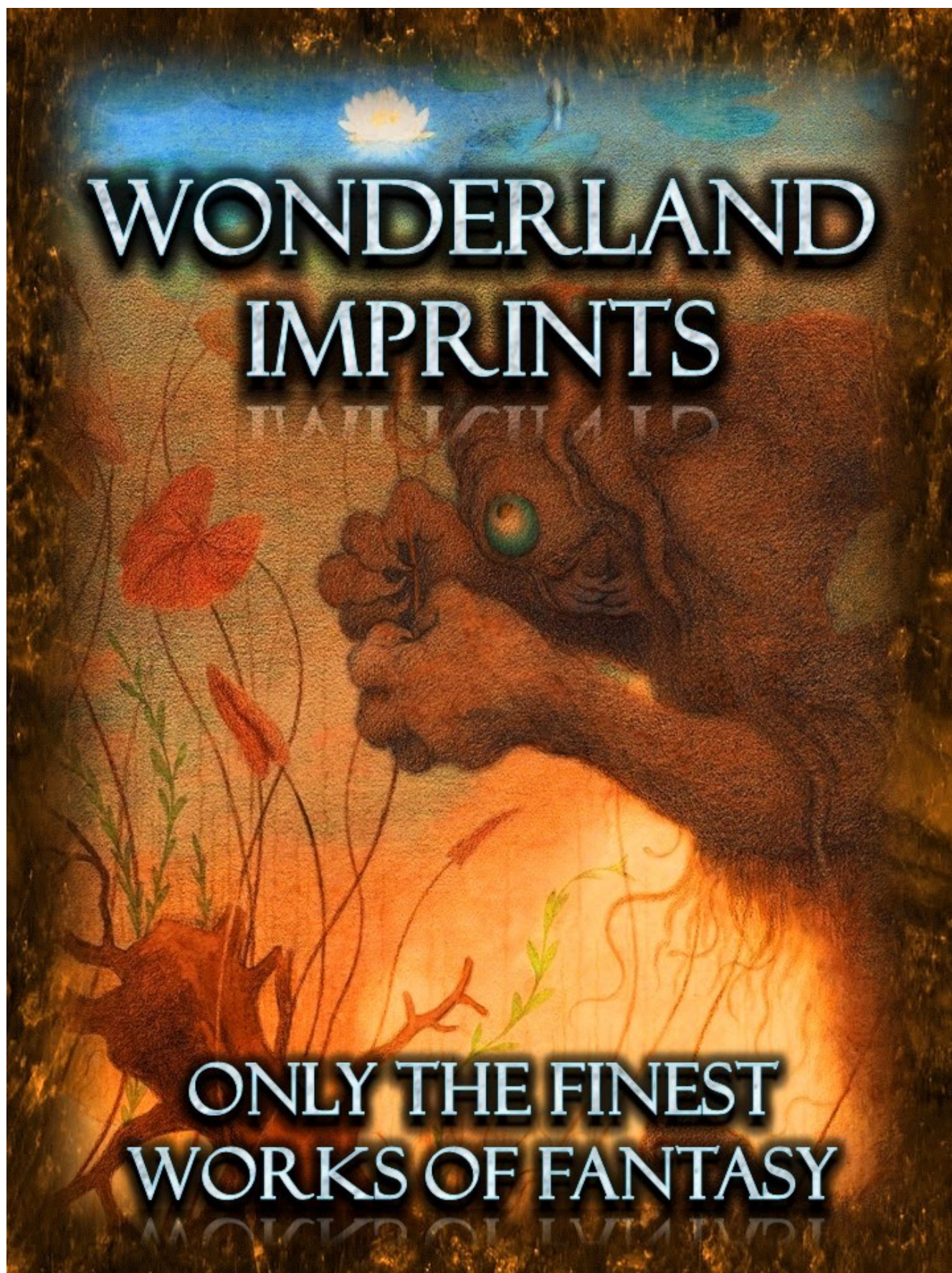


OLDSKULL ANTI-PALADINS

KENT DAVID KELLY



Oldskull Anti-Paladins

**An Old School Supplement
For Fantasy Role-Playing Games**

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Only the Finest Works of Fantasy

OSR



Description

***Beyond mortal comprehension,
Beyond redemption,
Some insidious fiends
Just want to watch the world burn ...***



Ofttimes controversial, always vexing, but never boring, the ANTI-PALADIN is a specialized chaotic evil fighter sub-class which represents an irrepressible remnant order of the unholy black knights of yore. Whereas paladins represent ultimate light and the might of purity, anti-paladins are the harbingers of abyssal darkness, despair, and overpowering evil.

Anti-paladins were introduced to the game in 1980 and were even briefly made official by accident (via the 1981 fiendish bestiary)

before being relegated to oblivion. They only ever returned in a sanitized form as the diluted “Blackguard.” But for those who want to include and glorify the original iconic class as first presented in a Draconian magazine almost 30 years ago, this supplement — likely the most detailed treatment of anti-paladins ever created — should be received with delectation.

The class has been reimagined and fully expanded upon within the context of the World of Oldskull campaign (as featured in the Oldskull Adventure Generator and other tomes), with elaborations pertaining to demonic worship, the enigmatic Knights of Saigoth, and the Great Old Ones who represent the Cthulhu Mythos. Systems featured in this old school gaming supplement include: a history and literary justification of the class (using Lord Mordred as a primary exemplar, among others), an overview of the Arthurian Knights Perilous, demonic empowerment and vigil systems, level titles, weaknesses, powers, spell casting rules, and ruling clarifications (based for example on a contemplated inversion of official Sagely paladin rulings made throughout the years).

Lacking in lechery or gore yet replete with sinister gothic atmosphere, the reimagined Oldskull Anti-Paladin is a perfect villainous archetype rendered for your enjoyment as a Non-Player Character, or even as a PC option pending Game Master approval.

However you decide to play them, I can assure you that your players will never forget these terrible nemeses. Why not give your most skilled and daring players a challenge, and a nefarious villain they’ll love to hate?

Another fine gaming supplement from Kent David Kelly and Wonderland Imprints, *Only the Finest Works of Fantasy*.

Face to Face with Evil: Arguments for and Against the Anti-Paladin

As grandiose and evil knights resplendent in their not-quite-shining armor, anti-paladins have a long and somewhat notorious history in Fantasy Role-Playing Games. The idea premiered all the way back in 1980 as an anti-heroic inversion of the favored — and some would say overpowered — paladin-fighter sub-class. When E. Gary Gygax read over the first published NPC anti-paladin archetype in a certain Draconic magazine, he declared the idea “as useful as a third leg.” But this was a bit disingenuous, considering that in 1978 he wrote up descriptions of the dark elf homeland, complete with chaotic evil noble fighters wielding “death lances” and riding about on nightmare steeds. And by 1983, he had introduced his own knightly cavalier class which specifically embraced the tenets of evil alignment alongside the more staid options of chivalric good, law, and measured neutrality.

So from the early years on, the idea of the evil knight was resisted and stigmatized, yet obliquely offered. Very interesting, to say the least! The tensions of resistance seemed to arise not from the class concept directly, but rather from the idea of allowing such an evildoer to potentially take center stage at the forefront of the campaign. But in the end, why should a black knight seem to be more unnerving than a demon lord, an arch-devil, a Great Old One, or any of the other terrible evils featured in the game? Perhaps it is the anti-paladin’s *mortality* which makes people nervous, calling into question whether any human being could ever make a conscious *choice* to become a soulless

monster. That question tends to unnerve people.

But the resistance to anti-paladins does not stop there. Even outside of the highly confused early precedents, some Game Masters might say that they don’t want anti-paladins to be a valid character option, because the associated behaviors (cruelty, torture, treachery, etc.) are disturbing qualities which should not be represented in a game of heroic imagination. But that stance is abjectly incorrect, because those behaviors are already enfranchised in the game, under the moniker “Chaotic Evil.” And evil Player Characters have been specifically written into the game since at least 1976 (with Elric being celebrated in 1971, and FRPG play examples in Gary’s campaign dating back to 1972).



Anti-paladins are embodiments of both intelligent chaos and evil incarnate. As such they share that foundational villainous distinction with Great Cthulhu, demons, demon lords and queens, the drow, and even red dragons, which are arguably the most iconic villains in the game. Anti-paladins — being mortal and beginning their adventures at experience level 1 — are certainly no more evil than these already-established creatures of greater power are. If chaotic evil clerics, fighters, and magic-users are all allowed in play, why not an unholy amalgamation of the three? The FRPG is already built to

support the existence evil characters, and logically a viable anti-paladin can simply be constructed to be “no more evil” than any of the other options already provided by the game.

Other GMs have said to me that anti-paladins shouldn't exist because there's no historical or mythic precedent for their existence. However, there actually is. The prototypical noble evil villain is the fallen angel Lucifer, especially as represented in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. While honoring his personal code of behavior Lucifer fights in armor against good, conquering the weak and eventually establishing the infernal stronghold of Pandaemonium (“Kingdom of All Demons”). Of course it can be argued that Lucifer is an immortal example, yes, and perhaps as a devil therefore too far afield; but there are mortal examples of the noble villain-knight as well.

In mythic folklore, the prime example of the archetype is found in Mordred, slayer of King Arthur. The 1980 book of gods and demigods — as scribed by the esteemed messengers Ward and Kuntz — lists a baker's dozen of evil knights (Mordred foremost among them) in the Arthurian Heroes section. And of course there is more, because the idea of the evil supernatural knight has been played with for many years. Further iconic examples celebrated in modern literature and cinema include Dracula, Elric (he is a noble sword-wielder, after all), Randall Flagg (who stands diametrically opposed against a gunslinging paladin), and even Darth Vader ... from a certain point of view.

The historical trend of the evil knight becomes more interesting when we consider that each of these characters is instilled with *supernatural* villainry: Lucifer is an angel who becomes a devil, wielding black magic; the rebellious Lord Mordred is frequently associated with the dark faerie Morgan le Fay; Dracula (Vlad

Tepes) was declared “noble” and a student of the unholy Scholomance, making him both a vampire and a devil-magic wielder; Elric is possessed by a demonic sword-spirit; Randall Flagg is a lesser demon lord incarnated as a man; and Vader is corrupted by the spirits of the Sith. We can see that anti-paladinhood doesn't just embody the idea of the martial, sword-bearing black knight; it also incorporates the concept of *unholy power acting through an armored mortal vessel — whether it be willing or unwilling*.

And that concept, I think, is unique and distinctive enough to be fairly regarded as the creative basis for a specialized FRPG character class.

So, the beleaguering question as to whether or not anti-paladins *should* exist is in essence a deeply misguided one, because the legendary archetype is already well-established. You need to overlook *a lot* of existing material, going back to Sir Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485), if you want to argue against that evident reality.

The more pertinent question however remains as to whether those fabled evil qualities should be role-played by the players, which is an entirely separate issue of genuine importance. That is a decision that should be left exclusively to the GM for his or her own campaign. I can only say that if you already allow your players to play the roles of evil PCs, there's no reason why “anti-paladin” could not be added to the class roster alongside Gygaxian Evil High Priests and Priestesses (EHPs) and Arnesonian assassins. Conversely however if you have any doubts whatsoever, there's no reason to start allowing evil PCs in your game now. Take a measured approach to the matter. Talk to your players, come to a consensus about the themes, styles, and motivations that you all want to play with.

No matter how you prefer to play your game, I can whole-heartedly recommend

the anti-paladin as an iconic NPC villainous presence. The class has a great deal to offer and will be certain to become an exemplar of foul and wondrous demonic glories that your players will love to hate.



Overview of the Anti-Paladin Class

In the World of Oldskull campaign, “anti-paladin” is a pejorative term which mocks the importance of a considerable brand of devout and forbidden evil. The more correct in-game term for such a character would be **Chaos Knight**. That is what they call themselves, and that is the true encapsulation of their mission: to sow grief and murderous discord in a contemptuous,

yet charismatic (and almost noble) fashion. They share less philosophical flair with a random serial killer, and rather more with Saruman or Professor Moriarty. But when stylistic flourishes all come to an end and it’s time for senseless butchery, they will sardonically resort to whatever final means are truly necessary. The end, to an anti-paladin, truly justifies the means.

The word “paladin” by the way comes from the Latin *palatinus*, which in the late Roman and Byzantine Empires meant “an officer of the palace.” The word implies eloquent speech and courtly graces to an extent, but it has nothing to do with good deeds and chivalry until we get to the Age of Charlemagne (c. 800 AD).

As a further matter of terminology, the phrasing “anti-paladin” will be used throughout this supplement to represent the Chaos Knight class, because those words have a considerable built-up burden of meaning and expectation within the existing game.

In game terms an anti-paladin is a mortal champion who devoutly serves an immortal extra-planar power of chaotic evil alignment. That power might be a demon lord, demon prince, demon queen, god, goddess, immortal monster (such as the Egyptian Apep / Apophis), or a Great Old One. For an NPC anti-paladin, the immortal power should be chosen by the Game Master as appropriate to campaign circumstance; for a PC paladin, the choice is given to the player.

Fans of the 1985 *Unearthed* rules set (sometimes called “Edition 1.5”) might notice that I deliberately do not make the anti-paladin (originally established in 1980) a sub-class of the later cavalier (established in 1983). This is because I want the class to be unique, and I don’t want it to be completely overpowered ... which the *Unearthed* paladin-cavalier, combining two already-powerful classes

into one, undoubtedly is. Therefore, I should make it clear that Oldskull anti-paladins are a sub-class of *fighter*, not cavalier. This distinction keeps the three knightly subclasses — cavaliers (knights of horsemanship), paladins (holy knights), and anti-paladins (unholy knights) balanced and clearly distinct from one another.

Game Masters who want to make anti-paladin cavaliers, combining my rules with the Unearthed non-fighter cavalier class, will need to hash out those sordid details on their own. However, a word of warning: I tried it in the past, and it went very badly for my game. The combination is simply too powerful and too discordant, and the focus on horsemanship frequently gets in the way of the anti-paladin's special themes.



Anti-Paladins in the World of Oldskull

*Heed to thy steps bestow,
Lest haply by thy soles
The heads be spurned of wretched
brothers,
Wearied in their woe ...*

* * *

*With downcast face stood every one of
them. To cold from every mouth, and to
despair from every eye, an ample witness
came.*

* * *

*Search the whole malign Caïna, and thou
shalt not any see more worthy to be fixed
in gelatine; not he whose breast and
shadow equally were by one thrust of
Arthur's lance pierced through ...*

— Excerpts from the Sibbald translation
of *The Inferno*, Canto XXXII, by Dante
Alighieri

*(This section combines many conflicting
sources from the real world's labyrinthine
Arthurian tales, with some additional
secrets of lore drawn from the author's own
more encompassing game world history.
You are welcome to do your own research if
you'd like to know how I drew those many*

tales together into a single narrative of the unholiest of knights. ~K)

* * *

In the World of Oldskull campaign — and outside of the existence of those unrecorded lone wolves who terrorized the world in earlier centuries — the first rebellious knightly order of anti-paladins arose as the Dolorous Cabal in service to Sir Mordred, c. 534 AD, prior to the tragic Battle of Camlann (in the Year of the Pretender, 537 AD) which ended the reign of King Arthur.

Hagiographic histories beyond the *Mort Artu* have white-washed Arthur, and the endless bardic reiterations of his glory have rendered him stainless. But despite his paladinhood he was a real and deeply flawed man. Rather than being perfect, his disgrace and fall from the paladin mantle of holy power directly resulted in his doom, as well as a calamitous end to the illustrious Age of Camelot.

The whole tale is far too convoluted to be told in full here, but the general flow is critical to our subject. The grim tale of Lord Mordred gives full reasons for the establishment of the Dolorous Cabal of the Chaos Knights, and perhaps in the minds of some even justifies their fury.

And so:

Mordred was born of an incestuous union between the deceived Arthur and his half-sister, Queen Morgause. Morgause in turn was a sister to the high sorceress of the Unseelie Court, that sister being Morgan le Fay herself.

Upon horrified realization, rather than atoning for his sin, Arthur sought to have the young evil-born Mordred murdered. (Or more politely, “abandoned” and “exposed.”) Worse, all babies that were

born on the same day were gathered up as well so that Arthur could be certain that the dark faerie threat to his throne would be annihilated. The abducted children were set adrift in a boat, which sank, drowning all but Mordred himself. Few knew of this terrible truth ... and no one human knew that through the crystal-gazing arts of Morgan the observer, the forsaken Mordred had indeed survived.



Arthur was disgraced in the eyes of the holy, and his paladinhood faded despite his continuing earthly majesty. A doom was born that day, which Morgan le Fay had long ago divined. Through an evil act wrought upon innocent souls, the gilded future of Camelot was forever destroyed by the same man who had caused its glory to arise.

Mordred was raised by one Lord Nabur, and it is believed that he learned the truth of his birth and background from Morgan le Fay and the elves of darkness. He harbored hatred in his heart and swore that he would one day claim the throne which his murderous father had forbade him. To that end he vowed his soul to unholy powers, the only that would embrace him, and so in secrecy as a young man the greatest anti-paladin was ordained in the name of a terrible demon queen.



Once he came of age, Mordred insinuated himself into the royal domain of power by challenging and becoming a Knight of the Round Table. But his darker character emerged many a time, and others with evil

hearts saw him as a dark savior of the fey and elven races which had fallen to fear and weakness during the time of Arthur. Sir Mordred at this time — as an occasional associate of Sir Lancelot — was fully chaotic evil, veiled by demonic auras; although he wisely pretended otherwise. Accusations of deceit, incitement to treason, murder, rape, and vile treachery were whispered yet never proven. He sired two secret sons with a dark elven maiden, and through black magics these half-human shades grew to maturity with unnatural speed. Sir Mordred in the meanwhile proved himself in battle and he maintained a bold charismatic front of wounded innocence, thereby successfully portraying any of his detractors as envious fools. Through charm, wise counsel, and valorous deeds Mordred was eventually made a Worthy Lord by Arthur the accursed.

Thus emboldened, Mordred journeyed far and wide. He made alliances with various powers including the Picts, the Caledonians (Scotsmen) and even the grim Midgardian Saxones. He deceived distant nobles into believing that Arthur was dead, or near death, and proclaimed that he would need to wed Queen Guinevere himself in order to ensure continued stability throughout the divided kingdom. Guinevere fled his advances and when the adventuring Arthur learned of this lecherous betrayal, he returned to his throne and furiously prepared to wage war upon the pretender.

Lord Mordred however had sworn other willing knights to his unholy cause, and the forces of Demonium were in play. The paladins and cavaliers loyal to Arthur defeated Mordred and his outnumbered knights in their first battle, forcing an inglorious retreat. The further and final battle occurred at Camlann. Virtually all of the knights on both sides were slain in this cataclysmic fray, and many awe-inspiring

powers both sacred and unholy were visited upon the battlefield.

Mordred's demon blade mortally wounded Arthur. Arthur, barely standing, managed one final charge and impaled Mordred with his sacred lance. It is said that sunlight burst through Mordred's flesh and hollowed him into a wasted thing, writhing within his drowic armor. Arthur died beloved and redeemed as is known, but the tale of Mordred does not end there.



Through his foul powers of demonic healing Mordred saved himself from death, and he crawled from the battlefield into the remnants of an unholy shrine. He was saved in the nether through some manner of demonic sacrifice conducted by his sons, Melehan and Melou.

Later in life the vengeful Mordred was revealed once more and finally defeated by the aging paladin lord Sir Lancelot himself. Yet — even to the sages, many of the details remain unknown — in some terrible way, Mordred and his sons managed to either execute the widow Guinevere or to afflict her with a fatal wasting disease. The presence of demonic power was made clear in the tumultuous battle between the Knights Illustrious and Mordred, although Melehan and Melou escaped. It is said that Lancelot suffered a lunatic rage after Mordred was captured, in grief for Guinevere; or, that Mordred was seized by a mob and dragged through the streets. Perhaps aspects of both tales are true.

Whatever truly occurred, the terrible end is known: The curse which had destroyed the legacy of Camelot was twofold, and as a result of the defeated Mordred's panicked pleas, demonic insanity reigned once more. Lord Mordred was entombed alive by noble men who were driven mad; horrifically, he was sealed into the tomb of Queen Guinevere herself. There in the utter dark, he was offered the embrace of one final pact of darkness by a banshee spirit who hailed from the Unseelie Court. This he accepted, and to save himself from starvation — and to empower the banshee's terrible pact in his black heart — he ate of the dead flesh of Guinevere. In so doing he became an undead heir to the dread and ancient Knights of Saigoth, a hateful revenant. He was torn away into the dark faerie realm of the Unseelie and never seen again.

A later and anti-climactic revolt (led by Melehan and Melou) was ended by Lancelot and the surviving Knights of the Round

Table, and only then did the terror-reign of Mordred's ill-omened legacy finally come to an end.

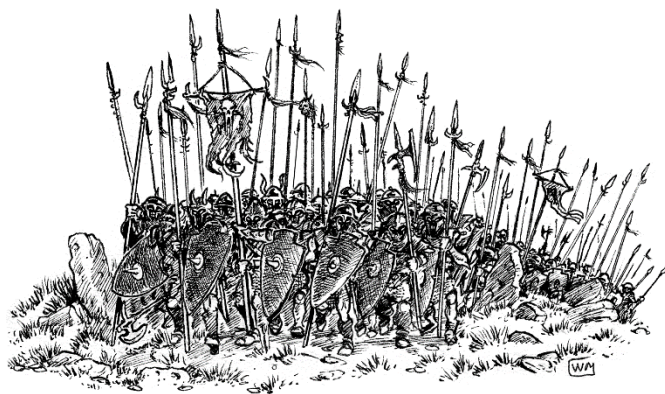
Anti-paladins persisted in their twisted machinations and scattered heresies throughout the Dark Ages of the lands, although regionally they were largely wiped out by the wrathful surviving peoples of Britannia and Caledonia. It was not until the 1300s that a collective order of multiple Chaos Knights once again arose beneath the realms, in abject defiance of all that is pure and holy.



The new terror came surrounded in vermin-touched dust, upon insect-clouded winds, from out of the Utter East. The civilized kingdoms in the realm of Tyrrhenia learned of this terrible demonic resurgence when the first Chaos Plague emerged as the Yellow Death, as manifested by an avatar of

the King in Yellow in Anno Calvariae (Year of the Skull, AC) 1348. Refer to the supplement Oldskull Plague Doctors for further details concerning that foul contagion, the sieges of Grimrook and Serenisse, the King in Yellow, the heroic resistance of the plague doctors, and the deathless Triumphator known as the Lich Queen.

The Chaos Plague took over a million lives. The swarming legions of vagabond plague victims, undead, vermin, wererats, abominations, and demonic terrors were led into battle by a foul order of Chaos Knights who called themselves the Avengers of Saigoth.



When the Lich Queen was finally defeated and entombed, several of her anti-paladin champions were sealed away along with her ... a gruesome echo of the fate of accursed Lord Mordred, imprisoned in the black sepulcher of Guinevere.

But several of the Lich Queen's most powerful lieutenants escaped the last battle in the ravaged Tyrrhenian lands, fleeing westward to establish themselves in the lost dimensional fanes which lie beneath the ruins of the Ushirian Manor, that magicked pile of ruin known to adventurers and mercenaries alike as "Castle Oldskull, upon yon farthest shore," beyond the city of Grimrook proper.

But nevertheless, the looming threat from the bloody Avengers of Saigoth had been ended, at least for a time.

Years passed and a fragile spirit of peace seemed to seep tenuously across the land. A short and severed generation of naïve humanity witnessed the birth of a shocking new heresy amongst the younger folk, in which minxes and striplings would dare to play at “Plague Danses” in imitation of the nearly-triumphant legions of undeath. (“Ashes, ashes, we all fall down!”)

Resonating with taunt and prayer, demonic powers of shivering temptation stirred beneath the earth. The young people were emboldened, by fleeting glimmers of the supernatural, to turn their sinister games into far more active nocturnal imaginings. Occasionally, even the blood of hated rivals’ sons and daughters was shed by the over-zealous in petty rituals secretly known as the “Danses Macabre.”

Most of these outrageous young idiots were disciplined or disowned by their mothers and fathers, those who were veteran survivors of the Chaos Plague. Yet some few of these youths accidentally tampered a bit too far with the wrong grimoire, the wrong ruins, or the wrong skull of a fallen lord. Foolish promises were made to invisible black powers in the name of inkling envy or fleeting seduction.

A new scattering of weak anti-paladins — a handful of caitiffs, poltroons, dastards, and outright fools — has now been instilled with unholy essence through obscene incantations whispered in the middle of the night. Only a few of these youths in exile have fully fallen to the path of darkness, and now exist as level 1 and 2 anti-paladins who lead small gangs of brigands, or witchless rat-things, or limping zombies. But many more young lost souls remain completely unaware that their yearnings and spite are tallied even now by imprisoned demon lords who skulk and

scheme, awakening, down in the deepest Oldskull infernos burning beneath the earth.

The Stricken Names: Anti-Paladins of the Arthurian Age



There are several Knights Perilous, traitors, murderers, and foul anti-paladins who are known in the tales of Arthur and his knights. Their most terrible crimes have been stricken from memory, as a protection against demonic invocations led by the curious and the power-hungry. But we do know a little of these Chaos Knights, their experience levels, and a few of their lesser deeds. It is likely that several of these foul

men will be found in the campaign as undead lords, vampires, incubi, or perhaps even something worse.

The known black knights of Britannia were:

- **Lord Mordred the King-Slayer, Level 13:** The slayer of King Arthur at the Battle of Camlann. Whether he was slain by Arthur, or barely survived, is unknown to many. It is whispered by the wisest that he was entombed alive with the body of Queen Guinevere, and that he ate of her flesh before he starved to death in the utter dark. If true he likely arose as an undead Knight of Saigoth.
- **Sir Breunis Sans Pite (“Without Mercy”), Level 12:** A malefactor who killed Knights of the Round Table, as well as their damosels.
- **Sir Edward the Knight Perilous, Level 10:** Lord of the Red Castle. An evil lord who stole a Barony, and would only do battle with outnumbered heroes.
- **King Mark of the Viper, Level 10:** A noble man fallen to evil; he killed Sir Tristan with a poisoned lance for daring to love Isolde.
- **King Meleagrance the Ensnarer (Maleagant), Level 10:** A dark half-elven black knight, and the abductor of Queen Guinevere.
- **Sir Melehan (Meleon) the Defiant, Level 9:** The eldest son of Lord Mordred, who defied the rule of King Constantine after the death of Arthur. Slayer of King Lionel.
- **Sir Damas the Craven, Level 9:** A cowardly castle lord who took courtly prisoners, while treacherously never doing battle on his own.
- **Sir Andred the False, Level 8:** Allied with King Mark in the treason against his cousin, Sir Tristan. A deceiver and failed kin-slayer.

- **Sir Helius the Heart-Spearer, Level 8:** A treacherous knight who killed King Hermance.
- **Sir Pinell the Black-Hearted, Level 8:** A coward who poisoned a feast of apples in order to slay Sir Gawain.
- **Sir Melou the Inciter, Level 8:** The younger son of Lord Mordred, who incited the resistance against King Constantine and the remaining Knights of the Round Table. Beheaded by Sir Lancelot.
- **Sir Garlon the Unseen, Level 8:** A black knight who slaughtered enemies through treacherous stealth and the magics of invisibility.
- **Sir Phelot the Beheaded, Level 8:** A treasonous deceiver who forced his wife to lie in hopes of murdering Sir Lancelot.
- **Sir Hue the Overthrower, Level 8:** Another knight of the Red Castle, who disherited the Lady of the Rock of her barony.
- **Sir Gringamore of the Dwarven Lands, Level 8:** A black and unholy knight, a coward and traitor of unknown deeds. His allegiance to the Dvergar and other evil dwarves remains a mystery.

The tombs of these NPCs are undoubtedly evil fanes, protected by demonic entities and filled with treasure, which good PCs might well want to seek out and raid ... if they can.



The reader might be surprised to see that none of the original anti-paladins rose to experience levels higher than 13. This is due to the fact that Chaos Knights cannot be resurrected from the dead, as we will explore in the weaknesses section of this supplement a little further on. When an anti-paladin is laid low, his soul is stolen away by the chaotic immortal who empowered him, to be tortured into a forever-agonized demonic shape. Only undeath can cheat the immortal's grasp, and that only for a few centuries at best. (And in realizing this, we might well sympathize slightly with Lord Mordred's banshee plight and the blasphemy which took place in the sepulcher of Guinevere.)

We also must consider that anti-paladins either live as exiles surrounded by evil minions, or in the shadows, lest they be dragged out into the light and torn apart. They are the most hated of humankind. Given these facts it stands to reason that

level 13 is a very high level indeed, and even reaching experience level 2 is a considerable accomplishment for many. If there are to be any anti-paladins of experience level 14 or higher, they will exist as arch-villains in the Game Master's own campaign, or (!) perhaps even as Player Characters raised up from level 1 into infamous glory.

Anti-Paladin Races

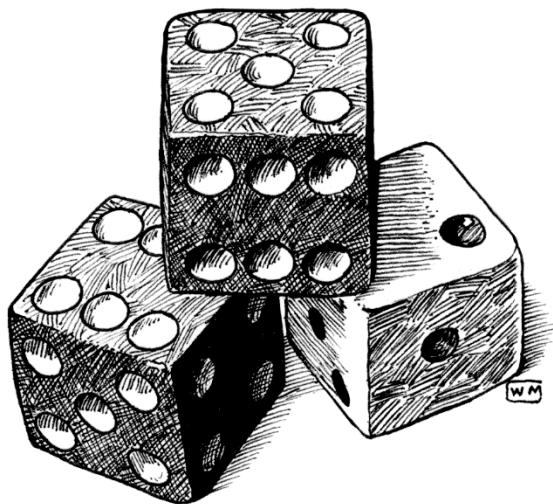
Anti-paladins must be human, elven (drow only), or half-elven (half-drow changeling only).

Half-drow anti-paladins, in particular, are Unseelie Court creatures who are raised by evil human nobles and demon worshippers as the "champions of two worlds."



Starting Age

Anti-paladins will begin play at experience level 1 at an age equivalent to a cavalier of the same race.



Ability Score Requirements

The prime requisite abilities for the anti-paladin are Strength and Wisdom (typically in the forms of wile, cunning, and self-preserving intuition).

An anti-paladin character must have the following minimum ability scores to qualify for the class: STR 12+, DEX 6+, CON 9+, INT 9+, WIS 13+, CHA 17+. As a reminder, do consider that Charisma does not necessarily represent handsomeness or beauty, or one's charming ideals; it represents an aura of command, "strange compulsion" arising in others, and the power of personal magnetism. To echo one of Gygax's 1979 examples, Adolf Hitler could certainly be regarded as possessing an 18 Charisma.

Under the Advanced rules, note that anti-paladins do not roll for exceptional strength; their maximum rolled STR is 18 at level 1. However, the Self-Mastery ability (described later) could potentially give an anti-paladin exceptional strength gradually over time.

Experience Point Modifiers

If either Strength or Wisdom is greater than 14, the anti-paladin character adds +5% to all experience points (XP) awarded by the Game Master. If both Strength and Wisdom are greater than 14, the bonus is +10% instead of +5%.

Anti-paladins of lower aptitude (STR<15, WIS<15) gain no such bonuses.

Experience Hierarchy

Anti-paladins are powerful. Their many abilities are partially balanced by their inherent weaknesses, particularly the threat of death in good-aligned civilizations and the mortal threat to their souls which prevents resurrection.

However, these weaknesses are not quite enough to balance them properly, due to the terrible capacity of the class. Therefore to maintain game balance anti-paladins are also somewhat slowed in their experience level progression.

Anti-paladins progress on the same experience scale as paladins, requiring (for example) 2,751 experience points to attain experience level 2.

Anti-Paladin Level Limits

Due in part to their mortality, their demonic empowerment, and their relative difficulty of progression, anti-paladins have no theoretical level limit, regardless of race. However anti-paladins can never be multi-classed, or characters with two classes.

As a very general rule of thumb for Non-Player Character populations and knightly orders, the Game Master should assume a 30% lethal attrition rate for anti-paladins between experience levels. In other words, if you decide that your campaign's perilous homeland features 100 NPC anti-paladins, then only 70 of those would reach level 2, only 49 would reach level 3, 34 would reach level 4, 24 would reach level 5, 17 would reach level 6, 12 would reach level 7, and so forth. Of course singular and favored arch-villains — those who you only want to leave the game when they are slain by the Player Characters — would never arbitrarily die behind the scenes in such an arbitrary manner.



Suggested Level Titles for Anti-Paladins

Anti-paladins gain level titles in accordance with the vileness of their past misdeeds. Here are 55 examples of appropriate level titles, which will give you potential ideas for NPC backgrounds (or possibly even some thematic ideas for developing Player Characters).

- **Experience Level 1:** Caitiff, Chaos Minion, Evildoer, Poltroon, Traitor
- **Experience Level 2:** Betrayer, Chaos Bringer, Miscreant, Ruiner, Varlet
- **Experience Level 3:** Chaos Warrior, Demon Worshipper, Grief Bringer, Hellion, Malefactor
- **Experience Level 4:** Anti-Hero / Anti-Heroine, Chaos Reaver, Dire Malefactor, Hag Hunter, Hate Bringer
- **Experience Level 5:** Black Malefactor, Blackguard, Knight Perilous, Nightmare Rider, Unforgiven One
- **Experience Level 6:** Foul Blackguard, Paladin Slayer, Scoundrel, Shadow Knight
- **Experience Level 7:** Black Knight, Dastard, Demon Singer / Demon Songstress, Hero Slayer
- **Experience Level 8:** Anti-Superhero / Anti-Superheroine, Champion of Chaos, Demon Bringer, Villain
- **Experience Level 9:** Arch-Villain, Bringer of Treachery, Chaos Lord / Lady of Chaos, Knight of Ruin
- **Experience Level 10:** Blood Fiend, Demon Incarnate / Demoness Incarnate, Lord of Ruin / Lady of Ruin
- **Experience Level 11:** Anti-Paladin, Warlord of Ruin

- **Experience Level 12:** Anti-Paladin Lord / Anti-Paladin Lady, Overlord of Ruin / Dame Overlord of Ruin
- **Experience Level 13:** Hatred Incarnate, Nemesis
- **Experience Level 14:** Chaos Incarnate, Vile Nemesis
- **Experience Level 15+:** Arch-Nemesis, Evil Incarnate



by dread nemeses who lair in the lower planes. As such, they must always be Chaotic Evil.

Some GMs might allow Lawful Evil or Neutral Evil anti-paladins on a case-by-case basis, but I personally do not. Despite the primordial example of Lucifer, an anti-paladin exemplifies everything that a paladin is *not*, meaning specifically that they embrace the opposite of good (evil) as well as the opposite of law (chaos). The entire theme of the Oldskull class is dependent upon this rather exacting interpretation of the planar and cosmic order.



Deities and Worshipped Immortal Powers of the Anti-Paladins

The exact immortals who empower Chaos Knights are really up to the decisions of the Game Master. I can provide extensive helpful guidelines, however. In general every chaotic evil immortal (godly or demonic) should be considered by the GM.

In the World of Oldskull campaign the real-world mythologies are in full force throughout the appropriate realms and

Anti-Paladin Alignment Requirements

Just as paladins are instilled with divine and holy powers derived from the great and sacred immortals, anti-paladins are infused with demonic and unholy majesty

homelands. As such, I can offer a very partial list of those dread and immortal chaotic evil powers that are served by anti-paladins:

- **Babylonian Deities:** Anshar, Dahak
- **Chinese (Serean) Deities:** Lu Yueh, Ma Yuan, Tou Mu
- **Deities of the Pegana Mythos:** Trogool the Un-God
- **Demon Lords:** Azazel, Baphomet, Belphegor, Hyaenoghul, Koschei the Deathless, Shoggothlex
- **Demon Princes:** Orcus, Pazuzu, The Ulthrogorgon
- **Demon Queens:** Empusa, Ereshkigal, Lilith, Mormo, Zagemotha
- **Egyptian (Khomite) Deities:** Apep
- **Finnish (Finnian) Deities:** Hiisi, Kiputytto, Tuonetar
- **Great Old Ones:** Cthugha, Cthulhu, Dagon, Hastur, Nyarlathotep, Shub-Niggurath, Yog-Sothoth (among others)
- **Greek (Achaean) Deities:** Ares, Eris
- **Indian Deities:** Kali
- **Mesoamerican (Terra Novan) Deities:** Camazotz, Huehueteotl, Tezcatlipoca, Tlazolteotl
- **Native American (Terra Novan) Deities:** Shakak
- **Norse (Asgardian) Deities:** Loki (tenous and untested in my campaign, as Loki is technically redeemable)
- **Roman (Tyrrhenian) Deities:** Alernus, Discordia

A Lovecraftian Example of Thematic Knightly Orders



Each immortal's order will differ in the details, but not in their apocalyptic ideals. Examples of some orders of unique anti-paladins, using the Cthulhu Mythos for the matter of demonstration, include the following. Note that unlike most demon lords and deities, the Great Old Ones simply do not care about mortals or mortal affairs, but their more powerful servitors (such as star-spawn) do grant spells on behalf of that higher power.

- **The Knights of Cthugha** seek to immolate buildings and innocents, destroying everything with fire. Their spells are received from aching dreams of incineration, brought

down through flame creatures and fire vampires.

- **The Knights of Cthulhu** serve to bring about the rising of R'lyeh. They receive their prayed-for spells through nightmare visions, brought by the star-spawn of Great Cthulhu. Deep Ones ally with this foul order.
- **The Knights of Dagon** seek to conquer seaside towns and villages insidiously, without being detected, in the name of the Deep Ones. Spells are received through the nocturnal whispers of Mother Hydra.
- **The Knights of Hastur** live for the glory of the Unspeakable One, and ultimate Armageddon. Spells are received as pleadings from beggar-souls as the anti-paladin's spirit wanders the twisting dream-wrought alleys of Carcosa.
- **The Knights of Nyarlathotep** tempt dreamers to seek the forbidden mysteries of Kadath in the Cold Waste. Spells are brought by robed and dripping Men of Leng, who visit in the flesh to pass their deteriorating rune-scrolls down to the anti-paladin.
- **The Knights of Shub-Niggurath** sacrifice innocents in the black forest-wilds, using either obsidian daggers or the grisly means of soil suffocation. Spells are brought through moist tendrils of rootlets, which crawl out of the ground and into the anti-paladin's mind.
- **The Knights of Yog-Sothoth** hope to summon the great coruscating orbs of revelation through primordial circles of standing stones; these stones must be fed fresh blood when

the moon is full. Spells are brought by crawling human-like spawnlings, which touch the anti-paladin with their tongues and then melt away in to die.

You can come up with your own ideas for anti-paladins who serve demon lords, chaotic evil goddesses, and so forth.



Hit Dice and Hit Points

The anti-paladin has ten-sided dice (D10) per experience level for hit point determination. They gain full hit dice for experience levels 2 through 9. At levels 10 and higher, they gain +3 additional hit points per level thereafter.

At experience level 1, due to demonic influence an anti-paladin begins play with the maximum potential number of hit points (10 points + any Constitution bonus). Additional earned hit points are

determined normally by D10 die roll thereafter.

In the Basic game, anti-paladins have the normal listed hit point bonuses due to exceptional Constitution (no bonus for CON 9 to 12, +1 per hit die for CON 13 to 15, +2 for CON 16 or 17, and +3 for CON 18). In the Advanced game, anti-paladins have the same hit point bonuses that fighters and paladins do (+1 per hit die for CON 15, +2 for CON 16, +3 for CON 17, +4 for CON 18).

Assuming a Constitution score of 16 as a baseline example, most NPC anti-paladins will have approximate hit point totals as follows:

- **Experience Level 1:** 12 hit points
- **Experience Level 2:** 19 hit points
- **Experience Level 3:** 27 hit points
- **Experience Level 4:** 34 hit points
- **Experience Level 5:** 42 hit points
- **Experience Level 6:** 49 hit points
- **Experience Level 7:** 57 hit points
- **Experience Level 8:** 64 hit points
- **Experience Level 9:** 72 hit points
- **Experience Level 10:** 75 hit points
- **Experience Level 11:** 78 hit points
- **Experience Level 12:** 81 hit points
- **Experience Level 13:** 84 hit points
- **Experience Level 14:** 87 hit points

This is a GM's guideline only; more powerful villains will certainly possess higher hit point totals.

Social Standing

Unlike paladins and cavaliers, anti-paladins have very poor social standing in any predominantly good or neutral cities. There, they will always be considered Lower Class, Tier 1 at low and mid-levels (1-8), just as assassins are; and even at high

levels (9+) will be feared and Middle Lower Class, Tier 2.

But in predominantly evil cities, they are considered to be Lower Upper Class, Tier 7 at low and mid-levels, and Middle Upper Class, Tier 8 at high levels.

Refer to supplement GWG1-D (The Game World Generator, Deluxe Edition) for individual social status levels, as personal status can change as a result of character actions, rumors, crimes, and reputation.

Anti-paladins typically find shelter within non-evil cities in the underworld, either figuratively (criminal areas) or literally (in subterranean hideouts beneath the city). Those who live openly in good-aligned cities, without insinuating themselves into some deceitful household, will not survive for very long.



Starting Gold

Anti-paladins begin play with a random amount of gold, equivalent to a level 1 fighter.

They do not begin the game with “free” cavalier benefits (a mount, armor, etc.) under any circumstances. All such things must be paid for using the anti-paladin’s starting gold.

Enhancing the Power of the Anti-Paladin Class

This character class is already powerful, and additional “buffs” aimed directly at the class abilities are not recommended in the name of overall game balance. If the GM decides that a specific anti-paladin will be a powerful adversary in defiance of the Player Character party, a trapped and guarded stronghold will probably be in order. Refer to the “Minions and Guardians of the Chaos Knights” section for a summary of recommended guardian races and other related monster types.

Limiting the Power of the Anti-Paladin Class

From the perspective of allowing Player Character anti-paladins in the game, the GM might want to limit the power of the class initially on a “trial” basis, so that the anti-paladin character does not forthrightly overpower the other players’ PCs. Through role-playing, the anti-paladin might emerge as the party leader, but otherwise his threats, dominance, and insistence upon group leadership will only be entertained to a limited extent (think Kylo Ren, for example).

The author recommends two possible restrictions that a GM can use to make the class less disruptive to your game:

[A] Enforced Rarity: The GM can dictate that a PC party can only have one Chaos Knight at a time.

[B] Limited Hit Points: The GM can reduce the class’s D10 hit points to D8.



Either or both limits can be placed, according to GM preference.

I recommend that you consider trying the class in play as NPC before weakening it, as it is typically no more powerful than an

Unearthed weapon specialist, barbarian, or paladin. But if you need to rein the Chaos Knights in to keep them from dominating the game, those two limitations (either, or both) should certainly do the trick.

Anti-Paladin Combat

Ability and Survivability

In combat, anti-paladins fight with the same level of prowess that fighters and paladins do. They cannot be weapon specialists however.

Similarly, they have the same base saving throws as paladins (using fighter saving throw numbers, with a permanent +2 bonus applied due to protective aura).

Anti-Paladin Spell

Casting Ability

Anti-paladins gain clerical spell powers of the same potencies as paladins do. More specifically, this means that they are purely martial and possess no spell casting powers from experience levels 1 through 8.

At experience level 9, “the whispers” begin and they can meditate and pray directly to their patron immortal power (demon lord, goddess, Great Old One, etc.) for spells. Because these spells are received through meditation, they are in general accordance with the spell casting rules described for clerics in the game.

Afflictive spells can be cast upon any target, for any reason. The chaotic evil immortal will actually be quite amused if an angered

anti-paladin casts a deadly spell upon an errant minion who has failed an important task!

Importantly however, anti-paladins are inherently selfish and live only for self-preservation. This narcissistic nature is 100% tied up in the unholy pact they have made as a representative champion of their chosen immortal. As such they can never cast beneficial spells on anyone but themselves; even beneficial area of effect spells must include the anti-paladin in their area. Otherwise, the beneficial spell will fail and be wasted in the casting.

As examples:

- **A Cure Light Wounds spell** cast by an anti-paladin would need to be cast on the anti-paladin himself, only. Even if he desperately wanted to save an ally with this spell, casting it upon someone else would result in failure.
- **A Cause Light Wounds spell**, however, could be cast upon any target with impunity.
- Although a **Resist Cold spell** has a range of “Touch” (implying it can be cast on an ally or the self), the spell would only work properly if the anti-paladin cast it upon himself.
- **A Cure Blindness spell** would only work if cast upon the anti-paladin, curing his own blindness.
- **A Cause Blindness spell** however could affect anyone.
- *(Etc.)*

The Game Master can decide upon odd situations which arise in play on a case-by-case basis. Focus not on punishing the player, but rather on being consistent with the spirit of these rulings.

There are no limits to which spells an anti-paladin can pray for; if it's on the clerical spell list, an anti-paladin can receive it. Reversed spells (Blight, Cause Wounds,

Curse, etc.) tend to be favored by NPCs however because their casting is more reliable overall due to the above-mentioned restrictions.



Spells Available by Experience Level

Specifically, anti-paladins can cast the following numbers of spells:

- **Experience Levels 1 to 8:** No spell casting ability.
- **Experience Level 9:** 1 1st-level spell (1-L1).
- **Experience Level 10:** 2-L2.
- **Experience Level 11:** 2-L1, 1-L2.
- **Experience Level 12:** 2-L1, 2-L2.
- **Experience Level 13:** 2-L1, 2-L2, 1-L3.
- **Experience Level 14:** 3-L1, 2-L2, 1-L3.
- **Experience Level 15:** 3-L1, 2-L2, 1-L3, 1-L4.
- **Experience Level 16:** 3-L1, 3-L2, 1-L3, 1-L4.
- **Experience Level 17:** 3-L1, 3-L2, 2-L3, 1-L4.
- **Experience Level 18:** 3-L1, 3-L2, 3-L3, 1-L4.
- **Experience Level 19:** 3-L1, 3-L2, 3-L3, 2-L4.
- **Experience Level 20+:** 3-L1, 3-L2, 3-L3, 3-L4.

Maximum theoretical spell casting power is attained at experience level 20, and no higher numbers of memorizable spells will ever occur.

Anti-paladins are not clerics, and they gain no bonus spells for high Wisdom.

Anti-paladins never gain 5th-, 6th-, or 7th-level spells.

For the purposes of range, duration, and other spell factors, an anti-paladin's spell caster level is equal to his or her experience level minus 8. This means that a level 9 anti-paladin casts as would a level 1 cleric, a level 10 anti-paladin casts as would a level 2 cleric, and so forth.

The Malefactor's Most Dire Glories: Anti-Paladin Special Abilities

Due to their unholy pact with a foul immortal power, anti-paladins receive several unique special abilities above and beyond their potential for spell casting.

These abilities include:

I Unholy Fortitude

This major passive ability is gained at experience level 1.

An anti-paladin always has saving throw target numbers that are equivalent to a fighter of the same experience level.

However, an anti-paladin always gains a +2 bonus to all saving throw rolls. For

example a saving throw roll of 13 would be treated as a 15 before any other modifiers are applied.

This ability mirrors a lawful good paladin's holy fortitude ability.

II

Chaos Warrior's Arsenal of the Arcane

This minor passive ability is gained at experience level 1.

The anti-paladin can use any magic items which are usable by fighters.

They cannot use clerical spell scrolls, but they can use protection scrolls as fighters can.

Unlike paladins, anti-paladins are not oathbound to limit the number of magic items which they can possess.

III

Vampiric Healing

This conditional ability is gained at experience level 1.

Vampiric healing is similar to a paladin's "lay on hands" ability, but it is weaker and more limited.

Like a paladin, an anti-paladin can magically heal himself once a day. The maximum healing amount is 2 hit points of damage per experience level; therefore a level 8 anti-paladin could heal up to 16 points of damage.

However, the spell-like effect requires touching a helpless living creature. The

creature might be a willing servitor, a shackled prisoner, a paralyzed enemy, an unconscious hero, etc.



The vampiric touch cannot occur during combat, and it cannot ever be induced against a resistant, conscious opponent. Non-living creatures, such as golems and the undead, cannot be the victims of this spell because they have no life force. Evil extra-planar creatures (demons, devils, etc.) cannot be drained, but good and

neutral extra-planar creatures can be ... if one can make them helpless first, that is!

The helpless victim suffers damage, with no saving throw, equal to the amount that the anti-paladin healed for. The anti-paladin *can* draw more healing out of a victim than the victim's hit point total might indicate. For example, an ultra-powerful level 20 anti-paladin could heal himself for 40 hit points while draining an imprisoned maiden. The maiden, a normal human with only 3 hit points, would be slain and reduced to ash as a result of the vampiric healing.

Vampiric healing cannot be bestowed on an ally, as that goes against the anti-paladin's nature of selfish supremacy.

IV

Detection of Good Auras, Creatures, and Entities

This power is gained at experience level 1.

By concentrating, the anti-paladin can detect good, somewhat equivalent to casting the clerical spell. The anti-paladin can walk and move normally, but cannot perform major actions while using this power; this means that he cannot attack or cast spells, and being attacked would negate the ability until he could refocus.

To avoid this power being “always on” (Player: “As soon as possible I always start concentrating again,” etc.) the detection can only be attempted 3 times per day, with a maximum duration of 6 turns per attempt. Range of detection is 60’.

Beginning at experience level 6, the anti-paladin has a chance (equal to his current experience level x 5%) to determine the true nature of any detected good, as either Chaotic, Lawful, or Neutral Good.

V

Aura of Unholy Protection



This powerful “always on” ability is gained at experience level 1.

The anti-paladin is surrounded by a 10’-radius Protection from Good aura, per the spell, with a permanent duration.

Keep in mind that this effect prevents enchanted or extra-planar (demon, deva, djinn, elemental, etc.), conjured, and summoned monsters from touching or attacking the anti-paladin in melee. But once the anti-paladin attacks such a creature, all bets are off and the protection aura is nullified (attacked creatures can defend themselves).

Carefully read the spell description and note that this effect prevents bodily contact; however such a creature could still cast spells at the anti-paladin, petrify him with a gaze, affect him with telekinesis, and so forth.

In addition to this effect, all good creatures and characters (CG, LG, or NG) within the radius suffer a -2 on all to hit rolls (melee and/or ranged) when attacking the anti-paladin.

Additionally, all good creatures and characters who attack the anti-paladin

with special attacks who cause a saving throw are disadvantaged. The anti-paladin gains an additional +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. effects from such creatures.

VI

Disease Mastery

This dual-option ability is gained at experience level 1.

For NPC anti-paladins, the Cause Disease ability is known 70% of the time, and the Disease Immunity ability is known 30% of the time. For PC anti-paladins, the decision of which power to possess is up to the choice of the player.

If the Cause Disease ability is known, the anti-paladin is capable (once every 24 hours) of causing a serious disease, by touch; a saving throw vs. death magic will negate the effect. The disease will have no effect on the first day; on the second day, it will cause a -1 penalty to all ability scores (or hit points, to hit rolls, saving throws, and damage rolls for a monster); this will become a -2 penalty on day 3, -3 on day 4, and so forth. Death will result if any ability score reaches zero, or after 18 days of contagion. A Cure Disease spell will remove the effect.

The victim's saving throw is at +4 if the anti-paladin is level 1 or 2; +3 if his level is 3 or 4; +2 if his level is 5 or 6; +1 if his level is 7 or 8; or made at no bonus if his level is 9 or higher. And of course various types of monsters (such as the undead, golems, elementals, etc.) are immune to diseases of any kind.

Killing a victim with a disease, even if the anti-paladin is not present to witness the

creature's later death, gives the anti-paladin a full experience point award for the creature slain.

If the Disease Immunity ability is known, the anti-paladin is immune to all natural and mundane monstrous diseases, including the bites of giant rats, gas spore infestation, and the touch of violet fungus branches.

At experience level 8, the Disease Immunity will also extend to powerful magical diseases, such as lycanthropy, mummy rot, and vampirism (but not energy drain).

VII

Melee Dominance vs.

Inferior Foes

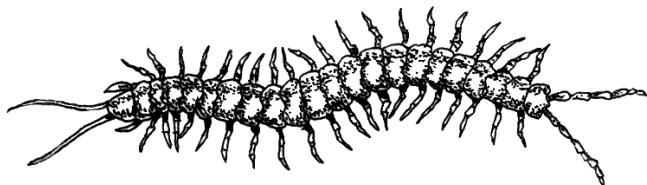
This ability is gained at experience level 2.

When in melee combat with inferior foes, the anti-paladin gains a multiple number of attacks, just as fighters do. The attack rate becomes 1 strike per experience level of the anti-paladin. For example, a level 6 anti-paladin could attack inferior enemies 6 times per melee round.

This ability does not extend to missile attacks or other abilities. It also does not extend to non-inferior foes; for example an anti-paladin surrounded by kobolds and trolls could inflict multiple strikes on the kobolds, but not on the trolls.

"Inferior foes" are those with less than one full D8 hit die. Examples include rot grubs (HD 1/8, 1 hit point), giant centipedes (HD 1/4, 1 or 2 hit points), kobolds (HD 1/2, 1 to 4 hit points), normal men (HD 1D6, 1 to 6 hit points), men-at-arms (HD 1D6+1, 2 to

7 hit points) and goblins (HD 1D8-1, 1 to 7 hit points). Orcs for example, however, are not inferior foes, because they have HD 1D8 (1 to 8 hit points).



VIII

Self-Sufficiency

This passive ability is gained at experience level 2.

You may have noticed the prevailing opinion that as incarnations of chaotic evil the anti-paladins don't necessarily like or trust one another, at least in the long term. This is because each adheres to the principles of complete self-sufficiency and a full belief in narcissistic supremacy. As a result alliances between NPC anti-paladins tend to fall apart over a period of several months, at best.

A beneficial side effect of this situation, however, involves the anti-paladin's training for new experience levels.

Anti-paladins do not need to train under a higher-level mentor to gain experience levels. As such, they do not need to pay for training either.

They still require *time* to self-train, however (typically 1 to 4 uninterrupted weeks of training in the Advanced game, and a minimum of 1 week's time regardless).

IX

Self-Mastery

This passive demonic ability is gained at experience level 2.

In a manner somewhat similar to a cavalier, an anti-paladin can gradually improve one ability score over time through level progression. The one affected ability score must be either Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, or Charisma. An NPC will have a random ability chosen for self-mastery; a PC's affected ability score would be chosen by the player. The choice cannot be remade later, and the other abilities are then forever excluded. For example, choosing Strength would only affect STR, but never DEX, CON, or CHA.

At each gained experience level, beginning at level 2, 3D10 are rolled to determine the decimal points that the chosen ability score improves by. For example an anti-paladin with STR chosen, and rolled STR 15, would roll 2D10 (let us say the rolls are a 5, a 7, and a 2) to improve his 15 STR to 15.14.

Decimal scores have no considerable game effect until they "roll over." If the above-mentioned cavalier gained enough decimal points in STR to gain STR 16, then he would gain the normal benefits of possessing 16 Strength. And the gain of decimal points would still continue thereafter.

The maximum decimal rating for any ability score improved in this way is 18.99.

The effects of 18.01 to 18.99 ability scores are as follows ...



In the Basic game:

- **Strength:** Strength scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give a +3 bonus to melee to hit rolls, and a +4 bonus to damage. Strength 18.99 gives a +4 bonus to melee to hit rolls, and a +4 bonus to damage.
- **Dexterity:** Dexterity scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give a +3 bonus to missile to hit rolls, a +4 Armor Class adjustment, and a +2 to personal initiative. Dexterity 18.99 gives a +3 bonus to missile to hit rolls, a +4 Armor Class adjustment, and a +3 to personal initiative

- **Constitution:** Constitution scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give +3 bonus hit points per hit die. Constitution 18.99 gives +4 bonus hit points per hit die.
- **Charisma:** Charisma scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give a +2 bonus to reaction rolls, a maximum of 8 henchmen, and a henchman morale rating of 10. Charisma 18.00 gives a +2 bonus to reaction rolls, a maximum of 9 henchmen, and a henchman morale rating of 11.

In the Advanced game:

- **Strength:** Strength scores of 18.01 through 18.99 are treated as a fighter's exceptional strength, per the normal rules. Anti-paladins can ultimately achieve 18.99 strength, but they cannot achieve 18/00 (maximum human exceptional strength for the fighter class).
- **Dexterity:** Dexterity scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give a +3 to personal initiative, a +3 bonus to missile to hit rolls, and a +4 Armor Class adjustment. Dexterity 18.99 gives the same bonuses, but three times every 24 hours the character can reroll a personal initiative roll during combat. The player (if the character is a PC) accepts the best result between the two rolls when this action is chosen.
- **Constitution:** Constitution scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give +2 bonus hit points per hit die for non-fighters, and +4 bonus hit points per hit die for fighters. (As a fighter sub-class, anti-paladins gain the +4 bonus.) Additionally, the character has a 99% System Shock Survival roll

rating, and a 100% Resurrection Survival roll rating. The advantages for 18.99 Constitution are largely the same, but System Shock Survival improves to 100%; also, for further level advancements (up through level 9) any “1” rolls (on 1D10) for added hit points are rerolled. This “reroll all 1s” effect is not retroactively applied to hit points gained through earlier experience levels, however. Lastly, upon attaining 18.99 Constitution, the character immediately gains a permanent +2 bonus to his hit point total.

- **Charisma:** Charisma scores of 18.01 through 18.98 give a maximum of 16 henchmen, +45% loyalty base, and +35% to reaction rolls. A Charisma of 18.99 gives a maximum of 18 henchmen, +45% loyalty base, and +40% to reaction rolls.



In the same way that evil clerics can turn paladins, anti-paladins can turn paladins as well.

Only one turning attempt per paladin can be made per day. An unholy symbol is required.

The anti-paladin’s turning ability is equivalent to that of a cleric of the same experience level, minus 2. This means that a level 3 anti-paladin can turn a paladin using the same numbers as a level 1 cleric; a level 4 anti-paladin can turn using the same numbers as a level 2 cleric; and so forth.

Since (per the Advanced rules) a level 1 paladin is turned at the same power level as mummies are, this means that a paladin cannot be turned until the anti-paladin is at least level 4. And even then, a 20 on 1D20 must be rolled.

If the turning is effective, the paladin will uncontrollably flee for only 1D4 melee rounds. This is because despite the anti-paladin’s demonic power, paladins are protected from evil, and anti-paladins are not as powerful as evil clerics are in this regard.

The paladin will not drop weapons, a shield, or other carried items while fleeing. If the paladin is attacked or afflicted by anyone, the turning effect is immediately dispelled.

The specific abilities are as follows:

- A level 4 anti-paladin can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 or 2.
- A level 5 anti-paladin can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 4.

X

Nemeses of Paladins

This powerful yet situational ability is learned at experience level 4.

- A level 6 anti-paladin can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 6.
- A level 7 anti-paladin can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 7.
- A level 8 anti-paladin can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 8.
- This scale continues thereafter; a level 13 anti-paladin can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 13.

Note that the minimum D20 target roll is 4, regardless of the anti-paladin's power. This means that there are no automatic "T" turn effects vs. paladins, and a D20 roll of 1, 2, or 3 will always fail.

XI

Nightmare Steed

This epic signature ability is gained at experience level 4.

It is the inverse of the paladin's ability to call for a divinely-protected warhorse; the normal paladin warhorse rules and restrictions apply. The anti-paladin can call for a minor nightmare steed (as opposed to a paladin's divine warhorse), which despite being "minor" is nevertheless a very deadly creature. The nightmare will be sent from the lower planes by the anti-paladin's immortal protector.

As per the paladin rules, the mount must be called for, quested for, and won. The quest will be designed by the Game Master. Allies can assist along the way, but the taming of the nightmare (taming, not combat) will be the sole responsibility of the

anti-paladin. Questing for a nightmare is called "Hag Hunting," and sages believe that nightmares are intelligent because they harbor the imprisoned spirits of night hags or evil witches. It is said that nightmares can speak the chaotic evil tongue when they choose to do so. The taming process might even involve (for example) a game of riddles between the nightmare and the anti-paladin, or some strange kind of arcane challenge in which the anti-paladin proves his or her skills and prowess — and, yes, willingness to do evil — to the hag-spirit.



Once won, the anti-paladin's nightmare will bond for life. It will not allow anyone else to ride it. The nightmare will be immortal until slain; it can attain any age.

Fully mature nightmares are extremely powerful (refer to the 1977 bestiary), and the lethality of the anti-paladin's steed will be limited for purposes of game balance. The steed will be a young mare if called at level 4, and will then gain additional hit points and powers each time the anti-paladin attains a new experience level.

The nightmare's increasing powers will be as follows:

- **At Experience Level 4:** Hit Dice 3+3, minimum hit points 18. Armor Class 2, flying speed 150', attack damage 1D3 hoof / 1D3 hoof / 1D3 fangs. Cannot exhale smoking clouds. Cannot enter the Astral Plane or the Ethereal Plane.
- **At Experience Level 5:** Hit Dice 4+2, minimum hit points 22 (or +4 hit points if already summoned at level 4). Armor Class 1, flying speed 180', attack damage 1D4 hoof / 1D4 hoof / 1D4 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once per week. Cannot enter the Astral Plane or the Ethereal Plane.
- **At Experience Level 6:** Hit Dice 5+1, minimum hit points 26 (or +4 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class 0, flying speed 210', attack damage 1D4+1 hoof / 1D4+1 hoof / 1D6 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once every 24 hours. Cannot enter the Astral Plane or the Ethereal Plane.
- **At Experience Level 7:** Hit Dice 6, minimum hit points 30 (or +4 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -1, flying speed 240', attack damage 1D6+1 hoof / 1D6+1 hoof / 1D6+1 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once every 8 hours. Can enter the Astral

Plane once a month, for up to 1 hour. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a month, for up to 1 hour.

- **At Experience Level 8:** Hit Dice 6+3, minimum hit points 33 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -2, flying speed 270', attack damage 2D4+1 hoof / 2D4+1 hoof / 2D4 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once every hour. Can enter the Astral Plane once a week, for up to 2 hours. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a week, for up to 6 hours. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a week, for up to 6 hours.
- **At Experience Level 9:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 36 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -3, flying speed 300', attack damage 2D4+2 hoof / 2D+2 hoof / 2D4 fangs (the maximum for a nightmare). Can exhale a smoking cloud three times every hour. Can enter the Astral Plane once a day, for up to 12 hours. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a day, for up to 12 hours.
- **At Experience Level 10:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 39 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -4 (the maximum for a nightmare), flying speed 330'. Can exhale a smoking cloud at will. Can enter the Astral Plane three times a day. Can enter the Ethereal Plane 3 times a day.
- **At Experience Level 11:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 42 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). A normal nightmare in all respects.
- **At Experience Level 12:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 45 (or +3

hit points if already summoned at a lower level).

- **At Experience Level 13:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 48 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level).
- **At Experience Level 14:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 51 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level).
- **At Experience Level 15+:** Hit Dice 6+6, hit points 54 (the maximum for a nightmare).

XII

Martial Prowess

This ability is gained at experience level 7.

Just as paladins and fighters do, anti-paladins gain the ability to perform multiple melee attacks against all non-inferior foes at level 7. (Refer to the related ability, Melee Dominance vs. Inferior Foes.) Technically, this ability applies against all enemies that have 1D8 HD or higher.

The ability does not extend to missile attacks.

Beginning at experience level 7, the anti-paladin can make 2 attacks every other round. This means that during odd-numbered melee rounds (for example), the anti-paladin would attack once per round; and then during even-numbered melee rounds he would attack twice per round. This is referred to as a 3/2 attack rate.

Beginning at experience level 13, the anti-paladin can make 2 melee attacks every single round. This is referred to as a 2/1 attack rate.

XIII

Demonic Vigil

This powerful ability is gained at experience level 14.

Upon reaching level 14, an anti-paladin has exceeded the highest level attained by an historical Chaos Knight (namely, Lord Mordred). As a result, the character will be protected and watched over by a physically present summoned demon while meditating for spells, but not while sleeping. The demon is always sent by the anti-paladin's immortal protector.

The type of demon guardian sent is dependent upon the anti-paladin's current experience level, as follows:

- **Experience Level 14:** Vulture Demon (70%) or Fly Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 15:** Leaping Demon (50%) or Fly Demon (50%).
- **Experience Level 16:** Toad Demon (70%) or Ebony Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 17:** Hound Demon (70%) or Toad Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 18:** Boar Demon (70%) or Hound Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 19:** Serpentine Demoness (70%) or Boar Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 20+:** The player (for a PC) or GM (for an NPC) can choose 1 demon from the following options: Vulture Demon, Toad Demon, Hound Demon, Boar Demon, or Serpentine Demoness. The huge demon will have maximum hit points, as well as +1 bonus to hit and +2 to damage.

The demon will appear when the anti-paladin begins meditating for spell recovery, and will end when the meditation ends. A demonic vigil will only be performed for an anti-paladin once every 24 hours, at most.

The summoned demon will not take orders from anyone, and will not leave the anti-paladin's side. It will attack and fight to the death if either it, or the anti-paladin, is attacked; but it will not defend the anti-paladin's allies.

When meditation peacefully ends, the demon will be unsummoned. If meditation ends violently, the demon will fight alongside the anti-paladin as an ally. If meditation ends for a non-peaceful but non-violent circumstance (e.g., the sound of boulders falling in the distance startles the anti-paladin out of his trance), the demon will remain for 1D6 rounds — to make certain that there is no threat of harm to the anti-paladin — and will then vanish.

The Curse of the Abhorred: Anti-Paladin Vulnerabilities

To balance their considerable powers, anti-paladins have vulnerabilities and weaknesses as well.

These weaknesses keep the class from becoming overpowered, and should not be revoked under any circumstances.

I

Exclusivity Requirement

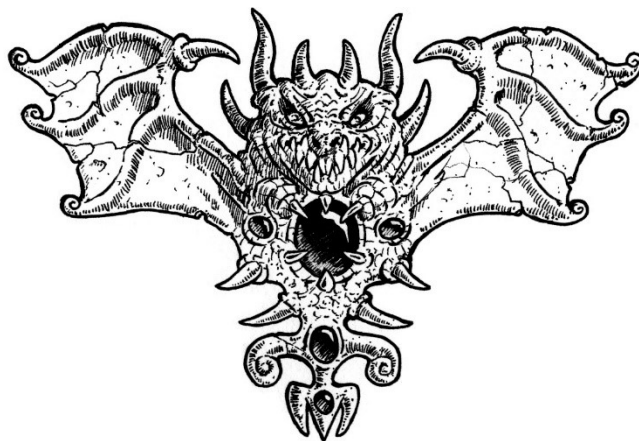
Anti-paladin demi-humans are never multi-classed. Also, human anti-paladins can never be characters with two classes.

II

Bonded Sigil of the Unholy

The anti-paladin must carry, wear, or wield an unholy symbol (appropriate to the immortal patron) to successfully use the following powers: compelling undead, turning paladins, taming a nightmare, praying for spells, and casting spells.

The symbol can be worn around the neck in order to keep the hands free for weaponry, shields, and spell casting. It must be visible and exposed, and of decent size, so that the anti-paladin is identified as a bold and empowered champion of chaos and evil.



A wise enemy of an anti-paladin will try to destroy the unholy symbol, of course. The GM might rule that if a knowledgeable foe attacks the anti-paladin, and a natural 20 is rolled to hit, there is a 15% chance that in addition to normal damage the unholy symbol itself will be hit and destroyed (regardless of the material it is made of). The legend, actually true, that this is a vulnerable spot for an anti-paladin is widely known in the superstitions of the realms. Therefore it stands to reason that Player Characters will know of this weakness and will be able to exploit it. Assume that all intelligent good-aligned creatures and characters will attempt to destroy the unholy symbol with every melee or missile attack made against the anti-paladin directly.

There's nothing logically stopping an anti-paladin from literally covering his entire personage (helm, neck, shield, umm ... codpiece ...) with garish and heaping unholy symbols to prevent any potential disempowerment. And some actually do so! But to be reasonable, the GM should rule that (much like the conflicting auras of magical rings) an anti-paladin can carry no more than two *empowered* unholy symbols at one time. Any others that are carried will be merely symbolic and ineffective.

Anti-paladins also tend to keep at least one additional unholy symbol in their lair, in relatively easy reach.

A wise anti-paladin, bereft of his unholy symbol, will likely retreat and live to fight another day.

III

The Essence of Evil

Anti-paladins can be damaged by vials of holy water, just as the undead can.

As a logical turnabout on this state of affairs, anti-paladins can also use vials of unholy water as weapons. Unholy water will damage paladins, as well as extra-planar creatures of good alignment. However unholy water will not damage non-paladin good-aligned PCs, or good-aligned creatures who do not have an extra-planar origin. This is because holy and unholy water wound the planar essences inherent in the cosmic ideals (Good and Evil), not necessarily the flesh; and these creatures, paladins, and anti-paladins are vessels of that essence.

Anti-paladins cannot craft unholy water themselves (that requires a temple font or basin), but they can purchase vials from unholy temples, even those that are dedicated to other immortals besides the anti-paladin's patron.

IV

Hated by the Icons of Good

The anti-paladin is loathed by empowered intelligent monsters who are champions of good. This category includes the various angels, archangels, devas, ki-rins, lammasus, and shedus, among others. Basically, anything that is extra-planar, good, intelligent and quite powerful will (a) detect the anti-paladin for what he is, and (b) hate his guts. Such creatures will

attack the anti-paladin and his allies on sight, and will fight to kill.

And now those high experience levels for ultra-powerful Chaos Knights seem like a faraway and impossible dream, don't they ...

Naturally, anti-paladins either exterminate such creatures if they are able (preferably from a distance, and using poison), or run like mad to save themselves from utter annihilation.

V

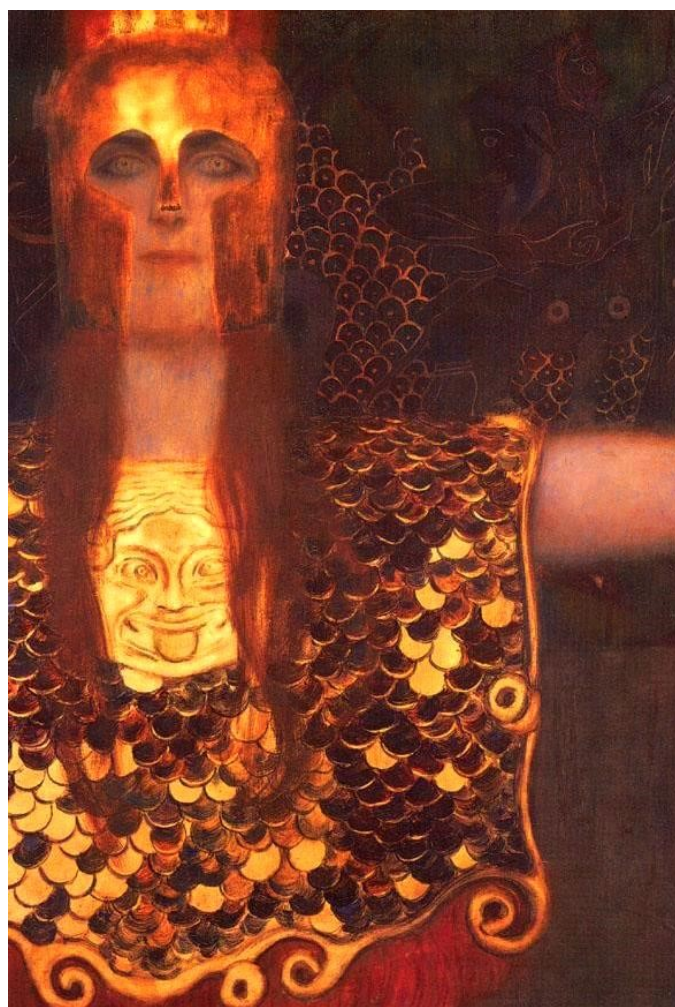
Nemesis of the Holy

Anti-paladins can be turned by good-aligned clerics and paladins. The turning effect will only last for 1D4 melee rounds at most, and is basically the same as the Nemesis of Paladins ability (which allows the anti-paladin to attempt to turn paladins).

Remember that only one turning attempt per paladin or anti-paladin can be made per day, and an unholy symbol is required.

This creates a brutal back-and-forth effect between mortal foes; an evenly-matched paladin and anti-paladin will almost certainly try to turn one another, and one or the other might succeed! But it's basically a case of "the unstoppable force meeting the immovable object," and neither side can gain a turning advantage for very long.

Anti-paladins have, perhaps, the most to fear from powerful good clerics, because the cleric can attempt to turn the anti-paladin and the anti-paladin does not have the ultimate power to reciprocate.



VI

Tumultuous Alliance of Evil

There are several rules and guidelines which govern the anti-paladin's ability to associate with others. The Chaos Knight is an irredeemable lone wolf who abhors submission to other powers. And yet, everyone needs minions to do their evil deeds, and at times even tumultuous friendship can exist ... although such dalliances tend to be doomed from the start.

Anti-paladins, in the long term, can only freely associate with chaotic evil, lawful

evil, and neutral evil characters and monsters. They can consort with intelligent neutrals (CN, LN, TN) when needed, but only to corrupt them or to serve an evil end. They can never knowingly consort with good people or creatures (CG, LG, NG) unless they are deceitfully planning their destruction, which is actually a fairly common situation.



They can consort with unaligned creatures (unintelligent animals etc.) to commit evil acts; as an example, an anti-paladin might use tamed lions to tear his imprisoned victims apart. They can ride warhorses or use beasts of burden or whatever else, provided the creatures are not of good alignment.

Anti-paladins can never submit in the long term to another creature, unless that creature is a servitor in service to the same immortal patron.

Also any *long-term* clerical followers, henchmen, or minions must serve the same immortal as the anti-paladin does, or there

will eventually be violence. For example an anti-paladin in service to the Ulthrogorgon would only tolerate the presence of allied clerics of Shub-Niggurath on a single adventure basis, or a month-long expedition at most. Player Character anti-paladins are welcome to push these limits if they like, and in doing so they will find that something always goes very wrong when the NPCs try to kill, imprison, or betray the anti-paladin because he is simply too demonic and powerful to be trusted.

Also, an anti-paladin cannot have long-term followers who are anti-paladins themselves. The reason for this is that the lower NPC anti-paladin would be entering a hierarchy with the higher anti-paladin, a form of submission to another mortal, which is a forbidden tenet. However, several anti-paladins who belong to the same knightly order, worshipping the same immortal, can bond together for a single Unholy Crusade. The crusade will have a specific evil goal; for example, Mordred's quest was to "Destroy Camelot by slaying Arthur, and too, take Queen Guinevere and the entire kingdom as my own." The crusade can last for up to 4D4 weeks before rivalries arise between NPCs and the alliance falls apart. Unholy Crusades are rarely successful due to their grandiose ambition; but they *always* leave a significant amount of wild destruction in their wake.

This is simply the abject nature of pure chaos and pure evil; the forces of destruction cannot ever endure in terms of any alliance, faithful sense of teamwork, or mortal compromise.

VII

Unholy Sacraments of Chaos

Much as a paladin must give away treasure to worthy temples and innocents, an anti-paladin must sacrifice non-magical treasures to the immortal patron. The sacrifice of treasures is termed a Burnt Offering.

To perform a Burnt Offering, the anti-paladin must invoke the immortal power's name whenever non-magical treasures are won. In game terms, this is an automatic action; the anti-paladin is understood to invoke the name whenever new non-magical treasures are won. The prayer can be silent if the anti-paladin is engaging in subterfuge, but most frequently it is whispered.

When the Burnt Offering is invoked, 10% of the won non-magical treasure evaporates in halos of cold, violet flames; the items are claimed by the extra-planar immortal as a sacrifice to its glory (and they are added to its hoard). This effect is somewhat "gamist" and arbitrary, and will require GM adjudication to make sense of various circumstances. For example if an anti-paladin wins a share equaling 1,000 gold pieces, 100 of the gold pieces will vanish in cold flames and he will be left with 900 remaining. But if his share of the treasure is a necklace worth 1,800 gold pieces, the flames will damage the necklace — it will become pale and somewhat brittle — and it will only be worth (1800 minus 180 equals) 1,620 gold pieces as a result.

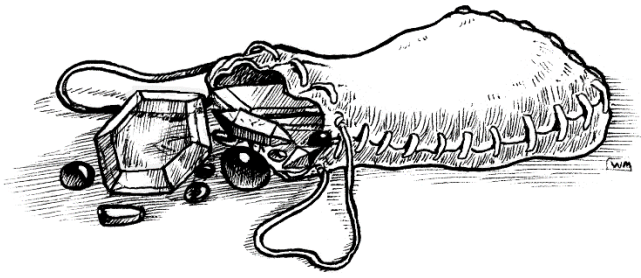
Magical treasures are never affected; they are the trophies of the anti-paladin's evil deeds in the mortal realm.

"Unwon treasures" are not affected either. This means that if a temporary ally pays the anti-paladin 8,000 gold pieces, a Burnt Offering will not take place because the anti-paladin did not win the treasure by either (a) killing someone or something, or (b) finding unguarded treasure. Similarly if an anti-paladin sells a magic item for gold, the gold will not be affected by the invocation. (It was not hard-won, it was a mundane payment.) Game Master discretion must rule in borderline cases.

If a Player Character anti-paladin wishes to tempt fate and to cease with these irksome automatic invocations, this can be done, but it is perilous. Let us say for example that the anti-paladin is on a quest to obtain a jeweled crown for a mighty dragon, and the dragon has insisted that the crown must be received undamaged. The anti-paladin's player might choose to not invoke a Burnt Offering when the crown is seized.

If this is done, the anti-paladin stops gaining experience points until the invocations are re-enacted; and then, the immortal patron will demand arrears! As an example, let us say that the crown was worth 50,000 gold pieces; this means that the immortal has been cheated out of a Burnt Offering worth 5,000 gold pieces. If the anti-paladin later discovered 20,000 gold pieces, the next invoked Burnt Offering will result in a loss of 5,000 gold pieces (for the crown's arrears), plus 2,000 gold pieces (10% of the 20,000), leaving the anti-paladin with an undamaged crown to give to a dragon, along with 13,000 gold pieces for himself.

The demon must have his filthy lucre. Such is the price of blood-won gold in the dismal world of the chaotic evil champion!



VIII

Accursed Exaltation

Just as a paladin who falls from the lawful good ideal loses all of his divine powers, an anti-paladin who rises out of chaotic evil loses all of his unholy powers. There is no chance for “redemption”; the character becomes a fighter of the same experience level. The fighter status is permanent and cannot be changed, even with a Wish.

Reasonable and merciful GMs might well rule that this severe restriction does not apply to situations of uncontrollable alignment change, such as that caused (temporarily) by a magical helm. But even in that case, if an anti-paladin performs good deeds against evil creatures he will need to repent by undertaking a dangerous quest in the name of his immortal patron. An example of a quest might be to burn down a good lord’s castle, or to abduct an elven princess, or to slay a bronze dragon, and so on and so forth. Once the quest is completed — and allies can certainly assist the anti-paladin in the dangerous and lucrative mission — forgiveness will be offered, and anti-paladin class status will be restored.

IX

Establishing an Unholy Stronghold

Beginning at experience level 9, an anti-paladin (a wealthy one, at least) will have the option of establishing an unholy stronghold. This is mostly a matter of self-protection, however, because the anti-paladin’s chaotic evil nature will be known far and wide by this time. Few if any will care to willingly join his murderous cause.



An anti-paladin will not attract men-at-arms to his cause by establishing a stronghold. He will also not attract a population of normal men and women seeking protection, who could be tithed.

Nevertheless high-level NPC anti-paladins will typically seek to establish a stronghold as soon as they can so that they can fill it with traps, protective minions, escape tunnels, dungeon cells for imprisonment, and so forth.

X

Demonic Glorification

When an anti-paladin dies and his soul essence is taken by his patron immortal, he will be tortuously crafted to become an Instrument of Vengeance. This means that he will be reshaped to become a (Non-Player Character!) demon, and sent to the Prime Material Plane to either kill good creatures, or be annihilated in the trying.

The demonic flesh-crafting process involved in creating an Instrument is extremely agonizing, and it requires 666 days of toil as the immortal's servitors boil the soul's essence down into an ichor, and infuse the ichor into animated necrotic flesh, which then must grow in a colossal she-demon incubator (called a "Mother of Chaos") while feeding upon lesser evil creatures (such as lost souls, larvae, and manes demonlings).

When the fully-crafted demon — which was once the anti-paladin — is sent to the Material Plane, it will bear a fragmentary and nightmarish collection of the mortal anti-paladin's memories as its own. Most likely, the enraged demon will either kill every weak thing it can find in a vicious rage; or, it will find a way to gather followers, and then track and hunt down the people who destroyed its mortal form.

And in case you were wondering, yes this means that when a PC anti-paladin dies, it will rise as an NPC demon in 666 game days to hunt any surviving members of the party!





The power level and type of the manifested Instrument of Vengeance will depend on the anti-paladin's experience level when slain, as follows:

- **Experience Level 1, Lower Tier (meaning that the anti-paladin was only 1-50% of the way through the XP range for experience level 1):** The immortal looks down on the anti-paladin as a "Miserable Failure." The manifested demon is a Manes Demonling only, and will almost certainly be exterminated.
- **Experience Level 1, High Tier (meaning that the anti-paladin was 51-99% of the way through the XP range for experience level 1):** The immortal looks down on the anti-paladin as a "Pathetic Failure." The manifested demon is a Wretched

Demonling. Perhaps it will be able to prey upon a few good men-at-arms, if it is careful ...

- **Experience Level 2, Lower Tier:** The immortal believes that the anti-paladin suffered an "Unworthy Defeat." The manifested demon is a Quasit. There is a fair chance that the Quasit might be bound to an evil NPC spell caster as a familiar and advisor.
- **Experience Level 2, High Tier:** "Pyrrhic Defeat." Manifested as a Rutterkin Demonling. At this power level and above, the demon will likely be able to kill a fair number of good-aligned people before it eventually falls in battle.
- **Experience Level 3:** "Worthy Defeat." Manifested as a Shadow Demon.
- **Experience Level 4:** "Inglorious Victory." Manifested as either a Fly Demon (50%) or a Vulture Demon (50%).
- **Experience Level 5:** "Costly Victory." Manifested as a Lesser Cambion.
- **Experience Level 6:** "Victorious." Manifested as a Leaping Demon.
- **Experience Level 7:** "Victorious and Triumphant." Manifested as a Toad Demon if the anti-paladin was male, or as an Ebony Demoness if the anti-paladin was female.
- **Experience Level 8:** "Glorious Victory." Manifested as an Incubus if the anti-paladin was male, or as a Succubus if the anti-paladin was female. The demon has a 10% chance of establishing a lair and retinue servitors for 1D12 months before pursuing its prey.
- **Experience Level 9:** "Triumphator." Manifested as a Hound Demon. 20% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 10:** "Grand Triumphator." Manifested as a Boar

Demon if the anti-paladin was male, or as a Serpentine Demoness if the anti-paladin was female. 30% chance of establishing a lair.

- **Experience Level 11:** “Glorious Triumphator.” Manifested as a Baronial Incubus or Succubus. 40% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 12:** “Illustrious Triumphator.” Manifested as a Death Stealer (50%) or Pyre Demon (50%). 50% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 13:** “Grand Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Greater Pyre Demon (Balorian) with a minimum of 5 hit points per hit die. 60% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 14:** “Epic Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Noble Incubus or Succubus with a minimum of 6 hit points per hit die. 70% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 15:** “Mythic Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Baronial Cambion. 80% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 16+:** “Legendary Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Cambion Marquis. 90% chance of establishing a lair.



If the demon is slain, its soul is sent back to the immortal power for re-crafting. However, this time the process will take

666 months, not 666 days, which will result in a berserk and fearless madness ...

XI

Destiny of Damnation

The grimmest vulnerability of an anti-paladin is this: The immortal power will gleefully empower an anti-paladin with unholy might, turning him into a vessel of nigh-unstoppable destruction. However, chaotic evil powers also forever refuse to entertain any notion of forgiveness, mercy, or acceptance of the weak.

What this means is this: If an anti-paladin is ever slain, he is forever dead. He cannot be resurrected. Even a Wish spell will not return his soul to his body, because his soul has already been forever claimed by the immortal power (as per the Demonic Glorification rules, above). The actual dread pact was made many years ago when the young adult anti-paladin swore his soul to the immortal in the name of earthly power.

This is why anti-paladins are sometimes seen as craven cowards, because they absolutely do not want to die! This is also why many high-level anti-paladins seek to achieve a form of undeath, as a way to maintain sentient survival and to cheat their master of the soul ... for a time.

This is a permanent curse, which balances the might of the anti-paladin class.

* * *

Have fun playing one, and good luck! May you never run into an imperious ki-rin, bolting down from the clouds.

Fearing the Reaper: Minions and Guardians of the Chaos Knights

Considering the anti-paladin's terror of death, it logically follows that they will seek to protect themselves with expendable minions whenever possible. Player Character anti-paladins will need to employ hard-won evil henchmen, tamed mounts, subdued monsters, or (if they are lucky) perhaps a subdued evil dragon, or even a summoned demon, or maybe an ifrit brought forth from out of an Iron Flask. These allies will be won through the course of play; they will not ever be granted freely or arbitrarily by the Game Master.



Non-Player Character anti-paladins, however, will almost always be surrounded by evil thralls and servitors. This is because a PC anti-paladin has the other PCs, chaotic evil or not, to protect him to some extent. The NPC anti-paladin however is going to be outnumbered by the lethal PCs unless he has some protectors. After all, a crafty and classic arch-villain always needs *lots* of nasty minions to avoid certain death at the hands of determined and angry heroes.

In other words: This section of the supplement *only applies to Non-Player Characters*. Sorry, PC Chaos Knights! When you want evil creatures to serve you, you will need to fend for yourselves.

Here is a quick summary of the types of creatures that will be found protecting an anti-paladin NPC. The numbers of such creatures will be up to the Game Master's discretion, but they will not be found in enormous legions (because anti-paladins actually make terrible leaders, and no one will ever trust them for very long).



- **Experience Level 1+:** Brigand (Thrall), Manes Demonling (Servitor), Pirate (Warrior Minion), Svart Goblin (Minion), Vulture Man (Scout)

- **Experience Level 2+:** Drow Minion (Advisor), Frogman (Warrior Minion), Ghoul (Minion), Gnoll (Warrior Minion), Troglodyte (Warrior)
- **Experience Level 3+:** Bugbear (Warrior), Drow Warrior (Advisor / Warrior), Harpy (Scout), Lesser Cyclops (Warrior), Ogre (Warrior), White Dvergr (Scout), Very Young Black Dragon (Protected)
- **Experience Level 4+:** Blur Pixie (Scout), Drow Swordsman (Advisor / Warrior), Gargoyle (Guardian), Ghost (Minion), Lesser Nightmare (Mount), Peryton (Scout), Shadow (Servitor), Very Young or Young Red Dragon (Protected), Werewolf (Guardian), Young or Sub-Adult Black Dragon (Protected)
- **Experience Level 5+:** Demon Dog (Guardian Beast), Drow Anti-Hero (Advisor / Guardian), Quasit (Familiar Liaison), Sub-Adult or Young Adult Red Dragon (Protected), Young Adult or Adult Black Dragon (Mount)
- **Experience Level 6+:** Adult Red Dragon (Mount), Drow Blade Master (Advisor / Guardian), Jackalwere (Guardian), Leucrocotta (Guardian Beast), Minotaur (Guardian), Old Black Dragon (Mount), Salamander (Guardian), Shadow Demon (Scout), Succubus / Incubus (Consort), Troll (Warrior), Various Minor Demons (Guardians)
- **Experience Level 7+:** Chimera (Guardian Beast), Draconian Basilisk (Mount), Dream Eater (Guardian), Drow Mage (Advisor / Guardian), Ettin (Guardian), Frost Giant (Guardian), Hieracosphinx (Mount), Hill Giant (Guardian), Hound Demon (Guardian), Lamia (Consort), Night Hag (Advisor), Old Red Dragon (Mount / Advisor), Roper (Guardian Beast), Spirit Naga (Guardian), Toad Demon (Guardian),

Very Old Black Dragon (Mount),
Vulture Demon (Guardian)



- **Experience Level 8+:** Ancient Black Dragon (Mount), Boar Demon (Guardian), Elder Night Hag (Advisor), Gorgonian Chimera (Guardian Beast), Lamia Noble (Consort), Pyre Demon (Guardian), Serpentine Demoness (Guardian), Will-o'-Wisp (Guardian), Very Old Red Dragon (Mount / Advisor)
- **Experience Level 9+:** Greater Pyre Demon (Guardian), Knight of Saigoth (Advisor), Mated Pair of Black Dragons (Mounts / Protected)
- **Experience Level 10+:** Mated Pair of Red Dragons (Protected / Advisors), Vampire / Vampiress (Consort)
- **Experience Level 11+:** Vampire Lord / Lady Vampiress (Consort), Vampire Patriarch / Vampiress Matriarch (Consort)
- Other chaotic evil creatures can be added by the Game Master, as seems appropriate to the campaign.

Becoming Nothing:

Anti-Paladins and the

Knights of Saigoth

The Knights of Saigoth are an ancient heretical sect that is tied to the Pegana Mythos. They are undead chaotic evil knights of terrible power, similar to liches.

A typical Knight of Saigoth has Armor Class 0, Movement Rate 120' (40') or 90' (30'), Hit Dice 9D10, a minimum of 45 hit points, Magic Resistance 75%, Intelligence Average to Genius (equivalent to the anti-paladin's INT in life), unholy 18/00 Strength, and various deadly special abilities including but not limited to: Detect Invisibility,

Detect Magic, Dispel Magic, Fireball, Gate (Demonic), Power Word (Any), Symbol (Any), and Wall of Ice. The Game Master will need to develop full details for this undead horror if he or she wishes to use a Knight of Saigoth in the campaign. These foul things will pose a challenge to Player Characters of experience levels 8 and up; anyone of levels 1 through 7 will probably not stand a chance.

The rite to become a Knight of Saigoth is rather horrific. When a high-level (at least level 13) NPC, *but not Player Character*, anti-paladin is near to death there is a chance that he will be visited by a powerful banshee of the Unseelie Court. The chance is up to the Game Master, but is highly dependent upon immediate circumstances. An anti-paladin who is slain by a party of good characters will die and have his soul taken before a banshee can appear to intervene. However an anti-paladin who is trapped by a cave-in and slowly dying, or drowning alone, or dying painfully in solitude, *will* probably be visited by the spirit.

Once the NPC anti-paladin agrees to the rite (which he almost always will), the banshee's hymn will then bring forth a magically unearthed dead body, which might be years old or recently slain. The anti-paladin must eat of the dead body's flesh and then swear to forever serve the Priesthood of Saigoth. When this is done the banshee will scream, fatally separating the anti-paladin's soul from his body. The anti-paladin's immortal patron will be cheated of the soul, and the banshee's ensnaring power will stitch the soul into the corpse which has been unearthed. The corpse's remaining flesh will wither away, to be only partially reformed into a vile and twisted countenance.

A magical mask will be conjured and seared into the animated corpse's face. In 13 nights' time, these tortured remnants will arise as a Knight of Saigoth, fully undead yet also possessing all of the fallen anti-paladin's memories. The mask can be removed by the Knight of Saigoth at any time, but doing so will cause it to suffer 15 points of immediate damage. This damage cannot be healed in any way until the mask is returned to its former station.



Here is the relevant additional lore from Castle Oldskull supplement PM1, The Pegana Mythos, for those Game Masters who wish to know more of the forgotten Saigoth heresy:

Of the Dread Knights of Saigoth

(The Speakers of Terror unto Mung)

There are conflicting beliefs among Men, in regards to the ultimate fate of the Gods and Time when The End is come. Most believe in “orthodox” fashion that when all Men are dead and gone, and the Worlds come to an end, that Mana-Yood-Sushai shall have no need for Gods or Men or Time itself. The Gods of Pegana will be exiled, or perhaps (according to heresy) even slain; their playthings Men will be no more; and the Great Hound of Time itself, as the last living thing, will collapse feasting upon itself in meaninglessness and die. Then, Mana-Yood-Sushai will journey into other realities, perhaps avoiding the spirits of Fate and Chance, and perhaps creating new Gods in his own image as he had always secretly desired.

A very different belief, however, was held by the heretics known as the Saigoths. The Saigoths believed that the Great Hound of Time will in The End finally be unleashed, and will battle with Mung the Lord of Death for two days and two nights. Mung's cruel sword will finally fail him, and Time will tear his throat, thus proving that Time is the true immortal and is greater than all the Gods but one.

There was once a Priesthood of Saigoth (regarding the plural Saigoths, the people, as a singular entity and soul, one mind and one conviction), beneath the great mountain of Trehagobol. These priests not only believed in the Heresy of Immortal Time; they enslaved the peoples around them, falsely taking the name of Sish (who did not praise them, or ever answer their prayers), and creating their own kingdom in which bloody-jawed Time was worshipped as the Mightiest and Most Monstrous Beast. Sacrifices were made, severing the lives of the unworthy in order

to bargain for far longer lives of the “pure.” And indeed, the priests who believed in this foul practice and who performed blood sacrifice in the name of Time did live for centuries. But this priesthood lasted barely an extended generation, for while the priests were powerful warriors and blood-princes they were not instilled with any of the true and divine magics from the Gods. For the Gods had turned from them, and they were regarded by all as an unholy and unworthy people.

Nevertheless, their martial and deceptive powers upon the earth were considerable.

Before they could all be hunted down and wiped out by holier Men, however, some few of the arch-priests fled into the nether. There — seeking arcane and necromantic powers where divine magic had failed them — they made allegiance with the last of the Lich Maidens. (Which Maiden it was, some sayeth Hagath, others Annis, is unknown.) They twisted even the arts of Mung, who sent his own minions and the Monsters against them. But twenty-three of these arcane warriors of undeath endured these trials and torments, and rose in the World of Oldskull as terrible princely powers of wrath and hate.

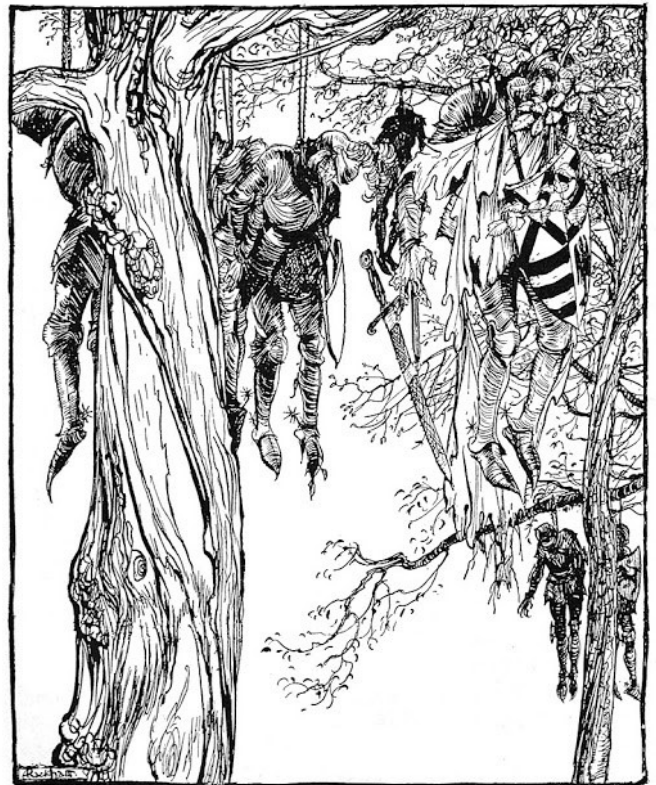
These twenty-three were the Knights of Saigoth. They are warrior Liches of dreadful might, and each is worshipped by a death cult, lost in a different corner of the world. In the intervening thousands of years, eleven of the Knights of Saigoth have been destroyed. Twelve remain.

While their powers have waned, their hatred has not. They resist spells, instill terror, create walls of ice, hurl fire, and summon abyssal demons to their cause. Worst of all, they dwell in strongholds well-protected by death cultists, undead, guardian beasts and demons. Only the most powerful of heroes will ever dare to defy them. But surely, in their wretched temples and cultic strongholds there are

century-heaps of treasures to be had by the victorious!

Role-Playing the Anti-Paladin

Being an anti-paladin simply means being irrevocably evil. Depending on the nature of the GM’s campaign and the wishes of the player, that might mean gory and sadistic evil. Or, it might just mean cartoonish, mustache-twirling Vaudeville evil. Or, anything in between those two extremes.



As long as everyone at the table is comfortable with the mode of play and no one is being hurt or traumatized, the “level of evil” is ultimately up to the final decision of the Game Master. Play situations might

be scaled back or glossed over (not described) if things are getting too grisly in the game.

You can add a bit of sardonic flourish to the anti-paladin's personality if you like: They adore mockery and silent deception. They do not make oaths to higher powers, they make promises to themselves. They might mock paladins outright with their own secret practices; instead of a vow of silence, they might make a promise of lies. Instead of a vow of charity, they might make a promise of thievery from the weak, and so forth. Their goals are not only to glorify themselves, but also to mock the forces of good and to humiliate the pure.

Anti-paladins are not chivalrous, but they are masters of the arts of manipulation. They fully understand the coins of the chivalric realm which hold value in the eyes of the holy; namely, honor, trust, love, loyalty, faith, and sacrifice. This wise knowledge of "what is sacred" gives them the ability to twist ideals into horrible things. They can feign acts of chivalry more finely than any other as they charm, betray, tempt, and seduce their way through civilization, ushering in an age of ruin.

Besides the base matter of villainy, anti-paladins are the epitome of narcissistic and sociopathic behavior. They can be very charming indeed when they want to be, as killing isn't the only thing that they do. They also live to *destroy*, and destruction can take on many forms. Outside of the obvious (killing people, imprisoning innocents, conquering strongholds, setting fires to druidic groves, and defacing good shrines and temples), they can go for the subtle path, destroying trust, love, oaths, traditions, legacies, bloodlines, truces, alliances, and the bonds between loved ones. The aftermath surrounding a masterfully treacherous lie — creating a permanent severance between a prince and a queen mother, for example — can be just

as sweet as bloody slaughter ... if not more so.

Anti-paladins do not seek long-term allies, except to exploit them or to protect themselves from harm. They wisely use their Charisma to charm and seduce; they seek victims that they can manipulate and exploit. They can convince many low-level NPCs to do their bidding in the name of evil (and personal reward), and then either discard or kill the person once their bidding has been done.



I will say further that anti-paladins are not *inherently* cowardly, but they are frequently seen as such because they are self-preservationists above all. This of course is because when they die, they cannot be

resurrected and their soul goes directly to their empowerer.

As such they will never charge foolishly into a battle they cannot win. They are not stupid; in fact, they are all of average human intelligence or higher. They are not berserkers either, and they tend toward a strongly innate sense of tactical patience. They make plans, attack from ambush, issue challenges to champions of good when outnumbered and then use poison, treachery, dolorous and unfair strikes, and so forth. They are villains and nemeses, and evil masterminds. Don't ever play them as being foolish and straightforward; they make their *minions* perform the rashest and most dangerous actions, not themselves, whenever possible.

The Arsenal of the Merciless: Equipment for Anti-Paladins

I

Allowable Shields

Anti-paladins can use any kind of shield, from bucklers to pavises. Spiked bucklers are a favorite when a magical shield cannot be had.

Non-Player Character anti-paladins will typically favor two-handed weapons if they have never directly faced the risk of death. Any NPC anti-paladin who has suffered a near-death experience, however, will carry a shield while wielding a one-handed weapon.

II

Allowable Armor

Anti-paladins can use any type of armor. NPCs will favor plate mail or plate armor whenever possible. Further, NPCs will not wear padded or leather armor if something finer can be had, because such materials are beneath their station.



III

Allowable Weapons

Anti-paladins can use any weapons. They prefer melee weapons which have barbs, spikes, or vicious cutting surfaces. Favored weapon types include harpoons,

two-handed flamberge swords, morning stars, and heavy war flails.

They can also use missile weapons, and due to their innate cowardice many of them do so.



IV

Special Weapons

Anti-paladins use poisoned weapons, unholy water, and flaming oil whenever they can. They cannot make any of these concoctions themselves, however. Poisons are brewed by assassins and alchemists; unholy water is empowered by evil clerics and their deities; and flaming oil is made by artilleryists and plague doctors.

Refer to the Oldskull Plague Doctors supplement for details concerning the (good-aligned!) plague doctor sub-cleric class.

Remember that overuse of poison by Player Characters should result, over time, in dangerous accidents in which an anti-

paladin cuts himself with a mishandled weapon or something similar. Such matters need to be carefully considered, of course, so that players are warned of the risk long before any potential self-poisoning occurs.



* * *

And there you have it. I hope you have found this dark supplement to be both inspirational and disturbing, because every campaign needs evil to a certain extent. Even if you don't want evil PCs running around, you will find that if you create a brilliant and charismatic NPC anti-paladin for the heroes to hate, you will be breathing new life into your game world and the stories therein. And paradoxically, anti-paladins do breed unity, good deeds, and loyal teamwork, because they unite heroes against them. What an ironic fate for one to fall to in the end, eh?

About the Author



Beginning play as a chaotic neutral normal human with one measly hit point to his name, KENT DAVID KELLY eventually became apprenticed to a magic-user of ill repute ... a foul man who dwelt in the steamy deeps of the Ivory Cloud Mountain. After this mentor carelessly misplaced an intelligent soul-sucking sword and then died under suspicious circumstances, his former henchman Mr. Kelly escaped to the deeper underground and there began playing Satanic role-playing games. This, the legends tell us, occurred in the year 1981.

Hoary wizard-priests who inspired Mr. Kelly in his netherworldly machinations included the peerless Gyga, Carr,

Arneson, Cook, Hammack, Jaquays, Bledsaw, Moldvay, Kuntz, Schick and Ward. Sadly, a misguided made-for-the-basements movie entitled *Mazes and Monsters* gave Mr. Kelly's parents conniptions in 1982. As a result of that blasphemous Tom Hanks debacle (and other more personal lapses in judgment), Mr. Kelly was eventually forbidden from playing his favorite game for a considerable length of time.

Nonplussed but not defeated, he used this enforced exile to escape to a friend's alehouse, and there indulged himself in now-classic computer RPGs such as *Zork*, *Telengard*, *Temple of Apshai*, *Ultima*, *Tunnels of Doom*, *The Bard's Tale*, *Phantasie*, *Pool of Radiance*, *Wizard's Crown* and *Wasteland*. He then went on to write computer versions of his own FRPGs, which led to his obsession with coupling creative design elements with random dungeons and unpredictable adventure generation.

Mr. Kelly wrote and submitted his first adventure for *Dungeon Magazine* #1 in 1986. Unfortunately, one Mr. Moore decided that his submission was far too "Lovecraftian, horrific and unfair" to ever serve that worthy periodical as a publishable adventure. Mr. Kelly, it must be said, took this rejection as a very good sign of things to come.

In the late 80s and 90s, Mr. Kelly wrote short stories, poems and essays ... some of which have been published under the Wonderland Imprints banner. He wrote several dark fantasy and horror novels as well. Concurrently, he ran *Dark Angel Collectibles*, selling classic FRPG materials as *Darkseraphim*, and assisted the *Acaem* with the creation of the Valuation Board and other minor research projects.

At this time, Mr. Kelly and his entourage of evil gnomes are rumored to dwell in the dread and deathly under-halls of the Acaeum, Dragonsfoot, ENWorld, Grogardia, Knights & Knaves, ODD, and even more nefarious levels deep down in the mega-dungeon of the Web.

There he remains in vigil, his vampiric sword yet shivering in his hand. When not being sought outright for answers to halfling riddles or other more sundry sage advice, he is to be avoided by sane individuals *at all costs*.



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