, a man kills a woman's husband. That woman must not seek to kill the man herself, but instead appeals to a higher authority for retribution. In this case, the higher authority is the church of Maal. The Maalites hunt down the man, try him impartially, and extract from him the retributive price for murder (which in many societies is his life; this will vary by campaign setting). Maal stands for retribution and against revenge.

Revenge: Often defined as “repaying evil with evil,” revenge is a mortal ethic of justice stating that if someone commits a wrong

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against you (or your family) it is your right to commit a wrong back against him as bad or worse. Revenge is particularly characterized by its inclusion of those who have nothing to do with the original crime. For instance, a man kills a boy's father and that boy goes on to kill the man's daughter. The daughter had nothing to do with the crime but is drawn in by blood-for-blood vengeance. The Maalite faith is opposed to revenge (as is Maal himself), believing that a person must never seek to mete out justice for a crime committed against him; crimes must be punished with retribution from an impartial authority in order to have a truly just society and to avoid escalating acts of evil.

Rigyl: The North wind, Rigyl is hateful and wishes to destroy everything he touches. Rigyl is now chained in the northernmost hall of Urian. See the Four Winds for more.

Rinalde Wolfcall: A wily farmer who was selected by Darmon to be his ward in a contest among the gods over who would win the hand of Mirien, the fairest mortal ever born. Through his cleverness and genuine love for the princess, Rinalde won her hand and made Darmon the Champion of the Gods in the process.

Rite, The: The central function of the sacristies of Mormekar is the administration of the rite to the dead. It informs the dead that they have passed and prepares them for their journey to the land of the dead.

Rontra: Goddess of the earth, Rontra is the second eldest of the gods created by the Nameless One; only Kador is older. Rontra is the embodiment of all the lands of the material plane. She is lawful good and kindly, considered the grandmother of creation. She is the mother of Eliwyn, the Tree of Life.

Sacred Laws, The: In the Third Epoch, Maal gave the mortal races a series of perfect laws through which mortal society could live in harmony. However, the laws were lost because the mortal races did not follow them. Most say there were 12 laws. Only the first survives: Maal's proscription on revenge.

Saint Anne: The founder of the modern order of paladins, Anne saw herself flanked by hundreds of doughty warriors in the sculpture found at the Great Cathedral of the Great Church.

Saint Astafis: A Mormekim saint, Brother Astafis died wiping out a cadre of vampires. His name is invoked by Mormekim faced with vampiric foes.

Saint Isyl: A Shalimyn saint who saw that all sailors around the world must be faithful to Shalimyr or the Wave will destroy them all. He founded the order of the sail masters.

Saint Marlessa: Reputedly the founder of the first Rontran foundation, St. Marlessa is the ear of Rontra, walking at the Grandmother's side and listening to the pleas of her worshippers. She only brings the most pressing to the goddess herself. She is invoked as "Saint Marlessa, sister of the people" by common folk and is often named in private prayer by Rontra's followers.

Saint Mathilde: Griffin Saint Mathilde was the last of the Urianath order of Griffins. Her order was destroyed by a demonic cult planning on bringing one of the most powerful demon princes to the earth. St. Mathilde survived, however, and sacrificed herself to close the gate to the Abyss.

Saraqael: The magistrate of Heaven, Saraqael the archangel oversees the laws of Heaven and sees to it that all celestials perform their duties under the Compact. She is fifth among the archangels.

Scriveners, The: An order of servants to Tinel in Heaven, these mute and hooded celestials take note of every event in the mortal world and Heaven, making the supreme record of history. Their chief is called the Black Scribe.

Seacrest: The falchion of Shalimyr was forged by Korak out of the reflection of a metal sword caught in water. In return for this fine gift, Shalimyr agreed not to destroy the dwarves for their arrogance – for dwarves do not praise the water and believe they might build structures safe from it beneath the earth.

Second Epoch: The time of creation, when the Nameless One created the Four Pillars, the Great Sphere, the Prime Material Plane and Kador. In this time the Nameless One spoke the Three Prophecies and left the sphere. Kador convinced the earth, the waters, and the skies to unite into three gods, Rontra, Shalimyr, and Urian, and these three gods gave rise to Eliwyn, the tree of life. From the tree were born the four chief gods, Morwyn, Terak, Tinel and Zheenkeef, and also the race of the div. With their birth, the epoch ended.

Second Hall, The: See the Four Halls.

Serpent, The: A peripheral character in many myths, some believe that the surface of the world is actually the serpent biting its own tail (he is sometimes called Ouroboros). They believe that the serpent is the chief of Rontra's servants and that all strength and power, particularly the power of fertility, is given to mortals through the serpent, which contains in it the power of life and death. The more common belief is that Master Korak, who ripped off its legs in an effort to woo Thellyne, created the serpent. These legends hold that it came to Rontra in terrible pain and she took to her bosom. The serpent now visits those in mortal agony and eases their pain.

Seven, The: The children of Aymara by Aragos, the seven are charged with inspiring and watching over musicians. Each one of the seven corresponds to one kind of instrument and one of the notes on the scale. Their names are Aragoth, Barawyn, Celedynne, Dariun, Erylwyn, Fionali, and Geromul. The instruments they correspond to (in order of name) are: reeds, drums, horns, flutes and whistles, cymbals and gongs, plucked and struck strings, and bowed strings.

Shachté: An ancient word for the moment before the dice decide which face to show, Shachté is best understood as pure change or chaos. It is often understood to be evil and is generally used interchangeably as a term with Corpus Infernus.

Shadow Plane, The: Within the central sphere, the Nameless One gathered the energies that filled the Great Sphere when He first created it. Those energies, ether and shadow, were perfect but had no substance. Combining their power and His own great words of power, the Nameless One created the Prime Material Plane. But shadows are still seen all around, co-existing within the central sphere with the ethereal and the Prime. The plane of pure shadow, though, is visible only through the use of great magic.

Shaitan: The most numerous tribe of the div, the Shaitan occupied most of the world before the uprising of the div against the gods. It was also from the Shaitan that Kador found his most faithful servants, for they had the greatest affinity with fire of the three tribes of div. Most Shaitan are now either devils or efreets.

Shalimyr: The god of the waters, Shalimyr is wild. He is the personification of all of the waters of the material plane. With Rontra, he created Eliwyn. Shalimyr is engaged in a long-lasting affair with Zheenkeef that is secret only to Tinel, who refuses to see it. Shalimyr is chaotic neutral and hates arrogance and pride over all else.

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Shawaliasha: The queen of the sea-elves who tricked the pirate king, Erikul, into proclaiming himself lord of the seas and arousing Shalimyr's wrath.

She-Devils: The many she-devils of Hell are said to be born of the union of Kador and Lilith. Most now reside in their mother's circle of Hell at her side. At the time of the Greater War of the Gods, the she-devils were Lilith's personal retinue; they are not as faded in might as the other creatures born of Kador and their mother.

Shee: The members of the third tribe of the div, the Shee were always quiet and frightened. They stayed hidden away from all struggles, exploring nature and its wonders. When the Marid and Shaitan rose up against the gods, the Shee did not participate. But the gods fear they might also rebel and so the Shee were given a choice: become mortal or lose their free will. Those who chose mortality became the elves, while those who chose to lose their free will became the fey.

Shepherdess, The: See Gwainlath.

Sorrow's Song: The name of Aymara's rapier, which sings with the mournful music of war. Legends tell that it was forged for her during the wars with Kador – but as the Great Sage Matalou's Treatise proves, she was not yet born during those wars, nor was Korak who forged it. It was likely forged for her by Korak for her continuing struggle against Kador's servants on earth (which were particularly fierce in her youth before the Compact). It is rumored that there are those who can hear its music and dance to it in battle.

Soul: A being has a soul if it meets three criteria: It is alive, has free will, and has received the fire of power. Religious scholars believe it is the fire that kindles the soul; without it, the spirit is attached to the body and dies when the body dies. There are many races that meet two of these criteria, but only the five mortal races meet all three. When a soul is separated from its body, it goes before Maal: There it may be rewarded in the land of the dead, sent to Heaven to serve the god it served in life, sent to one of the evil realms for eternal punishment, or, as happens most often, be reborn.

Tekit: One of a pair of hyenas that accompany Zheenkeef. The two are part of the menagerie Zheenkeef keeps of all the creatures of the earth.

Terak: The god of war and the body, Terak has always opposed his brother, Tinel. Terak believes the greatest force in the world is the unification of people into nations and armies; as long as the many band together against those who would harm them, much good is possible. He is married to Morwyn and is the father of Korak and Anwyn. Terak's heart is divided – he is both lawful good, in that he desires to see the strong protect the weak, and he is lawful neutral, in that he desires to see mortals unite their strength first and foremost.

Thellos: God of gluttony and greed, Thellos has sandy hair and a piggish nose. The most hidden of the Three Brothers, he pulls strings from the background. He prefers to collect wealth and indulge himself than to come into conflict. The goblins revere him as their god; he appears to them as a fat goblin god who will lead them into a land of milk and honey. He secretly plots to take control of the pillar of air.

Thellyne: The goddess of the woods and the hunt, Thellyne is the shyest of all the gods. One of the Three Sisters, she is rarely seen even by her siblings. Thellyne has golden hair and is a master of all woodcraft. She is neutral good and seeks to protect and promote the natural beauty of the world. She is also the guardian of Eliwyn, the Tree of Life. Korak is in love with her, but the feelings are unreciprocated. Her sisters are Naryne and Canelle.

Third Epoch: The time of the gods. In this epoch, Terak and Tinel slew each other in the Lesser War of the Gods; Zheenkeef killed herself on their funeral pyre. These tragedies gave birth to Death, who is called Mormekar. The three gods were reborn by Morwyn's grace and raised by her. During this epoch, Morwyn discovered Corpus Infernus and cast it out of the gods. She declared the Three Laws of the gods, gave birth to the first god born of the womb, Maal. The gods then rose up against Kador, and in the Greater War of the Gods eventually cast him into Hell. During the peace that prevailed after Kador's fall, the twins were born (Korak and Anwyn to Terak and Morwyn, Aymara and Darmon to Zheenkeef and Tinel) and the div rose up against the gods in rebellion and were cast out into the pillar of fire for their rebellion. At the end of the epoch, the five mortal races (humans, gnomes, halflings, elves and dwarves) were born.

Third Hall, The: See the Four Halls.

Three Blessings: The central beliefs of the Shalimyn are these three blessings: Humility, Sacrifice and Gratitude.

Three Brothers: Born by a river beside the Three Sisters, these three gods are one of the secret forces of evil in the world, unbound by the Compact. They are: Naran, Canarak, and Thellos.

Three Companions: This is a reference to Darmon, Korak, and Maal, who once traveled across the mortal world looking for a wife for Maal. On their journey, they had many great adventures often told of in myth and song, culminating in the discovery of the Three Sisters.

The Druids: When the druids first came upon the sacred grove of Eliwyn, Thellyne mistook them for invaders. In three quick breaths, she released three shafts from her bow and slew the three mightiest druids. From their blood arose red poppies, red roses, and red lotus blossoms with white hearts. Also from this accident came the treants, the naga and the unicorns, all of which still protect the sacred grove.

Three Laws: Declared by Morwyn in the third epoch, the first laws of the gods predated the Compact and were: first, that the gods would never make war against one another; second, that the gods would use their strength to guide the div and the new races ripening in Eliwyn's fruit (that would turn out to be the five mortal races); and third, that no one god would rule the others.

Three Prophecies: The last words of the Nameless One before He departed the sphere, the three prophecies told to Kador were: first, that much life would come to the world and that it was Kador's duty to give the gift of fire to all those born of the world; second, a long and secret decree whispered into Kador's ear (to this day, only Kador knows its contents); third, that as all of creation was born with the uttering of the Nameless One's name, so too would all creation cease when His name was spoken again.

Three Sisters: Born by a river long ago beside the Three Brothers, these three goddesses were found by the Three Companions in their search for a wife for Maal. They are Naryne, Canelle, and Thellyne. They are often closely identified with the Gods born of the Womb.

Three Stones, The: Korak left the dwarves these three stones of enormous power after teaching them the arts of smithy and masonry. The ultimate fate of these stones is unknown.

Three Utterances, The: Spoken by Mormekar to Alonzo d'Eriq, these utterances are the pillars of the sacrifices of Mormekar. Each begins with the words, "Death is sacred."

Thunder: The sound heard in the heavens when all of the gods argue to the exclusion of all else and cause Urian to tremble with the force of their voices.

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The Three Companions on one of their countless legendary journeys. In this picture, Wisdom has just told Maal of the 99 princesses and the lake of fire.

Tinel: The god of magic and knowledge, Tinel has long struggled with his brother, Terak. Tinel believes that the individual is the supreme force and that nothing is greater than a single person's quest for knowledge. He is married to Zheenkeef and is the father of Darmon and Aymara. Tinel's heart is divided – he is chaotic good, in that he is most interested in the good an individual can do when she seeks knowledge, and he is neutral, in that he sometimes cares nothing for the mortal world and wants only to collect knowledge.

Titans: Made by Zheenkeef from the clay of a sacred pool and her own excrement, these powerful creatures exist to amuse their creator with their adventures and struggles. While they revere Zheenkeef as their creator, they are fonder of Darmon, her son, who has accompanied many of them on adventures.

Tongs: See the Five Apprentices.

Tora: One of two beloved sisters and priestesses of Morwyn. She and her sister Menara were victims of a vile trick at the hands of the Zhenkefan apostles in their home city of Corason. The ensuing tragedy resulted in Menara's death (and the death of her whole family) and the formation of the Compact of the gods. Tora did not die, but was so filled with sorrow that she plucked out her own eyes. Morwyn ended up ascending her bodily into Heaven while she still lived, in an effort to ease her terrible suffering.

Tower of the White Hands: The headquarters of the order of the white hands of Morwyn, found near the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand.

Twelve Swans, The: Naryne rides a chariot drawn by these magnificent birds. Once every 100 years, they come to the Prime Material Plane and assume the form of mortal women, often falling

in love and having children before they must return to their duties. Their names are: Inixos, Yaili, Marit, Oona, Pilai, Weili, Uxos, Darila, Marila, Tani, Sa'ool, and Jeini.

Twelve Whales: It is said that Shalimyr lives in a mighty palace made of pearl and alabaster that is drawn through the waters by 12 colossal whales, each large enough to swallow a small fleet of ships. These 12 whales are named after the sounds that waves make when they hit the various types of land.

Tyngelle: The first Supreme Matriarch of the Morwynite faith, Tyngelle was a priestess wandering the desert and saw a vision of Morwyn touching a rock and a fountain of light springing forth from it. She then went on a pilgrimage and found the rock she saw in her vision. On that rock she founded the White Hall of Morwyn's Hand.

Underwater Palace: See Keep in the Sea.

Urian: God of the air, Urian is the heavens and the winds. He is kindly and gentle, but also gives in to the stormy side of his nature from time to time. Urian is neutral good and loves all life.

Uriel: The protector of Heaven, Uriel the archangel is only seen by mortals should they seek entrance through the locked gates of Heaven. Uriel also watches over the celestial host; it is he who casts down the fallen. Uriel returned magic to the mortal races when they lost it long ago. He is fourth among the archangels.

Vintner's Creed, The: Often called simply "The Creed," this six saying maxim is the core liturgy of the Zhenkefan faith. The sayings are: "The fruit of the vine is sweet. Drink deep!"; "There is no joy without suffering."; "All that there is will be undone."; "Only that

Appendix II ~ Gods and Races

which you have not done is worthy.”; “Inspiration’s voice is felt, not heard.”; and “Those who crave control are slaves.”

Vision of the Opening Eye: A sacrament of the Tinelite faith, all Tinelites seek to receive this vision in which they are presented with the key to the central mystery of their lives in the form of a hazy dream. Much of their lives are spent interpreting the vision. Once they do so, they seek to use what they have learned to solve the problem of their life.

Vola Ulfhedin: A barbarian of the frozen north who told the Great Sage Matalou stories of the creation of the world that helped him in the writing of the Treatise. Vola is a title of respect, like “wise man.”

Wahilla: Counselor to Naryne, Wahilla and Naryne met during the goddess’ Journey to the East. When Naryne returned to the world after marrying Maal, she intended to make Wahilla queen of the world, for the halfling lady was the wisest mortal ever born. But Wahilla was ancient and on death’s door, so instead Naryne took her to Heaven with her, where Morwyn healed the halfling of her age. Wahilla, therefore, never died and serves the queen of the dead purely from choice and love.

Wandyl: The West wind, Wandyl is gentle in nature but fought with Ragyl, the East wind, to protect the mortal races from his rage. Wandyl is now chained in the westernmost hall of Urian. See the Four Winds for more.

Water Pillar: This pillar is a plane of pure water. Many creatures have come to live in this plane, and even visit the Prime Material Plane from time to time.

White Hall of Morwyn’s Hand, The: The central cathedral of the Morwynite faith.

White Ledger: The book in which all of a person’s good deeds are recorded by the guardian angels of Elysium that observe him. The white ledger is sent to Maal’s kingdom along the river of light when he dies, its contents read aloud at his judgment. The white ledger is sometimes called the Book of the Righteous.

White Whisperer, The: Head of Tinel’s celestial order of secret gatherers, the Eyes, the White Whisperer is an enigma. Hooded in robes of snow fox fur trimmed in ebon, the White Whisperer is of mysterious form and background and speaks to no one but Tinel himself.

Wicked Injustice: See the Great Wrong.

Wisdom: Maal’s owl companion, Wisdom’s origins are mysterious. Maal sometimes uses Wisdom to send messages to the mortal sphere. The owl is often depicted on Maal’s left shoulder or perched on the razor’s edge of Justice, Maal’s blade.

Works of the Hand: The most common phrase among the Koraketh to describe what they revere – those things actually made by the hands of mortals: buildings, tools, weapons, etc.

Wyndyl: The South wind, Wyndyl is gentle in nature but fought with Rigyl, the North wind, to protect the mortal races from her rage. Wyndyl is now chained in the southernmost hall of Urian. See the Four Winds for more.

Zheenkeef: The goddess of inspiration, wine, and madness, Zheenkeef is the wildest of the gods. She is chaotic neutral and believes the world is suffused with unavoidable tragedy and stasis. The only proper response, as she sees it, is to embrace newness, invention, madness, drunkenness, and change. Zheenkeef is married to Tinel but cuckolds him with Shalimyr. She is the mother of Darmon and Amar.

Appendix III: Religion Reference Guide

About This Appendix

This appendix gathers together in one place many of the details scattered throughout the book. There is a chart that lists the deities, their alignments, and associated domains. Following that is a recap of the major churches that goes over the holy orders and their associated forms of address, with examples. This section can be used as a handy reference in play or as a handout for your players. Permission is granted to photocopy Appendix III for personal use.

Appendix III ~ Religion Reference Guide

Church Names and Proper Forms of Address

From Chapter III:

- An address is an honorific applied before saying a name (i.e. if a deacon of the Great Church is to be addressed as “deacon,” Grimthor the deacon would be greeted thus: “Hail and well met, Deacon Grimthor!”). Usually an address can be used without the name (“How are you today, Deacon?”).
- An introduction is the full form that a herald would use at court or an author would use in a formal letter. Unless stated otherwise, members of holy orders are introduced by their address honorific followed by their order name and their church. So the Archdeacon Grimthor would be introduced as “The Archdeacon Grimthor of the Deaconry of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.” Some orders have other forms for their introductions, which are explained individually. When it says that a member of the order is introduced by “full title,” for instance, it means that the address for that rank of the order does not include the actual rank name, but a formal introduction will. A dean of the Great Church is addressed as “reverend father,” for example, which does not include the word “dean.” Deans are introduced with “full title,” though, so Grimthor would be introduced as “The reverend father, Dean Grimthor, of the Clergy of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

The formula for introductions provided in Chapter III is not exact, though, and does not always sound right. For instance, a grand prelate of Rontra is addressed as “Mother” and introduced by full title. Following the same form as the dean, above, that would be “The Mother, Grand Prelate Isabella, of the Sowers of the Foundations of Rontra.” Obviously, it sounds better the other way around. We have listed out all of the introductions below, but if you like a different order, switch things around.

(Notes: All introductions below assume a male character named Sigfried or a female character named Isabella. We do not provide addresses and introductions for minor holy orders, such as the friars of the Great Church.)

Depending on your game world, clergy may also have secular titles that go with their clerical titles. For instance, if your GM sets the White Hall of Morwyn’s Hand in the capital of a nation deeply devoted to Morwyn, the Supreme Matriarch of the Morwynites may always be considered a Baroness of the city regardless of her birth rank – it may be a title that goes with being the lady of the White Hall. In this case, her introduction would be “The Supreme Matriarch of the Healing Halls of Morwyn, Baroness of the White Hall of Morwyn’s Hand.” Obviously, we can’t prescribe such titles and maintain our goal of easy use for “pick-up-and-play,” but we do advise you to consider such blending of secular and religious titles as they add a great deal of flavor to the world.

Table III-1: Deities

Deity	Alignment	Cleric Domains	Holy Warrior Domains
The Great Church	Lawful good	Any two (non-evil)	Champion, Protection
Urian	Neutral good	Air, Good, Sun, Night	Champion, Air, Freedom
Rontra	Lawful good	Earth, Healing, Good, Law, Plant	Earth, Life, Creation
Shalimyr	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Water, Destruction	Champion, Water, Body
Morwyn	Lawful good	Good, Healing, Protection, Knowledge	Life, Protection, Compassion
Terak	Lawful good/Lawful neutral	(Good), Law, Protection, War, Strength	Body, Leadership, Might
Zheenkeef	Chaotic neutral	Chaos, Oracle, Inspiration, Trickery	Freedom, Mind, Emotion
Tinel	Chaotic good/Neutral	(Chaos), (Good), Knowledge, Truth, Magic	Mind, Protection, Magic
Mormekar	Neutral	The Dead, Protection, Destruction	Champion, Hunt, Death
Maal	Lawful neutral	Protection, Law, Justice, The Dead	Champion, Justice, Death
Darmon	Chaotic good	Chaos, Good, Knowledge, Luck, Trickery, Travel	Travel, Mind, Champion
Aymara	Chaotic good	Chaos, Good, Inspiration, Beauty	Creation, Protection, Emotion
Korak	Neutral good	Earth, Fire, Forge, Good	Earth, Protection, Creation
Anwyn	Lawful good	Home, Good, Law, Protection, Fire	None
Naryne	Lawful neutral	Law, Knowledge, Protection	Leadership, Protection, Champion
Canelle	Chaotic good	Strength, Luck, Chaos, Good	Might, Body, Champion
Thellyne	Neutral good	Good, Animal, Plant, Protection	Hunt, Creation, Travel
Asmodeus	Lawful evil	Law, Evil, Trickery, Fire	None
Canarak	Chaotic evil	Chaos, Evil, Destruction, Water, War	None
Thellos	Neutral evil	Evil, Air, Travel, Trickery	None
Naran	Lawful evil	Knowledge, War, Earth, Law, Evil	None
The Conspiracy*	Lawful evil	Evil, Law, Trickery*, Protection, Fire	None

*The conspiracy is a secret; if you don’t know what it is, don’t ask! Members of the Conspiracy must take the Trickery domain.

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The Great Church

Religious Name: The Faithful

Clergy Name: Clerics

Proper Address & Introduction:

Cleric, level 1-6: Cleric. Addressed as “Father Sigfried” and introduced as “Father Sigfried, of the Clergy of Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Cleric, level 7-11: Dean. Addressed as “Reverend Father Sigfried” and introduced as “The Reverend Father, Dean Sigfried, of the Clergy of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Cleric of at least 12th level: Bishop. Addressed as “Blessed Father Sigfried” or “Your Eminence,” “Your Holiness,” or “Your Grace” and introduced as “The Blessed Father, Bishop Sigfried, of the Clergy of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Cleric of at least 15th level: Archbishop. Addressed as “Holy Father Sigfried” or “Your Eminence,” “Your Holiness,” or “Your Grace” and introduced as “The Holy Father, Archbishop Sigfried, of the Clergy of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

The unique head of the faith: Supreme Patriarch/Matriarch. Addressed as “Most Reverend Lord Sigfried,” “Most Holy Father Sigfried,” “Your eminence,” “Your Holiness,” or “Your Grace.” Introduced as “The Most Reverend Lord, Supreme Patriarch Sigfried of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Holy Warrior Name: Paladins

Proper Address & Introduction:

Paladin, level 1-9: Paladin. Addressed as “Dame Isabella” and introduced as “The Dame Isabella, of the Paladins of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Paladin, level 10-17: Captain. Addressed as “Dame Isabella” and introduced as “The Dame Isabella, of the Paladins of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Paladin, level 18+: Lord/Lady Protector. Addressed as “Lady Isabella” and introduced as “The Lady Protector Isabella, of the Paladins of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Prestige Class Name: Deacons

Proper Address & Introduction:

Deacon, level 1-7 (or at this level of status without taking levels of the PrC): Deacon. Addressed as “Deacon Isabella” and introduced as “The Deacon Isabella of the Deaconry of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

Archdeacon, level 8+ (or at this level of status without taking levels of the PrC): Archdeacon. Addressed as “Archdeacon Isabella” and introduced as “The Archdeacon Isabella of the Deaconry of the Great Church of the Lords of Heaven.”

The Eyries of Urian

Religious Name: The Urianath

Clergy Name: Skylarks

Proper Address & Introduction:

Skylark, younger than “old” for her race: Skylark’s Wing. Addressed as “Skylark’s Wing Isabella” and introduced as “The Skylark’s Wing Isabella of the Eyries of Urian.”

Skylark, “old” for her race or older: Skylark’s Song. Addressed as “Skylark’s Song Isabella” and introduced as “The Skylark’s Song Isabella of the Eyries of Urian.”

Holy Warrior Name: Eagles

Proper Address & Introduction:

Eagle, level 1-7: Talon. Addressed as “Eagle’s Talon Sigfried” and introduced as “The Eagle’s Talon Sigfried of the Eyries of Urian.”

Eagle, level 8-17: Eagle Rider. Addressed as “Eagle’s Master Sigfried” and introduced as “The Eagle’s Master Sigfried, an Eagle Rider of the Eyries of Urian.”

Eagle, level 18+: Eyrie Lord. Addressed as “Eagle’s Lord Sigfried” and introduced as “The Eagle’s Lord Sigfried, Lord of the Eyries of Urian.”

Prestige Class Name: Hawks

Proper Address & Introduction:

Hawk, level 1+: Hawk. Addressed as “Hawk Isabella” and introduced as “The Hawk Isabella of the Eyries of Urian.”

The Foundations of Rontra

Religious Name: Rontran

Clergy Name: Sowers

Proper Address & Introduction:

Sower, level 1-6: Prelate. Addressed as “Sister Isabella” and introduced as “The Prelate, Sister Isabella, of the Sowers of the Foundations of Rontra.”

Sower, level 7-14 (potentially): Grand Prelate. Addressed as “Mother Isabella” and introduced as “The Grand Prelate, Mother Isabella, of the Sowers of the Foundations of Rontra.”

Sower, level 15+: Great Elder. Addressed as “Grandmother Isabella” and introduced as “The Great Elder, Grandmother Isabella, of the Sowers of the Foundations of Rontra.”

Holy Warrior Name: Wardens

Proper Address & Introduction:

Warden, level 1+: Warden. Addressed as “Sir Sigfried” and introduced as “The Warden, Sir Sigfried, of the Foundations of Rontra.”

Prestige Class Name: Gleaners

Proper Address & Introduction:

Gleaner, level 1+: Gleaner. No formal address or introduction. Often called “friend,” “brother,” or “sister.”

The Basins of Shalimyr

Religious Name: Shalimyn

Clergy Name: Mariners

Proper Address & Introduction:

Mariner, level 1-8: Shorehand. Addressed as “Brother Sigfried” and introduced as “Our Brother, Shorehand Sigfried, a Mariner of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

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Mariner, level 9+: Shipwright. Addressed as “Father Sigfried” and introduced as “The Shalimyn Shipwright, Father Sigfried, a Mariner of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

Holy Warrior Name: Ascetics
Proper Address & Introduction:

Ascetic, level 1-4: Neonate. Addressed as “Child Isabella” or “Child” and introduced as “Isabella, a Child of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

Ascetic, level 5-11: Ascetic. Addressed as “Isabella” and introduced as “Isabella, an Ascetic of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

Ascetic, level 18+: Watername. The ascetic casts off her old name and takes a new one based on the water, like “Nile.” Addressed as “Nile” and introduced as “Nile, a Watername Ascetic of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

Prestige Class Name: Sail Masters
Proper Address & Introduction:

Sail Master, level 1-6: Sail Master. Addressed as “Sail Master Sigfried” and introduced as “The Sail Master Sigfried of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

Sail Master, level 7+: Sail Lord. Addressed as “Sail Lord Sigfried” and introduced as “The Sail Lord Sigfried, a Sail Master of the Basins of Shalimyr.”

The Healing Halls of Morwyn

Religious Name: Morwynite

Clergy Name: Matriarchs
Proper Address & Introduction:

Matriarch, level 1-6: Sister of Beneficence. Always female. Addressed as “Sister Isabella” and introduced as “Sister of Beneficence Isabella, a Matriarch of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

Matriarch, level 7-13: Holy Mother. Addressed as “Mother Isabella” and introduced as “Holy Mother Isabella, a Matriarch of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

Matriarch, level 14+: High Matriarch. Addressed as “Reverend Mother Isabella” and introduced as “The Reverend Mother, High Matriarch Isabella of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

The unique head of the faith: Supreme Matriarch. Addressed as “Your Holiness,” “Your Eminence,” “Your Grace,” or “Most Hallowed Mother Isabella” and introduced as “The Supreme Matriarch of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

Holy Warrior Name: Faithful Sons
Proper Address & Introduction:

Faithful Son, level 1-7: Brother. Always male. Addressed as “Brother Sigfried” and introduced as “Brother Sigfried, a Faithful Son of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

Faithful Son, level 8-14: Master. Addressed as “Master Sigfried” and introduced as “Master Sigfried, a Faithful Son of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

Faithful Son, level 15+: Father of the Faithful Sons. Addressed as “Father Sigfried” and introduced as “Father Sigfried, a Faithful Son of the Healing Halls of Morwyn.”

Prestige Class Name: White Hands
Proper Address & Introduction:

White Hand, levels 1-8: White Hand. No address is gained. The proper form of introduction is “Isabella, a White Hand of the Xth Circle,” where X is the level the White Hand has achieved in the Prestige Class.

The Temples of Terak

Religious Name: Teraketh

Note: All Teraketh, particularly Soldiers, may interchangeably be addressed and introduced by their secular military rank.

Clergy Name: Soldiers
Proper Address & Introduction:

Soldier, level 1-2: Helm. Addressed as “Helm Sigfried” and introduced as “Helm Sigfried, a Soldier of the Temples of Terak.”

Soldier, level 3-6: Lieutenant. Addressed as “Lieutenant Sigfried” and introduced as “Lieutenant Sigfried, a Soldier of the Temples of Terak.”

Soldier, level 7-11: Banner. Addressed as “Banner Sigfried” and introduced as “Banner Sigfried, a Soldier of the Temples of Terak.”

Soldier, level 12-17: Commander. Addressed as “Commander Sigfried” and introduced as “Commander Sigfried, a Soldier of the Temples of Terak.”

Soldier, level 18+: Lord Commander. Addressed as “Lord Commander Sigfried” and introduced as “Lord Commander Sigfried, a Soldier of the Temples of Terak.”

Holy Warrior Name: Crusaders
Proper Address & Introduction:

Crusader, level 1+: Crusader. Addressed as “Crusader Isabella” and introduced as “The Crusader Isabella of the Temples of Terak.”

Prestige Class Name: Master of the Way
Proper Address & Introduction:

Master of the Way, level 1-2: Weapons Expert. Addressed as “Teacher Isabella” and introduced as “The Weapons Expert, Isabella, a Teacher of the Way of the Temples of Terak.”

Master of the Way, level 3-5: Weapons Master. Addressed as “Master Isabella” and introduced as “The Weapons Master Isabella, a Master of the Way of the Temples of Terak.”

Master of the Way, level 6-8: Senior Master. Addressed as “Master Isabella” and introduced as “The Senior Master Isabella, a Master of the Way of the Temples of Terak.”

Master of the Way, level 9+: Grandmaster. Addressed as “Grandmaster Isabella” and introduced as “Grandmaster Isabella of the Temples of Terak.”

The Vineyards of Zheenkeef

Religious Name: Zhenkefan

Clergy Name: Apostles
Proper Address & Introduction:

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Apostle, level 1+: Apostle. Addressed as “Sigfried” and introduced as “Sigfried, an Apostle of Zheenkeef.”

Holy Warrior Name: Joyous Brotherhood

Proper Address & Introduction:

Joyous Sister, level 1-11: Laughing Brother/Sister. Addressed as “Sister Isabella” and introduced as “Laughing Sister Isabella, of the Joyous Brotherhood of Zheenkeef.”

Joyous Sister, level 12+: Drunken Brother/Sister. Addressed as “Honored Sister Isabella” and introduced as “The Honored Drunken Sister Isabella, of the Joyous Brotherhood of Zheenkeef.”

Prestige Class Name: Oracle

Proper Address & Introduction:

Oracle, level 1-6: Seer. Addressed as “Far-Seeing Master Isabella” and introduced as “The Seer Isabella, an oracle of Zheenkeef.”

Oracle, level 7+: Prophet. Addressed as “All-Seeing Master Isabella” and introduced as “The Prophet Isabella, an oracle of Zheenkeef.”

The Scriptoriums of Tinel

Religious Name: Tinelite

Clergy Name: Inceptors

Proper Address & Introduction:

Inceptor, level 1-4: Neophyte. Addressed as “Neophyte Sigfried” and introduced as “Neophyte Sigfried, an Inceptor of the Scriptoriums of Tinel.”

Inceptor, level 5-9: Teacher. Addressed as “Master Sigfried” and introduced as “The Teacher, Master Sigfried, an Inceptor of the Scriptoriums of Tinel.”

Inceptor, level 10+: Armarius. Addressed as “Revered Master Sigfried” and introduced as “The Reverend Master, Armarius Sigfried, an Inceptor of the Scriptoriums of Tinel.”

Holy Warrior Name: Mage Guard

Proper Address & Introduction:

Mage Guard, level 1-8: Defender of the Word. Addressed as “Defender Isabella” and introduced as “Defender of the Word Isabella, a Mage Guard of the scriptoriums of Tinel.”

Mage Guard, level 9+: Keeper of Secrets. Addressed as “Keeper Isabella” and introduced as “Keeper of Secrets Isabella, a Mage Guard of the scriptoriums of Tinel.”

Prestige Class Name: Hierophant

Proper Address & Introduction:

Hierophant, level 1: Hierophant. Addressed as “Great Lady Isabella” and introduced as “The Great Lady Isabella, Hierophant of the Scriptoriums of Tinel.”

Hierophant, level 2: Hierophant; One of the Five. Addressed as “Your Eminence” and introduced as “Her Eminence, the Hierophant Isabella, Member of the Council of Five of the Scriptoriums of Tinel.”

The Sacristies of Mormekar

Religious Name: Mormekim

Clergy Name: Ministers

Proper Address & Introduction:

Minister, level 1+: Minister. Addressed as “Father Sigfried” and introduced as “Father Sigfried, a Minister of the Sacristies of Mormekar.”

Holy Warrior Name: Obedient Brotherhood

Proper Address & Introduction:

Obedient Sister, level 1+: Obedient Sister/Brother. Addressed as “Sister Isabella” and introduced as “Isabella, an Obedient Sister of the Sacristies of Mormekar.”

Prestige Class Name: Reborn

Proper Address & Introduction:

Reborn, level 1+: No special address or introduction.

The Courts of Maal

Religious Name: Maalites

Clergy Name: Justiciars

Proper Address & Introduction:

Justiciar, level 1-8: Justiciar. Addressed as “Honored Justiciar Isabella” and introduced as “Honored Justiciar Isabella of the Courts of Maal.”

Justiciar, level 9-14: High Justiciar. Addressed as “Lady Justiciar Isabella” and introduced as “The Lady Justiciar Isabella of the Courts of Maal.”

Justiciar, level 15+: Prolocutor. Addressed as “Most Honored Justiciar Isabella” and introduced as “The Most Honored Justiciar, Prolocutor Isabella of the Courts of Maal.”

The two unique heads of the church from the clergy: Justices. Addressed as “Supreme Justiciar Isabella” and introduced as “Supreme Justiciar Isabella, one of the Four Justices of the Courts of Maal.”

Holy Warrior Name: Officers

Proper Address & Introduction:

Officer, level 1-6: Sword of Maal. Addressed as “Sword Sigfried” and introduced as “Sword Sigfried, an Officer of the Courts of Maal.” (Or quite formally, “Sword of Maal Sigfried, an Officer of the Courts of Maal.” This goes for shields and hands as well.)

Officer, level 7-14: Shield of Maal. Addressed as “Shield Sigfried” and introduced as “Shield Sigfried, an Officer of the Courts of Maal.”

Officer, level 15+: Hand of Maal. Addressed as “Grim Lord Sigfried” and introduced as “Hand Sigfried, an Officer of the Courts of Maal.”

The two unique heads of the church from the holy warriors: Justice. Addressed as “Supreme Lord Sigfried” and introduced as “Supreme Lord Sigfried, one of the Four Justices of the courts of Maal.”

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Prestige Class Name: Talesman
Proper Address & Introduction:

Talesman, level 1+: This prestige class does not provide extraordinary titles or addresses.

The Houses of Darmon

Religious Name: Darmonites

Clergy Name: Clerics

Proper Address & Introduction:

Clergy of Darmon are introduced like other members – the religious leader of a house (the high wayfarer) is elected by the congregation and wayfarers are appointed. A cleric is always at least a wayfarer, though.

Religious Leader of a House, Knowledge (religion) 4+: Wayfarer. Addressed as “Wayfarer Sigfried” and introduced with the name of the house where he serves. So, if Sigfried serves in the Freeport House, “Wayfarer Sigfried of the Freeport House of Darmon.”

Religious Leader of a House, Knowledge (religion) 12+: High Wayfarer. Addressed as “High Wayfarer Sigfried” and introduced as “High Wayfarer Sigfried of the Freeport House of Darmon.”

Holy Warrior Name: Heroes

Proper Address & Introduction:

Hero, level 1+: No title. Addressed sometimes as “Dame Isabella” and introduced even more rarely as “Dame Isabella, a Wayfarer of the Freeport House of Darmon.” Usually heroes just go by their name without any honorifics.

Prestige Class Name: Runners

Proper Address & Introduction:

Runner, level 1+: No titles unless a wayfarer (or high wayfarer). See above. A runner is usually a wayfarer.

The Lyceums of Aymara

Religious Name: Aymaran

Clergy Name: Fair Fellowship

Proper Address & Introduction:

Fair Fellow, level 1-6: Singer. Addressed as “Kindly Sister Isabella” and introduced as “The Kindly Sister, Singer Isabella, of the Fair Fellowship of the Lyceums of Aymara.”

Fair Fellow, level 7+: Celebrant. Addressed as “Fairest Sister Isabella” and introduced as “The Fairest Sister, Celebrant Isabella, of the Fair Fellowship of the Lyceums of Aymara.”

Holy Warrior Name: Aesthetes

Proper Address & Introduction:

Aesthete, level 1+: Aesthete. Addressed as “Fair Sir Sigfried” and introduced as “Fair Sir Sigfried, an Aesthete of the Lyceums of Aymara.”

Prestige Class Name: Watcher

Proper Address & Introduction:

The Watchers are a secret society and are never addressed or introduced by order status.

The Guildhalls of Korak

Religious Name: Koraketh

Clergy Name: Clerics

Holy Warrior Name: Arcstones

Prestige Class Name: Artificers

The addresses and titles of the Koraketh are based on guild membership and not on class level. The following are the addresses for the three main guilds (using the Makers for an example):

The Guild of Makers

Proper Address & Introduction:

Maker, Craft 4+: Maker. Addressed as “Maker Sigfried” and introduced as “Maker Sigfried, of the Holy and Revered Order of Makers of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

Maker, Craft 8+: Master Maker. Addressed as “Master Maker Sigfried” and introduced as “Master Maker Sigfried, of the Holy and Revered Order of Makers of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

Maker, Craft 15+: Grand Maker. Addressed as “Illustrious Master Sigfried” and introduced as “The Illustrious Master, Grand Maker Sigfried, of the Holy and Revered Order of Makers of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

The unique head of the order: Supreme Maker. Addressed as “Most Excellent and Venerable Master Sigfried” and introduced as “The Most Excellent and Venerable Master, Supreme Maker Sigfried, of the Holy and Revered Order of Makers of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

(The Masons and the Builders follow the exact same format. Simply replace the word “Maker” with the word “Mason” or “Builder.”)

The Guild of Wrights

The addresses and introductions are different for the Wrights. Wrights must also be a member of one of the three main guilds. For these examples, we will assume our example Wright is also a Grand Maker:

Proper Address & Introduction:

Wright, Craft 11+ in two crafts: Wright. Addressed as “Sister Isabella” and introduced as “The Illustrious Master, Sister Isabella, Grand Maker and Wright of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

Master Wright, Craft 16+ in three crafts: Master Wright. Addressed as “Wise Sister Isabella” and introduced as “The Illustrious Master, Wise Sister Isabella, Grand Maker and Master Wright of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

A Master Wright who is also the head of an order (say, the Masons) would be introduced as follows: “The Most Excellent and Venerable Master, Wise Sister Isabella, Supreme Mason of the Holy and Revered Order of Masons and Master Wright of the Guildhalls of Korak.”

The Hearths of Anwyn

Religious Name: Anwynites

Clergy Name: Manciples

Proper Address & Introduction:

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Manciple, level 1-8: Manciple. Addressed as “Friend Sigfried” and introduced as “Friend Sigfried, a Manciple of the Hearths of Anwyn.”

Manciple, level 9-13: High Manciple. Addressed as “Goodfather Sigfried” and introduced as “Goodfather Sigfried, a High Manciple of the Hearths of Anwyn.” This is the highest one may climb in the halfling hearths.

Manciple, level 14+: Elder Manciple. Addressed as “Beloved Master Sigfried” and introduced as “Beloved Master Sigfried, an Elder Manciple of the Hearths of Anwyn.”

The unique head of the faith: Supreme Manciple. Addressed as “Hallowed Lord Sigfried” and introduced as “Hallowed Lord Sigfried, the Supreme Manciple of the Hearths of Anwyn.”

The other holy orders of Anwyn no longer exist.

The Triads of the Three Sisters:

Religious Name: Triad

Clergy Name: Variegate Priests

Proper Address & Introduction:

Cleric of Naryne, Thellyne, Canelle, level 7+: Variegate Priest. Addressed as “Revered Mother Isabella” and introduced including the location of her triad. So a variegate priestess from Freeport would be introduced as “Revered Mother Isabella, the Variegate Priestess of the Freeport Triad.” A cleric of one of the Three Sisters below 7th level may not be a variegate priest.

Prestige Class Name: Unity

Proper Address & Introduction:

Members of the Unity receive no special addresses or titles.

The Dark Altars of Naryne

Religious Name: Narynite

Clergy Name: Seneschals

Proper Address & Introduction:

Seneschal, level 1+: Seneschal. Most seneschals are also noble-born and have a noble title by which they are addressed. Their noble “status trailers” are put after their religious titles in introduction, though. For example, a seneschal might be addressed as “Baron Sigfried” and introduced as “Baron Sigfried, a consecrated seneschal of the Narynites, lord of the eastern marches, and high mayor of Bergenbad.” A base-

born seneschal would be addressed as “Master Sigfried” and introduced as “Master Sigfried, a consecrated seneschal of the Narynites.”

Holy Warrior Name: Swan Knights

Proper Address & Introduction:

Swan Knight, level 1+: Swan Knight. Most swan knights are also noble-born and have a noble title by which they are addressed. Their noble “status trailers” are put after her religious titles in introduction, though. For example, a swan knight might be addressed as “Duchess Isabella” and introduced as “Duchess Isabella, a sworn knight of Naryne, protector of the realm, bearer of the seal of Marinden and lady of the fourth watch.” A base-born seneschal would be addressed as “Dame Isabella” and introduced as “Dame Isabella, a sworn knight Naryne.”

The Red Altars of Canelle

Religious Name: Canellan

Clergy Name: Red Masters

Proper Address & Introduction:

Red Master, level 1+: Red Master. Addressed as “Teacher Isabella” or “Master Isabella” and introduced as “Isabella, a Red Master of the Canellan Altars.”

Holy Warrior Name: Purified

Proper Address & Introduction:

Purified, level 1+: Pure Brother/Sister. Addressed as “Pure Brother Sigfried” and introduced as “Pure Brother Sigfried, one of the Purified of the Red Altars of Canelle.”

The Golden Altars of Thellyne

Religious Name: Thellynite

Clergy Name: Woodwardens

Proper Address & Introduction:

Woodwarden, level 1+: Woodwarden. Addressed as “Warden Isabella” and introduced as “Isabella, a Woodwarden of the Thellynites.”

Holy Warrior Name: Hallowed Hunter

Proper Address & Introduction:

Hallowed Hunter, level 1+: Hunter. Addressed as “Hunter Sigfried” and introduced as “Hallowed Hunter Sigfried of the Golden Altars of Thellyne.”

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