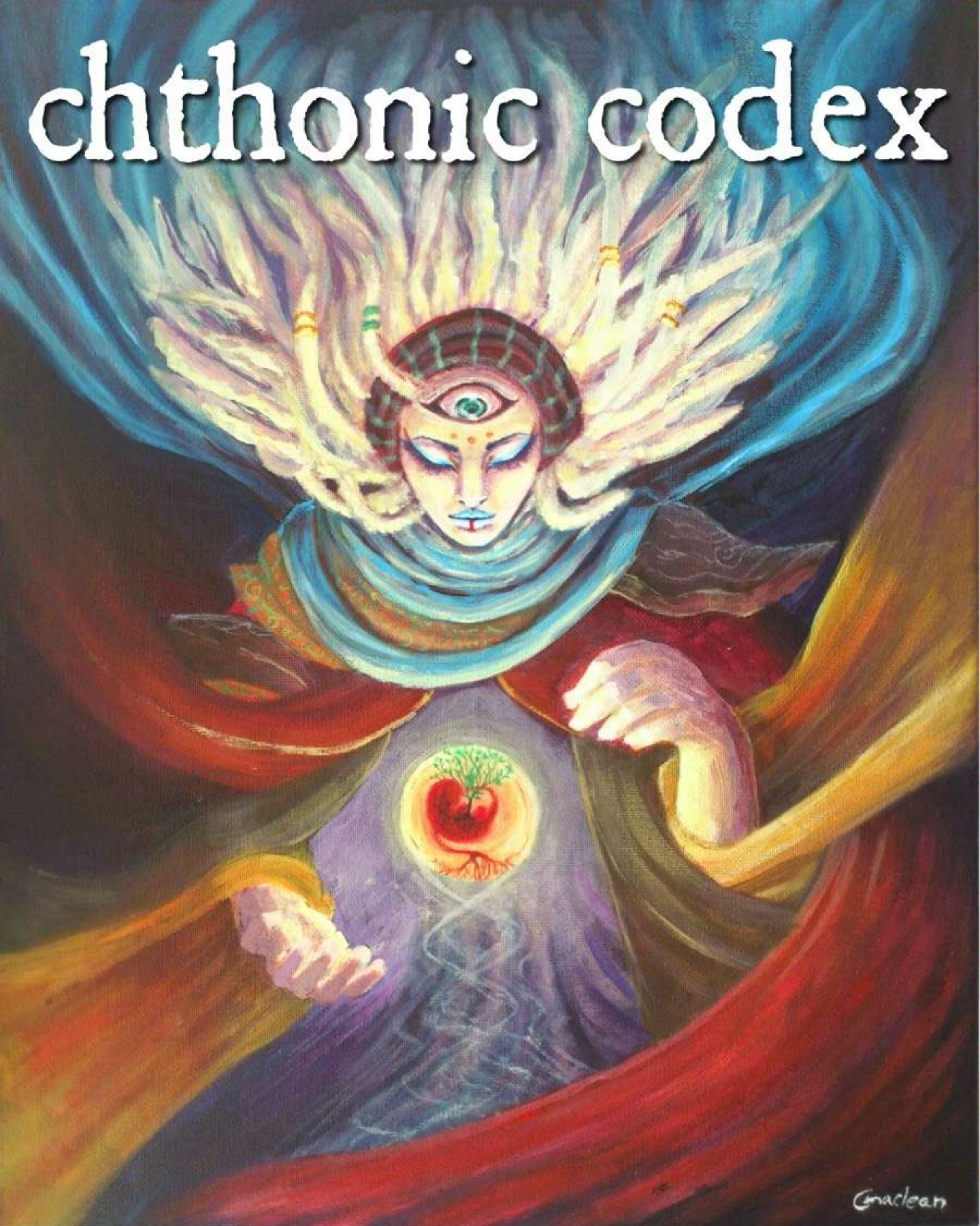


chthonic codex



Paolo Greco
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Lost Pages

chthonic codex

a Lost Pages book



issue four

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OMNIBUS EDITION

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Whys & Wherefores

This book presents, in an abridged form, what I call “Chthonic Codex”. The Codex was probably not thought as a single opus, but instead it’s a collation of scroll and clay fragments. Their leitmotif is that they all seem to be written by students and teachers of the Schools of the Hypogea of the Valley of Fire, magic universities hiding in a karst complex under a barren plateau scoured by fire.

At any rate, while editing this book I tried to abide to a golden rule:

Write what you need
Add nothing more

While I could have caked the fragments in a lengthy prose describing details aplenty, I preferred to only finish the details I found more intriguing. If possible presenting them in a near vacuum of commentary, but with game mechanics.

The canvas is now yours to complete. Enjoy the responsibility. - P.

Colophon, Corpus & Gloss

The text in the book is presented in two formats, as you can appreciate from the facing page, to better distinguish between corpus and gloss:

The corpus, the original text, is printed in Ancient type by Jeffrey S. Lee.

The rest of the book is printed in the beautiful Fell types by Iginio Marini et al., *often in Italic if presented as gloss so to make it more distinguishable from the corpus*. This is used for commentary, game mechanics and, of course, most of this page.

Note: Mysteries & Time

The book refers to Mysteries. They are not whodunnit, but cults and rites officiated in secret, only amongst initiates. It is forbidden to discuss mysteries with non initiates, or write of them at all. Mystagogues are powerful and quick to anger.

Often the original text mentions an unspecified period of time like “a few weeks” or “for hours”. If you need to be more precise, roll *1d6* to determine the correct number of rounds, turns, hours, days or weeks as appropriate.

Exculpatory Exegesis

The whole of the Codex is split in three parts,
the first describing creatures,
the second catechesis,
the third is full of truths in deliberate obscure languages, which we call Mysteries.
These all differ in tone, customs and rules.

Chthonic Codex is a campaign setting about apprentice wizards trying to graduate from magic university without being too endangered by the whims of their reckless teachers. Forget about balanced parties, generate a group of mages and have all the fun. Chthonic Codex is also this very book, and also a book in the campaign setting. This edition of Chthonic Codex combines the three booklets of the boxed set in a handy omnibus. The contents are organized as follows:

The first part is a selection of the creatures which inhabit the Hypogaea of the Valley of Fire. It's a mixture of illustrations and prose, accompanied by stat blocks. Very little is expository, don't treat it as canon, just as colour.

The second part, from page 65, pertains the catechesis, instruction of the young apprentice wizards: character generation, a new magic system, crafting, potion brewing (a great opportunity for adventuring), spells research and the Schools and their spells. Each apprentice should be in a school, and the schools might be organized in a single campus. Or not. To come up with the schools, just mash all the schools you attended, all your teachers, and use the best and the worst.

The third part, from page 129, is about the campaign in general and Mysteries in particular. It starts with several types of adventure hooks, to be used during prep or as improv aid, and accomplishments (they work as you expect, and maybe you can try to completely ignore experience points). Then a generator of initiation rituals for the mysteric cults of your campaign, and powers granted to initiates: mysteric cult initiation should be an early important event of your campaign, independently from academic achievements. Then more campaign setup: Laws of Reality, Chthonotron to generate the chthonic campaign pointcrawl procedurally, random encounters, treasures and scrolls. The infamous Devouring Idols follow, as does Mana Tar, the real reason the Schools are here. Then the important section on Truth and Lies, and tables with random names, trades and gods.

A final note: this book is part my lost Mediterranean, part lies. Greek Mysteric cults, wizardry, Sufi mysticism, struggle for power, Orthodox Christianity, drunken students, Nabatean oddness, and gonzo satire about my postgraduate studies are all in. Glasgow University not only inspired Hogwarts, but also the colleges in this very book. I hope you will find your schools in here too.

- Paolo



Asphaltomorphling

A rock shaped like a rabbit with a tentacle for a head. Another rock shaped like a foot. Another like a starfish with a three-eyed human face, or a long, coiled arm, or a perfect cube, a spider goat, a spiked trout. And these rocks move. These shapes are clearly a creation of our minds, but not the way clouds are shaped like the faces of the dead!

Truth is, mana-tar lives. And our thoughts flow and ripple and coalesce and animate it. And our uncontrolled dreams, hopes and fears shape it, and our thoughts and emotions give it a psyche, and the psyche gives it motion.

And of course we capture them. And we bind them, and we keep them around as pets and puppets and animated statues, and we are delighted and inebriated as if we actually took control of our dreams and emotions.

AFG: LVL 1 Weird, 1 hit, DEF light. Special: Mana Sink, Puppet, Mana Vessel, Swarm, Unliving.

OSR: HD 1 hit; AC 7[12]; Atk special; Move 9; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Mana Sink, Puppet, Mana Vessel, Swarm, Unliving.

Puppet: asphaltomorphlings are mentally controlled by their bound master using no effort. If their master is not controlling them, they move and change shape in a seemingly random fashion. Casters can bind captured asphaltomorphlings spending 10 minutes building an empathic link; this link is permanent.

Mana Vessel: an asphaltomorphling can transfer magical energy to its bound master as if it was mana-tar, transforming it into useless shale. AFG: The master gains 1 mana. OSR: The master can recover a spell that has been already cast during the day, or cast a spell without spending the memorization slot.

Mana Sink: every spell cast at an asphaltomorphling will be countered and absorbed by the weird, granting it 1 additional hit per spell. These additional hits dissipate at dawn.

Swarm: asphaltomorphlings are too small to fight properly, but they can swarm bigger opponents in large numbers. Compare the number of asphaltomorphlings attacking a creature with the result of 1d6; if the number is lesser than or equal to half of the swarm size, that amount of damage is dealt to the creature. Divide damage by 2 if creature is armoured.



Great Asphaltomorph

In his youth, Grand Sorcerer Deleterios I Apostate was a skilled spelunker, naturalist and explorer. Before his defiant act, he discovered the Iridescent Beneath, was the first to domesticate a glowbat, found the Crystal Hollow and recovered the Crucible of Spite from the Methane Vents during the Fire Dervish Troubles.

During his explorations of the Hypogea, following his glowbat familiar Pterobrontos, he found a particularly active pool of iridescent mana-tar. Approaching to harvest some, he stopped and stared at the pool: the tar ripples were forming precise shapes, glyphs and figures in rapid succession.

Never having heard of such behaviour, the caster spent a few hours making observations and taking samples, then cast a spell to identify the magical properties of the pool, not knowing that it was about to cost him far more than he hoped. The tar shifted into a human-sized asphaltomorphling, taking the shape of a slender humanoid armed with two blades. It lunged, carving out a chunk of flesh from the Apostate.

Deleterios's spells splashed like water against the creature. Hitting it with a sword was no better, as every blow sliced off tar, and the tar immediately took the many shapes of aggressive asphaltomorphlings, all of them joining the battle against the Apostate.

Deleterios backed up and was about to succumb under the incessant attacks, when he finally managed to collapse a part of the cave on the fiend, reducing it to a mere puddle of iridescent tar.

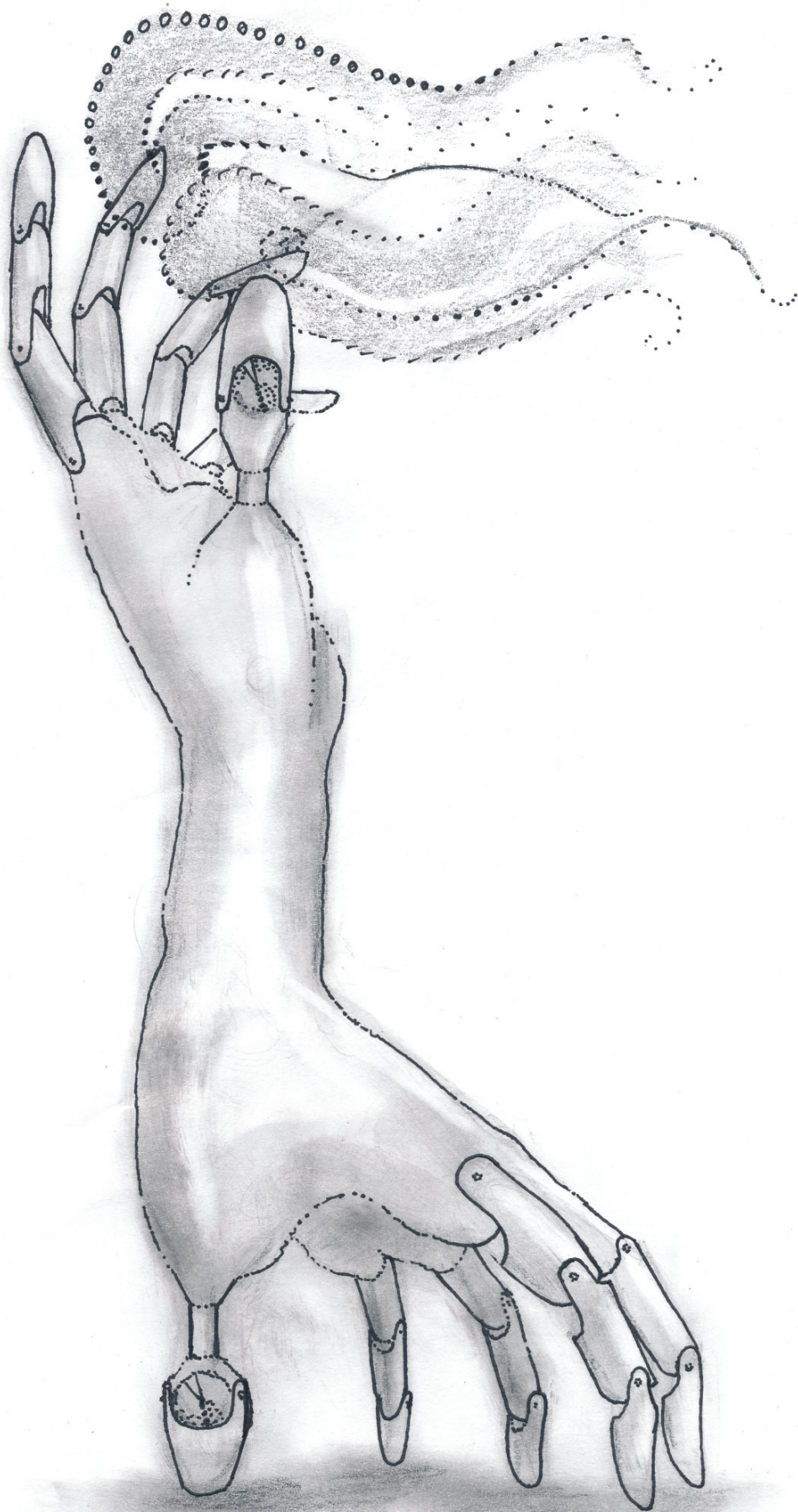
AFG: LVL 7+14 Weird, DEF Medium. Special: Fighter (+14 Hits), Morphling Fountain, Mana Sink, Moody and Masterless, Unliving.

OSR: HD 10; AC 4[15]; Atk two weapons, +3 to damage (1d8+3); Move 12; Save 5; AL None; CL/XP 16/3200; Special: Morphling Fountain, Mana Sink, Moody and Masterless, Unliving.

Morphling Fountain: every time a greater asphaltomorph is hit, the wound will spray mana tar around and form an asphaltomorphling with 1 hit for each hit lost. The asphaltomorphling will be bound to its great asphaltomorph.

Mana Sink: every spell cast at a great asphaltomorph will be countered and absorbed by the tar, increasing its current hits by one per caster level.

Moody and Masterless: great asphaltomorphs lack minds. Their actions are dictated by reflections of the thoughts in their limited surroundings and the vagaries of spellcasting in the cosmos. They are thus uncontrollable and, due to spellcasting often being done in distress, usually hostile.



Manoquin

There is something to be said about getting a hand when you really need it.

Orestes knew this. The price to be privy to the Erebus Mystery is evident by looking at its initiates. His left hand was now lost in a deep chasm, chewed on by the unknowable Reavers of Erebus. But he danced and dreamt and partook in the revelries.

His head ached. His stump ached even more. That was not the problem. The problem was not the ambush, bocklins capturing his friends, having to climb up the karst to reach the desertic surface with only one hand to avoid the chthonic perils. The problem was not explaining to his Masters what happened without irking the Mystagogues.

Back at the School, Orestes studied and experimented. After months, with scrounged ivory, gold, nacre, fossil bones and human skin, he set himself to work. And he failed again and again. The problem was replacing his hand, and failure followed failure, because the Erebus Mystery gnaws away more than a simple hand.

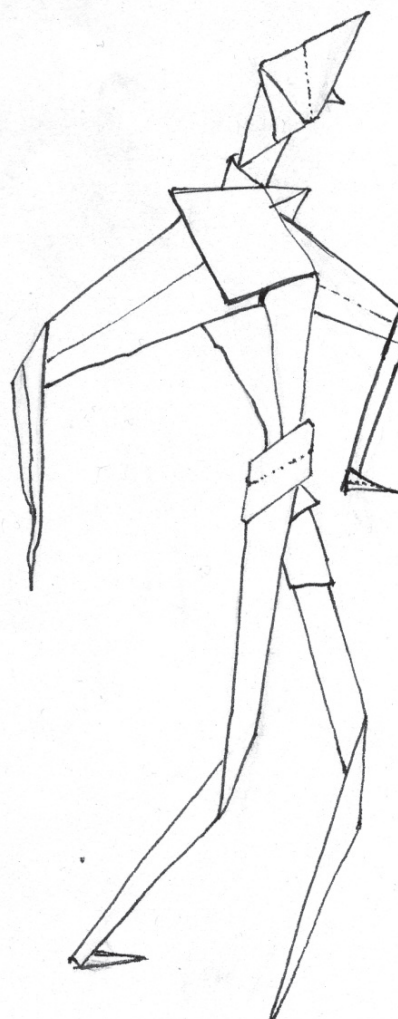
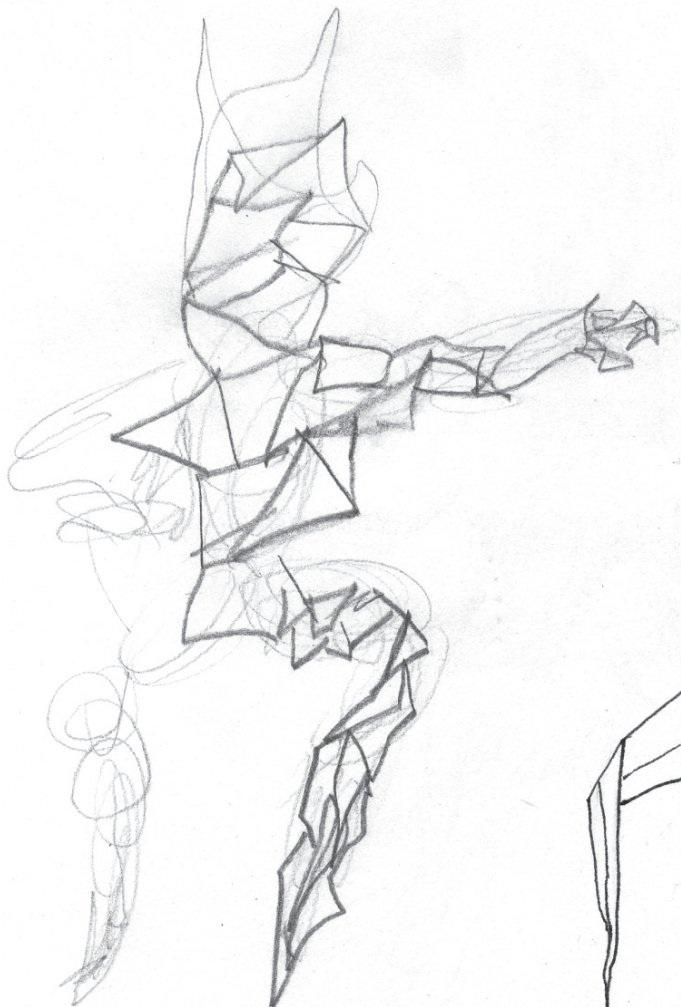
So Orestes gave up, and came up with Manoquins.

AFG: LVL 1 Construct, DEF light. Special: Lend a Spellcasting Hand, Puppet, Sneaky.

OSR: HD 1-1; AC 7[12]; Atk with weapon; Move 9; Save 18; AL none, CL/XP 1/15; Special: Lend a Spellcasting Hand, Puppet, Construct.

Lend a Spellcasting Hand: the caster can cast a spell through the manoquin. The caster must be within 30' of the manoquin and pronounce the words of power, while the gestures are carried out by the manoquin. The spell will originate not from the manoquin but from the caster.

Puppet: Manoquins are bound to their builder, who can control them mentally with no effort.



Paper Assassin

Techne was the littlest little girl in the greatest Great Workshop.

Techne grew little and wrong. Techne grew weak. Her body did not work right. She could not thread screws. She could not engrave. Nor run.

Nor lift metal tools. Not even with two hands.

She could use the littlest bone folder, needle and stylus. So that's what she used.

She folded paper and stitched books and wrote for years under her Master's benches.

Her books were filled with landscapes, flying birds, jousting knights, moving gears.

All made of paper. All perfectly moving. All doing what she could not.

Birds would fly. Horses would run. Rushing rivers, dawns and sunsets, falling leaves.

Knights would behead each other, yet fight again if the book was closed and reopened.

The other kids did not like Techne. She was different. They were jealous of her books.

One night they tried to steal her books from her cell. She tried to stop them.

They pushed her to the ground, hurt her. She screamed in pain. Cried. Cursed.

And paper started to fold itself, into the shapes of knights, birds, horses.

Paper cuts. Hundreds of them. Hundreds of times. Too much pain for some.

And that's why you don't mess with Savant Techne.

These stats are for a dry, human-sized paper assassin. Scale as needed. Paper assassins can follow complex orders imparted by their creator, but can only communicate through folding and gestures.

AFG: LVL 3 Construct, DEF light. Special: Dry/Wet, Papercraft, Double damage from fire.

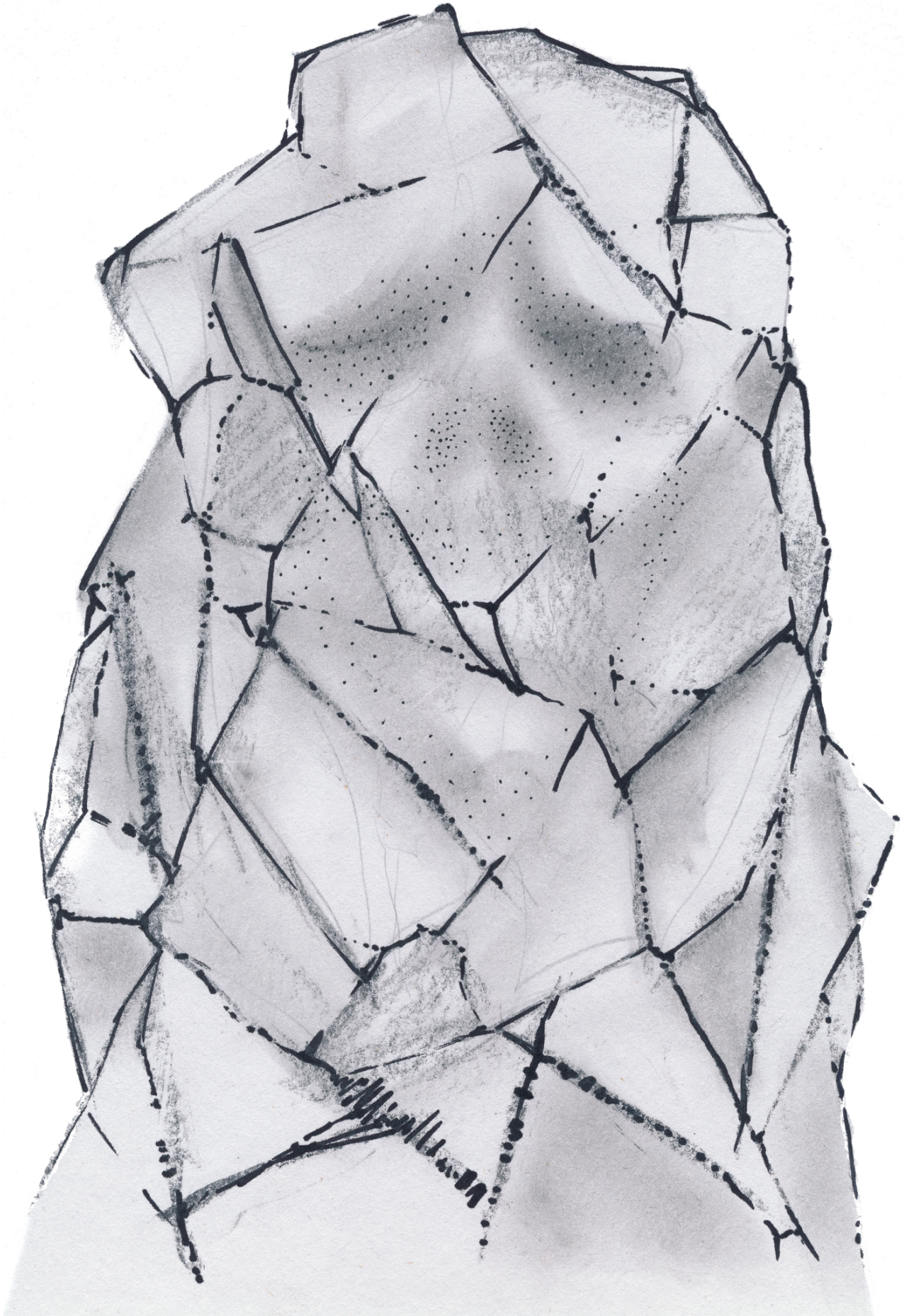
OSR: HD 3; AC 7[12]; Atk 2 paper-cutting arms (1d6); Move 12; Save 14; AL none, CL/XP 5/240; Special: Dry/Wet, Papercraft, double damage from fire, Construct.

Dry/Wet: The above stats are for dry specimens. When soaked in water, paper assassins become immune to fire, move at half speed and are easier to hit:

OSR: AC 9 [10]

AFG: Armour none.

Papercraft: paper assassins can fold themselves into new shapes, both for mimicry and to obtain new functionality. Folding takes 1d6 turns and they can either: gain the shape of a specific person, animal or object so that in scarce visibility they are perfectly indistinguishable; or they can fold themselves into a glider, boat, hut, hat, or anything else that strikes their fancy.



Emerald Prisoner

The Savants have not yet reached consensus on what the worst fate for a really bright mind is. Being forced to eternally toil as an undead for a master is dreadful, losing one's mind is scary and having one's life eaten by Dreamsquirrels is awful, but there is worse.

While extracting a soul from its body and encasing it in emerald is not by itself the end of the world - as the trapped soul can still use its magic powers - often the victims of the process find the experience of being trapped for centuries in a tiny green stone, possibly forgotten, alone and buried, terribly taxing.

So taxing, in fact, that most of the souls trapped for so long end up so disturbed they are best described as *deranged, murderous and lunatic*. Even if before they might have been sane.

What's worse is that not only they are mostly in control of their powers, but also are encased in a gem-hard container. And when they get free (because eventually they do), they raise havok and must be taken care of immediately.

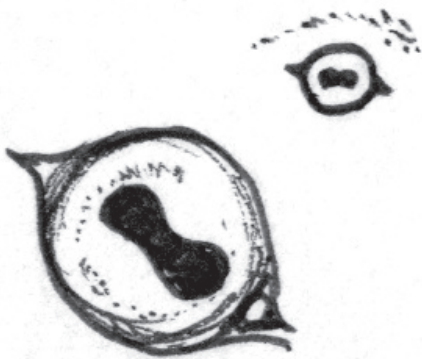
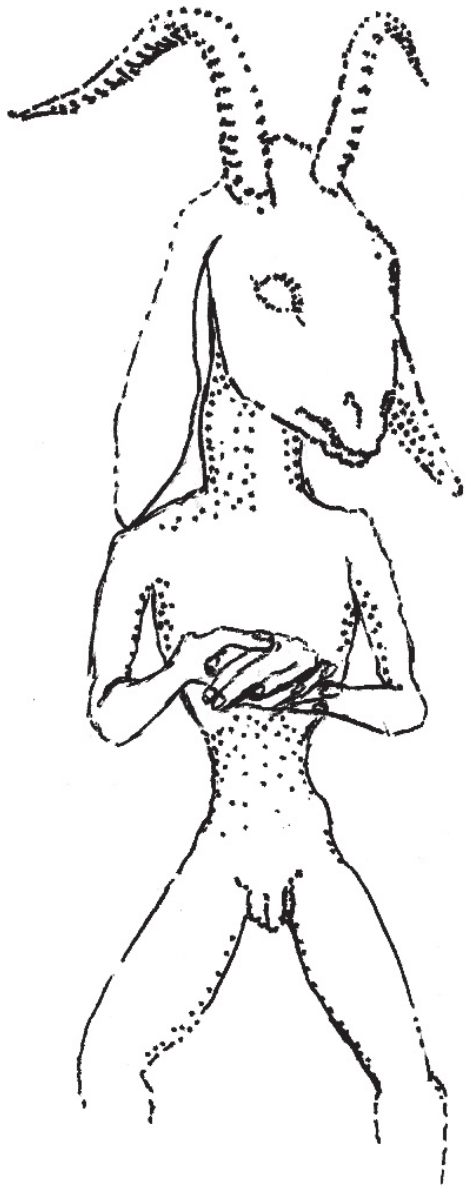
AFG: LVL 1+ Construct, DEF Heavy. Special: Caster, Encased.

OSR: HD 1+; AC 0 [19]; Atk none; Move 0; Save 3; AL any, often Chaotic after derangement, CL/XP +5/?; Special: Caster, Encased, Unliving.

Encased: the soul is protected by the gem. Immune to cold, pressure, radiation, mutagenic powers. Any physical damage dealt to the emerald is reduced by 1. When the hits are reduced to zero, the emerald cracks and the soul is freed.

Caster: the soul maintains its spellcasting abilities despite not being able to gesticulate. The soul does not recover power as it used to. AFG: it recovers 1 mana per day. OSR: it recovers 1 spell per day, as if it was memorized. Strong mana winds double this recovery.

Creation: the spell Emerald Curse is needed to create an emerald prisoner. The spell, by itself, does not have mental health consequences: the derangement is caused by decades spent trapped and buried.



Bocklin

The old tales of the black bucks of the woods mingling at night with women are not entirely made up. Perhaps fleeing from a mob of angry villagers during the aftermath of one such night-time ritual, a group of bocklins reached the mountains surrounding the Valley of Fire, where they found a favourable environment.

From there, reaching the Hypogea has been just a matter of time. Here they quickly spread and grew in numbers to the point of populating almost the entirety of the Hypogea and representing an important source of food for the local predators.

Continuous residence in the Hypogea and exposure to its eldritch qualities often causes mutations in some of their kids, mostly beneficial. It's suspected that bocklin villages are purposely built close to seams of mana-tar and that their casters eat mana-tar in yet-unobserved rituals. At night, it's hard to ignore their terrifyingly loud, human-like bleating, echoing in caverns and canyons for miles.

AFG: LVL 1+ Humanoid, DEF Light. Special: Iron Stomach, Ramming, Polycerate.

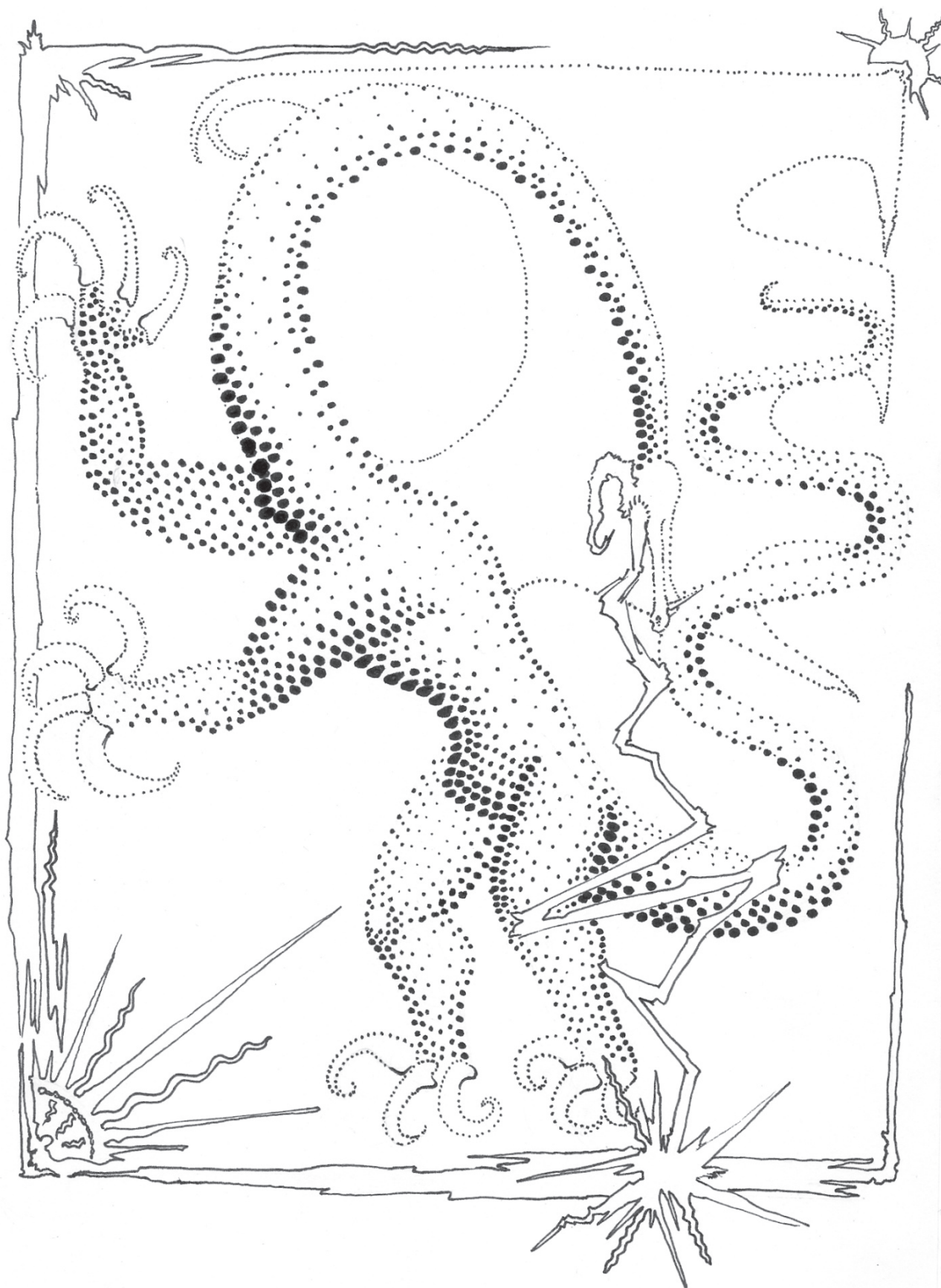
OSR: HD 1 or more; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 horns (1d6) or weapon; Move 12 (Climbing 6); Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 1+/15+; Special: Iron Stomach, Ramming, Polycerate.

Iron Stomach: bocklins are capable of sustaining themselves on pretty much anything organic, and they eat with gusto. They don't suffer ill effects from anything eaten.

Ramming: If ramming with their horns while charging, bocklins deal an extra damage dice.

Polycerate: About one bocklin in six has 8 horns. These specimens are considered superior and therefore "more worthy" by non-polycerate bocklins, which will treat them as leaders and "gifts" bestowed on their community. Due to their increased status they enjoy better living conditions, surviving longer and gaining arcane insight. Polycerate bocklins are Casters of level 1d6 and deal a second additional dice of damage when ramming.

Bocklin villages: bocklin live in villages with a population of 3d6x10 adults, plus the same amount of kids, led by a level 1d6 caster. 1-in-6 polycerate bocklins know the location of nearby mana-tar seams.



Spite Dragon

Dragons hate humans. For millennia, humans lived in terror and provided dragons with livestock, tributes and, most importantly, ego-pandering. But when the human power waxed, they hunted the dragons away. Forced into remote areas like the Valley of Fire and mad at us “puny fleshlings”, the surviving dragons have been cultivating revenge and scorn in their hearts for millennia. Quietly, they wait for the right moment to strike back and revenge the murders of their unhatched eggs and the plunder of their hoards.

Grand Sorcerer Karbouna IV was one of them, the leader of a secret cabal of Fire Dervishes. Straight after his Apotheosis, as the Savant Conspiracy disbanded, he and his minions betrayed the Conspiracy. Shrouded by magic, the dragons attacked, slaying most of the the other Savants, thus starting the Fire Dervish Troubles.

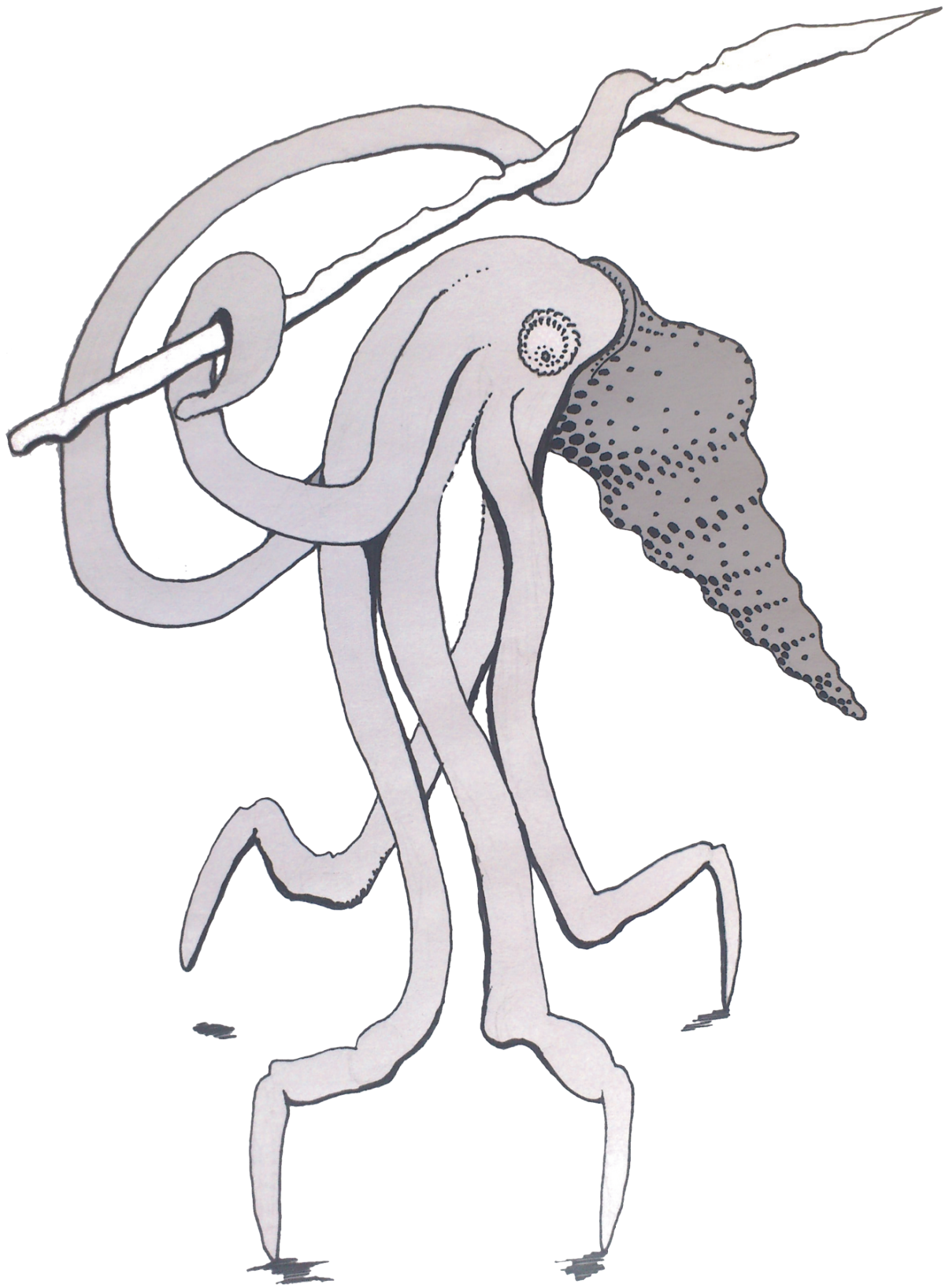
AFG: LVL 6+ Monster, DEF Heavy. Special: Giant, Dragon Breath, Glare, Scorn, Flying.

OSR: HD 6 or more; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (3d8); Move 9 (Fly 24); Save 11; AL Chaotic, CL/XP 14/2600; Special: Dragon Breath, Flying, Glare, Scorn.

Dragon Breath: every 1d6 rounds, a spite dragon can unleash their noxious breath on their enemies, in the form of a cone 100' long and 50' wide at its extremity. It deals 1d6 damage plus 1d6 each 3 levels, save for half damage. Spite dragons have been observed breathing fire, hail, hornets, metal shards, sand, acid and are immune from damage of their breath type.

Glare: spite dragons can glare at a human within 300', filling them with fear fueled by ancestral scorn. If the glared at human averts their eyes and avoids eye contact with the dragon, no ill effect is suffered, except for the combat penalties relevant to a lack of looking directly at their opponent. If the glare is not averted, every round the human will be struck by the lightning stare, taking 1d6 damage due the terror, and must roll a save. If failed, the human is terrorized and must either flee or be completely still for 1d6 rounds.

Scorn: once per day, spite dragons can release their scorn in a terrifying roar, releasing a cloud of anger-powered lightning from their eyes. Humans within 60' take 1d6 damage per dragon level (save for half damage) and are paralyzed with terror for 1d6 rounds (save to avoid).



Cephalopods and their Lost Empire

Cuttlefish, squid and the like are quite commonly fished and eaten, yet scarcely is a sailor aware of their larger, man-sized, intelligent and civilized varieties. In ages past, the Cephalopod Empire controlled our seas and our lands. We were a tiny part of an unbroken domain that in tens of millions of years spread to govern most of the stars.

We are incredibly lucky that the past Ice Age killed most of their ilk on our world, else we would be raised as slaves and cattle. Cephalopod survivors flocked to the seas or deep underground and started working on the maintenance of their crumbling Imperial outpost, clinging with tentacles, not just metaphorically, to the vestiges of a lost past.

Apprentices and travellers must pay particular attention to the occasional feral specimen or group; cephalopods are not automatically hostile to other life forms, but consider them more like delicacies. They consider other cephalopods, even of the same species, as delicacies too. They like their food. So they might try to talk, and only later eat you.

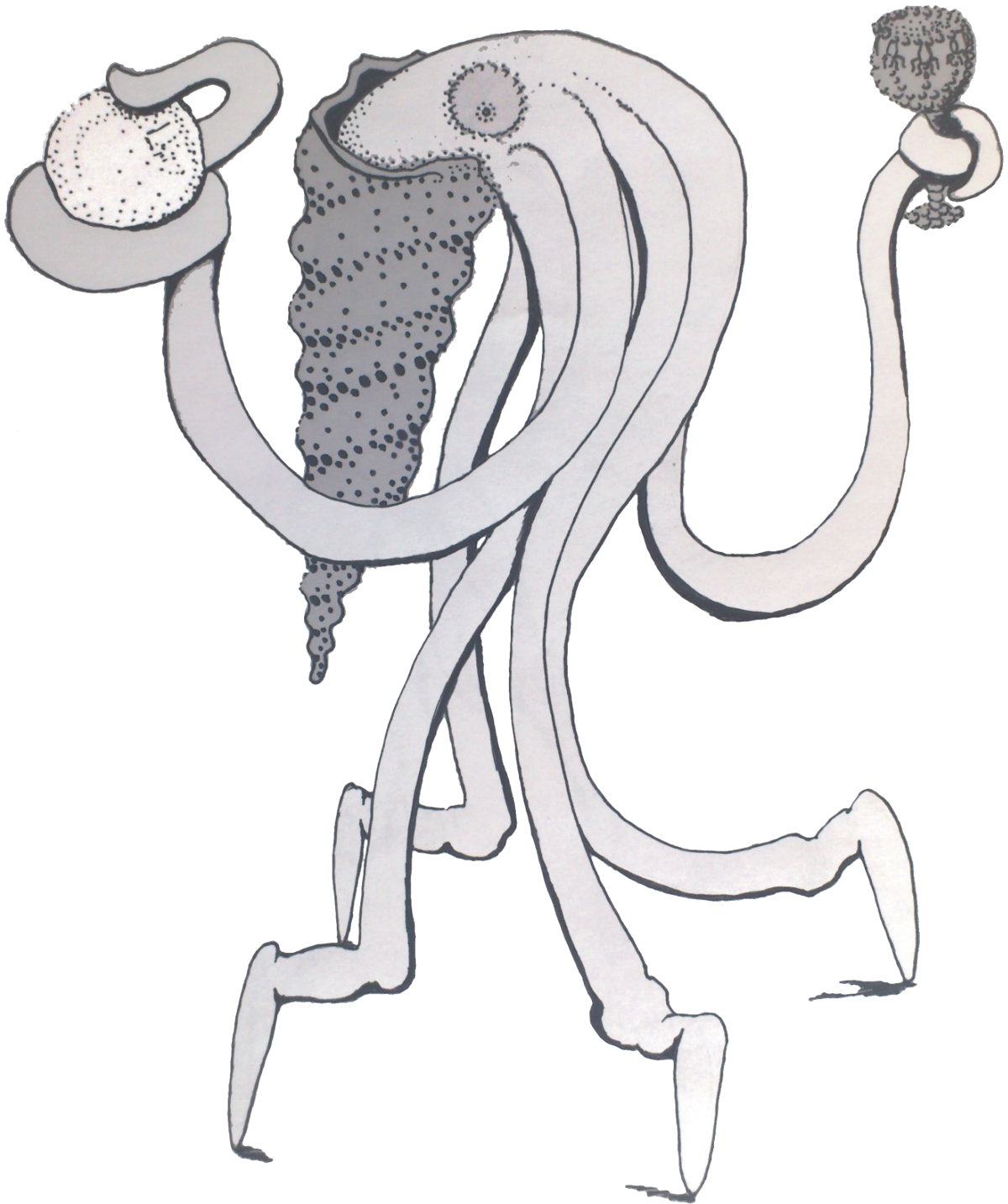
Well, talk, more like bubble. Their bubbling is perfectly intelligible. We conjecture that this is caused by humans, like bocklins and many other humanoids, having been subjects of the Cephalopod Empire. It's possible that, for millennia, their Empire selectively bred humanoid slaves for telepathic susceptibility. The only exceptions are elves, which can't communicate with them in any way. Given the state of the once-great Elven civilization, if new Cephalopod sources confirming this are found they might give weight to the hypothesis that elves are either not autochthon to this world or somehow managed to escape slavery. The tentacled ones, once masters, are now in hiding.

But they're waiting for relief, which is going to rain down from the stars anytime soon.

AFG: LVL 1-12 Monster, DEF None. Special: Inferable Bubbling, Tentacles, Tough, Relics, Chromatophores, Squeezable, Subspecies.

OSR: HD 1 to 12; AC 9 [10]; Atk 1 beak (1d6) and 1 weapon; Move 9 (Swimming 15, Climbing 9); Save 17; AL L; CL/XP 1+/15+; Special: Inferable Bubbling, Tentacles, Tough, Relics, Chromatophores, Squeezable, Subspecies.

Inferable Bubbling: Cephalopod languages resemble a more or less continuous stream of bubbling. Humans and other humanoids, except elves, while perceiving the bubbling as it is, are capable of understanding it after a few seconds. Somehow cephalopods can also understand humanoids. The only exception are elves. Elves and cephalopods can't communicate in any way.



Tentacles: cephalopods have a number of tentacles (some of them technically are arms) variable from 6 to 90, often ridged or lined with suckers. This enables them to both slither and wield and manipulate many objects at the same time and to automatically succeed at grappling with anything. Cephalopods can usually wield two weapons (or a two-handed weapon) for the purposes of combat.

Tough: cephalopods breathe water and can survive outside of water for 6+1d6 hours. After the first six hours and every hour thereafter, the cephalopod has to roll a save. If successful, the cephalopod can survive for another hour. If failed, the cephalopod will start to get very tired and collapse within 1d6 hours, then die within a day unless submerged in water.

Chromatophores: cephalopods can change their skin colour. +2/+35% to Hide.

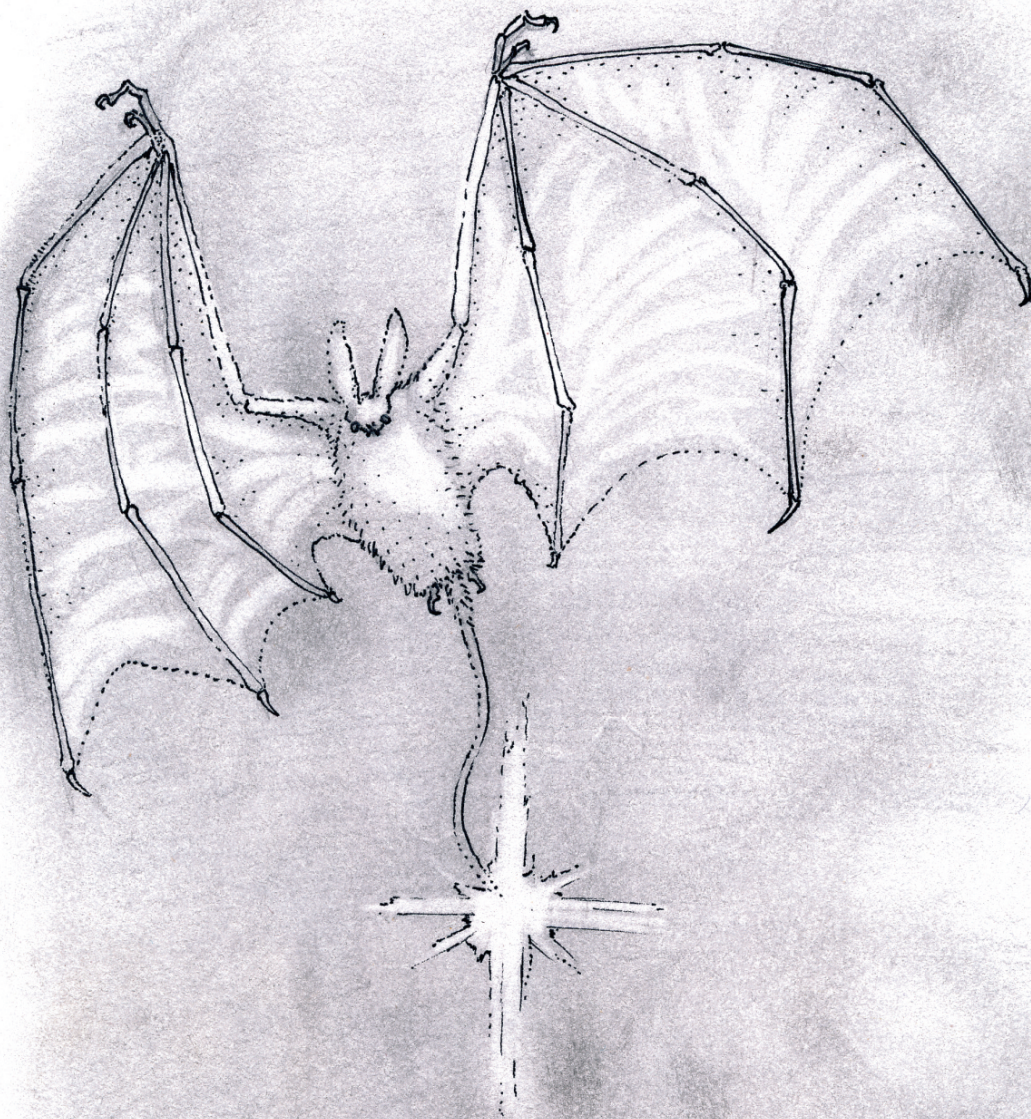
Relics: All cephalopod PCs can roll one of their two starting equipment rolls on the following table. Cephalopod NPCs leaders will roll once. Roll 1d6 to determine the object:

- 1: Returning Spear: this magic spear returns to the thrower 1 round after being thrown.*
- 2: Wet Suit: a sealable cephalopod suit, keeps the wearer moist even in dry environments, thus increasing their survival time outside of water by 24 hours.*
- 3: Spinal Nerve Latch: a barbed metal plaque that can be applied to a vertebrate's neck, stifling the vertebrate's non-autonomous nervous system. It allows a cephalopod, after latching themselves to the plate, to finely control the movements of the latched vertebrate.*
- 4: Ruling of the Grand Tribunal: a nautiloid shell covered in some rulings of the Grand Cephalopod Tribunal in the Vulcanic Ark. A cephalopod can read it and spend a mana or spell slot to force all vertebrates within 20' to save vs Stubborness/Spells or be disorientated and unable to act for 1d6 rounds.*
- 5: Tentaclonger: a 30' long tentacle extension. Fully prehensile.*
- 6: Raygun: a +1 chromed raygun, treated as magical (despite being powered by forgotten super-science but otherwise mundane). Fusion powered, can shoot 1d6 times a day.*

Squeezable: Most cephalopods have no skeleton to speak of. This enables them to squeeze through holes four inches wide.

Subspecies: Cephalopods come in many forms. Roll 1d6 or pick from the following list:

- 1-2: Cuttlefish: Cuttlefish have big brains, are smart and educated. They start with 5 experience points to be allocated to Tasks.*
- 3-4: Octopus: Octopous and squid have an awesome control over their tentacles. They can wield up to four weapons in combat and attack twice per round.*
- 5-6: Nautiloid: Nautilods have external rigid shells, which give them the equivalent of Heavy Defence, AC 3[16] and carrying a corresponding movement penalty when not swimming. Due to their shells they lack the Squeezable ability and their chromatophores might not be as effective in most situations.*



On Glowbat Feeding

The school's glowbats must be fed every three days, every other day if they become restless and aggressive. The best method of feeding them is to channel enough mana in a bucket of very liquid mana-tar and, with extreme care, put the bucket in their cage. It's important to recover the bucket and as much of the spilled mana-tar as you can.

Another acceptable method is to feed glowbats with glowing manaticks. Due to their invisibility, the cobalt lenses necessary to see manaticks are kept in the lead closet, which is to be otherwise kept shut and locked at all times. Remember that glowbats have no problems finding manaticks, even if they're invisible.

In case of emergency, collect a mana weirdling and crush it, possibly using a big stone or a cider press, and feed the bat with the extracted mana-tar. Remember that a well fed glowbat is a happy glowbat, and that hungry glowbats are aggressive, nasty beasts and hard to bond with.

Don't lock non-prisoners in a cage with more than a single hungry glowbat.

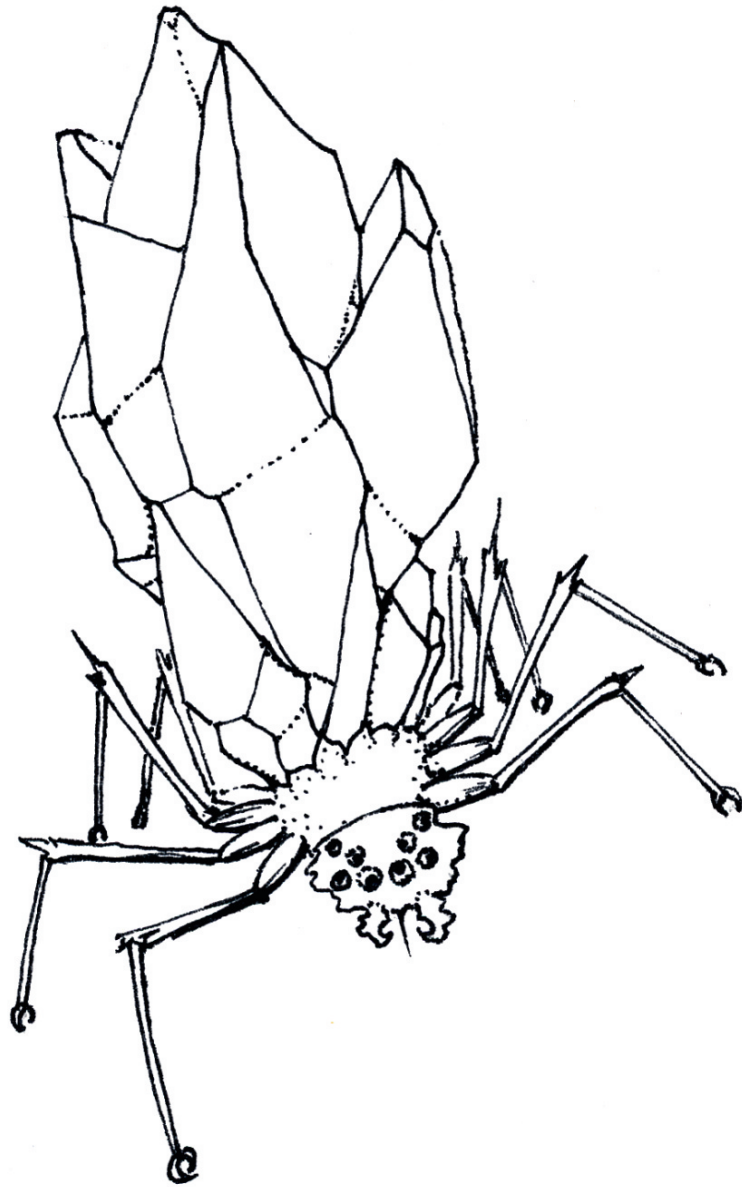
AFG: LVL 1 animal, DEF none. Special: Flying, Smell Mana, Mana Eater, Glowing Tail.

OSR: HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 bite (1d4); Move 3 (Flying 18); Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 2/30; Special: Flying, Smell Mana, Mana Eater, Glowing Tail.

Smell Mana: glowbats can smell and track mana sources. They know the direction of the closest mana source and of the highest mana concentration within a mile (be it mana-tar, a group of spellcasters or the Iridescent Beneath).

Mana Eater: glowbats eat mana. An attack will drain 1 mana in addition to dealing normal damage. They can survive for 1d6+1 days on a single mana. Unless starving they won't attack awake casters.

Glowing Tail: glowbats can emit a very bright light from their tails and use it in their complex mating rituals. If done in the darkness or in a poorly illuminated area, it can blind creatures within 50' for 1d6 rounds, save to avoid. Many glowbats glowing together require an extra save for each 2, 4, 8, 16, ... glowbats.



Manatick

To all the apprentices, endowment, residents and Savants of the School:

In the past weeks, a number of apprentices reported channelling failures, missing sparks and chronic aphasia. No official response was given as symptoms were reported only from those of you who participated in the Mysteries of the Bridge of Yearning, and the wise shall spend no more words. Our physiurgists though saw the symptoms spread and, after the opportune divinations, found manaticks responsible. All manaticks are to be destroyed.

We mandate the following to all students for three weeks:

- 1: Every sundown, seek your mentor, when in their presence imbibe an infusion made with an ounce of Gnarled Willow leaves and do their bidding.
- 2: Fully eschew use of any kind of mana vessel, mana-tar or similar.
- 3: Abstain from mingling and meditation.

Be aware. You know We are.

PS: You are to procure your leaves. Gnarled Willows are found in bright dry areas.

Blind Alexos
Savant, College of the Stargazers

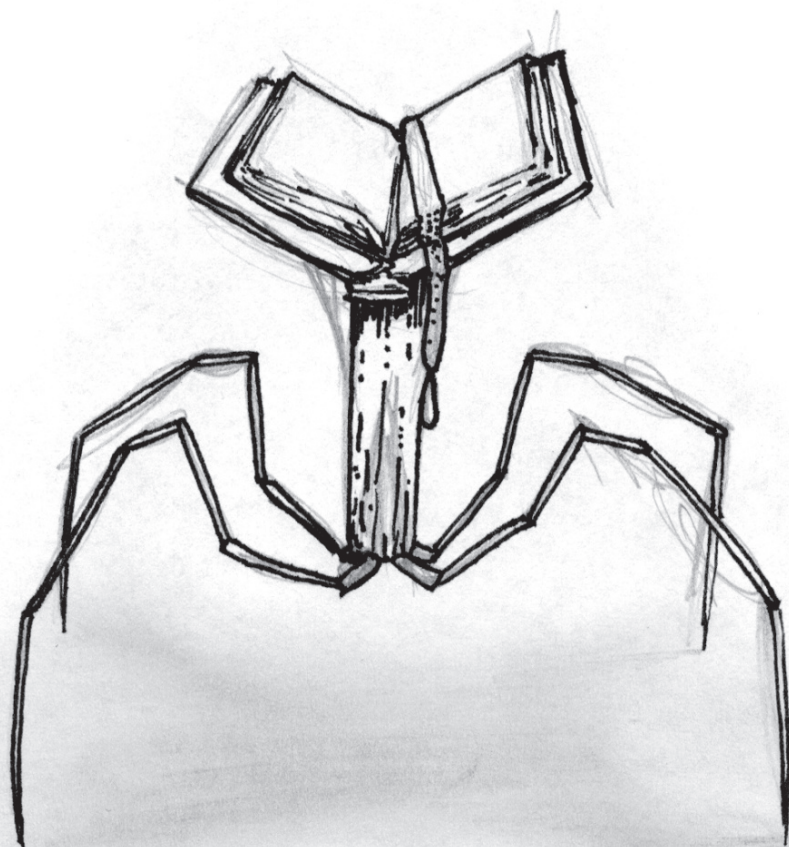
AFG: LVL 1 animal, 1 hit, DEF heavy. Special: Tick, Invisible, Inoffensive.

OSR: HD: 1 HP; AC 3 [16]; Atk 1 bite (1 mana); Move 1 (Jump 6); Save 18; AL N; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Tick, Invisible, Inoffensive.

Tick: Manaticks can smell nearby casters. They will bite them while they sleep (for no damage, as they are really tiny) and drain 1 mana. This will make their crystal idiosoma slightly glow until the mana is spent.

Invisible: Manaticks can tap into the stored mana to become invisible for a day. The mana will not be spent on a 5 or more on a d6.

Inoffensive: The tick does not cause damage to human-sized opponents. If it hits in melee, it will instead drain 1 mana or a memorized spell, turn immediately invisible and jump away to safety as soon as possible.



Lecternomancer

Grand Sorcerer of the Valley of Fire Deleterios III killed, in a single stroke, all of his 15 apprentices. Opinions on the reasons differ. Of his detractors, the Chimerists mention he needed corpses of spellcasters for his own nefarious experiments, while the Orthodox Necromancers remind that Deleterios III was reckless during experimentations.

Rumours circulate about how all of his apprentices might or might not have been corrupted by their Master's enemies to plot against him, that somehow Deleterios III found out and crushed their hearts with magic.

Anyway, he took their corpses and retired for a long while, a couple of years, in his laboratories, flayed the bodies, tanned the skins with their brains to make vellum, wrote on their skin with their blood, then stitched them in codexes with their hair and bound them in books.

All his spells and notes were allegedly copied in these tomes, albeit this is hard to believe as every tome is rumoured to count at most 100 pages. Deleterios III then built around the codexes a mobile lectern with the apprentices' bones and kept them around as guards and assistants. At least five of them were destroyed during the Orthodox Restoration, the fate of the rest unknown. It is said that they managed to find protection working for new masters, holding the secret of their creator and their creation within them.

AFG: LVL 4 Undead, DEF Medium. Special: Construct, Caster Empathy, Caster, Conscious Spellbook.

OSR: HD 4; AC 5[14]; Atk 1 foot spike (1d4+1); Move 9; Save 13; AL any, CL/XP 5/240; Special: Caster Empathy, Undead, Construct, Caster (lvl 4), Conscious Spellbook.

Caster Empathy: Lecternomancers, in addition to being able to use magic as a level 3 caster, can telepathically communicate with any caster within 100'. In addition, they can be aides for spell research and recharge mana vessels left on the lectern.

Spellbook: Lecternomancers' lecterns are controlled by the soul of the caster, trapped in its book. Not only will any other book placed on the lectern be shrugged off, but a lectern's book can teleport itself back onto the lectern, open and close itself, slowly flip its pages and fly within 30' of the lectern.

Legacy of Deleterios III: Each of the original books contains at least 140 levels worth of spells plus instructions to build 1d6 magic items. One of the original 15 books contained the instructions to build more lecternomancers, but it is not known if the relevant book survived.



Skullsnatcher

Orthodox Necromancers usually satisfy their mad power ravings by achieving immortality and leading giant undead armies. Others, like the Reformed Necromancers, are not happy with simple massacre, and desire to fight their enemies using the Black Art in much subtler ways.

Skullsnatchers are sometimes used for this purpose, using the rites developed by Grand Sorceress of the Valley of Fire Deleterios II. She created these headless undeads by performing rituals on the decapitated remains of the rebellious Orthodox Necromancy apprentices after the revolts following her predecessor's Apotheosis ritual.

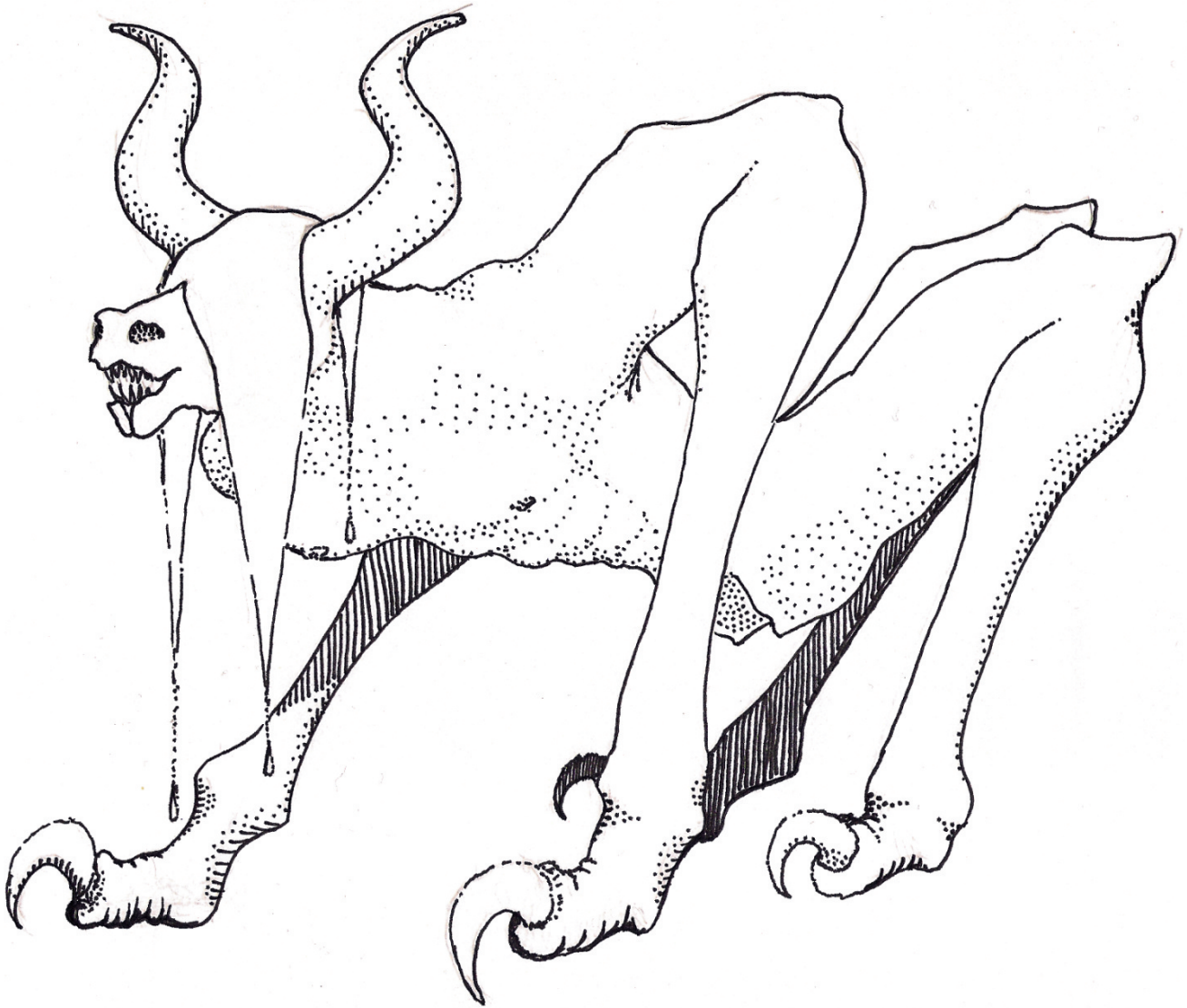
Skullsnatchers steal heads from corpses to appear as the newly beheaded corpse did before dying, leaving behind only decapitated remains that are hard to identify. Despite the lack of a head, they are capable of perceiving sounds and their surroundings, and obey the necromancer's verbal orders even if elaborate, making them especially suitable for tasks involving murder and theft.

Grand Sorceress Deleterios II used her newly created undead minions to infiltrate and wreak havoc on the last remaining fringes of Orthodox Necromancers and Fire Dervishes that still were on the offensive.

AFG: LVL 4 Undead, DEF Medium. Special: Quick (double movement), Persona.

OSR: HD 4; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d4); Move 18; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Immunities, Persona, Undead.

Persona: a Skullsnatcher can take a skull or a dead head and put it in place of its missing one. This creates a strong illusion in the eyes of the viewers: the skullsnatcher will appear as the ex-owner of the head. The beholders will perceive the behaviour, clothing and aspect of the skullsnatcher as if the original owner of the head was still alive and well, filling in details from their memory. In case the bystanders didn't know the head in question, they'll fill in with generic details, leading to a really unstriking encounter with some person. Some of the details, if not most of them, will however be personal to the viewer and therefore all the viewers' memories of the skullsnatcher will not necessarily match.



Horned Kataract

Nobody knows the origins of the Horned Kataracts, but speculations abound. Grand Sorcerer Cacotherion V, while exploring the ruins of his predecessor Opidnorexis I, saw his minions die in great number around a self-standing alabaster dome, completely sealed. The minions either collapsed or turned against each other for no apparent reason.

Cacotherion V promptly brought down a star from the sky upon the alabaster dome, collapsing it. Out of the ruin came beasts with the body of a giant man and the head of a buffalo, jumping on four legs folded like an insect's, their eyes covered by a silk veil.

The struggle between the Grand Sorcerer's forces and the horned beasts continued for a few hours, when the latter retired through the ruins. After the battle, the surviving beasts spread in the Hypogea, settling down in small groups of never more than a dozen occupying separate rooms or caverns close to each other. Despite this, kataracts are solitary beasts that spend most of their life sitting on piles of treasure in meditation.

AFG: LVL 8 Monster, DEF Medium. Special: Awareness, Blindfold, Jumping.

OSR: HD 8; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (1d6); Move 9 (Jump 18); Save 8; AL L; CL/XP 13/2300; Special: Can't be surprised, Blindfold.

Blindfold: horned kataracts can perceive their surroundings perfectly at any time, blindness, darkness, illusions and other magic notwithstanding. They can spend a round lifting the silk blindfold from one of their eyes using a clawed forelimb, uncovering either the Left Eye of Madness or the Right Eye of Anxiety.

Left Eye of Madness: If the left eye is uncovered, every being looking at the kataract within 30' must save on stubbornness or become raging mad for 1d6 rounds, attacking the closest creature or running in a random direction, half chance of each.

Right Eye of Anxiety: If the right eye is uncovered, every being looking at the kataract within 30' must save on stubbornness or become paralyzed with doubts for 1d6 rounds, incapable of acting.



Blind Piercing Behemoth

Hundreds of Blind Piercing Behemoths appeared one fine spring morning. They started draining all blood from bocklin first, then dinosaurs, and then the less mindful college apprentices. Nobody cared, at least until they entered the Great Workshop.

It's not clear where these 30-foot-tall, four-legged beings came from, but suddenly they were ravaging the Hypogea and draining blood from anything they could catch. Initially, most of the Savants accused the Chimerists of not disposing of the results of a badly botched experiment, then the Gatekeepers of opening portals without performing the necessary and lengthy divinations. Grand Sorcerer Cacotherion IV spent one full day meditating over the Iridescent Beneath and, despite the huge risks taken and many portents witnessed, could not divine anything about their provenience or nature.

The Savant Conspiracy was called; as a result, the colleges united their strengths against the infestation and - through a methodical process of extermination - managed to almost completely eradicate them from the Hypogea. The remaining Blind Piercing Behemoth population is limited to about 50 specimens, living in the Brackish Karsts in the east, preying on the sea monsters mating there.

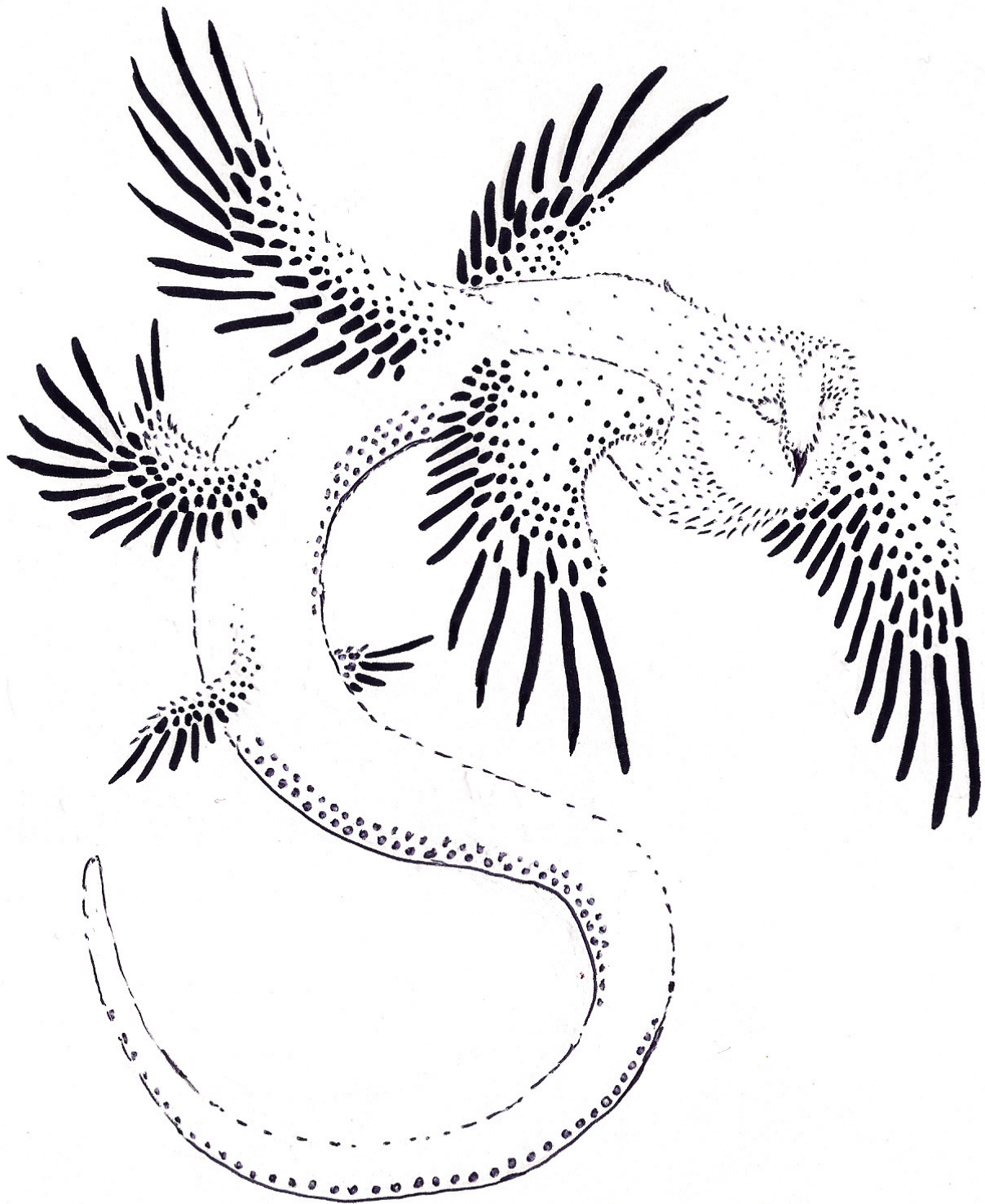
AFG: LVL 9 Animal, DEF Light. Special: Giant, Uncannily Sneaky, Perception, Piercer, Quick (triple speed), two attacks.

*OSR: HD 9; AC 4 [15]; Atk 2 claws (2d6); Move 36; Save 6; AL C; CL/XP 13/2300;
Special: Uncannily Sneaky, Perception, Piercer.*

Uncannily Sneaky: behemoths, despite their gigantic size, are capable of moving very silently and surprise opponents 5-in-6 times. They are completely undetectable with magic.

Perception: Despite lack of eyes and ears, behemoths are extremely aware of their surroundings. Their bodies are covered with very fine hair that is very sensitive to vibration and air currents, giving them awareness of any walking creature greater than a cat within 1000'. They are also aware of any object of that size moving through the air within 100'.

Piercer: The round after a piercer hits in melee a creature up to half its size, the behemoth can lift it and drive its hollow nails in its flesh, draining blood and dealing automatically 1d6 damage per round for each hand used. The behemoth heals 1 hit for each 5 hits drained.



Cave-Owl Constrictor

Grand Sorcerer of the Valley of Fire Edonoplechtus III had a penchant for silent guardians. She spent years experimenting with constrictor snakes and barn owls in her Reverse Tower in the Hypogean Great Karst.

Being almost satisfied with both, she realized that the lovechild of a male barn owl and a female 20-foot-long python would be the perfect predator for an environment consisting mostly of vast underground caverns.

She made that love blossom. She was good at that.

Her experimental cave-owl constrictors proved successful: perfect as guardians and thriving in the strange microclimate of the Hypogea.

AFG: LVL 2 to 5 Animal, DEF None. Special: Flying (nimble), Constriction, Silent, Nightvision.

OSR: HD 2: AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d4+1); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 4/120; Special: Flying (nimble), Constriction, Silent, Nightvision.

HD 3: AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d4+1); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Flying (nimble), Constriction, Silent, Nightvision.

HD 4: AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d4+1); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 13; AL N; CL/XP 6/400; Special: Flying (nimble), Constriction, Silent, Nightvision.

HD 5: AC 7[12]; Atk 1 bite (1d6+2); Move 3 (Fly 24); Save 12; AL N; CL/XP 7/600; Special: Flying (nimble), Constriction, Silent, Nightvision.

Silent: cave-owl constrictors never make a noise, not even when moving, hunting or dying. Even hitting them produces no sound. They surprise opponents 5-in-6 times.

Constriction: the favourite attack of the cave-owl constrictors is to attack by surprise, usually approaching silently either by swooping down or crawling. If the attack is successful, the snake will wrap around the prey dealing damage automatically each round. The round after the snake successfully grappled someone, it will fly away carrying the prey with them, unless at least 3 of the 8 wings are disabled (requiring 1 damage per level per wing, from 2 to 5). The constricted prey is not in the position to cast spells or use any weapon bigger than a dagger, but can try to struggle free once per round. If successful two rounds in a row, the owl will lose its grasp. Each helping person can help the prey to break free, allowing the prey to reroll.



Kelpie

Rivers are great forces of life. The melting glaciers of the Spine Mountains make the Hypogaea liveable. In the past, erosion from ancestral rivers carved most of the Hypogaea, grain of sand after grain of sand. Rivers give us water to drink and caverns to hide in, protected from both the scorching sun and the Age of Man, giving us access to the Iridescent Beneath.

But sometimes rivers take life back. And not just by drowning and flooding.

Rivers running over mana-tar seams often results in water contaminated by weird emanations, which condense in these horse-looking, four-armed watery horrors.

Some travellers approach them believing they're horses stuck in the river with only their heads surfacing, others are tugged into the water while fishing or, simply, surprised while drinking.

The outcome is, in most cases, death by drowning.

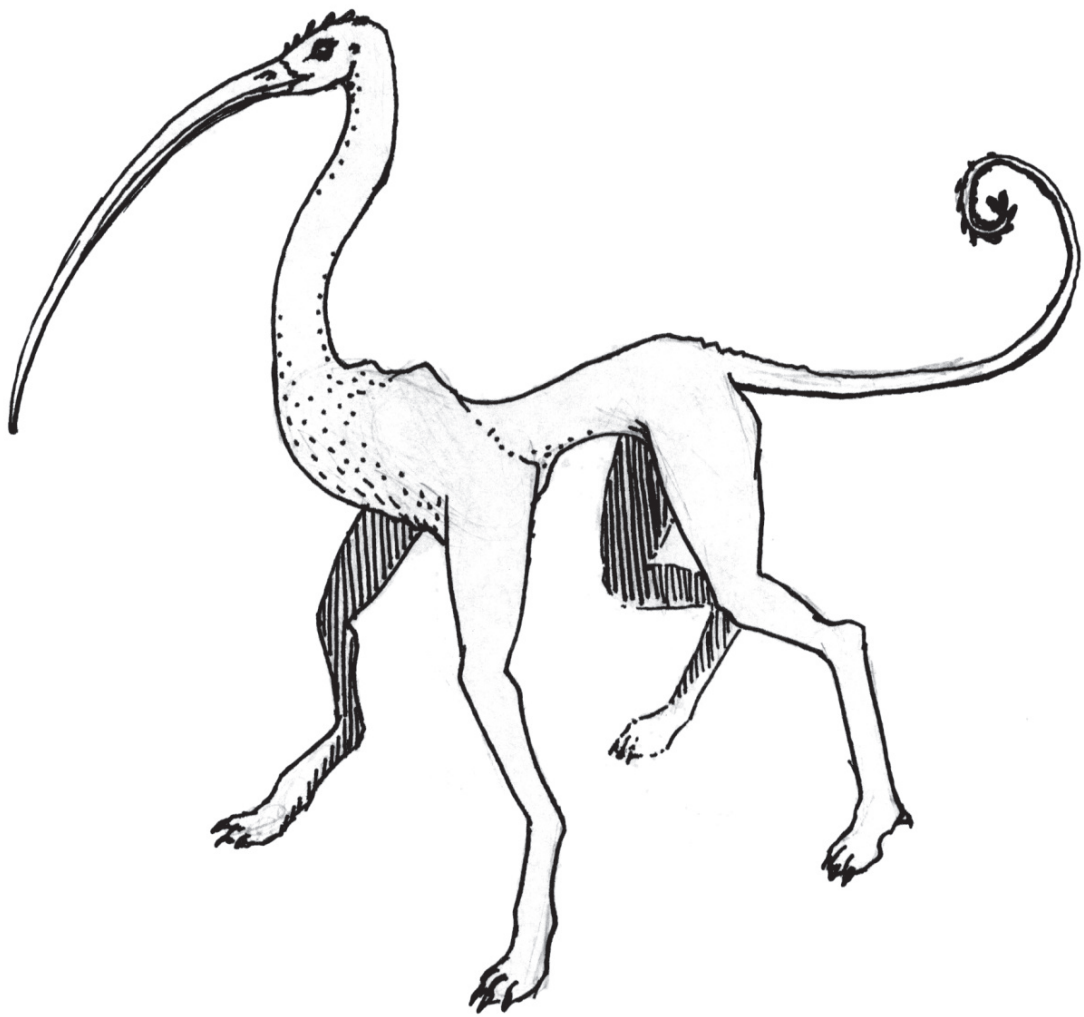
AFG: LVL 3 weird, DEF light. Special: Water Steed, Drowner, Unkillable

OSR: HD 3; AC 7[12]; Atk 1 hit (2d6 temporary damage); Move 18 (Swim 18); Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Water Spirit, Drowner, Unkillable.

Water Steed: kelpies can swim or gallop on water at the same speed of a horse. They can also walk on land, but are not keen on leaving water.

Drowner: kelpies ignore armour and deal temporary damage. Kelpies prioritize pulling unconscious opponents under water to drown them.

Unkillable: kelpies can't really be killed: they exist due to the river flow. Reducing a kelpie's hits to 0 though transforms their body into clear, drinkable water. The kelpie will reform in the river in 1d6 days.



Ornipooch

Grand Sorcerer Edonoplechtus II loved her birds. She loved her dogs too. Over a weekend she interbred dogs and birds, creating Schnozzles, the first Ornipooch.

Ornipooches (also called chickpups, duckmutt, mallard-terrier, hawkhound and hencurs, depending on their looks) are feathered, chirping, yapping and barking dogs less than a foot long with the head of a bird.

They combine the trustiness and companionship of dogs with the arcane properties of birds and they are known to easily bond with their companions if treated nicely.

Ornipooches are capable of breeding not only between themselves, but also with dogs and birds: the results of such crossings, if successful, are always ornipooches.

Ornipooches sometimes develop uncanny powers when feeding on casters and magic items, something that they are wont to do anyway. For this reason, their bowels are searched carefully before being cooked and served to new Savants.

AFG: LVL1, 1d2 hits, Animal, DEF None. Special: Awareness, Mana Source, Best Friend

OSR: HD 1d2 HP: AC 8[11]; Atk 1 hit (2d6 temporary damage); Move 18 (Swim 18); Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Can't be surprised, Mana Source, Best Friend

Mana Source: an Ornipooch once per day can make available magic energy to a friendly caster within 1 inch. This energy is enough to empower the casting of a single spell.

Best Friend: an ornipooch can give up their life to save a truly loved companion by transferring them their life force, usually by licking their companion's face. If their companion is unconscious due to excessive damage, the ornipooch can start the transfer and suffer 1d3 damage plus 1d3 temporary damage, possibly snuffing the pooch. The amount of hits regained by the companion is the sum of the two rolls.



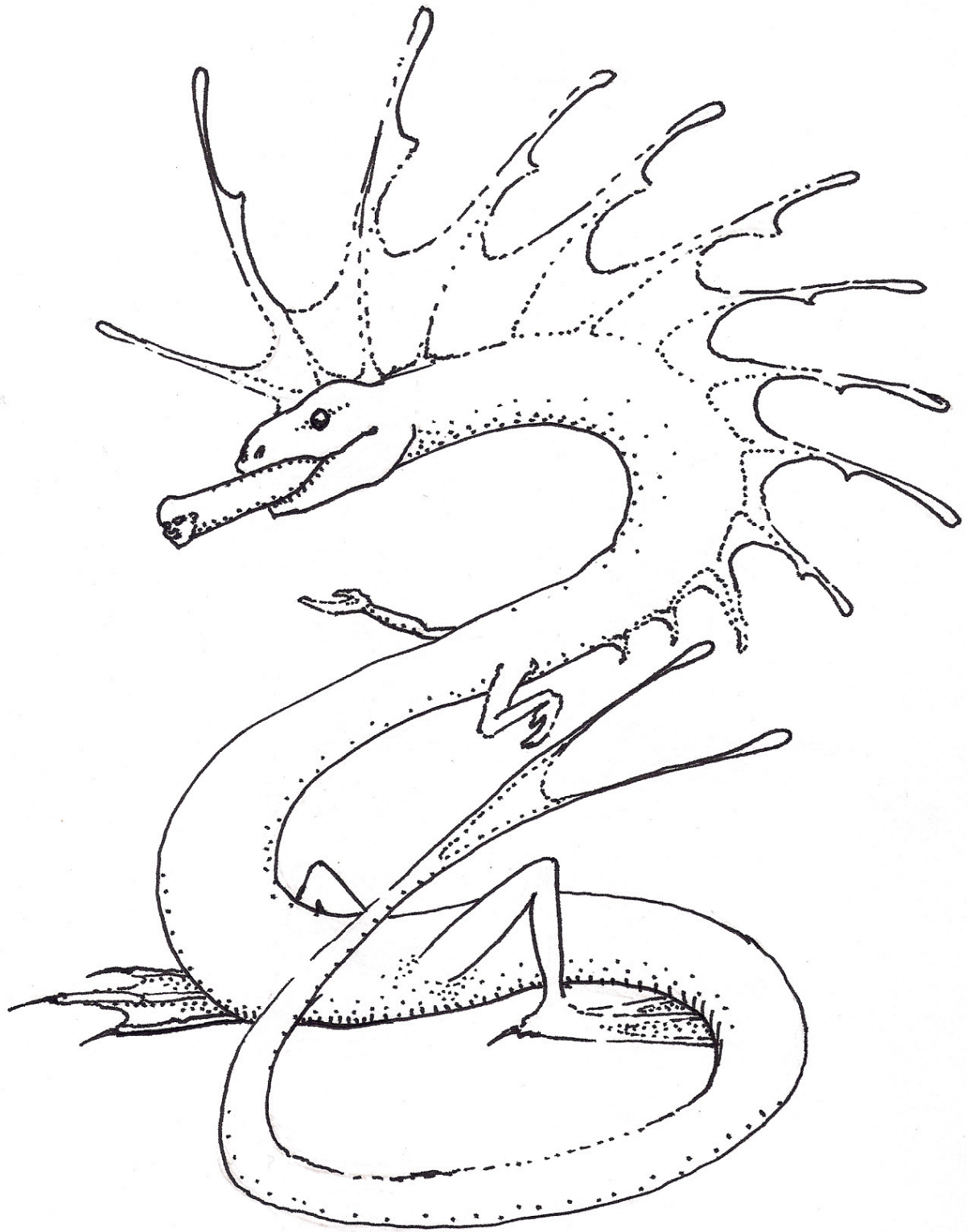
Hapax Legomenon: Asphaltarch
Then the Savant shouted:
**MASTER
CACOTHERION!**
It's the Asphaltarch,
RUN!

AFG: LVL₁₄+14 Monster, DEF Heavy + Armoured. Special: Fighter, Caster, Tar-port, Armoured, Giant, Immune (non-magical weapons).

*OSR: HD 14: AC -1[20]; Atk 4 spikes (2d6); Move 6; Save 3; AL C; CL/XP 20/4400;
Special: Caster, Tar-port, magical weapon to hit.*

Tar-Port: The Asphaltarch can plunge in a mana-tar-pit of at least 20 mana and emerge from a similar pit elsewhere in the Hypogea as part of their normal movement.

Caster: The Asphaltarch casts spells as a level 14 caster. They can cast a spell every round in addition to any other action, like attacking in melee. Hitting the front part of the Asphaltarch does not hinder spellcasting: to stop them from casting spells, the back part must be wounded separately.



The Dealer in Kind

Travellers in the Hypogea of the Valley of Fire will sometimes be approached by a giant bipedal green and purple-crested salamander, holding a rosewood box in its spindly and disproportionately small arms. It will always barter the contents of its box for a little something carried by the traveller and leave, usually by diving into the nearest body of water and quickly swimming away, by climbing up walls, or by jumping down crevices.

Then, whoever traded with the Dealer in Kind, will realize that the deal was indeed great, but only for the Dealer in Kind. Tales are told of magical swords traded for dead mice and ransoms in gold and gems swapped for the core of a red apple. Truth is, for some obscure reason, possession of the worthless objects obtained from the Dealer always prove to be extremely important at some point in the future, their presence changing the course of events in oblique ways.

Scholars conjecture that whoever happens to trade with the Dealer is in fact lending a hand toward the completion of a very convoluted plan. Anyway, after their involuntary contribution has been given, the Dealer in Kind will be back once more for bartering, this time counterbalancing the previous trade, asking for useless objects in exchange for magic and other valuables.

It's said that Edonoplechtus III received a litter of Ornipooches from the Dealer in exchange for a cup of apple juice. Based on this rumour, several Savants explain why no Breeding Breviaria for Ornipoochies have ever been found. While most Chimerists beg to differ, these breviaria are still missing.

OSR: HD 11, 66hp; AC 2[17]; Atk 1 tail slap (2d6); Move 48 (Swimming 36, Climbing 24); Save 4; AL huh, maybe Neutral; CL/XP 12/2600; Special: Cunning Trader.

AFG: LVL 11 Monster, DEF Heavy. Special: Very Quick (quadruple movement), Cunning Trader.

Cunning Trader: The Dealer drives a hard bargain. If the Dealer is bartering with a character and the rosewood box is open, the character will have to roll a save every round, even during combat. If the save fails, the character will finally yield and accept the Dealer's offer. After that, the Dealer will most probably run away.



Kallias, the first Pterochiron

So, you say you have better wine than this? - said Electra - 'cause I'm not drunk yet. Sure, a red from the Western League. Good stuff - said Elpis, passing her a full kylix. That stupid chicken broke its legs. Both. It's so clumsy. - said Electra.

Kallias, the almost-two-headed chicken? - said Elpis.

Yes. That one. The only one we were too scared to eat.

Elpis looked at the naked initiates on the empty kylix and, giggling, filled it again.

I am attached to that... thing - said Electra.

Have more wine... uhm... - said Elpis

What? Are you trying to come up with one of your witty remarks? - said Electra

No, but... - Elpis paused, then restarted - you know what would be totally crazy?

Electra's eyes, at this point, could not focus properly, and her speech was way slurred.

This wine is real good. That stupid chicken, I wish I could fix his stupid legs. But no, tell me, why are you laughing? - said Electra.

You know what would be crazy? If we stitched the spare arm I have in that vat over there to the abdomen of your chicken, in place of the legs. That would solve the leg problem. And it would be **AMAZING TO LOOK AT**. - said Elpis.

That could never work. And it would kill the poor thing. And you would waste a perfectly good arm. This is *most definitely* not going to happen. - said Electra

MASTER PAMPHILOS, LOOK AT THIS CHICKEN - shouted Elpis - IT HAS A HAND, IT CAN STIR SOUP, DUST YOUR SHELVES UP THERE, BRING YOU WINE, SO I DON'T HAVE TO.

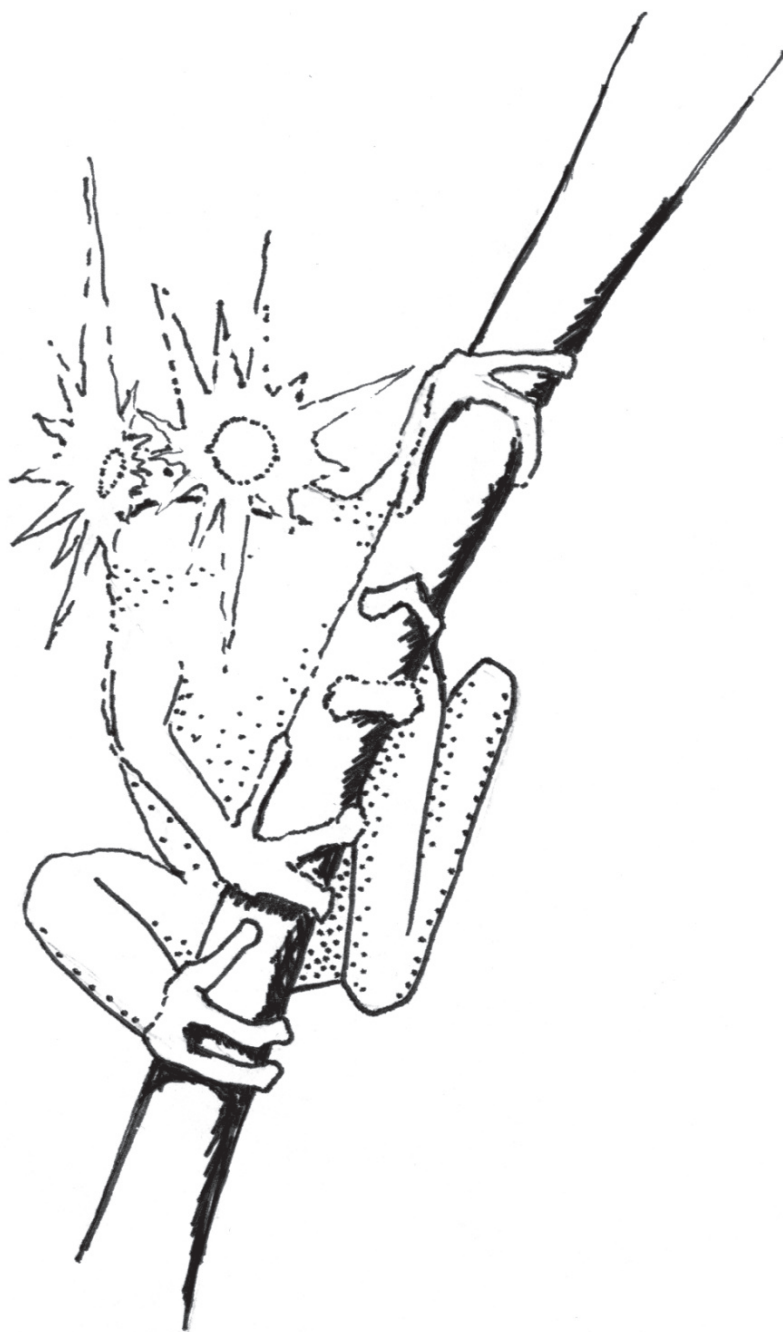
You're full of shit. And drunk. And you're going to kill my chicken. - said Electra

WANNA BET? - shouted Elpis, standing up and falling over her drunk friend.

The next morning the two students woke up, totally hungover, on the floor of the laboratory. The first thing they saw was Kallias, flying around, capturing a small mouse with his new arm. They immediately ran away, screaming like furies.

OSR: HD 2; AC 7[12]; Atk weapon (1d6); Move 3 (Flying 24); Save 16; AL Neutral; CL/XP 3/60.

AFG: LVL 2 Animal, DEF light. Special: Flying - Very Quick (triple movement).



Bone Frog

Master, we were just down by the Swamp of the Starry Sights, down the canyon, picking dragonroot and goatleaf, erm, I meant honeysuckle, sorry, and I heard a noise, and I thought it was Phile getting in trouble again, so I went to have a look, and when I got there sure it was full of flies, but bogs are always full of flies, and I saw a whole lot of decomposing corpses, and was about to run away, but the frog, the frog's eyes were shining at me, shined so much, and they were so beautiful and shiny, so shiny it's unreal, never seen anything so beautiful and shiny, and I didn't realize what was going on, even the flies kept on biting me but I didn't care, and then other things came around, and they had sharp fangs and talons and some kind of blindfolds, and...

So much pain. So much pain.

First, they clawed at my abdomen. They literally ripped me open, and I felt my guts dropping out. And much blood gushing. And my arm fell off, and I thought I was going to die.

And, well, I died for real. I guess.

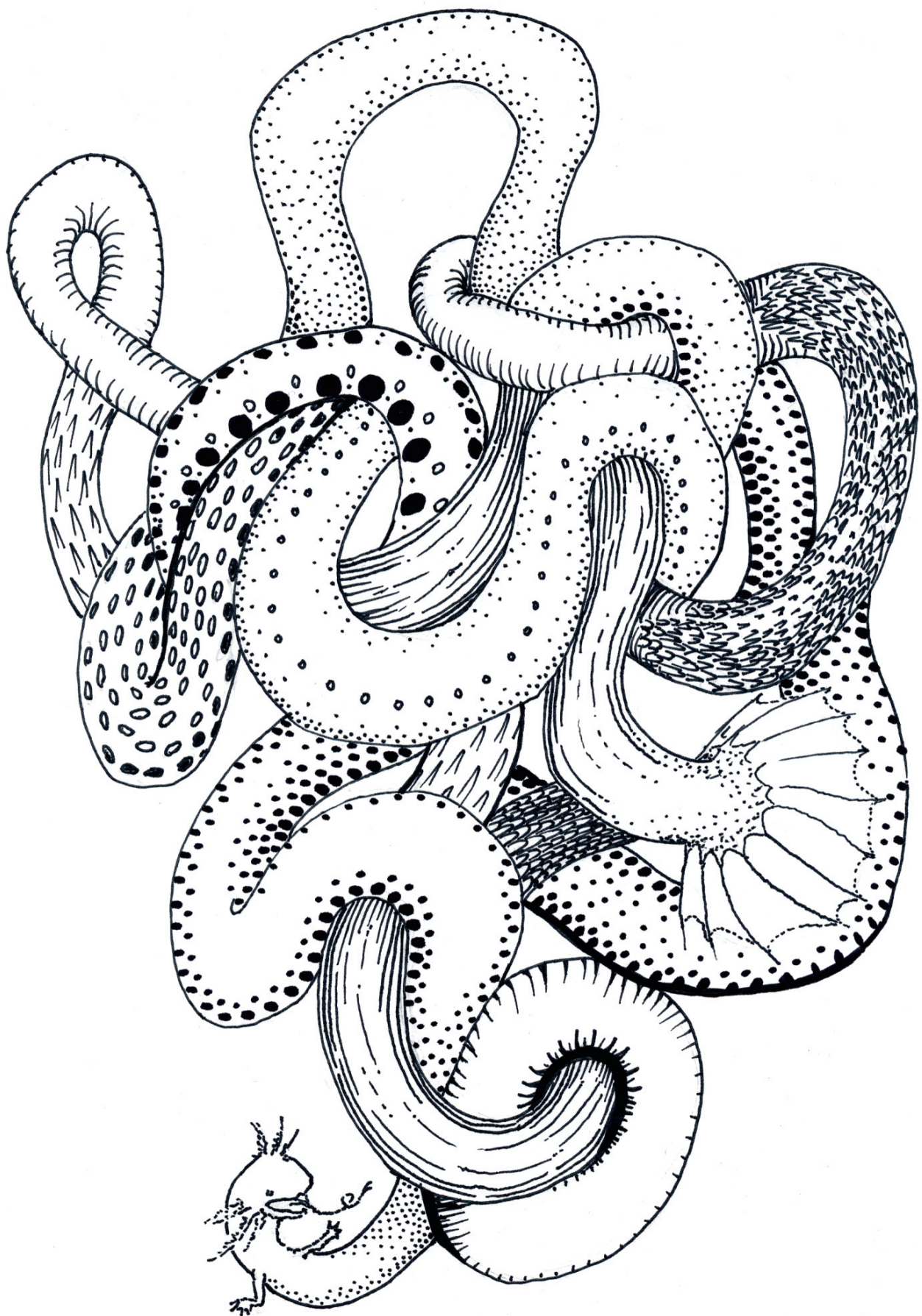
And then the Elixir of Immortality kicked in, and I found myself at the bottom of the deep end of the swamp, and at that point I didn't need to breathe, so I just followed the current until I got in front of the School.

I'm really sorry Master. I really tried to get that dragonroot and honeysuckle, but I lost the bag with my arm. I'll try harder, but please, don't send me to the Methane Vents.

OSR: HD 1; AC 8[11]; Atk bite (1d4); Move 3 (Jumping 9); Save 17; AL Neutral; CL/XP 2/30. Special: Beautiful Shiny Eyes.

AFG: LVL 1 Animal, DEF light. Special: Beautiful Shiny Eyes.

Beautiful Shiny Eyes: the frog can shine its eyes every 10 minutes for 2d6 rounds. Everyone looking at a frog will be incredibly enthralled and allured and won't be able to do much except stare at all that shininess, mouth agape, smiling, unless they save.



Rainbow Axolotl

The Amphibian tangles
Its plumpy body
In and out of existence
Like a hidden shame

Being too big
Being too bright
Sliding colourful
Yet unnoticed
In its rainbow skin
Everchanging

One does not truly
Appreciate, understand
Rainbow Coils
Until they appear
Until they're all around
Until there's nothing else

Only iridescent patterns
Not even room to move
Wiggle, hope
Breathe, cry

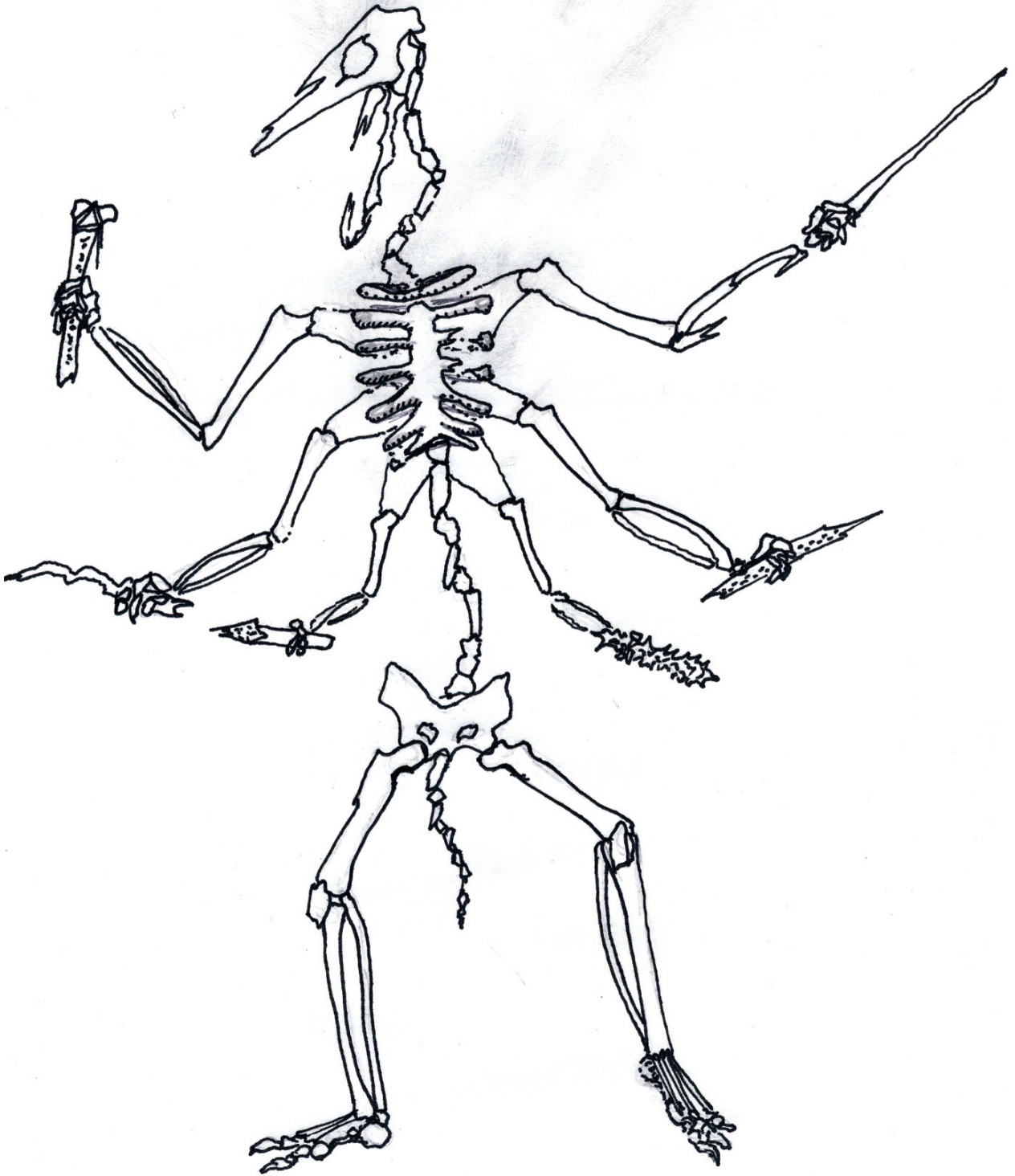
OSR: HD 2 to 6; AC 7[12]; Atk bite (1d6); Move 6 (Swimming 15); Save 16; AL Neutral; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Uncanny Constriction, Dazzling Camouflage, Phasing.

AFG: LVL 2-6 Animal, DEF light. Special: Uncanny Constriction, Dazzling Camouflage, Phasing.

Uncanny Constriction: axolotls can, in addition to attacking with their bite once per round, grapple with one enemy up to human size for each two levels. The enemy needs to be within 30' of the axolotl, which will make a section of his body coil around the target in what seems like a torus. The axolotl can then immediately hold the victim if an attack roll is successful and the target fails to save. Constricted victims can't move away, and take 1d6 damage per round.

Dazzling Camouflage: due to the gorgeous changing patterns and the phasing coils, all melee and missile attacks against Rainbow Axolotls have 1-in-6 of missing the target.

Phasing: the axolotl can teleport up to 20' away once per round, even partially.



Wand Companion

Necromancy? No, that would be cheating. And so demeaning of you to insinuate it.

The Great Workshop is not be one of the Great Schools, but that's only a formality. We do things properly here. No shoddy workmanship. Only sound best practices.

Instead we take bones of dead casters, boil them clean and leave them in white vinegar. Then they're soaked in iridescent mana-tar for a few months. The bones are laid down in the new shape, the joints covered in brass and carefully coupled. A nice horned skull from a bocklin or a kataract or a cow is installed where a head should be, simply because it makes it look more scary.

The companion does not need a head, of course. What kind of silliness would that be!

At any rate, at that point the construct is ready for the final incantations.

So, no, we don't simply bring a few different skeletons stapled together back to a life.

That would not work. There would be too many souls, or too few, and they would compete with the builder's will. It would be a complete failure.

We are instead creating something completely new from what anybody else would only see as a mere pile of useless bones.

OSR: HD 4; AC 8[11]; Atk kick (1d6); Move 9; Save 13; AL None; CL/XP 5/240; Special: Construct, Bound, Extra-handy.

AFG: LVL 4 Constuct, DEF none. Special: Bound, Extra-handy.

Bound: during construction, the companion binds to its builder, who becomes its master. The builder can afterward perform a day-long ritual to bind the Companion to someone else instead. A companion can be bound to anybody in a week-long ritual.

Extra-handy: wand companions can hold up to 6 fetishes or other items like staves or wands. They can use one such object every round as if their master was using it. Mana for fetishes and other costs have to be paid by the master.



Savant Emeritus

Savants never truly retire. As they become older and wiser, more and more bent and withered, even more haughty and crotchety, often they die. And while sometimes it's not noticeable, some other times it is, and it's ok. So when they do go properly dead and motionless, we usually bury them in the catacombs, so that we can protect them. And when we can't do that, they're reanimated and buried in crypts or in their hermitage with all their stuff. Or sometimes they just go there by themselves. Away from the Schools, because it would be trouble to keep them close or keep them unprotected; the reasoning goes that, if they can cast spells, they can prevent the plundering of their tomb, to say the least. And now and then, we send someone to check if they're fine, if they need supplies, and to ask them over for tea.

Not that they ever do, but it's always better to try to be courteous with Savants.

To generate a Savant Emeritus, start with a Caster of level 9-12, give them undead immunities (even if only extremely wizened and not technically undead), and give them 1d6 major magic items. Then pick three powers on the following table, one up to 1d6, one up to 1/2 level+1d6, the other up to level+1d6.

SAVANT EMERITUS NECROPOWERS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1: every spell they cast is also an energy drain. | 10: they can eat souls: if they succeed in a bite attack, the victim must save or have their soul completely destroyed. In this case, the savant recovers 1 mana per level of the victim. |
| 2: their soul is stored in an indestructible item somewhere. | 11: they can see through the eyes and control the movement of anyone sleeping under a night sky. No Save unless the movement would cause harm to the victim. |
| 3: after being "killed", they come back to "life" after 1d6 days. | 12: they can spin time back once per hour. Ignore what happened in the past two rounds. |
| 4: they can teleport from a dark area to any other dark area instead of moving normally. | 13: they can move, shift and rearrange the rooms in their crypt or hermitage. |
| 5: they smell so bad, everybody within 30' must save every round or not be able to do much besides being sick. | 14: all harm done to them is repeated onto the aggressor the next round. |
| 6: all damage they do takes 1d6 weeks to heal, even with magic. | 15+: they know what you did, why, and who to tell. They will tell you what's going to happen if they do. |
| 7: they are immune to magic. Unless they prefer not to be immune. | |
| 8: their touch can steal mana. In addition to normal damage, 1d6 mana stolen, save to halve. | |
| 9: their touch can steal time: target ages 1d10 years (save to halve), savant gains 1 round of "borrowed time" for each year stolen. | |



Dreamsquirrel

As previously mentioned, digging for relics is always dangerous. We have explained how there's always the chance of accidents, like falling in trenches, or a collapse. Then we brought up many examples of the relics themselves causing problems, even before being unearthed, even if not trapped. And then there is the problem of the fauna.

Obviously one should clear the area of all the obvious menacing monsters, but also be wary about vermin. A particularly dangerous vermin nesting in rough terrain like rubble, even in the ruins scattered in the desert above the Hypogea, is the dreamsquirrel. If one is allowed to insert its foot-long tongue inside a human ear or nose, it will squirrel away memories, dreams and abilities. An incomplete list of symptoms of squirreling follows:

	<i>roll d6 and d6</i>
Loss of: sight, hearing, touch, taste, balance, smell	1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-5, 1-6
Retrograde Amnesia: all memories are lost since	
a few hours ago	2-1, 2-2, 2-3
a few days ago	2-4, 2-5
the last traumatic or otherwise important event	2-6
Loss of the ability to	
cast any spell	3-1
speak	3-2
read and write	3-3
perform a specific activity, like riding, carpentry, smithing	3-4
dream	3-5, 3-6
Loss of any memories related to a	
specific spell	4-any, 5-any
specific spell tradition	6-1, 6-2,
Mystery	6-3,
School Mystery	6-4, 6-5, 6-6

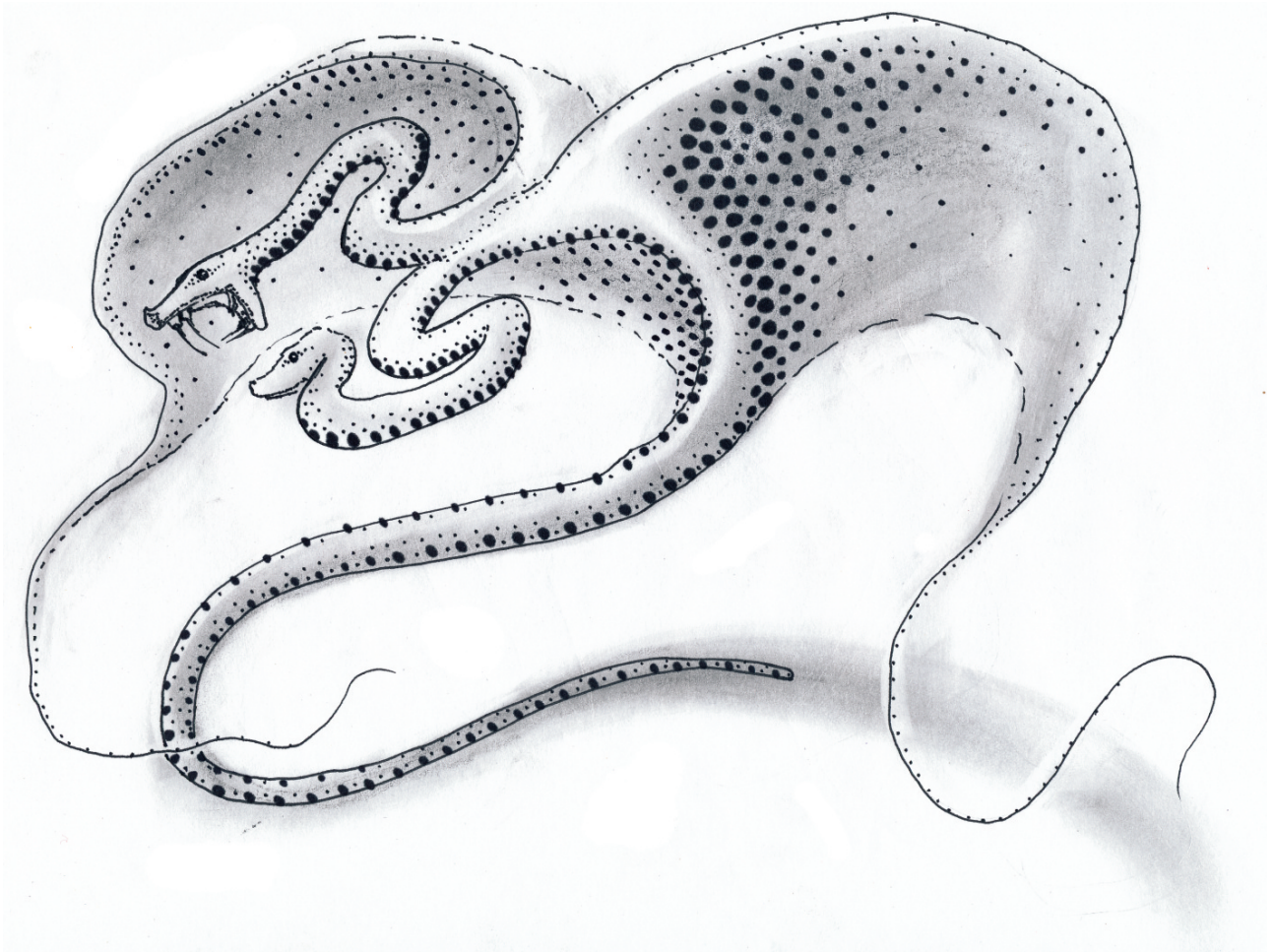
The above symptoms last not more than a few days.

Once again, we need to repeat that secrecy, the sun and the scorching heat are not the only reason you're required to wear a coif when leaving the bottom of the canyons.

OSR: HD 1 hp: AC 7[12]; Atk tongue (special); Move 6, Jumping 9; Save 18; AL Neutral; CL/XP 1/15; Special: Squirreling.

AFG: LVL 0 Animal (1 hit), DEF light. Special: Squirreling.

Squirreling: when a dreamsquirrel hits an opponent with nose or ears exposed, it will probe it with its long telescopic tongue, reach the brain, and try to yank away a memory or ability. This deals one damage to the victim and, if they do not save, roll two dice on the table above, one to determine the type of loss, one for the specific loss. If a roll causes no loss, for example if 3-1 is rolled twice for the same victim, roll again.



On the Other Hypogean Dragons

Roll 2d6 for Dragons accumulate treasures. And treasures, somehow, obtain dragons. It's both columns, known that if a dragon is offered a treasure to keep safe, they're not going to ask pick the lowest much for the service. They just like treasure. That's why there's a... result for each

1	ravenous,	human-hating	dragon under each tower in the Valley of Fire,
2	poison-spitting,	terrifying	dragon sleeping in the Gilded Garden,
3	regenerating,	soul-eating	dragon in the ruins of the School of Pharmacy,
4	ghostly,	teleporting	dragon in the Vault of the Great Workshop,
5	mummified,	invisible	dragon protecting every Mystagogue,
6	two-headed,	mana-draining	dragon on the Bridge across the Abyss.

Ravenous: the dragon will complain about hunger and attack after 1d6 rounds unless fed.

*Poison-spitting: the dragon bite is poisonous. The dragon can also spit poison at a target within 30'. Being hit by either means **SAVE OR DIE**.*

Regenerating: the dragon heals 2 hits per round.

Ghostly: the dragon is immaterial. It is not affected by nonmagical weapons and armour.

Mummified: the dragon is undead, takes double damage from fire and half from weapons.

Two-Headed: the second dragon head can act independently, if possible casting a spell or using their breath weapon, or simply attacking an extra time each round.

Human-Hating: the dragon attacks humans on sight.

Deafening: the dragon roars are so thundering that any spellcasting within 100' must save or have their spellcasting disrupted for this round.

Terrifying: anybody attacked by the dragon must save or be unable to act for 1d6 rounds, fully paralyzed by terror.

Soul-eating: the dragon recovers half of the wounds they deal in melee.

Teleporting: the dragon can teleport every 1d6 rounds, but only either away from its den or back.

Invisible: the dragon becomes invisible at the end of any round unless it did anything aggressive.

Mana-draining: AFG: when dealing melee damage the dragon steals 1d6 mana points. OSR: the dragon's first melee hit every round makes the victim lose 1d6 prepared spells at random.



Toxicant Storks and a Panoply of other Ominous Hypogean Avians

Young Stargazer, stars are not the only portentous thing above. Birds are important too.

Oily Owls are great pan-fried, a very filling meal worthy of a Savant. They give you trouble only if you're a mouse or a bocklin kid, or if you have one in your bag. If they fly westward, bad omens for spellcasting.

Silver Swans are aggressive. Just avoid them. They bury their victims under their nests, so do not approach a swan nest. If they fly toward the sun, bad omen for travels.

Hidden Herons, well, they're so graceful they're invisible. They can only be seen when they're attacking. But they're a very stupid bird, and tossing fishes or food in their general direction will send them into some kind of feeding frenzy. If somehow you can see them flying at all, very bad omen for everything related to goats until dawn.

Swordbills are cunning apex predators that sneak up on you overnight, in big groups. Don't let that happen. If one flies alone, good omen for those who draw blood in anger.

Flaming Flamingos are either pink or blue, depending on the quality of their diet. And they are on fire, which makes them very easy to notice. If they fly toward the moon, good omens for tomb-raiding.

Toxicant Storks look like a flightless bird, but somehow they manage to fly anyway, on their tiny wings. Oh, yes, they belch a yellowish poisonous cloud. They don't even taste good. Keep away. If you see them flying, just look at them, have a laugh and be merry.

OSR: HD 1; AC 7[12], Atk: claw, beak or wing buffet (1d4); Move 3 (Flying 36).

AFG: LVL 1 Animal, DEF Light. Special: Flying.

Oily Owls: owls see through 30' of solid objects.

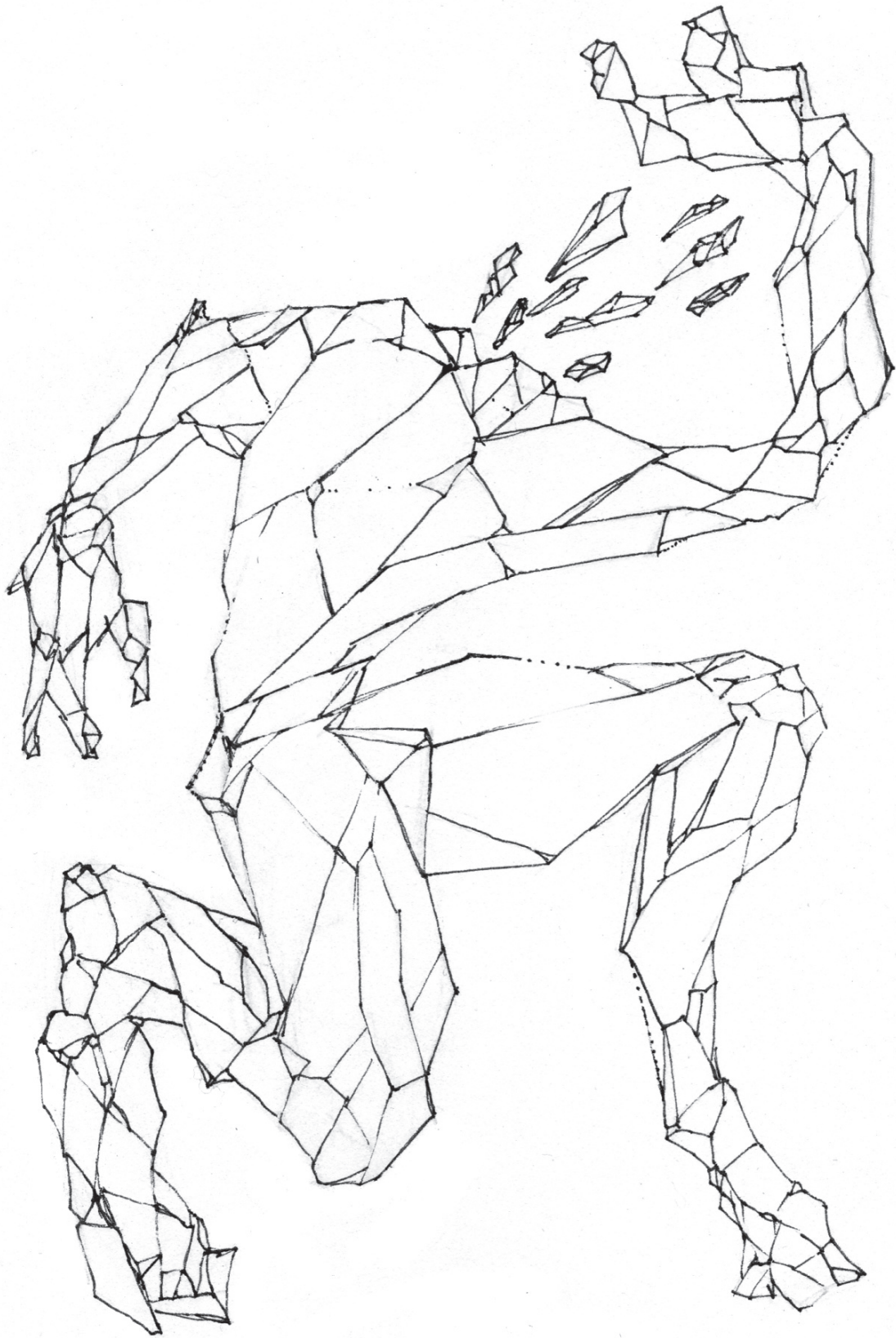
Silver Swans: swans attack anybody within 30' of their nest with extreme prejudice.

Swordbills: swordbills deal double damage against wounded, bleeding opponents.

Flaming Flamingos: immune to fire. The flames deal 1d6/round to melee opponents.

Toxicant Storks: once per hour they can breathe a 10-foot-wide toxic cloud, lasting 1d6 rounds. Save or take 2d6 damage.

Omen: for each hour spent watching the sky, there's a 1-in-6 chance of birds flying. Roll 1d6 to determine the bird type from the text above, then 1d6. If the result is 1, the ominous special condition is fulfilled. When doing the relevant action, in case of good omen, PCs can reroll a single dice roll. In case of bad omen, the Referee can force you to reroll a die.



Shambling Shards

Only a tremor. It took only a tremor for the School of Pharmacy to be no more.

There was no need to go there to realize the extent of the destruction. A pillar of fire rose for a league into the night sky, blinding scores of Stargazers intent in their nocturnal rites. With time the flames subsided, but continued raging, making the night as bright as the day. Even nowadays, in these lost canyons, the inferno never truly stops. The wise always directs the eyes to the moon and the stars before going there.

But back then we had to act. We needed to save what was left of the school. We sent in our salamanders, protected by shambling shards. Of the few that came back alive, young Pyrodes saw great clouds of iridescent flames burning under the ruins, and the surviving pharmas, horribly deformed by the disaster but still very much alive, attacking the recovery party with no concern except for violence.

And that's where the shards, already weakened by the intense heat, saved the day. They threw themselves at the fiendish pharmas, twisting their magic and allowing the rest of the party to make it back. It was there when we understood that they are not mere mindless matter. Their sacrifice was unrequested, and direct orders were ignored. They stopped the pharmas and allowed some of ours to make it back with important artefacts.

To be fair, to this day I'm still not sure whether I'm more sad for their sacrifice or for the loss of all these constructs. But, after all, salamander apprentices come here in great numbers, while a good construct requires much care and time. Finding enough mana-tar of specific hues and crystallizing it under the correct conditions is hard work indeed.

*OSR: HD 4; AC 2[17]; Atk 2 fists (1d6, 1d6); Move 6; Save 13; AL L; CL/XP 6/400;
Special: Quartz Quality, Construct, quarter damage from elements.*

AFG: LVL 4 Construct, DEF Heavy. Special: Quartz Quality, Construct, quarter damage from elements.

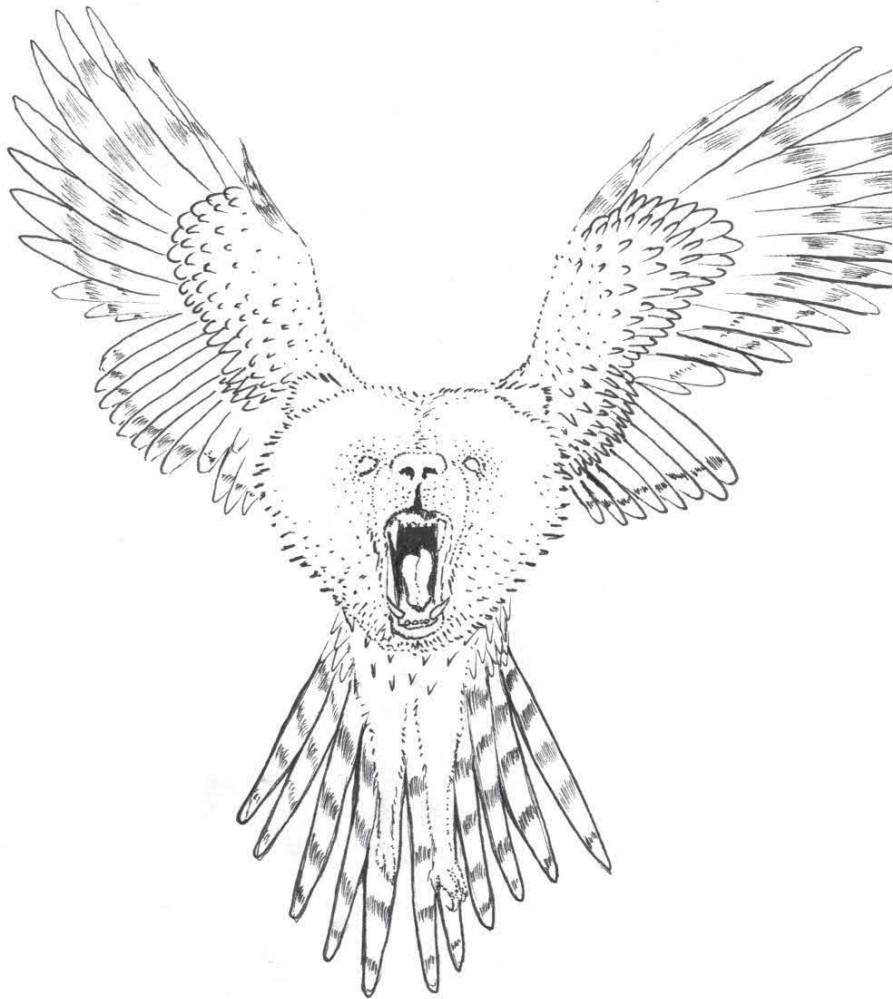
Quartz Quality: shambling shards are made of one of four specific colours of quartz:

Crystal Quartz counters offensive magic. Anything cast in anger or with the intent to deceive or impair that would affect the shard, even partially, is fully countered.

Smokey Quartz makes everything look better. When the shard hits in melee the victim must save or perceive the damage as minimal, as if it was only a flesh wound.

Roze Quartz is calming. Opponents within 30' of the shard can't perform offensive actions until attacked unless they save.

Tourmalined Quartz amplifies black magic and evil intent. The shard reverberates the pernicious effects of any offensive spell affecting it, replicating it upon all beings within 120'.



Bearowls, Chimerists' Flying Shame

Opidnorexus II brought a mated pair to the School as a gift. Amazing specimen! Never before a bear-owl chimera with wings and a bear head was seen, let alone bred in our school. Seeing it was possible, all our Savants tried, and failed, and failed!

We tried, tried harder, our best minds spent years on the problem. Our best minds.

Hundreds of times we tried, hundreds of times we failed. Hundreds of heads of owl on wingless bears. Shame on our School.

And it's not the prestige of flying one, we have enough. They are so fertile.

The problem is that we can't do it. Now, after years pursuing the solution myself, I believe it can't be done. I think Opidnorexus played a trick on us. He might have seen them in his peering and brought them here to mock us, to trick us into a wild chase of an illusion, a metaphorical chimera, the only one we'll never really create.

But, at times, the thought that the Grand Sorcerer might have found a way to breed that chimera keeps me awake at night. Our supremacy would be compromised, and the consequences are unacceptable.

OSR: HD 5+1; AC 5 [14]; Atk 2 claws (1d6), 1 bite (2d6); Move 12; Save 12; AL N; CL/XP 5/240; Special: raking with claws for additional 2d8 if to-hit roll is 18+.

AFG: LVL 6 Animal, DEF medium. Special: Flying, Raking (if rolling a 6 to hit, in addition to the bite damage, the claws deal 1d6 damage each).

Flying mount: Bearowls can be used as mounts by human-sized riders. Due to their extreme rarity, when encountered outwith a School Bearowls have a 5-in-6 chance of being ridden by Chimerist or Stargazer Savants or their apprentices running dangerous errands.



Abundant Amphibians

Croaking and wet, we ride them, we lick them and at the end we eat them. Sometimes I wish they were less slimy and more affectionate, but that would be asking too much.

All the following amphibians can jump their movement once per round. Each amphibian type has an additional special ability. Stats depend on size.

Bullfrog - deals double damage when charging, hitting with its horns.

Fire toad - anybody within 1' of the toad takes 1d6 fire damage per round.

Brain-eating Batrachian - after mating, once per year it will give birth to 6d6 tadpoles.

Tadpoles can be inserted in a vertebrate ear, lodging themselves in the brain of the host; the host automatically fails all saves against mind control.

Bloated Anura - Anuras can inflate themselves and float away like hot-air balloons, at very, very slow rates, paddling at about 300 feet/turn. A large anura can fly away carrying a human. They can deflate themselves hastily emitting a loud whistle.

*Purple Toad - lick to get hallucinations: recover 1 mana, but Save or the lick is knocked out tripping for 1d6 hours. If a character licks more than 1 toad a day, **SAVE OR DIE**.*

OSR: Fist-sized: HD 1hp; AC 7 [12]; Atk -; Move 6; Save 18; AL N; CL/XP A/5

Goat-sized: HD 1; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 bite (1d6-1); Move 12; Save 17; AL N; CL/XP 2/30.

Human-sized: HD 2; AC 7 [12]; Atk 1 tongue (special) or 1 bite (1d6+1); Move 18; Save 16; AL N; CL/XP 2/30; Special: if empty-mouthed can snatch a human-sized opponent within 20 feet with its tongue. If the attack hits, the victim must save or be dragged into the frog mouth, taking an additional bite attack.

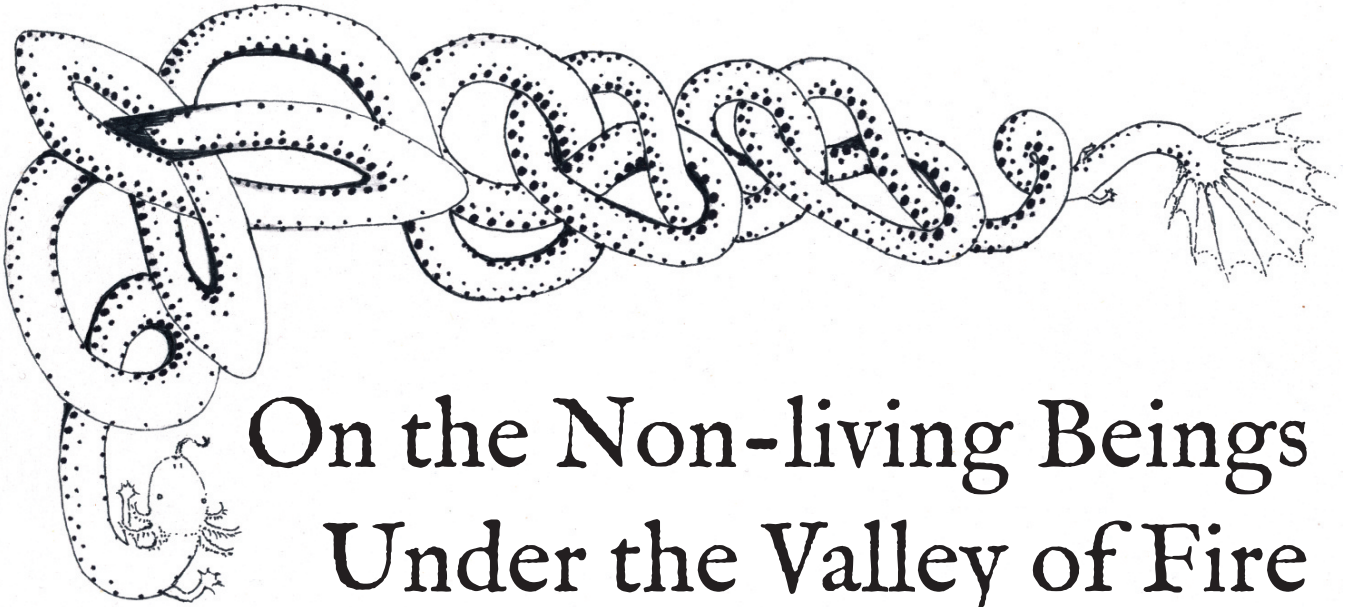
Couch-sized: HD 5; AC 5 [14]; Atk 1 bite (2d6); Move 24; Save 12; AL N; CL/XP 5/240; Special: if empty-mouthed can snatch a human-sized opponent within 40 feet with its tongue. If the attack hits, the victim must save or be dragged into the frog mouth, taking 1d6 damage every round.

AFG: Fist-sized: LVL 0 Animal, DEF none.

Goat-sized: LVL 1 Animal, DEF light.

Human-sized: LVL 2 Animal, DEF light. Special: Snatch (if empty-mouthed can snatch a human-sized opponent within 20 feet with its tongue. If the attack hits, the victim must save or be dragged into the frog mouth, taking an additional bite attack)

Couch-sized: LVL 6 Animal, DEF light. Special: Snatch'n'Chew (if empty-mouthed can snatch a human-sized opponent within 40 feet with its tongue. If the attack hits, the victim must save or be dragged into the frog mouth, taking 1d6 damage every round)



On the Non-living Beings Under the Valley of Fire

Most of the creatures of the Hypogea live their lives as many other animals and beasts, regardless of the fact that they might or might not have a soul. But due to its peculiar environment and history, the Hypogea are populated - one might even say infested - by creatures that are not strictly *alive*.

Here we describe three categories of these beings:

Non-living: the creature is not alive and therefore is not bothered by sleep, hunger, disease and other scourges of life like love, hope, fascination and pain. Through experiments and other evidence we found non-livings are also immune to poison and spells causing paralysis and other types of mind-control. Despite all the above, it's common knowledge that at times some of them suffer, in fact, particularly exacerbated cases of the worst of the human problems, hybris.

Undead: these creatures are non-living corpses animated by their psyche, somehow still lingering with the corpse. More rarely they are simply a disembodied lost psyche roaming our world. The spirit can be affected by banishment, circles of protections, holy places, people and objects, and of course all magic affecting specifically undead corpses and lost souls. Mana-tar does not seem to cause harm to undead: this causes boundless jocularly in the College of Necromancy and incredible hair-pulling in any other school.

Construct: these objects are not only obviously non-living, but they also usually lack a soul. Despite lacking a soul, they are somehow animated. This exposes them to magic that affects inanimate objects. Having souls can be a boon, sometimes.

OSR: these three types are meant to complete and replace the usual "immune to sleep, charm" and similar lists of immunities that non-living creatures share.

AFG: in the Chthonic Codex setting all creatures of types Construct and Undead have the above immunities, plus Nightvision.

The Five Great Schools of Magic

The Five Great Schools of Magic in the Hypogea of the Valley of Fire are:

The Circle of the Fire Dervishes
The College of the Gatekeepers
The College of the Chimerists
The College of the Stargazers
The School of Necromancy

When it's time to create a Grand Sorcerer, the Five Great Schools pick their best Savants to meet for the Conspiracy. Together they perform the Ritual of Apotheosis to create the Grand Sorcerer of the Fire Valley. The Grand Sorcerer abandons their life, all traces they left in the world destroyed forever, and rule the Hypogea until death, leading the Schools through adverse times.

And upon their death, a new Conspiracy is called. A new Grand Sorcerer created.

Because the Great Schools, their Traditions and their Secrets have to live on.

Apprentices and petitioners come to them from all over the land and from across the sea. The Great Schools accept students of all levels, provided they find a Master to tutor them. Once someone becomes part of a School, the School owns them; leaving the school is not permitted, loyalty is expected and even a temporary leave should be discussed with one's superiors. This is especially important for Apprentices.

The Circle of Fire Dervishes has been literally torn down during the Fire Dervish Troubles. The few left Fire Dervishes are residents in other schools, accept apprentices and operate within their control. Independent Fire Dervishes are hunted down with alacrity, even more than mages turning independent without their School's consent.

Fortunately the Five Great Schools are quite strict in their admissions. But there are schools so desperate for students that they accept even the less skilled. For example, the School of Artifice, sometimes called the Great Workshop or the Shop, is surely not as prestigious as the Five Great Schools and has a negligible relevance, but it still somehow manages to scrounge together resources to teach and manufacture their fancy toys.

All the schools in the book, not only the Great Schools, are good options for starting PCs.

Task Checks with 5MORE

The bread and butter of refereeing is adjudicating characters' actions when their outcome is not certain. The 5MORE system works like this:

Let the player describe their action and roll a d6:
ON A 5 OR MORE, SUCCESS!
Done! Easy-peasy!

More in detail: 5MORE is not a substitute for good ideas. Players must describe their actions first, then modify rolls as needed:

+1 for easy tasks, -1 for hard ones
+1 for good ideas or plans, -1 for bad ones
+1 for high relevant Stat, -1 for a low relevant Stat
+1 for excellent equipment, -1 for inappropriate equipment

Then roll 1d6 and consult the following list of results:

- 1: Absolute Failure: be creative with the consequences.
- 2-4: Failure: the character failed but consequences might not be dire.
- 5-6: Success: awesome! The character might also get better at this! If they succeeded with unmodified 5 or 6, try an Experience Roll: roll 1d6 and if the result is an unmodified 5 or 6, note a letter from the word "EXPERT" next to the Task name on the character sheet. For each Task, the first letter is going to be an E, the second an X and so on.

When the character completes the letter EXPERT he gets a +1 to the 5MORE roll on that task. The Referee is encouraged to put a limit on how often EXPERT letters are gained; a letter per encounter or scene is a safe limit.

Furthermore, after a character becomes EXPERT in 6 tasks, he can choose one of them and replace EXPERT with MASTER. The character now adds +2 to rolls on that task.

5More for other Old School Games

Here's the list of 5MORE relevant stats for other Old School games. A high or low stat gives a +1 or -1 to 5MORE rolls. The Referee might set the threshold for a high stat at anything between 12 and 16, and a low stat between 9 and 5.

Arts & Crafts Tasks: either intelligence, dexterity or strength based.
STR: climbing, feat of strength (like open doors, push boulders, etc)
INT: herbalism, astrology, medicine, research, astrology, herbalism, pharmacy
WIS: scrying, first aid
DEX: balance, tumbling, sneak (a combination of Move Silently and Hide)
CHA: enchanting, music, seduction



Apprentice Preparation

First teaching: traditions are important. We all use "Master" while addressing anybody who is not another apprentice. Even your Master does that, and sometimes even the Grand Sorcerer does that. Second: we will teach you *our* ways, you will learn them. The technique of spellcasting taught here in the Hypogea, as already mentioned, is unique. We teach apprentices not to rely on the side effects of inebriating, mind-numbing rote learning, but to chase what they love and to embrace it fully, aiming to reach total understanding of the topic. Or, at least, deeper understanding. The failures of an apprentice reflect on their sponsors. Try not to disappoint or embarrass anybody.

Characters of any class and level can be apprentices in an Hypogean School: apprenticeship does not confer automatic spellcasting abilities. Replace traditional spell lists with the spells from this book and traditional wizardly magic with the Hypogean Casting rules described across.

We do things differently here. No magic-reading juju. The first spell you will learn is...

The Apprentice's Bridge

This bridge will let you cross the gorge of fear, the karst of uncertainty, the canyon of doubt and the river of ignorance. Enough metaphors now, just shut up and listen. - *Anonymous*

Unveil Arcana

Level: 0. Range: 1'. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster uncannily receives insights and visions enabling them to identify and understand one *arcana*, an unknown function of the chosen arcane item or phenomenon within range. If cast on a grimoire, the caster will be able to identify a chosen spell from the source. The caster can then learn and transcribe it if their levels are compatible. If cast on other items or phenomena, the weakest unknown function or detail of the object or phenomenon will be understood by the Caster first, with more details conveyed on subsequent castings.

Dispensation - the caster has to sleep at least 1d6 hours with their head close to the *arcana* to be unveiled. Comfy pillows can be used, but not overly thick.

Hypogean Casting

Casters can alter reality by casting spells. First-level Casters know three spells: *Unveil Arcana* plus, after a short discussion with the referee about what they are up to in the Hypogea, a second spell of level 0 and a spell of level 1.

First-level Casters start with one Mana, which can be spent to cast a single spell. If the Dispensation clause of the spell is satisfied, no mana is spent. Casting spells requires the ability to speak unimpeded and a hand free to make precise gestures. When Casters gain a level, they gain one extra mana and learn a new spell of their level. Example: third-level Casters know at least five spells (*Unveil Arcana*, plus a spell for each level 0, 1, 2 and 3) and are able to spend three Mana points per day.

A Caster can't cast a given spell more than once a day: the sun at dawn replenishes spent mana and the ability to cast used spells. Extra spells can be researched or learned in other ways, for example by obtaining spells from another Caster.

Grimoires

Grimoires are often a Caster's most valuable possession, as they are collected methods, procedures and notes on how to cast spells. In order to be able to cast a spell, the Caster must have written the spell in their grimoire and have revised the spell in the past season or so.

While grimoires can have many forms (codices, scrolls, carved sticks, copper tablets, tapestries, knotted strings, engraved crystals and tattoos are just a few examples) Caster training enables them to understand the nature of a grimoire after a brief examination. To be able to understand the contents of a newly found grimoire, the Caster will need either repeated uses of the *Unveil Arcana* spell, one casting per new spell, or plenty of time to decipher its contents.

Paraphernalia: Talismans and Mana Vessels

Talismans are charms, trinkets, fetishes and other curios. Each is dedicated to a specific spell and allows a Caster to cast the spell a second time per day, provided the Caster provides the necessary Mana. The form and function of a talisman always relate. For example, talismans for *Unveil Arcana* usually are spectacles or pillows. Goatskin bellows could be talismans for *Furious Fires*. A silver hammer could be the talisman for *Curse of the Cog*.

Mana Vessels store Mana which can be later used by Casters. Mana Vessels of a given level store 1 Mana that can be used to power spells up to that level. They can be recharged by a Caster of at least the same level by spending 1 Mana in a process that takes 1 hour and 1 mana. Mana Vessels can be little flasks, gems, tattoos or similar small items. Mana Vessels will sometimes change when storing Mana. Gems might glow, tops could spin forever, tattoos may animate and so on.

Apprentice Proficiency Acquisition Process

Apprentices are introduced early to a number of mundane skills and chores. By the end of your introduction, you will be able and will be expected to carry out the following tasks unsupervised and unrequested, even more so if asked by senior school members:

- maintaining of the decor and cleanliness of the relevant School
- hunting, fishing, harvesting food and cooking
- alternative writing: cuneiform on clay tablets, weaving, stone etching
- accurately transcribing mundane writings
- paper making, goatskin tanning, bookbinding
- procurement, production and purification of arcane components

An apprentice can safely produce about 1d6c worth of arcane materials every week by gathering materials found around the Hypogea and refining them in a laboratory. This is one of the main reasons why high level casters have apprentices. After all, there's not much you can buy with gold in the Hypogea.

Apprentices understand that avoiding their assigned work means punishment and that punishment is only to benefit the apprentice, never for the mere gain of their Master or their School. Trying to do away with punishment means the apprentice refuses to accept their Master's wisdom and will therefore be probably cast off, naked, from the School. While this does not necessarily mean sudden death, it might mean that the apprentice will have to resort to enrolling in a minor School or, in the worst case, be tutored by an unaffiliated Master. Avoid the shame. It reflects badly upon us too.

But we do understand that not all apprentices have the gift of magic or the enormous dedication needed to harness it. Should you not pursue further the art of magic, there's still a place for you here. You are still bound to your School and Master, after all.

Characters of all classes can learn the above skills and a couple of level 0 spells. Since they are not Casters though, they have to rely on mana vessels for mana. Years of playtesting showed that this is not something that is going to wreck your game.

Learning & Copying New Spells

A caster can learn more spells in other ways too: for example, studying a grimoire describing the spell or being taught by another character who knows the spell already. Learning a spell takes one week of full-time study per spell level, which includes writing the spell into a grimoire. Then the caster will need to make a Research roll learn the spell. If the roll is not successful, the caster may reattempt the roll once per additional week of full-time study.

Time and labour are needed to copy spells. Copying a spell in a grimoire takes one day per spell level. It can be done reliably only if the copier has learned the spell already. In any other case, the transcription can't be used to learn the spell.



Being an Apprentice, regardless of the College, you should usually be endowed with:

- A jute shoulder bag.
- Some leaves of paper, ink and pen, or clay tablets and reeds.
- Access to a shared room or solitary cell, dug in stone.
- 6 chunky candles, 6 tarred torches, tinder and flint.
- A knife, a staff, a mallet and a chisel.
- A thick woolen cloak, a linen short tunic and goatskin sandals.
- Knowledge of the spell Unveil Arcana, plus another Cantrip and a First Circle Spell, chosen by Your Master.

Plus an endowment depending on the School:

Fire Dervishes: White skirt, white shirt, red fez. A selection of flints and steel, tinder and a matchsticks box. Your Master can provide access to three sealed glass flasks of blazing oil.

Gatekeepers: White tunic, white hood. A box of chalk. Your master can provide access to a sealed iron flask for spirit binding, holding an unspecified spirit if they feel so inclined.

Chimerists: Tye-dyed turquoise-purple skorts, sleeveless top and a face-covering, web-like coif. Six sealable ceramic jars. Your Master can provide a frog, ooze, slime, mould, protoplasm or plasmoid of any appropriate color.

Necromancers: Black tunic with long pointy hood with holes for eyes and extra-long sleeves, with crude white bone motifs. Your Master can provide access to corpses and three flasks of blessed water.

Stargazers: Sky-blue tunic with white dots and star patches. Multicoloured brimless top-hat or blue conical hat with embedded mirror shards. A brass goat liver map for casting omens. Your Master can provide access to a spyglass.

Artificers: Felt trousers, shirt, leather apron with arms cover (*light armour*) and goggles. A crossbow and 12 darts. Your so-called "master" might scrounge for you a mostly working musket or handgun, with powder and 6 shots.

Plus each Apprentice will inevitably get some obtained, gifted, bought or stolen Ambite Pieces and Arcane Pointless Adjuncts of some dubious utility.

Ambite Pieces

A Paramount Assorted Panoply of Apprentice Provisions

or

A Perfunctory Allotment of Arcane Pointless Adjuncts

Hypogean traditions dictate that Alumni, upon leaving the Fire Valley, must leave behind most of their belongings. This is a partial list of the most notable of the many objects passed around over the years. Apprentices do their best to obtain, buy and steal as many as they can. This is what you can expect:

*Starting characters
roll a d666 (3d6)
1d6 times on this list
for extra equipment.
Reroll duplicates.*

- 1-1-1 An oversized goat head mask
- 1-1-2 A magnificent glass-topped wooden display case segregated into 256 compartments that contain the full spectrum of colors found in accumulations of navel lint.
- 1-1-3 A compass that always points Thisaway
- 1-1-4 An egg timer calibrated in aeons
- 1-1-5 An abacus with lettered blocks for performing impromptu numerology
- 1-1-6 A pair of 3-lensed spectacles tinted in ulfire, dolm and jale
- 1-2-1 The Milk of Human Kindness (gone sour) in small vial with eyedropper
- 1-2-2 Half a horseshoe
- 1-2-3 A bag of teeth
- 1-2-4 A pint of children tears
- 1-2-5 Spoons for bending practice
- 1-2-6 Tea, for alertness, tanning and teamancy
- 1-3-1 A small box containing an invisible scarab
- 1-3-2 A device that tells you how the weather was in your current location five million years ago
- 1-3-3 A disguising comb that always leaves you looking faintly vulpine
- 1-3-4 Equipment for a sport reputedly played during the 16th Age
- 1-3-5 Erotic fortune-telling postcards adapted to the tastes of some hideous semi-insectoid wilderness-thing
- 1-3-6 Punctilio For Dummies
- 1-4-1 An astrolabe demarcated in another planar system of measurement
- 1-4-2 A vial with the last breath of a notorious necromancer dissolved in ether
- 1-4-3 3 stereopoticon slides of salacious ghosts
- 1-4-4 A map depicting the continents of an unknown planet
- 1-4-5 A crystal ball containing a wonderfully detailed miniature palace; small beings move about performing their duties and living their lives - if you shake the ball the beings become frightened and agitated
- 1-4-6 A beanie that makes the wearer feel the weather in the precisely opposite location on the globe
- 1-5-1 A jar of eyenails

- 1-5-2 A mug that instantly turns its contents tepid
- 1-5-3 A cat muzzle
- 1-5-4 Three saplings of thunder-oak *
- 1-5-5 Five lead tubes attached to a nozzle
- 1-5-6 Twenty-seven live bats stitched onto a cloak
- 1-6-1 A handkerchief containing the noseblowings of the North Wind
- 1-6-2 Lipstick that sticks lips
- 1-6-3 An empty wire cage at the end of a staff
- 1-6-4 The Strong Gauntlet of the Star Soldier Who Cried
- 1-6-5 A bag of unlimited eels *it's possible to pull out 1d6 eels a day*
- 1-6-6 A necklace of all your baby teeth
- 2-1-1 A potted ghoulish heath
- 2-1-2 A spicy balm, spread on wounds to seethe
- 2-1-3 A codpiece for women
- 2-1-4 Box of Carcosan Crayons, including the totally transparent Bone crayon
- 2-1-5 A half-pendulum that only swings fro, or a half-clock that only tocks
- 2-1-6 A Saving Purse (it never opens)
- 2-2-1 Something in a matchbox that makes people go "yuck". Nobody wants to discuss the content.
- 2-2-2 A monode for your third eye
- 2-2-3 A homeoscope that makes things look exactly the same size as they actually are
- 2-2-4 A double-headed divination coin
- 2-2-5 A coprolite from an extinct species of dragon
- 2-2-6 A box of Flavoury Crunchy Frog Chocolate
- 2-3-1 A periwig of real baboon hair
- 2-3-2 DIY voodoo doll kit; requires three different body parts from target
- 2-3-3 A gallium spoon
- 2-3-4 A curious speaking tube that translates any language into whistles
- 2-3-5 Dust of Slightly Grubby Appearance
- 2-3-6 Hydrometer for testing specific gravity of fluids, esp. beer
- 2-4-1 False cat whiskers for seeing if you can fit through a gap
- 2-4-2 Dark monode for keeping sun glare out of one eye
- 2-4-3 Colour chart for the correct identification of oozes, molds and slimes
- 2-4-4 Slide rule in base 17 arithmetic
- 2-4-5 Wand of Prime Number detection - wave it at a collection of any kind of object and it will tell you if there is a prime number of them
- 2-4-6 Animated lithograph of wizard at his graduation from Alchemy College, slightly singed and acid-stained
- 2-5-1 An axolotl
- 2-5-2 A copy of How to Win at Drinking
- 2-5-3 A random list maker
- 2-5-4 A book of true and reliable prophecies pertaining to utterly insignificant events
- 2-5-5 Temporary glue: sticks things for 2 minutes, then lubricates.
- 2-5-6 The Drink of Forgetfulness - works only while you're drinking it
- 2-6-1 Suppositories of Stuttering

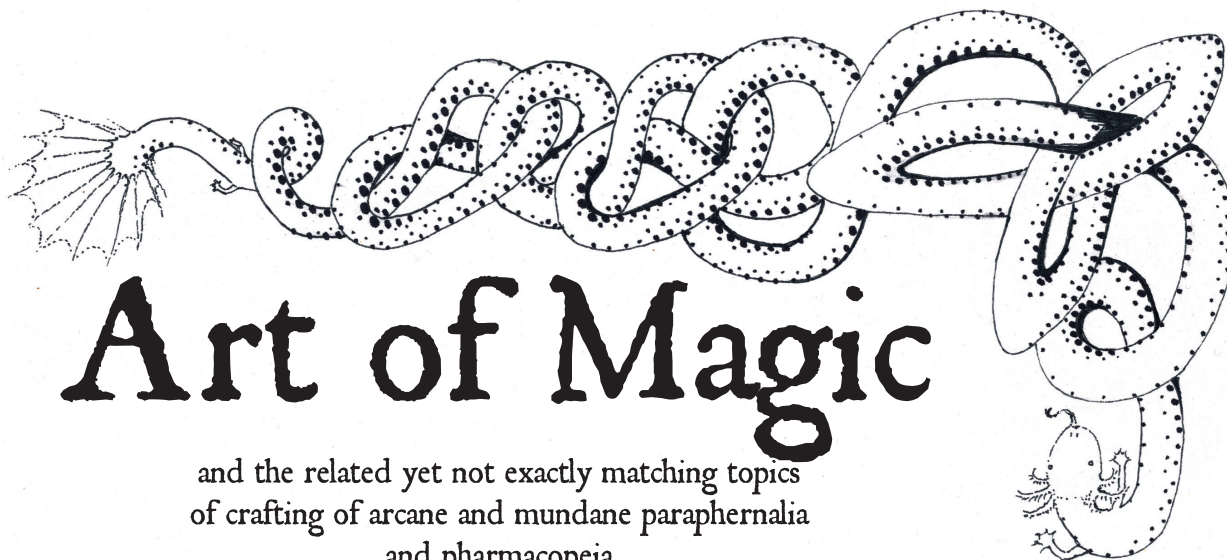
*: *guaranteed to be struck by lightning when fully grown, centuries later.*

- 2-6-2 A pop-up heart surgery manual, annotated in an unknown language
- 2-6-3 An accurate map of the world on a leather möbius strip
- 2-6-4 A miniscule snot golem with a nasty cold
- 2-6-5 A domino mask that, when donned, makes the wearer think they are the hottest thing on the dancefloor
- 2-6-6 A rusty tiara that mysteriously attracts useless scrap metal in the dark of night
- 3-1-1 An effigy of a prancing monster that howls in the light of the moon
- 3-1-2 A Gordian Accordion
- 3-1-3 A fathom line for measuring the Depths of Sorrow
- 3-1-4 A glass lyre
- 2-1-5 Schematics of automata in a language and scale unknown - could be anything between a child's toy and a towering colossus
- 3-1-6 Screw-driver's licence, released by the School of Artificers
- 3-2-1 A hexaflexagon of mirrors that supposedly reflects the true soul - but only in total darkness.
- 3-2-2 A Gamelan gong tuned to an ultrasonic pitch.
- 3-2-3 Fish barding (heavy plates)
- 3-2-4 A jack hammer made of knuckle bones; only hammers Jacks
- 3-2-5 A rotting pair of old boxer shorts so offensive it can clear a room in moments
- 3-2-6 Shibboleth joke-book. Reduces one in fifty people to wheezing ruin for minutes
- 3-3-1 A Pelgrane-spotter's notebook. Infuriates pelgranes
- 3-3-2 A raunchy publication for whalers with an enticing sealed section.
- 3-3-3 Rusted mechanical parts
- 3-3-4 A manuscript of a novel about the tall tales of a knight. Starts boring but becomes slightly less so over a few hundred pages. The content changes every night.
- 3-3-5 A vial containing a milky liquid identified as "The Quality of Mercy" and a small silver straining spoon.
- 3-3-6 A well-licked toad
- 3-4-1 An old map marked only with letter 'h', maybe from the middle of Nowhere
- 3-4-2 The liturgical manual of a forgotten religion with 17 blank pages.
- 3-4-3 Ear Candles
- 3-4-4 The concentrated sweat of female goats
- 3-4-5 1 oz of pure pandemonium
- 3-4-6 Opera glasses that purportedly show all on stage buck-naked
- 3-5-1 A bag of flux helpful to melt cheese
- 3-5-2 A pien-mein hand fan from the Western Land of the Lakes that cools the user but heats the person in front of them
- 3-5-3 A 1 inch cast iron Skillet of Perfect Recipes
- 3-5-4 A bag of fine glass shards
- 3-5-5 A concertina that, when played, puts mice to sleep.
- 3-5-6 A pair of tiny pliers for extracting the molars of pixies
- 3-6-1 A basset-hound trained in tracking down nail clippings
- 3-6-2 A cow bell that, when rung, causes all mammals in earshot to lactate
- 3-6-3 83 silver coated aphids. All alive and healthy
- 3-6-4 A bunch of fresh spinach leaves; they are stone-hard
- 3-6-5 A dead baby in a jar. It is smiling

- 3-6-6 A tentacle-adaptor for scissors
- 4-1-1 The Compleat Atlas of Inns and Speakeasys. It updates itself every night
- 4-1-2 A starchart showing the proximity between the famous and infamous
- 4-1-3 A rodent's foot. Each time it is touched can be lucky or unlucky
- 4-1-4 A frypan that burns all meals cooked in it.
- 4-1-5 Worm blinders
- 4-1-6 Inverse Colander. A bucket with a magic hole. Fluids don't flow through it.
- 4-2-1 A perfectly relative argument
- 4-2-2 Ring of Obscene Noises
- 4-2-3 Bland-o-Mat Powder. Add to food and drink to make it blander.
- 4-2-4 Crystal Ball of Regrets. It shows what would happen if you behaved differently in your past
- 4-2-5 Zither of Shoggot Cuddles
- 4-2-6 Cursed Bouncy Ball. You can't get rid of it. Every midnight, it mysteriously finds its way back to you
- 4-3-1 Pack of Magical Spaghetti. Two command words switches them instantly between raw-rigid and cooked-soft
- 4-3-2 Spatula of leverage (bendy)
- 4-3-3 Badwrong Sex Drawing. Depicts disgusting sexual acts. Subject is dependent on viewers' tastes
- 4-3-4 Misenchanted Dice. When rolled, they fall from the table, pile up or cock up or get knocked up before they can be read
- 4-3-5 Slippery Slippers. They create no drag whatsoever. Neither on the feet
- 4-3-6 Pocket Goat, 2" tall. When excited, shouts random words in Common Language
- 4-4-1 Snail shoes
- 4-4-2 A block of cheese, but when you bite into it, you only taste human flesh
- 4-4-3 The ingredients for a spell, but when used it backfires and the spell affects the caster or someone else with no predictable pattern
- 4-4-4 A small coin with two heads. If someone ever flips it and calls "tails" it will change to a two tails coin
- 4-4-5 A small pot of paint, changes colour when nobody looks at it
- 4-4-6 Green powder. Smells like cumin, is not cumin, does nothing. But smells like cumin
- 4-5-1 A neverending match, but how do you put it out?
- 4-5-2 Antimagic Grimoire, in a foreign language you don't know. Spells to read magic won't work (it's magic-proof).
- 4-5-3 Earhorn of Empty Words, 1 mile range. It amplifies only phrase parts that don't carry any meaning.
- 4-5-4 Frog/ooze/slime/mould/protoplasm instant-growth powder
- 4-5-5 7 dozens of preserved Glowbat placentas. A topping for special occasions
- 4-5-6 Half a dozen century-preserved ornipoochie eggs
- 4-6-1 Itchy goatskin gloves
- 4-6-2 Misenchanted Pen. Perfectly readable, the writer can't see the writing.
- 4-6-3 Phasing Pheasants Leash. It magically attaches itself to a pheasant but doesn't stop the pheasant from phasing away
- 4-6-4 8 Tripephile Lozenges. The eater will crave tripe for weeks.
- 4-6-5 6 pills. If eaten, you speak in High Ancient Qorinthian until dawn

- 4-6-6 Diploma of Prestidigitation. Prestidigitation is frowned upon by mages
- 5-1-1 Fireproof oil, 1 pint
- 5-1-2 Lutefisk, 1 pound, in sealed clay jar
- 5-1-3 Slide Whistle of Annoying Ghost Kid Summoning.
- 5-1-4 Medusa Shampoo
- 5-1-5 A fluid that if injected into a fresh corpse causes it to act out the most prominent incidents of its life
- 5-1-6 Bottomless Eyedropper
- 5-2-1 Bloating drops, 1 vial. If dripped on a body part, it will become harmlessly bloated for a few days
- 5-2-2 Obsidian Ravens of Dispersion. Statue of 6 ravens. Command word transforms them into ravens that immediately disperse flying away
- 5-2-3 Toy Chariot of Fire, 1 inch tall
- 5-2-4 Everfull Crock of Shit
- 5-2-5 Gem of Apathy. Nobody cares about it. You keep it amongst your stuff because you can't be bothered to get rid of it
- 5-2-6 Shiny woolen socks.
- 5-3-1 Bureaucratic notes of long-destroyed magic colleges
- 5-3-2 Floating stone.
- 5-3-3 Marionette. Warm to the touch, has a pulse.
- 5-3-4 A glass plate that lets through light with one year delay.
- 5-3-5 A small vial containing red mercury.
- 5-3-6 Large bag of individually numbered lentils.
- 5-4-1 Petrified duck filled with basilisk stuffing.
- 5-4-2 A bad penny and its big brother, the sinful shilling. Can only be spent on rubbish, but at least it always comes back.
- 5-4-3 The immortal gobstopper, suck as hard as you like it never gets any smaller! About the size of a golfball.
- 5-4-4 A comb that can do any hairstyle, from 2 seasons ago.
- 5-4-5 Spare spleen, in case the first one vents
- 5-4-6 A plywood cone for keeping wizard hats nice and pointy.
- 5-5-1 Shoulder holster for a wheellock pistol (not included)
- 5-5-2 Three medicinal leeches named Curr, Lar and Moa. Won't suck anyone who has eaten asparagus or garlic in the last 48 hours
- 5-5-3 A box of musical cigars.
- 5-5-4 A magical whoopie cushion. When sat on, blurts out what the sitter last ate.
- 5-5-5 A never empty can of nourishing armpit broth. Smells like armpit.
- 5-5-6 A runcible spoon
- 5-6-1 A urinalysis colour chart and bottle
- 5-6-2 The Infallible Charm against Spontaneous Combustion
- 5-6-3 A nugget of purest green!
- 5-6-4 An acupuncture map for glabargs, floating tentacled leeches.
- 5-6-5 A handbook of Phrenology and rubber mallet for adjusting head
- 5-6-6 Slug Nails
- 6-1-1 Pan Pipes of Ennui
- 6-1-2 A zip-up codpiece

- 6-1-3 Five goat wool spools, of various sizes and colours
- 6-1-4 Levitating humming maggots, live bait for bat-fishing
- 6-1-5 A crochet hook enchanted as a magic weapon
- 6-1-6 The time written down on piece of paper
- 6-2-1 A carmine stick of mustache wax and vermillion stick of phosphoric diambroid
- 6-2-2 A bottle of Worcester Sauce (it's magic, I tell you! Not natural!)
- 6-2-3 Bicycle clips
- 6-2-4 Eau de Ferret aftershave
- 6-2-5 Wind-up Wombat-botherer
- 6-2-6 A copy of "101 Sure Hellgate Chat Up Lines"
- 6-3-1 One of them pointy things you use to take stones out of a goat's hoof
- 6-3-2 A cedarwood box containing an Oread's lost virginity
- 6-3-3 Tuning fork carved in brain for encouraging cognitive dissonance
- 6-3-4 A puncture repair kit for deflated egos (a bottle of port and cigars)
- 6-3-5 The match foretold to burn down the world
- 6-3-6 A whiff of yesterday (vaguely noisome)
- 6-4-1 A flathead screw, rather annoyed with having a two-dimensional face and not afraid to let you know
- 6-4-2 Pugsley, a friendly and faithful pug that always smells like shit no matter how many baths you give it
- 6-4-3 The only extant copy of the Ultimate Tome of Transcendental Illumination, all pages of which are fiendishly stuck together
- 6-4-4 The original master mould of the human brain, cracked and graffitied by a rabid phrenologist cult
- 6-4-5 The Little Black Book of Western Headbinding Techniques with Curious Illustrations of the Unusually Shaped
- 6-4-6 Brain pickles. Delicious!
- 6-5-1 One of the Seven Endless Bogrolls of Annoying Flimsiness
- 6-5-2 A full set of Darts of Veering. Comes with a 2' square of sticky carpet of unknown origin and a pint
- 6-5-3 A laquered purple dlog
- 6-5-4 The Unfuckable Buckle
- 6-5-5 The Disceptre, that makes all who behold the wielder think they are royalty until they get a good look at them in the eye, at which point they think the wielder is trash
- 6-5-6 The middle of a donut
- 6-6-1 A wind-up talking skull with chattering teeth. Actually an undead pretending to be an automa.
- 6-6-2 A piglet with a grappling hook embedded in its head. The beast is perfectly happy and the grapple is perfectly functional.
- 6-6-3 A saddle for giant amphibians.
- 6-6-4 The most comfortable slippers in the world. Each is a slackjawed giant leech that feeds on toejam.
- 6-6-5 A bottle of nameless liquor from the Isle of Pleasure. It won't help you forget, but you won't mind remembering
- 6-6-6 A well-preserved whale phallus



Art of Magic

and the related yet not exactly matching topics
of crafting of arcane and mundane paraphernalia
and pharmacopeia
and spell research
of both the orthodox & the unorthodox varieties

Magic is an art that deserves a whole life to be mastered. There is the casting art itself, which is complicated enough. There are spells, more than we can list, and their countless applications. Paraphernalia, to be both crafted and used. Mysteries to witness. Laws of magic to be discovered and learnt. Pharmacy. Mana-tar.

And the devouring idols. These are the weirdest.

Crafting Paraphernalia

Spells and magic often require a variety of tools, and apprentices spend a whole lot of time creating objects for their Masters. While crafting, only the first 5MORE roll per month has the chance of causing an experience roll. Use these crafting rules: the minimum level is listed. Crafting magic items costs 250c/level per week.

Mundane Crafts - any level - supervised apprentices with access to tools can create 1d6c worth of manufacturd objects like rope, papyrus, woodwork, glasswork and ironwork, 3d6 if EXPERT in the field, 4d6 if MASTER. Using a less-relaxed approach, try a 5MORE test on the relevant task every week: if it's successful, double the amount produced; if failed, no progress.

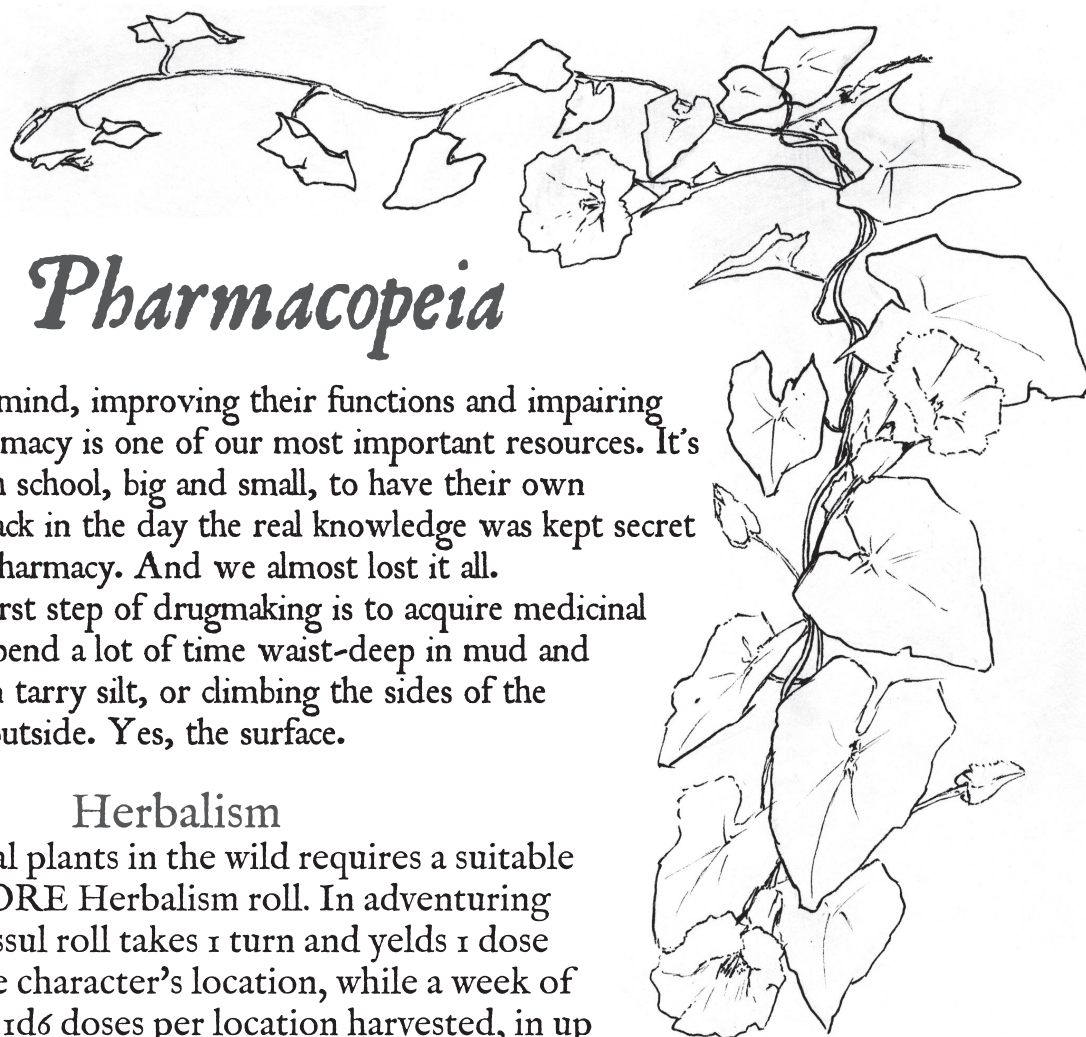
Mana Vessels - any level - starting from a mundane object, roll a 5MORE Enchanting check every fortnight of work. The first success transforms the item in a level 0 mana vessel, each other success raises the mana vessel level by 1. Critical failures destroy the object, simple failures add a flaw each.

Talismans - same level as the spell - the process takes a week per spell level. At the end of the process, roll up to 1 5MORE Enchanting check per caster level: you need as many successes as half the spell level (rounded up) to succeed.

Critical failures destroy the object, each 4 simple failures (or less) add a flaw.

Other Objects - special - build them as talismans of a spell level decided by the Referee, but taking a month per level. Treat normal magic weapons as level 6.

Example Flaws: sunlight disables it until nightfall; can't be used underground; can only be used by gingers and goats; needs 1 hit worth of blood to operate; only usable for a specific school; has a 50% chance of not working, check every round.



Pharmacopeia

Healing body and mind, improving their functions and impairing them through pharmacy is one of our most important resources. It's a tradition for each school, big and small, to have their own pharmacists, but back in the day the real knowledge was kept secret by the School of Pharmacy. And we almost lost it all.

At any rate, the first step of drugmaking is to acquire medicinal herbs. Expect to spend a lot of time waist-deep in mud and bogs, or digging in tarry silt, or climbing the sides of the canyons, or even outside. Yes, the surface.

Herbalism

Finding medicinal plants in the wild requires a suitable location and 5MORE Herbalism roll. In adventuring scenarios a successful roll takes 1 turn and yields 1 dose depending on the character's location, while a week of harvesting yields 1d6 doses per location harvested, in up to 3 locations. It's possible to harvest a location thrice, but at the risk of eradicating all useful flora.

For each location, roll on the following table to determine the plant harvested.

1d6	Swampy	Dry	Tarry	Surface
1	Chthonic Parsley	Chthonic Parsley	Chthonic Parsley	Chthonic Parsley
2	Hemlock	Hemlock	Mhyrr	Mhyrr
3	Calendula	Citrus Perforans	Calendula	Citrus Perforans
4	Honeysuckle	Aloe Vera	Honeysuckle	Aloe Vera
5+	Rare Plant!	Rare Plant!	Rare Plant!	Rare Plant!

All these common plants can be used fresh (within 1 week) without preparation:

Chthonic Parsley can be smoked to recover 1d6 hit points for the next 1d6 hours.

Aloe can be applied to acid, fire, cold burns to heal 1d6 hits.

Hemlock is an ingested poison dealing 2d6 damage, save to halve.

Calendula can be applied to open wounds or blunt trauma to heal 1d6 hits.

Honeysuckle is an emetic and purgative. Ingested grants a second save against poison and counters all ingested ones, but the imbiber is disabled for 1d6 turns.

The juice of Citrus Perforans is caustic. Spraying or ingesting it deals 1d6 damage.

Mhyrr sap mixed with wine affords a second save against any poison.

Rare Plants

Rare plants are precious finds, roll 1d6 twice on the table below to find their name: the first part of the name determines the effect when used fresh, the second part how long it keeps fresh. Rare herbs have special rules when prepared into medicines, as shown in the next page.

1d6 Prefix Effect

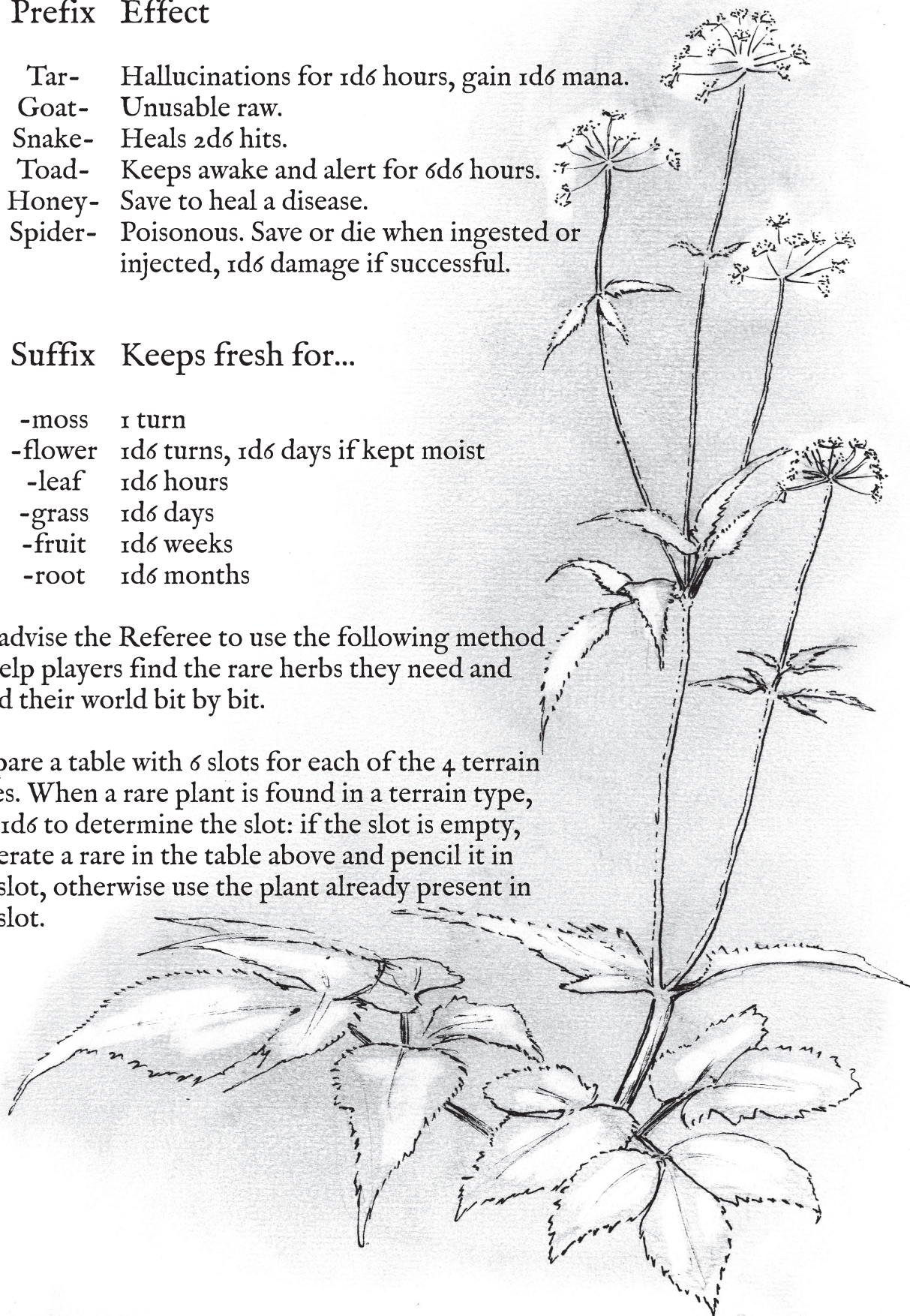
- | | | |
|---|---------|---|
| 1 | Tar- | Hallucinations for 1d6 hours, gain 1d6 mana. |
| 2 | Goat- | Unusable raw. |
| 3 | Snake- | Heals 2d6 hits. |
| 4 | Toad- | Keeps awake and alert for 6d6 hours. |
| 5 | Honey- | Save to heal a disease. |
| 6 | Spider- | Poisonous. Save or die when ingested or injected, 1d6 damage if successful. |

1d6 Suffix Keeps fresh for...

- | | | |
|---|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | -moss | 1 turn |
| 2 | -flower | 1d6 turns, 1d6 days if kept moist |
| 3 | -leaf | 1d6 hours |
| 4 | -grass | 1d6 days |
| 5 | -fruit | 1d6 weeks |
| 6 | -root | 1d6 months |

We advise the Referee to use the following method to help players find the rare herbs they need and build their world bit by bit.

Prepare a table with 6 slots for each of the 4 terrain types. When a rare plant is found in a terrain type, roll 1d6 to determine the slot: if the slot is empty, generate a rare in the table above and pencil it in the slot, otherwise use the plant already present in the slot.



On Pharmacology

Medicines are made of different ingredients, processed in different ways. This is way longer than harvesting herbs, but there are advantages compared to using the fresh plant: first, medicines are more stable and keep almost indefinitely; second, they are more concentrated than the plant itself. Third, exotic effects can be achieved combining different plants.

Simple potions are made from a single plant and have the same effect of the harvested plant. Ingredients: two doses of the plant.

The Six Traditional Potions are well known to anybody with even the minimal interest in pharmacy (even first level characters). The yield is 1d6 potions for each set of three ingredients.

Neurotoxic: the potion is affective when drunk or when injected (for example with a cutting weapon). The character must roll three saves: one immediately, one after a turn, another after an hour. If a save is failed, the character is slowed for 1d6 hours. If a second save is failed, the character is paralyzed for 2d6 hours. If all three saves are failed, the character dies.

Ingredients: Hemlock, Chthonic Parsley, Honeysuckle.

Nootropic: the character's mind power expands beyond the possible. For the next 1d6 hours any die roll concerning the character's mind and its powers (but not magic) can be rerolled and the best result taken.

Ingredients: Chthonic Parsley, Citrus Perforans, Mhyrr.

Analgesic: the character can't feel pain and gains 5d6 temporary hits. After 1d6 hours the temporary hits are lost: if this sends the character below 0 hits, the character will collapse until their hits go above 0 (through healing or natural recovery).

Ingredients: Chthonic Parsley, Hemlock, Aloe Vera.

Hemostatic: the first 20 piercing or slashing points of damage dealt to the character in the next day are halved.

Ingredients: Aloe Vera, Citrus Perforans, Calendula.

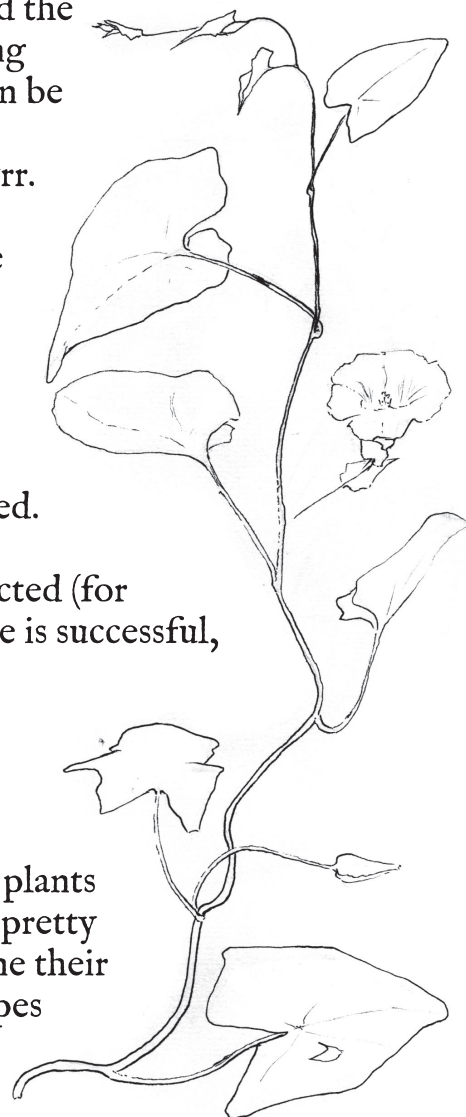
Toxic: the potion is affective when drunk or when injected (for example with a cutting weapon): save or die. If the save is successful, take 2d6 damage.

Ingredients: Hemlock, Mhyrr, Citrus Perforans.

Tonic: the character recovers 2d6+2 hits.

Ingredients: Calendula, Mhyrr, Aloe Vera.

Advanced potions are done with at least two doses of rare plants and one dose of common plant. Advanced Potions can do pretty much anything, and the referee is encouraged to determine their ingredients at random. The real problem is that their recipes are jealously kept secret. The Referee could encourage reckless experimentation. Or not.



Pharmaceutical Process

The process takes a person 3 days for simple potions, a week for traditional potions and two weeks for advanced potions. All potions are processed in batches, and the maximum number of ingredients in the batch depends on the facilities available, as shown in this table:

Portable Kit - 3 ingredients - 40c
Desk Apparatus - 30 ingredients - 500c
Room-sized Plant - 300 ingredients - 10000c
The Great Reactor of the School of Pharmacy - 3000 ingredients - 200000c

After working on the potions for the required amount of time the brew is successful with a successful Pharmacy roll. The yield is 1d6 for each multiple of the ingredients used. For example, working 20 doses of Mhyrr in a desk apparatus yields 10d6 doses of Simple Mhyrr Portion. Ten doses of Hemlock, Chthonic Parsley and Honeysuckle each (for a total of 30 doses) yield 10d6 doses of Traditional Neurotoxic Brew.

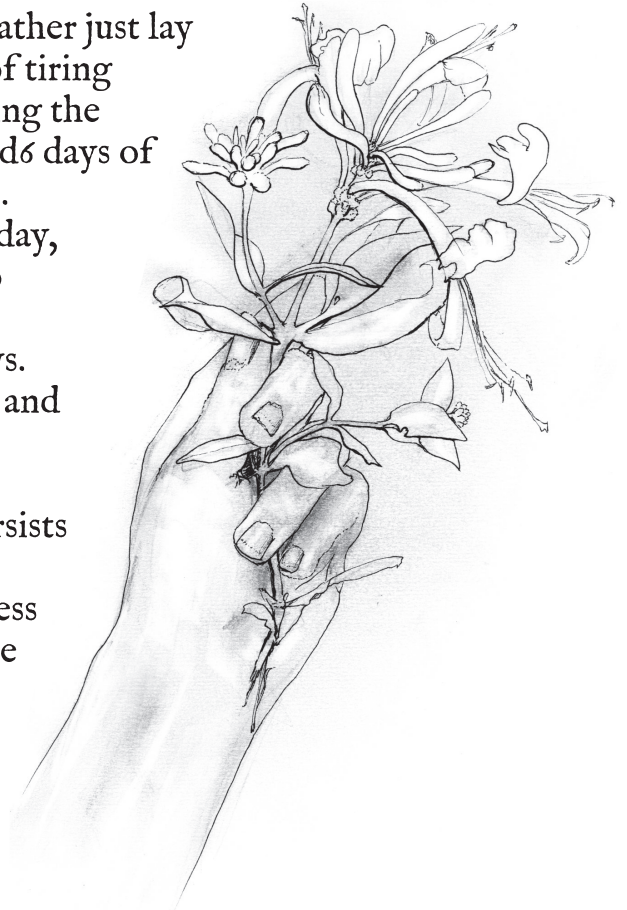
Chthonic Parsley can replace 25% of a single common plant in a recipe without altering its effects in any way. The Parsley dose can be increased up to 50%, but this requires a second Alchemy check to avoid spoiling all the batch.

Compatibility and Unfortunate Collateral Effects

Potions and medicinal plants are not to be assumed together, as there's a risk of suffering horrible side effects. When assuming herbs or medicines less than 4 hours from each other, roll 1d6. On a 5+ the herbs and formulations are not compatible, so user must save or roll 1d6 per herb or medicine to determine the Collateral Effect Score. Rolls are cumulative.

- 1-5: General Wooziness: the character would rather just lay down. The user can only endure 1d6 rounds of tiring activity like spellcasting or fighting or climbing the stairs before needing to rest for 1d6 rounds. 1d6 days of rest and fasting clear the illness and the score.
- 6-10: Mild Poisoning: as 1-5 plus, for the next day, every hour, save or collapse for 2d6 hours. To recover, 2d6 days of rest and fasting.
- 11-15: Acute Poisoning: as 6-10, but for 1d6 days.
- 16+: Way Too Much. As 11-15, plus save or die, and save again at dawn every day of illness.

The Collateral Effect score is cumulative and persists until total recovery. Assuming an emetic or purgative clears all lingering effects and unwellness of the body. The Referee can rule a given mixture of medicines to be compatible or not, especially after compatibility has been checked in game. You can not have a meaningful pharmacopea unless strict compatibility records are kept.



Spell Research

Casters can develop new spells. The player describes a spell to be researched and the Referee decides its level: a character cannot research a spell of higher level than their own Caster level. Then the character must spend time and money and have access to tomes, special crystals, contraptions, research notes and whatnot.

The total value of the research equipment must be at least 100c multiplied by the square of the spell level. It will not be consumed during research. Grimoires can be used as research equipment. For this purpose, they are worth 10c per spell level they contain, not counting duplicate spells. During research, more money is also spent on consumable components. This spending also creates lasting equipment, which can be used in further research, of a value of 1c for every 10c spent.

Spell research happens in three phases: Design, Feasibility, Development.

DESIGN - After 1 day per spell level, the character can decide the effect of the spell. Design is not mandatory; if skipped, the Referee will secretly come up with a spell to be researched but all research rolls will get a +1 bonus.

FEASIBILITY - This step is not mandatory, but at times advised: every week and 100c per spell level spent investigating feasibility will allow a 5MORE Research roll (which does not accrue EXPERT letters). If the roll is successful, the Referee will inform the player of the exact spell effects: effects decided during the Design phase might not be deemed compatible with its level and might need adjustment.

DEVELOPMENT - Each month of development costs 100t per spell level and allows a 5MORE roll on Research. The research is complete when the Caster accumulates a number of successes equal to the spell level.

AIDES - Up to 3 casters can help research if they can cast spells of at least three levels less than the researched spell. For example, a Caster 6 can be an aide for a level 9 spell. If one of the Research rolls is failed, each aide can try 5MORE on Research. If at least one of the aides succeeds, the researcher can make a second attempt to get 5MORE on the research roll.

Example: Stratos (Caster 5) decides to research a level 3 spell aided by his apprentice Heli (Caster 2). Stratos's library is worth 780c. He also has 20 levels of spells in his grimoires, worth 10c each, so that his total resource is 980c, more than the 900 needed. After 3 days of design, Stratos decides to go straight to development as he's a bit pressed for time and doesn't have much cash to spend. The first month Stratos spends 300c and gets the research roll, so a first success is tallied. The second month, 300c more are spent. Stratos fails the roll but Heli succeeds; this allows Stratos a second roll, which is successful, so a second success is tallied. The third month a further 300c are spent. Stratos fails but Heli succeeds, so Stratos can reroll once. The reroll succeeds and the third, final success is achieved. Stratos skipped the feasibility phase so the Referee can now tell Stratos's player the exact effects. The whole research lasted 3 months and three days and cost 900c, creating a third-level spell and 120c worth of research notes. Stratos's library is now worth 1100c (870c + 230c as his grimoires contains 23 levels of spells).

More on Spellcasting

There are also some additional rules applying to the spells presented in this book:

TIER - a tier is equivalent to 3 character levels. Tier 1 is level 1-3, tier 2 level 4-6, etc.

CURSES - curses can be cast either as a spell taking immediate effect or as a proper curse. In the latter case, the caster throws the curse on the subject shouting the condition triggering the curse (ie: if you don't drop your weapons). Only when the condition is met the curse has effect and the subject must save to avoid the curse.

DISPENSATION - the spell can be cast without spending mana if the catch is satisfied.

ALTERATION - the spell can be cast and is learnt in two forms. Both forms count as single spell for Caster's daily casting limitations.

ESSENCE CORRUPTION - sometimes spells change the caster... forever. Everybody loves their metamorphoses, and changing back is usually a given, but sometimes it doesn't work. It's not a problem of magic lingering, but rather a question of wounding and recovery. Some spells do not merely bend reality, sometimes things go wrong and they change the nature of things. Some spell effects include rolling for "Essence Corruption" and a time unit between parenthesis. The time units are, in order: rounds, turns, hours, days, weeks, months, years, forever. When requested, roll a save. If the save fails, the spell wears off but the effects lasts 1d6 of the specified time units, and the next time essence corruption is failed for the same spell, the time unit will be bumped by one on this scale, the second time by two, and so on, until the magic is gone but the effects are permanent. There are rumours that essence corruption might be liftable, as some curses are, but they are only rumours.

CONCENTRATION - some spells require concentration to have an effect. Keeping your concentration can be hard and requires the character to only move at 10' per round, 600' per turn. Any action harder than something simple like walking or drinking require a save to use the spell.

EOS ELEGY: EXTENDING SPELL DURATION - when a spell ends, if the duration is not instantaneous or permanent, the caster can spend another Mana to keep the spell going. The caster feels when spells are expiring and can opt to simply spend more Mana without casting the spell again. A common practice for Casters with a lot of lasting active spells is to touch enough Mana Vessels to power the extension and spend Mana from them. Since many spell effects last until dawn, the act of powering spell extensions through Mana Vessels is often called *Eos Elegy* even when performed at other times.

ADAPTING SPELLS FROM OTHER GAMES - spells from other fantasy games can usually be easily converted for use with Hypogean Casting. The new spell level is roughly equal to the character level needed to cast a spell in other games by a character focused exclusively on spell casting.

Arcane Powers Alternative Procurement

Proper magical research isn't for everybody. Sometimes even Sacred Mysteries Rites are not for you. But magic (in the form of new spells) can be taken directly from the radiant bowels of the earth. This, combined with a stodgy and restrictive magical establishment, makes the Hypogaea a beacon for wizards, a sort of magical gold rush.

Countless apprentices and teachers alike brave canyons, karsts and caves hoping to find hallucinations and whispers of eldritch secrets.

When trying an Alternative Procurement of Arcane Powers, the caster will first commit to it, spend the equivalent of 50t per spell level and vanish in the Hypogaea. After a week per level, the caster will learn a spell of their level and will try a save to get back. If failed, the caster will need to try every week until a save is successful.

Of all the people that leave, nobody fails to pay a price for trying to take such raw primal magic straight from its source. The price of this knowledge is becoming permanently stranger. Afflictions mount and transform the mage as he increases in power resulting in casters that are powerful, crazy and far removed from humans and reality.

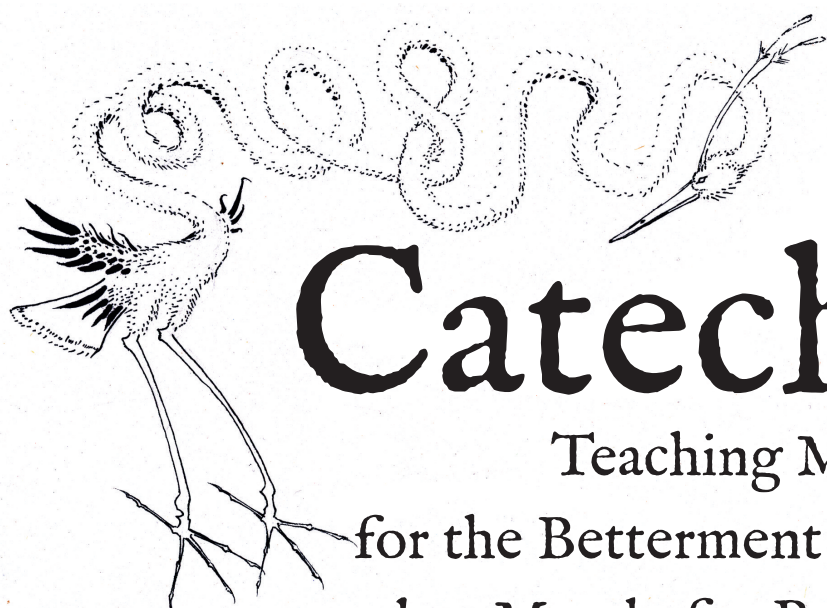
Nota bene: this table can also be used as a Random Curse/Failed Experiment/Carousing Table.

Roll
1d6+
level

Alternative Procurement of Arcane Powers: Afflictions

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 | Minor Affectation: the caster develops a minor affectation. It's voluntary but if broken the caster won't be able to cast the procured spell for a few months. Observed affectations include: only wearing a certain color of clothing, sleeping with their head pointing east or always speaking in the third person. |
| 3 | Minor Prohibition: the spirits have placed a prohibition on the caster in exchange for power, though it's not major. Past prohibitions include: never use gunpowder, never touch a cat, only drink alcoholic beverages (or abstaining from them). If the prohibition is broken, the caster won't be able to cast the procured spell for a few months. |
| 4 | Minor Affliction/Mutation: something little - small horns, tears replaced with mercury, nails turn to nacre, cilia grow from neck, drug addiction, stuttering. |
| 5 | Spirit Mark: the spirits feel like marking the caster as having learned from them. A relatively minor physical change (ember-like brand, steaming eyes, ice always in hair, mossy soles, fishy breath) show the allegiance to the spirit, which can create all kinds of social issues. |
| 6 | Minor Obsession: the caster develops an obsession with something related to the spell. This is usually something unpleasant or debasing that the spirits find humorous: eating dirt, nudity, always counting to 4 before speaking. |
| 7 | Geas: The caster owes the spirits something and will best do it for them. Might be something as simple as drawing water from a certain stream or eating a certain food. It might be complicated, like pleasing a cranky savant emeritus. |

- 8 Lost: the caster is lost either physically or mentally for seven more weeks.
- 9 Unwanted Familiar: somehow the caster is now bound to a companion, a totally useless familiar, to suffer, look after and care for. Something like an earwig or a dipsomaniac duck or a fire salamander. The creature is of human intelligence and is quite petulant. It chases off any existing familiar and, if harmed, the caster will suffer a similar wound. If the familiar dies, the caster will go in a coma until the next equinox.
- 10 Blood Debt: the earth/spirits develop a taste for the caster's blood and let him know it. The caster must shed their own blood any time they wish to cast the learnt spell. *The caster takes 2 damage in the process.*
- 11 Major Affectation: a voluntary, but serious affectation with social and in-game consequences - such as always wearing a mask, walking backwards, or constant nudity. If breached or intolerable, the caster will lose access to the spell forever, and won't be able to learn it again.
- 12 Major Prohibition: the caster must abstain from something that will seriously affect her life and magic. Examples include: never harming an animal, never putting out/starting a fire, never touching running water, never wearing or using metal. Failure to abide by this prohibition will result in the permanent inability to cast the spell granted, plus a fugue state lasting a few weeks.
- 13 Major Affliction/Mutation: something obvious and different. A crooked back resulting in an ape-like gait, arm replaced with a tentacle, skin turned to bark or metal, incurable rotting disease leading to the appearance of death. Another example of a major affliction would be the deadly weakness to a specific item, material, event or creature.
- 14 Body Price: in keeping with ancient tradition, the spirits have demanded a piece of the casters's flesh in exchange for spell knowledge. Nothing too big, but something the caster will miss. Frequently the spirits replace these losses with something whimsical.
Roll 1D6: 1: Ears; 2: Left Hand; 3: Nose; 4: Libido; 5: Hair, all of it, including body hair; 6. An internal organ (the caster is not sure which one - everything seems to work fine, but there's a nagging feeling of loss).
- 15 Essence Deformity: too much meditation and chanting in the wrong places caused the body of the caster to be warped by the power of the Hypogea. Such changes are immediately obvious; the transformation into a being of living water is a possible example.
- 16 Withered: the caster traded their life force for knowledge.
The caster permanently loses 1d6 hits and develops a harmless but extremely annoying condition.
- 17 Major Obsession: the caster develops a dangerous or antisocial obsession such as pyromania, suicidal bravery, vampirism or extreme snottyness.
- 18 Metamorphosis: the caster is transformed into something completely alien. It could be a transformation into an animal, inanimate object or spirit. This may create interesting challenges: for example the caster, now known in the Hypogea as "the all-knowing toadstool", may have problems deambulating.



Catechesis

Teaching Magic for the Betterment of the Youth but Mostly for Personal Gain

Potential apprentices flock to learned casters like bees to honey. And, when one is chased by insects capable of delivering a painful but otherwise useless sting, one should gently shoo them away. They are more bother than anything. But sometimes having free skilled servants can be helpful. They only require some teaching and the occasional rescue.

Powerful casters attract apprentices, and Schools, by induction, attract many more. Each apprentice starts as a level 1 caster, and if they survive long enough, they might even gain levels. The main advantage of having apprentices is to make them work, both menial jobs and in manufacturing magic items, as previously explained.

The size of the student body is determined as follows:

For each resident Master: depending on tier. Tier 2: 1; Tier 3: 1d6; Tier 4: 3d6

For each laboratory (cost: 5000c to 10000c): +1d6, max 1 laboratory per Master

Focus on a specific, important topic: +1d6 per 2 Masters

For each Mystagogue : +1d6

Library: +1d6/10000c of publicly accessible material (even if regimented)

Reputation: from +1d6 for a well-known school to +5d6 for the Great Schools

Each year from 10% to 60% of the students (in small groups of 1d6) have horrible misadventures and are lost forever. But their Masters or the School can rescue a group: usually this requires a small adventure (for example one from the WE HAVE ASSIGNMENTS section, p.130-133), and the Masters can send other students as a rescue group, which in turn can end up lost forever. Those who survive get to the next year and might even gain a level, or after 3-4 years graduate and leave. At the end of the year, the student body is probably reduced: at the beginning of the next year, roll again to determine the student body size and, if greater than the current number, the difference is the number of enrolled freshers.

New schools attract less students: if a school has more than 1d6 students for each year since it's been founded, divide its enrollment by two.



Hypogean Schools

Magic & Secrets

Schools & their Golden Secrets

Each school has one or more Golden Secrets. They are presented in the first section of each school, and a level is indicated: that's the minimum character level necessary to learn the Secret. There are many options for characters studying in a school to learn the school's Secrets and the Referee should decide on one or more:

- when reaching the relative level.

- when reaching the relative level, but no spell is learnt for that level.

- when reaching the relative level, but the character casts spells of level 5 or more from other Disciplines one level later.

- when reaching the relative level, after a mystical quest.

- when reaching the relative level, after a lengthy meditation and relative roll on the Alternative Procurement of Arcane Power Affliction table.

- when reaching the relative level, by witnessing the School's Mysteries (generate a Mystery Initiation Ritual from pp.136).

- when the character's Master (or someone else) decides to teach them.

In most cases Secrets from different schools are incompatible: learning one instills some kind of weird trauma, deep belief, paranoia, monomania or cognitive bias stopping the character from learning Secrets from other schools.

Graduate, Master, Savant

The Five Great Schools, the School of Pharmacy and the Great Workshop have a structured progression through their ranks. Apprentices that behave well and have a Master patron can expect to graduate at around level 4, provided they show their worth and they served their Master well enough. Graduates tend to interact with apprentices as patronizing adults do around drooling kids. Graduates's requests to be dismissed from the school are often accepted, but at times they are sent away. If they don't leave they can work and teach for the school and keep on studying: if they do and their Master is satisfied with their progress, they can become Master at level 8, reaching an increased social status. If the School's Savants, those in charge, does not kick them out now the character can now expect to participate in some intense scheming for years and years and, with a lot of luck, the handful of Savants of the School will accept the character as member of their selected cabal.

Circle of the Fire Dervishes

In flames, we seek change. In change, we seek a chance to make a difference.

The student touches the flame, the flame touches the student's heart.

The student can only truly love the flame if their hearth is empty of anything else.

The student will first empty their heart of pain and fear, because they stop the student from loving the flame.

*Pain is gone
Fear has left
Where they lived
Flame dances*

Some students sooner or later fall in love with the flame. In the good student's heart only love for the flame will be found. But the flame is raw and rushing and more powerful than a thousand rivers washing down from a thousand mountains. The flame does not love the student yet, because it can see that the student's heart still is filled with the rest of their life. The flame is flattered, but the flame can only love back true love.

Level 2 - Eschewing Fear and Pain - the dervish is immune to fear and terror and ignores the first 10 points of damage from fire every round. Fire damage does not interrupt the dervish's casting. Note: while the dervish can now only be hurt by intense flames, the dervish can still be set on fire normally.

The student will then empty their heart of pride and wrath, because they stop the student from feeding the flame with true love.

*No one can
Steal my heart
It belongs
To my love*

All good students, in due time, understand that they love the flame for the wrong reasons. Some leave our circle, other can't face the truth and never progress, others are simply content with their feelings for the flame. Only few accept this, abandon their selfishness and their other passions, and pursue their true love.

Level 5 - Flame Heart - the dervish can, on the round after casting a Pyrolatry spell, cast the same spell again without spending mana. This ability can be used once per day.

The student will at last empty their hearth of past and future, because they stop the flame from loving back.

*Flame dances
Inside me
And it will
Outlast me*

There is no teaching, no control, no power. Only fire can spread fire, only the flame can spread the flame. Words are useless, words are a burden. There is no teaching, no control, no power. The flame cannot be mastered, only loved. If love is true and pure, if the flame finds nothing else but itself in the student's heart, the flame will love back. And love will last longer than life and death. Love lasts if flame dances.

Level 8 - Flame Loved - the dervish is immune to fire damage and fire creatures will be friendly to them. On their death, the dervish can let the flame out of their heart to create a flaming deflagration dealing 9d6 fire damage, save for half damage, to everyone within 100'. Neither immunity to magic nor to non-magical fires is effective. Since the dervish's soul is released with the flame, if all the flames caused by the deflagration are extinguished, so is the soul. In this case, the dervish cannot be brought back to life in their or any other body.

Pyrolatry

Bursting Boiling Bottle

Level: 0. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster channels magic at a bottle, overheating it and making the contents boil. If the bottle is sealed, the seal and the bottle will instantly fail spectacularly, and the contents will be sprayed in a 15' radius. If the bottle contains a flammable liquid like lamp oil, it will instantly catch fire, dealing 2d6 fire damage to everybody in the area, plus 1d6 next round.

Alteration - Vicious Fruit Flagrant Vaporization - the spell overheats and then vaporizes the fruits of a plant. Either a big-medium fruit (melon, lemon) or a dozen tiny fruits (chilies) are vaporized and their toxic effect is unleashed to everybody within 10'. Fire Dervish Masters traditionally gift small chili plants potted in jute bags (save to avoid blindness when vaporized) and fresh citrus fruit of the *citrus perforans* variety (1d6 acid damage, save for half).

Flame Fingers

Level: 1/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster can shape the dancing flames burning from an held torch, but any burning held object will do. The flames can be reduced, extended up to 5' per caster level, their shape and colour controlled in detail. Due to the great precision of the spell, they can also be used as a magic weapon, in melee or at a short range. Dispensation - the caster must bleed onto the the flame, losing two hits.

Burst in Flames

Level: 2/i. Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster, by projecting and concentrating their inner heat through a bare hand, can instantly utterly destroy a human-sized object of flammable or combustible material (for example: a tree, a door, or a bed) in a bright, instantaneous, hot flash, turning it into embers. Anybody, except the caster, within 10' of the destroyed object takes 1d6 damage.

Alteration - Clench the Crucible - for 1 turn, a caster's hand reaches incredibly high temperatures. In addition to dealing 1d6 fire damage in melee and ignoring armour, it can be used to melt metal and destroy property.

Furious Fires

Level: 3/ii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

As the caster starts blowing on a flame, all fires within range (max 1/level) animate as lvl 1 fire spirits. They will help the caster and do their bidding, but they tend to set everything on fire. At the end of the spell duration, the spirits are let free.

Dispensation - all fires within range animate as uncontrollable lvl 1 fire spirits.

Burning Breath

Level: 4/ii. Range: self Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

The caster breaths in a flame, then breathes it out as a big cloud of fire (a cone 20' long and 20' wide at the end) dealing 1d6 fire damage per caster tier, save halves.

The caster can breath fire two more times, but must wait at least 1d6 rounds between each fire-breath.

Alteration - Hearth/Heart - after breathing in the flame, the caster warms up to about 200C/400F, becoming impervious to cold. While this is not enough to cause extra melee damage, burn paper or melt tin, it's enough to boil water, cook food and warming up a room and cold comrades.

Venting Vortex

Level: 5/iii. Range: 90'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn/tier

The spell creates an intense vortex of fresh air centered on the caster. In addition to providing good, breathable air, any fire burning in the area is invigorated by the wind: when rolling for fire damage, reroll up to two dice and take the best result.

Dispensation - the caster must keep concentration whirling without moving away for the whole duration of the spell, but they are allowed to cast more spells without breaking concentration. All other concentration rules apply.

Curse of the Boiling Blood

Level: 6/iii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 month.

If the victim fails a save against this curse their flesh takes on a red glow. When the subject bleeds, the blood spilling from the wound immediately catches fire, dealing an additional 1d6 fire damage to the victim.

Dispensation - the caster must have been wounded by the victim and bled in the previous round.

Sudden Smelt

Level: 7/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 3 rounds.

The first nonmagic metal object touched by the caster melts over the course of the next 3 rounds. If the object is in contact with someone that won't or can't let it go, it will deal 1d6 damage per round, 2d6 if the object is worn (like a necklace, crown or metal armour).

Dispensation - the caster must be within 10' of an extremely intense fire.

Pyrarch Prayer of the Fiery Flesh

Level: 8/iv. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster recites an prayer to the Pyrarch. Their flesh and bones turn into magma: they become immune to fire and take only half damage from melee and ranged combat. Any non-magic equipment worn is destroyed by the intense heat, but the caster's bare hands deal 2d6 extra fire damage.

Alteration - Paper Present for the Pyrarch - the caster sets a book on fire. When the book is completely burnt, a creature within range reduces all fire damage by 5 for the spell duration. If the book was a grimoire, a creature per spell level burnt takes half damage from fire instead.

Immediate Immolation

Level: 9/v. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1d6 rounds.

The caster, with a long stare, a few words and a little flick of the neck, immolates a creature within range. When the spell is cast the creature catches fire and must save (taking 2d6 fire damage per round for the spell duration) or die and explode dealing 1d6 fire damage to all creatures within 5'.

Alteration - Flaring Funeral - a corpse within range burns in an unnaturally hot fire. The corpse is immediately destroyed. For the next 1d6 rounds anybody within 10' takes 2d6 fire damage.

Fearful Invocation of the Raptor of Embers

Level: 10/v. Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: special.

Learning this spell creates a bond between the caster and a specific Raptor of Ember, a giant winged lvl 9 fire-demon with a fire aura dealing 2d6 fire damage per round to everybody within 10'. The caster prays and begs their Raptor to appear to either slay their enemies or revive someone they hold dear.

In the first case the Raptor immediately opens a portal anywhere within range: the fire gushing from the portal deals 6d6 damage to everybody within 20' (save to halve). For the next 6 rounds the Raptor will attack the caster's enemies until they all are dead. If the Raptor dies the bond with the caster is severed, but the caster won't be able to bind with another Raptor.

In the second case the caster must prepare a pyre for a corpse in full regalia: all the best clothes, instruments and equipment of the dead must be put on the pyre. The Raptor will appear, ignite the pyre and eat heart and liver of the corpse. Then it will brood on the pyre. After 1 turn the pyre will be completely reduced to embers, the corpse will come back to life fully healed and the Raptor will leave, not to answer summons for 1d6 years. In any case, if the caster dies while the Raptor is summoned, the Raptor will put together a pyre and proceed to revive the caster as described above.

Friendly Fire

Level: 11/vi. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn.

The touched fire can spread to and burn everything: for example glass, flesh, metal, stone, sand and water will burn as if they were wood.

Alteration - Everember - Duration: permanent - The touched fire can't be put off. Even if completely buried the embers will keep on smouldering forever.

Karbouna's Combustion

Level: 12/vi. Range: 0. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 3 rounds.

Everything within 60' of the caster (except the caster) gloriously catches fire with an unmatched impetus. All combustible objects are destroyed by the end of the third round, and all creatures suffer 5d6 fire damage per round plus, if they are made of a substance that could burn under the right conditions (for example flesh) they catch fire too and take 2d6 extra damage per round. Attempts to put out fires in the area of effect are destined to fail, even using magic.

College of the Gatekeepers

Remember that metaphorurgy is universally liminal, it acts on doors, thresholds and portals in general, of both the mundane and arcane kind. Also, any spell affecting any such threshold will affect both its natural and arcane sides. For example, the True Pinhole of a door that is also an arcane portal will allow you to peer through to both other sides.

Level 2 - Locked? Really? - The character can pick normal locks by rolling 4 or less on a d6. Lockpicking takes 1d6 minutes. A lockpicking set is required.

Due to the peculiar nature of our manifold reality, the Gatekeeping Discipline often creates a lot of questions, especially for doors opening on more than two destinations at the same time, and what happens at the edge of such thresholds.

Level 5 - Manyfold Ripples - the caster can perceive teleportations, apportations, summoning, warps and the opening and closing of arcane portals and the like within 100'.

Rejoice, rejoice in meeting a paradox. It's not a burden, but a blessing. Now you have some hope of making progress. Without any closed door to open, we have no meaning.

And the burden to adjudicate their space- and mind-bending resolution and to answer all those pesky questions by puzzled players is, of course, on the Referee.

Level 8 - Kleidochous - the caster can, once a day, open or close an existing threshold within 30'. This can be done outside of initiative order and even if surprised. If the caster wills it, the threshold will stay open or shut for the next turn, regardless of any other attempt.

Metaphorurgy

Portal Pinhole

Level: 0. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

The spell opens a conduit between the caster's senses and a touched door or portal. This allows the caster to perceive the environment beyond the portal as if they were on the other side (or sides) until contact with the portal is interrupted. Dispensation - the caster must peer in the door's True Pinhole. To find it, each turn the caster can attempt a Scrying 5MORE roll.

Past Passage

Level: 1/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

This simple spell folds a door frame over the caster's time continuum. The door will open on the first threshold the caster went through since last sunset.

Alteration - by smearing 1 hit point worth of blood on the door, the door will open instead on the first threshold the blood went through since last sunset.

Gate's Gossip

Level: 2/4. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

Gates are known to wizards to be notoriously chatty, if one can be bothered to listen: they are all very boring. After asking a question to a door, the spell enables the caster to hear the answer, if the gate can be bothered to answer. At least they are always willing to say the name and nature of the last three creatures gone through or the number of the creatures gone through since the last twilight.

Dispensation - the caster must have built the gate and decorated it with 100c of precious metals.

Right of the Recluse

Level: 3/ii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next sunset.

A closed door magically holds closed and can't be opened by anybody except the caster. Sadly, this spell does not improve the door's resistance, so it can still be conveniently destroyed should the need arise.

Alteration - Knack of the Nosy - An open door magically holds open and can't be closed, as if it got stuck wide open.

Dominate Door

Level: 4/ii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster takes full mental control of a specific door - the part that actually shuts the passage. The door will open, close, slam on people (for 1d6 damage, 2d6 if a big, heavy door), unhinge and get back, slither on the floor (at the speed of a heavily encumbered person), prop itself up to close a passage and do other doorsy things on command. The door has 1 level per three caster levels.

Dispensation - the caster must sweet-talk the door for 1d6 turns, telling it who's the boss and that bad stuff can happen to it if it doesn't behave and do as it's told.

Waive the Lawful Writ of Locality

Level: 5/iii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1d6 turns.

Locality is one of these things taken for granted, but there are ways to exploit loopholes in the ordered creation of space. The spell splits locality of everything within 20' of the target area, removing it from the outside reality and temporarily placing it in a self-contained, unreachable somewhere-else from which nothing can come out while the spell lasts. If cast in the middle of a corridor, the corridor will be shorter. If cast on the wall of a square room, the room will somehow have a shorter wall but the corners will still be right angles. If cast on that room's corner, the room will be a triangular room. Creatures in the area can save to dash out as the locality writ is lifted.

Alteration - Colocation Con - the alteration affects the caster only, and only for 1 turn. An object or creature within range can be colocated with the caster, allowing them to occupy the same space with no discomfort nor issue. The caster can spend one round to concentrate and move the colocation to something else.

For example, the caster can choose the sword of the fighter who is attacking them to avoid being hurt by it, then can choose a wall and walk through it.

Portal

Level: 6/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn. The caster opens a two-way, 5' wide portal between two flat surfaces. The caster must have drawn matching circles on the two surfaces in the week prior to casting. Alteration - Ley Line Lug - this spell can only be cast within 10' of a ley line. When the spell is cast the caster is made aware of the length and shape of the ley line. Afterward, the caster and up to 5 voluntary subjects (all holding hands), are instantly teleported at any point on the ley line the caster desires.

Sudden Yet Sufficient Step

Level: 7/iv. Range: 200'. Casting time: none, see text. Duration: instantaneous. The caster triggers and falls through a seam in the manifold, immediately folding space to be repositioned anywhere within range. This spell can be cast at any time: for example out of initiative order, or if the caster already acted this round, or even to avoid a melee or missile attack or spell that successfully hit, but not if damage or a save has been rolled or the effects have been determined already. Dispensation - the caster avoids taking control of the manifold seam and is teleported to a random unoccupied place within range, but 1d6-1 rounds in the future. Reappearing, the caster must save or be unable to act for 1 round.

Rover's Recall

Level: 8/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous. The spell either marks the caster's current position (if on a threshold) or teleports the caster and up to 6 close willing targets back to a marked threshold.

Mark - if the caster is on a threshold, the caster is primed with their specific location at the time of casting. Following castings of Mark substitute the primed location with the new caster location.

Recall - the caster opens any touched threshold toward the caster's marked threshold. The portal is one-way toward the Mark and is shut as soon as the caster steps through.

Dispensation - the caster must recall a position where they etched or drawn a specific glyph while casting the Mark. If more than one of these glyphs are present or if the glyph has been compromised the spell fails.

Subitaneous Summon

Level: 9/v. Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous. The caster yanks a creature through space, removing them and their carried equipment from where they are to bring them within range from the caster. The creature knows that the caster is summoning them and can save to resist. Alteration - Kefitzat Haderech - Duration: 1d6 rounds - The caster's movement becomes unbounded. Distance and barriers immaterial. Every time this version of the spell is cast to carry out selfish acts, check for Essence Corruption (week): during the corruption period the caster can't cast this specific version of this spell.

Great Gate

Level: 10/v. Range: 120'. Casting time: 1d6 rounds. Duration: 1d6 rounds.

The caster opens a gate to another location. The size and nature of the gates and the precise positions depend on the two locations. The caster must have been at the other location or be in contact something related to the other location while casting the spell.

Dispensation - the spell must be cast outside, in a circle of stones, at twilight, during an equinox or solstice. The gate stays open for a full turn.

Malcontent Misplacing Maelstrom

Level: 11/vi. Range: 120'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn

The caster opens a maelstrom - an uncontrollable dimensional rift with the nasty habit of sucking inside all kinds of things from its surroundings and spewing them around all universes. While the maelstrom is open, each creature within 60' must save or be sucked in and thrown gods-know-where in the multiverse, taking 3d6 damage due to the all the flinging around involved. But even if the save succeeds, the objects sucked in by the maelstrom will hit those in the area, inflicting 1d6 damage per round.

Dispensation - the caster can cast this spell on any unstable dimensional rift, like one produced by hitting a Phasing Pheasant with a Bending Box.

Mangled Manifold Malison

Level: 12/vi. Range: 120'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

The ultimate spell for the Metaphorurge that needs some space. While the spell lasts the caster can concentrate for a round and alter the relative size, distance and position (but not mass) of everything in the area of effect. It's been demonstrated that, while the initial area of effect cannot be changed in shape or size in any way, the interior area can be extended to be of near-infinite size.

College of Chimerists

In the beginning there was the useful and unexpected spidergoat. Then thee different kinds of rabid wolfishes, the sneaky viperat, the perplexing pheasanteater, the noble sharkrotalus. And the cuddly squidog, the delicious rabbison, the ravenous whaliger.

Level 2 - Fostering - while having pets is normal, the caster can adopt and develop a special bond with a pet per tier. The pet must be adopted in its early phases of development. The pet will never willingly harm them and will do their best to protect them, never checking morale.

Then we realized we were onto something, and we got going. But results were kind of disappointing. The coelacantelope was really upsetting, the cobrabbits kept on eating each other, the newtarsiop was just useless, and let's not talk about the tortoisponge. But the bearmadillo, the llamacaw and the trifecta wolfrog/wolfly/wolflamingo gave us hopes.

Level 5 - Best Friend - through extensive contact or exposition, the caster becomes immune to damage or negative effects caused by their Foster pets.

Experience taught us that our expectations rarely come alive. But we love them anyway.

Level 8 - Symbiont - as the contact and empathy grows stronger, the caster can gain powers and immunities from their Foster pets. The caster can spend a round to gain an innate immunity or power that their pets have. Only one such immunity or power can be active at the same time.

Proteism

Caregiver's Caress

Level: 0. Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until dawn.

The caster is imprinted as parent on 1d6 touched young animals or intelligent beings. The subject will take comfort in being with the caster and will try to follow them around to the best of their abilities without complaining. No save allowed. Dispensation - the caster must play a flute for the subjects. The spell terminates as soon as the caster stops playing.

Xanathon's Xenophilia

Level: 1/1. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

This spell affects two beings of different species. The two subjects of the spell must save or be very, very, very physically attracted toward the other, regardless of inconvenient incompatibilities. The attraction will not be reciprocated should one of the two succeed a save.

Alteration - Xanathon's Xenophobia - as above, but the feeling toward each other will be a mixture of fear and hatred. Even if both subjects fail their save, it does not necessarily mean that they will resort to violence.

Abnormal Anura

Level: 2/i. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour.

A non-giant frog or toad grows to become 2 metres long, becoming of level equal to the caster's. The anura is friendly to the caster and can be ridden. It can also jump up to 20 metres away, but without a proper saddle such a jump requires the rider to save to avoid being thrown off and be stunned for 1d6 rounds.

Dispensation - the caster must seduce (with a successful Seduction roll) and then kiss the frog. If the attempt fails the frog can't be seduced for the rest of the day.

Reptilian Relief

Level: 3/ii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 2 rounds/level.

The caster rubs the subject's skin with snake skin and snake oil. The subject recovers 1 hit per round or, if poisoned, the effects of poison are countered.

Alteration - Delicate Delivery - if the spell is cast on a delivering mother, the spell ensure a painless delivery to the mother and a healthy birth for the child.

Surge of Strength

Level: 4/ii. Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

A creature within range must save or have their strength multiplied. The creature deals double combat damage and is capable of inhuman feats of strength. This intensity though is incredibly taxing for the body: each round the creature engages in such a strenuous activity, they suffer 1d6 temporary damage.

Dispensation - the caster must have stabbed the subject with a knife covered in chilli oil in the round prior to casting.



Qualities of the Snake

Level: 5/iii. Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

The caster becomes more serpentine: their tongue forks, they grow visible fangs and their skin becomes scaly. By laying down still for 1 hour the caster can shed some skin and dead tissue and heal 1d6 hits. They can deliver a dose of poison with a bite: the victim must save or suffer 1d6 damage/caster level. The poison sacks take 1d6 hours to refill.

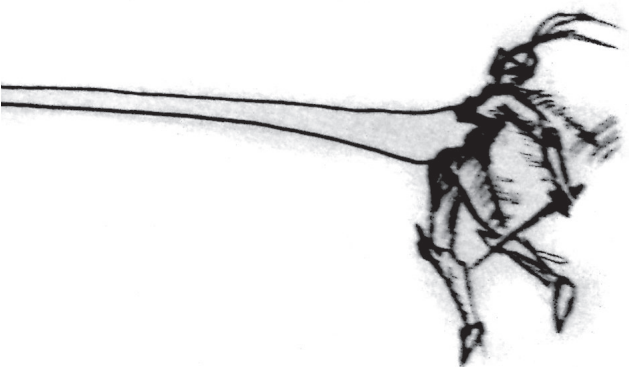
Dispensation - the caster must check for Essence Corruption (day). Once the caster fails the Essence Corruption check against this spell they must check Essence Corruption every time they cast this spell, even when paying mana.

Call Forth the Cladic Forebearer

Level: 6/iii. Range: 40'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

The caster can push back along the evolution tree part of the subject creature and select a trait from an ancestor species to merge it back into the present individual. The trait can be anything, from gills to psi powers, provided that it belonged to a species belonging to the direct lineage of the target individual. The subject can save to avoid the effect.

Alteration - Pour the Primordial Progenitor - if the subject fails a save it will melt into primordial soup, unable to act but delicious. At the end of the spell duration the soup will revert to the original creature and recover 3d6 hits. In case the soup is separate and not allowed to gel back together, only the biggest part will revert back to the creature, while the rest will become living tissue of various kinds: in this case the reformed creature will have maximum hits equal to the relevant percentage of the original, and if well fed will recover 1 maximum hit per day.





Xanthe's Anurid Curse

Level: 7/iv. Range: 60'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1d6 turns.

The subject of the spell, if a save is failed, will start excreting toads, frogs and tadpoles from most orifices for 1d6 turns. This prevents the subject from taking any action except moving at half-speed, but every round they can decide to withstand the batrachian eruption and act normally, taking 1 point of temporary damage if they fail to save. Every turn, a random, special anura will be vomited, roll 1d6 on the following table:

- 1: bullfrog - subject takes 1d6 damage. These horns hurt.
- 2: fire toad - subject takes 1d6 fire damage. Yow.
- 3: brain-eating tadpole - it can be immediately inserted in the subject's ear.
- 4: bloated anura - it will hastily inflate and merrily float away.
- 5: bone frog.
- 6: purple toad - can be licked immediately, but for obvious reasons tastes incredibly awful.

The amphibians are non-magical and will persist after the spell terminates.

Mask of Life

Level: 8/iv. Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

The caster dons a Mask of Life (made without tools from the remains of a fish, a bird, a mammal, an amphibian and some insects) and recites the invocations. While wearing the mask animals and natural spirits (like kelpies) will react positively to the caster, and the caster can communicate with them. The caster can also spend a round to summon the following animals and control them mentally. Any number can be summoned in a round, but the same type can't be summoned twice:

- Axolotl
- Bat
- Bear (lvl 3)
- Butterflies - can distract someone and disrupt spellcasting, save to avoid.
- Coelacanth (lvl 2)
- Goat, pygmy
- Heron (lvl 1)
- Otter
- Owl (lvl 1)
- Snake (lvl 1) - bite is poisonous (save or die).
- Sparrow

Tadpoles, one hundred - the caster is always aware of their position.

All animals have 1 hit and can't fight effectively except where a level is specified. Dispensation - the caster must cast the spell while naked, except for the mask. If the caster wears any other garment the spell terminates.

Phenomenal Phlebotomic Filiation

Level: 9/v. Range: touch. Casting time: 1d6 rounds. Duration: until dawn. The caster carefully opens a tiny hole in an egg carefully painted with teal and green motifs, then inserts a few drops of freshly spilled blood. The egg will then immediately start growing. At the end of the casting time the egg, if whole and left undisturbed, will hatch a twin of the creature that provided the blood. The twin doesn't have any knowledge and can't speak but can understand simple language and will do their best to protect the caster. The twin will melt away into fatty and salty semi-liquid jelly immediately after dying or at the first light of dawn. Dispensation - instead of an egg the caster must insert the blood in a receptacle adequate for the specific life form: for example an egg of the same specie, or for mammals a placenta of the same specie.

Asphaltomorphosis

Level: 10/v. Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until sunset. The caster melts into a puddle of mana tar to reform into a Greater Asphaltomorph of the same level and with the same hits. In this form, the caster loses all arcane abilities, including casting, but gains all the abilities of the new form (immune to magic, absorbs spells, heals 1 hit per spell level absorbed, immune to mind control). When cast, save to avoid Essence Corruption (day). If the corruption is avoided, the transformation can be reversed at any time: returning to their normal form, the caster will recover 1d6 mana and 3d6 hits. Dispensation - the caster must dive into a pool of iridescent mana tar.

Protoplasmic Phlegm Fruitful Projection

Level: 11/vi. Range: 100' cone. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous. The caster coughs out a massive multicoloured spray of assorted oozes, moulds, protoplasms and slimes. Anything in a 100-foot-long, 100-foot-wide cone in front of the target takes a hit from 1d3 different creatures from the following table: Roll 1d6:

- 1: brown ooze - 1d6 damage, all organic mundane worn objects are corroded.
- 2: blood slime - 2d6 damage, caster is healed the same amount.
- 3: purple jelly - 1d6 damage, save or be paralysed for 1 turn.
- 4: opal plasmoid - 3d6 damage, corrosion of 1 random exposed item.
- 5: brain protoplasm - save or be mind-controlled by the caster for 1 turn.
- 6: mad mould - save or go crazy for 1d6 rounds and attack a random different target every round.

Alteration - Specific Slime Spew - the caster coughs up a single type of phlegm chosen from the table above, but a reduced amount: apply only 1 hit to everything in the area of effect.

Creation of a Better Human

Level: 12/vi. Range: 1'. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: special. The caster alters the growth process of a creature, enhancing, adding or removing a feature from them. Discuss details with the Referee. The spell must be cast on the subject each week from fertilization/inception/parthenogenesis to maturity.

College of Stargazers

The sky reminds us: what happens in the world is shown in the stars. As above, so below.

Level 2 - Sideral Seer - The caster can observe the night sky to attempt predicting the astral influx on the nature of things. After spending 1 hour, try a 5MORE Astrology roll. In case of failure, the caster can spend 1 mana to reroll. If the roll is successful, the Referee will first determine if the night sky is ominous: rolling 1d6 the sky is ominous on a 5+.

If it is, determine the nature of the omen (for example, the omen might be "Magic - When determining spell effects the caster level is modified by +1/-1") and the omen quality: whether it's a good or bad. In case of good omen, pick the first alternative ("modified by +1"), but for a bad omen pick the second ("modified by -1"). Certain nights the stars are so powerful that they affect those engaging in these activities even after the act. The Referee can elect, if the roll is done with a d20, to change the modifiers to +3/-3.

- 1d6
- ### Omen Quality
- 1 Optimal Omen - in addition to the good omen effect, if a character engages for a few hours or significantly enough in the activity under the "Luck" heading, something gratuitously lucky will happen to them.
 - 2-3 Good Omen - ignore Luck effect.
 - 4-5 Bad Omen - ignore Luck effect.
 - 6 Worst Omen - in addition to the bad omen effect, if a character engages even for an instant in the activity under the "Luck" heading, something gratuitously unlucky will happen to them.

- 1d6
- ### Omen Type
- 1 Love - When attempting seduction, roll twice and pick best/worst result.
Luck: seduction, sex, carousing.
 - 2 Money - When rolling for wealth found or gained, roll twice and pick best/worst.
Luck: working, finding treasure.
 - 3 Health - Roll saves against physical threats (like poison) twice, pick best/worst.
Luck: calisthenics and exercise.
 - 4 Spirit - Roll save against mental threats (like mind control) twice, pick best/worst.
Luck: meditation.
 - 5 Work - Roll for crafting, research and day-job-related tasks twice, pick best/worst.
Luck: working one's day job, or something assimilable to.
 - 6 What a portent to witness! A Night of Rare Omens! Roll 1d6 in the table overleaf!

Rare Omen Type

- 1 Magic - When determining spell effects the caster level is modified by +1/-1.
Luck: spellcasting.
- 2 Melee - Melee damage is doubled/If wearing armour it's impossible to die in melee. Luck: engaging in possibly lethal melee.
- 3 Mysteries - Mystagogues are a bit less/way more prone to anger.
Luck: initiation rituals and preparation.
- 4 Fire - Fire deals double/half damage.
Luck: starting a fire, setting things on fire.
- 5 Friendship - When meeting new people reactions are positive/negative.
Luck: meeting new people.
- 6 Luck - Everybody is lucky/unlucky.
Luck: nothing specific.

We live under the constant reminder that the cosmos dances following rules. We are here to understand the rules and exploit them, know the future, seize the right moment.

Level 5 - Thundering Tympanon & Clashing Cymbals - after hearing the rhythm of Nyx beaten continuously in the College of the Stargazers for such a long time, the character learns to clash cymbals and drum tympani in rhythm. After less than a minute (1d6 rounds) the character synchronizes perfectly with the fixed stars and any character with this ability within hearing range can tell their local time and, if they can see the stars or the sun, their position with perfect accuracy. While the percussion continues their casting is much more precise: when wounded they fail casting only if they fail to save. Of course the percussions are very noticeable, and they carry a lot in tunnels and canyons. The caster can play less loudly, but that requires a roll on Music. If the roll is failed the synchronization is lost for a turn, and the character can be heard anyway.

And our discipline constantly reminds us of our mortality. Instead of fighting the stars, we make the most of our time. We can't escape our doom. It's written in the sky.

Level 8 - Thanatoscopy - the caster can finally see in the stars a few details of their own most humbling moment: the way they will die or how they will meet their doom. The Referee will refer scant details, like "You will die outdoors" or "You will be torn apart by undead" or "You will perish underwater". The stargazer can avoid death & doom simply by avoiding these circumstances. The stargazer must be careful because there are fates more horrible than death.

Astrology

Star Sight

Level: 0. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

The caster covers the eyes of the subject so that their pupils expand greatly. Save to negate. Otherwise their eyes seem to become only a giant pupil, no iris, no white. The subject can now see perfectly in near darkness, but any light brighter than a candle can blind them if they fail to save. The blindness persists until they spend 1 turn in near-darkness.

Dispensation - the caster must spend 1 hour in absolute darkness.

Petty Portent

Level: 1/1. Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous.

This basic divination can be used to get a hunch of whether a single, specific action, if taken by a specific person present, will be successful or not. For example: "What if I try to find medicinal herbs in the Basalt Bocklin Bog?". After looking at the stars for a round, the caster receives an omen about the event: if the given action needs a die roll to determine success, the dice are rolled now and told to the player. Note: this spell can only give hunches about active actions, like climbing, attacking someone, making a skill roll. Saves are not really active actions, so this spell can't predict the outcome of a save.

Alteration - Augury - The caster finds and correctly interpret an omen regarding a specific course of action to be carried out in the future. Omens can be read by stargazing, examining the entrails of a recently slain creature, the flight of birds in the sky, patterns of lightnings in a thunderstorm or other natural phenomena. The Referee will tell the Caster if the omen is good and the specific course of action will be favourable or, conversely, if the omen is bad and the specific course of action will be unfavourable. Such prescience of course does not imply success in the endeavour.

Ominous Cosmic But Bafflingly Cryptic Observation

Level: 2/1. Range: self. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until sunset.

The caster spends some time studying the stars to receive an incomprehensible omen. Before sunset, if the events allow, the Referee will in due time give the caster some precious insight, uncanny understanding or to warn them that something they're about to do is terribly stupid.

Alteration - Fortunate Foresight - the observation gives the caster a generic hint on his luck. The player can roll a die but must use it during the spell duration, or else the Referee can use it later during the campaign. The Referee is encouraged to reward any frivolous use of an unlucky roll with with awful, major consequences.

Little Luck Lease

Level: 3/1. Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

The caster sees how to push their luck. The character can reroll a die. The Referee can, from the next sunset to the next dawn, force the character to reroll a single die. These rolls are only for in-game events, not for rolling hits when gaining a level. Dispensation - the Referee has no time limit to force the reroll on the character.

Wilson's Song to Stodgy Selene

Level: 4/1. Range: special. Casting time: 1 hour. Duration: instantaneous.

One night every month the Moon takes a break. Not full nor new, neither waxing nor waning; the Moon is simply boring. The song can be cast on that night only, because it's the only time the Moon can be bothered to answer questions. So the caster can ask the almost-omniscient Moon one question, but given their mutable nature the only reliable answer they can give is a "yes" or a "no".

Alteration - Supplication to Selene - in the same night, the Moon is easily pleased with supplications for luck. Before dawn something lucky will happen to the caster.

Sophia's Supreme Syzygy

Level: 6/iii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1d6 turns.

The spell can have four different effects, depending on how the caster aligns themselves with the subject and one of four directions. The spell takes effect soon as the caster, the subject and the desired of the four directions are aligned. The spell does not give information about direction or time of the day, but the caster can pick an alignment and move around the subject: when the alignment is correct the spell takes effect.

Astraea, Oracular - the caster must be aligned between the subject and the Sun.

The caster will receive a brief vision about a desired detail about the subject.

Eos, Abducting - the subject must be aligned eastward from the caster. The subject must save or be abducted to the House of Dawn while the spell lasts, then they will be brought back in a flash of rosy light.

Helios, Blinding - the subject must be aligned between the caster and the Sun.

The subject must save or be blinded, as if they stared at the sun.

Astreos, Windy - the subject must be aligned westward from the caster. The subject alone is battered by strong winds. Each round the subject has a 2-in-6 chance of being thrown to the ground.

Dispensation - the caster does not select an alignment. Instead the first successful alignment has effect, regardless of the caster's desires.

Curse of the Cajoled Cosmos

Level: 7/iv. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until sunset.

This spell might seem like a curse of ill-luck, but rather than casting it on the target the caster instead wheedles the stars to subtly wiggle. The spell acts on the firmament, therefore the recipient is ensured to suffer a period of consistent bad luck, no save allowed. The subject, in addition to being generically Unlucky (gratuitously unlucky things happen to them) must, once per hour as decided by the Caster or the Referee, reroll a die and take the worst result.

Dispensation - the subject must have displeased the caster. Even the slightest provocation will do. Stargazers are a prickly bunch.

Jason's Cosmic Comet Joyride

Level: 8/iv. Range: 200'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

The caster, under a night sky, hitches a ride for themselves and up to 5 allies. A comet will come and pick them up in 1d6 rounds, and then shoot through the sky and deposit them up to 100 miles away. The duration and distance can of course be increased by spending mana to extend the spell (cfr. Eos Elegy, p.83).

Alteration - Incredible Insight - the caster gains a very short-term, continuous premonition. This allows the caster to know what everybody else will be doing each round of combat before declaring their intent.

Appeal to a Good Star

Level: 9/v. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until sunset.

The subject, due to an improbable stroke of luck, succeeds the next failed save, or dodges an otherwise lethal wound, or something equally lucky.

Dispensation - range: self - The duration is limited to 1d6 rounds.

Ominous Comet

Level: 10/v. Range: nil. Casting time: 1d6 hours. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster, after observing a comet wandering thorough the night sky, divines the incredibly important event the comet is pointing to. Each casting reveals a single detail pertaining to the event.

Alteration - Supreme Sideral Speculation - The most powerful Astrology divination spell. The caster can find the answer to any question in the stars. After the spell is cast the caster must spend 2d6 days researching the results (no other activity is allowed) and, if an Astrology roll is successful, will learn the answer. The roll is made in secret by the Referee, which is encouraged to refer misleading, false or almost true (in a dangerous way) readings in case of an absolute failure.

Little Star from the Sky

Level: 11/vi. Range: 1 mile. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster will bring down on a target within range a little star from the sky. If the caster owns a tiny star the spell can throw that instead. The star will enter the atmosphere, hit the target unerringly and explode for 4d6 impact plus 4d6 star-cradle-level-fusion-powered radioactivity damage, no save. The explosion will damage everything around the subject within the radius of the spell, scattering debris and dealing 8d6 damage to anybody else within 30'. Creatures in the area can halve the damage if they save twice, reduced to 3/4 if they save once. Note: the star, on its way to the target, can smash through to 30' of rock before exploding. Making stars fall can anger gods, especially if the caster does not own the star and casts it more than once a year or in the same calendar day in different years.

Dispensation - the caster can throw a recovered Fallen Little Star at the target. This consumes the Star, but avoids the cost in mana and the divine retribution.

Call Down the Baethilus

Level: 12/vi. Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: permanent, see below.

The Caster attempts to trap a being under a baethilus, a stone this spell calls down from the sky (gods frown upon this). If the creature fails to save they are powerless but safely trapped under the stone, which is always sized to completely bury the target. Anybody, while touching the baethilus, can use the trapped being's powers as if they were their own. The spell ends when the baethilus is moved.

School of Necromancy

The School of Necromancy fame reaches far beyond the Fire Valley, and for all the right reasons. Fortunately our internal discourse and, for lack of a better term, disagreement, is not that well known.

Decades passed since the Apotheosis of Deleterios I Apostate, but his betrayal still causes disturbances. What he did is beyond reproach and reconciliation, his name cursed in eternity. His blasphemous support for reformism and the abandonment of our traditions of power through terror goes against what this Great School stands for.

Level 2 - Corpse Treatment - the caster can spend a day treating a corpse before reanimating it to improve its resistance. The process costs 10t. When the corpse is reanimated and its hits are rolled, reroll all dice results of 1 and 2.

The Reformist faction in the school held the opinion that raising armies of undead was not the best way to gain power, that it was too conspicuous and that, like already happened in the past, compromised the future of the discipline should new wars be declared on all necromancers. Deleterios I, before becoming Grand Sorcerer of the Fire Valley, was a Reformist. His betrayal will be known in perpetuity! His name will shame us forever from the Annals of the Fire Valley!

Level 5 - Drink of Immortality - it's a deadly poison brewed from the brewer's blood and unwholesome ingredients like human bone meal, ground polycerate goat horn, amethyst and 2 random results from the Pharmacopeia Rare Ingredients Table. The first time the drinker dies, they will become a undead after 1d6 rounds. When drunk, immediately SAVE OR DIE. And become an undead in 1d6 rounds, of course, because the Drink still works.

The post-apotheosis turmoil lasted decades. About three quarters of the School's staff and students killed each other. Often more than once. But we are done with fighting. Fortunately we got over that bad spell now. And we must do our best to become stronger than ever.

Level 8 - Drink of Eternal Power - it's an even deadlier poison brewed from mana-tar, seven caster pineal glands, a bucket of honey and 6 random results from the Pharmacopeia Rare Ingredients Table. When drunk, immediately SAVE OR DIE. If the caster survives, the first time they die, they will return as an undead after 1d6 rounds. The ordeal will confer them a power from the Savant Necropowers Table: the player can pick any power lower than 1d6 + caster level. The potion immediately kills any drinker except the brewer, NO SAVE.

And it's with extreme rejoicing that I look at you all now, wearing your newly acquired Bone Signet and holding your Drink of Immortality, ready to use our knowledge for the pursuit of Eternal Power. The future of this world is ours.

Necromancy

Song of the Dead

Level: 0. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.
The caster sings the Song of Death to an undead. This will make the undead follow the Caster's commands. The undead can try to save and completely negate the effects of the spell but only if its level is higher than the caster's level.
Dispensation - the spell ends when the caster stops singing.

Interrupted Rest

Level: 1/i. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.
The touched corpse corpse animates as an undead of level 1. Its personality has been completely corrupted by the ordeal of waking up as a rotting corpse; it is free-willed but spiteful, ravenous and angry with all that is alive.
Dispensation - the caster must pour a pint of innocent blood on the corpse.

Zombify

Level: 2/i. Range: touch. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: instantaneous.
The caster lights incense and candles around a corpse, then rubs it with special powders and mhyrr. The corpse animates as an undead of level equal to the Tier of the Caster. It is completely subject to the Casters will. The ingredients cost 50c per level of the undead created.
Alteration - Necrosurgery - this spell must be cast within 2d6 rounds of the subject's death. The caster treats the corpse with oils (500c) and replaces the heart with a stone. The subject is animated as a zombie, their powers, skills, levels, personality, will and agency escaping the clutch of death completely preserved, but completely subject to the caster's will. The undead will lose 1 level per month until, at level 0, they instead become a mindless ravenous lvl1 undead.

Ghoulish Taste

Level: 3/ii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.
A willing subject becomes extremely hungry but only wants to eat flesh, their visage becomes gaunt and horrible to behold and their breath unberably foul. The subject can eat hearts to heal 1d6 per Tier of the creature the heart comes from.
Dispensation - the caster must eat the (possibly fresh) heart of an innocent and check for Essence Corruption (day).

Dead Head

Level: 4/ii. Range: touch. Casting time: instantaneous. Duration: until dawn.
The Caster animates an undead severed head, known as a Dead Head, completely subject to the caster's will. The head has 1 Hit per caster's Tier and whispers with a really quiet voice. If an appendage is stitched to it, the Dead Head will be able to use it to move around, flying with bird or bat wings, hopping on a foot, crawling on a hand..
Alteration - Heeding Head - Duration: permanent - a head is set up to watch over a passage or an entrance, and the caster can order it to watch for a particular event or creature. When the head witnesses the event or creature it will report it by talking, whispering or shouting.

Back from the Graves

Level: 5/iii. Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: instantaneous. The closest humanoid corpses to the caster will animate as undead. The spell affects 2 corpses per Caster level and the undead created are level 1. Their personalities have been completely corrupted by the ordeal of waking up as rotting corpses: they are spiteful, ravenous and angry with all that is alive, but they must save or obey every wish of the caster. The spell ingredients cost 1000c. Dispensation - the casting time is 1 turn per corpse to be reanimated.

Gift of Immortality

Level: 6/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: instantaneous. Like Interrupted Rest except that the subject's powers, skills, levels, personality, will and agency escape the clutch of death completely preserved. The spell also laces the corpse with necromantic energy. The subject gains undead immunities, one Undead Ability determined rolling 1d6 on the following table, plus the ability to see in the dark. The spell needs ingredients costing 1000c.

- 1: any physical contact transfers 1d6 hits from the victim to the undead
- 2: immunity to cold and spells up to level 1d6+1
- 3: any victim killed with natural attacks will raise as a lvl 1 undead minion in 1 turn
- 4: once per day the undead can teleport between shadows
- 5: victims hit by the undead natural attack must save or be paralyzed for 1 turn
- 6: become incorporeal for up to 1 hour, either once per day or spending 1 mana.

While incorporeal the undead can't interact with non-magic objects.

Taste the Drink of Life

Level: 7/iv. Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until dawn. The caster grows fangs and may bite and drink blood in melee like a vampire. This attack deals damage like a magic one-handed melee weapon and if damage is dealt the caster will drink blood from their victim. Drinking blood will transfer 1d6 Hits from the victim to the caster, enabling the latter's Hits to go above the maximum for the spell duration. Another vampiric peculiarity gained by the caster is susceptibility to sunlight: daylight is fatal to the Caster, even the first light of dawn shining as the spell is ending. Dispensation - the caster must drink blood from a dying member of their own specie and check for Essence Corruption (week).

Gangrenous Curse

Level: 8/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous. The first creature touched by the caster must save or have one of their limbs at random go gangrenous. If the gangrene is not magically cured within a week the limb will become useless and, unless amputated, will spread to the core and kill the victim in two more weeks. Dispensation - the caster must have been hit in melee by the victim since the last round.

Wounding Wind

Level: 9/v. Range: see below. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 round/tier. The caster pumps three times a pair of bellows, blowing out a skin-rending wind. While doing so they can decide to blow in a 30' wide, 30' long cone, or in a 30' whirlwind centered on themselves. All living creatures in range (except the caster) suffer 1d6 per caster tier every round. The spell ends if the bellows are broken or the caster stops pumping the magic wind out of them. Alteration - Sarcomancy - the spell can only be cast on a paralyzed or immobilized victim. The caster can ask 1 question per round, then partially flay or strip flesh from the victim dealing 3d6 damage. The wounded flesh forms images revealing what the victim knows about the topic. The victim's death terminates the spell.

Great Gift of Immortality

Level: 10/v. Range: touch. Casting time: 12 hours. Duration: instantaneous. Like Gift of Immortality except the subject gains one random undead ability per Tier it had before death. The spell requires ingredients costing 5000c.

Lost Company

Level: 11/iv. Range: 100 yards. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous. Like Zombify except it affects the closest 250 corpses. The spell needs ingredients costing 10000c.

Grand Celebration of the Chthonic Gods

Level: 12/vi. Range: 1 mile. Casting time: 8 hours. Duration: instantaneous. The caster finds a suitable threshold for having a meal of dog meat and burying alive 12 innocent people, 6 men and 6 women, each person wearing jewelry worth 2500c. Two hours after the burial 250 corpses within range animate like Zombify. At the fourth, sixth and eighth hour of casting a characters of level 1d6+1 animates as per the spell Great Gift of Immortality. They report for duty as liutenants, their devotion to the caster unshakable. Each liutenant independently controls 250 corpses that animate together with them. If a liutenant is destroyed its now free-willed company will do its best to take as many lives as possible. The 12 victims are never reanimated: after the burial they simply vanish from below the ground. Alteration - Totentanz - Like Interrupted Rest except affecting all corpses in range. The ingredients cost 10000c.

School of Artifice

Note to the Staff: the diamond forges in the laboratories are to be used only after reservation. To book forge time, refer to your Master. The grey diamond forge by the hypocaust is intended for small works only; please be considerate and remember that adapting spinal nerve latches takes always at least twice the amount you schedule for it, even considering this advice, so it's not an acceptable job for the grey forge.

Lvl 2 - Manufactured with care: objects built by the demiurge are so well made that demiurgy spells cast on them do not require mana for upkeep. Note that upkeeping the spell counts as casting the spell toward its daily limit, so that stops the caster from casting the spell again during the same day. The demiurge also reduces either construction time or cost of objects by 25%: consult your Referee on a case-by-case basis.

In unrelated news, all the school's printing presses are now unusable. Again. Most type and plates went missing or defaced. It's the third time this month. Therefore the new directives for presses and prints are: if you restore one, don't mention it to anybody; if you create your own, hold it dear and keep it secret.

Lvl 5 - Automatic Daemon - the demiurge can build an automatic daemon, an object capable of communication, movement and understanding. The daemon always follows its constructor's commands and protects them from harm to the best of its abilities. Automatic daemons construction takes 1 week per level, and it can't be of a higher level than its builder. They are considered unarmoured and move at walking pace. Armour can be added at no cost and slows them accordingly. For each 1000c of material spent in construction one of the hit dice is considered as if it rolled a 6. If its hits go below 0 it must be rebuilt from scratch. When the demiurge gains a level, a day of tweaking is enough to raise the level of the daemon. A demiurge can only have a single automatic daemon active at the same time.

The demiurge can add special abilities to their automatic daemon. Each ability reduces the daemon maximum level; for example, adding wings reduces the maximum daemon level by 2. We list only a few examples, demiurges should innovate and come up with more:

Self-aware Workshop: the daemon incorporates a workshop for a specific craft, for example a loom or a small forge. It can operate itself at a basic level of skill, yielding manufactured good as if it was a simple apprentice working in a workshop. Cost: 1.

Cab: a person can climb in the daemon, close the hatch and gain full cover. While melee from inside is problematic, spellcasting and missile combat are possible through hatches: in this case the cover is partial. Cost: 1.

Hauler: the maximum encumbrance for the daemon is 1 ton per level. Cost: 1

Wings: the daemon, if unencumbered, can fly at its walking speed x3. Cost: 2.

Deadly Tools: standing next to the daemon in combat is hazardous: burning coal might spew out, or its movable spinning blades might just be flailing around. Each round the daemon fights in melee, everybody within 5' must save or take 1d6 damage per daemon tier. Cost: 2.

Final Weapon: once per day, but for some oblique reason only after fighting in melee for 1d6+1 continuous rounds, the daemon can unleash a powerful attack dealing 1d6/level, save to halve. Choose the area of effect at construction time: a 30' wide, 30' long cone; a 40' long line; a 20' wide blast targeted within 200'. Cost: 2.

Remember:

1: Security FIRST!

2: we are here to show that the arrogant barrier between theurgy and crafts is artificial: embrace both.

3: be excellent thrice: with others, in your art, and toward yourself.

Lvl 8 - Aegis - the demiurge can craft a special bespoke magic armour for themselves, a process taking 6 months and 20000c. The Aegis protects as magic plate mail and stops the demiurge from spellcasting, but not from casting through talismans built into it. It takes the demiurge a week to embed each talisman. The demiurge can also attack with the Aegis Magic Fists, dealing an extra d6 of damage.

Demiurgy

Animate Assorted Knick-Knacks

Level: 0. Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 hour.

The caster animates 1d6 small objects, like teapots, candlesticks, books or dice.

They open their cute eyes, and can talk and bumble around following the orders of the caster. One hit to disable, will then keep on complaining about being hurt with their falsetto mechanical voices until completely destroyed.

Dispensation - only one object is animated. The caster must spend 1 turn cranking it up with a gold hand crank, worth 100c.

Repair

Level: 1/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

An object is repaired and made whole. Gaps are mended, cracks vanish, chipped paint regenerates. If cast on a construct, it will heal 1d6 hits every two caster levels.

Alteration - Ruin - the touched non-magical object falls apart and deteriorates.

Constructs suffer 1d6 points of damage every two caster levels.

Tip-Toeing Traveling Trunk

Level: 2/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until dawn.

A must-have for the treasure hunter or the lazy, this spell causes a chest or trunk to animate, sprouting a number of feet, ready to follow the caster's orders. The chest can't be bigger than 16 cubic feet/half a cubic meter, can carry up to 200kg/400lb, walk as fast as an unencumbered human, has 2 hit dice and can attack by either ramming or slamming itself closed around opponents (1d6 damage).

Alteration - Comfy Cruising Couch - the spell affects a couch, armchair, ottoman, bed or chaise-longue in a similar way but, instead of deambulation, it confers buoyancy, a capacity of 500kg/1000lb and a swimming speed equal to that of a walking unencumbered human.

Animate Armour

Level: 3/ii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until sunset.

A touched armour animates and is controlled by the caster. It fights as a level 3 creature. If the armour is worn, the wearer can save to resist the spell.

Dispensation - the mana to cast this spell can be provided by the armour wearer, if they are either willing or unconscious. This way, it's possible for the caster to have the armour move around its unconscious or paralysed wearer.

Assemble Challenge-Driven Contraption

Level: 4/ii. Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

The spell instantly assembles a complex contraption designed by the caster using material within 30' useful to overcome a single, specific problem. While seemingly improbable, if the design is backed by a sound rationale, the contraption will work as designed, as long as the player is able to actually describe how such a machine could work based on the material present in the room. At the end of the spell, the contraption falls apart.

Dispensation - the spell requires 1d6 minutes to cast and the help of 1d6 other people. During this time, the building will take place as a choreographed assemblage-and-singing-and-dancing routine.

Dioptric Detonation

Level: 5/iii. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster shoots red rays from their eyes. Any non-magic object struck by the rays explodes, dealing 1d6 damage every two caster levels to everything within 10'. Magic items are not affected, and if the object is bigger than a cubic foot only a volume of cubic foot will be affected. If a construct is hit by the rays, it suffer the same amount of damage. Hitting the correct object requires a ranged hit roll, if failed the rays will hit another object.

Dispensation - Duration: 1 round/level - the rays are less intense, dealing 1 damage per round and digging through inanimate matter at the speed of 1 inch per round.

Invigorate Implement

Level: 6/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until sunset.

The caster either greatly improves the effectiveness of an already working machine (for example doubling its speed) or makes work correctly a sabotaged, malfunctioning or broken machine.

Dispensation - Casting time: 1d6 turns - The spell ends when the caster stops concentrating.

Curse of the Cog

Level: 7/iv. Range: 90'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 month.

The subject is transmogrified into a construct made of springs, cogs, cylinders, aetheric batteries, pumps and vats filled with glowing, colourful liquids. While this does not compromise spellcasting or fighting abilities, it makes the subject an object with no life signs nor biological processes. For example, healing spells will not work, the subject can't bleed, can't and does not need to breathe, eat or drink.

Dispensation - the subject must have hit the caster with a crossbow dart, a trap or another mechanic device.

Tricky Construction of the Tool Cabinet and the Transportable Case

Level: 8/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until sunset.

The caster must, before casting the spell, build a wooden cabinet, then disassemble and reassemble it and, with the spare parts leftover, build a small case with a hinged lid. This might take time and skill (a Carpentry roll and a 1d6 days per attempt), but, once prepared, it's possible to cast the spell on the case. While the spell lasts the caster can open the case, reach in and grab any manufactured, non-magic object currently in the cabinet, or put in an analogous object. Extraction or insertion takes 1 round regardless of the conditions.

Emerald Curse

Level: 9/v. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until sunset.

The subject's soul is permanently trapped within an emerald gem, their body left soulless and brain-dead. While this limits a lot of the subject's functionality, their spellcasting ability is not impaired by the lack of a physical body. And of course without a physical body the soul of the subject is now trapped forever in the gem. The number of hit points remains the same. The caster must have an "empty" emerald worth at least 5000c when the spell is cast. The same gem must be still available when the curse takes effect for the spell to work.

Dispensation - the caster must cast the curse the round immediately after the subject died.

Mana Vessel Magic Vortex

Level: 10/v. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: see below.

The spell modifies a charged mana vessel. The vessel start draining mana and spinning mid-air. Every round the vessel spins faster and faster and drains 1 mana from each caster and mana vessel within an ever-increasing distance: 20' the first round, 40' the second round and so on. The spell terminates when the mana vessel drains all the mana in the area or when physically destroyed; at that point it explodes dealing 1d6 for each round it spun to everything within 30', save for half damage.

Dispensation - the charged vessel explodes after three rounds.

Meta-Magic Mind-Machine

Level: 11/vi. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

A target construct or complex piece of machinery becomes sentient. While usually well-disposed toward its creator, it does not necessarily confer any other capacity like souledness, hearing or talking. It also requires the installation of a Cognitive Coiled-Crystal Core, a Tar-Thought Terminal or an Ætheric Æolipile.

Alteration - Engine Empath - Target construct develops empathy toward the caster and, to a lesser extent, to their associates. The construct will not do any harm to them, as if they were friends. No save unless the construct is animated by a genuine soul.

Rite of Replication

Level: 12/vi. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 week. Duration: instantaneous.

The spell embeds a soul (for example one from a recently dead person) into a receptacle. The spell then, over the next week, slowly pulls together all the needed components (costing 1000c per character level) from its surrounding to create a replica of the first body the soul belonged to. The replica has the same stats as the character in their original body, except it's now a construct. The receptacle can be a Cognitive Coiled-Crystal Core, a Tar Thought Terminal, an Ætheric Æolipile or an emerald filled with a soul.

School of Pharmacy

We have scores of laboratories in the Schools of Pharmacy. We spend so much time toiling there. We can brew any potion and cure any affliction. We make health happen.

Level 2 - Perfect Recipes - the pharma is so precise in dosing ingredients that a single dose of Rare Plant can be stretched quite a lot when creating potions. When calculating the amount of Rare Plants needed for a brew, halve the amount.

We are pharmas and this is the life we chose. Not chasing ultimate power over mind and matter, but improving life, and without touching the scalpel. Taking away pain and suffering. Bringing health where there is disease, and improving well-being. But we can do better than spending days and nights in these laboratories mixing and grating and stirring and distillating. We all spent too much time doing that, time that we won't get back. But we had a vision and finally today that vision is about to come true.

Level 5 - Humorism - the pharma can cure unbalances in patients's humours with herbal potions. The pharma can brew the potion in 1d6 hours using Chthonic Parsley and one of the other Common Plants at random. If the pharma succeeds a Medicine roll the diagnosis is correct and a disease afflicting the patient is cured in a few hours, otherwise the potion is wasted.

We spent years building the Methane Vents, but now we can ignite the Crucible of Spite and turn on the Great Reactor. We will spend most of our time explaining the wonder around us, instead of toiling surrounded by bottles and distillers. I raise this kylix to the implement of progress, let's kindle the flame to a brighter future!

Level 8 - Holistic Approach - the pharma understand their body perfectly, knowing how to perfect their diet. Each day the pharma must eat a dose of a Common Plant, rolled at random every day. If the diet is kept for a week the pharma is immune to poison, disease, deafness and blindness, recovers 1 hit per hour and becomes immune from Pharmacy sides effects.

Physiurgy

Selfless Gift of Life

Level: 0. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster heals the subject of the spell of 1d6 Hits and takes the same amount of temporary damage.

Dispensation - Duration: 1d6 turns - The caster lays hands on the subject to heal 1 hit immediately, then 1 hit per turn while the spell lasts and both caster and subject don't move.

Cure

Level: 1/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous. The caster, with a simple touch, closes the wounds of the subject. The subject recovers 1d6 hits. The subject can also save toward a partial recovery from diseases. Dispensation - the caster must have not performed surgery for a week (no First Aid or bandaging attempts).

Wilson's Orange Draining

Level: 2/1. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until hit, max. 6 rounds. The caster can shoot an orange ray at a living target within range. If a ranged attack is successful, the ray transfers 1d6 Hits from the victim to the Caster and the spell terminates.

Healer's Last Stand

Level: 3/ii. Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous. The caster heals all the allies (including oneself) within range for 1d6 Hits and then suffers the total healed amount as temporary damage. Dispensation - one of the caster's allies in range must have been attacked since the previous round.

Enkoimesis

Level: 4/ii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 2d6 hours. The caster rubs on the subject's head a salve of balsamic oil. The subject, if willing, can fall asleep so deeply that the can't be awoken during the spell duration. While sleeping the subject recovers 2 hits per hour. Alteration - Good Nap - The subject, if willing, is healed of 4d6 Hits but takes twice that amount as temporary damage.

Salvific Apport

Level: 5/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn. The Caster's hands will exude a small quantity of apport, a gunky white goo. The apport will evaporate with the rising of the morrow's sun as mysteriously as it appeared. This apport can be spread on a creature, allowing an extra daily disease Save roll, neutralizing any poison and healing 2d6 Hits. Dissolving the apport in 10 gallons or less of water will make it pure and safe to drink. If dissolved in a quart of water it will make it blessed. Eating it will make a person sated for the day. Dispensation - the caster must have not have attacked anybody with weapons for at least a week, except in self defence.

Aura of Renewal

Level: 6/iii. Range: 20' radius. Casting time: special. Duration: special. An aura of renewal spreads from the chanting Caster. Everybody in the area is healed of 1d6 Hits per hour of complete rest, 1 Hit per hour if conducting other activities. Everybody in the aura can save every hour to recover from diseases and counter poisons, lifting their effects for the spell's duration. To emanate the aura, the Caster must be immobile and chanting. Any movement or interruption terminates the spell. The Caster can't maintain the spell for more than 1 hour per level. Dispensation - everybody within range must stay immobile and chanting for the spell duration. The spell is interrupted if anybody moves or stops chanting.

Wholeness of Body

Level: 7/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.
As per Cure, but the subject is healed of 1d6 per Caster level.
Alteration - Wholeness of Mind - the subject is relieved from any form of mind affliction, like madness, frenzy, fascination, mind control, drunkenness.

Warrior's Respite

Level: 8/iv. Range: 10'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 round.
The spell heals all the wounds suffered by a subject during the casting round plus 1d6, possibly resuscitating a recently dead subject. In addition, all Hits lost due to melee damage by the subject during the next round will be halved.
Dispensation - one of the caster's allies must have been fell this round.

Health

Level: 9/v. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: instantaneous.
The subject is instantly healed of disease and poison present in their body.
Alteration - Safety - the round following the casting the subjects will always save.

Mors Tua, Vita Mia

Level: 10/v. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.
The Caster can, every round during the spell duration, either drain life as a double-strength Wilson's Orange Draining (draining 2d6 Hits) or transfer 2d6 of their own Hits to a subject within range.

Salvation of Body and Soul

Level: 11/vi. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.
The subject becomes perfectly healthy and pure of any ill-influence. Not only wounds, diseases, poison and their effects are healed and canceled, but also all noxious spells and effects affecting the target are countered.
Dispensation - the caster must have not have attacked or hurt anybody for at least a month, self defence notwithstanding.

Death unto Life

Level: 12/vi. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.
A corpse, when touched, is brought back to life. The resurrected creature has 0 maximum Hits, however. The corpse's conditions must be good or it will survive only 1d6 rounds: existing mortal wounds will need additional magical healing administered in this interval. The maximum amount of Hits of the resurrected will be 0 during the first day, increasing by 1 every subsequent day, up to the maximum number of Hits they had before they died.

Hypogean Hermits

Goats, earth, goatleaf, rivers and mana-tar. Flowing, continually churning and renewing itself, oozing from rock, ongoing and surviving and thriving in a thin layer between an inhospitable, no, deadly desert, and the worst case of runoff natural arcane phenomenon. There's no arguing with time, no reasoning with rivers eroding rocks, no compassion in this environment. And in the same way there's nothing we have that these ascetics want, hiding naked in their caves, praying on their pillars, fasting under the sun.

Level 1 - Ascetism - the caster does not need to transcribe spells in a grimoire in order to learn them, nor needs a grimoire at all. Spell research can be performed without books or a library, costs 1/10th of the normal cost (mostly spent in special herbs) but takes twice as much time.

We don't know what they do, except meditating and holding symposia. They do not care about us. What's sure is that their craft is older than anything we know about, their casting form is pure and unrelated to anything else and, for good or bad, they are not going to go anywhere. The loons probably know something we do not, but they do not care about sharing it, even amongst themselves, even writing it down.

Level 8 - Chrism - through a ritual anointment, the caster becomes immune to curses, mind control, changes of his body or nature like metamorphosis, petrification, energy drain, mana-tar sickness and essence corruption.

Chthonic Craft

Crypsis

Level: 0. Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster, after taking cover behind a natural feature, vanishes. The caster can't be found even looking and probing directly where it was. The caster is at the same time there and not there, being able to sense their surroundings but not able to interact in any other way (except coming out of hiding).

Dispensation - after hiding behind the feature the caster must step inside a goat-skin sack and bag themselves up, closing the bag and making it impossible to be found too. This makes the caster unable to look out.

Caprine Climb

Level: 1/1. Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn.

The caster's legs become hairy and caprine, their feet like a goat's. With goat feet comes their sure-footedness. The caster, when on natural surfaces like trees, rocks, climber plants, mana-tar falls and the Great Pile of Elven Corpses, will succeed automatically all climbing and balance rolls.

Dispensation - the caster must check for Essence Corruption (day).



Chthonic Cacophony

Level: 2/i. Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

This spell can be cast only underground. By subvocalizing a loud, low hum, the caster calls the earth. Within a few seconds, the earth hums back, only louder, much louder. The round after the spell is cast all creatures within 30' of the caster must save or flee terrified until they reach the surface or the spell wears off.

Hostile action against a subject will break the spell for that subject only, as exposure to any danger that can't be dealt with by running to the surface. The caster and their allies can reroll the save.

Alteration - Chthonic Comfort - the earth will hum back a soothing noise. Instead of going toward the surface, the subjects will want to sit and enjoy in the moist cavities of the underworld.

Caprine Call

Level: 3/ii. Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

The caster bellows out a powerful, loud bleat which can be heard for miles.

Recognizing the secret call of the Worthy Polycerates, 1d6 bocklins of level 2 will answer the call and arrive to help the caster within 1d6 rounds.

Dispensation - the caster will spend the best part of 10 minutes (one turn) shouting like a really distressed Worthy Policerate in grave danger. This will surely summon the helpful bocklins as above, but also a random interloper: roll to find if there's a random encounter.

Captivating Container

Level: 4/ii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

The caster opens a container revealing an object, for example a rosewood box can be opened to reveal a pine cone. Up to 1d6 subjects must save or be extremely compelled to obtain the object. The spell ends after 1 turn or 1d6 rounds after the object leaves the container.

Dispensation - the spell insteads affects 6d6 creatures within range. The caster automatically fails the save.

Carnal Curse

Level: 5/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 month.

The subject of the curse becomes overly worried with pleasing their flesh in any way they feel enjoy. The accursed will immediately start to binge and intensely indulge in pleasures of the flesh. Taken by the frenzy, they lose their head for 2d6 turns, without care for anything that does not bring immediate pleasure. After such a binge, the character can act normally for 1d6 hours, after which they start to binge again, and so on.

Dispensation - the subject must physically wound the caster or deny them a drink of wine in the round before the casting.

Caustic Catapult

Level: 6/iii. Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The spell throws a bucket of mana-tar (containing at least 1 mana) at a target. The bucket and tar explodes at destination, dealing 1d6 damage per caster level, save to halve. The damage is due to both the solidified tar shrapnel and the contamination it brings. Everybody in the blast must save or gain 1d6 mana-tar sickness points.

Dispensation - the caster vomits out the blob of mana-tar toward the target, eschewing both the mana and the material. The caster takes 2d6 damage and adds 1d6 to their mana-tar sickness score.

Cyst Cradle

Level: 7/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: see below.

The earth opens, swallows the subjects (up to 6 friendly subjects within 30' or up to 1 opponent, save to avoid) and puts them to sleep. The earth will nourish, sustain and heal the subjects, who will emerge in full health after 1d6 sunsets.

Dispensation - all subjects must be buried alive. The spell can be cast while buried.

Call the Covetous Kraken

Level: 8/iv. Range: 0. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

The caster steps into a river or a lake and rhythmically taps the bottom. For each caster level a tentacle rises from the water. The caster can direct the tentacles to grab and pull under water objects and creatures within 30' of the water. The tentacles are unarmored, have 10 hits and fight as level 3 monsters. To get hold of somebody they need a melee hit: afterward every round they try to drag the creature under water: if the creature fails a save they will be dragged 20' toward the centre of the water body.

Dispensation - the tentacles take 1d6 rounds to appear but the caster does not control them. They will try to drown any living creature within range.

Curative Kylix

Level: 9/v. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 hour.

The casters fills a kylix with wine and blesses the drinkers. Drinking a sip from the kylix heals 1d6 hits, three sips heal poison, 6 sips disease, 12 sips remove a curse.

The effects are not cumulative, and only a sip per caster level is effective. If a character drinks more than a sip per round, they must save or take 1 temporary damage per sip, due to the increasing tipsyness. The kylix contents remain potent for 1 hour, but the shape of the container makes it hard to move it around much without spilling the wine.

Alteration - Curative Krater - this spell can only be cast during a party, convivium, symposium or while watching theatre or games like wrestling, horse races or athletics. Each subject (up to two per caster level) must pour a litre of wine in a krater of adequate size. Unless watching theatre or games, while pouring, each subject must sing improvised bawdy songs and dancing around the krater. After all the pouring is finished, the drinking can commence: over the next hour of drinking all the subjects will be healed 2d6 hits and from poison, and they must save or pass out for 1d6 turns.

Cataclysmic Collapse

Level: 10/v. Range: 200'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The spell opens a number of small sinkholes under the area of effect, causing, in order: a possible downwash as the water in the area flows down the sinkholes, a subsequent collapse of the area of effect which will mostly clog the sinkholes, and a flooding of the area with water from nearby sources. Everybody in the area must roll a save or being buried under rocks and take 8d6 damage. Anybody buried then has the problem of the rising water: there is a 50% chance of ending up submerged in 1d6 hours.

Alteration - Create Karst - a 20' wide sinkhole opens anywhere within range. Everybody in the area of effect must save or fall down, taking 4d6 damage. After falling the character must roll another save to avoid being trapped under rocks, taking 2d6 further damage.

Krater

Level: 11/vi. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.

While the spell is cast the caster pours some wine and at least a potion in a krater (a big wine-mixing bowl). This creates two portions of a powerful mixture that, if drank within a turn, has the effect of all the potions poured in the krater.

Dispensation - an expensive (10000c) and very heavy (40kg) krater must be used.

Catacomb Convocation

Level: 12/vi. Range: 10 miles. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

This spell can be cast using only a bit of mental effort and no gesture or words of power. It sends a subtle yet powerful ripple of energy down the Hypogea which is immediately noticed by all casters within 10 miles, which are made aware of the direction and location of the Convocation. Knowing that some serious business is going on, 1d6 Savants Emeriti (the referee will generate them randomly) will come and have a look: each will arrive after 1d6-1 rounds, and while they are not bound to do the caster's bidding they will be of a slightly-friendly disposition toward them, in that they will not be as cantankerous as usual. The already crotchety savants are going to be seriously crossed if they are awakened more than once a year: for each savant roll 2d6 and, in case of a double 1, they will demand excuse, some kind of compensation and invariably some large-scale public degradation from the caster.

The School of Lies

Nowhere to be found, the School of Lies has always been there. The entrance looks like a wall of bare rock, their gardens like sand, their other buildings like ruins, they all say. Confusion stops you, misdirection brings you away, but frustration does the rest.

Level 2 - Unweaving the Veil - the caster can perceive the nature of illusions of level lower than their own. They can decide to ignore either the illusion or the underlying reality.

But, is it? Is it for real? Has anyone been there? Who told you about it? And why did they tell you? And why do you believe them? Do they have interests in lying to you?

Level 5 - Cognitive Consonance - when someone falls for the caster's illusions, they must save or regard any action aimed at proving that the illusion is not real as a loss of time, avoiding to spend any effort and attention for these proofs. Clearly it's not illusory, why bother checking?

And if they do not, do they really believe in it, or do they just hope it's real? Or is the School is a ruse, to give students something to chase? Is the School of Lies there at all? If it isn't, who spread the lie? And what if the lie is created by the School itself?

Level 8 - Reversible Reality - the student can interact with illusions as if they were real. They can walk on illusory bridges, be satisfied by illusory food and so on.

Psychosurgery

Clamour, Glamour, Flavour, Odour, Tremor

Level: 0. Range: 20'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1 turn.

The caster can alter, cancel or create a single stimulus of the auditory, visual, gustatory, olfactory or haptic nature within range. A round of concentration changes the stimulus, but not the target. For example they can make, over the course of the spell duration, a bowl of broccoli sound like a trumpet, then look like a goat, then taste like honey, then smell like a fish and then sound like a trumpet, but only within the area of effect. Someone from the outside will instead look at a bowl of broccoli smelling like broccoli sitting there, silently brooding, completely unsuspecting of the spell's effects.

Dispensation - the stimulus works on a single person and the spell must be cast within 3 rounds of the subject being exposed to any stimulus from the object.

Magnificence

Level: 1/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until midnight.
The subject gets uncannily glamorous, friendly, amiable and, most importantly, awesome. Whoever interacts with the subject must save or have at least a courteous disposition toward them. They won't risk anything for the subject's sake, but most probably they won't do anything gauche like attacking them on sight.
Dispensation - the subject must don lordly clothes worth at least 1000c, wear at least 4000c of jewellery, bathe for 1 hour and perfume themselves with 50c of the finest fragrances.

(In)Credible Architecture

Level: 2/1i. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until next sunset.
The target architectural element stops looking like what it is and starts looking like some other architectural element. For example, a pit like a section of floor, a door like a wall, a wall like a door.
Alteration - Gilding the Gate - Duration: special - the caster can partially gild an architectural element so as to make it look perfectly maintained and structurally sound, even if it's not. The spell lasts 1 week if 10c of gold is spent, 5 years for 1000c, a century for 10000c.

Visage Vagaries

Level: 3/1i. Range: self. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 1d6 turns.
The caster's face will appear like someone else's. The caster can choose a specific face (in this case, anybody with more familiarity with the face than the caster's can save to notice some weird oddness about it) or just making up one on the spot. The caster can spend 1 round to change their face to a different face.
Alteration - Flesh Mirror - anybody looking in anger at the caster's face will see their own face instead of the caster's. Conscious beings will require a save in order to hurt the caster. A new save can be attempted every round, and a successful save breaks the illusion for that specific person.

Drawing a Crowd

Level: 4/1i. Range: 100'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: 1 turn.
An object or person within range becomes the undisputed centre of everybody's attention. Anybody in range from the subject, even if they just take a glimpse at it, must save or be utterly stolen and captivated by the subject's specialness and unique way of being what it is. When captivated they will pay scarce attention to their environment, except to discuss matters related to the spell's subject.
Dispensation - the subject must be incredibly beautiful, precious, rare or exotic, and the caster must spend 1d6 rounds praising its qualities in front of everybody.

Vanish

Level: 5/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until next dawn. The touched object or person becomes invisible, together with the objects they were wearing. They will become visible again when they interact in a visible way with any visible object, only to vanish again once they leave everybody's sight. Dispensation - the subject can be completely hidden from view simply by hiding it behind something else. Not only it will be magically protected from sight, but even if searching the area anybody must save to decide to actually spend time searching in such an obviously inadequate hiding place.

Stage a Gruesome Death

Level: 6/iii. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 turn. Duration: until next dawn. The subject of the spell, upon the caster's mental desire, must save or die. Well, will actually seem to die. No more perceptible breath or pulse. If the subject has been attacked, the caster can make it seem as if the attack completely kills the subject seriously dead, even in a totally gruesome, gory, blood-spattering way. If not, the subject will just clutch their chest, spit blood and pretend to croak over.

Elise

Level: 7/iv. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: until next dawn. The caster creates an illusion of a creature. The illusion covers all senses and reacts accordingly to any stimuli, but it is not capable of much beside entertaining people in well-mannered conversation. The chat will be quite compelling, but the illusion simply investigates the topics of anybody it talks to without adding much that is not circumstantial.

Circle of Fools

Level: 8/iv. Range: special. Casting time: special. Duration: until next dawn. The caster traces a ward, leaving behind him an invisible edge of falsity. The edge can be up to three miles long and must completely encircle an area: the casting time is 20 minutes per mile of trace: it does not need to be circular, only to be closed. Within the circle everybody, except up to 12 people specified by the caster during the casting of the spell, must save every hour. Should anybody fail a save, for the next hour they will be subject to one of the following effects (roll 1d6):

- 1: they will get lost and wander off.
- 2: they will leave behind an object or container, typically the heaviest they carry.
- 3: they will not recognize someone they know.
- 4: they will forget what they were doing and start doing something else.
- 5: they will fall asleep.
- 6: they will fail to react appropriately to emergencies and unforeseen events.

The Deep Garden

They're not glamorous, nor powerful, nor well known. But you have to keep them friendly, because they always have what you need. And you are better off paying them immediately: they have the nasty habit of giving the herbs you need as a favour, only demanding the favour to be returned in the future. And if you don't return it when asked, they start to pull favours to have their revenge. Do not cross them.

Level 3 - Herbal - having spent so much time preparing herbs, browsing herbals and working in the Deep Garden, the caster can identify all Hypogean plants correctly. The caster also is really good at finding the plant they need. While harvesting plants in adequate terrain the character doesn't need to try Herbalism rolls: plants are found anyway. The character can still try attempt an Herbalism roll: if successful the character finds the common plant they want.

Dendrurgy

Bounty of the Tree

Level: 0. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 hour. Duration: instantaneous.

The touched plant or tree, during the casting, flowers and then bears 1d6 apples or figs. If eaten before dawn they heal 1 hit and satiate the eater for a day.

Alteration - Bountiful Branch - when harvesting plants the amount of common plants doses found is doubled.

Twisting Root & Branch

Level: 1/1. Range: touch. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: until sunset.

The caster animates the touched tree for the spell duration as long as physical contact and concentration are maintained. The caster can control movements of any parts of the tree, making them twist, bend and bow on demand, enabling the caster, for example, to uproot a tree and reroot it somewhere else.

Dispensation - the caster falls asleep under the tree. If the caster is in danger the tree will wake them and stop the attacker, hitting them with a branch for 1d6 damage. The spell ends when the caster wakes up.

Bridle of Briars

Level: 2/1. Range: 40'. Casting time: 1 phase. Duration: 2 rounds/1vl.

The subject of the spell becomes an attraction for all the flora in the area. Should the subject fail a save the greenery will hastily wrap around the subject, holding and choking them. After being wrapped, the subject takes 1d6-4 damage every round and is not able to cast spells but can attempt another save to wiggle free. Anyone helping by attacking the Bridle grants another save attempt. After the subject saves the vegetables lose interest in them.

Dispensation - the caster must smear the subject with manure mixed with goat blood, requiring a hit in melee.

On the Things Beneath the Valley of Fire

In a bend between the Spine and the Orient Sea lies the Valley of Fire.

The Valley is a desert plateau scoured by raging deflagration. Piles of rubble and ruins few and far between, huge billowing flames venting from the karsts, canyons and crevices crisscrossing the valley.

You have no reason to be there. Go home. Or come underground.

Under the desert, hidden from sight and the scorching sun, in these very canyons, karsts and crevices, rivers flow and life abounds. Trees, ivy, honeysuckle, fungal sprawls and fauna teems, nestled in the moist chthonic cavities, protected from the inhospitable inferno above us.

Over the millennia, witch hunts, war, distrust and persecution drove to the Valley both monstrosities and practitioners of the occult arts. Here they found even weirder beings and more inexplicable phenomena.

To resist the vexing environment and wanton aggression, covenants and congregations were formed. Eventually the Schools of Magic were founded; as they began to accept apprentices, a greater influx of young, foolish and ambitious students started. But conflict continued. Many schools were destroyed, together with their immense knowledge.

The Five Great Schools left joined in a Conspiracy, to find strength through numbers, to keep their friends close and to keep their enemies even closer.

There were more. Many more.

They've torn each other apart. They are gone now.

The ruins of their greatness lie before us

Academies, Magic, Murder, Ruins,

Politics, Survival, Initiations, Spelunking

and a Lake of Iridescent Mana-tar



We Have Assignments

Exceptional Events
And
Reasons to Roam

The seeds are listed as small chains of consequences. Players can decide to do something, be forced to do it, try to cope with the outcome or otherwise follow up. This also helps the Referee decide what happens after the adventure, consequences of action and inaction and so on. So either browse the list or treat it as a d66 table and feel free to riff on and combine them as much as you want!

INFORMATION GATHERING AND FALLING IN THE WRONG HANDS

Can also be adapted to McGuffins, both people and magic items.

- 1-1 Someone needs to do some original research (e.g.: find all the tombs close to the Singing River, catalogue the interesting herbs in the Bog of Purple Fishes)
- 1-2 A bit of knowledge is missing or misplaced and needs to be recovered or sourced elsewhere (e.g.: a copy of the catalogue is in the Hermitage of Ivy Pillars)
- 1-3 Someone stole an important bit of information, it must be recovered and they must be stopped (e.g.: they will recover an artefact from a tomb and use it)
- 1-4 Cope with and recover from the catastrophe (e.g.: the school is underwater now)

I GOT 99 PROBLEMS BUT DRUGS AIN'T ONE

- 1-5 Explore until you find a specific herb
- 1-6 Go to there and harvest this specific herb; I swear we found some there in spring
- 2-1 Someone might want to nick some herbs or potions from the School Pharmacy
- 2-2 Someone raided the Pharmacy again, and the School might be on fire
- 2-3 Your Master wants you to catch who raided the Pharmacy
- 2-4 You got caught for making a mess in the Pharmacy; the punishment is atrocious

YOUR MASTER LIED, THEY SENT YOU ON AN ERRAND FOR ANOTHER REASON

- 2-5 You better not be around lest you discover something
- 2-6 I sent you there *because reasons*
- 3-1 Now that you know, you're too risky to have around at critical times
- 3-2 They want you to feed that specific horrible monster
- 3-3 They thought you were going to die, so now they'll make sure you Graduate soon and are immediately kicked out afterwards



UNFINISHED BUSINESS YOU'D BETTER DO SOMETHING ABOUT

- 3-4 Fire Dervishes: you're not really allowed to go to the Cirde anymore, but you heard that somebody might be digging there. Could be a stupid apprentice, a treasure hunter, an extremist fringe of Dervishes. Or could be a Spite Dragon.
- 3-5 Gatekeepers: a student is moonlighting smuggling luxury and magic items. That's fine. The problem is that they're stealing School property left, right and centre.
- 3-6 Chimerists: some new apprentice tried to make an anglerfeet. So apparently there's a 30'-long invisible hypnotic teleporting anglerfish with 6 human legs hiding somewhere in the school and eating people. Again.
- 4-1 Stargazers: the stars might be about to be right.
- 4-2 Necromancers: a sleeper cabal of Ultra-Traditional-Orthodox Necromancers decided that the College is getting too Reformist and now a whole lot of school members are dead... well, kind of dead.
- 4-3 Artificers: someone hid a full emerald prison in the grey diamond forge. It's the third attempt of sabotage this month and despite the still-decent health and safety record you can't sleep at night. Neither can your Master. Nobody's happy.
- 4-4 Pharmacists: the Savants are making improvements on the Great Reactor. You heard it might not be as secure as they think. You should do something about it.

YOUR MASTER NEVER MADE IT BACK FROM THEIR LAST TRIP

- 4-5 Let's find out how long we can skyve work and pretend everything's OK
- 4-6 Well, it's about time we went to find Master, wherever they might be
- 5-1 Oh well, it's time to find a new Master, but they're all awful people
- 5-2 Darn, they kicked us out

ALLEGIANCE, ALLEGIANCE, ALLEGIANCE

- 5-3 A school member left without licence; find them and try to bring them back
- 5-4 As their defiance continues, find out what they're up to and, if it's something harmful, do something about it or at least disrupt what they are doing
- 5-5 We'll let them go, but we want all their grimoires, books and notes
- 5-6 We want them dead or alive, and find what happened to these we sent before you

DELIVERY & DELIVERANCE

- 6-1 Deliver this parcel to someone, they should be at this place
- 6-2 Someone went somewhere and did not come back; find and possibly rescue them
- 6-3 They need help making it back before something bad happens

WOOING & WEASELING

- 6-4 Half-truths have been said to impress someone, so you have to guilt some garbage and distract them with some shineys to make sure that they do not notice
- 6-5 Two of them had a fight, we have to pick a side, and we are screwed either way
- 6-6 It all got misunderstood in the worst way possible and names got called and people got upset and deals got broken and friendships got strained and we really need someone to do something about this

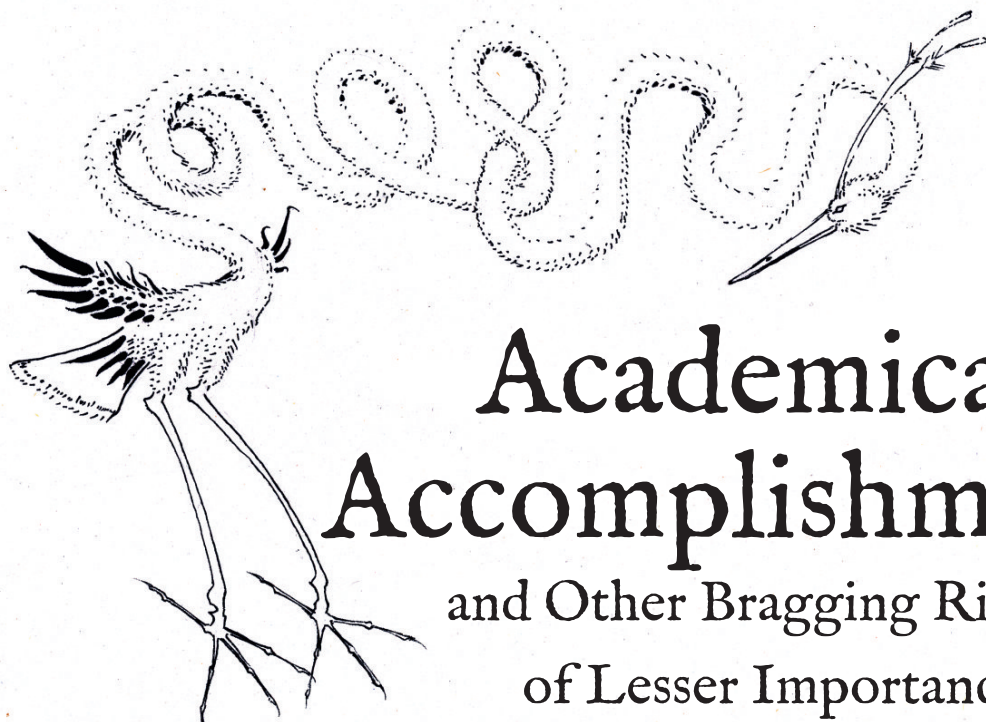
And of course the characters can be the causes, initiators, bystanders of these events, and they can be on either side of the adventure hook. Have fun!

Roll 1d66 Incidentally Missing Magical Ingredients

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 1-1 | polycerate goat hooves | 4-1 | fresh spleens |
| 1-2 | a pint of kelpie goo | 4-2 | fish fingers |
| 1-3 | feather from a sphynx | 4-3 | a trichobezoar |
| 1-4 | amethyst dust | 4-4 | sea-monster scales |
| 1-5 | hallucinatory mushrooms | 4-5 | casters' pineal glands |
| 1-6 | bullfrog horns | 4-6 | tentacles |
| 2-1 | a few hundred teeth | 5-1 | a virgin |
| 2-2 | silver swan feathers | 5-2 | metallic ore |
| 2-3 | coloured oozes/moulds | 5-3 | superfluid mana-tar |
| 2-4 | dragon bone | 5-4 | glowbat tails |
| 2-5 | snake skins | 5-5 | mana-tick crystals |
| 2-6 | cats | 5-6 | a few gallons of blood |
| 3-1 | delicious marzipan | 6-1 | a bucket of toads |
| 3-2 | swamp gas | 6-2 | exotic spices |
| 3-3 | tears of an innocent | 6-3 | unrequited love letters |
| 3-4 | heart of a baby | 6-4 | a jar of eyes |
| 3-5 | dogs | 6-5 | a murder most foul |
| 3-6 | special herbs | 6-6 | a cask of fine cephalopod garum |

Exceptional (Yet Somehow Not Uncommon) Events

- 1-1 A star has fallen; you better run and get it.
- 1-2 Your Master said "fetch me this", you better run.
- 1-3 Your Master is uncannily upset, you better run.
- 1-4 Everyone else is running away from the School, and you do not know why.
- 1-5 It's not really worth discussing why, but you got lost in the Hypogea.
- 1-6 Someone annoyed a Savant Emeritus. Now the curmudgeon is back at the school, more abusive than ever. You now understand why Savants are forced to retire.
- 2-1 You heard of something interesting being hidden somewhere. Better go there and find out what before that cheeky smug frenemy of yours gets there first.
- 2-2 Mana-tick infestation at school. Everybody's getting bitten. A lot.
- 2-3 Your nemesis is being wildly successful at something. They do like to rub it in.
- 2-4 You were sent somewhere far and you got there days in advance. You're bored.
- 2-5 You found an interesting scroll in the School Library...
- 2-6 They said you could not get a glowbat. You bet it would be easy.
- 3-1 The river by the School is swelling; the lower School levels are flooded already.
- 3-2 During a lecture, you crossed the Lecturer. Please them before they complain.
- 3-3 The goats are behaving very strangely. As if growing restless in the darkness.
- 3-4 "We need volunteers to test an unknown artefact".
- 3-5 Your Master is behaving in a weird way. Might be related to their last discovery.
- 3-6 Someone complained about someone else last night; barricades are being built.
- 4-1 That tunnel was not there yesterday.
- 4-2 Someone rummaged through your stuff and took something away.
- 4-3 "Such a nice library you have. Shame if something were to happen to it."
- 4-4 Your Master needs volunteers, you better find some, else it might be you.
- 4-5 Due to unforeseen circumstances, you really need to enthuse your Master.
- 4-6 A Conspiracy has been called, and all the Savants are gone for a while.
- 5-1 Someone caught up with your past misdeeds.
- 5-2 A cave collapsed, revealing previously unknown chthonic cavities.
- 5-3 You Master needs you to do someone a favour, but you know it's better not to.
- 5-4 The School needs more space. One of the abandoned sections (freaky accidents do happen) is being reclaimed. There's need for scouting and a cleanup crew.
- 5-5 Someone you know got kicked out of the School, but the reason is kept secret.
- 5-6 ... and apparently it's a secret cabal that did it.
- 6-1 A gaggle of drunk apprentices from another School came and made a glorious mess.
- 6-2 Something has been erroneously released from a laboratory.
- 6-3 You found something in your bag you've never seen before.
- 6-4 ... and you wake up somewhere else.
- 6-5 You've been given details about a Mystery's INTERESTING PHENOMENA.
- 6-6 You've been volunteered/selected for some kind of Inter-Scholastic contest, of the kind that might be an end of you more horrible than death if you fail. On top of that, everybody in your school really cares a lot about you winning, to the point where you got threats in case you don't. On top of even that, you're pretty sure the whole competition is rigged, and someone put mana-ticks in your bed already. Have I mentioned Hoochie Tamzah Bearded Amanita Fortified Wine is involved?



Academical Accomplishments

and Other Bragging Rights of Lesser Importance

Despite the awful politics and backstabbing and sneering and cut-throat rivalries and pointless feuds and feticism of our little differences and jealousy (deserved or not) and countless other ways we waste our time and energy strutting, you get respect from what you do, not for what you have or who's your Master. Deeds speak louder than words. All the following accomplishments are, usually, noteworthy enough:

The followings are just suggestions, and they supplement the AFG Campaign Accomplishments. Players should not necessarily be aware of all of them and should discover them in play.

Research your own third spell

Unlock Tier 2/+1 CRA

Research your own twelfth spell

Unlock Tier 3/learn a spell from the same tradition of a spell known, but of lower level

Unveil your first Mystery

Unlock Tier 2/gain a level/+1 mana

Discover a previously unknown Law of Reality

Unlock next Tier/+1 SPI

Survive a day of torture in the Pit of Thorns

Unlock Tier 3/+1 PHY/+1 SPI/+1 mana

Engrave a new spell in the Eternal Library

Unlock Tier 3/Halve successes needed for your next spell research

Sleep over the Gorge of Dreams

Unlock Tier 2/Learn a spell at random

Swim across the the Iridescent Beneath

Unlock Tier 4/gain a level/+1 mana

Drink milk from a Sphinx's breast and survive the ensuing visions (and the Sphynx)

Unlock Tier 3/gain a Mystic Power, Referee choice/+1 mana

Eat the brain of a Horned Kataract

First, save or die. Then unlock Tier 3/+1 mana

Hang out with bocklins for a season and win their trust

Get access to a mana-tar vein, producing a randomly generated cask of mana-tar/month

Create a dogmatic rift in any School

Unlock next tier/Gain the service of 3d6 apprentices

Rescue a Thrakadaemon out of the ruins of the Circle of the Fire Dervish

Unlock next tier, set something on fire 7/day, +1 mana

Enter the College of Gatekeepers via the elusive Neverdoor

Unlock next tier, Detect Threshold 20' radius, always active

Send a Fallen Star back to the Sky

Unlock next tier, the Star will grant a small wish, not so small if selfless

Win the Bearowl Jousting Tournament

Unlock next tier, +1 PHY, acquire 1d6+1 bearowls

Reanimate your nemesis, abuse them publicly as a slave

Unlock next tier, +1 SPI, get the fame of one not to be messed with

Finish your Great Masterwork

Unlock next tier, +1 CRA, need only 3 EXPERT tasks to get MASTER in this task.

Recover a Lost Recipe from the ruins of the School of Pharmacy

Unlock next tier, gain the service of 2d6 apprentices

Survive a drunken romantic night with a Maenad

Unlock next tier, immunity to fear, +1 PHY or SPI

Win the Verdant Grand Laurel in the Deep Garden Grand Vernal Contest, twice

Unlock next tier, obtain through friends/contacts 1 dose of a desired rare plant each week

Find the Lost Rosewood Box in the School of Lies

Unlock next tier, the character automatically saves when disbelieving illusions

Dig a Cyst and bind therein an otherworldly being

Unlock next tier. The spirit can be freed in exchange for a service, until then +2 mana

Found a School and licence 3 graduates

Unlock next tier, +1 CRA, gain the service/burden of 6d6 apprentices

Kill an Hypogean Dragon and build a walking palanquin with its remains

Unlock next tier, gain the service of 3d6 apprentices

Be outlawed by at least two Great Schools and survive for one year and one day

Unlock next tier, +1 SPI gain the service of a cell of 3d6 renegade casters of lower level

Become Mystagogue

+1 level, sense which Initiate shares Mysteries with prophanes, reroll a failed save 1/day

As in AFG, Tiers must be unlocked in order. If a higher Tier is unlocked before unlocking the next one, the next one is unlocked instead. Tier 5 can be attained via specific Accomplishments.

Become Grand Sorcerer

Unlock Caster 13, +1 all stats, +3 mana, reroll a failed save 3/day

Name the number of all Valley goats in the Valley and walk over the Gape

Unlock Caster 13, +1 all stats, automatically succeed 1 save/day

Also, while not all the above accomplishments are immediately recognizable as academical, it's important to remember that the best way to accomplish something in a Hypogean School is to impress Masters and Savants with something completely unrelated and enjoy the attention.



Mysteries & Initiations

Casters crave knowledge of new spells, but they can't usually find anyone to teach them. And those that could teach do not because enchantments are hard to acquire. Even then, teachers often teach only because of their devotion to the art. Self-inflicted is the problem of those that find knowledge precious.

But the Hypogea are full of Mysteries. Old, non-written tales are peppered with wanderings of witches and sorcerers trying to pry secrets directly from their source instead of spending months toiling trying to replicate them. Such stories are based on facts or on their allegorical description. With these tales as guides, apprentices are encouraged to wander in the chthonic cavities, chasing secrets.

Mystagogues and Hierophants have the double-edged privilege and burden of administering and protecting knowledge of the arcane. Details about mysteries are never recorded lest these figures get upset as they are extremely powerful and quick to anger.

The wise needs not only to know, but also to know when to be silent. Therefore the following elenchi are not to be taken literally, nor treated as canon! They are merely artefacts and idle fantasies written in order to convey the idea of what these forbidden tales contain.

With many thanks to our superiors for the granted privilege, we commence.

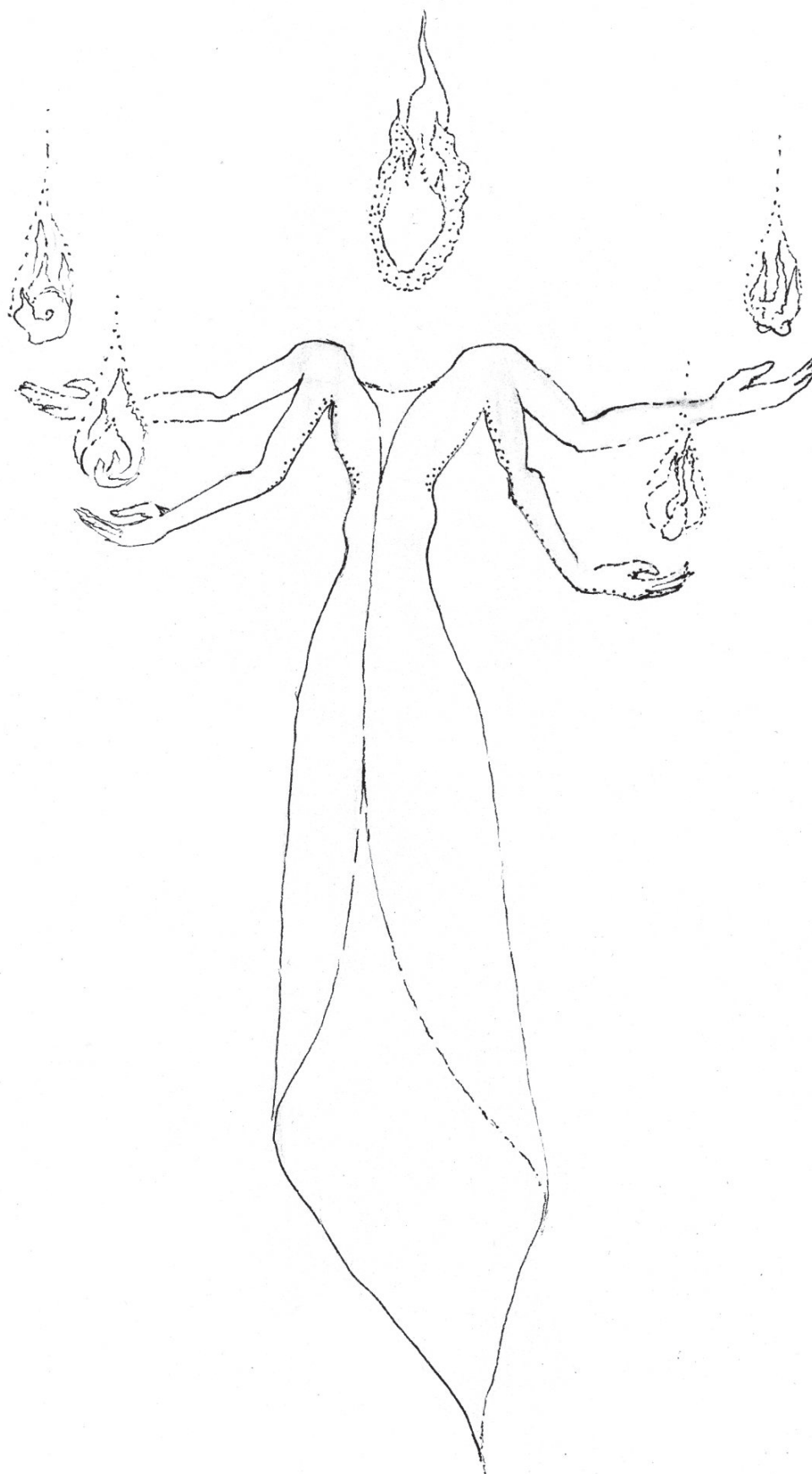
Mysteries are an adventurous way to replace spell research with more interesting gaming and, most importantly, not reduce it to just a dice roll to see if the research is successful.

Here's a generator for a short adventure. Prepare a list of spells for PCs to learn and use them as Mysteries. It's useful for rituals, McGuffin recovery scenarios (like "find the Acorn of Tongues"), or to give characters access to spellcasting they need and can't otherwise obtain.

Furthermore, unless PC's money is something you really want to get rid of, it often preferable to have PCs jump through a number of hoops rather than research spells.

Obviously, should the character reveal the wrong details about Mysteries, feel free to be cruel. Mystagogue and Hierophant are considered to be synonyms for our purpose, use what you please.

To find how to unearth the Mysteries, roll on all the following tables.



*Grand Mystagogue Pyrocles, Fire Dervish Savant, resident at the Gatekeeper's College
Hierophant of the Seventh Path, depicted not in their usual fiery pillar form*

First, Initiands examine a number of INSIGHTFUL PHENOMENA, lest they are caught unaware:

*Roll 1d66
1d3 times*

the petal patterns in a hundred honeysuckle blooms	
the mauve volutes of mana-tar fumes	1-1
the rolling of pebbles in the river	1-2
a loom operated by a blind weaver	1-3
the noise of a battleaxe repeatedly swinging inches over your nose	1-4
9 dried petals from a black rose	1-5
old maps of the area	1-6
the ravings of a savant in a bout of hysteria	2-1
an augury of muskrat bones and smashed grapes	2-2
pebbles in your shoes after a long drunken traispe	2-3
snake owls hunting mice during a storm	2-4
a handful of dust from the floor of a college dorm	2-5
the rainwater collected in the leaves of lashing willows	2-6
motions of three brooks as they rush and billow	3-1
ashes from a hated wizard's spell book	3-2
transcripts from a mob of lawyers' gobbledygook	3-3
the ridges on a narwhal's horn	3-4
the rust patterns of a suit of chainmail old and worn	3-5
the twisted patterns of high grass after a flood	3-6
the wavy pattern of a scale weighing feathers against blood	4-1
a strange pattern in the hair of a sleeping bear	4-2
the noise of a comfy wooden rocking chair	4-3
the tracks of an ant carrying a grain of salt	4-4
the aroma of a peaty distillate of single malt	4-5
the tickle of swallowed live centipedes down your throat	4-6
the veins of a drum made with the skin of a goat	5-1
the scales of a fish caught by hand in a frozen creek	5-2
the laughter of an assassin paid to kill the meek	5-3
the second word of the title of the books misplaced in a Library	5-4
what, when you were a kid, was most scary	5-5
sitting still on a riverbank, the secrets of the patterns of sand	5-6
adventuring in the night's most dangerous place, your own dreamland	6-1
the message encoded in the cracks of an old masonry wall	6-2
the genuine pain from getting broken bones in a drunken brawl	6-3
the flame of a candle set on the skull of a snake	6-4
suffering an indigestion from the infamous squid-goat-snake-cheese-mauve	6-5
mushrooms-human bone marrow-garum-oats-olives-lentils-figs-pasta bake	6-6

The best way to know the INSIGHTFUL PHENOMENA for a Mystery is from an Initiate, who is allowed to reveal them only to those really worthy. They are not allowed to reveal more, lest the Mystagogues be angered.

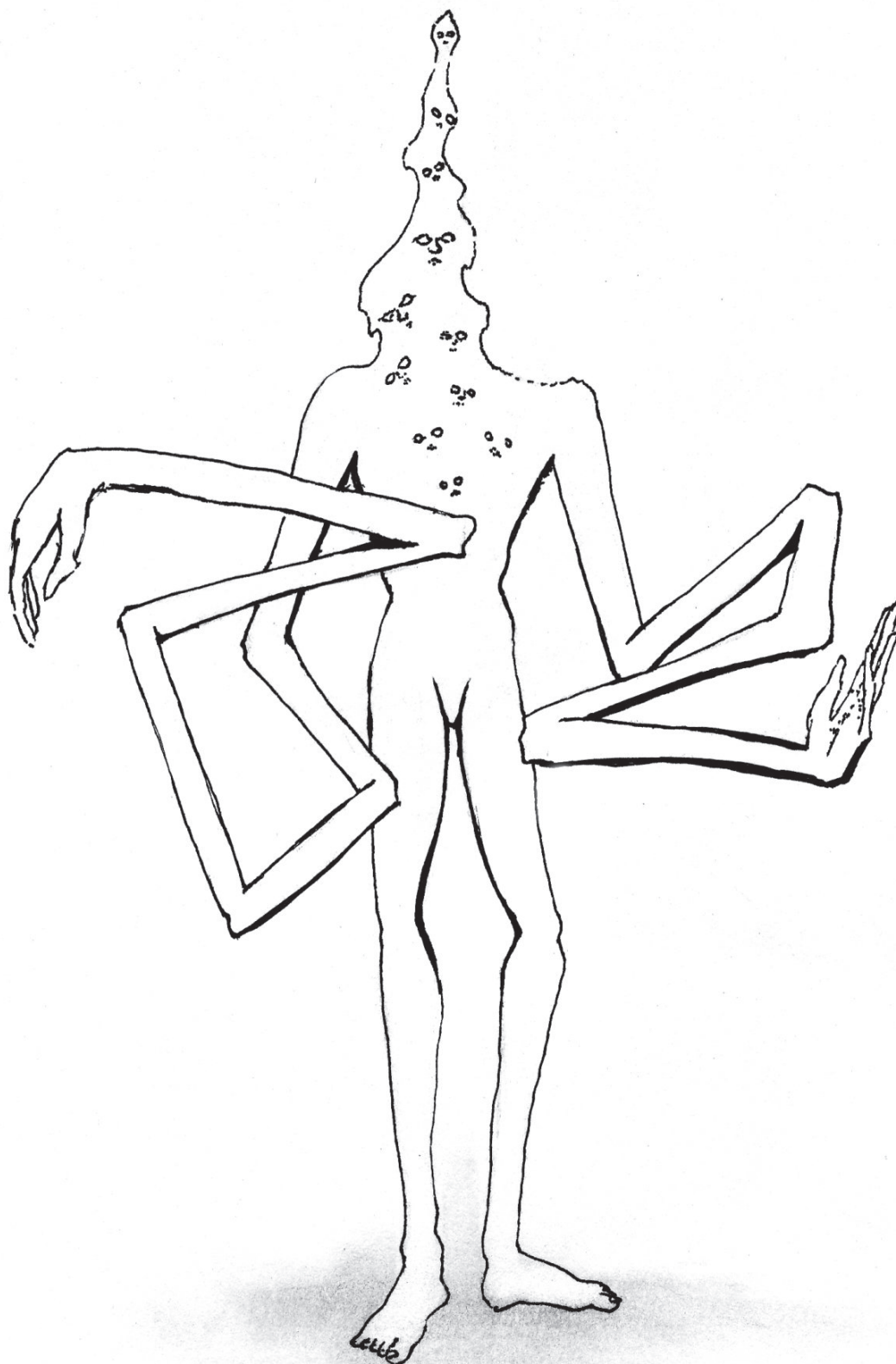
Having characters learn the INSIGHTFUL PHENOMENA for a Mystery, either by finding a forbidden scroll or by being told by an initiate wanting them to join the Mystery, is a great way to start a campaign or start a one-shot to demo the setting.

Roll 1d66 Further examinations and dedicated study of the Phenomena leads them to
1d3 times identify and GATHER IMPORTANT PARAPHERNALIA for the journey:

- 1-1* stout shoes repaired by a seven-or-less-fingered cobbler
- 1-2* four strands of hair from an undead toddler
- 1-3* tears for your death from your despairing lover
- 1-4* a wooden bucket full of whale blubber
- 1-5* fourteen singing frogs
- 1-6* two jewels the size of mockingbird's eggs
- 2-1* a wagon made of iron and a team of goats stout enough to pull it
- 2-2* a talking rabbit
- 2-3* a half-baked enchanted marzipan baby
- 2-4* a pastel colour hat from a grumpy old lady
- 2-5* a ball of thread from an unwoven spider-silk hat
- 2-6* a waistcoat-wearing seven-toed cat
- 3-1* someone you have shot and wounded to bring on the journey
- 3-2* a potted plant, luxuriant, green and ferny
- 3-3* the residual essence of thirteen moonbeams
- 3-4* a child that is surely not what it seems
- 3-5* three old friends
- 3-6* a purple crystal lens
- 4-1* a mated pair of ferocious guard goats
- 4-2* seven rusty nails from rotten boats
- 4-3* a velvet bonnet with a teal bow
- 4-4* a silken parasol stolen from your beau
- 4-5* wind trapped in a goat-skin bag
- 4-6* pockets stitched closed, full of lead slag
- 5-1* a caltrop that has injured a centaur
- 5-2* a recommendation letter from your mentor
- 5-3* a bag of stolen gold
- 5-4* bread with green mold
- 5-5* blood from a person you blasted with magic
- 5-6* omens of your quest having an end so tragic
- 6-1* a stuffed toy squid made from real squid
- 6-2* eight long bones, tied together in a pyramid
- 6-3* a prayer to forever murmur
- 6-4* a concrete block and chain, to use as an anchor
- 6-5* a parasol made of fine paper
- 6-6* a stuffed tapir

Once the above are gathered, the Initiands usually spend a few days studying all the collected evidence and taking no less and no more than Three Omens.

The Three Omens reveal important details concerning the Initiation.



*Mystagogue Oziron of the Silent Mouths, Gatekeeper Savant
Hierophant of the Mystery of the Basalt Pit*

*Roll 1d66
1d3 times*

The First Omen warns that Initiands must be make themselves recognizable by bearing an INITIATE MARK:

- 1-1 purple feather in their hat
- 1-2 a human brain in a glass vat
- 1-3 carrot in vest pocket
- 1-4 a luxuriant plant of rocket
- 1-5 bag of live chickens carried in the left hand
- 1-6 always leaving behind a trail of sand
- 2-1 pure white suit coat/pure red for evil mage
- 2-2 holding one's turnip effigy in a metal cage
- 2-3 wearing a yellow tabard and ringing a cowbell
- 2-4 covering one's left eye with a painted shell
- 2-5 wearing a perfume made with lilac
- 2-6 as a hat, wear a male mallard duck
- 3-1 grass blades entwined in their (possibly fake) beard
- 3-2 crushed gems and honey on their face smeared
- 3-3 token of cast silver pinned to their lapel
- 3-4 bringing an empty basket of woven rosell
- 3-5 goat horns clashed like cymbals
- 3-6 ears pierced, leaving in place augers and wimbles
- 4-1 wearing a necklace of strung together knick-knacks
- 4-2 scroll of mockery and curses pinned to their backs
- 4-3 walking a leashed gilded turtle
- 4-4 wearing a crown of dried myrtle
- 4-5 a koi fish in a bowl to attract bad luck during the quest
- 4-6 the mark of their School painted in blood on the bare breast
- 5-1 a tabernacle holding a relic thrice blessed
- 5-2 a fine blue glass vial, filled with alkahest
- 5-3 riding an ass
- 5-4 a bottle of wine of the highest class
- 5-5 pretending to read from a blank book
- 5-6 walking with a fish tied to a crook
- 6-1 being followed by a lovable duckling
- 6-2 wearing a respectable amount of bling-bling
- 6-3 holding a thyrsus of giant fennel
- 6-4 walking on a leash the smelliest dog from a kennel
- 6-5 a ribbon on your arm belonging to the School's doyen
- 6-6 nailed on the belt, the wings of a wren

Not doing so will attract the wrath of Gods and Mystagogues alike.

The Second Omen directs Initiands to proceed to a SECRET PLACE:

*Roll id66
twice*

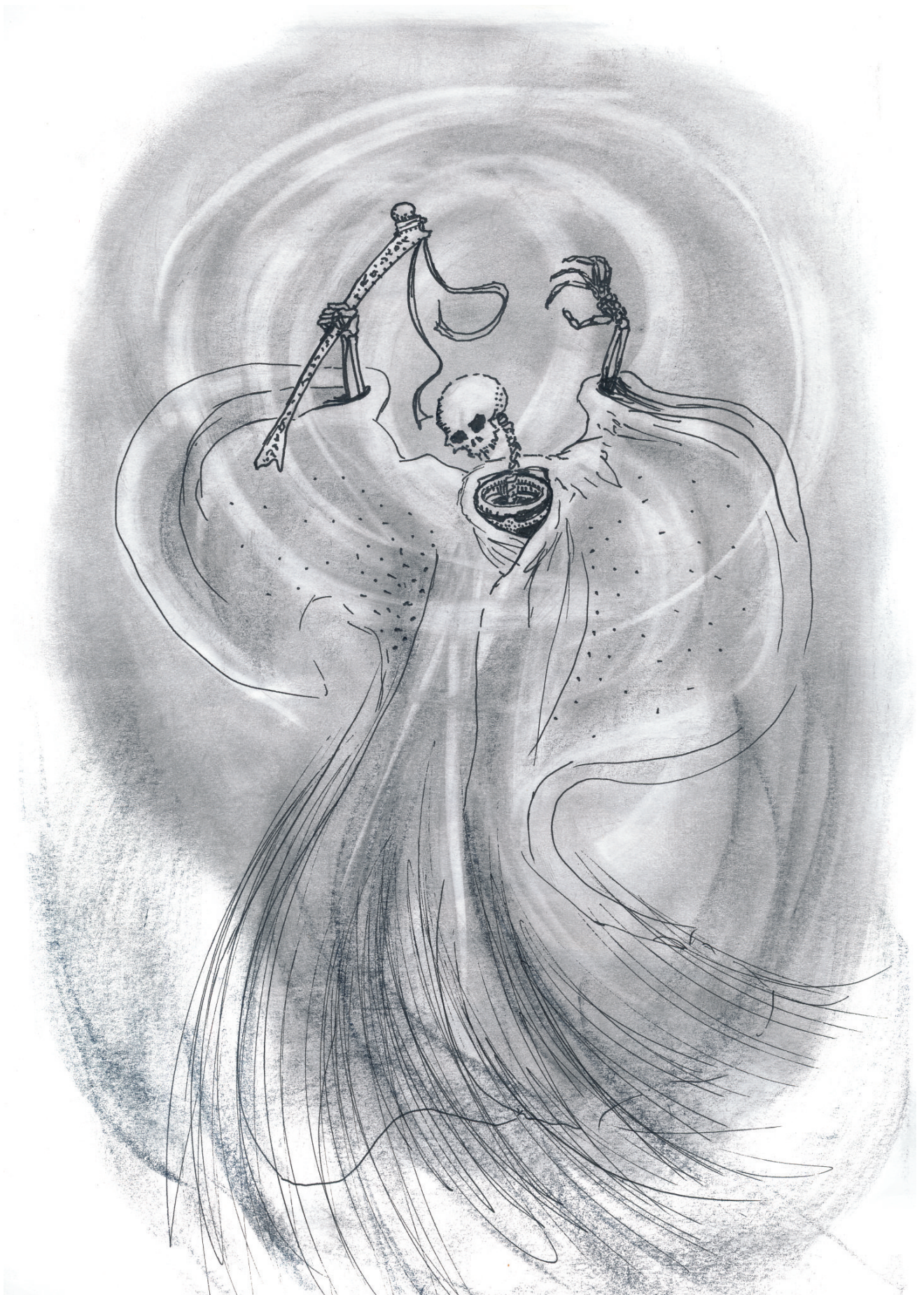
The	Swamp	of	Sweet Salt	1-1
The	Grotto	of	Pyrite	1-2
The	Ravine	of	Weeping	1-3
The	Oubliette	of	Solitude	1-4
The	Cairn	of	Regrets	1-5
The	Statue	of	Sighs	1-6
The	Obelisk	of	Splintered Bones	2-1
The	Gate	of	Wailing	2-2
The	Bridge	of	87 Ladders	2-3
The	Stone	of	Yearning	2-4
The	Junction	of	Despair	2-5
The	Broken Wall	of	Fire	2-6
The	Well	of	Rusty Nails	3-1
The	Pool	of	Mandatory Silence	3-2
The	Karst	of	Crawling Jade	3-3
The	Aerie	of	Bountiful Dreams	3-4
The	Lichen Field	of	Starry Sights	3-5
The	Hanging Rock	of	Fumes	3-6
The	Arch	of	Bright Feathers	4-1
The	Mana-Tar Pit	of	Pilfered Souls	4-2
The	Killing Fields	of	Silver Waters	4-3
The	Catacombs	of	the Laughing Loon	4-4
The	Lodge	of	Knowing	4-5
The	Sundial	of	Unescapable Thoughts	4-6
The	Cavity	of	Impure Dreams	5-1
The	Cuniculi	of	Murmuring Moss	5-2
The	Omphalos	of	Lying Hallucinations	5-3
The	Gorge	of	Spite	5-4
The	Waterfall	of	Farewells	5-5
The	Hermitage	of	Paid Blood	5-6
The	Tree	of	Time Forever Lost	6-1
The	Megalith	of	Tongues	6-2
The	Pit	of	Obsession	6-3
The	Spring	of	Ivy	6-4
The	Observatory	of	Lack of Insight	6-5
The	Hall	of	Misspent Youth	6-6

Roll
1d66

The Third Omen reveals that the Initiands need to spend a few days in the Secret Place, but in no reported case more than a week, every day performing a specific PROPITIATORY RITUAL in order to summon, enable, satisfy, placate and/or amuse Gods and Mystagogues:

- 1-1 revel
- 1-2 sculpt their own effigy with chisel and kevel
- 1-3 meditate
- 1-4 the shouts of the bocklin to loudly emulate
- 1-5 pound sand (in a leather bag with a wooden hammer)
- 1-6 about inconsequential matter yammer yammer yammer yammer
- 2-1 set up a picnic
- 2-2 seven goats to cleanly nitpick
- 2-3 bang on a zombie skin drum
- 2-4 with a chum and a plum, bum and drink rum, strum and hum
- 2-5 walk backwards in tight circles until passing out
- 2-6 eat a sow from tail to snout
- 3-1 construct a fishing rod and "fish" in the wind
- 3-2 continually stroke a live animal which is finned
- 3-3 pour liquor from a jeweled cup at appointed times on the ground
- 3-4 suffer from a possibly mortal wound
- 3-5 start and walk through a roaring bonfire
- 3-6 pretend to be a calf, chained in a byre
- 4-1 sit on top of a column
- 4-2 lie in the dark at the bottom of a horrible chasm
- 4-3 dig 21 graves in a spiral pattern
- 4-4 paint their effigy with their blood at the entrance of a cavern
- 4-5 with rocks found there build a shrine to magical knowledge
- 4-6 steal something important from their Master or College
- 5-1 plant a 1001 seeds of various food crops
- 5-2 lie by a monster sleeping in a nearby copse
- 5-3 kill, slaughter, and cook a large game animal using only knives
- 5-4 entertain the Mystagogue's guests, dancing and playing a fife
- 5-5 paint glyphs on the landscape in bright colors, then scrub it clean
- 5-6 kill all the plants growing in a nearby ravine
- 6-1 bury oneself in the earth and listen to the stars, breathing with a straw
- 6-2 dance until their feet are bleeding and raw
- 6-3 remain motionless and naked, even after seeing a visitor coming
- 6-4 keep a fire going, to the darkness never succumbing
- 6-5 etch star maps in the rock, marking Uranian Junctions with gems
- 6-6 dig a firepit, surround it with three concentric hems

The Initiands must perform the act for 1d6+1 days at least 16 hours a day.



*Mystagogue Stratos the Supreme, Necromancer Savant Emeritus
Hierophant of the Mystery of the Cunicoli of Hope*

Roll 1d66
1d3 times

After the Three Omens come true, a small cadre of MYSTAGOGUES visits the Initiands in succession. Typical Mystagogues could be:

- 1-1 a hooded mute will drop off a sack of talking parsnips and run away
- 1-2 among some cave paintings, a speaking portrait
- 1-3 a lyre-playing loup garou
- 1-4 a naked woman, masked with a seven-horned head of a caribou
- 1-5 riding a giant leech, a white bear holding a stone mace
- 1-6 a tornado, swept up, take damage, brought to a new SECRET PLACE
- 2-1 a phalanx of drilling skeletons who crumble if you speak
- 2-2 two well-dressed bullfrogs, wanting to play a game of caique
- 2-3 the Grand Sorcerer of the Fire Valley
- 2-4 of all the Hypogean Maenads, the most doolally
- 2-5 a flight of rainbow-feathered birds, squawking from vantage points
- 2-6 a scrawny teenager, pretending to translate his invisible god-piglet's oinks
- 3-1 a comet streaks across the sky at night, its tail spells things to you
- 3-2 a seven-horned cow, you need to listen to every moo
- 3-3 a traveling group of blindfolded people, led by a hooded figure
- 3-4 coming out of a ground, a dirty digger
- 3-5 six mourning goats carrying picks, shovels and a lead casket
- 3-6 an old wandering mystic, badly ill and hopelessly unfit
- 4-1 a flaming flying monkey
- 4-2 a fragile old crone and her seven armed flunkie
- 4-3 a swarm of locusts, devouring everything green
- 4-4 a talking statue of a lying ephebe, brought around by a self-propelled palanquin
- 4-5 a singing cricket, with top hat and tailcoat
- 4-6 a black, polycerate goat
- 5-1 a violent storm-spirit, with lighting blazing in its veins
- 5-2 a grinning trio of Kelpies, with their ever-dripping manes
- 5-3 a lost puppy, gain a friend for life
- 5-4 a kid masked with the skull of a cow, holding a bloodied bone knife
- 5-5 a couple of newlyweds, wanting to be entertained
- 5-6 a man dressed in rags, his arms chained
- 6-1 a misanthropic old man hurrying to find someone
- 6-2 a turtle running up, the bunny can't come
- 6-3 a Savant from your School
- 6-4 a talking mule
- 6-5 the local numen
- 6-6 the spirits of a long-dead dragon, still angry with humans

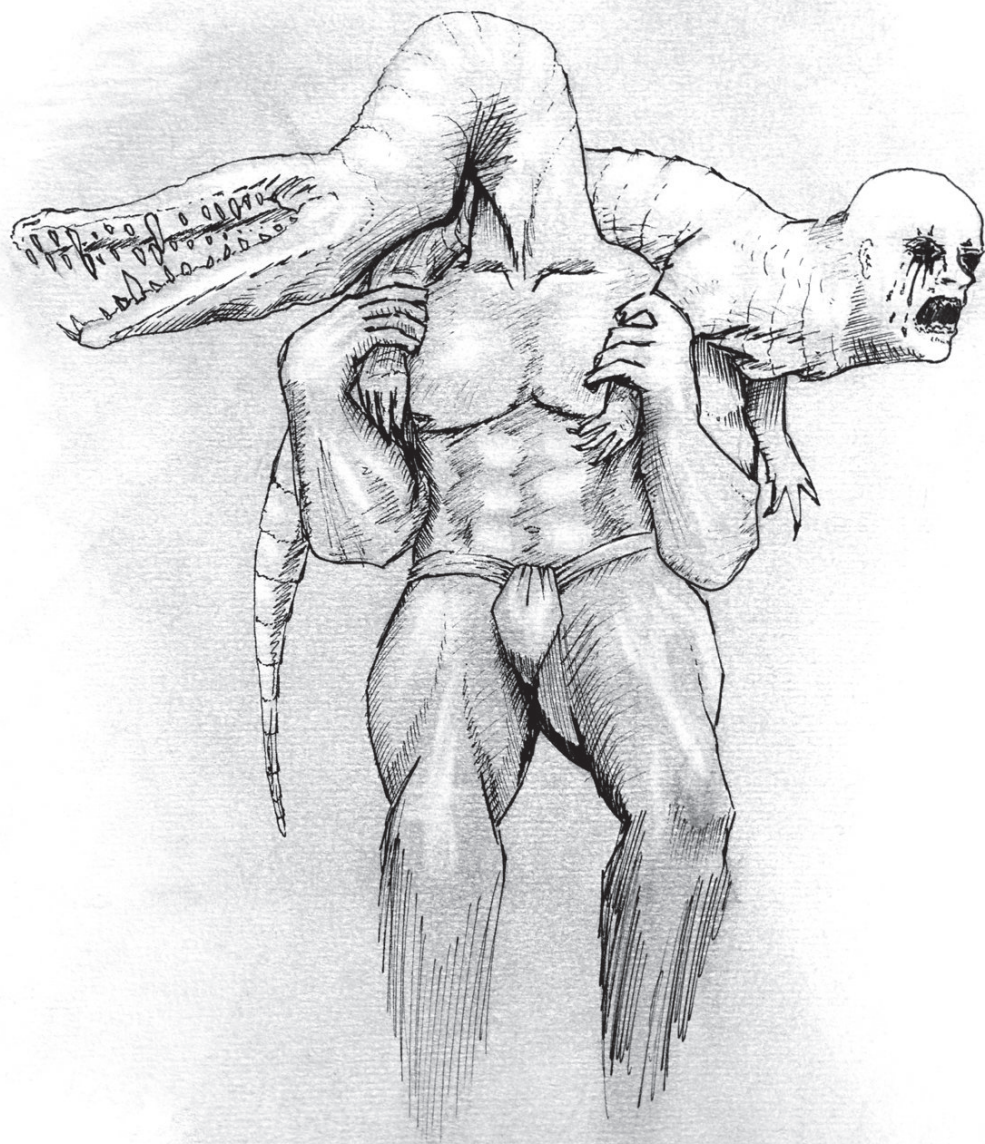
Each Mystagogue tests the Initiands asking to carry out an INITIATION CHALLENGE. The challenge might or might not be similar to the following: *For each Mystagogue roll 1d66*

go to another SECRET PLACE, perform a PROPITIATORY RITUAL	1-1
adopt a new style of dress and make it habitual	1-2
destroy your most valued possession	1-3
answer a riddle or a conundrum	1-4
go to a SECRET PLACE and GATHER IMPORTANT PARAPHERNALIA	1-5
organize and on a set date hold a bacchanalia	1-6
an enemy to befriend	2-1
fight the next thing you meet to a bitter end	2-2
guide them to another SECRET PLACE	2-3
to another SECRET PLACE beat them to a race	2-4
laugh until you cry seven times	2-5
lop off one of your fingers to atone for your crimes	2-6
waltz with them in the moonlight	3-1
bring the eternal rest to a wight	3-2
plant a tree in memory of someone	3-3
bake and offer the Mystagogue a gigantic hot cross bun	3-4
assume and survive the mind-bending Bearded Amanita	3-5
embed in your brain three psionic parasites	3-6
adopt pacifism in your next adventure, tell no one why	4-1
kill a wizard and eat their whole brain in a baked pie	4-2
discuss philosophy over tea	4-3
learn a musical instrument hanging from a tree	4-4
study your spellbook for a hidden meaning	4-5
live for a week on a tree over a chasm leaning	4-6
build a statue in tribute to those you have slain	5-1
meditate a week buried under a cairn	5-2
with the blood of three innocents, make a patch of land fertile	5-3
teach the Mystagogue a spell; this is going to take a while	5-4
chew up a gemstone and swallow it together with your broken teeth	5-5
fashion and devote your heart to a crude doll made of heath	5-6
burn your whole body hair dangling over a bonfire	6-1
forever renounce your most craved earthly desire	6-2
drive through your tongue a string with embedded spines	6-3
bring here and drink the Seven Great Hypogean Wines	6-4
have your right hand chewed off by the Reavers of Erebus	6-5
for a week devote all your time befriending the School's worst dweebus	6-6

The Mystagogues then force the now-Initiates to take a vow of secrecy. Should the Initiate share the Mystery with anybody, the Mystagogues will notice, and retribution will be harsh and memorable. If all Challenges are carried out at least in a satisfactory way, the Initiation is concluded.

Roll The Mystagogues might also grant a BOON depending on how the Initiates
1d66 have played this far:

- 1-1 Axe that Never Misses Its Target
- 1-2 Axe that Never Misses Its Target & When In Trouble Targets Your Foot
- 1-3 Bucket of Plentiful Water
- 1-4 Bucket of Hard to Detect Corruption, Disease, Rotting & Putrescence
- 1-5 Bag Never Full
- 1-6 Bag of Picky Pickings; makes the contents vanish, but only the good stuff
- 2-1 Helmet of Invisibility
- 2-2 Hemlet of Invisibility to Other People If You Have Malicious Intentions
- 2-3 Spear of Lightning
- 2-4 Spear of Self-Shocking When Used In Anger
- 2-5 A Young Basilisk in a Cage, covered with a convenient curtain
- 2-6 A Young Basilisk in a Cage, covered with a convenient curtain, blinded
- 3-1 Feather of Falling Like a Feather
- 3-2 Feather of Falling Like a Brick
- 3-3 Bottle of Boreal Brandy; protects from cold like a Seriously Thick Blanket
- 3-4 Bottle of Burning Brandy; burns insides like a fire
- 3-5 Ring of Finding What's Lost
- 3-6 Ring of Finding Out That You Lost What You Owned
- 4-1 Spyglass of Nightvision
- 4-2 Spyglass of Poke Your Eye Out When You Really Need It
- 4-3 Sack of Six Continually Glowing Crystals
- 4-4 Sack of Coal mined from the Mine of Restless Spirits
- 4-5 Sandals of Jumping
- 4-6 Sandals of Wandering, a.k.a. in the Wrong Direction More Often Than Not
- 5-1 Marzipan Baby, with prize inside
- 5-2 Marzipan Baby, animated and crying, messy, hungry, dingy, adhesive
- 5-3 Pillow of Good Sleep; wake up earlier and still be fresh
- 5-4 Pillow of Sleeping Like A Rock But Horribly & Waking Up Seriously Late
- 5-5 That Extra Spell you were not looking for
- 5-6 That Epic Migraine that Lasts a Week
- 6-1 Enchanted Hermetic Jar; opening makes you learn a Secret Law of Reality
- 6-2 Enchanted Hermetic Jar; opening causes Obscuring Hallucinogenic Toxic Mist
- 6-3 Mythical Fleece of Luck
- 6-4 Mythical Fleece of Utter Stench when Wet
- 6-5 Bronze Tablet bearing the Sign of the Ancients
- 6-6 Bronze Tablet bearing the Sign of Antipathy

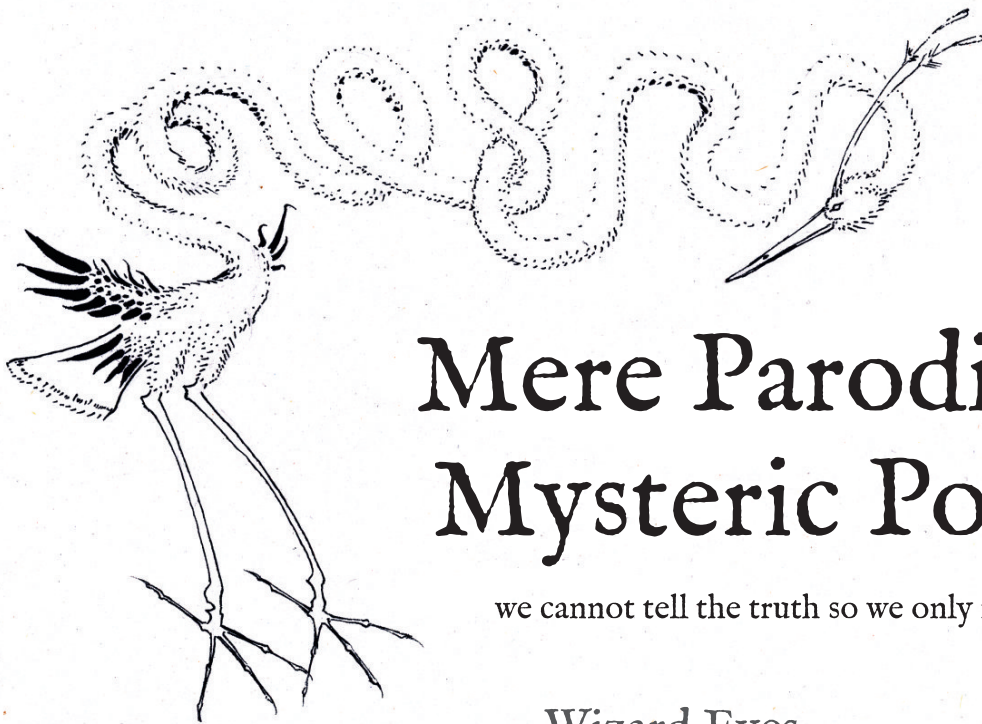


*Mystagogue Kallistrata, Servant of the School of Lies
Hierophant of the Mystery of the Lake of Glass*

Roll
1d66

At last the Mystagogue will reveal to the Initiate how to receive the knowledge of the Mystery through a REVELATION, possibly in a way similar to one of the following:

- 1-1 when they go meditate at a SECRET PLACE
- 1-2 while crotcheting, understanding the real meaning of the Rainbow Lace
- 1-3 written in letters that just appeared on the wall
- 1-4 in a thick tome, read by the light of a tallow candle in a dark hall
- 1-5 in a trance, while forever spinning
- 1-6 as a sudden realization, while bell-ringing
- 2-1 spoken, while asleep, by the person you most pine
- 2-2 at the bottom of a large krater of wine
- 2-3 intricately spelled out in a spider web
- 2-4 in the moves of a dance, pay attention to every step
- 2-5 hallucinating, after eating - of all the cheeses - the most smelly
- 2-6 spelled out in the gurgling coming out of a snake belly
- 3-1 you will find a scroll waking up, attached to your chest with a dagger
- 3-2 read from the veins of a goat bladder
- 3-3 a choir of all the initiates will sing it to you
- 3-4 found on a riverbank, on the horns of a mountain caribou
- 3-5 folded up on a scrap of paper in your pocket
- 3-6 carved on a skull, in the eye socket
- 4-1 in a beautiful scroll, not in its text, but in its calligraphy
- 4-2 as you see dawn, have a sudden ephiphany
- 4-3 written in the wind, on falling leaves and butterflies
- 4-4 from the gurgling of the Sacred Purple Ooze, as it's fed and multiplies
- 4-5 inebriated from the smoke coming out of a crack in the wall of a cave
- 4-6 read the marks on the skin of a goat you must catch alive and shave
- 5-1 written in the sky, a message nobody else can discern
- 5-2 as you meditate, as you now can shed your most worldly concern
- 5-3 drawing detailed star maps on a moonless night, on the map words appear
- 5-4 drawn in the patterns of repeatedly spilled beer
- 5-5 in the slithering pattern of a drunken snake, or perhaps on its scales
- 5-6 after you pass out, as the Mystagogue your back repeatedly flails
- 6-1 in the moving shadow cast by a big bonfire
- 6-2 as you are forced to almost drown in a river gyre
- 6-3 after three days in a cell in perfect silence, you will hear words
- 6-4 as you stab yourself with sacrificial knives, the knowledge is conferred
- 6-5 conveyed by the mesmerizing stare of an old tomcat, don't blink
- 6-6 evident as you wiggle a paper on which you spilled ink



Mere Parodies of Mysteric Powers

we cannot tell the truth so we only fabricate lies

Wizard Eyes

The initiate can see what others can't. Spirits, auras, negativity, fear, love, and sometimes even other people's problems. While this is incredibly useful, it's also incredibly distracting: apply a +1/-1 modifier to all attempts to surprise the subject.

Polypogenesys

The initiate spawns a squid. The squid lives inside the subject and, as long as it's inside, they can communicate telepathically. It can be commanded to leave (through a bodily orifice) and fight for the host. The squid is literally spawned by the host and will die if not allowed back in the host through any orifice at least once a day (a freaky process to watch, but totally harmless). If the squid dies, a new squid spawns in two months.

Spiritual Flim-Flam

The initiate can entice a spirit or daemon to do their bidding, in exchange for service, but at a price, namely returning the favour in the future. An old trick, to avoid returning the favour, is to ask for help wearing spectacles, a beard or a hat. Spirits are deceived by such silly tricks, and nobody knows why; they literally can't understand that the bearded person who asked them a favour a moment ago is the same bearded person right in front of them. But as soon as the disguise is gone, the spirit will reach the character to whisk them away and often return them - but only after a while - completely deprived of mana and covered in bruises. (1d6 hits left)

The Theurge who Stares at Goats

The initiate can intensely stare at a goat for a full round. The goat must save or die, its heart stopped, its breath stolen.

Skyclad

While the initiate is under the sky and completely naked, except for headgear and jewelry, the sky will be their aegis. The character can't be paralyzed, petrified or held, and is protected from claws and weapons (as if wearing medium armour).

Secret of Memory

If the caster memorizes spells, 1 spell slot of any single level can be left non-memorized. It can be used to cast a spell of the same level that has not already been cast during the same day.

If the caster uses mana, instead the caster can spend mana to memorize spells. To memorize a spell, the caster spends 1 mana. Before next dawn, the memorized spell can be cast without counting for the daily limit for that spell, as if the caster was using a talisman.

Hieratic Alignment

The initiate is now widely known within an in-group and treated as if they were one of them. The character also enjoys their friendship and camaraderie, and can pull some strings, but not too many. Such groups could be something like “Bocklins”, “Orthodox Necromancers” and “Horned Kataracts”. The in-group expects the same polite courtesy from the character, of course, lest nasty words be exchanged.

Snake-on-a-Stick

The initiate can bind a snake to a staff, granting the staff healing powers. The snake can save to avoid being bound. While bound, the caster can spend 1 mana point to transfer the snake’s preternatural healing and regeneration to a touched ally, healing 1d6 damage. This can be done once per day per level of the snake. The snake can also be cast off the staff at an opponent; after the ensuing fight the snake considers itself excused and will slither away. Binding a recently excused snake is considered a terrible faux-pas.

Naiad-Friend

The initiate is really, really close to a naiad. Like, really close. The character can get the help of the river-spirit by stepping in any flowing body of water somehow connected to the sea and calling her name. The naiad will arrive after some time, an interval reduced to under a minute (1d6 rounds) if called in her own body of water. Naiads are known to show up at the last minute to save their friends from drowning and other horrible water-related deaths. The naiad will always expect some kind of nice gift or quality time from the character, or will start to stalk and annoy them until fully satisfied.

Star-Lover

The initiate’s night dreams are periodically visited by a starchild. If the character is left to sleep the whole night, they will wake up extremely tired and debilitated (1d6 temporary damage) but they will enjoy the favour of the star until their next sleep. Determine a good omen (for example, from the Omen tables at pp.103-104) which is applied to the character until next dawn.

The Sphenoid Procedure

The initiate can spend one turn sensing the direction of the closest magic item. While doing so, their noses will profusely bleed, taking 1 temporary damage.

Shroud of Nyx

The Shroud of Nyx grants great protection if worn for at least a moon. While away from direct sunlight and, if fully coated with pitch or black ink at least since the last new moon, the initiate can reroll a failed save once a day.

Mother, Kardiophagic

The female initiate, unless already with child, after eating the raw heart of a dead creature, can bear them as a child. The mother must save or die upon delivery, when the dead creature will be reborn. In a year, the baby will quickly grow to be about as developed as a mature young adult, but with the personality, memories and levels they had in their previous life.

Blood Summons

The character can power spells using their own blood instead of mana. During the casting of the spell, the caster will stab oneself, dealing 1d6 damage per spell tier, round up. A more painful but less harmful method requires a genital perforator or passing twine with embedded thorns through a hole in one's tongue; the damage suffered by the caster is halved, the casting time is increased by 1d6-1 rounds and, after the spell is cast, the caster must roll a save or pass out for a turn.

Thrall of the Polycerate Buck

Once per month, on a new moon night, polycerate bocklins leave their village to choose a thrall to share their power with, perpetuating a ritual older than the world. The thrall's maximum mana is increased by 1 for a month, and they can cast spells as if they were 1 level higher. Bocklin casters can bestow this benefit to no more than 1 thrall per caster level every month, but often there are more would-be thralls than polycerate bocklin caster levels. Usually the bocklin demands worship, tributes and a more or less symbolic task from their thralls, but the initiates to this mystery will usually be chosen over any other. This can become interesting if more than a single initiate happens to show up during the rite. Interesting indeed.

Night Echelon

The caster recovers mana and recovers spell allowance at sunset instead of at dawn. Note: this does not affect spell duration: spells previously ending at dawn still end at dawn, and any spell duration extensions must be paid at the end of the spell.

Suckling the Beast

The character can charm mammals once per day for 1d6 hours. By suckling the charmed victim, the character can make this charm permanent for a total of levels equal to their own. Male initiates lactate too, of course.

Girthing the Serpent

The character can charm a snake once per day. If successful, the snake will coil around the character. While coiled, the snake will leave the character to attack anybody attacking the character in melee. The snake, at dawn, will wake up the character and leave if its level is higher than the initiate's.

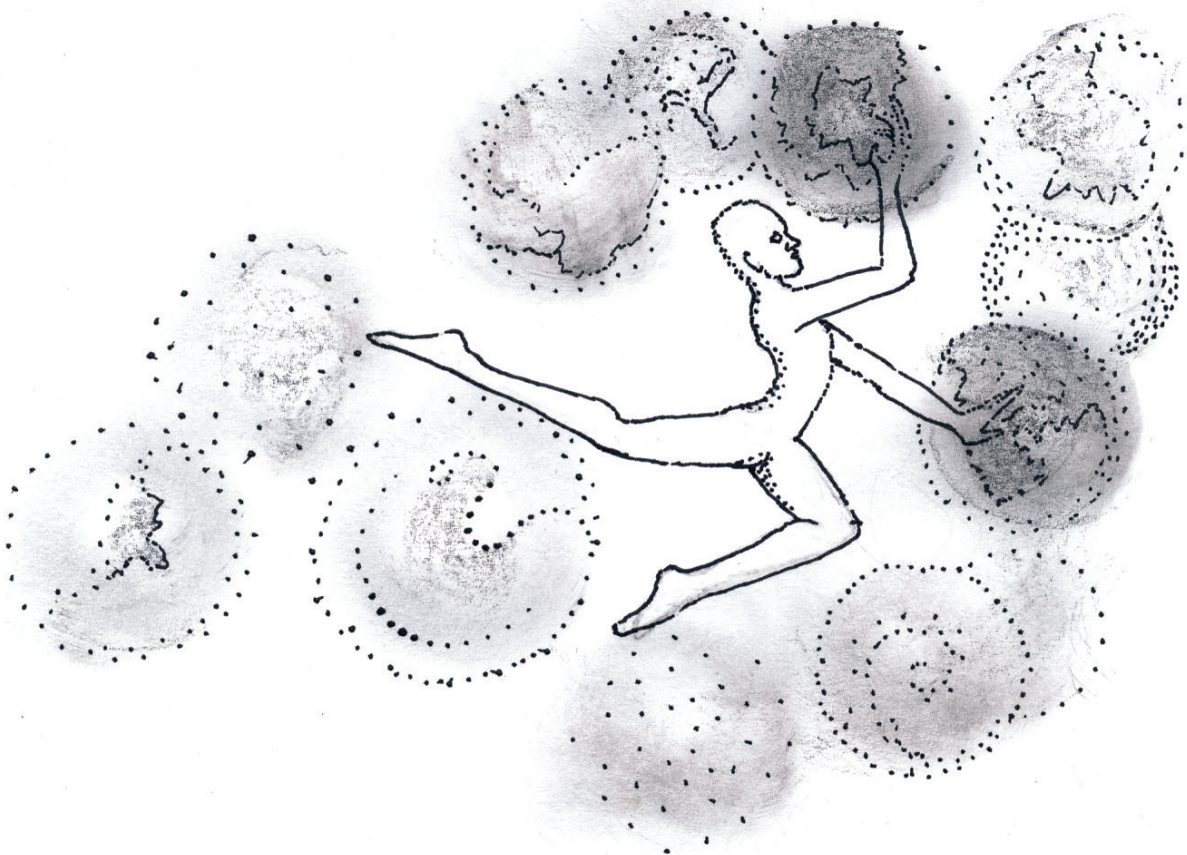
Words of Peace

The character can ask for peace once per day. The character can only do so if they are not bearing any weapon nor wearing any armour nor have been doing anything offensive or violent in the past turn. Speaking out loud, with a very soothing voice, asks everybody to stop hurting each other. Everybody within 100', both friends and foes, must SAVE or stop fighting for 1 turn. The character can follow up on asking for peace a second round, so that anybody who succeeded the save in the first round must save again. The peace lasts 1 turn or until someone gets attacked.

Alternate Casters

The Referee might decide to create new classes to represent mystic cults. Treat the class as a normal caster, but instead of gaining mana and new spells each level, each order teaches them a specific mystic power at every odd level. The teaching is decided by the Referee, and kept secret until taught.

In a similar way casters focusing on meditation or belonging to reclusive monastic traditions learn, instead of normal spells, Laws of Reality. Each caster is taught or discovers a Law of Reality at every odd level, and gains a mana per level as normal.





Laws of Reality

Reality is more complex than it looks. I'm not talking about magic, because we know why it happens. Reality hides deeper laws that we don't understand yet. Some we can use, but we can't explain how they work. They mock us. This is not acceptable.

You should roll a few Laws of Reality (from three to a dozen, but any number is good) at the beginning of your campaign and nail them to the inside of your screen. Keep them in mind. You need to be ready in case players happen to stumble into them, as they work even if nobody is aware of their existence. Maybe they're lost in a book, or mentioned as a silly superstition, or are told to Initiates as they unveil a Mystery. Maybe everybody knows a few of them. Maybe they are precious secrets. Or maybe your granny told you that since you're red-headed you should not burn teeth for any reason ever and never told you why. Maybe you want to find out now.

At any rate, roll your campaign's Laws very soon. You want to find out early if iron-working wards against dragons, or if dancing kills goats! Superstitions and (possibly incorrect) explanations to engage or avoid these activities will flesh out your world. Why include them? Game mechanics are usually known to all players, so I thought it would be interesting to also introduce some game mechanics that players are not aware of, but are always present.

When the right conditions are triggered (Thing + optional Treatment + optional Time + optional Place + optional Person), roll a 5MORE Spirit roll. If successful, Magic Happens. Laws can also be deliberately triggered. On a success, the character can roll for Experience on this single specific Law and accrue EXPERT letters as normal. On failure the character can spend a mana point to Make Magic Happen nonetheless.

If the Law is not bound to a special time or a special place, you can still roll them. In these special occasions and places, apply a +1 modifier to the Activation roll. You can also include Laws that are valid only for single, specific locations in your campaign, like the Great Pile of Elven Corpses or the Bridge of Bones.

Roll
1d66

There are so many MAGICAL THINGS in our world, which...

1-1	garlic	4-1	relics
1-2	mana-tar	4-2	idols
1-3	bones	4-3	feathers
1-4	teeth	4-4	life fluids
1-5	keys	4-5	goats
1-6	rattles & bells	4-6	talismans
2-1	mirrors	5-1	singing
2-2	glass	5-2	acting
2-3	coins	5-3	laughing
2-4	grains	5-4	carousing
2-5	maps	5-5	making burnt offerings
2-6	ex-voto	5-6	making chthonic offerings
3-1	babies	6-1	praying
3-2	books	6-2	making love
3-3	salt	6-3	fasting
3-4	fingernails	6-4	crying
3-5	holy water	6-5	being with child
3-6	your most precious or important possession	6-6	ironworking

On a 4- or less, roll on the Special Treatment Table*

On a 5- or more roll on the Make Magic Happen Table*

Roll
1d12 ... if subject to a
SPECIFIC TREATMENT...

1	scattering
2	tossing/spilling
3	eating
4	burying
5	wearing
6	holding
7	burning
8	breaking
9	finding
10	making
11	losing
12	revering

*Now roll on the
Make Magic Happen Table*

Roll
1d6
twice

MAKE MAGIC HAPPEN

1-1	stuns	save or stunned for 1d6 rounds	water *
1-2	repulses	save or back off for 1d6 turns	fire *
1-3	slows	slowed for 1 turn	luck *
1-4	quickens	double speed for 1 turn	beasts
1-5	attracts	save or try to obtain/be close to the <i>THING</i>	weirds
1-6	wards against	can't reach within 1d6 x 10' from the <i>THING</i>	undeads
2-1	placates	if angry/hostile the stance improves	casters
2-2	locates	reveals rough location of closest subject within 1 mile	animals
2-3	detects	highlights precise location of any subject within 100'	spirits
2-4	summons	1d6 subjects appear out of thin air for 1 turn	rats
2-5	charms	save or charmed until dawn	goats
2-6	hides	makes the subject invisible until dawn	dragons
3-1	weakens	the subject level is reduced by 1 per tier	gods
3-2	strengthenens	the subject level is increased by 1 per tier	magic *
3-3	enrages	save or start a rampaging murderous spree	mana-tar *
3-4	confuses	save or random actions for 1 turn	riches *
3-5	pleases	the subject's stance to the character is now positive	mana *
3-6	paralyzes	save or paralysis	men
4-1	banishes	save or teleported to a random location	women
4-2	destroys	save or disintegrates	plants
4-3	blinds	save or blindness until dawn	lies *
4-4	burns	the subject catches fire	snakes
4-5	distracts	save or interested in something else for 1d6 turns	insects
4-6	creates	creates a specimen	life *
5-1	mutates	save or apply creepy mutation	sleep *
5-2	corrupts	intentions become evil	voices *
5-3	heals	heals 1d6 x 10% of their wounds	iron *
5-4	fascinates	save or have attention monopolized by the <i>THING</i>	books *
5-5	annoys	stance worsens, but not necessarily become hostile	chimaere
5-6	scares	save or flee for 2d6 rounds	reptiles
6-1	protects from	save or can't use offensive powers or attack	melee *
6-2	transforms	save or changes into something else	thresholds *
6-3	puts to sleep	save or sleep until woken up or until dawn	stars *
6-4	befuddles	save or act incoherently, mixing up people and things	wine *
6-5	... and ...	roll twice, apply both	... and ...
6-6	... or ...	roll twice, apply one at random	... or ...

Now roll 1d6 three times:

if 5 MORE on the first, roll on the Special Times Table
if 5 MORE on the second, roll on the Special Places Table
if 5 MORE in the third, roll on the Special People Table

<i>Roll 1d12</i>	... during SPECIAL TIMES...	... while in SPECIAL PLACES...	... only for SPECIAL PEOPLE...
1	night	over graves	red-headed
2	day	in temples	accursed
3	twilight	under a tree	casters
4	spring	on a threshold	kids
5	summer	on a bridge	elderly
6	autumn	under water	abinos
7	winter	in chthonic cavities	bocklin
8	solstice	in the dark	initiates to mysteries
9	equinox	under the open sky	men
10	during a birth	in a stone circle	women
11	when at ease	in a magic ward	Mystagogues
12	in the moment of direst need	where you were born	undead

A Few Words on the Laws of Nature

While they generate laws, these tables do not often specify range, area of effect and other details. They are left to be determined by the Referee; the combinations of ease of activation, discovery and sheer power are too many to be preemptively properly balanced and perfectly defined, so all require adjudication.

For the same reason, the Make Magic Happen Table sometimes can produce hard to adjudicate results like “dancing burns luck” or “crying paralyzes magic”. All such subjects are listed with an asterisk: we suggest you come up with a meaningful interpretation, metaphor or symbology and if you can’t come up with interesting effects, simply reroll the first column on Make Magic Happen.

The various combinations of Magical Things, Specific Treatments and Magic Happening might also lead to some Laws being common knowledge, some other being completely unknown, some others being the real, unmentioned reason behind specific taboos. For example, if carousing puts casters to sleep, expect much less partying, but the explanations for why partying is prohibited might vary.

At any rate, using the Laws is completely optional. If you do use them though, think hard about their implications; we are talking about a world where the laws that govern reality sometimes work differently. And somebody should notice, and they might have revealed it to someone. And someone might have written it down, and the manuscript has to be somewhere.

Somewhere to be found.



Apotheosis of the Grand Sorcerer

The Grand Sorcerer is the Hypogean Hegemon: Keeper of Tradition and Peace. Without Traditions there would be uncontrollable changes. Changes kill Traditions. Such a loss would be a tragedy, if it wasn't for the Savant Conspiracy. So the less worst of the Savants will be named Grand Sorcerer, to Serve and Command all the Schools.

If you wonder why this is here, ponder why other settings don't have anything similar instead.

The Threefold Beckoning

The First Beckoning is hard to notice, but all the Savants That Bled Tar during the last Apotheosis feel a jolt, and surely wake up, even if they've been sleeping for decades.

The Second Beckoning is visible to all through the night, as the ruined towers on the surface spread blue and green and mauve aurora in the night sky.

The Third Beckoning is felt by all. In the Crypt, at dawn, the Companion Chamberlain takes off their armour, kindles the Crucible of Spite and rings the Catacomb Convocation.

Now it's time for the Savants to stop their meddling and reach the Crucible. Not all Savants bother, and some take their time, but as soon as twenty arrive, the Conspiracy is ready to start. And there will be eating, refreshments and much concerned discussion and tearing up about the early demise of the Grand Sorcerer. And all the Savants That Bleed contribute mana-tar made with their own blood to be used during the Creation.

Hematic Tar

Level: 5/iii. Range: self. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

The caster stabs themselves for 1d6 hits, which can't be healed by magical means. As blood profusely comes out of the wound, it instantly gels and becomes a lump of mana-tar, holding 1 mana. Note: the caster must be alive and bleeding to cast this spell. Dispensation - the caster instead takes 3d6 damage.

The Great Conspiracy

At sunset the Conspiracy begins. Before entering the Crypt, all Savants leave all their belongings behind and don simple linen robes to endure the Supplice of Two Dozen Bites. Equestrian Companions in full regalia apply twenty-four starving mana-ticks to each Savant, ensuring that they enter the Crypt with their spirits cleansed and, most importantly, with less chances to cause problems and disturbances. The Companions then crush the ticks into mana-tar, collect it into a kylix, and put it on the central Dais.

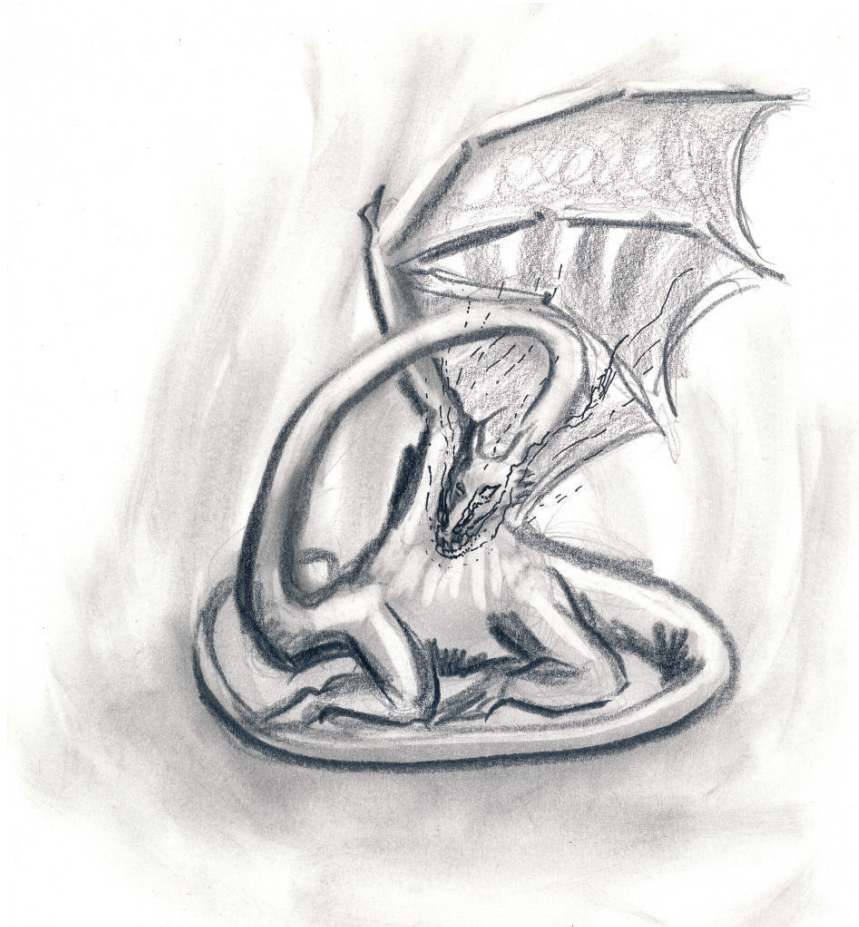
And at this point, all the Savants present in the Crypt take turns talking. And scheming. And proposing. And drawing alliances. And all know this is useless, but it's Tradition.

Before dawn, all the Savants That Bled from the Five Great Schools go to the central Dais and, tapping mana-tar found in the kylix there, find the Maximum Compromise.

Maximum Compromise

Level: 7/iv. Range: 30'. Casting time: 1 round. Duration: instantaneous.

This spell must be cast by at least two casters within range at the same time. Before the casting, they must have discussed how to reach a compromise on a topic. This spell instantly determines the most optimal compromise reachable between all the casters' opinions: a good solution, alas guaranteed to displease everybody. This is how the Grand Sorcerer is chosen.



Grand Sorcerer Kərbouna IV

Apotheosis

The name of the Compromise is announced thrice, and the Savants leave the central Dais. The Compromise alone stays behind. The Equestrian Companions bring them a kylix containing all the Ematic Tar collected from the Savants, and then give it to the Compromise, together with all of their possessions previously left behind.

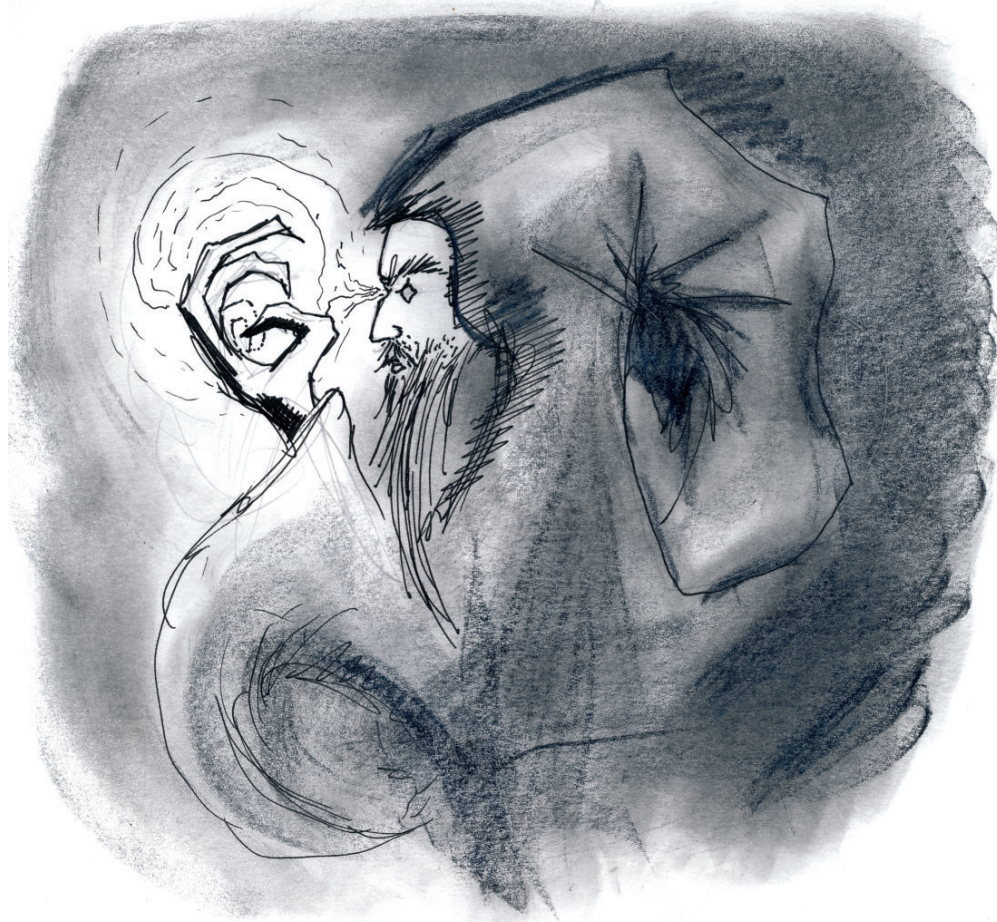
At this point usually they prepare themselves with propitiatory spells and, traditionally, hold a Fallen Star, because sometimes you need to make your own Luck.

And before dawn, they have to drink all the mana-tar from the kylix. Drink it like one drinks water. Only the Savant that Bleeds and Drinks Tar can be Grand Sorcerer.

If the Compromise dies from the Burning Inside, the Threefold Beckoning is repeated.

If the Compromise survives, the Apotheosis is complete.

The Compromise must save thrice or die from acute mana-tar poisoning, culminating in an unforgettable and instantaneous case of Burning Inside-caused autocombustion. But if they survive, they keep the imbibed mana-tar inside, and can tap it without suffering side effects.



Grand Sorcerer Deleterios I, Apostate

Naming of the Grand Sorcerer

At this point, the Apotheosis is complete and the Grand Sorcerer is created. The Grand Sorcerer will present their new regnal name to the Savant Conspiracy. Then all Savants etch the mundane name of the Grand Sorcerer on a piece of pottery for the ostracism.

Grand Sorcerers always choose the traditional name from their School:

The Circle of the Fire Dervishes - Karbouna
The College of the Gatekeepers - Cacotherion
The College of the Stargazers - Opidnorexis
The College of the Chimerists - Edonoplechtus
The School of Necromancy - Skotos

A regnal name is always followed by a regnal number, and it is always appropriate for everyone to defer to the Grand Sorcerer as Master or Mistress.

A gloss under the original fragment reads:

The correct title for any Grand Sorcerer Edonoplechtus has always been Mistress. Apprentices should not try to infer anything from this, nor innuendo should be made. Any reference to the tale of Ephoebic Heri and Edonoplechtus II is not appropriate in any formal circumstance.

Mnemonic Ostracism

Level: 10/vi. Range: 40'. Casting time: 1 hour. Duration: instantaneous.

This spell must be cast by 20 casters or more. The spell temporarily opens a small, stable null-vortex, then all Savants toss their etched pieces of pottery in it. This causes all memories of the subject to be erased, together with all records of their existence. The subject will not be remembered by anybody, and it will also be impossible to infer their previous persona from what they left behind.

The spell was infamously *not* cast after the Apotheosis of Grand Sorcerer Deleterios I Apostate. After his creation he announced his desire of putting an end to important Necromancer traditions, like corpse-reaping and ritual rape sacrifices, that were in these days endangering the furthering of the Necromantic discipline by attracting the fury of villains and rulers alike. Several members of the Savant Conspiracy left in disagreement before the spell was cast, leaving an insufficient number of casters to complete the ritual. Following this, to highlight his want to break up with the traditional Necromantic College, the new Grand Sorcerer decided on the name Deleterios I instead of choosing Skotos as all the Grand Sorcerers from his college did before him, renouncing his right to ring a second Catacomb Convocation to ensure their Mnemonic Ostracism.

The division between the Orthodox and the Reformist currents in the College of Necromancy soon degenerated into violence. The other Great Schools sided with the smaller Reformist faction in order to weaken the Necromantic College, which at that point was the hegemon of Hypogean politics.

CHTHONOTRON

Hypogean DIY for Fun and Profit

The Hypogea, as a game location, is a big network of deep canyons, caverns and karsts, but it's also used as a generic name for underground complexes. Under the Valley of Fire, all inhabited spaces are hypogea: caves or dug in rock. While in other games dungeons are a hostile adventuring locale, the setting of this game is completely underground, away from the sun and civilization.

The Chthonic Cavities of the Hypogea are what you call Home

There are no Civilizations, no Cities, none of their Mundane Rules

The Mythic Underworld is where you live now

The geography makes the setting a bit peculiar as, while elsewhere travel between locations can happen over rolling hills and dark forests, the routes here are a bit limited; the surface is thousands feet above and hostile, so characters walk in caves, at the bottom of canyons, and occasionally via the Metaphorurgy discipline.

An effective way to map this net of passages is with a graph; each line on the map is a cave or a canyon. No need to draw anything else except a few minor detail. For each A4/Letter-sized map, include at least 1 or 2 canyons or rivers, 6 caves completely contained in the map and at least 12 caves leading off the map.

First, draw a few canyons or underground rivers. I suggest using blue or a thick pen, as a canyon is borne out of a river, and rivers are what makes the Hypogea livable. You probably want at least one or two canyons for each map. Make them start at the edge of the paper, and make them turn and bend until they leave the map. If you have more than one canyon in your map, let them flow together into a bigger river. If you want to randomize the river flow, pick a starting edge, roll 3-5 dice on the map and, starting from the edge, draw a river to the closest die, then to the next, and so on, until you draw to the closest edge to the last dice. Decide which portions of the river are completely underground; it's not impossible for an underground river to cross itself on different levels. At any rate, let the river bend; it's important to have it cross the caves as much as possible and create shortcuts.

Then, draw lines for the caves. Use a thick black pen or a soft pencil, and do what you did in the previous step: toss dice on the paper, draw a line passing through them, but do not extend to the edge of the map unless the dice went over. Do it again for small caves using a smaller line. The Hypogea structure is now complete.

The next step is to mark distances on caves and canyons. It's optional but gives way more structure to your Hypogea, and also helps when populating it later. Travel happens only on foot, so absolute distances are not as important as traveling times (there are no horses or other convenient transportation means in the Hypogea). Decide the length of a travel turn. Anything between 1 hour and 1 day works fine, but bear in mind that longer turns make for a bigger and less detailed Hypogea. For neatness and simplicity, distances between locations should be whole turns, not fractions. Keep it simple.

Now, for every cave and canyon, mark the distance traveled for each traveling turn. For example, you decided on a 1-hour travel turn, and you decide that a cave takes 3 hours to walk. Mark the two ends, plus two marks between them, splitting it in 3 parts. Mark where caves and canyons end, begin and cross. If you want to make it more random, make a mark along caves every 1d6cm, or 1/3 of an inch for every pip on the die. Feel free to make the terrain rougher by making the marks closer, or easier making them further apart. Caves can be hard or easy to navigate.

Now, populate these marks; each mark is a potential interesting location. Roll 1d6: on a 4+, roll on the CHTHONIC CONTENT table to decide the location. Adapt, based on turn length and your taste, the chance of interesting locations. Other factors to consider is how big you imagine the Fire Valley, and how easy it should be to traverse. Some dice results have two entries, "wet" (for canyon and lakes) and "other" for other areas. Note the result on the map or on a separate sheet of paper. Now, as you generate the contents, if there are incongruities, feel free to reroll them. But I recommend instead to find a reason for them, and write it on the map, and make it visible on the map where needed. Use arrows and borders and colours to help you run the game better. For example, if there is a squid settlement in front of the School of Necromancy, find a reason now. And, most importantly, do not treat the generated Hypogea as something static: maybe the above squid settlement is only temporary, or maybe they are laying siege to the School, or maybe it's the Sacred Festival of the Necrocephal, which meets every ten years for a month. The Hypogea is not static, expect your players to horribly, horribly mess it up until it's unrecognizable. Don't be upset about it, let it happen.

One last note: the location of the schools can be either randomized (using the School entry in the table) or decided in advance. Starting player characters usually are apprentices attached to a Master who teaches in a School. If the Schools are distant, you need to come up with reasons for the characters of different Schools to be together. Maybe the Masters are meeting for some reason, or one of the Masters is a resident in another School, or the apprentices have been temporarily learning from another Master in a different school. If the Schools are a few hours away from each other, it's not a problem, unless there is something awful in the caves between the Schools. Then it's just fun. And, of course, all the affiliated Schools might be linked together in a University. The amount of backstabbing and intrigue and sneering at other inferior Schools is, of course, multiplied many-fold. Humans are horrible to each other here also.

Roll 2d6,
read smaller
die first:

Chthonic Contents

1-1	Standing Stones			
1-2	Monster Den		<i>Wet</i>	<i>Other</i>
1-3	Goat Village	3-5	Lake	Stairs
1-4	Ruins	3-6	Farm	Monster Den
1-5	Fortification	4-4	Squid Settlement	Spring
1-6	Caves, Minor	4-5	Hunting Grounds	Chasm
2-2	School	4-6	Mire	Cache
2-3	Mysteric Secret Place	5-5	Flood	Hermitage
2-4	Observatory	5-6	Underwater Passage	Catacomb
2-5	Catacomb	6-6	Waterfall	Monastery
2-6	Shrine			
3-3	Altar			
3-4	Mana-tar - Seam			

The format for the entries is: Name - optional chance of being hidden from sight - description. The tables in this chapter are only 6 entries long for reasons of space. Should you find their lack of variety unsatisfying, you're allowed to add extra entries: the Mystagogues will not give you a hard time for it. Here's the list.

ALTAR - a stone block, probably decorated, for the making of a holocaust - a burnt offering. A temple, maybe decorated with votive statues, might be built around the altar. Each altar is dedicated to a specific god. To determine the effects, roll 1d6 on the following table:

- 1: Lightning - lightning from the sky will deal 1d6 damage to an enemy.
- 2: Limerence - a person must SAVE TO RESIST or their heart is completely stolen by the character, and they will do their best to please them, even to their detriment. Imagine the worst kind of friendzone self-abuse, then multiply it manifold.
- 3: Wit - a ruse, trick, decoy, scam, con, hustle, hoodwink, gambit, flimflam, stratagem or bamboozle benefiting the characters will automatically succeed.
- 4: Prophecy - the god will (usually immediately) inspire a vision or dream.
- 5: Hunt - one of the arrows shot by the character will hit automatically.
- 6: War - one of the melee blows dealt by the character will deal double damage.

The benefit will be administered if and when the god feels like it. A brief prayer (less than a round) and a successful 5MORE Spirit roll allow the character to benefit on demand (unless the god decides otherwise).

The god will be satisfied only by a holocaust, a complete destruction of the sacrifice by fire. These weak, half-hearted rituals where the flesh is eaten by the worshipper and only the inedible parts are sacrificed are not sufficient. The sacrifice must be usually carried out on a specific day of the moon, and must be of an animal or sentient being not smaller than a goat.

CATACOMB - 2-in-6 - the entrance to a network of subterranean crypts. A catacomb complex develops over $1d6+1$ clusters of rooms, each cluster reaching toward other clusters through narrow tunnels.

Roll one die per cluster on a sheet of paper and mark its location and number. Draw connections between the numbers by linking each number with the next lower number (3 links to 2, 4 links to 3, 5 links to 3 if there's no 4 and so on). All the lowest level clusters are linked to the entrance, usually sealed with a stone slab.

For each cluster, determine the cluster level by starting with the cluster with the lowest number. The first cluster's base level is 1; roll a die: on a 5+, increase the level by 1 and keep on rerolling until you roll a 4 or less. For following clusters, the base level is the level of the previous one +1, and roll again to increase their level.

Each cluster is formed by $1d6+1$ rooms. In addition to horrible deadly traps (for example, pits, spiked pits, spiked pits with asps, spiked pits with undead asps) to deter tomb raiders, there is a chance that the dead might wake up to murder the living. Check when these events happen:

after spending $2d6$ rounds in a given room: 2-in-6

the first time treasure is looted from each room: 4-in-6

when a crypt is opened: 5-in-6

If the roll is successful, all the corpses in the room rise, even breaking out of their crypts. Or maybe some of them try to shoo the looters away and to wrestle their jewels back before going totally murderous. The undead are of level equal to the cluster they belong to.

For each room, roll $1d6$ on the following table to determine the content:

1: $3d6$ corpses rest in shelves dug in the bare rock.

2: $2d6$ corpses wrapped in shrouds, in the middle of the room.

2: the floor is littered with bones: $1d6$ corpses.

3: there are orderly piles of bones, from dozen of corpses. If they animate, they take time to reassemble. $1d6$ animate in the first round, $2d6$ in the second, $3d6$ in the third.

5: $1d6$ sealed crypts. Each crypt usually has 1 occupant with double treasure, but roll a die: on a 5, it is instead packed with $6d6$ corpses, with no treasure. On a 6, the crypt holds the corpse of a Time-Forgotten Important Person (level equal to cluster level + $1d6$, buried with appropriate equipment).

6: a room with $1d6+1$ sealed crypts and a feature ($1d6$: 1: brazier; 2: ALTAR; 3: statue; 4: fountain, with a SPRING and proper drainage; 5: STANDING STONE; 6: tabernacle with 1 Valuable Object or McGuffin and $1d6 \times 1000c$ of treasure).

The crypts in this room host only Time-Forgotten Important Persons as above, except one packed with $10d6$ corpses (with no treasure).

If touching or destroying the feature, the corpses in the room will wake up after $1d6$ rounds, 5-in-6 that after $4d6$ rounds all the undead in the cluster will rise and kill the profanatory tomb raiders. There might also be horrible curses involved.

CAVES, MINOR - 1-in-6 - a local network of 2d6 caves. Except for the entrance location, these caves do not link to other caves, but only between themselves. There's a 5-in-6 chance they hide some other feature.

CHASM - a deep chasm divides the cave. Roll 1d6:

- 1: there's a bridge
- 2: there's a bridge, and someone asks for a toll: roll an encounter
- 3: maybe jumpable. Plummet in the darkness if 5MORE on Acrobatic fails
- 4+: too wide, unpassable without a bridge of some kind

It's also recommended that the Referee drop some random reference to how horrible the Offsprings of Erebus are, and how awesome it would be if the whole party decided to explore the chasm. In that case, possibly after an adequate number of climbing checks, they would find no Offsprings but probably another feature. Unless you are really mean.

Furthermore, there's a 3-in-6 chance that the chasm is the sacred home of some chthonic god. If so, the place sports some kind of detail (like engravings or statues or ex-voto) that, after a successful 5MORE Theology roll, reveals the secret: throwing a live, bound animal (or intelligent being) not smaller than a dog in the chasm would please the god, who will probably confer a blessing (as if it was an ALTAR). Roll 1d6 to determine the blessing:

- 1: Underworld - the characters can become invisible for up to 6 rounds.
- 2: Revenge - if the cleric is wounded, the same amount of damage is dealt to the attacker. This power can be used instantly and during the opponent's turn.
- 3: Forge - during a combat, the party's weapons become so sharp all opponents are considered completely unarmoured.
- 4: Healing - 2d6 hits, or a long-term disease or wound are healed.
- 5: Abyss - a horrible monster (lvl 3) appears from nearby waters and fights the enemies of the character.
- 6: Night - when casting a spell the character level is increased by 1d6.

CACHE - always hidden - a buried cavity filled with useful treasure. It contains 1d3 Valuable Objects, 3d6 rations of dried food (2-in-6 still edible) and other worthless knick-knacks. 1-in-6 it also contains documents compromising someone.

HERMITAGE - 5-in-6 - the home of an hermit. The hermit will probably be a cantankerous old gnarly caster, a curmudgeon of legendary proportions, therefore probably won't be pleased with annoying pesky young whippersnappers. The hermit level is 3d6, drop the lowest, equipped accordingly. Unless the characters are kind, educated, entertaining, generous and courteous, the hermit will curse them: if the characters don't do what the hermit wants, they must SAVE OR ...

The only upside of hermits is their incredible knowledge. They might share some.

FARM - arable land is scarce at the bottom of canyons, so any decent stretch of fertile terrain is farmed. It grows olives, tomatoes, vines, oranges, pears, barley, spelt, lentils, peas, vetch, broad beans, cabbage, onion, figs, pomegranates and raisins, depending on the season. Of course there's also a goat pen. Farms are extremely important for the humans in the Hypogea, so destroying or capturing them is a sure-fire way to hurt a whole lot of people.

FLOOD - the area is flooded, possibly because a section downstream collapsed and restricted the water flow. There is no way to progress walking on the river banks.

FORTIFICATION - a wall and other buildings block transit in the location. It might be as simple as a wall with a narrow opening blocked by a removable obstacle or as an intricate as a fort with towers, its stones held together by bitumen. Roll an encounter to determine the occupiers.

GOAT VILLAGE - a village of bocklins living in small huts and caves, often keeping the Hypogea awake at night with their incessant, loud bleating that carries for miles. Roll 8d6 to determine the base adult population then, roll a d6: on a 5+, double the number of goats and keep on rerolling on every additional 5+. Every 12 goats there is a mated pair of **CORSICAN** swamp goats (lvl 6, 10' tall at the shoulder). Determine the amount and levels of polycerates as in p.13.

HUNTING GROUNDS - a particularly luxuriant part of the Hypogea: full of dense vegetation and fauna. Traversing the area always causes a random encounter with some kind of apex predator. If the characters are being careful, they will manage to evade it unnoticed. Add +1 to 5**MORE** hunting and herbalism rolls.

LAKE - the area is dominated by a lake, teeming with vegetation and life. Attempts at foraging automatically succeed. 4-in-6 chances that a wide enough section of the sky is visible to properly gaze at the stars.

MANA-TAR - SEAM - 4-in-6 - a seam of mana-tar bleeds out of the rock, spreading in the soil and possibly tainting the water. If harvested, a day of work is enough to harvest a good quantity: roll a random cask to determine quantity and quality. The same amount will be replenished in 1d6 weeks. Tarry plants grow in the area. Should this be generated in a wet area, the location is infested with 1d6 ravaging kelpies, and Tarry plants grow instead of Wet plants in 1d6 locations downstream.

MIRE - the river flow here slows and almost stops, forming a marshy area. The swamp is dense with vegetation (+1 to herbalism) and possibly dangerous fauna: roll for random encounters, plus there is a 5-in-6 chance that 2d6 hypogean birds of some variety (p.57) are in the mire too. If the mire is healthy (4-in-6), +1 to foraging. If the mire is sickly, miasma and stinging insects will soon pester the characters; if they do something that is not simply hastily travelling through, make them roll a save against disease. On a failure, they get some strange fever that deals 1d6 temporary damage every 12 hours, lasting 1d6 days.

MONASTERY - 1-in-6 - dug in the rock, a reclusive monastic order keeps its traditions alive. Inside 20d6 monks meditate and pray keeping a strict regimen, achieving some form of higher existence and the related powers. Entrance is forbidden, except for extremely young applicants.

The Regimen consists of a few monastic rules regulating their daily routine, a **MONASTIC PRAXIS** (consisting of performing a rite during specific days, for example determined using the **PROPITIATORY RITUAL** table, p.143) plus three **ANATHEMA**. Each Anathema makes an act or object completely profane (roll thrice on the **MAGICAL THINGS** table, p.155, without rolling on the **SPECIFIC TREATMENT** table) to the order: the monks must live their lives pure from contact with each Anathema, or when not physically possible periodically purging them from their lives. Leading this life is the only way to have access to three special **Laws Of Reality**, determined only by rolling on the **MAKE MAGIC HAPPEN** table (p.156): their **PRAXIS** allow monks to activate one such Law per round.

The monks are usually ranked as follows:

Deacons (lvl 1): 3/4 of the monks are ordained and taught only the First Law, but are not allowed to use it except in extremis. They also are rarely allowed to leave the monastery, and only in a groups of three or more. They take care of all the earthly needs of the monastery.

Anchorites (lvl 1d6+1): the rest of the monks completely retire from mundane life. Never leaving the monastery and having no contact with profanes, they live a pure life of meditation. They know the First and the Second Law.

Hesychasts (lvl 2d6): they are omphalopsychite monks living in their cells in silence and meditation, forever alone. Food is brought to the antechamber of their cell, so that they can completely avoid contact even with other monks. In a monastery, there are only 1d6 Hesychasts, and they know all Three Laws.

Why would someone bother to face the wrath of dozens of unbelievably crossed monks trying to enter such a place? First, to steal the secrets of the monastic order. Second, there are tales of great riches hidden in monasteries. Third, it's rumoured that Hesychasts might know way, way more than what's assumed. They are, of course, not saying anything.

MONSTER DEN - 1-in-6 - roll a random encounter, but multiply the number by 1d6 to generate the population for the den. Feel free to perk up the den with additional monsters and encounters. If rolling an **AFG Holding**, generate an holding appropriate for the rolled random encounter. Note that this might not necessarily be a den, it can be a lair, hideout, fort, settlement and so on.

MYSTERIC SECRET PLACE - 2-in-6 - roll on the **SECRET PLACE** table (p.142). The Secret Places are not only these randomly placed; when coming up with a Mystery, the Secret Place can be located anywhere the Referee finds convenient.

OBSERVATORY - 4-in-6 - a reclusive, comfortable and convenient observation deck. The entrance is usually easily accessible from the cave or canyon, and leads to a few small simple rooms and from there to the stairs that lead up to the deck. The deck can either be on the surface or in the top part of the canyon, in any case optimised for comfort, safety and stargazing. Stargazers know that omens made in an observatory differ subtly if the stairs are clockwise or counterclockwise. It's not clear why, but it improves divinations.

RUINS - some ruins of an ancient civilization, or a Lost School. If characters camp here, they can easily find decent shelter. If they spend their time rummaging around the ruins looking for treasure or information, in addition to the usual random encounters roll, make a second random encounter roll. If this is successful they meet another group of ruin looters. Given their line of work, interaction might not be entirely pacific, especially if either party is obviously laden with relics.

SHRINE - a shrine built around a **CHASM** or an **ALTAR**. The shrine is usually split in two rooms: the entrance leads to the **CELLA**, where the worshippers bring offers, and from there a passage leads to an **ADYTON**, where the holy is kept separate from the mundane worshippers, accessible only to the priests. The priests do their best to regiment access to the shrine and its other services (for example, healing spells), exploiting them to increase the shrine's power, but often for their personal gain too. There are 6d6 people at the shrine: depending on the amount rolled, it might be only a small shrine with a shed on the side for the priests or a bigger complex. The High Priest is a character of level equal to the randomly generated population divided by three, and is helped by two other priests 1d6 levels lower.

SCHOOL - this can be either one of the Great Schools (if your Hypogea does not have a single campus) or a Minor School, or a building belonging to them, or ruins.

SPRING - clean, fresh water coming straight out of the rock. Roll a die: on a 5+, it's collected in an overflowing basin, otherwise it forms a pool. If it forms a pool it will be surely home to spirits. Of these pools, 5-in-6 are home to 1d6 kelpies, otherwise by 1d6 lithe, preternaturally attractive naiads (use kelpie stats). Sacrificing an animal not smaller than a lamb by drowning it in the pool will please the resident spirit and allow access to the waters. In either case, the runoff loses its magic and happily follows the law of gravity to eventually join a river or end up in a chasm, so trace its course on the map: enterprising apprentices will probably try to find its source.

At any rate, the magic permeating the Hypogea makes the water magical; bathing in the pool, washing oneself in the water from the basin or drinking the water out of them will have a weird effect, determined rolling 1d6 on the following table:

- 1: a single weapon dipped into it becomes enchanted for a season
- 2: raises a stat by 1, permanently; double dips are ineffective
- 3: lifts curses
- 4: heals 6d6 damage and all diseases, blindness, deafness and similia
- 5: poisonous, **SAVE OR DIE**
- 6: what's going on with my body? Genderswap for 1d6 days

SQUID SETTLEMENT - in the ruins of the Cephalopod Empire, in the remains of their colossal nautiloid buildings made of pure nacre, in the drowned tunnels under their colonies, some squid still lurk. In their heyday, the population of each settlement might have been 10-20 times bigger, but then the Cephalopod Empire temporarily forsook the colonies on this planet after a major setback in a war. Thousands of years have passed and they still are not back. In the meantime, the colonists' society, culture and technology horribly degenerated, with the Empire seen as some sort of messianic saviour, and in the dark depths of the tunnels horrendous rituals are performed, invoking its return...

To determine the settlement size, roll a d6: on a 6, the settlement size grows by 1, and roll again.

Size 1: **OUTPOST**: 10d6 adults cephalopods, led by a Leader (lvl 1d6+1, equipped with 1 relic from p.19), 2 advisors (lvl 1d6)

Size 2: **ENCLOSURE**: composed of 1d6+1 settlements clumped together, led by a Manager (lvl 2d6, 2 different relics)

Size 3: **COLONY**: as big as 1d6+1 Enclosures, led by a Director (lvl 1d6+6, 3 different relics, 1 Valuable Item)

Size 4+: **OUTHOME**: as populated as 1d6+1 Colonies, led by an Overseer (a Director, 4 different relics, 2 Valuable Items)

To determine the special structures, roll 1d6 on the following table for each settlement size, rerolling duplicates. Each of these structures is colossal and dominates the skyline of the settlement. When exploring these structures, half of the random encounters are with cephalopod residents, the other half with non-squid treasure hunters. Spending 1 day digging for treasure and a 5MORE Archaeology roll yields 1 relic at random depending on the structure type.

1: **Tribunal**: wretched remains of an old hall of justice. A Judge (level 1d6+2 Cuttlefish caster equipped with Rulings of the Grand Tribunal) commands 3d6 lvl 2 clerks. Relic (1d6): 1-2: Ruling of the Grand Tribunal; 3-4: Spinal Nerve Latch; 5-6: random relic.

2: **Arena**: empty, hollow arena. Once hosting games, now it's used by cephalopod gangs as some kind of token: whoever controls the Arena, symbolically controls the whole community. Each gang counts 3d6 cephalopods of level 1-6, each gang equipped with normal weapons and 1d6 Returning Spears. Relic (1d6): 1-4: Returning Spear; 5: Tentaclonger; 6: random relic.

3: **Fort**: a 60' tall, 150' wide featureless cylinder made of shiny nacre, still protecting what's left of the once-great garrison. Trying to keep order when all else is lost, a War Team of 3d6 guards (lvl 6 fighter) equipped with a Power suit, Returning Spear and Ray-gun pretend to be the last bastion of safety of a dying civilization. They are supported by a Cuttlefish Medic (lvl 4, MASTER Surgery, EXPERT Medicine, Herbalism and Pharmacy). Relic (1d6): 1-2: Returning Spear; 3: Power Suit (as wet suits, protects as heavy armour, allows the wearer to jump 30' once per round); 4-5: Ray-gun; 6: random relic.

- 4: Academy: once a great place of learning and science, now reduced to hollow ruins: 6d6 cuttlefish (lvl 1, EXPERT in random fields) spend their days in pointless debates about the true nature of things they pretend to understand. Relic (1d6): 1-2: Tentaclonger; 3-4: Spinal Nerve Latch; 5-6: Wet Suit.
- 5: Farm: giant but empty nautiloid-shaped prison for humanoids, equipped with what's left of an automated robotic butchery (2d6 butcher robots, lvl 5, heavy armour). No relics here, only mass graves full of bones.
- 6: Starport: completely unusable due to thousands of years of neglect. Surely there are incredibly dangerous relics amongst the ruins. Relic (1d6): 1: Wet Suit; 2: Barrel of colonial trade goods, now rotten; 3-5: Barrel of star-grade reagent, explodes in a giant fireball when agitated or opened for 8d6 damage within 100', save to halve and to avoid being set on fire. 6: random relic.

Note: cephalopods are awfully chauvinistic, but not automatically aggressive. Some even manage to enroll in the Great Schools. Definitely a playable race.

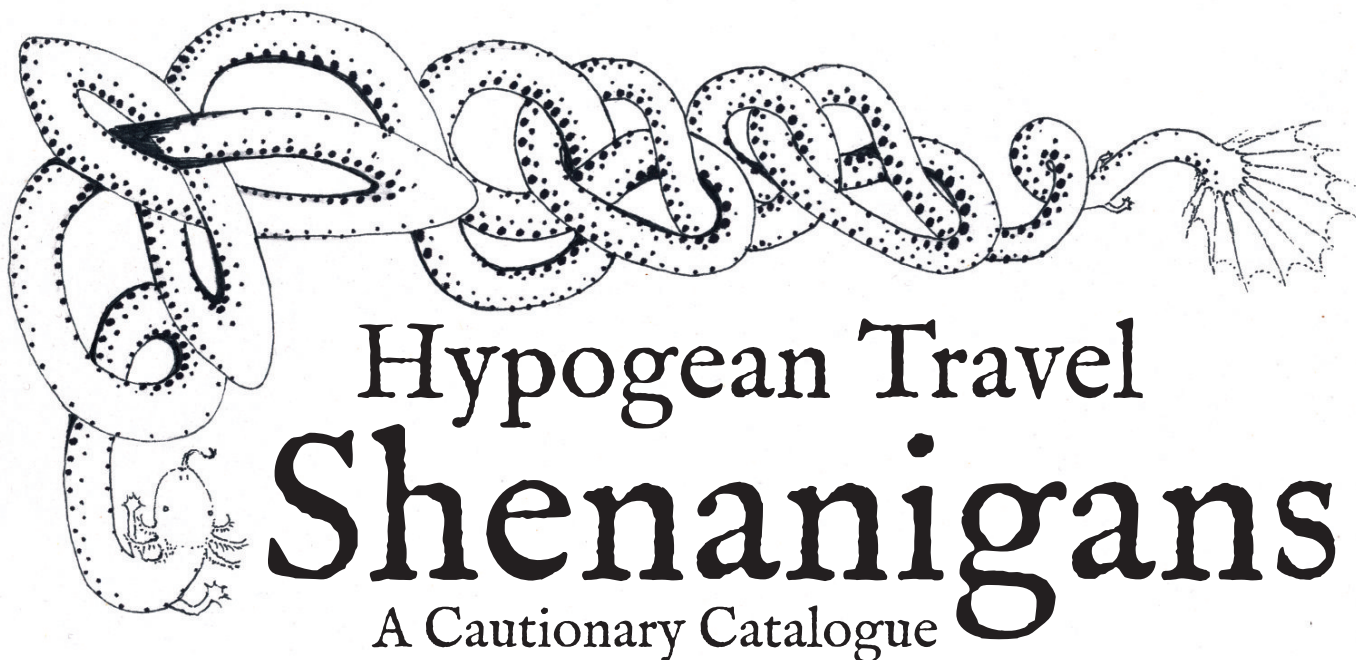
STAIRS - 2-in-6 - stairs leading to the surface, but 1-in-6 go downwards to further caves, probably leading to the Iridescent Beneath, the legendary mana-tar lake.

STANDING STONES - big megaliths, older than man and covered in mysterious writing, stand in a circle around an empty space. Roll 1d6:

- 1: the stones are just a marker for a ley-line passing through them. 1-in-6: 2 ley lines cross in the middle of the standing stones.
 - 2: spraying caster's blood over the stones at twilight opens a dimensional portal to a specific place.
 - 3: Menhir with 1d6/2 random spells. Once per month it's not necessary to spend magic energy or even to learn the spell in order to cast it.
 - 4+: Stones engraved with 1d6 random spells.
- Also, roll a d66. On a double 1, there is an ALTAR just off the middle of the circle. On a double 6, there is a CHASM.

UNDERWATER PASSAGE - the canyon ends abruptly to continue its path completely underground. There can be either a small lake or rushing rapids, but at any rate the river rushes through a completely submerged cave. So, safe for squids, most probably deadly for humans and goats, as there's no way to know when it will be possible to catch a breath in a cave filled with water. In midwinter, when the Hypogean rivers are almost dry, there might be a chance of swimming down the river, but it's a typical case of SAVE OR DIE.

WATERFALL - descending or ascending requires climbing equipment and rolls. If characters want to dive off the waterfall, SAVE OR DIE. Naturally there is a cave hidden behind the waterfall: to reach it, SAVE or the waterfall blocks the attempt and deals 2d6 temporary damage.



Hypogean Travel Shenanigans

A Cautionary Catalogue

The Hypogea are dangerous even when deserted. Spelunking can be lethal, but is the safest way to travel. And then there are enough kinds of weirdness and monstrosities to kill you ten times. And then, on top of all these hazards, there are the scores of lunatics that choose to live there, in Schools, Monasteries and Hermitages.

Random encounters in adventuring locations (for example a School, or a den, in general in any of the locations from the Chthonic Contents table) happen with a 1-in-6 chance every turn. Every time characters make loud noises unusual for that environment, roll again. In case of an encounter it's usually someone from that location. Or you can roll 1d6 to find its rarity: 1-3:common; 4-5:uncommon; 6:rare; then roll on the appropriate table across.

Is there a traveling encounter?

Traveling in the Hypogea, roll 1d6 every 6 hours: there's an encounter on a 6. Determine it as above. Also, when approaching a den or settlement of any kind, there is a 2-in-6 chance of an additional encounter with someone from the settlement. If a school is approached, this chance is 5-in-6.

Hypogean Evasion & Approach

The lay of the land in the Hypogea makes encounters a bit peculiar: in the darkness light sources can be seen from afar, but caverns rarely provide a long uninterrupted line of sight. The real giveaway is noise: in caves noises carry, so the two parties can hear each other from far away. Even approaching the noise does not guarantee to intercept the other party: caves are full of nooks and crannies, and everything could be hiding, lurking in the shadows.

In a canyon the noise problem is reduced because of the rushing water, and light comes from the sky above. In addition the water brings vegetation and erosion. Both provide additional chances to find hiding places. And the other party might safely be on the other river bank.

			Surface		
<i>Roll 1d6</i>	COMMON	UNCOMMON	RARE		
1	3d6 Goats	Bearowl	Sphinx		
2	1d6 Snakes	1d6 Casters	Basilisk		
3	1d6 Dreamsquirrel	1d6 Lost Souls	Chimera		
4	1d6 Centipede - Giant	1d6 Pterocherion	1d6 Pegasi		
5	2d6 Hypogean Birds	1d2 Skullsnatcher	1d3 Giant Eagles		
6	2d6 Hypogean Birds & roll again	Chthonic Encounter!	1d3 Giants (traveling)		
			Chthonic		
<i>Roll 1d6</i>	COMMON	UNCOMMON	RARE		
1	Ooze	Bearowl	Gorgon		
2	2d6 Bocklin	Paper Assassin	Chimera		
3	1d6 Casters	1d3 Minotaurs	Dealer in Kind		
4	2d6 Glowbats	1d6 Manaticks	Emerald Prisoner		
5	Snake - Giant	3d6 bocklin + 1 Polycerate	2 Horned Kataracts		
6	1d6 Giant Centipede	2d6 Cephalopods + 1 Leader	Mysteric Procession (5d6 initiates, 1 Mystagogue)		
			Wet		
<i>Roll 1d6</i>	COMMON	UNCOMMON	RARE		
1	1d6 Snakes	1d6 Kelpie	Hydra		
2	1d6 Frogs - Giant	Bone Frog + reroll	Basilisk		
3	Cave-owl Constrictor	Snake - giant water	Dealer in Kind		
4	3d6 Cephalopods + 1 Leader	1d3 Rainbow Axolotl	Horned Kataract		
5	2d6 Hypogean Birds	1d6 Cave-Owl Constrictors	Cephalopod War Team		
6	2d6 Hypogean Birds & roll again	4d6 Cephalopods + 1 Manager	Blind Piercing Behemoth		
			Tarry		
<i>Roll 1d6</i>	COMMON	UNCOMMON	RARE		
1	3d6 Glowbats	roll on the other relevant terrain type e.g.: wet for a tarry river	Hydra		
2	1d6+1 Casters		Gorgon		
3	1d6 Mana-ticks		Asphaltomorph		
4	1d6 Dreamsquirrel		Savant Emeritus		
5	1d6 Asphaltomorphling		Asphaltarch, on its way		
6	1d6 Bocklin + 1 Polycerate		Savant + 1d6 Apprentices		
			Interior		
<i>Roll 1d6</i>	COMMON	UNCOMMON	RARE		
1	Skullsnatcher	Bone Frog	Lecternomancer		
2	1d6 Casters	1d6 Manaticks	Savant Emeritus		
3	1d6 Dreamsquirrels	Paper Assassin	Emerald Prisoner		
4	2d6 Undead (lvl 1d6)	2d6 Armed Pterocherions	2d6 Horned Kataracts		
5	1d6 Centipede - Giant	1 Shambling Shard + reroll	Wand Companion + reroll		
6	1d6 Ornipoochies + 1d6 casters	1d6 Casters, badly wounded	Spite or Hypogean Dragon		

Precious Loot & Plunder List

Finding enchanted and interesting items is one of the main reason for adventuring. While, of course, all kind of magic items can be found under the Fire Valley, this book provides a way to determine what's found when you need to determine which magic or special item is found. To find which item, roll 2d6 (3d6 if you prefer more mundane treasures) and pick the highest to determine the category below, then roll in the appropriate subtable and follow the instructions. If needed, the level of an item or spell can be rolled on the Magic Item Level table on the next page.

1d6

1 - Awesome Artefacts

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1 Chthonic Chrism | 4 Ulbatar's Ulnar Ukulele |
| 2 Scoundrel's Sinister Shoe | 5 Mana-tar - Pool |
| 3 Five Eyes Facial Effigy | 6 Equestrian Companions' Enchanted Cuirasse |

1d6

2 - Compelling Curios

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Leonida's Ley Liner | 4 Fallen Star |
| 2 Swollen Stratos's Star Spectacles | 5 Five-Fold Fire Fan |
| 3 Veracious Breeding Volumes Breviaria | 6 Selene's Superabundant Psychotropic Strongbox |

1d6

3 - Impressive Items

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Suede-Lined Lead Suit | 4 Scapegoat |
| 2 Hoochie Tamzah's Hooded Tabard | 5 Conjuring Constructing Caulk |
| 3 Spelunking Stoats | 6 Devouring Idol - roll on Idol table |

4 - Scholarly Spellbooks

First, determine the grimoire level. The highest spell level is the same level as the grimoire's, other spells are of lower level. Low-level grimoires have 1d6+1 spells, mid-level grimoires have 3d6 spells, high-level grimoires have d6 spells.

1d6

5 - Great Gadgets

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Mana-tar - Cask | 4 Mana Vessel - determine level |
| 2 Hoochie Tamzah's Holistic Tonic | 5 Talisman - determine level |
| 3 Dried Plants - 2d6 doses of common plants and 1d6 doses of rare plants | 6 Potions - box of 1d6. Roll 1d6 for each: 1-3:basic; 4-5:traditional; 6:advanced |

1d6

6 - Miscellaneous Manuscripts

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1 Scroll of Details | 4 Scroll of Riches |
| 2 Scroll of Secrets | 5 Scroll of Directions |
| 3 Scroll of Knowledge: research notes worth 1d6 (exploding) x 1000 | 6 Scroll of Curiosities |

Magic Item Level Table

When determining a magic item level, roll 1d6 on the low-level table below:

1d6	LOW-LEVEL	1d6	MID-LEVEL	1d6	HIGH-LEVEL
1	0	1	4	1-2	8
2	1	2	5	3	9
3	2	3	6	4	10
4	3	4	7	5	11
5+	Roll on mid-level	5+	Roll on high-level	6	12

Devouring Idols Table

When determining a Devouring Idol archetype, start rolling 1d6 on the Rancorous Idols table below. Also, roll for their quality in the appropriate table.

1d6	RANCOROUS IDOLS	1d6	SELFISH IDOLS	1d6	ABUSIVE IDOLS
1	Ungraspable Tripod	1	Ophidiopharma	1	Butyrous Sarcomancer
2	He Who Hates Sound	2	Proxy of Flesh	2	Gaping Thaumaturge
3	Harbinger of Motion	3	Sleeper Unbound	3	Night Torment
4	The Other Scornful Bulwark	4	Harsh Teacher of Many Paths	4	The Venerable Horned One
5	The Enemy of Truth and Beauty	5	Forlorn Shame	5	Your Abusable Other Self
6	Roll on Selfish Idols	6	Roll on Abusive Idols	6	The Eater of Souls

Miscellaneous Manuscripts Minutiae

Most of the treasures found in the Hypogaea are manuscripts. For being a bunch of paranoid and secretive people, surely they write about their secrets a whole lot. There is at least a 1-in-6 chance of the scroll being wrong, misleading or outdated: the Referee must come up with consequences of acting on the information found in such a scroll. Possibly nothing? Possibly something interesting? Most certainly unescapable doom? At any rate, these are the six types of scrolls:

SCROLL OF DETAILS - the scroll warns of problems, hazards and traps regarding a specific Hypogean location, or advises how to overcome one such problem.

SCROLL OF SECRETS - this useful scroll describes the powers, immunities and weaknesses of a strange creature. Studying it will reveal abilities and immunities of a monster type or of a specific unique creature.

SCROLL OF KNOWLEDGE - during spell creation, reams of research notes are routinely produced. These notes are useful for further research and can be added to a library increasing its value by 1d6 (exploding) x 1d6 (exploding) x 100c.

SCROLL OF RICHES - this scroll describes a Treasure Trove or the treasure of a MONSTER DEN, including most importantly, its many defenses and guardians. It does not mention how to bypass them though.

SCROLL OF DIRECTIONS - the scroll contains either directions or a map to reach a specific location, including its entrance in case it's hidden. It also provides details on how to avoid hazards on the way to the location, but not inside. Roll 1d6:

- 1: an isolated place where a specific RARE PLANT can be reliably found.
- 2: a CATACOMB, the scroll lists all important people buried and their regalia.
- 3: a remote OBSERVATORY, including its spin and facilities.
- 4: the RUINS of a LOST SCHOOL, and the name of the school.
- 5: a SHRINE, its features and some details about the rituals performed therein.
- 6: Surely this is a rare scroll! Roll a second die:
 - 6-1: a HERMITAGE, and the name of the hermit and some details about them.
 - 6-2: a MANA-TAR SEAM.
 - 6-3: a carefully hidden and trapped treasure of 1d6+1 interesting items and 1d6 x 3000c. The scroll mentions all the interesting items of the treasure.
 - 6-4: a CACHE, its owner, intended use or recipient and its inventory.
 - 6-5: STANDING STONES, plus their details; e.g., depending on the feature: might be the spell written on the menhir or the chthonic god living is in the chasm.
 - 6-6: a LEYLINE and its notable destinations. The exact leyline position might not be marked on the spot, and that's why the scroll is useful.

SCROLL OF CURIOSITIES - and of course there are plenty of other things of great interest that have been written down and passed on to posterity. Roll 1d6:

- 1: ADVANCED HERBALISM RECIPE - replicates a specific spell effect. Determine the spell finding its level rolling on the table and picking a school at random.
- 2: a whole lot of mostly unsubstantiated saucy details about someone. Not many uses for it beside blackmail, shaming and character assassination.
- 3-4: a Mystic Initiation Scroll - it reports only the INTERESTING PHENOMENA needed to cast the Three Omens. Mystagogues don't mind this. Not at all.
- 5: a discussion of strange phenomena related to a LAW OF MAGIC: one of the triggering details is missing, and the authors lament their ignorance.
- 6: this scroll is rare, and surely there are reasons for it. Roll a second die:
 - 6-1: gardening notes for growing and caring for a PLANT of special medicinal interest and advice aplenty on how to harvest it. Determine the plant at random using the rules from pp.78-79, with the usual chances of rarity.
 - 6-2: a monastic enchiridion. Describes MONASTIC PRAXIS and ANATHEMA. Strict adherence grants use of the first LAW after 1d6 months, the second law after 1d6 years and the third after d66 years. The Laws are not described.
 - 6-3: very specific instructions on how to sculpt a single DEVOURING IDOL.
 - 6-4: a grimoire containing a new version of a single SPELL: while it takes thrice as much time to learn, it's otherwise considered one level lower than normal.
 - 6-5: a LAW OF MAGIC - complete in all details.
 - 6-6: a Mystic Manual - the full description, from the starting INTERESTING PHENOMENA to the final REVELATION. Much Forbidden. So Dangerous. Beware of Mystagogues, they might be pursuing the characters already.



Fancy Trinkets

A Partial Catalogue of Hypogean Artefacts

The Schools through the centuries managed to produce or seize a sizeable assortment of gimmicks and trinkets. The most interesting, unusual or otherwise notable are:

Suede Lined Lead Suit

A comfortable three-piece suit made of lead, out of the Artificers's School atelier. Comes with a wide-brimmed hat. As heavy as a suit of plate, the suit is still too soft to provide physical protection. It still allows the wearer to cast spells unimpeded, certainly due to both the sartorial mastery of its tailor and the very supple goat suede lining. This most fine suit protects from all kinds of bad radiations, lightning, curses and the like.

Hoochie Tamzah's Holistic Tonic

The Hypogean tradition of brewing tonics is widely known in the Spine and beyond. Of the many special brews, surely Hoochie Tamzah's Holistic Tonic is the most prized. The pinnacle of Hoochie Tamzah's skill, the Holistic Tonic not only makes the imbiber feel better and mends their wounds, but also improves their spirit, aids resting and provides entertainment and enjoyment in a single gulp.

The Tonic heals 1d6 hits, counters the effects of disease and poison for 1d6 days and restores 1 mana. Drinking it causes relaxation, weakness of the limbs, lack of coordination and mild hallucinations. There is a 3-in-6 chance that the drinker will just want to "chill" for the next 1d6 hours.

Hoochie Tamzah's Hooded Tabard

Tired of spending months regrowing her limbs lost in experiments, Hoochie Tamzah devised the ultimate protection: a fully-sealable head-to-toe garment with full hood and a stained glass visor. The first so-called Tabard was so effective that Chimerists still manufacture them to this day, taking pride in their creation. The robe is completely liquid-, gas-, fire-, acid- and ooze-proof. It can be worn sealed for about 10 minutes.

Leonida's Ley Liner

A 12-people row boat. The spell Ley Line Lug can be cast on the liner; it will transport it and all its contents as per the spell along a ley line. There is a chance that, after the trip, the Liner will need some simple but time-expensive repairs taking a few hours.

Scoundrel's Sinister Shoe

An enchanted left shoe, apparently given from a Scoundrel Fiend to a long-forgotten Gatekeeper apprentice. When worn as a hat, nobody will find the garment odd and the wearer will find scarce problem befriending anybody.

Activation costs 1 mana and lasts 1d6 turns.

When activated and if not in combat, everybody within 30' will be friendly toward the wearer unless they save vs magic.

Veracious Breeding Volumes Breviaria

The legacy of Grand Sorcerer Edonoplechtus II consists mostly in methods to crossbreed animals through magic. Her magna opus Breeding Volumes is a collection of 127 scrolls covering magical rites to crossbreed incompatible specimens to create chimerae.

The complete works are now lost, only fragments surviving in separate books, each breviarium containing only a small part of the original.

A breviarium contains information on how to crossbreed one specie of living being with a number of others. The process described takes a few months from a caster of low experience. Materials needed are oils, spices and special foods and juices, which are consumed in the process. A big number of gold-lined vats and other instruments are also needed but those can be used again for similar rituals. Owing to Edonoplechtus II's great skill, the rituals deliver a healthy chimera very often. While growing up it will acquire a portion of the positive traits and powers of both parents and lose some of their negative traits and deficiencies.

A breviarium contains rituals to breed a specie with 1d6 other species; on a 6, with any other.

Minimum caster level: 1d6

Ritual cost: 10d1000c

Reusable equipment: 25d100c

Maturation time: 1d6 months

Chances of success: 5 in 6

Chimerae powers and negative traits: 1d100% from each "parent", rolled separately

Five Eyes Facial Effigy

These chitinous masks are made with the skulls of Chronomods, a lost lineage of star-children. The enchantment grants the wearer partial but very powerful foresight of the events half a second in the future and the power to uncannily avoid them by briefly slipping through the warp and weft of time a moment before they would happen.



Once per day the mask allows its wearer to completely avoid an event (like being targeted by a spell, failing a save or receiving a mortal wound) by jumping forward 1d6 rounds in the future. For example: a character might be on the wrong end of a death spell; as the spell is announced the character will perceive the danger and instead of suffering the effect they will jump forward in time and avoid the spell altogether.

Swollen Stratos's Star Spectacles

These smoked glass spectacles conceal from the eyes of the wearer everything that is not burning star-stuff, at the same time stopping all ordinary light from reaching their eyes, thus avoiding being blinded by the Sun. This allows them to know the direction and position of the Sun and any other star, allowing for stargazing and divination even from the deepest bottom of the Hypogea.

Spelunking Stoats

These are specially trained lvl 1 stoats. They are unnaturally quiet and lethargic and usually do not move much. This changes when they are thrown at an opponent: they will attack and, on a hit, they'll latch in and burrow deep into the victim dealing plenty of damage until the demise of the victim or theirs, whichever comes first. *After hitting they deal 1d6 damage/round.*

They can also be inserted in a subject, usually through the mouth, but they are also happy with other body cavities, or even with creating new body cavities. There they will dig, extract and devour any external body, like internal moulds and oozes, uncontrolled growths, fetuses, implanted eggs, half-digested godlings, resident squids and extra souls. *In the process, the stoat will deal 2d6 damage to the subject, and then save or die of indigestion.*

Scapegoats

One of the best gifts are scapegoats, goats kept in sacks. When the carrier is about to be blamed, cursed or mortally wounded, the goat will suffer the consequences instead. The scapegoat can also be given away to someone to avert their wrath. Bagging goats is a very dangerous fine art practiced only by the most adept Savants, but it's said that it's common knowledge between Hypogean Hermits. What's certain is that the mystic ritual involves naked chanting the Stodgy Selenic Song under the open sky and must be completed before dawn, and that a captured goat is required. The goat will not survive more than a week in the bag, a month if properly watered.

Fallen Star

Stars fall. When they do, there's a great rush as all Savants send their apprentices there to recover the star. Fallen stars have many uses, such as spell component, but the most important is that they give an extra dose of luck to their owner. *Should the person carrying the star fail a save, they can spend the star to reroll the save. If the rerolled save is successful, the spent star vanishes, otherwise it's useless until next sunset.*

Selene's Superabundant Psychotropic Strongbox

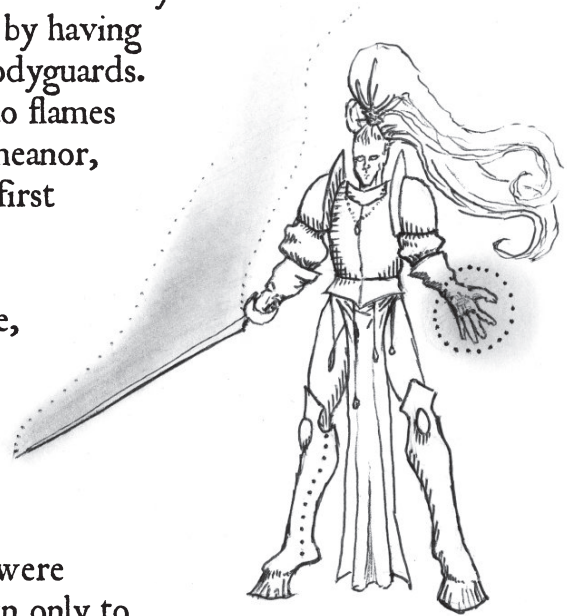
Blue-haired Selene had a wooden box, and that's where she kept her herbs, again and again, and in her altered states, enchantments were woven and wishes expressed, and therefore every third night, if a single portion of a herb was left inside, the morning after it was refreshed and multiplied twofold.

And somehow the box went missing, surely to her chagrin, and replicas started to show up all over the place, but somehow never anywhere close to the Deep Garden.

Equestrian Companions' Enchanted Cuirasse

Karbouna II saw that the life of the Grand Sorcerer could be dangerous indeed, and that the early demise of her unlucky predecessor Skotos II could have been avoided by having always available a group of extremely mobile bodyguards. But since her line of work was pretty much into flames and explosions, not to speak of her solitary demeanor, she made and gave to her companion Erin the first Equestrian Cuirasse.

In addition to being a heavy, magic suit of plate, the armour allows its wearer to run with the speed of a fast horse. The Grand Sorcerer can also summon the suit and its wearer quicker than the bat of an eyelid. As time went by, the number of companions increased to twelve, and a total of twelve such armours were made. The secret of their manufacture is known only to the Companion Chamberlain and the Grand Sorcerer.



Ulbatar's Ulnar Ukulele

Savant Ulbatar Blackcloak is a passionate musician, and his skill with stringed instruments is known in all the Hypogea. He built a few magic ukuleles out of bones, and uses them to bind undead to his will to great effect. If the player sings the Song of the Dead while playing this ukulele, all undead hearing the music risk falling under the player's malison until the music ends.

The area of effect is 100', save to avoid, 1 mana to activate.

Chthonic Chrism

Every now and then the occasional student dies from the Burning Inside. And when it happens, rumors start circulating about this ointment made by goat sorcerers or Hypogean hermits or dryads that when applied lifts all curses, mind control, changes of the body or nature - like metamorphosis and petrification - reverses energy drain and aging, counters essence corruption and reduces tar-sickness. I've never seen any in sixty years here, but surely as spring some students ends up bartering away mhyrr mixed with snake oil as if it was the real thing. And, to be fair, I can't blame them. I've done it myself.

Conjuring Construction Caulk

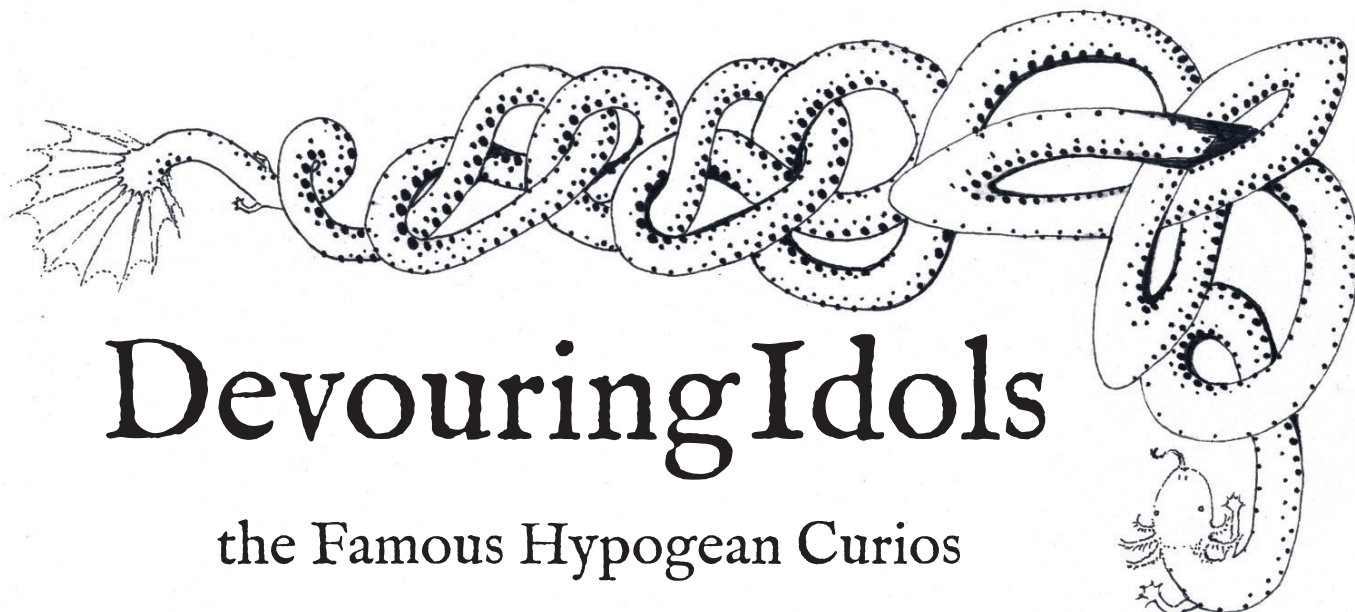
Yet another silly toy from the School of Artificers, this is simply magic caulk or glue. Its "magic" consists in simply making it slightly quicker to glue things together.

The construction times of a construct or object is reduced by 5-30%, 10-60% for Artificers.

Five-Fold Fire Fan

It's a bright red linen and whalebone magic fan. It has five folds. Despite being very stylish, it only makes a great deal of wind. Only useful if you need to change stale air, dust a room or annihilate your enemies in a gigantic firestorm.

Once per day, casting a Pyrolatry spell waving this fan doubles either the spell's area of effect or range.



Devouring Idols

the Famous Hypogean Curios

Devouring Idols always follow one of 16 archetypes. No divination reveals their secrets, what they represent, do or are. And, for some reason, and regardless of the will of the sculptor, when one of the archetypes is sculpted, it will get hungry, and whisper, and insistently demand to be fed. Making them does not require any enchantment, only sculpture. And they whisper the most horrible things... they whisper in your dreams.

And I destroyed some of mine, because I could not bear that anymore. - *Cacotherion II*

Feeding Idols

Each Idol has its own favourite food. When fed, it will confer a boon. To find the boon, the Referee should roll 1d6 on the Idol's table, but don't immediately reveal the result to the players. After eating, it won't eat for a specified period of time, but roll 1d6: on a 6, it also asks for a SPECIAL TREAT. To find it, roll 1d6:

- 1: hungry for a specific body part from a specific person
- 2: hungry for valuables, 2d6 x 1000c
- 3-4: hungry for grimoires, 3d6 spell levels; unsatisfied with spells it ate already
- 5-6: it asks for a service, usually extremely debasing, reckless or heinous

Idol Quality

When an idol is found, determine its quality by rolling 1d6:

- 1: Ancestral: when fed, it always asks a SPECIAL TREAT
- 2-3: Cracked: 3-in-6 chance that, when fed, it won't work nor eat for a week
- 4: Quirky Replica: when fed, roll 2d6, pick the lowest to determine the boon
- 5-6: Bad Replica: when fed, roll 3d6, pick the lowest to determine the boon

Sculpting Idols

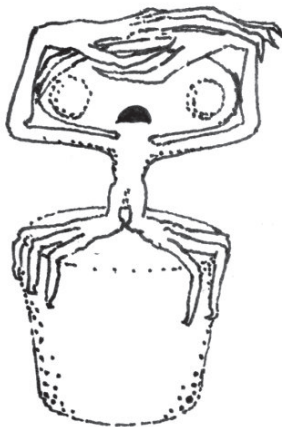
Copying an Idol takes 3 months. When it's done, the Referee rolls three sculpting rolls for the artist. If at least 1 is successful, the idol is working, and hungry, and insistently demanding to be fed. One failure means the Idol is Quirky, as above. Two failures makes a Bad Replica.



Ungraspable Tripod

hungry for blood once a week, must be grasped (spilling plenty of blood and dealing 2d6 damage), the blood will flow into its mouth

- 1-3: when the feeder is imprisoned or held, the Idol deals 2d6 damage to whoever caused the hold/paralysis.
- 4-5: ... and something (be it the lock, or the spell, or the ropes) will soon unnaturally fail.
- 6: ... and the first time the character is wounded, the damage is also dealt back to the attacker.



He Who Hates Sound

hungry for either a musical instrument or 1d6 noisy tools once a week

- 1-4: the idol emits a 10' wide aura of complete silence.
- 5-6: ... and the feeder can expand the area to 100' at will.



Harbinger of Motion

hungry for the heart and wings of a bird once a week

- 1-3: once during the week, double speed for 1d6 turns.
 - 4-5: ... and will always outdistance pursuers.
 - 6: ... and once can teleport anywhere within one mile.
- This terminates the effect of the idol for the week.



The Other Scornful Bulwark

hungry for ten pounds of meat once a day

- 1-3: once, stop one opponent from getting closer than 30' for one turn. Save to avoid.
- 4-5: ... instead, it works on all opponents.
- 6: ... and stops physical objects, gases and liquids too.



Enemy of Truth and Beauty

hungry for something written by the person, plus some tissue (blood, muscle, hair, bone) from the same person once a month

- 1-4: the person fed to the Idol is cursed for a month: save or can't effectively relate anything complex.
- 5: ... and should they fail a second save, they are not able to understand anything meaningful either.
- 6: ... and they can't cast spells or write or read.



The Ophidiopharma

hungry once a day for valuables: gems, gold, etc...

- 1-3: heals feeder 1 hit for each 10c. Stops eating at 50c.
- 4-5: ... then heals 1 hit/25c. Stops after 250c more.
- 6: ... keeps on eating until 2000c. If during the day it's been fed from only one person, that person is fully healed, all wounds mended, all diseases cured.



Proxy of Flesh, Fed to Carnifex

hungry for the feeder's blood and pain once a month, the feeder does not feel pain nor know when they are hit or taking wounds

- 1-4: immune to pain/stun/stagger. Can keep on fighting 3d6 rounds after ordinary death/collapse. Other critical hits and mutilations effects still apply.
- 5: ... and magically heals 1 hit/turn.
- 6: ... and can only die if, at dawn or sunset, their wounds are still lethal. Other critical hits and mutilations effects still apply.



Unbound Sleeper

hungry for sleep once a year, feeder must fall asleep holding the idol, which puts them in suspended animation, their life force preserved, and can't be awakened

- 1-5: feeder wakes up after 3d6 weeks fully healed and can reroll their hits, keeping the new result if higher.
- 6: ... and is rejuvenated by 1d6 years.



Harsh Teacher of Many Paths

hungry once per season for the most difficult object the feeder can create

- 1-3: while building a single object or creating a new single spell, the feeder can reroll all experience rolls.
- 4-5: ... and all failed craft and research rolls.
- 6: ... and, if already EXPERT, further experience points from the creation of the object or spell are accrued toward becoming a MASTER.



Forlorn Shame

hungry for mana-tar (at least 2d6 mana) once a week

- 1-2: feeder can place the Teratocurse on someone, once: victim must save or have their form HORRIBLY misshapen for a week. Reactions toward them will always be awful.
- 3-4: ... and their friends will not feel empathy for them (save or be disgusted by the horror and abandon them).
- 5-6: ... and the cursed regains 5 hits/round and deals double damage in melee. If save is successful, the Teratocurse lasts 1d6 rounds instead.



Butyrous Sarcomancer

hungry for a corpse once a week

- 1-2: the Idol spews nauseating buttery goo out of its duct.
- 3-4: ... and the goo is toxic to the past enemies of the corpse (3d6 damage if eaten, 1d6 for 2 rounds if applied).
- 5-6: ... and the goo is also curative for the allies of the corpse, healing 3d6 hits when applied on wounds.



Gaping Thaumaturge

hungry for live, sentient humanoids once a week

- 1-3: nothing happens, but the Idol can be fed again.
- 4-5: the Idol will cast a single spell (often as requested by the feeder) as a caster of level three.
- 6: ... or a spell or power that the sacrifice victim could use.



Night Torment

hungry for dreams once per night, it will eat the dreams of the creature sleeping closest to it (the feeder)

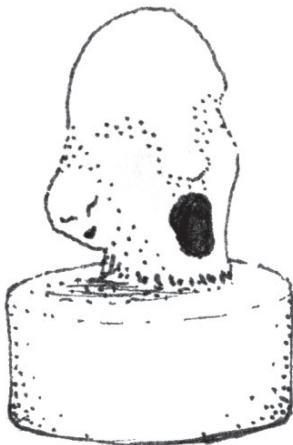
- 1: the feeder's sleep is haunted by horrible nightmares. Treat as a sleepless night.
- 2-5: ... and the feeder must save or be enthralled by the Idol. Sleepwalking, they will do horrible deeds for it, and will be unable to recall any of the depravation after waking up.
- 6: ... and waking up they must SAVE OR DIE.



The Venerable Horned One

hungry for magic items (not mana-vessels or talismans) once a week

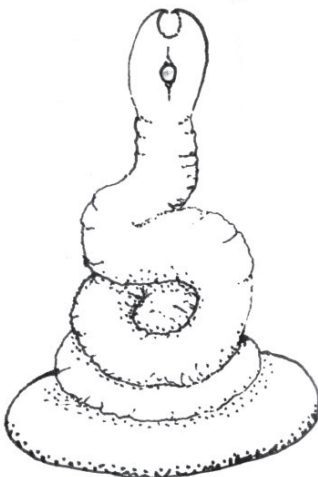
- 1-2: all opponents of level 3 or less within 200' are paralyzed in terror for a turn, no save.
- 3-4: ... and all other opponents within 100' must save or run away terrified for a turn.
- 5-6: ... and everybody, friend or foe, within 30' will have their life sucked away by the idol, 5d6 damage, no save.



Your Abusable Other Inner Self

hungry once a week for a shard of the feeder's soul (it will drain 1 level, 1 mana and 1d6 hits, regained at the end of the week)

- 1-3: mind control, curses, fear and other mind-affecting effects have a 2-in-6 chance of being ineffective as they try to hit the soul shard and totally fail. After the week there's a 2-in-6 chance that merging the soul back will inflict them on the feeder.
- 4-5: ... and the first such effect will fail automatically.
- 6: ... and all others will automatically hit the shard.



The Eater of Souls

hungry for either the heart of the feeder's most loved one or the item you love the most or your best apprentice (requested by the Idol), once a year

- 1: nothing happens.
- 2-5: nothing happens, but it can be immediately fed again.
- 6: one of the feeder's wishes is fulfilled. The wish will not be twisted, but will be limited if the expressed scope or intensity is too big.

On Mana-Tar

There's a sticky substance seeping between the Hypogean rocks. Usually it's only a sticky, thick, useless goop. Sometimes runnier varieties are found, oozing as some kind of very fluid bitumen, and that's when it's interesting. It's possible to drain mana from this runnier tar, and about two pints will be enough to power a spell, depending on the tar viscosity. The runnier it is, the less mana-tar is needed. Anyway, be careful when using it as it makes you blind, and while you will eventually recover, there's no cure for it.

And sometimes there are seams where the tar is so runny it's just like oil. At times it will slightly ebb and flow as you approach. Some other times you will see ripples on its surface, the interfering waves forming faint glyphs.

And if you ever see it changing colour, run away and do not dare to use magic nearby!

A character, when in need of spending mana, can instead drain it from mana-tar by touching the tar. As mana leaves the tar, it thickens and possibly even solidifies.

Every time a character drains mana-tar, roll a save, but only the Referee will look at the result. If the save is failed the Referee will secretly roll 1d6 and add it to the character's secret Mana-Tar Sickness score, if the save is successful the Referee will apply a -4 modifier to the d6, minimum 0.

Depending on the Mana-Tar Sickness score, characters suffer the following:

1-5: The Bleeding of the Eyes: the character's eye sockets bleed continuously. Not enough to hurt the character, but enough to be worrying.

6-11: The Red Sickness: as 1-5 plus, plus all the character's stats are lowered by 1d6. The character also bleeds profusely from the eyes, ears and mouth: no natural healing is possible, and the bleeding deals 1d6 hits per day. The character must save or become horribly near-sighted.

12-17: The Blood Rupture: as 6-11, but the stats are lowered by 2d6, and the bleeding deals 2d6 damage per day. The character must also save immediately, within a turn, within an hour and within a day: if the first save is failed save the character becomes almost completely blind; if the second save is failed the character collapses for 1d6 turns; if either the third or fourth save are failed the character enters a coma; if they are both failed the character dies.

18+: The Burning Inside: as 12-17, plus the character, every round, must save or die, smouldering from the inside. Until then, they can cast two spells every round without spending mana.

The Mana-Tar Sickness score decreases by 1 for every week the character spends at least 20' away from tar. The various symptoms of tar sickness improve as the weeks pass and the score is reduced. For example, a character becoming near-sighted with a score of 9 will recover its sight and stop bleeding intensely after 4 weeks as their score reaches 5. Complete recovery will need 5 more weeks.

You can tap it to power your spells
 You can also use it as glue, or as combustible in case of emergency
 You can use it to caulk, and then make it solid by tapping it
 You can shape it into an asphaltomorphling. And as long as you have within you the energy to power even the simplest spell, it will stick around around as a protean pet, as faithful as an old's man dog, and nowhere near as smelly, if less affectionate
 You can also use it for research, if you have enough of the right intensity
 You'll probably find more uses. Remember to be careful tapping the stuff, because you'll go blind and you might also die. And, yes, there's more to it.

When mana-tar is found, determine its mana density (mana/litre, halve it for mana/pint): roll 3d6 and take the lowest. It can be found in a Cask (1d6 litres) or Pool (d66 litres. On a 66, roll instead a d666, but use the smallest number for the hundreds).

Mana Tar - Iridescent

As mana-tar become more intense, if kept in big pools it glows and become iridescent. If enough iridescent mana-tar is collected, it enters the critical phase and reverberates the Keys to Reality. As you were taught back in Theosophy class, the unfolding of events sends waves through the cosmos, like stones thrown into a pool. Mana pools are sensitive to these waves, shaping the relevant glyphs of power on their surfaces, the very same glyphs that are contained in some of our books.

Mana-tar is iridescent at 1 mana per pint or 2 mana per litre, but must be in a pool of at least 100 mana. Continuous access to an iridescent

Mana-tar pool of at least 200 mana halves spell research times, but does not give any control on the final effects of the spell (the Referee could roll dice to determine the level of the spell, even of spells of levels higher than the researchers').

If you deserve it, you might be assigned to observe such pools and note anything you see. But you must be aware of how dangerous they can become. If they are iridescent, there's no way to know how intense they truly are, and I'm pretty sure that you will fare much, much worse than the Apostate. If it's shining, don't you dare to do magic nearby.

Very intense mana pools (300 mana within 10' or more) are unstable, dangerous and potentially lethal. Casting spells within 20' of the pool almost guarantees to create a ripple so intense that the tar will become protean and form uncontrollable Great Asphaltomorphs.





The nature of text does not concern itself with reality. The message itself is delivered regardless of its intended meaning. Knowing your audience helps, but nothing guarantees that even the simplest idea will get through without being misinterpreted. You can't guarantee that a message is true, false, neither, both or meaningless at the same time.

Literal Truth - you can run the Codex "straight", set during or after the domain of Grand Sorcerer Skotos XIII Orthodox. A campaign like this treats as canon the content of all three books: everything happened already, simply tie in your campaign details with what you put together from the events set in the book and decorate them with mysteries, scavenging, murder, plotting and wonders. The characters might try to recover the sections of Codex to solve a mystery, or to destroy them and keep them from the wrong hands.

In Itinere - you can run the Codex during the events narrated within, and treat the "future" events as some sort of fiction, or prophecies, or an in-world book coming from the future, or a mixture of these suggestions. If you want to be strict, try to avoid insertion of elements that haven't happened already. No, a timeline is not included. Yes, a timeline can be rebuilt from the fragments, and then safely ignored.

Only lies, as Mystagogues are best left Unangered - this book is only lies and fabrications. Treat the Codex as an in-world work of fiction, some kind of fairy tale, satire or allegory that discusses things from a distance because it is forbidden to tell them straight. Maybe your characters find this banned book, and they don't know if Savants banned because it's blatantly libelous, a blatant allegory of things better left unmentioned or simply because they are annoyed with students losing time after conspiracy theories. Allegory and satire are often the only ways to discuss secrets and misdeeds. Any in-game event is a lie.

All and None are the Same - the author could claim that they run the game as a mixture of all the above, after all they only found the Codex fragments on the Mediterranean a few years ago. Not deciding or switching reading between any of the readings is always legitimate if everyone is having fun. Have fun.

... and the shepherds told Stratos about this temple, its entrance only a simple hexastyle prostyle in front of a cave, or a deep hole dug in the side of the mountain.

And outside they saw a goat sitting on a rock, playing a tympanon and clashing cymbals. And as they got closer to the goat, the horned beast looked at them with its eyes older than the world, and without skipping a beat told them to bring an animal to offer in sacrifice and go inside.

And inside, a cella dug in the rock, filled with the treasures of the great kings. Among the treasures was a woman of darkest black, wrapped in black wool, chanting in front of a curtain, hiding the adyton and its secret.

And then she spoke. She told the shepherds they were soon going to meet an apprentice from one of the Great Schools, and they were to tell him to avoid the temple, as it would bring everybody incredible misfortune.

And then the woman opened her eyes, and they were bright as stars, and pulled the curtain to step through, and the shepherds said that, behind the curtain, they got a glimpse of a giant sickle and a giant man, lying down, delirious, his mouth and great beard soiled by some black substance.

And that's what they told my friend Stratos. They told him not to go to the temple. So Stratos came back and told me this tale in secret, and we never spoke of this again, and I hoped he would forget about this.

And after years he cast his omens, and finally the stars were right. The temptation of the secrets hidden in the temple was too strong to resist.

Roll
1d66:

Random Given Names

1-1	Alexis - Agatha	3-1	Nemo - Nike	5-1	Alesos - Arethia
1-2	Bion - Berenike	3-2	Xenophon - Xanthe	5-2	Aretas - Amayos
1-3	Gyges - Gaia	3-3	Otus - Odessa	5-3	Azizos - Ausos
1-4	Drakon - Danae	3-4	Pedaeus - Pallas	5-4	Garmabas - Gamilat
1-5	Euphron - Europa	3-5	Rasmus - Rhea	5-5	Dusarios - Ammayu
1-6	Zenon - Zoe	3-6	Sophos - Scylla	5-6	Keamos - Hagane
2-1	Eliante - Echo	4-1	Timaios - Tethys	6-1	Malichus - Hagru
2-2	Thales - Theano	4-2	Ylas - Hybla	6-2	Oboda - Ouardos
2-3	Ixion - Io	4-3	Phaiton - Phillis	6-3	Rabbell - Uldo
2-4	Cimon - Clio	4-4	Chleon - Chloe	6-4	Savas - Sagilat
2-5	Lysis - Leda	4-5	Origen - Ophelia	6-5	Selamanos - Sadallas
2-6	Menexeus - Melissa	4-6	Hector - Zenobia	6-6	Tym - Themellas

Roll
1d66:

Random Background/5 More Task

1-1	Sheperd	3-1	Tailor	5-1	Musician
1-2	Hunter	3-2	Soldier	5-2	Poet
1-3	Barber	3-3	Sailor	5-3	Thief
1-4	Painter	3-4	Tanner	5-4	Priest
1-5	Butcher	3-5	Sculptor	5-5	Miner
1-6	Peddler	3-6	Stonemason	5-6	Courtesan
2-1	Philosopher	4-1	Smith	6-1	Scribe
2-2	Athlete	4-2	Vintner	6-2	Teacher
2-3	Oracle	4-3	Cook	6-3	Craftman
2-4	Pharmacist	4-4	Engineer	6-4	Statesperson
2-5	Peasant	4-5	Messenger	6-5	Merchant
2-6	Tinker	4-6	Boatwright	6-6	Mason

Roll
1d66:

Random Chthonic God Names

1-1	Alecto f	3-1	Keuthonymos m	5-1	Phorcis m
1-2	Allat f	3-2	Krataiis f	5-2	Pipituna f
1-3	Batrabos m	3-3	Kutbay m	5-3	Proteus m
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