

# Silven Trumpeter

the official magazine of Silven Crossroads

Issue 26  
October 2005

## FEATURE:

Silven Publishing previews

*Death at Whitefell Pass*

by Kyle Thompson

page 28

<http://www.silven.com>



## Fiction

Three Drabbles  
by *Nghi Vo*  
page 20

## General RPG

Gen Con Coverage: Chaosium Unplugged  
by *Elizabeth R.A. Liddell*  
page 3

Gen Con Coverage: Costume Corner  
by *Elizabeth R.A. Liddell*  
page 6

The Silven Bestiary  
by *Kyle Thompson*  
page 12

The Sphercallers  
by *Landon J. Winkler*  
page 15

The Once and Future Gamer  
by *Sean Patrick Fannon*  
page 18

## Reviews

*Obsidian: The Age of Judgment*  
page 23

*Heavy Gear: Miniature Rules*  
page 24

*Heavy Gear: Earth Companion*  
page 25

*Xenomorph Invasion Demo*  
page 26

## Exclusive Preview

Silven Publishing previews *Death at Whitefell Pass*  
by *Kyle Thompson*  
page 28

Hello, and welcome to the 26th issue of the *Silven Trumpeter*!

October is the start of the change to cool weather where I live. That means a shift from running around outside to hanging out indoors with a good group of friends, drinking apple cider from the local orchard and trying out a new game or three or five. My group is investigating several new games – the new *Shadowrun* and *White Wolf's Mage: The Awakening* to name a few – and I'm finally getting a chance to play Malhavoc's *Arcana Evolved*!

In this issue of the *Trumpeter*, you'll find plenty of material to help begin your autumnal games (or, if you live on the other side of the planet, your vernal games). Nash DeVita reviews several new games in a wide variety of formats and settings. The *Silven Bestiary* provides new monsters for your campaign, and Landon J. Winkler presents another secret society to serve as friend or foe to your PCs. I'd also like to welcome new columnist Sean Patrick Fannon as he presents *The Once and Future Gamer*.

We're still picking up the pieces from Gen Con Indy 2005. You'll find within these pages the upcoming products from Chaosium (many of which would give a jumpstart to any game!), as well as a parade of some of the finest costumes we could find in the halls of the Gen Con convention center. I personally hope you enjoy looking through them as much as we enjoyed tracking them down!

So, I'm off to get some apple cider, dig out a sweater and settle down for a game – and I heartily encourage you to do the same!

Elizabeth R.A. Liddell  
Editor-in-Chief  
*Silven Trumpeter*



## Gen Con Coverage: Chaosium Unplugged

by Elizabeth R.A. Liddell

Chaosium is the publishing group best known for the *Call of Cthulhu* RPG, a game based on the writings of H.P. Lovecraft that has been around for over 30 years. They have also published *Stormbringer*, an RPG based on Michael Moorcock's fiction. Furthermore, they publish a series of trade paperback horror anthologies based on the Cthulhu mythos. For a group of four self-entitled "dudes" (who will be referred to throughout this article as such), they produce a massive amount of high-quality books and game supplements.

As in most years, this year I took an hour to attend the Chaosium Unplugged session at Gen Con Indy. This is odd primarily because I have never played a *Call of Cthulhu* game and probably never will, though I have over a dozen books and supplements on my bookcase. I go because the four guys who make up Chaosium are a fun bunch of folks who are always very enthusiastic about their products, and those products are always exciting. This year was no exception, so (with my apologies for the delay in publication) let me present the upcoming products from Chaosium!

As of Gen Con Indy 2005, Chaosium's newest book was *Secrets of New York*. Primarily a setting supplement, it covers the 1920s and 1930s in the Big Apple, combining history and mythos into one concrete text. Both concepts are presented concurrently, rather than splitting the book into one section for history and one section for mythos. As described in the seminar, "when the monsters start showing up," it's pretty obvious that you've moved over into the mythos part! Also fully integrated into the text is a campaign, with seeds and hints planted throughout.

Set for release in September was *Miskatonic University*. Featuring prominently in many of

Lovecraft's stories, Miskatonic is the fictional university located in equally fictional Arkham, Massachusetts, where students and faculty exchange their very sanity for the secrets of the mythos. Loved by fans of both *Call of Cthulhu* and the mythos as a whole, Miskatonic University is described in detail, from professors to courses and even to nearby cafes!

The first upcoming product from Chaosium (as of the printing of this article) is *Tatters of the King*, an "absolutely outstanding" scenario for the King in Yellow that begins in Britain and goes from there. The author was not named, but was described as a "very talented fellow." The dudes also mentioned that this is the first book in a while that people haven't been expecting for the last year or two, making it an exciting release for the company. While a date wasn't set for the release, it was implied that this would be the first product to follow *Miskatonic University*. Set for release in the end of 2005 or the very beginning of 2006 is *Malleus Monstrorum*. Not just a reprint, this version will double the size of the original book and will update, correct, expand and edit the entries from the original. The sourcebook will break creatures down into four categories: creatures of the mythos, deities of the mythos, creatures from legend and lore, and animals of earth.



From left to right: Charlie Krank, president of Chaosium, and Dustin Wright (Sales & Support), present the Chaosium Unplugged seminar along with William Jones, a man whose position was never really declared...

The next fiction release from Chaosium, reported as "at the printer" as of Gen Con, is *The Tsathoggua Cycle*. Containing tales by Clark Ashton Smith and H. P. Lovecraft as well as new writers, this illustrated anthology revolves around the toad god Tsathoggua. As of the printing of this article, *The Tsathoggua Cycle* is available for purchase.

After *The Tsathoggua Cycle*, say the Chaosium dudes, will come *Arkham Tales*, a set of stories set in Lovecraft's fictional Massachusetts city. No specific release date was given, but we were handed a time frame of "Decemberish."

In addition to these two anthologies, our hosts dropped a few hints about possible reprints of older fiction works. In particular, the *Encyclopedia*

*Cthuliana* and the *Necronomicon* were mentioned. While there were no promises made, Chaosium fans should keep their eyes open for these possibilities!

Another reprint, more solidly confirmed, will be the popular scenario *Horrors on the Orient Express*. The audience had high words of praise for this classic campaign! Again, no release date was given, but the product is very likely to happen and fans will probably see it sometime in 2007.

Looking ahead into more concrete plans, we got a glimpse of the major product for the first quarter of 2006: *Pulp Cthulhu*. As *Secrets of New York* combined New York and the mythos, *Pulp Cthulhu* combines the mythos with 1930-style pulp action! However, this book is meant as a stand-alone product, much as *Cthulhu Dark Ages*. It allows more adventure and recklessness than traditional *Call of Cthulhu*, and uses traits like psychic abilities and a point-buy system. The pulp-to-realism scale ranges from *Indiana Jones* to *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, resulting a product that sounds like nothing if not fun!

Also slated for 2006 is a generic rulebook for the "BRP," which is short for Chaosium's **basic roleplay** system. Borrowing from many previous products, this rulebook will be a stand-alone product that that finally presents the rules independently of any setting or storyline.

In the non-books line, Chaosium is collaborating to produce another *Call of Cthulhu* computer game, slated for release in 2006. There was a very positive response to the first such game, and the dudes were excited about what they've seen of this one so far.

Also set for release in the spring of 2006 is a new Keeper Screen. It isn't the screen for *Cthulhu Dark Ages*; that product concept got shelved. Instead, it will be a cross-genre *Call of Cthulhu* screen useful to Keepers in a wide variety of settings.

As the Chaosium Unplugged seminars are often a chance for fans and the dudes to chat about things going on, there were a number of questions about the "Monograph Line." These are small books with short runs, offered exclusively through the Chaosium website and not in stores. This is a way for Chaosium to bring into the light ideas that are rather cool, but perhaps not quite developed enough (or just not long enough!) for a full book. The line has been popular and continues to see production, though not a lot of details on the upcoming products were given. It was neat to see, however, that one monograph author was in the audience for the session!

Another question from the audience brought up the *Stormbringer* product line. The dudes admitted that due to the larger fanbase, business sense demanded that they focus primarily on the *Call of Cthulhu* product line. However, there is a possibility that *Stormbringer* products will be released as part of the Monograph line, since they all would like to do more and just don't have the finances and manpower to produce everything they want to!

And then, of course, the conversation moved away from products and more into interesting happenings. Charlie Krank, president of Chaosium, had earlier in the year attended Tentacle, a convention in Germany based around Chaosium products! He described how for 90 Euros people could stay for the entire convention, including lodging, events, food, and – of course – German beer! With 170 attendees, over 1,640 pints of beer were consumed – and that is to say nothing of the hard liquors. A large, air-powered tentacle served as the master of ceremonies. To add to the effect, a mist-machine providing ambience to the convention-hosting castle provided a bit too much ambience – mist overflowed and filled the streets of the village just down the mountain, making it seem like it came straight out of a Lovecraftian story!



# Libem Liboriam

## The Complete d20 Guide to Books

by Dana Lynn Driscoll

*Libem Liborium: The Complete d20 Guide to Books* is the most comprehensive guide to books and tomes available to the d20 industry ever published! *Libem Liborium: The Complete d20 Guide to Books* is an extensive, exhaustive, and creative resource that will be useful to many gamers as it was specifically written to cover the range of places and forms writing, books, and the quest for knowledge can take in a campaign world. The book details information about writing while adventuring, including a complete set of mechanics for writing, publishing, and marketing books from hand-publishing to mass book sales.

What others are saying...

[Crothian of ENworld.org](#)

This book does the job of being a complete book on books. It deals with the areas I wanted and showed me ones I did not think of. It seems to be the rare book that expands upon the campaign world in a way that no other has. It adds detail and levels of realism to the world without bogging down with irrelevant items.

» 4 out of 5

[Bill Perman of GamingReport.com](#)

...The amount of new spells and prestige classes found in later chapters will make this book a valued purchase. Beyond that you'll find write-ups for dozens of books, new deities and new mundane items. *Libem Liborium* also contains a random book generator that allows for GMs to create 100's of new books. In conclusion, while this supplement may not be as glamorous as say, a book about Barbarians, or a sourcebook on weapons, *Libem Liborium: The Complete d20 Guide to Books* is a treasure chest for the less combat oriented characters in your party, as well as an invaluable resource to bring the art of writing, researching, and learning to life. Those not interested in such things will still find plenty of useful tools for their fantasy game.

» 3.5 out of 5



## Gen Con Coverage: Costume Corner

by Elizabeth R.A. Liddell

Gen Con is, of course, a time for gamers to show their inner selves. While many take this as an opportunity to (unfortunately) not bathe and wear the same dirty jeans and black t-shirt for four days in a row, others take advantage of the opportunity to dress to the nines! And since gaming covers everything from modern to fantasy to sci-fi to anime and beyond, the costumes that can be seen at Gen Con cover the same range.

What follows is a tiny fraction of the costumes that appeared at Gen Con Indy 2005. Silven photographers Shandylinn K. Devita and Bill Paulson, along with yours truly, caught these few on camera – most of them simply because they happened to be where we were at the time! I don't claim to have the vast expanses of knowledge necessary to identify each and every one of these costumes. Besides, many of the costumes that one finds at Gen Con are homebrew concepts from homebrew games, or just someone who put together a bunch of neat garments and came out with a pretty cool end product! On the other hand, there are plenty of costumes that are easily pegged from a mile away, and we caught plenty of those on film, too!

But they say a picture is worth a thousand words, so I'll give up on the words thing and just let you see the pictures for yourself!



Some fine costumes that I'm not brave enough to try and put a name to!



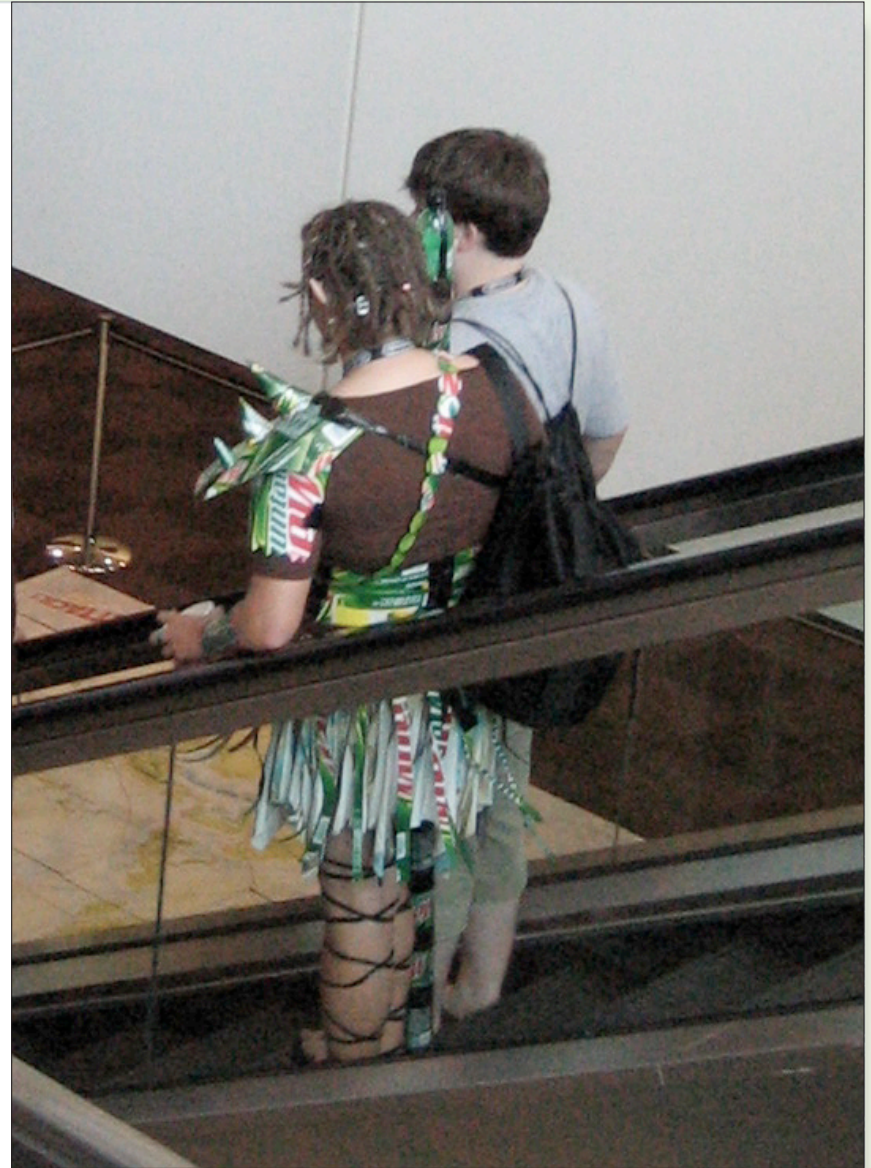




As gamers grow up, get married, and have children, what else can you expect but that they dress those children appropriately and bring them to Gen Con?



Bonus points for the first person who can post in the Silven Trumpeter forums and correctly identify each character shown here!



Going the other way on the escalator, I couldn't really stop and get a great shot of this gal's armor, crafted entirely from Mountain Dew boxes and cans!





You might think this is just another couple in well-crafted armor... until you see that they're conversing with a Tie Fighter pilot describing the various pieces of the outfit he hand-crafted himself!



And, further adding to the incongruity of the situation, our pilot found himself a cat-eared "save point" for his game.

Silven Publishing writer Landon J. Winkler shows off as an Imperial War Mage from his homebrew campaign setting.







This gentleman at first glimpse would appear to be Gandalf from the beloved *Lord of the Rings* series. It's actually Randolf from *The Dork of the Rings*, a parody set for release in 2006.

As awe-inspiring as huge anime swords are on screen, it's nothing compared to seeing them in person!



A little crossover between good and evil can't possibly hurt when everyone looks this good!





Vash the Stampede, from the popular anime Trigun, makes an appearance in the skywalks between buildings.

Though stormtroopers are not terribly uncommon at Gen Con, (after all, Darth Vaders are easily found and there have even been instances of two Boba Fetts meeting face-to-face), Leia's Tatooine disguise seldom shows up.



This costume of the Night Elf from World of Warcraft was so realistic that it could have been a statue. Actually, it is a statue, but I wanted to make sure you were still paying attention!





Over the past few years at Gen Con, there has been a sharp increase in the number of Ghostbuster costumes. While some other attendees' costumes can lag in the quality department, these guys (and gals) have costumes so well done that they could have made an appearance in the films!



This team of ghostbusters (this particular squad is the Louisville Ghostbusters) proves that even heroes need some good, hearty food-court meals!





# The Silven Bestiary

## Beasts of Iron

by Kyle Thompson

The Silven Bestiary is a monthly article that contains new monsters on a monthly basis. It will generally contain two to three monsters and occasionally a special bonus that includes other new material such as magic items, etc.

This month's topic is beasts from the Ethereal Plane.

### Ethereal Stalker

**Medium Monstrous Humanoid**

**Hit Dice:** 4d8+8 (24 hp)

**Initiative:** +5 (Dex)

**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)

**Armor Class:** 15 (+5 Dex), touch 15, flat-footed 10

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/+6

**Attack:** Dagger +7 melee (1d4+2/19-20)

**Full Attack:** 2 daggers +5 melee (1d4+2/19-20)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** Sneak attack +1d6

**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., ethereal jaunt

**Saves:** Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +3

**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12

**Skills:** Hide +13, Move Silently +15, Spot +7

**Feats:** Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (Dagger)

**Environment:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary

**Challenge Rating:** 3

**Treasure:** Double coins, standard goods, standard items

**Alignment:** Always chaotic evil

**Advancement:** 5-20 HD (Medium)

**Level Adjustment:** +2

*A strange, blue-skinned, genderless humanoid steps from the shadows. It wields two long daggers and wears tight fitting, black clothing. It wears a cape around its shoulders and approaches menacingly.*

Ethereal stalkers are the ideal assassins. Their good reflexes combined with their ability to jump from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane make it extremely easy for them to sneak up on a target. Also, being genderless, they see no point in love and therefore do not care for their targets.

They are easily found in big cities, secretly hiring themselves out to clients. They make a lot of money, and the richer ones tend to wield magic daggers. The most famous ethereal stalker, Mor'ac D'ellunai, was never captured. It wielded two flaming daggers and always left a strange mark on its victims.

Ethereal stalkers are blue-skinned and stand about 6 to 7 feet tall. They speak common and often learn other languages.

### About the Author:

Kyle Thompson was born in Hawaii and is now sixteen years old. He enjoys writing and drawing. He currently is being schooled in West High School and is working towards some scholarships to get him through college. He plans to finish college with a degree in writing and continue on to write fantasy novels. His teachers, family and friends (including his roleplaying group) all support and encourage him. They all tell him that he has to take them to dinner when he gets paid, and his mom says that he will be moving her back to Hawaii.

### COMBAT

Ethereal stalkers always work alone. They take full advantage of their ethereal jaunt ability, often using it in combination with their sneak attack. They try to make fights as quick as possible and tend to flee from a losing battle.

They rarely move in the Material Plane while in combat, preferring to shift through the Ethereal Plane so as to avoid attacks of opportunity.

**Ethereal Jaunt (Sp):** An ethereal stalker can shift from the Ethereal to the Material Plane as a free action, and shift back again as a move-equivalent action (or as part of a move-equivalent action). The ability is otherwise identical with *ethereal jaunt* as cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** If an ethereal stalker can catch an opponent when he is unable to defend himself effectively from its attack, it can strike a vital spot for extra damage.

The ethereal stalker's attack deals 1d6 extra damage any time its target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when



the ethereal stalker flanks its target. Should the ethereal stalker score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

Ranged attacks can count as sneak attacks only if the target is within 30 feet.

An ethereal stalker can sneak attack only living creatures with discernible anatomies—undead, constructs, oozes, plants, and incorporeal creatures lack vital areas to attack. Any creature that is immune to critical hits is not vulnerable to sneak attacks. The ethereal stalker must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. An ethereal stalker cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

### Ethereal Sorcerer's Blade

#### Medium Construct

**Hit Dice:** 6d10 (30 hp)

**Initiative:** +7 (Dex)

**Speed:** Fly 40 ft. (perfect) (8 squares)

**Armor Class:** 22 (+7 Dex, +5 natural), touch 17, flat-footed 15

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/-

**Attack:** Slash +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20)

**Full Attack:** Slash +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20)

**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.

**Special Attacks:** -

**Special Qualities:** Blindsight 60 ft., DR 5/-, ethereal jaunt, magic blade, SR 15

**Saves:** Fort +2, Ref +8, Will -1

**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 23, Con -, Int -, Wis 5, Cha 10

**Skills:** -

**Feats:** -

**Environment:** Any land and underground

**Organization:** Solitary, pair, squad (3-10)

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Always neutral

**Advancement:** 7-12 HD (Medium), 13-15 HD (Large)

**Level Adjustment:** -

*A longsword that seems to be wielded by an invisible hand blinks out of existence, only to reappear closer to you.*

Ethereal sorcerer's blades are constructs left behind to guard treasure stashes and the like. They are often crafted from longswords, but can be found in a variety of weapons. Even crossbows have been used, bolts trailing through the air behind them (though these are more often referred to as "ethereal sorcerer's bows").

Some sorcerers enchant the blade with fire, cold or any other wide varieties of abilities, but the one common factor is its access to the *ethereal jaunt* spell.

Ethereal sorcerer's blades understand the same languages as their creators, but cannot speak.

#### COMBAT

An ethereal sorcerer's blade always follows its creator's commands without question. It generally attacks fighters first, moving on to confront spellcasters second. If a cleric is amongst the opponents, the sorcerer's blade attempts to kill that person first, to stop him from healing the warriors in the group.

**Blindsight (Ex):** Due to the enchantments weaved around it, an ethereal sorcerer's blade is always able to perceive anything within 60 feet regardless of lighting and other conditions that may impair vision. It is also invulnerable to attacks that require true sight, such as glamor effects from illusions or a medusa's gaze attack.

**Ethereal Jaunt (Sp):** An ethereal sorcerer's blade can shift from the Ethereal to the Material Plane as a free action, and shift back again as a move-equivalent action (or as part of a move-equivalent action). The ability is otherwise identical with *ethereal jaunt* as cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

**Magic Blade (Ex):** Any attacks made by an ethereal sorcerer's blade count as magic for reasons of overcoming damage reduction.

#### Construction

Constructing an ethereal sorcerer's blade requires several difficult spells and to many, it seems not worth the effort. The weapon used in the creation must be masterwork. Other materials cost 2,000 gp to acquire.

Assembling the construct is not necessary unless the creator is crafting the weapon himself.

Caster Level: 15th; Feats: Craft Construct; Spells: *ethereal jaunt* and any spells required for further enchantment (i.e. *fireball* for flaming); Market Price: 6,000 gp (more with further enchantments).



**Mor'ac D'ellunai**

Mor'ac D'ellunai was an ethereal stalker with a large reputation. Serial killer gone assassin, it is infamous for its single-handed slaying of thirteen mages from a large college. It had stalked the mages for a long period of time, waiting for the right opportunity.

Its reason for this massacre: to gain immortality. A local cult that Mor'ac had recently been watching had made a prophecy that any who killed thirteen mages in the span of one hour on the night of a waning moon would gain immortality. The prophecy was obviously wrong, because Mor'ac is now dead.

After the massacre at the mage college, Mor'ac became an assassin. It still killed mages from time to time, just to endure its immortality. It is well-known for using two flaming daggers and leaving cuts on its victims' left cheeks in the shape of an oval with a strange star-shaped figure in the middle. None have ever discovered if this was just a crude logo to brag, or if this had deeper meaning.

Mor'ac D'ellunai was never caught, and died of old age while stalking another victim. It was found dead in an alley that it had been in without a mark on it. With one exception; it seems after Mor'ac died, the strange sigil that he had cut into its victims' cheeks was burned upon its own.

You can use Mor'ac D'ellunai in your campaign either before its demise, or by altering the history presented here. In either case, here are its stats.

**Mor'ac D'ellunai (Ethereal Stalker)****Medium Monstrous Humanoid****Hit Dice:** 15d8+30 (90 hp)**Initiative:** +7**Speed:** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Armor Class:** 17 (+7 Dex), touch 17, flat-footed 10**Base Attack/Grapple:** +15/+17**Attack:** +1 *Flaming dagger* +24 melee (1d4+3 plus 1d6 fire/19-20)**Full Attack:** 2 +1 *Flaming daggers* +22 melee (1d4+3 plus 1d6 fire/19-20)**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.**Special Attacks:** Sneak attack +1d6**Special Qualities:** Darkvision 60 ft., ethereal jaunt**Saves:** Fort +7, Ref +16, Will +9**Abilities:** Str 15, Dex 24, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 15**Skills:** Hide +23, Move Silently +24, Spot +17**Feats:** Combat Reflexes, Two Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse (Dagger), Weapon Focus (Dagger)**Environment:** Any land and underground**Organization:** Solitary**Challenge Rating:** 13**Treasure:** Double coins, standard goods, two +1 *flaming daggers***Alignment:** Chaotic evil**Ethereal Jaunt (Sp):** Mor'ac D'ellunai can shift from the Ethereal to the Material Plane as a free action, and shift back again as a move-equivalent action (or as part of a move-equivalent action). The ability is otherwise identical with *ethereal jaunt* as cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.



# The Sphercallers

by Landon J. Winkler

Some musicians are naturally drawn to the music created by the natural world. Only a few, however, find another layer of music hiding beyond natural laws. The Sphercallers are an order dedicated to that music of the spheres.

The music created by Sphercallers is unlike other songs, intended to embody certain forces rather than be pleasing to the ear. Its grating dissonances are damaging to mortal senses and minds alike, while the most powerful compositions offend nature itself. Still, most Sphercallers are written off as harmless eccentrics with particularly odd taste in music.

Unlike many secret societies, the Sphercallers have no organizational tiers or initiation ceremonies. Indeed, many initiates have never met another member of the order. The Sphercallers' compositions appear in most large personal collections, entrancing those with the necessary skills to understand the dissonances.

Most Sphercallers enter the order through the long process of finding such a piece of music and becoming entranced with it, wanting to learn more. Some master Sphercallers purposefully expose promising musicians to the order's strange compositions. Only rarely do more than a few Sphercallers gather in one place, but when they do, disaster follows closely behind.

Perhaps as a side effect of their music, members of the order generally follow a slow descent into madness. Sphercallers often enter the order with their own agendas and desires, but these are slowly eroded away by obsession with the music.

The madness advances to the point at which some long-time Sphercallers see themselves

as a breed apart from normal mortals. To those Sphercallers, the music is so perfect and necessary that killing guards to steal just the right instrument or incorporating the cries of the tortured doesn't bother them. The furthest-gone members don't even realize that using death to create this music could disturb people.

## History of the Sphercallers

In an ancient city-state, a solitary bard of great talent spent her life in solitude studying music. She could have played in the highest courts of the land, but instead played her experimental pieces for small audiences of dedicated fanatics. She was not the first to discover the strange dissonances, but she was the first to codify them.

Composing dozens of songs with her newly discovered techniques, she drove away even her most loyal listeners. In their place, she found several apprentices who admired her with a ferocity bordering on worship. They played together and explored the depths of her revelations until a great disaster befell the city.

Gateways to myriad planes tore open the night sky above that city. Great forces ripped buildings apart while bizarre creatures from a hundred worlds stalked the streets. The surviving members of the order who fled the city became the core of the Sphercallers, including their master, who only narrowly escaped the cataclysm.

The Sphercallers wandered from city to city, practicing their arts and experimenting with the effects their dissonances could have on the fabric between the planes. The order moved rapidly from place to place, staying one step ahead of the misfortune that seemed to be stalking

them. Cities they passed through were beset by plagues, natural disasters, coups, magical battles, or planar gateways, only days or weeks after the Sphercallers arrived.

As they went, the Sphercallers distributed their music to those with the talent to understand it, and acquired new members. On several occasions, they stumbled across old bards who had been working on pieces similar to theirs for years and exchanged notes.

Tales still speak of the "Grey Minstrel" whose coming brought catastrophe on every community she visited. The modern Sphercallers believe these tales are a retelling of the founder's wanderings and refer to their founder as the Grey Minstrel in place of her long-forgotten name. Only the Sphercallers, however, know that she was dragged into the sky by an invisible beast and was never seen again.

Since the disappearance of their founder, the Sphercallers have scattered across many nations. Her compositions are still the most popular among them, although many other composers have left their mark since her passing. Many members have dedicated their entire lives to completing a collection of their founder's work, although none have yet succeeded.

## The Sphercallers in Your Campaign

The Sphercallers can serve many purposes in your campaign. They can be a vague insidious threat, assistants to dark forces, or a variant path for PCs.

As a threat, the Sphercallers can represent the spread of an insidious plague upon society. Each person introduced to the music is a potentially a new member and therefore potentially a disaster to the community. The party will face difficult choices as the organization spreads. Is it worth killing still-sane musicians and destroying hundreds of musical texts to protect the community? Especially when most of the threat comes from a vague bad



luck following the order? If the party decides to do so without due consideration, it leaves an uncomfortable precedence when the party's organization is targeted next.

Individual Sphercallers can easily be drawn into service of the forces they summon or any god that has music or madness as part of its domain. Many Sphercallers would gladly enter a partnership in exchange for help finding their founder's music or even money to fund their own research. Finding Sphercallers working along different enemies of the party can provide variety in encounters or cause paranoid characters to jump to conclusions.

PCs with the appropriate talents can become Sphercallers, either trained by an elder or stumbling upon the music independently. Although madness may eventually grip these PCs and misfortune will haunt their steps, the Sphercaller's path has its own advantages. If you're lucky, the player will want to portray that descent into madness. Otherwise, you can focus on the misfortune, potentially using it as an explanation for the progression of threats your PCs face.

Integrating the Sphercallers into your setting is easiest if you have an ancient ruined city (or series of ruined cities) to attach their history to. Ideally, one of the PCs will also have a connection to the city. Another order that once existed in that ancient city serves as a natural foil for the Sphercallers. If your campaign doesn't have any appropriate ruins handy, placing those ruins in a far-off nation that the Sphercallers have spread from over time is also a possibility.

## Sphercaller

Each Sphercaller is an individual case, with some receiving formalized training from the point they showed musical talent and others discovering the secrets of dissonance almost entirely on their own.

**Hit Die:** d6

### Requirements

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

**Skills:** Decipher Script 4 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 4 ranks, Perform 8 ranks.

**Special:** Must have read and performed at least one piece by the Grey Minstrel.

### Class Skills

The Sphercaller's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Magical Device (Cha).

**Skill Points at Each Level:** 4 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

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

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A Sphercaller does not gain any additional proficiency with armor or weapons.

**Bardic Music (Ex):** Once per day per level in this class, you may use bardic music. You gain abilities in bardic music as though you are a bard of the same level. If you already have levels in bard, your class levels stack to determine your bardic music abilities.

**Lesser Dissonance (Su):** While concentrating on another use of bardic music, once per round as a free action, you can introduce a horrible dissonance. You learn one use of this dissonance at first level and one more every two levels beyond that. Each time you use a dissonance, it counts as one of your daily uses of bardic music.

The target of each of these abilities must be within thirty feet and able to hear you playing. All are considered sound-based effects and can be stopped by a bard's *countersong* or the effect of a *silence* spell.

**Building Dissonance:** As you play, the dissonance builds into a cacophony. When you use this dissonance, the DC to resist your dissonances is increased by 4. This effect lasts one round per level.

**Deafening Dissonance:** By invoking dissonance, you can make one living subject permanently deaf. The target can make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to negate the effect.

**Disruptive Dissonance:** This dissonance disrupts any action, slightly altering probability. The next attack roll or skill check the target makes is -4.

**Distracting Dissonance:** Your dissonance can shatter spellcasters' concentration. You may use this dissonance in response to someone within 30 feet casting a spell, but only if you are currently singing or playing. The target must make a Concentration check opposing your Perform check or the spell is countered.

**Maddening Dissonance:** This whispering dissonance drives the target slowly to madness, dealing them 1d4 Wisdom damage. The target can make a Will save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to avoid the effect.

**Piercing Dissonance:** Your dissonance tears at the flesh and bone of a creature, dealing 2d6 + your Charisma bonus sound damage. The target can make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to negate the effect.

**Rending Dissonance:** Sound damages the internal organs of a target, dealing them 1d4 Constitution damage. The target can make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to negate the effect. Beings without discernable anatomies (oozes, golems, and the like) are not affected.

**Stunning Dissonance:** The power of your dissonance paralyzes the target with pain for one round. The target can make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to negate the effect.



**Lesser Song of Calling (Su):** Your songs rend the veils between worlds and summon a creature to serve you. This counts as a use of bardic music. To keep the summoned creature in existence, you must concentrate on maintaining the bardic music effect. You can keep this concentration for a maximum of one round per level. While you are concentrating on this, you may use lesser dissonance and greater dissonance.

Some appropriate creatures for this summoning are: cloaker, gibbering moulder, howler, shadow mastiff, and will-o'-wisp. Other creatures with a CR of 5 or 6 could be appropriate, especially aberrations.

**Terrifying Performance (Sp):** Beginning at 4th level you may use *fear* as a spell-like ability, which uses one of your bardic music uses this day. The DC to resist the fear is 10 + your ranks in Perform.

**Song of Calling (Su):** This is a more powerful variant of the lesser song of calling, summoning creatures with a CR of 7 to 8. It counts as two uses of bardic music for the day, but still must be maintained through concentration. Some appropriate creatures include the destrachan, grey render, invisible stalker, and phasm.

**Greater Dissonance (Su):** These abilities are used in the same way as lesser dissonances, but count as three of your daily uses of bardic music.

*Dissonance of the Grey Minstrel:* Unleashing a wave of dissonance, you cause sonic damage to everyone within thirty feet, including yourself. Each creature takes 8d6+8 damage, but can make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) for half damage.

You may designate a number of creatures up to your Charisma modifier which are not affected by this wave. If you do not want to be damaged, you must designate yourself as one of these creatures.

*Dissonant Blade:* With this action, you build up dissonant energy within a nearby melee weapon of your choice. For one minute, it deals 2d6 sonic damage with each strike. Also, any target of a critical hit by the weapon must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) or be permanently deafened.

*Mental Dissonance:* Terrible dissonance reduces the target's intelligence, wisdom, and charisma to 1, as though struck with a *feeblemind* spell. The target can make a Will save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to negate the effect.

*Planar Dissonance:* This power pushes a single target to another plane, seemingly at random, as though they had been affected by a *plane shift* spell. The target can make a Will save (DC 10 + your ranks in Perform) to negate the effect. A Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 25) can determine where the target was sent.

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bardic music, lesser dissonance
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Lesser song of calling
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Lesser dissonance
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Terrifying performance
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Lesser dissonance
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Song of calling
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Lesser dissonance
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Greater dissonance
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Lesser dissonance
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Greater dissonance



# The Once And Future Gamer

## The Old Man and the Dice

by Sean Patrick Fannon

I'm sitting here listening to a "radio station" that a friend of mine put together and put into a web-based format for me to click around on at my leisure. It's called *Radio Shaintar*, and it features all the music I have compiled for our regular gaming sessions (Shaintar being, naturally, the name of the world in which I am running my campaign). As I contemplate what to write as my first installment for this wonderful e-zine, it just slams into me like a truck.

I am sitting here, *listening to Radio Shaintar*. A program of music designed specifically for my campaign.

(Those of you ages 26 and younger may now groan, shake your heads, and say "Codger Alert." Just get off my lawn...)

Cut to almost three decades ago. When you wanted to have a collection of music back then, you played cuts on vinyl albums and held your tape recorder as close to the speakers as possible. It took all day long. Your mother yelled at you to get out of the living room. Any kid crazy enough to do it was "pretty cool," but the tape was usually quickly forgotten in the midst of the latest argument messing with purple worm stats.

Shaintar has a web site. I didn't put it together. I can barely code the microwave to not burn my frozen burritos (the microwave, of course, being

the one of the great empowering devices of the 20th century for men everywhere; it may be the cause of the divorce rate, since men stopped needing to be cooked for lest they die). Some gaming friends, in their free time, put the hosting site together, including access to a "blog" for the front page and connecting to an online store where you can click and order "lifestyle" items with our logos on them. The guy who put the *Radio Shaintar* thing together also codes the actual Shaintar stuff in. I just write things, send them to him, and they magically appear on my pretty site.

Back in the day, "web sites" were notebooks with college-lined pages and graph paper hanging out of them, scribbled all over with ink pen doodles of naked elf chicks and dragons that would make Trogdor look like high art.

(Bonus points to anyone who gets the Trogdor reference. Don't know it? Google it. Google is, of course, the single most amazing thing ever to exist. Civilization will collapse if Google ever dies. Why the terrorists haven't figured this out is beyond me. They are probably too busy searching for nuclear bomb instructions on Google...)

When I run my game now, I do so from my computer desk, while my group is gathered around a table in the room. I just click open the charts and source material I need, rack up the CD that has the selected tunes I will want for the day (with

a standby list of MP3s ready to choose from in a pinch), and off we go.

Sadly, until I started writing this column, I had been taking all of this for granted. Only now can I really, truly appreciate how far things have come in my hobby. Well, really, how far things have come in the world – but we all measure progress as it most affects our lives.

Now I find myself in awe of it all.

(This will change tomorrow, when I am no longer writing the article and am probably grouching about how slow my PC is and how I wish I had better speakers installed, but go with me here. For the moment, I am feeling the awe...)

I mean, think of it. Not only are there tools that help to enhance our imaginations and the game play, there are now games that mostly throw out the need for much imagination, anymore. Not that I am about to trash computer games; as soon as I get *Shaintar: Immortal Legends* done, I fully intend to reward myself with some serious *City of Villains* and *Guild Wars* play. I am simply stating that the tools now exist to create the first stages of holodeck addiction that Jean Luc and his crew warned us about back in the eighties.

Interestingly enough, one of the reasons this piece is taking me much longer to write than I had originally anticipated is because I keep clicking over to message boards. These message boards (using that phpBB set-up that any net junkie sees in their sleep, now) cover everything I am interested in – the *Savage Worlds* game system, game industry news, developments by my *Evil Beagle* crew, and reviews of my latest offering, the *Player's Guide* for the aforementioned *Shaintar* property. There are also message boards dedicated to the campaigns I am playing in (a *Rolemaster* game set in the old Raven's Bluff of long-lost *Living City* fame, and a *Champions* campaign, run by a friend, that actually features characters I created over a decade ago). I just *have* to keep looking to see if anyone's responded to my latest posts...



You see, the game never *ends* now. In the old days, marathon sessions were common, sure. Certainly, we never really stopped talking about it, either. Now, however, we can stay connected to the gaming experience pretty much 24/7/365.

If the house has power, we have game.

E-mail, blog entries, and chat rooms keep us connected to the experience as much as we want to be. Of course, we're obsessive escapists, so that's pretty much all the time. And if we want a new game, there's always our good friend, PayPal, to transact the money and see to it that new games are on their way to us.

I'm not grousing, mind you – I am **reveling** in this. It has never been easier or more fun to be a gaming geek. I feel honestly bad for any of the Old Guard who haven't stuck around for this. With all of the advances has come a kind of maturation process in the hobby. As it becomes easier to mix cinema with the tabletop experience (through music, computer graphics, and time-saving game mastering tools), players are far more inclined to step past the number-crunching and the rules-lawyering and take a stab at real immersion and storytelling.

Sure, there's still someone screaming "Where's the Mountain Dew?" from the kitchen. There must always be someone screaming from the kitchen, or we will have lost an important part of our heritage.

Of course, the maturity of our hobby is undeniable; the fact is that gamers, overall, have simply grown older. The average age of roleplaying gamers has skewed seriously upwards. While this means that we have a less twinkish player base to draw from, it also means that we are in danger of dying out as a species, unless we figure out a way to recruit more whippersnappers.

But... that's a rant for a different issue.

For now, let me give you an idea what I am going

to be up to here. As someone who has not only worked in this business, off and on, for the last couple of decades, but has been an active and enthusiastic participant since the hobby's very beginnings, I have both an Old Guard sense of our history as well as a gee-whiz wonderment about our future. I intend to share all of this with you, as well as some ideas about how to make your own gaming experiences more enjoyable and interesting.

Occasionally, I will delve into some historical aspect of the adventure game hobby, and bring forth observations about its current state. I might talk about the right kinds of snacks to keep on hand for certain kinds of games. I might go on a rant about how people who go to conventions should remember to take a shower. (Every long-time participant in this business gets to rant about that at least once in their career. My turn is coming soon.)

I know the editor has already practically slavered over her keyboard at the idea that I want to do a column about the d20 trend in gaming, so that is coming up sometime soon. Unless, of course, I can use the promise of it to attain some terrible power over her...

Miniatures, dice, laptops, and anything else you might use at the gaming table will likely be covered at some point. The state of play online will eat some words here and there, I am sure. How to publish your own stuff will have to be addressed, if for no other reason than I can finally have it all written down and can just cut-and-paste it to the umpteen million requests I get via e-mail and at conventions for just that little tidbit of wisdom.

(Here's a freebie preview, folks – **write something**. Go from there.)

In short, I live and love gaming, my friends. I have since 1976, and I will stop gaming when they pry my dice from my cold dead fingers. I can't claim that as my own, mind you – just another really

clever button saying from another neon-colored, handmade convention button. This column is my bully pulpit, my megaphone, and my seat on the high mountain. I get to play wise man and wise guy at the same time, and hopefully make it all interesting and entertaining to you.

It was this, or write game reviews. I would rather claw my eardrums out with a shrimp fork than write game reviews.

If you have anything that you think it would be fun to see me fling words at, by all means drop a line in either of the Silven Trumpeter forums [link: <http://www.silven.com/community/forums.asp?case=subsections&id=21>]. I'll probably do the occasional "letter column" thing if I get enough good ones.

All for now, and welcome to the Silven Crossroads and the *Silven Trumpeter*!

Sean Patrick Fannon is the author of *The Fantasy Roleplaying Gamer's Bible*, and has worked on numerous gaming projects over the last two decades. His magnum opus, *Shaintar: Immortal Legends*, is now entering the marketplace, and he's very excited to be writing for a quality publication like the *Silven Trumpeter*. It certainly beats clawing his eardrums out with a shrimpfork... Email Sean at [SeanPatFan@gmail.com](mailto:SeanPatFan@gmail.com).



# Three Drabbles

by Nghi Vo

In the desert, the spirit of the well waited for holy men.

The bearded traders were too wily; they carried charms made by women who loved them, and always bedded their animals facing toward Mecca. They knew the words that would keep her away while they stole her water.

The holy men were fools, and they came without protection and without fear. They drank from her well and spoke with her, calling her 'daughter.' Her bedding place was decorated with their skulls.

She lived there until no more men came, and she became a whistle of wind over wet stones.

A drabble is a story written in exactly one hundred words. Some time back in last October, in the midst of post-graduation unemployment, I decided that I wanted to write one hundred drabbles. From October until February, I more or less successfully cranked out a drabble a night. Some of them I can't stand to look at now, and some of them I'm still rather proud of, but the fact remains that they exist, all 10,000 words of them.

*When I think the drabbles as a whole, I think of how much my life has changed since I started writing them. I've gained a job, lost some friends, gained some other ones, lost my mind and my dignity, had my sense of humor tested, got into a nasty car accident, written half a novel, and more or less survived. The usual run of things, I imagine.*

The thought that cerebral data ports had been unavailable to the previous generation of geisha was foreign to Sadako. She couldn't imagine not having instant access to her teahouse's prodigious database, or living without the augmentation that the Information Revolution had brought to Kyoto.

She would never have known, otherwise, that the man sprawled on the floor was a member of the Japanese royal family, or that he had very recently and very secretly married a geisha named Kaede.

Sadako found her teahouse's contact within the Daily Yomiuri and smiled at the speed that brought the press to the door.

I thought I took a wrong turn after the enormous rabbit skull; I was sure of it when I came upon Vitter's statue, the Bellam Lepidoptera. Foolishly, I kept going, though my torches were guttering low.

After another three days, sucking moisture off the walls and circling backwards, I knew I would never see the Middle Kingdom again.

I cried, and then I began digging a burrow. A day later, I found a well, and then a crop of strange, spicy mushrooms.

We lose our homes all the time, and sometimes it is best to simply make a new one.



A detailed chalk drawing of a graveyard at night. In the center, a large, rectangular tombstone sits on a raised platform. The word "CURSES!" is written on the front of the tombstone in a bold, blocky, outlined font. To the left of the main tombstone, there are several smaller, rounded tombstones. In the background, a tall, thin, spire-like structure with a circular top stands against a dark, textured sky. The foreground is filled with tall, thin grasses and some small, dark figures that look like skeletons or spirits. The overall style is dark and atmospheric, using fine lines and shading to create depth and texture.

by Eytan  
Bernstein

***Curses!*** is a comprehensive d20 guide to the use of curses, hexes and other magical afflictions. ***Curses!*** provides background material for expanding the notion of curses in your game and includes several new prestige classes, new feats, spells, and a number of variant options. From voodoo dolls to sweating blood, ***Curses!*** is everything you need to torment your PCs or spice up your favorite evil game! If evil isn't your style, there are also a variety of tools for vengeance and punishment and material to make your NPCs more interesting.

***Curses!*** is not only useful to spellcasters but also to other classes. There are options for traditional hexers as well for those looking to add a little misery to their character - or that of others. The book also offers some rules that clarify and expand the existing d20 curse rules.

***Curses!*** features the following:

- ▶ Background material for curses based on many traditions including: Ancient Greece, the Judeo-Christian Tradition, Voudoun and the Evil Eye
- ▶ A list of spells from the core rule books which gain the curse subtype - a new subtype for magical spells
- ▶ Variant rules on the use of the curse subtype
- ▶ New uses for the bestow curse and mark of justice spells
- ▶ 17 new spells for bards, clerics, druids, paladins, rangers and sorcerer/wizards.
- ▶ 12 new feats
- ▶ 4 new prestige classes



# Reviews, Reviews .....reviews!

## How we rate

### Scoring definitions for d20 products:

18 = Superior. *Best of the best.*  
16 = Very Good. *Part of a Baker's Dozen.*  
14 = Good. *Most gamers would like this.*  
12 = Fair. *Some gamers would like this.*  
10 = Average. *Most gamers would be indifferent.*  
8 = Sub-par. *Flawed, but not without promise.*  
6 = Bad. *Most gamers would dislike this.*  
4 = Very Bad. *Among the Dirty Dozen.*  
2 = Inferior. *Worst of the worst.*

### Scoring Definitions for non-d20 products:

12 = Superior. *Best of the best.*  
11 = Excellent. *Just a hair from perfect.*  
10 = Very Good. *Part of a Baker's Dozen.*  
9 = Good. *Most gamers would like this.*  
8 = Fair. *Some gamers would like this.*  
7 = Average. *Most gamers would be indifferent.*  
6 = Sub-par. *Flawed, but not without promise.*  
5 = Poor. *Some gamers would dislike this.*  
4 = Bad. *Most gamers would dislike this.*  
3 = Very Bad. *Among the Dirty Dozen.*  
2 = Inferior. *Worst of the worst.*

### Obsidian: The Age of Judgment

*Obsidian*, a very dark cyber-punk RPG core book is a 257-page hardback with interior black & white art from a collection of talented individuals...

*page 23*

### Heavy Gear: Miniature Rules

Normally, I would not cover a product like this, but the rules are actually tied to the pen-and paper RPG quite nicely, and I felt that some readers would really benefit from finding out more about the miniatures game...

*page 24*

### Heavy Gear: Earth Companion

This is a supplement for Heavy Gear 3rd Edition (along with the Silhouette Core Rules)...

*page 25*

### Xenomorph Invasion Demo

Xenomorph Invasion Demo is only ten pages worth of PDF. I expect this to be going way up in the final product since the only information given is that which is relevant to the demo...

*page 26*

read on...



## Obsidian: The Age of Judgment

Authors: Micah Skaritka, Dav Harnish, Frank Nolan  
Publisher: [Apophis Consortium \[http://www.apophisconsortium.com/\]](http://www.apophisconsortium.com/)

Reviewed by: *Nash J. DeVita*

Review Date: *September 12th, 2005*

*Reviewer Bias: I first found out about Obsidian during Gen Con Indy 2004. I did not have the opportunity to speak with the Apophis crew then but I made sure I did early on during Gen Con 2005. It's a good thing I did, too. I got my hands on a great game and interviewed a really great author, Micah Sakritka.*

*Obsidian*, a very dark cyber-punk RPG core book is a 257-page hardback with interior black & white art from a collection of talented individuals, including a couple of fairly well known names – Jason Gunn, Scott James, Randy Post, Mike Sutfin, Arnie Swekel, Fred Hooper, Daren Bader, George Davis, Christopher Shy, Johnathan Price, Rick Meyers, Paul Carrick, Lance Hutto, and Craig Deeley. The gloomy image that dawns the cover is from Christopher Shy.

### From the Back Cover

The year is 2299. Humanity wages a war against the manifested legions of Hell itself. In the final battle, the last vestiges of mankind construct a vast fortified city to hold the daemonic hordes at bay. Within this city, massive corporations vie for power, daemonic kults carve a bloody swath through its citizenry, and technology has surpassed the limits of the flesh. Take care when choosing your allies, even more when choosing your enemies. This is the Zone.

### Presentation

The cover's main feature is a war-torn man who is draped in only a somewhat toga-like robe of crimson. Women in various states of dress kneel before him while two heavily armored guards stand at his side in the shadows. This image is quite realistic-looking and helps portray the

darkness of the entire game thanks to the lighting that is utilized.

The title is written in a very strong font in dark gold. The 'O' in *Obsidian* contains a '2' since this is the second edition of the core book. The page border reflects another important portion of the game – technology. The border contains a circuitry-type pattern in grayscale so as to not distract the eye.

### Content

*Obsidian: the Age of Judgment* is a core book. It contains everything that a core book should. It goes above and beyond in some areas, actually. One of the things I am most impressed with, beyond the setting itself, is the organization. The book is broken down into six chapters and each is clearly labeled to reflect the contents. Also, they are in such an order as to build from one to the next. This is a flaw far too many RPG books have suffered – odd placement of chapters or inclusion of information in a chapter that isn't truly related.

**Obsidian Epoch**, the first chapter, contains detailed information on the history behind everything as well as the current setting. The history is so solid that I read it aloud to my wife on the way home from Gen Con Indy 2005. We were both floored at the skewing of true historic events and personalities and how well they all fit into 'real reality.' I will not spoil it for any of you, but it includes a large number of facts from history books and the Bible and spins them in such a manner that it all fits the game perfectly and almost makes the game believable.

What I will say is this – mankind had been dooming itself from the start thanks to all of the deplorable acts that have gone on regularly throughout history. Humanity itself invited demons from the various planes of hell via the heinous acts (sins) that each is directly tied to.

These demons were thankful. So thankful, in fact, that they ravaged humanity. The total remaining members of mankind were so small they were doomed. A demon from the heavenly plane – God, if you will – visited these last members of humanity and granted some of them insight and mystical powers to help fend off the demons. From here, a grand city/compound was built. This city, called The Zone, is so large that it is divided into 80 sectors, each itself a self-sustaining city.

Everything outside of The Zone is an absolute wasteland. In fact, that is exactly what it is all called – The Wasteland. Apropos, no? It is ruled by demons. Hardly anything stands a chance of survival for very long in the wasteland. Life inside of The Zone is not without its tribulations. The population has grown considerably.

Wherever there are a lot of people, bad things are bound to happen. There is still corruption, murder, drug abuse, and much more. The demons have some individuals on the inside of The Zone who hope to gain power via demonic bartering. These Kultists serve the demons well – so well that they occasionally manage to open a gate to hell for some of them to get into The Zone

Chapter two, **Elements of the Story**, goes into greater detail of the setting and the recent happenings as far as the story and the players are concerned. Social life and morals are also discussed here. All in all, this is the character creation chapter for characters of either side of the moral ethos, good or evil.

The next chapter, **Regulations**, covers exactly what it sounds like it will – the rules. All of the core game system mechanics are covered here along with the combat system, including (but not limited to) combat maneuvers and applying damage. Combat in *Obsidian* is lethal. It is important to remember that there are often alternatives to direct combat. If you do not, your character will not be alive long.

The entire system is really quite smooth. It always utilizes a number of d6 depending on the skill ranking (somewhat similar to *Shadowrun*). There are so very few charts to reference for modifiers that the system has a nice flow to it.

**Inhabitants** is the fourth chapter. Can you guess what is here? If you can, you are likely only partly right. This covers the roles of Mystics ('good' supernatural individuals), Kultists (the evil side of that coin) and both groups' 'spells', Rituals and Convocations. Corporations, since they run much of The Zone, are here along with types of 'street contacts' the characters are likely to have. Many of them are, in some way, shape, or form, related to corps.

Chapter five, **Tools of the Common**, is the gear chapter. It includes all of the things you would expect from just about any role playing game – standard equipment, armor, weapons, and things like transportation, health care, and communications.

The fun stuff is also included here – cybernetics. I can't think of many, if any, good cyberpunk games that don't have a good selection of cyberware. *Obsidian* is no exception. Also given for the sheer fun of it are (mostly) lethal security systems as well as drugs that have a serious variety of effects.

The final chapter, **Antagonists & Protagonists**, covers those details not given before on those individuals and organizations that are mostly beyond the players – demons and the Darchomen (the real rulers of The Zone who strive for the protection of its citizenry), major corporation presences and the Law (police). These are all possible/probable types of entities for the characters to run into during the course of a game but are all unlikely to be played themselves.

### Conclusion

Do yourself a favor and do not jump to the conclusion that *Obsidian* is just like other, similar

games. It may appear so on the surface, but it is much more. I guarantee it.

If you like cyber-punk at all, do yourself another favor and buy this book. At the price of the book, it is well worth it.

Micah told me in my interview with him that he had very seriously thought about leaving the industry and this line behind. I am so very glad that he did not as I have discovered a great new game that I can not wait to run.

### Archetype: Core Book

**Body 9** (*Game Mechanics*): A little sluggish but they work.

**Mind 11** (*Organization*): I could not ask for better, really.

**Spirit 11** (*Look & Feel*): All of the varying moods are portrayed well.

**Attack 12** (*Value of Content*): \$28 for 250 pages = a great value!

**Defense 10** (*Originality of Content*): Some parallels can be drawn initially, but the game goes well beyond them.

**Health 9** (*Physical Quality*): Banged corners and maybe a little smudging of some ink on the borders.

**Magic 11** (*Options & Adaptability*): You can tell so many different types of stories through *Obsidian* that it is disgusting!

### Heavy Gear: Miniature Rules

Authors: Robert Dubiod, Stuart Elle, John Buckmaster, Mark A. Vézina, Dayvd Atwood, Jonathan Breese, Nick Pilow, & Philipp F. Leclerc  
Publisher: [Dream Pod 9 \[http://www.dp9.com/\]](http://www.dp9.com/)  
Reviewed by: *Nash J. DeVita*  
Review Date: *September 13th, 2005*

This one book contains all of the rules necessary to play a number of different types of the Heavy Gear tactical miniature game. This is an 80-page paperback with photography and art from Ghislain Barbe, Robert Dubois, Philippe F. Lecerc, and Alain Gabois.

Normally, I would not cover a product like this, but the rules are actually tied to the pen-and-paper RPG quite nicely, and I felt that some readers would really benefit from finding out more about the miniatures game.

### From the Back Cover

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of Heavy Gear, we bring you the new 3rd Edition of miniature rules! The new Silhouette Core Heavy Gear Miniature Rules takes the acclaimed Silhouette game mechanics to the next level, with game play from one on one melee scale to massive Fleet scale battles. The Tactical scale has been revamped to speed up the game and save time on record keeping. Rules updates include improved Command Point usage, streamlined ammunition tracking, plus new artillery, air and orbital strike rules. The best in Giant Robot miniature games just got better!

The Silhouette Core Heavy Gear Miniature Rules include the following:

- Tactical scale, the main Heavy Gear miniature battle scale.
- Melee scale, character-scale battles with rules for converting SilCORE RPG characters into miniature stats.
- Duelist scale, for one on one duelist gear battles in close quarters skirmishes.
- Fleet scale, massive battles with land-ships and squad stands.
- Weapon tables, combat tables, and data cards included.

### Presentation

The cover of this title features a great number of painted miniatures in the background and one Gear unit in the fore. This particular mech is in desert tans and is wielding a large cannon and a knife. The painting on all of the miniatures is absolutely superb!

The vast majority of the art work contained herein is composed of photographs of miniatures – squads, single units, battle field scenes, etc. There



are also some manga-style illustrations included. The data cards contain both mini photos and illustrations.

### Content

As has been stated above, this book contains all of the rules necessary to play the *Heavy Gear Tactical Miniatures* game. This third edition expands on the old rules by leaps and bounds, but keeps them streamlined.

No longer is the minis game just "tactical". It can also be played on melee scale, one-on-one Duelist scale, and even massive Fleet scale. I'll be discussing the rules below but will not go into great detail. If you want detailed information on the rules, you can buy the book.

### Basics

Each miniature on the battlefield has a data card. This one data card has all of the pertinent information on that miniature. This way, you don't have to memorize all of the numbers that are associated with each and every member of your army nor do you have to flip open a book for all of the stats.

To perform most actions, one must roll against a skill. These skills are some of the same from the RPG and are written and rolled in just the same manner. This makes switching from one type of game to the other a breeze.

Being a combat game, there are lots and lots of rules on, well, combat, as well as the field of combat.

**Tactical Scale** is the typical scale of play. This consists of Gears, tanks and like vehicles, and some foot troops. This is really what the basic rules were designed to cover, so there are no more 'scale specific' rules here.

**Melee Scale**, on the other hand, does have new rules since it is a new scale for combat. This scale uses only foot troops. There are a number of

new rules introduced here, but most revolve around conversion of an RPG character to a Melee Scale mini character.

Players of the RPG are likely a little familiar with **Duelist Scale** already. Duelists are Gear pilots who challenge each other in one on one (or close to it) close range combat. Some new movement is introduced but most of the rules are merely minor conversions for close range combat.

I really like the idea of the **Dueling Arena** that is described in this section. If I still played mini games, I'd be all over this when I wanted to play but didn't have hours upon hours to dedicate to it.

**Fleet Scale** can help speed up play by grouping units into squads. This can help save some serious time because micromanagement is no longer as much of an issue thanks to these rules.

### Conclusion

Some of the rules can seem kind of confusing if you are not used to playing a tactical minis game. Once you have played a 'test' game, though, I think the rules should seem good deal clearer. I think this is true of any minis game, though, so you can not hold it against this one game in particular.

### Archetype: Supplement

**Body 10** (*Game Mechanics*): A nice minis system that ties to the RPG system well.

**Mind 11** (*Organization*): Can't get much better.

**Spirit 11** (*Look & Feel*): Fitting. Absolutely beautiful minis.

**Attack 9** (*Value of Content*): A complete rules set for only \$20.

**Defense 8** (*Originality of Content*): A nice rule set but it is a revision.

**Health 8** (*Physical Quality*): Being a paperback, tears can occur.

**Magic 10** (*Options & Adaptability*): So many types of games are available now.

## Heavy Gear: Earth Companion

Authors: Mark A. Vézina, John Buckmaster, Nick Pilon, Esteban Oceana, Janne Hempi, Scott A. Blow, Allistar Gillies, Dennis D. Kirkpatrick, Bryan Lee, Christian Schaller, & Wunji Law

Publisher: [Dream Pod 9](http://www.dp9.com/) [http://www.dp9.com/]

Reviewed by: *Nash J. DeVita*

Review Date: *September 13th, 2005*

*Reviewer Bias: I was introduced to the Silhouette system about three years ago when I picked up Heavy Gear 2nd Edition. This title was received for review and future play.*

This is a supplement for *Heavy Gear 3rd Edition* (along with the *Silhouette Core Rules*). This is a 255-page paperback with art (cover and interior) from Marc Ouellette, John Wu, Bobbi Burquel, Patrick Boutin Gangé, Ghislain Barbe, Jean-François Fortier, Pierre Ouellette, Hieran J. Yanner, & Alain Gadbois.

### From the Back Cover

Earth – cradle of mankind, and currently home of the neo-fascist New Earth Commonwealth, master of the feared Colonial Expeditionary Force. Visit the home world of humanity and see how it was altered by evolution, ice ages, and violent regime changes.

New Earth Commonwealth, along with its main fighting arm, the Expeditionary Force [CEF], is one of the main antagonists of the Heavy Gear universe. Equipped with advanced technology and vat-grown gene-engineered warriors, the NEC forces are intent on subjugating the entire interstellar network of human-colonized worlds for the greater glory (and profit) of the Commonwealth! This sourcebook details the history, structure, and equipment of this deadly foe:

- A complete history of both 62nd century Earth and Colonial Expeditionary Force;
- An examination of culture, geography, and daily life on post- ice age Earth;

- Background details on the strategies, uniforms, medals, and procedures of the CEF;
- NEC characters, equipment and fighting vehicles, including the CEF fleet.

### Presentation

The cover features a man wearing heavy armor. He is surrounded by a number of other soldiers and mecha, but he is the only figure that is well defined and even he is bathed in shadow. He is toting two huge guns and a number of targeting lights.

All of the interior art work is black and white and in an anime/manga style that Dream Pod 9 (DP9) has become known for. The largest images, through most of the book, are about a third of a page. There are a few images, like tech schematics, that are a full page. The image placement, as far as position and content relevance, is top notch.

### Content

Earth – humanity’s beginning and now its greatest enemy. The *Earth Companion* helps take the forces of Earth from simple “jack-booted thugs” to real people with hopes and dreams (as misguided as they may be).

Given in this title is a brief overview of the ‘history’ (our future, but the in-game history) of Earth and its colonies as well as the basics of the planet – ecology, landscape (I think most players already know about most of these things), and even the conquests of the Earth government.

Following that, the title gets onto the good stuff. Next up is a chapter on the various factions of Earth. Earth may be ‘one big happy place’, but not everyone lives under the same direct rule – there are larger groups like the Brazilian Combine and Allied Europe and smaller ones such as the Black Sea Coalition and the North American Waste Zone (happy sounding place, huh?).

Logically following the ruling parties should be those that are ruled – and that is exactly what

comes next - Life on Earth and The Forces of Earth: the personal aspects and the military aspects of the planet. The first of these chapters includes info on the language of Earth, the state of medicine and housing and even the very basics of the justice system. The second includes the basic breakdown of the military and its ranks. Battle groups and commanders are detailed as are the various types of GRELS - Genetically Recombined Experimental Legionnaires. These are super-soldiers of a sort.

The next few chapters get into greater details of the military - Earth Infantry, Earth Armor, and Logistics. These chapters include greater details on foot troops and their squads, squads of troops in Gears and other heavy vehicles, the thought behind fuel and ammo usage, medical personnel, how and when to use what types of fire power, and even the chain of command (and how it can change).

Chapter eight, Machines & Equipment, covers (you guessed it) military firearms, tanks, frames, and vehicles. Frames are a type of gear. There are six separate frames given with complete stats. The vehicles range from a submarine to a hunter/killer drone. Most of these entries take a page to two pages with a picture and stat blocks.

Next we move off of Earth itself and begin to discuss Earth’s Space Assets. Much of this chapter is stats again, but includes stat blocks for weapons as well as a number of space vessels.

Thankfully, there is some flavor added to this chapter in the form of Crew Interviews. These consist of a military service officer speaking of the ship and the policies that take place on board. These are fairly short but offer a great break from stats.

The final chapter in this title, Notable Battle Groups, is a who’s who of sorts. Described are a few notable squads that are in service as well as a few personalities from the military. These really make for excellent recurring enemies.

Because of this fact, this chapter is actually the one that I have turned to most in this title.

### Conclusion

This is a book that a player of *Heavy Gear 3* can live without. That being said, it is a valuable tool for any hardcore player or GM of the game. With the forces of Earth being such a massive threat to players and all of the colonies, they deserve a title of their own and now they have it.

### Archetype: Supplement

**Body 10** (*Game Mechanics*): Those that are introduced are fitting.

**Mind 11** (*Organization*): Quite nice.

**Spirit 11** (*Look & Feel*): Inspired and fitting.

**Attack 8** (*Value of Content*): \$30 for a book this thick is not bad.

**Defense 9** (*Originality of Content*): A lot of new info.

**Health 8** (*Physical Quality*): Being a paperback, tears can occur.

**Magic 9** (*Options & Adaptability*): A number of new options for citizens of Earth are now available.

### Xenomorph Invasion Demo

Author: Jason Libby

Publisher: [Dilly Green Bean Games \[http://www.dillygreenbeangames.com/\]](http://www.dillygreenbeangames.com/)

Reviewed by: *Nash J. DeVita*

Review Date: *November 27th, 2004*

*Reviewer Bias: This was received for review purposes. I do have some previous work with the Basic System/Fuzion System.*

*I do have to apologize to Jason Libby for the delay in the review. To tell the truth, I completely forgot about the request until just before Gen Con & going on vacation. Sorry, mate.*

The version of *Xenomorph Invasion* that is reviewed here is only a demo. There are bound to be a number of major changes made to this product before it becomes a full version.



## Presentation

*Xenomorph Invasion Demo* is only ten pages worth of PDF. I expect this to be going way up in the final product since the only information given is that which is relevant to the demo. A good portion of the artwork is computer-drawn and looks quite good. I wish the product would stick with only this type of illustration as it is fitting and not often seen, at least at this quality. There are also some hand drawn illustrations. They are far rougher than the 3D-rendered computer illustrations.

The cover features a space freighter being fired upon by a small number of fighter craft. The freighter was done in a very clean 3D render style while the fighters were hand-done. The fighters just look 'off' to me. Of course, I am almost never a fan of merging the two styles into one illustration, so I may be a little biased in this view.

## Content

As a mere ten pages, there isn't much here yet. I do really look forward to where the concept goes, however.

Humanity has reached a point in time that it is ready to move beyond 'known space'. There are so many possibilities with this idea that I believe a great number of stories will, some day, be able to be told.

At this point in time, though, *Xenomorph Invasion* just has not been fleshed out enough to see the possibilities beyond the similarities. The primary fighter vehicles are akin to 'Veritech' fighters (from *Robotech*). The primary antagonists in the demo seem to be space pirates. Those beyond the demo, if I can judge from the image at the end, are big insects.

These things have all been seen and done before and have been done a little better. I do believe there is great hope for *Xenomorph Invasion* once it has grown beyond the demo stage. Yes, these things have been done before because they

are iconic. As such, most players know what to expect to get and to give. If Jason Libby puts the right twists on these elements and drops enough fresh elements into the game, this could prove to be a great game.

I can see that he is more than capable of such. The Earth government within the game is not a violence-loving, shoot-first kind of organization even though it is run by the military. Also, it is clear that not all is good on Earth, as there is a separate Russian organization. I can't wait to see some expansion on these groups.

One suggestion I can make to Jason right now is this: please change the name of the 'Longbow Shuttle'. I am a bit of a *Halo* fan and this is the same name given to a transport in that game... or maybe it is 'Long Sword' in the video game. I can't remember now. Either way, I think a lot of people out there will balk at the name.

## Conclusion

At only ten pages, I can't make a fair review of the product. I just don't have enough to work off of. Like I have said, I am not impressed with what I can see here (thanks to 'been there, done that') but I do see an awful lot of potential. I really look forward seeing where this goes in the hopes that it goes in the positive direction. The scores are based on the fact that it is only a ten page demo and that there is more to come.

### Archetype: Setting

**Body 7** (*Game Mechanics*): Stats are given, no new mechanics. The stats do fit, however.

**Mind N/A** (*Organization*): 10 page demo.

**Spirit 7** (*Look & Feel*): Some art looks nice, some looks out of place.

**Attack N/A** (*Value of Content*): It's a demo.

**Defense 6** (*Originality of Content*): Been there, done that. This is only a demo, though.

**Health N/A** (*Physical Quality*): PDF.

**Magic N/A** (*Options & Adaptability*): I see great potential here. Only a demo now, though.

# Death at Whitefell Pass

by Kyle Thompson

Silven Publishing will be releasing Kyle Thompson's exciting new adventure module, *Death at Whitefell Pass*, in October.

Here you will find a preview of the adventure and a free monster from the book to whet your appetite.

## Adventure Background

*Death at Whitefell Pass* takes place in a winter or frozen locale deemed appropriate by the DM. It begins with the PCs entering a small military outpost, Fort White, at the opening of a canyon named Whitefell Pass.

Upon entering Fort White the PCs learn that goblins have been organizing raiding parties against the outpost.

Also, they learn of Azar'ixta'mesh (**A**-zar-eeek-sta-mesh), a lost city said to be hidden somewhere in Whitefell Pass. The city has not been heard from or reached for as long as any of the townsfolk can remember. What the locals do not know is that Azar'ixta'mesh harbors a dark secret that is only the beginning of a string of events that could destroy the world.

The last party that attempted to reach Azar'ixta'mesh was lead by a wizard named Infarcious (**In-far**-shus) five years before. Several weeks after the party left for the lost city, a half-mad Infarcious stumbled into town alone. No one believed that he and his party (now all deceased) had actually located Azar'ixta'mesh. Two years after the event, Infarcious appeared to have committed suicide through magical means. No one has

attempted to search for Azar'ixta'mesh since that time.

The PCs will discover that the goblin raids plaguing the town and Azar'ixta'mesh are related. The goblins are being sent on these raids by Malix, a manical madman, who is residing in Azar'ixta'mesh and attempting to open the rifts and destroy the world.

## Adventure Synopsis

*Death at Whitefell Pass* begins with the PCs entering a small outpost called Fort White. Here they meet the captain of the guard, Melshum (**Mel**-shoom) who informs the PCs that the outpost has been having trouble from goblins. The guard is growing more tired and stained by the day as the goblins continue to attack the village on a regular basis.

While in Fort White, the PCs also hear of Azar'ixta'mesh, a lost city allegedly filled with treasure.

On the first night of their stay, the PCs are forced to fight a frost giant that comes through a portal into the outpost. During the battle Fort White is destroyed, allowing Azar'ixta'mesh and its army free reign of the land. The refugees from Fort White head off to Nightwood, a town due east of Fort White.

The PCs are told by the last remaining guard, a man named Mithnik (**Mi**-thnik), that if they seek out and destroy the goblins, Fort White would be in their debt.

In order to defeat the goblins and locate Azar'ixta'mesh, the PCs must enter Whitefell Pass. Destroying the goblins is merely a distraction.

The real threat lies in the forgotten city of Azar'ixta'mesh and in the dark magic that lingers there.

When the PCs think it's finally over, they will discover that Azar'ixta'mesh is only one of several areas in which the catastrophic rift-opening event has occurred. This information will lead the PCs into several other adventures in order to form *The Rifts of Nar'dezi* adventure series.

## New Monster

*Death at Whitefell Pass* introduces some new game content. The frozen guard is just one of the new monsters introduced.

### Frozen Guard

#### Medium Construct (Cold)

**Hit Dice:** 8d10 (40 hp)

**Initiative:** +2

**Speed:** 20 ft.

**AC:** 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 15

**Base Attack/Grapple:** +6/+11

**Attacks:** Frost Longsword +10 melee (1d8+6 damage and 1d6 cold damage; 19-20/X2)

**Full Attack:** *Frost longsword* +10 melee (1d8+6/19-20 and 1d6 cold)

**Face/Reach:** 5ft./5ft.

**Special Attacks:** *Ray of Frost, Greater*

**Special Qualities:** Construct Traits, Melting

**Saves:** Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +1

**Abilities:** Str 20, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 14

**Skills:** -

**Feats:** -

**Climate/Terrain:** Any Cold

**Organization:** Solitary, pair or troop (3-10)

**Challenge Rating:** 5

**Treasure:** None

**Alignment:** Same as creator

**Advancement:** 9-10 HD (Medium)

**Level Adjustment:** -

*A suit of armor, crafted entirely of ice slowly*



*approaches you. It sparkles in the light and brandishes longsword also constructed of ice.*

Frozen guards are often crafted by wizards and sorcerers to guard treasure stashes and other important areas. They are costly to construct, but very good guardians. However, they are not without disadvantage. Frozen guards will melt in temperatures above 32°F.

#### **COMBAT**

Frozen guards follow their creator's orders to their destruction.

**Cold Subtype (Ex):** Cold immunity; double damage from fire except on a successful save.

**Construct Traits:** Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

**Melting (Ex):** A frozen guard melts in temperatures over 32°F. A frozen guard loses 1d4 hp for every 1 degree over 32°F every hour. If the temperature reaches 45°F, this increases the rate to every half hour. Temperatures over 60°F increase the rate to 1d4hp every minute.

**Ray of Frost, Greater (Su):** A frozen guard may cast *ray of frost, greater* three times a day as a fourth level sorcerer. See page \_ in the appendix of this module for the spell description.

#### **Construction**

A frozen guard's body must be sculpted from a single block of crystal clear ice weighing at least 500 pounds. The frozen guard costs 30,000 gp to create, including 500 gp for the body materials. Creating the body requires a successful Craft (sculpting) check (DC 15).

The creator must be at least 14<sup>th</sup> level and able to cast arcane spells. Completing the ritual drains 800 XP from the creator and requires *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *polymorph any object*, and *ray of frost, greater*.

# RACES OF TWILIGHT

## The Green

by Michael Thompson



silven **P**ublishing

Deep in the forests of the the world, the legendary tree men stir as their world is threatened by the humanoid races. Their numbers dwindle as the centuries pass, but their will to survive is strong. Can they protect themselves and the natural world from fire, magic, and steel, or will they and their lore pass into the twilight?

**Races of Twilight: The Green** is the first in a series of d20 racial toolkits. Not simply a collection of elf and dwarf variants, the Races of Twilight series provides detailed information on unique and original player races that can be incorporated into any fantasy campaign. While intended for the experienced gamer who enjoys deep characterization and role-playing over one-dimensional heroics and “roll-playing,” **Races of Twilight: The Green** can be used by anyone who likes unusual characters.

Each of the races presented are in some way approaching the final phase of their cultural, political, or physiological development and are slowly fading from the world. Some have fallen into decadence and apathy; others have lost their dominance and position in a world of multiracial empires; still others have been crushed by disease, overpopulation, or magical travails. Whether each races dies and is forgotten or overcomes its difficulties and thrives is in the hands of players and DMs.

While each book provides numerous details on a new race, plenty of room is left for DMs to develop a unique background and role for that race in his campaign world.



## OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

**1. Definitions:** (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

**2. The License:** This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

**3. Offer and Acceptance:** By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

**4. Grant and Consideration:** In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

**5. Representation of Authority to Contribute:** If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

**6. Notice of License Copyright:** You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

**7. Use of Product Identity:** You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

**8. Identification:** If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

**9. Updating the License:** Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

**10 Copy of this License:** You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

**11. Use of Contributor Credits:** You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

**12 Inability to Comply:** If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

**13 Termination:** This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

**14 Reformation:** If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

### 15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Silven Crossroads, Silven Publishing and the corresponding logos are trademarks ©2002-2005 Kosala Ubayasekara. All Rights Reserved.

Printing out the entire e-zine can be very demanding on your printer and use a lot of ink. If you are careful about the amount of ink you use in printing then we advise you not to print the entire e-zine.

Its recommended that you print the maps on glossy paper if you can. Glossy paper is available from most stationery or office supply stores and is more expensive than regular printing paper, but the quality difference in the print is worth it.

### **Silven Crossroads Legal Notice**

#### **Trademarks and Copyright**

Silven Crossroads and the Silven Crossroads logo are trademarks ©2003 Kosala Ubayasekara. All Rights Reserved. All text and artwork are copyright their respective authors and creators as noted in the text, images, or to the right of this page.

#### **Distribution**

This document may be distributed in its entirety on any website for non-commercial purposes. In the event of this occurring, the owner of the website must refer to our free syndication guidelines at: <http://www.silven.com/syndication.asp>

#### **Usage of this document**

No changes of any kind are to be made in this document including, but not limited to, editing or changing the text or images, saving and distributing parts of this document without the whole, and copying and pasting portions or excerpts of any content found herein on any site or document.

#### **Printing**

You may print out pages and content in this document for your own personal, non-commercial use only.

### **Silven Trumpeter Magazine**

The Silven Trumpeter is a monthly publication produced by the Silven Crossroads community (<http://www.silven.com>). Articles and fiction appearing in the Silven Trumpeter are drawn from the various content areas of the Silven Crossroads site as well as contributed by independent authors.

For more information, please contact the editor at [ElizabethRALiddell@yahoo.com](mailto:ElizabethRALiddell@yahoo.com)

#### **Publisher**

Silven Crossroads. attn: Kosala Ubayasekara  
[kosala@silven.com](mailto:kosala@silven.com)  
Ekensbergsvägen 17, 1tr. 11769 Stockholm.  
Sweden.

#### **Editor in Chief**

Elizabeth R.A. Liddell

#### **Assistant Editors**

Laura Heilman and Paul Tevis

#### **Layout and Design**

Kosala Ubayasekara

## **Next Issue: Nov 1, 2005**

In the November issue of the Silven Trumpeter, look for exciting new fiction from exciting new writers! We'll also see the return of Dregg's "Lights, Camera, Action!" column. Then, don't forget your favorites like the Silven Bestiary and more!