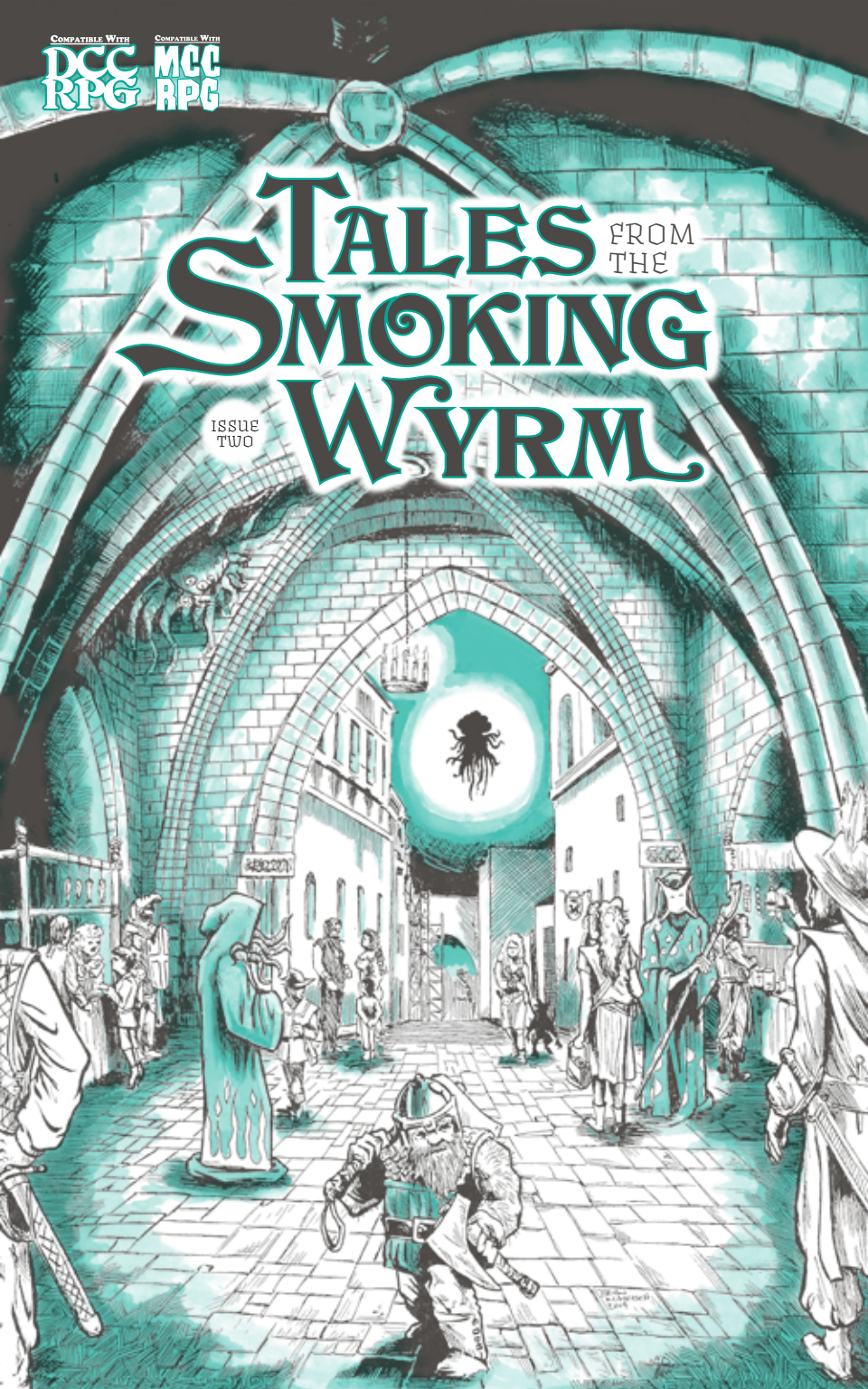


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TALES FROM THE SMOKING WYRM

ISSUE
TWO



Ah, what a most favorable endeavor! Dearest sapid sentients, welcome back to the Smoking Wyrn—we are so glad to see you again! Please, settle your motive limbs in place, for we continue to stock the most wonderful delicacies and comforting cuisine this side of the Cradianic Mountains! Take no notice of the proceedings in the inner courtyard—the guests there are servants of the King of Beasts, and prefer dining amidst my fine herb garden over the luxuries of my ever-warm hearths and plush leather seats. You may, of course, join them, if you enjoy bulette tar-tar and a side

*of freshly gathered
slime mold!*

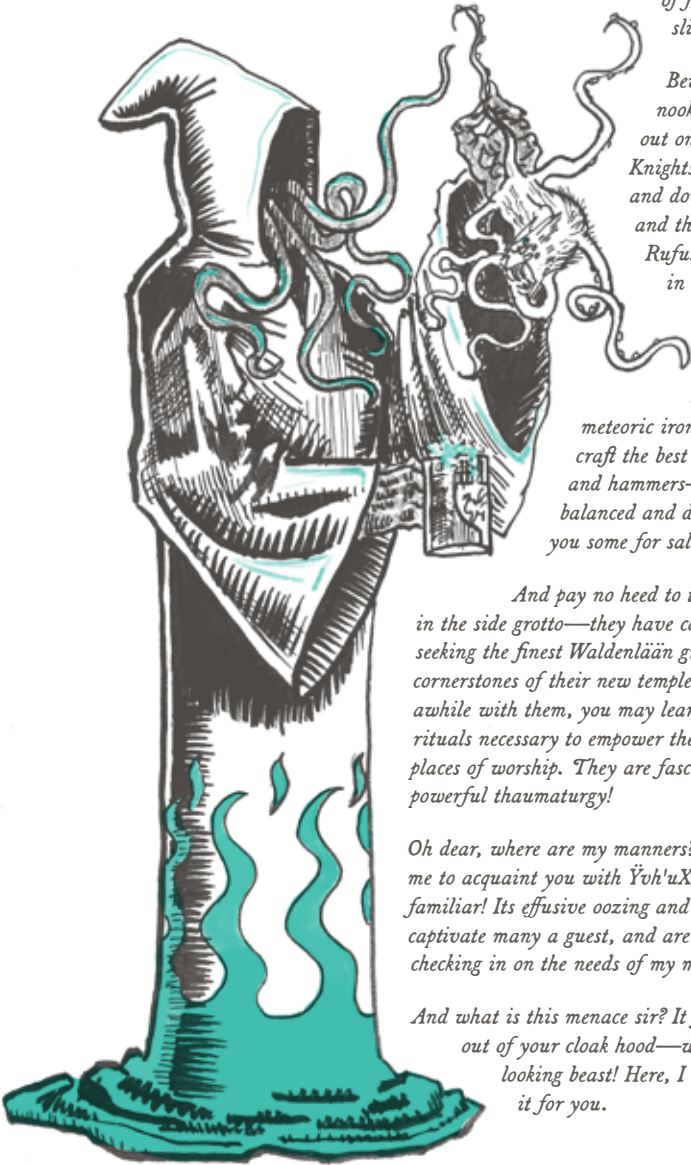
*Beware the corner
nook, which looks
out onto the Street of
Knights—those grim
and dour axe-men,
and their axe-caddy,
Rufus, are rather deep
in their cups this
eve. They tell
me they seek
new sources
of cerulean*

*meteoric iron with which to
craft the best throwing axes
and hammers—both finely
balanced and deadly. Have
you some for sale, per chance?*

*And pay no heed to the travelers
in the side grotto—they have come to town
seeking the finest Waldenlään granite for the
cornerstones of their new temple. If you sit
awhile with them, you may learn of the peculiar
rituals necessary to empower their deity in their
places of worship. They are fascinating and
powerful thaumaturgy!*

*Oh dear, where are my manners?! Please, allow
me to acquaint you with Ÿvh'uX'xash, my new
familiar! Its effusive oozing and myriad eyes
captivate many a guest, and are perfect for
checking in on the needs of my many customers!*

*And what is this menace sir? It just crawled
out of your cloak hood—what a wretched
looking beast! Here, I will dispose of
it for you.*



TALES FROM THE SMOKING WYRM

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KEEPING THIS TOME NEAR YOU ALWAYS IS PROOF
AGAINST THE RAVAGES OF SNAILS. FORGET THIS,
AND ABANDON HOPE AS YOU ENTER THE REALMS OF
MANDESS.

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KING OF BEASTS

The King of Beasts is at once a noble lion and a nimble hare, a fearsome serpent and a flighty crow. He watches over all animals of flesh and bone that crawl, slither, swim, and fly with detached interest from within the Great Jungle. Insects, mollusks, and stranger beasts are far too alien to respond to the King. The King of Beasts sees all his subjects as equals and does not regard humanoids as anything more than intelligent beasts. Those who form pacts with the King find themselves battling both the forces of law that threaten the natural order with their artificial institutions and the hordes of chaos threatening to destroy the balance of the animal kingdom.



King of Beasts: Invoke Patron Results

ROLL RESULT

12-13 The King grants his servant Claws of the Bear for 1d3 turns, which can be used as a melee attack for 1d6 damage and give the caster +5 to climbing checks.

14-17 The King grants his servant the Speed of the Gazelle for 1d4 turns, doubling their movement speed, and allowing them to jump up to 20 feet in distance with ease.

18-19 The King grants his servant the Shell of the Turtle for 1d5 turns, giving them +4 to AC and allowing them to hold their breath for the spell's duration.

20-23 The King grants his servant the Wings of the Eagle for 1d6 turns, giving them the ability to fly (though not hover) and granting a +5 on perception checks, as well as boosting their range of vision by four times their natural sight.

24-27 The King grants his servant 1d3+1 of the above effects at the same time, turning them into an avatar of nature for 2d6 turns.

28-29 The King summons a pack of enraged animals appropriate to the caster's location to protect the caster. They stampede onto the scene in 1d3 rounds. The pack of animals occupies a space of 30' x 30' and attack all enemies of the caster and the King within that space. The pack disperses after 1 minute. Animal Pack: Init +0, Atk +4 melee against all in area (dmg 1d6 plus grappled while in pack); AC 10; HP 80; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +3; Ref +3; Will +1; AL N.

30-31 The King transforms 1d6+CL of the caster's enemies into small, harmless creatures (DC 12+CL Will save to resist) for one day, during which they think and act exactly as that creature might.

32+ The King transforms 1d6+CL of the caster's enemies into small, harmless creatures (DC 15+CL Will save to resist) permanently. If this magic is ever dispelled, the victim must succeed on a DC 20 Will save to recall their former self, or forever thinks they are an animal.

Patron Taint: King of Beasts

Whenever patron taint is indicated for the King, roll 1d6 on the table below. When a caster has acquired all six taints at all levels of effect, there is no need to continue rolling any more.

ROLL RESULT

1 *The caster begins to take on an animal's physical features.*
First Time: You gain minor features of an animal you are close with (a familiar, pet, or just the last animal they've seen), such as cat whiskers, snake eyes and tongue, or hooked toes.
Second Time: You gain more obvious features, such as a coat of fur, scales, or feathers.
Third Time: You gain a major alteration, such as a tail, and your face becomes distinctly like that of your animal.

2 *Animals begin to imprint on the caster.*
First Time: A small, wounded animal adopts you as a parent. You must raise it to maturity, until it is old enough to fend for itself.
Second Time: You must care for a much larger animal, something not reasonably carried by yourself.
Third Time: A small family of animals become your charges, and you must cease all activities that would prevent you from teaching these animals the ways of the wild.

3 *The caster begins to adopt animal speech patterns.*
First Time: Your speech becomes noticeably riddled with grunts, caws, and other animal sounds.
Second Time: You find complicated concepts difficult to communicate through speech alone, and often act out their desires when conversing.
Third Time: You struggle to speak at all and must make a DC 15 Will save to convey anything more than a few words in a mundane language.

ROLL RESULT

The caster is tasked to free an animal from captivity.

First Time: You are tasked to free an animal from captivity. The animal will be within a day's journey, and you must free it within a week or lose favor with the King in the form of -2 to spell checks for a month.

4

Second Time: The animal will be within 1d4 days of travel, and its owner will be very keen on keeping it caged; if you fail you suffer -4 to spell checks for a month.

Third Time: Any time you see an animal in captivity, unless the animal is perfectly content you must free it within a day or lose a permanent point of luck. However, for every five animals you free you gain a point of luck, limited by the patron bond bonus you have for bonding others to the King of Beasts (see *patron bond* spell results in *DCC* p. 148).

The caster begins to develop beastly appetites.

First Time: You are overcome with a desire to hunt or gather, and must find their next meal in the wild.

5

Second Time: You find food that has been cooked or preserved revolting, and become immune to the negative effects of eating raw or spoiled food.

Third Time: You can no longer consume any food that you did not have a part in procuring.

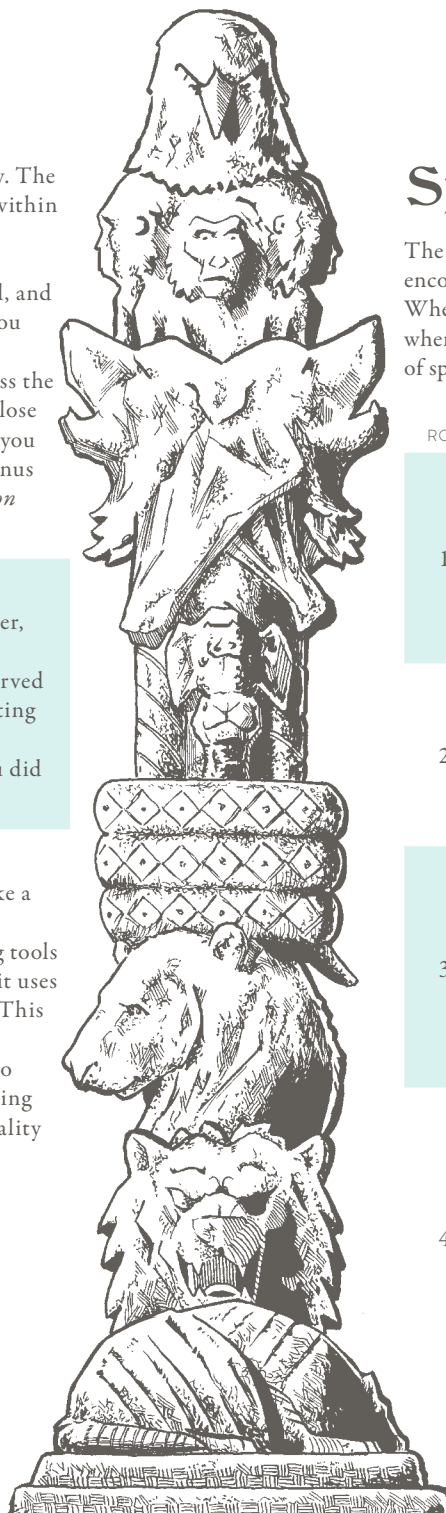
The caster becomes wild.

First Time: You lose your racial identity, wishing to live like a beast, eat with your hands, and sleep outdoors.

6

Second Time: You refuse to wear clothing, and forgo using tools except in dire circumstances, or if your bonded animal spirit uses rudimentary tools, you limit yourself to those same tools. This also applies to weapons.

Third Time: You forsake civilization altogether, refusing to spend more than a few hours in any occupied town or building unless on a quest for the King. You suffer -1d for all personality checks with your own race thereafter.



Spellburn: King of Beasts

The King's magic comes from primal, spiritual emotions, and he encourages his servants to draw magic from the same source.

Whenever a servant utilizes spellburn, roll 1d4 on the table below when the request is made unless the judge has a more relevant type of spellburn in mind.

ROLL RESULT

1

The caster's instincts grant them a burst of adrenaline, which they channel into their spellcasting. The caster spends the round running in full sprint towards their prey or away from a predator, while casting the spell at the same time. This supremely exhausts them (represented as Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage)

2

The caster rebukes their civilized mind for the animal wisdom of the King's. This spellburn can only take the form of Intelligence or Personality damage, but grants the caster +2 on the caster check per attribute spent instead of just +1.

3

The King of Beasts requires the caster's intelligent advice. They must make a DC 15 Intelligence check to provide the requisite knowledge; on a success the King grants the caster +5 to their caster check without burning attributes, but on a failure the caster must burn attributes as normal and additionally earns the ire of the King; for the next 24 hours, animals are hostile to the caster.

4

The caster realizes that their artificial possessions are inhibitions to their magic and revokes them. They can destroy up to 500 gp worth of man-made personal items, gaining +1 to their check for each 50 gp sacrificed in addition to their physical attributes, which are exhausted in this act of destruction. The caster must sacrifice at least 50 gp of items (usually gained from others, since they are most likely living with less material possessions at this point) or their spellburn will be in vain.

Patron Spells: King of Beasts

The lord of animals grants three unique spells, as follows:

Level 1 spell: *Speak with Animals*

Level 2 spell: *Bloodsense*

Level 3 spell: *Awaken*

Speak with Animals

Speaking is maybe too mature a word. It is more like feeling with animals, composed almost entirely of body language over verbal communication. We project feelings back and forth.

—Jacoba the hermit of languid rock

Level 1 Range: Self Duration: Casting time: Save: N/A
(KoB*) Varies 1 turn

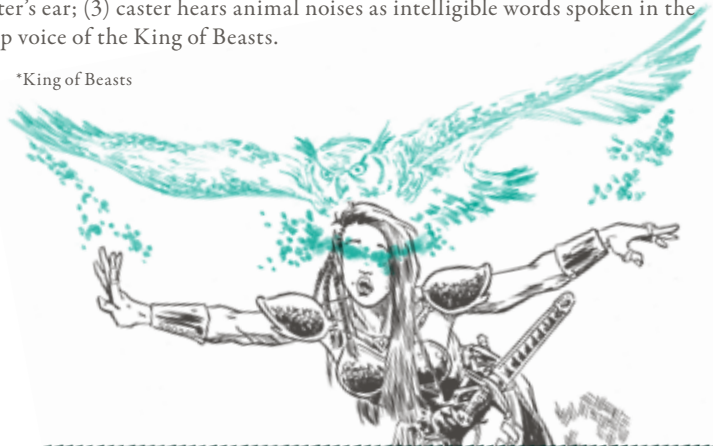
GENERAL

The caster communes with the King, learning how to interpret the meaning of growls and bird-calls, and how to respond in kind.

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d3: (1) caster's face is covered with a shimmering aura in the shape of the animal they are speaking to; (2) small animal spirit whispers translation into caster's ear; (3) caster hears animal noises as intelligible words spoken in the deep voice of the King of Beasts.

*King of Beasts



ROLL RESULT

1 Lost, failure, and patron taint.

2-11 Lost. Failure.

12-13 Caster can hear and understand basic concepts conveyed by one animal for 1 turn.

14-17 Caster can understand and speak with one animal for 1 turn, conveying only basic concepts and understanding similar phrases.

18-19 Caster can understand and speak with all members of one species for 1 turn, exchanging complex ideas (and thus granting the animal temporary supernatural intelligence).

20-23 Caster can understand and speak with all members of a certain type (lizards, canines, etc.) for 1 hour, exchanging complex ideas. The caster gains a +2 bonus to personality checks made during this conversation.

24-27 Caster can understand and speak with all members of a certain class (reptiles, mammals, etc.) for 1 hour per CL, exchanging complex ideas. The caster gains a +1d bonus to personality checks made during this conversation.

28-29 Caster can understand and speak with all animals (those under the King's purview) for 1 day per CL, exchanging complex ideas. The caster gains a +2d bonus to personality checks made during this conversation.

30-31 As above, except that the caster permanently learns the language of the first animal they speak with for at least one turn. Anything that can hear and understand this language knows the caster to be favored with the King of Beasts, and acts accordingly.

32+ As above, except that the caster permanently learns the language of the first 1d6+CL animals they speak with for at least one turn while the spell is in effect; anything that can hear and understand any of these languages knows the caster to be favored with the King of Beasts, and acts accordingly.



Bloodsense

There were two sets of imprints pointing in opposite directions. So his quarry had already passed on his return along the trail. As he examined the newer spoor a tiny particle of earth toppled from the outer edge of one of the footprints to the bottom of its shallow depression—ah, the trail was very fresh, his prey must have but scarcely passed.
—Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan of the Apes*



Level 2 (KoB)	Range: Varies	Duration: Varies	Casting time: 1 round	Save: N/A
------------------	------------------	---------------------	--------------------------	-----------



GENERAL

The King of Beast’s servants learn to tap into their primal instincts, and gain a supernatural awareness of the blood flowing through other beasts. With this spell the caster can focus on the scent of a specific creature, tracking it over great distances with bestial persistence.

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d4: (1)caster’s nose becomes that of a bloodhound; (2) red mist that only the caster can see leads towards their quarry; (3) caster’s eyes turn yellow and narrow when facing the direction of their quarry; (4) traces of the quarry are highlighted against an otherwise greyed bakground.

ROLL	RESULT
1	Lost, failure, and patron taint.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-13	Failure, but the spell is not lost.

ROLL	RESULT
------	--------

Caster can attempt to locate a specific, living animal of mundane birth (hereafter referred to as the quarry). This does not include mundane animals summoned or created by magical means. The caster must have a physical piece of the quarry, such as a tooth, a piece of fur, or drop of blood. Full concentration is required to cast the spell. If the quarry is within 100' of the caster, the caster knows in what direction it is. This directional sense is three-dimensional, so a quarry below the caster produce a downward sense of direction. Durratation is 1 turn.

As above, except that the range is increased with each round of full concentration, as follows: round 1 = 100', round 2 = 500', round 3 = half a mile, round 4 = 1 mile, round 5 = 2 miles, round 6 = 5 miles, round 7 = 10 miles and no more. The caster can sense the quarry range for a full hour. A lapse in concentration during the duration does not cancel the spell; the caster must simply re-establish concentration.

As above, except duration is a full day. At any point during the duration, the caster can spend a full round concentrating to receive a new “ping” on the direction and distance of quarry.

As above, except that the caster does not need a physical piece of the quarry, but must have specific quarry knowledge. For example, they must have beheld it in the past, read accounts of it, or heard tell of it. Provided the caster can give an accurate description of the creature, the spell will return the location of the creature matching its description, if it is in range.

As above, except quarry need not be a specific creature. The caster could choose to look for “any farmer,” or even “an injured elf,” or “the nearest warrior”. No physical piece of their quarry, nor specific knowledge is needed. However, vague description leads to inaccurate reads (at the judge's discretion).

As above, except that the range as follows: round 1 = half-mile, round 2 = 1 mile, round 3 = 5 miles, round 4 = 10 miles, round 5 = 50 miles, round 6 = 250 miles, round 7 = 1,000 miles. The caster can sense quarry as the crow flies to within 100'. Duration is 1 month.

As above, but, on the eighth round the caster will know if the quarry is on a different plane of existence. On the ninth round, they sense what plane that is. If they have visited that plane before, they know specifically; if they have never visited, they have a greater or lesser sense of which plane it is, depending on their knowledge of the planes. The caster also knows the quarry’s last location on the current plane, possibly leading them to a portal that the quarry used to cross. Direction or distance on that plane is not revealed.

As above, except caster concentrates for one round to learn location of their quarry if on their current plane of existence. If on a different plane, they know that plane’s identity on round two; and on round three, they know the creature’s exact location. The spell lasts until either the quarry or the caster perishes; in the case that the quarry perishes, the caster is made instantly aware.

Awaken

I am th etongue of the snake, the eyes of the quatl, and the feet of the bullette.
—Leo of Thrazia



Level 3 Range: Self Duration: Casting time: Save: N/A
(KoB) or Touch Varies Varies



GENERAL

The King of Beasts has many aspects, all of which take on the forms of various animals in his domain. These aspects are known as spirit animals and have been known to appear to various cultures across history. With this spell, the caster can awaken their mind to the true forms of these animal spirits and beseech them for aid. The caster may select what spirit animal to awaken, as indicated on pages 15-16. Each spirit grants the caster two boons and a bane. The spell check determines how long the caster may spend concentrating on the spell during a ritualized casting, which also increases the duration of the bond. Target of the bonding may make a Will save to resist the bane of the bonded creature, as the urges of the creature interfere with the personality of the target.

The spell can also bond the caster to multiple spirits at once, and they can bond other willing creatures to these spirits as well. Attempting to bond with multiple spirits at the same time is difficult; when casting the spell, the caster has a -1 to their spell check for each animal spirit they are already bonded with. Also, any creature can only ever gain a single extra action die as a result of this spell. On the other hand, having a physical trace of the animal(s) with which they are attempting to bond gives the caster an advantage: +1 if they have a piece of the animal (such as a claw or a feather), or +3 for a living animal that willingly assists the caster.

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d4: (1) spectral manifestation of the spirit animal appears before the caster; (2) caster's face becomes bestial and looks like that of the awakened spirit; (3) caster enters a dream-like trance and begins speaking through grunts and growls to the animal spirit; (4) a physical form of the animal appears and follows the caster for the duration.

ROLL RESULT

1	Lost, failure, and patron taint.
2-11	Lost. Failure.
12-15	Failure, but the spell is not lost.
16-17	Caster forms a bond with a spirit animal, chosen from the table below. The casting time is 1 round, and the bond lasts for 1d4+CL rounds. During this time the caster gains the boons of their spirit, as well as the bane. Whenever the conditions for the bane are met, the caster must succeed on a DC 8 Will save to resist succumbing to the spirit's urges. If the caster ever bonds to a spirit with the same bane as another bound spirit, the DC increases by 2.
18-21	As above, except that the caster may choose to continue concentrating on the spell after they cast it. If the caster spends a full turn concentrating on the spell, the bond lasts for 1d4+CL turns. The bane Will save is DC 10.
22-23	As above, except that the caster may choose to bond with two spirits at once. The bane Will save is DC 12. Additionally, if the caster spends a full day concentrating on the spell the duration increases to 1d4+CL days.
24-26	As above, except that if the caster spends a full day concentrating on the spell the duration is increased to 1d4+CL weeks. The bane Will save is DC 14.
27-31	As above, except that the caster may choose to bond with three animal spirits at once. The bane Will save is DC 16. Additionally, if the caster spends a full day concentrating on the spell the duration increases to 1d4+CL months. Alternatively, the caster may touch a willing creature during the casting of the spell to bond them to a spirit animal instead. In this case, treat the spell check result as a 16 for determining the number of spirits bonded, the DC for overcoming the bane(s), and the duration of the bond.

ROLL RESULT

32-33

As above, except that if the caster spends a full day concentrating on the spell (while casting it on themselves), the effect is permanent. The bane Will save is DC 18. Alternatively, the caster may bond themselves and up to 1d6 willing creatures that they touch during the casting of the spell with animal spirit(s). In this case, treat the spell check result as a 22 for determining the number of spirits bonded, the DC for overcoming the bane(s), and the duration of the bond.

34-35

As above, except that the caster may choose to bond with four animal spirits at once. The bane Will save is DC 20. Alternatively, the caster may bond themselves and up to 2d6 willing creatures that they touch during the casting of the spell with animal spirit(s). In this case, treat the spell result as a 27 for determining the number of spirits bonded, the DC for overcoming the bane(s), and the duration of the bond.

36+

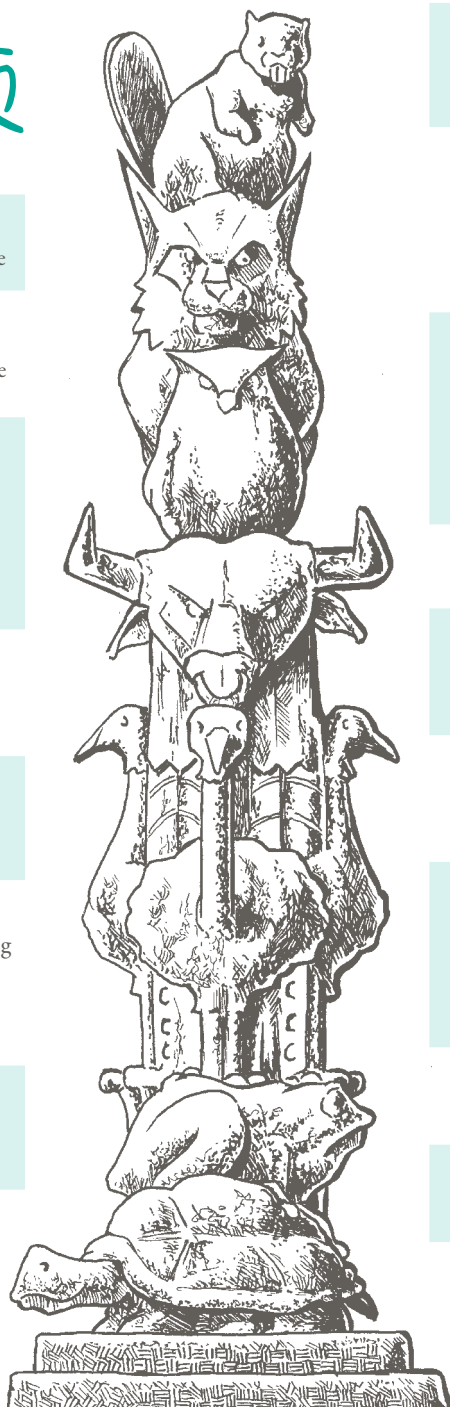
As above, except that the caster may choose to bond themselves and up to 3d6 willing creatures that they touch during the casting of the spell. In this case, treat the spell result as a 34 for determining the number of spirits bonded, the DC for overcoming the bane(s), and the duration of the bond.



Master Spirit List



SPIRIT	BOON	BANE
Armadillo	+2 AC, requires half as much food and water as a normal human to survive	Very secretive; refuses to give up information for free
Bat	Excellent hearing that allows perfect navigation in darkness, +4 to moving silently	Refuses to directly engage enemies during the daytime
Bear	Gain a 1d14 action die that can be used to claw enemies (dealing 1d6 plus strength damage), +2 hit points per level	When the bonded creature or an ally is wounded, the creature goes berserk and attacks the nearest enemy until they are killed or incapacitated
Beaver	20' swim speed, bite deals 1d4 plus strength damage and can be used as an axe to fell trees.	Refuses to make decisions without spending at least a turn deliberating
Bull	+2 Strength, +2 hit points per level	Gets distracted easily; refuses to sit still for longer than a turn unless sleeping
Crocodile	Gain a 1d14 action die that can be used to bite enemies (dealing 1d6 plus strength damage), can breathe underwater for up to 30 minutes	Lazy; refuses to do anything active without immediate benefits
Eagle	Excellent vision, can jump up to their movement	Refuses to back down from an insult towards themselves or their allies
Gazelle	40' movement, can jump up to their movement	Refuses to directly engage enemies when an escape route exists



SPIRIT	BOON	BANE
Horse	40' movement, can travel for twice as long as normal human without getting tired	Refuses to remain confined in one space for longer than 8 hours
Lion	Gain a 1d14 action die that can be used to bite enemies (dealing 1d6 plus strength damage), booming voice that can be heard from up to 5 miles away when shouting	Same as Eagle
Lynx	+4 to moving silently, treats all falls as if they were 50' less high	Enjoys toying with prey and refuses to directly engage with enemies. If wounded, the bonded creature automatically succeeds on their save to resist
Monkey	20' climb speed, feet become prehensile	Same as Bull
Ostrich	Gain a 1d14 action die that can be used to kick enemies (dealing 1d6 plus strength damage), 40' movement	Same as Bear
Owl	Learn an extra 1st level spell chosen randomly, can see at night as well as a normal human can see in day	Same as Bat
Python	Excellent sense of smell, melee attack causes constriction; when grappling you constrict opponent for 1d4 subdual damage	Same as Armadillo
Toad	Can breathe underwater for up to 30 minutes, can jump up to their movement	Same as Crocodile
Tortoise	+2 AC, can breathe underwater for up to 30 minutes	Same as Beaver
Wolf	Excellent sense of smell; all followers, retainers, etc. receive +2 to morale checks	Refuses to abandon allies in danger

DWARVEN JÄGER

While the dwarven race can be fiercely traditional and unbending, centuries of tunnel fighting has led to specialization in some of their forces—the dwarven jäger being one such example. Forgoing the typical “sword and board” training of their kinfolk, jäger instead are deadly skirmishers, skilled at fighting with two weapons at once. Those who dual-wield axes are sometimes referred to as “achtjäger”, the axe wardens; those armed instead with two hammers are called “kamtjäger”, or the anvil wardens. Not as common are the “thünjäger”, the thunder wardens, who bear both axe and hammer.



HIT POINTS

A dwarven jäger gains 1d10 hit points at each level.

WEAPON TRAINING

Unlike most dwarves, jäger prefer to battle with a weapon in each hand, instead of bearing a shield. They are trained to use the battleaxe, club, dagger, dart, handaxe, hand crossbow*, longsword, mace, short sword, throwing hammer*, and warhammer. Jäger wear whatever armor they can afford, and generally forgo the use of shields. If they choose to use a shield, they do *not* gain the dwarf's ability to make a shield bash as a second attack.

ALIGNMENT

Like the brethren they leave behind underground, dwarven jäger run the gamut of alignments. The training required to master dual-wielding implies discipline and practice, and those that retain lawful behavior after abandoning their clan tend to have been instructors and trainers of their kin.

But chaotic jäger are not unheard of. More common than in the dwarven population as a whole, yet still a minor percentage of jäger forces, these dwarves tend to abandon a disciplined approach to battle for a more random, almost berserker style.

Neutral dwarves, however, make up the bulk of the jäger corps, as the principles of their skirmish style demand the ability to quickly abandon predetermined battle plans for everchanging battlefields.

ATTACK MODIFIER

Dwarven jäger do not receive a fixed attack modifier at each level. Instead, they receive a deed die, just like a warrior. At 1st level, this is a d3. The jäger rolls this 1d3 on each attack roll and applies it to both his attack roll and his damage roll. The deed die advances with the jäger's level, at the same rate as a normal dwarf. The jäger always makes a new roll with this die in each combat round. When the jäger has multiple attacks at higher levels, the same deed die applies to all attacks in the same combat round.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

Dwarven jäger are masters at two-weapon fighting when using axes and hammers. Similar to halflings, they are considered to have an Agility of at least 16 when fighting with two weapons of the same size, such as two handaxes or two warhammers. If the jäger has a Strength score of at least 16, he can fight with a battleaxe in each hand (in this case, his initiative die drops to a d16, since the battleaxe is normally a two-handed weapon). When fighting with two weapons, a jäger automatically hits and scores a crit on any roll of a natural 16; however, *unlike* halflings, a jäger can still fumble if *either* dice is a natural 1.

MIGHTY DEEDS OF ARMS

As with the rest of their kin, dwarven jäger are skilled combatants, particularly in melee. Like warriors, they can perform Mighty Deeds of Arms in combat. See the warrior entry (*DCC RPG*, p. 42) for a complete description.

MIGHTY DEFENSE

Jäger are skilled at balancing offense and defense. In any given round, if the jäger attacks using two-weapon fighting, then for each –2d penalty he accepts to his deed die, he receives a +1 AC bonus for the next round (–4d grants +2 AC, etc.). His deed die can never be reduced to smaller than +1d3 in this way. The remaining smaller deed die can still be used for the jäger's attack modifier, damage, and determining the success of a Mighty Deed as normal.

INFRAVISION

A dwarven jäger can see in the dark up to 60'.

Slow and Steady: All dwarves, including jäger, have a base movement speed of 20'. However, jäger are not slowed in any way by their choice of armor.

UNDERGROUND SKILLS

Life underground teaches dwarves to detect certain kinds of construction. When underground, dwarves receive a bonus to detect traps, slanting passages, shifting walls, and other new construction equal to their class level. Additionally, dwarven jäger can smell gold and gems. They can tell the direction of a strong concentration of gold or gems within 100'; smaller

concentrations, even down to a single coin, can still be detected up to 40’ away if the dwarf concentrates.

LUCK

At 1st level, a dwarven jäger's Luck modifier applies to attack rolls with one specific kind of weapon, just as a warrior's does, and which must be chosen from the following: battleaxe, handaxe, throwing hammer, or warhammer. The type of weapon must be chosen at 1st level, and the modifier remains fixed over time, even if the dwarf's Luck score changes.

LANGUAGES

Dwarven jäger automatically know Common, the dwarven racial language, plus one additional randomly determined language at 1st level. A jäger also knows one additional language for every point of Int modifier.

ACTION DICE

A dwarven jäger's action dice are always used for attack rolls.



LEVEL	ATTACK (DEED DIE)	CRIT DIE/TABLE	ACTION DIE	REF	FORT	WILL
1	+d3	1d10 / III	1d20	+1	+1	+1
2	+d4	1d12 / III	1d20	+1	+1	+1
3	+d5	1d14 / III	1d20	+1	+2	+1
4	+d6	1d16 / IV	1d20	+2	+2	+2
5	+d7	1d20 / IV	1d20+1d14	+2	+3	+2
6	+d8	1d24 / V	1d20+1d16	+2	+4	+2
7	+d10+1	1d30 / V	1d20+1d20	+3	+4	+3
8	+d10+2	1d30 / V	1d20+1d20	+3	+5	+3
9	+d10+3	2d20 / V	1d20+1d20	+3	+5	+3
10	+d10+4	2d20 / V	1d20+1d20+1d14	+4	+6	+4



THROWING HAMMER

A light warhammer that has been balanced for throwing. They are typically forged from one solid piece of metal.



HAND CROSSBOW

A compact, collapsible versions of a normal crossbow that can be fired with one hand at no penalty. Jäger find these preferable to their larger counterparts as it allows them to always keep a melee weapon in-hand. Outside of dwarven enclaves, they may be difficult to find.

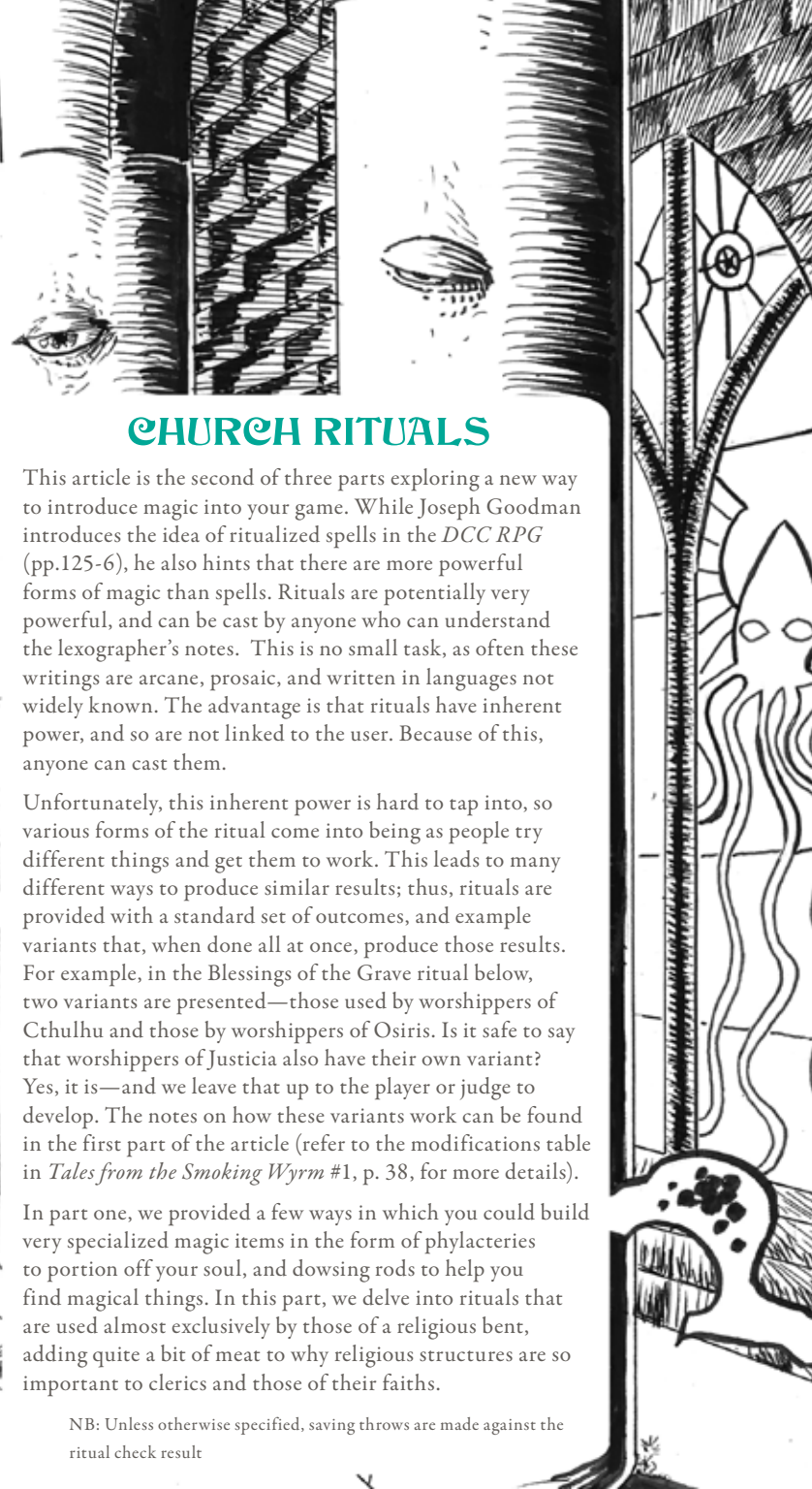
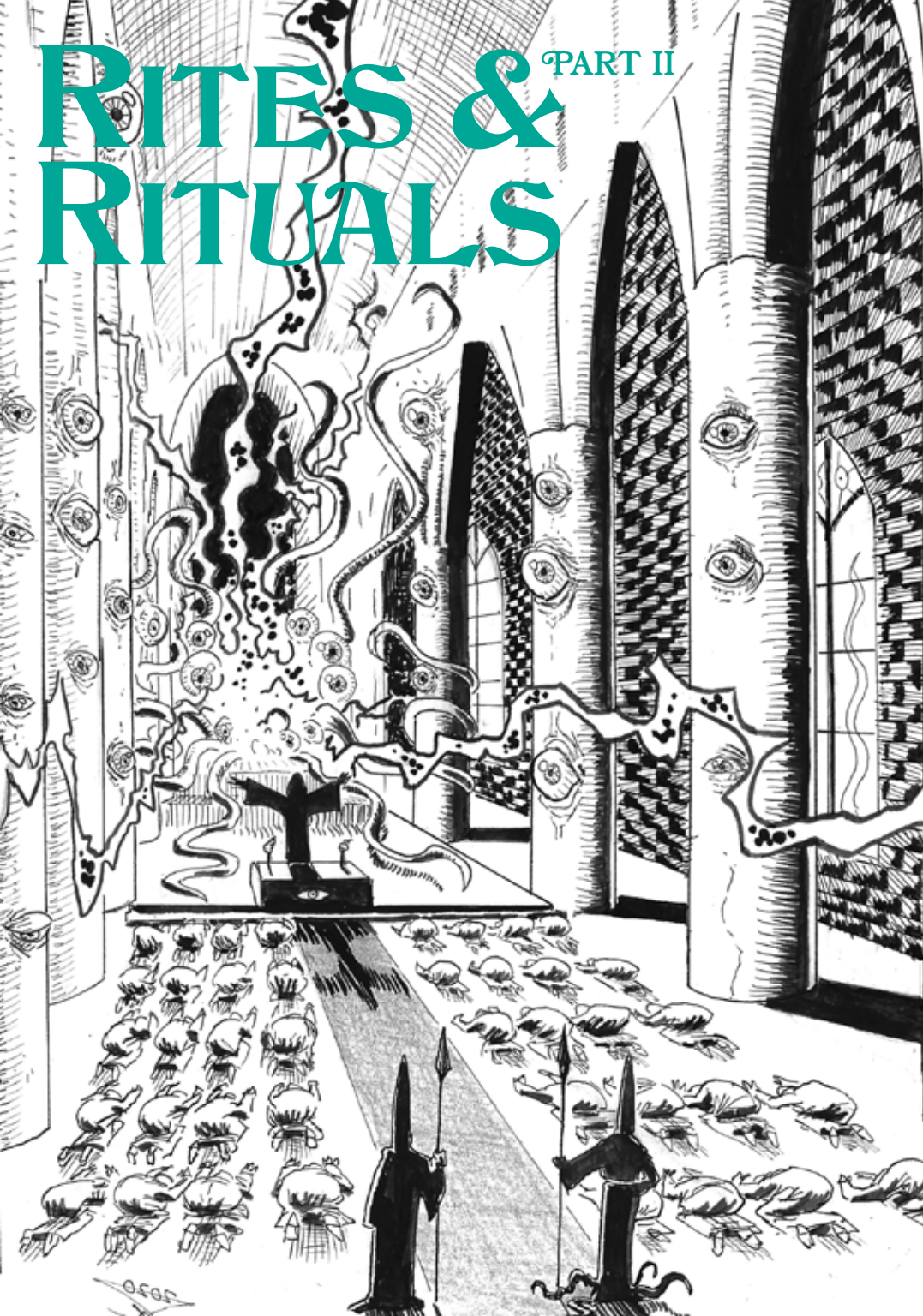
NEW WEAPONS	DAMAGE	RANGE	COST
Throwing hammer	1d6	20/40/60*	10 gp
Hand crossbow	1d6	30/60/90	75 gp

*Strength modifier applies to damage with this weapon at close range only



0505 RITES & RITUALS

PART II



CHURCH RITUALS

This article is the second of three parts exploring a new way to introduce magic into your game. While Joseph Goodman introduces the idea of ritualized spells in the *DCC RPG* (pp.125-6), he also hints that there are more powerful forms of magic than spells. Rituals are potentially very powerful, and can be cast by anyone who can understand the lexicographer's notes. This is no small task, as often these writings are arcane, prosaic, and written in languages not widely known. The advantage is that rituals have inherent power, and so are not linked to the user. Because of this, anyone can cast them.

Unfortunately, this inherent power is hard to tap into, so various forms of the ritual come into being as people try different things and get them to work. This leads to many different ways to produce similar results; thus, rituals are provided with a standard set of outcomes, and example variants that, when done all at once, produce those results. For example, in the Blessings of the Grave ritual below, two variants are presented—those used by worshippers of Cthulhu and those by worshippers of Osiris. Is it safe to say that worshippers of Justicia also have their own variant? Yes, it is—and we leave that up to the player or judge to develop. The notes on how these variants work can be found in the first part of the article (refer to the modifications table in *Tales from the Smoking Wyrms* #1, p. 38, for more details).

In part one, we provided a few ways in which you could build very specialized magic items in the form of phylacteries to portion off your soul, and dowsing rods to help you find magical things. In this part, we delve into rituals that are used almost exclusively by those of a religious bent, adding quite a bit of meat to why religious structures are so important to clerics and those of their faiths.

NB: Unless otherwise specified, saving throws are made against the ritual check result

Blessings of the Grave



Level 1 Base Die: Range: Duration: Casting Save:
1d8 Consecrated Space Varies time: 1 Day None



GENERAL

This ritual protects those buried in a graveyard, cemetery, or necropolis from animation as un-dead by inhibiting the raw ability of the necromancer to cast *animate dead* or related spells. Each patron or diety has their own ritual conditions; some even have multiple versions. *Blessings of the Grave* is always linked to a higher power, be it a patron or deity. See examples for Cthulhu and Osiris below.



Cthulhu as recorded in the Foul Blessings of the Pelagic God.



CONDITIONS

- Circle of casters:** 3/+1d
- Circle of followers:** If mortals 7/+1; if Deep Ones 5/+1
- Faith in Good Standing:** Caster must be a faithful adherent to Cthulhu in a graveyard with four cornerstones consecrated to Cthulhu
- Extra duration:** +2/day
- Rare ingredient:** +1d for each statue of Cthulhu interred in graveyard at time of casting
- Sacrifice:** For each enemy of Cthulhu drowned/+1d
- Location of power:** +2d

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d3: (1) a powerful wave washes over the graveyard, then dissipates, leaving all present soaked in a foul-smelling miasma, (2) the sky dims to a glowing iridescent green sky filled with blackened clouds that shoot out dazzling whitish lightning bolts at slow speed, (3) the ground begins to heat up, and a greenish mist coalesces from the graveyard, wisping up and around the legs of all present.

CORRUPTION

Roll Cthulhu patron taint for all involved in ritual, unless a cleric of Cthulhu, then roll on Cthulhu disapproval table for those individuals

MISFIRE

Roll 1d4: (1) one randomly determined follower is locked into the earth as a sacrifice to Cthulhu, (2) one randomly determined caster is locked into the earth as a sacrifice to Cthulhu, (3) lead caster rolls twice on Cthulhu patron taint, (4) all participants lose 1d4 personality as the dreams of Cthulhu overwhelm them.



Osiris as recorded in the Great Hymn to Osiris from the Coffin Texts.



CONDITIONS

- Circle of casters:** 1/+1d
- Circle of followers:** 14/+1
- Faith in Good Standing:** Caster must be a faithful adherent to Osiris in a necropolis with seven cornerstones consecrated to Osiris
- Extra duration:** +3/day
- Sacrifice:** Each mummified animal interred in the graveyard +1
- Location of power:** +2d

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d3: (1) crop plants sprout from all who partake in the ritual, bloom and fruit in minutes, then are ready for harvest at the end of the ritual ceremony, (2) the fecundity of those partaking in the ritual increases; 1d4 random females become pregnant, (3) sun discs appear over the heads of all those present while the ritual is in progress, and falcons appear and will forever roost in or near the graveyard.

CORRUPTION

Roll on Osiris disapproval table for all involved.

MISFIRE

Roll 1d4: (1) *Djed* columns appear from nowhere and fall on 1d6 random participants, (2) falcons appear and attack 1d14 random participants, (3) giant scarab beetles burst forth from the ground, devouring any mummified animal offerings and attacking all present, (4) all must roll on Osiris disapproval table.

ROLL	RESULT
1	Failure and worse! Roll 1d4 modified by Luck: 0 or less) corruption + misfire + patron taint*, 1-2) corruption, 3-4) misfire. Effects all participants.
2-11	Failure. Roll misfire, only effects caster.
12-13	-1d to <i>animate dead</i> action die
14-17	-2d to <i>animate dead</i> action die

*If not a wizard's patron but a cleric's god, then roll disapproval instead

ROLL	RESULT
18-19	-3d to <i>animate dead</i> action die
20-23	-4d to <i>animate dead</i> action die; targets of <i>animate dead</i> gain Will save
24-27	-4d to <i>animate dead</i> action die; targets of <i>animate dead</i> gain Will save at DC-3
28-29	-5d to <i>animate dead</i> action die; targets of <i>animate dead</i> gain Will save at DC-5
30-31	-6d to <i>animate dead</i> action die; targets of <i>animate dead</i> gain Will save at DC-7; may not be animated as intelligent undead
32+	-7d to <i>animate dead</i> action die; targets of <i>animate dead</i> gain Will save at DC-10; may not be animated as intelligent undead



Liturgy of Blessing

Level 1	Base Die: 1d8	Range: Touch	Duration: Permanent	Casting time: 1 Hour	Save: None
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GENERAL

The caster firmly brands the faith of a consenting individual with an imprint from their mutual god, opening the way for the target to become clergy; or blesses important implements or structures for their use in serving and protecting the faithful. Two of the items that may be blessed, the censer and the chalice, are mobile and may be carried places. The other two, the altar and the cornerstones, are not truly mobile, and work best when set into a foundation to become a permanent fixture of a place of worship. Mobile altars are possible, but these multiply the base cost in materials by 10, and require multiple people to carry around (at least four). When the ritual refers to casters “using” the blessed implements, they must be carrying them, or touching them in some fashion, unless the blessed implements have also been used in a rite of consecration and tied to that location, in which case merely being within the presence of the items in the consecrated space is enough to call upon their power.



Cthulhu as recorded in the Foul Blessings of the Pelagic God.



CONDITIONS

- Circle of casters:** 1/+1d
- Circle of followers:** 3/+1
- Faith in Good Standing:** Caster and ritual subject must be faithful adherents to Cthulhu
- Extra duration:** 1 hr/ +1
- Required ingredient:** Cthulhu idol present and rubbed with seaweed brined oils at time of casting/+1d
- Sacrifice:** For each enemy of Cthulhu drowned at start of ritual/+2d
- Rare ingredient:** Censer, chalice, altar, or cornerstone of at least 10 gp value each/+1 for each 10 gp each

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d4: (1) foggy green light lazily emanates from the idol of Cthulhu, and with a sudden movement, sucks into the mouths of all those present,

disappearing, (2) piercing green light fills the space, blinding those who are present for 1d4 rounds, then disappears as suddenly as it came, leaving a salty fermented oceanic taste in the mouth, (3) the idol of Cthulhu floats into the air, emitting a pulsing green aura and a deep scream like that of a kraken engulfing a giant squid—everyone is deafened for 1d3 rounds as a result, (4) all who witness the event fall prey to the intense dreaming of Cthulhu—on a failed Will save they fall into a stupor as they live out those horrific dreams in their heads for 1d5 rounds.

CORRUPTION

Roll Cthulhu patron taint for all involved in ritual. Clerics of Cthulhu also roll on Cthulhu disapproval table

MISFIRE

Roll 1d3: (1) all are stricken dead, (2) the circle of followers disappear in a flashing green light, while all others are overwhelmed by a briny wave of foamy water, (3) all involved must make a Will save (DC 15) or suffer horrible nightmares as they are drawn into Cthulhu’s dreams. If they fail the save in three consecutive times, they die in an insane panic, and are found frozen solid as if in a rictus of pain and fear.



Osiris as recorded in the Great Hymn to Osiris from the Coffin Texts.



CONDITIONS

Circle of casters: 2/+1d

Circle of followers: 5/+1

Faith in Good Standing: All involved must be faithful adherents to Osiris

Extra duration: 1 day/+1

Rare ingredient: Censer, chalice, altar, or cornerstone of at least 10 gp value each/+1 for each 10 gp each

Sacrifice: Foodstuffs equal to 10 gp per person who could stand in the structure being blessed with their arms out and fingers touching (1 person=1 five-foot square)/+2d

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d4: (1) target becomes bathed in holy moonlight leaving the target cleansed, (2) target glows with a divine radiance for 1 hour, (3) area fills with the sound of divine music for 1 hour, (4) ghostly celestial figures appear around the target, touching it with insubstantial hands, and laying the Atef crown on all who are in attendance.

CORRUPTION

Roll on Osiris disapproval table for all involved

MISFIRE

Roll on Osiris disapproval table

*If not a wizard’s patron but a cleric’s god, then roll disapproval instead

1	Failure and worse! Roll 1d4 modified by Luck: (0 or less) corruption + misfire + patron taint*, (1-2) corruption, (3-4) misfire. Effects all participants.	
2-17	Failure. Roll misfire, only effects caster.	
18-20	If same alignment as deity, ritual recipient is inducted as a cleric of diety. All existing class abilities and XPs, except HP, are lost as recipient becomes a 1st level cleric. If ritual alignment not same as deity, caster is geased to repent, and spell fails.	The ritual blesses a structure, censer, chalice, altar, and/or cornerstone to your deity creating a blessed implement cherished by the deity’s worshippers. Those witnessing the ritual gain a +1d to all fortitude checks for 1 week, so blessed is the event.
21-24	As above, but existing class abilities and XP are retained at level–4. May choose which level to advance, but may not advance both at once. Must advance 1 level of cleric at least every other level of advancement.	As above, using blessed implements gains: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Censer: +2 Divine Aid• Chalice: +2 Lay on Hands• Altar: +2 Spell Checks• Stone Cornerstone (set): +2 Turn Unholy Holding or touching a blessed implement, apply the following : Unholy creatures (UC) of 1 HD do not even sense the individual; 2+ HD unholy creatures must roll Will save to sense the individual.
25-27	As above, but existing class abilities and XP are retained at level–3.	As above, but 2 HD UC may not sense; and 3+ HD UC must make a Will save to sense.
28-29	As above, but existing class abilities and XP are retained at level–2.	As above, but blessed implement +3; 3 HD may not sense; 4+ HD must make a Will save to sense. When creating blessed implements, roll 1d10 on the Miracles table. Effect lasts for 1 day. On roll of 10+, the caster may burn one Luck point to make effect permanent.
30-31	As above, but existing class abilities and XP are retained at level–1.	As above, but 4 HD may not sense; 5+ HD must make a Will save to sense. Roll 1d12 on the Miracles table.
32+	As above, but all existing class abilities and XP are retained.	As above, but bonuses are +4; 5 HD may not sense; 6+ HD must make a Will save to sense. Roll 1d14 on the Miracles table.

Rite of Consecration

Level 3 Base Die: Range: Duration: Casting time: Save:
1d6 Self Permanent 1 Day None

GENERAL

The caster creates a sanctuary space dedicated to a specific deity bonding blessed implements (a censer, chalice, altar, and cornerstone set—which must have already gone through a *liturgy of blessing* ritual before they can be used in a *rite of consecration*) to a structure (referred to hereafter as holy ground; the limits of which are described in the ritual outcomes below).

The Rite of Consecration can be cast upon clerics as well, bonding them to consecrated structures and providing them with additional holy powers while acting inside that structure. One of these is the Pious Deed die. The Pious Deed die functions as a Mighty Deed of Arms die, but is used by clerics to augment any of their normal class abilities through pious acts.

Each use of *rite of consecration* is a separate ritual—you may not create a structure and bond clerics to that structure in the same ritual. An area permanently remains a sanctuary until *desecrated*, and a cleric is permanently bound to a structure unless excommunicated.



*Cthulhu as recorded in the Foul
Blessings of the Pelagic God.*



CONDITIONS

Caster: Must be a *Consecrated Priest*

Circle of casters: 2/+1d

Circle of followers: 3/+1

Faith in Good Standing: Caster and ritual subject must be a faithful adherents to Cthulhu

Extra duration: 1 day/+1

Rare ingredient: Cthulhu idol present and rubbed with seaweed-brined blood of the enemies of Cthulhu at time of casting/+1d

Sacrifice: For each enemy of Cthulhu drowned at start of ritual/+1d, or for each Elder Thing eyestalk eaten by the circle of casters/+1d

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d4: (1) the wild, cosmic dreams of Cthulhu manifest around the holy ground for all to see, (2) green spectral star spawn rise up out of the earth and fly around the participants, slathering their tentacles over the forms of those who witness the consecration, leaving a sickly sweet ichor over them, (3) each participant doubles over in pain, green mist exudes from their pores and they then choke up small shoggoths—which promptly slither away, (4) the idol of Cthulhu grows to twice its size, and roots itself into the altar of the structure. Moments later, eyes appear randomly along every surface of the structure, slowly opening and closing at random intervals.

CORRUPTION

Roll Cthulhu patron taint for all involved in ritual. Clerics of Cthulhu also roll on Cthulhu disapproval table.

MISFIRE

Roll 1d4: (1) the wild, cosmic dreams of Cthulhu manifest around the holy ground for all to see—Will save DC 20 or fall comatose for 1d4 days as the horrors rage on in their own mind; on a natural 1, they die as the dreams literally explode their head, (2) each participant doubles over in pain, green mist exudes from their pores, and they then choke up small shoggoths—which promptly attack them before slithering away 1d3 rounds later, (3) the Idol of Cthulhu falls over and 1d3 random participants are struck dead instantly, (4) briny sea water drains from the orifices of those involved, and they choke on long strands of seaweed—make a Fort save (DC 15) or suffer 1d3 permanent Stamina loss from the flotsam left in their lungs.



*Osiris as recorded in the Great Hymn
to Osiris from the Coffin Texts.*



CONDITIONS

Caster: Must be a *Consecrated Priest* of Osiris

Circle of casters: 3/+1d

Circle of followers: 12/+1

Extra duration: 1 day/+1

Rare ingredient: Blessed censer, chalice, altar, and fourteen *djed* of at least 100 gp (total)/+1d for each +1 bonus

MANIFESTATION

Roll 1d4: (1) the sanctuary or target affected erupts in harmless, divine fire that leaves them magically cleansed; (2) the sanctuary or target affected glows with a divine radiance of a color appropriate to the cleric's deity; (3) a blast of celestial music spills from the caster's mouth, causing the area to resonate with holy music; (4) tears of holy water flow from the caster's eyes, anointing the sanctuary or target.

CORRUPTION

Roll on Osiris disapproval table for all involved

MISFIRE

Roll 1d4: (1) no plant life will grow in the failed holy ground and milk sours when brought within 100 feet, (2) scarab beetles appear in a black cloud around the site, and drive their pincers into the flesh of those who participated in the ritual, causing 1d4 damage to all, (3) statues of Osiris crack and are rent asunder, falling to the ground, (4) 1d3 random participant wither and mummify in front of the eyes of all—yet they live as crazed individuals craving the watery-fattened flesh of those around them.

EFFECTS

SPELL CHECK PERSON CHURCH

1	Failure and worse! Roll 1d4 modified by Luck: (0 or less) corruption + misfire + patron taint , (1-2) corruption, (3-4) misfire. Affects all participants.
2-11	Failure. Roll misfire.
12-15	Ritual Failure.

16-17	<p>Ritual recipient is inducted as a structure consecrated cleric, gaining a +1 Will saves for each bonded religious implement on the grounds. The cleric gains a Pious Deed die at +1d5. On an action die roll of a natural 20, the consecrated priest enacts a miracle. Roll a d10 modified by priest's personality modifier on the Miracles table. Duration is 1 minute and only 1 miracle may be active at any time. Any permanent holy ground miracles do not count against limit.</p> <p>Unholy creatures suffer 1d10 points of damage each round when on holy ground. Harmful spells targeted at the cleric and allies receive a -1d penalty to spell checks while on this holy ground. Holy ground is limited to the area where the cleric presides over the congregation (no more than 20'x20' space). At the creation of the holy ground, the caster rolls 1d16 on the Miracles table, and the effect lasts for 1 day. On a die roll of 10+, the effect is permanent.</p>
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EFFECTS

SPELL CHECK PERSON

CHURCH

18-21	<p>As above, but Will save bonus increases to +2, the Pious Deed die increases to +1d6, and the Miracles roll is now 1d12. When defending the sanctuary, the priest may draw 1d10 hit points from the sanctuary itself to soak damage each time they are assaulted by an unholy foe. This damage is reflected in the structure as it is taken.</p> <p>Lesser Sanctuary As above, but unholy creatures suffer 1d12 damage and 2 HD or less creatures must make a Will save to enter holy ground. Harmful spells suffer -2d spellcheck penalty. Miracle roll at holy ground creation increases to d20. In addition, consecrated implements add a bonus as follows when used or housed within holy ground:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Censer: +1d to Divine Aid• Chalice: +1 Lay on Hands• Altar: +1 Spell Checks• Stone Cornerstone: +1 Turn Unholy <p>While using a <i>consecrated</i> instrument bonded to the structure, an natural 20 action die roll adds a 1d12 Miracles table roll, with the effect lasting 1 hour. Holy ground is increased to no more than a 50'x50' space.</p>
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22-23	<p>As above, but the Will save increases to +3, the Pious Deed die to +1d7, and the Miracles roll is now 1d14. Cleric may draw 1d12 hit points from sanctuary.</p> <p>Moderate Sanctuary As above, but unholy creatures suffer 1d14 damage and 3 HD or less creatures must make a Will save to enter. Harmful spells suffer a -3d penalty. Miracle roll at holy ground creation increases to 1d24. <i>Consecrated</i> implement Miracles die increases to 1d14. Holy ground is limited to a 100'x100' space.</p>
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24-26	<p>As above, but the Will save increases to +4, the Pious Deed die to +1d8, and the Miracles roll is now 1d16. Cleric may draw 1d16 hit points from sanctuary.</p> <p>Major Sanctuary As above, but cleric check increases to +2d, lay worshippers now receive +1d on all checks, and allies gain a +1 bonus when acting in alignment with the deity whose structure it is. Unholy creatures suffer 1d16 damage and 4 HD or less creatures must make a Will save to enter. Harmful spells suffer a -4d penalty. <i>Consecrated</i> implement Miracles die increases to 1d16. At the creation of the holy ground, roll 1d30 on the Miracles table and the holy ground gains this effect permanently. The sanctuary is known for this miracle and any supplicant of the deity who prays in the temple will witness (i.e., experience) this miracle on a d20 roll of 10+. Holy ground is limited to all buildings and grounds associated with the church and bounded by some sort of physical wall.</p>
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EFFECTS		CHURCH
SPELL CHECK	PERSON	
27-31	As above, but the Will save increases to +5, the Pious Deed die to +1d10, and Miracles roll is now 1d20. Cleric may draw 1d20 hit points from sanctuary. While defending the consecrated space they are bound to, the cleric may call down the wrath of their deity to smite their enemies. On a divine aid roll above a 20+ (taken with no disapproval), all unholy creatures on holy ground take 3d6 damage.	Revered Sanctuary As above, but unholy creatures suffer 1d20 damage and 5 HD or less creatures must make a Will save to enter. 2 HD or less unholy creatures instantly perish in flames if they enter holy ground. Harmful spells suffer a -5d penalty, and will no longer damage holy ground in any way. <i>Consecrated</i> implement Miracles die increases to 1d20. Supplicant may witness the miracle on a d20 roll of 8+. Holy ground extends out 100 feet from perimeter wall.
32-33	As above, but the Will save increases to +6, the Pious Deed die to +1d12, and the Miracles roll is now 1d24. Cleric may draw 1d24 hit points from sanctuary. Divine aid smite damage is now 4d8.	Iconic Sanctuary As above, but unholy creatures suffer 1d24 damage and 6 HD or less creatures must make a Will save to enter. 3 HD or less unholy creatures instantly perish. Harmful spells suffer a -6d penalty. <i>Consecrated</i> implement Miracles die increases to 1d24. At holy ground creation, roll 1d30 twice on the Miracles table and the holy ground gains these effects permanently. Supplicants witness a miracle on a d20 roll of 6+. Holy ground extends out 250 feet in all directions from the perimeter wall.
34-35	As above, but the Will save increases to +7, the Pious Deed die to d14, and the Miracles roll is now 1d30. Priest may draw 1d30 hit points from sanctuary. Priest rolls on Miracles table with 1d20. Smite damage is now 5d10.	Mythical Sanctuary As above, but unholy creatures suffer 1d30 damage and 7 HD or less creatures must make a Will save to enter. 4 HD or less unholy creatures instantly perish. Harmful spells suffer a -7d penalty. <i>Consecrated</i> implement Miracles die increases to 1d30. Supplicants witness a miracle on a d20 roll of 4+. Holy ground extends out 500 feet in all directions.

MIRACLES TABLE
Results marked with “*” do not affect unholy creatures for the deity whose holy ground this is.

CHECK	RESULT
1	Sweetwater* : Water drunk on holy ground is sweeter and acts as if having eaten a full meal.
2	Confused Language : Unholy creatures speak gibberish and must make a Will save to cast spells.
3	Insect Plague : A swarm of tiny divine creatures attack, harry, and hamper unholy creatures. Action dice suffer a -1d penalty.
4	Toothless Weapons : Edged weapons wielded by unholy creatures become dull. Affected weapons suffer a -1d penalty to damage.
5	Righteous Healing* : All lay on hands checks are treated as if the same alignment.
6	Foul Blindness : Unholy creatures are struck blind permanently. Only a divine healing or <i>remove curse</i> may remove the effect.
7	Holy Light* : Blind creatures have their sight restored. This cures natural and supernatural blindness.
8	Filthy Speechless : Unholy creatures are rendered mute permanently. Only a divine healing or <i>remove curse</i> may remove the effect.
9	Fecund Weapons : All weapons wielded by unholy creatures grow flowers and leaves that render them ineffectual. Affected weapons suffer a -2d penalty to damage
10	Inflict Deafness : Unholy creatures are rendered deaf permanently. Only a divine healing or <i>remove curse</i> may remove the effect.
11	Holy Sound* : Deaf creatures have their hearing restored. This cures natural and supernatural deafness.
12	Gift of Tongues : The priest gains the ability to speak and understand all natural and supernatural languages while on holy ground.
13	Disease : Unholy creatures become ill with a slow wasting disease. The disease causes a cumulative -1d penalty to all rolls daily until healed through magical means. If not healed, the creature dies after 1 week.
14	Holy Stamina* : Diseased creatures have their health and vigor restored. This cures natural and supernatural diseases.
15	Curse : Unholy creatures become cursed as if under the effect of <i>curse</i> (as if spell check result of 26).
16	Holy Might* : Cursed creatures have their curse removed. This functions as <i>remove curse</i> (as if spell check result of 26).

CHECK RESULT

- 17

Serpentine Weapons: All weapons wielded by unholy creatures become vipers and attack the wielding creature each round for 1 turn.
- 18

Poison: Unholy creatures become poisoned. Select poison radnoml fromAppendix P: Posions (*DCC RPG*, p. 446).
- 19

Holy Form*: Poisoned creatures are healed from all effects. This cures natural and supernatural poisons as *neutralize poison* or disease (as if spell check result of 22).
- 20

Divine Protection: All faithful defenders of the church gain a +4 AC bonus against unholy creatures for 1 turn.
- 21

Thunder and Lightning: Within holy ground, all are subjected to the flash of lightning and peals of thunder every round for 1 turn. Unholy creatures must make a Will save DC 20 to resist the effects or be stricken blind and deaf until healed magically or they leave holy ground.
- 22

Holy Waters*: All water within the confines of holy ground becomes infused with divine energies. Each draught of water can remove one detrimental condition or heals damage as if lay on hands check 22+, and add +1d if a worshipper of same diety. May only receive once per day.
- 23

The Word: Unholy creatures are stricken by the angry voice of the deity and his host. Creatures must make a Will save (DC 20) or flee in fear for 1 turn.
- 24

The Withering: Unholy creatures are struck with a supernatural withering condition. While on holy ground, a limb (at random) will wither and become useless. If a leg is stricken, reduce movement by 10'. If an arm is stricken, the creature may only defend.
- 25

Holy Strength: All faithful defenders of the church gain a +4 bonus to Strength against unholy creatures for 1 turn.
- 26

Holy Fires: Unholy creatures become bathed in divine fire. While on holy ground, the affected creatures suffer 1d20 points damage per round.
- 27

Exorcism: A possessing entity or soul is expelled from the body it is inhabiting and the original soul is restored.
- 28

Resurrection*: A deceased creature is restored to life with full health. This includes creatures that have had their souls destroyed by magic.
- 29

Roll twice on the Miracles table.
- 30

Roll three times on the Miracles table.

EXAMPLE PIOUS DEED MANEUVERS

Clerics who have access to a Pious Deed die may use implements of faith (e.g., holy censers) to perform many of the standard Mighty Deed maneuvers: rallying maneuvers, pushbacks, blinding attacks, disarming attacks all make sense in specific situations, which the cleric’s player must elucidate clearly to the judge. We provide another example of faith-based maneuvers. Players are directed to build their own unique maneuvers that embody their god and faith.

THE NUMINOUS GLORY OF FAITH

While the cleric is carrying out actions the judge deems worthy of their god’s glory, they are wreathed in a holy nimbus and their deeds become those that poets, playwrights, and balladeers evoke forever after as they inspire their allies to acts of supreme faith.

DEED DIE OUTCOME

- 3

The cleric’s luminous faith is a beacon to those in dark places against unholy creatures. If locked in combat against unholy forces when the cleric successfully rolls their Pious Deed die, worthy allies thus illumed gain 1 Luck point to be spent in the next round, or it is lost.
- 4

So effulgent is the cleric that they ignore damage inflicted by the next attack while they continue to use their Pious Deed die successfully each round. If they falter and cease their lambent piety (i.e., stop using their Pious Deed die completely), then all ignored damage returns full force. If the cleric stops rolling the Pious Deed die because combat has ended, then the damage does not return.
- 5

The radiant cleric’s philosophical chanting illuminates allies who work to curb the advances unholy foes, providing them +1d to any saves for a turn.
- 6

Engulfed in the cleric’s incandescent nature, allies ignore damage inflicted. This lasts until the cleric’s lustrous nature ends and they roll no more Pious Deed dice, then all ignored damage returns. If the cleric stops rolling the Pious Deed die because combat is over, damage does not return.
- 7+

The cleric’s resplendent numinous nature allows allies who see the cleric to receive a successful laying on of hands. Those who cannot see the cleric gain no such comfort.

CULPEPPER'S HERBAL

Agrimony

Agrimonia pilosa

Description: Standing between two to three feet high at maturity, agrimony has long, thin elliptic leaves that possess serrate edges and minute hairs. The leaves are dark green above and a silvery grey on the underside. The leaves are stipellate and arranged in off-pinnate fashion. Racemiform flowers grow from the peduncle stem.

Where to find: Normally found in hedgerows, or shrubbery at the base of deciduous trees, as red-throated razor grackle often drop seeds while resting in these places.

Flowering time: Agrimony flowers in the middle of summer, with the seeding ripening as summer turns to fall.

Astrology: Sympathetic with the moon Dis, agrimony thrives in uncultivated areas of chaos, and can grow to dominate in such conditions. If harvested when Dis is in eclipse, agrimony is said to take on fantastic healing properties (healing 1d6+3 damage or ability recovery as if under full bed rest, if chewed while fresh or dried). However, there is a downside, with the foul influence of that Black Magician, Jaracus the Jigarwakar,

rarely taking root in the user of agrimony (luck check, natural 20 = gain 1 patron taint). So severe is the fear of this taint that the Arturian peoples burn their stocks of dried agrimony at the beginning of the month of Niv.

BODILY VIRTUES

Shoots: When stripped of leaves and chewed fresh, the flavor is palliative for open sores, and cleanses urine. It is also good for reducing serpent venom potency (+3 to Fort saves).

Leaves: When steeped in red wines, muddled, and then dried in salts, can be mixed with swine fat and applied to open sores, ulcerous wounds, and cancers. Such salves can be stored in tins for several years before fouling. Stops bleeding in even the most extreme cases—even those thought to be too far gone to save (-2d on recovering the body Luck check if administered during recovery to the wounds incurred). However, decapitated heads cannot be reattached, as I discovered with poor Jacapo, my manservant on my journey to Furthest Ponteverde.

Flowers: When dried, infused in boiling water for half a day, and then taken in small doses (~1oz), can forestall the negative effects of stamina loss (1 dose = 3 hours of abeyance), 50% of the time. This saved the life of my porter, Snorri Gilkerson III, while climbing in the Valdainic Mountains. He really should not have lied about how fit he was for mountain terrain.

Root: When pulped and the juice is dropped into ears, will dissolve wax build-up and kill ear parasites. Also, when a body part is steeped in the juice for ten minutes, it will draw out splinters, nails, or other things that have gotten under the flesh, including the stingers of most Sempalli Murder Hornets and like-minded giant insects.

Bastard Agrimony

Aremonia agrimonoides

Description: Also known as bur marigold, three-lobed beggartick, or water hemp, this herb is medium height with triternite stems and stipules at the base of serrated lanceolate leaves. Said leaves are yellow-green on both sides. The flowers are a dull, mustard yellow; found at the end of erect stems. These flowers are arranged in capitate fashion with many florets. Roots are dominated by a main taproot with many rootlets.

Where to find: Ditches, ponds, streams, or even fast running water. Three-lobed beggartick is found right at the verge of the riparian zone.

Flowering time: Bur marigold flowers mid-to late summer, with seeds ripening by summer's end.

Astrology: Bastard agrimony is daughter of one of the twin moons—Alernus or Maldomini, but no one knows which. It is said to be strongest when picked during the solar eclipse of

either of these moons. It is opposed by the moon Minauros, for it is a dry, dead place, so say village elders of the Thraziun plains.

BODILY VIRTUES

Shoots: Drying the shoots, pulverizing them to a fine powder, and mixing them with nuts and honey, produces a cake that curbs the appetite and drives away buboes or cancerous growth of the lymphatic system over a few months of daily use.

Leaves: Steeping leaves in grain alcohol in the sun for a week makes a “tea” that is good for renal function, respirations, and urinary tract disorders. If then soaked into a cloth and used as a breathing aid, allows the user to defeat common illusions (+3 Will save), and reduces petrification or paralysis from wizard and monster alike (+1d to save).

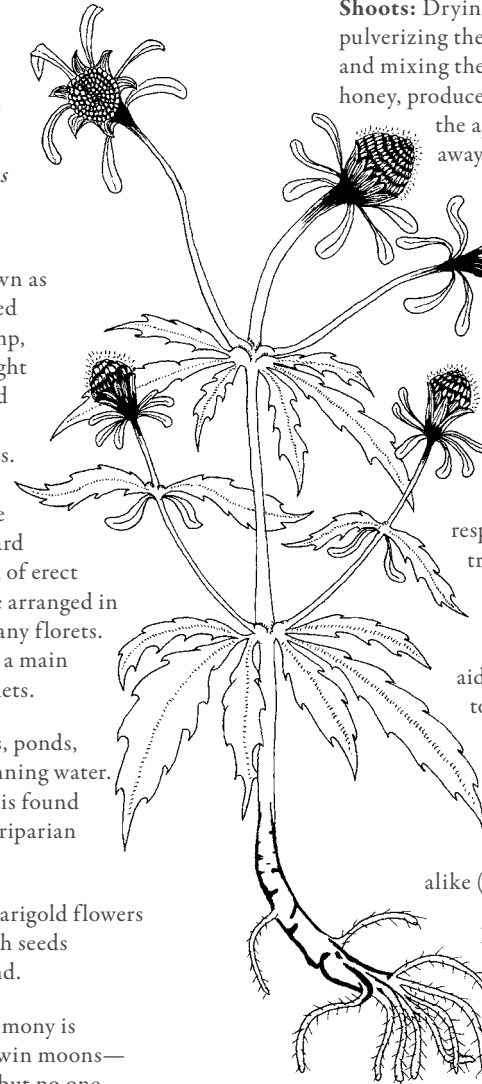
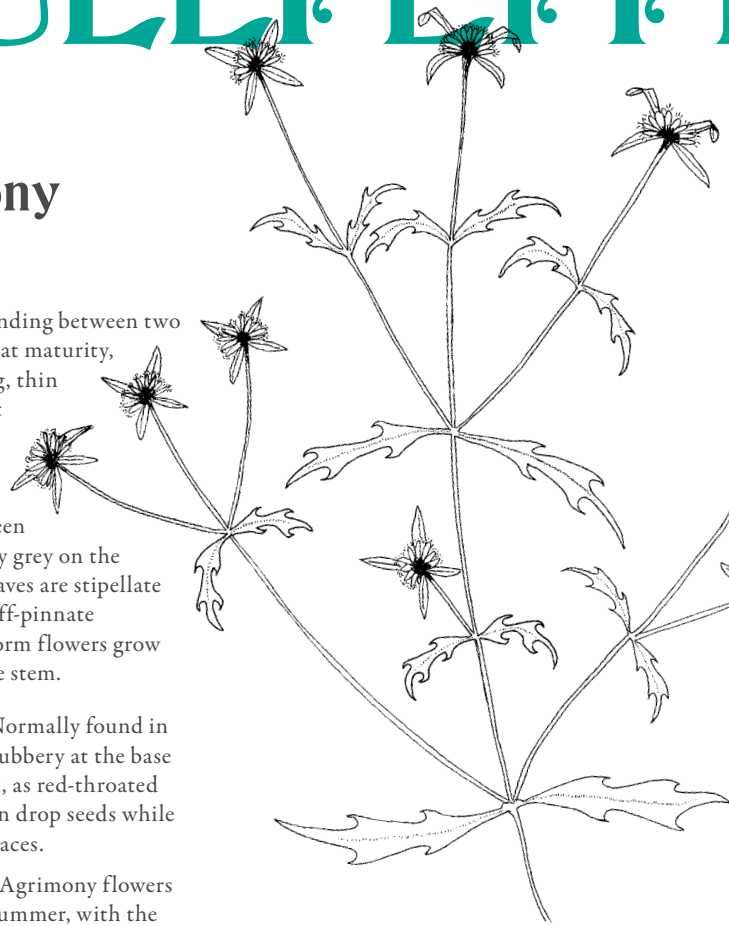
Flowers: No known medicinal benefits, but make a nice garnish for roast basilisk or any manner of giant insects. Ponteverdian Gnomes are known to

favor the flowers as a sign of youth, vitality, and an aphrodisiac if chewed just before lovers meet under the full moon of Alernus.

Root: It is the root for which water hemp is best known. So prized is this product that minotaur Fakhr will trade slaves for a few pounds of the dried rootstock, as they consume the roots prior to their autosacrifices to Middia. Rhew elves use it in their courting rituals, and the Eld’Magii of Nyst make an acidic paste of it and coat themselves in it prior to their psychic wars.

Chewing the root provides mental vitality (+2d to Intelligence-related checks for 1d4+4 hours). Drying it and steeping it produces a broth that rejuvenates the blood (heals 1d4 hit points once a day) in small quantities, and inhibits blood loss to cuts (no bleeding damage for the day).

Shredding the root and smoking it creates euphoria in small doses (1d5 hours in duration), and temporary (1d7 hours) mental enlightenment in large doses; roll 1d5 for random mutation: (1) dual brain (MCC, p. 69), (2) illusion generation (MCC, p. 72), (3) mental blast (MCC, p. 76), (4) mental shield (MCC, p. 76), (5) mental reflection (MCC, p. 77). It is possible there are other benefits of prolonged exposure to this root. Rarely, some people overdose on this root and crash, suffering catatonia for 1d3 days (on roll of natural 1 for first attempt to use mutation).



SHOGGOTH

It was a terrible, indescribable thing vaster than any subway train—a shapeless congeries of protoplasmic bubbles, faintly self-luminous, and with myriads of temporary eyes forming and un-forming as pustules of greenish light all over the tunnel-filling front that bore down upon us, crushing the frantic penguins and slithering over the glistening floor that it and its kind had swept so evilly free of all litter.

—H. P. Lovecraft, *At the Mountains of Madness*



Shoggoth. The mere mention of the primordial, amoeboid creature is enough to give veterans of the Call of Cthulhu game visible post-traumatic stress disorder, as they near-universally suffer flashbacks of their characters running for their lives while the protoplasmic shoggoths shrill "*Tekeli-li! Tekeli-li!*"

H.P. Lovecraft's creation has a long and storied history in roleplaying games. The shoggoth first appeared in the roleplaying literature in "The Lovecraftian Mythos in Dungeons & Dragons", an article appearing in issue #12 (February, 1978) of *The Dragon*, wherein all manner of Lovecraftian creations were described in a format compatible with the original *D&D supplement IV, Gods, Demi-Gods & Heroes*. These were then updated into the AD&D format for 1980's *Deities & Demigods*, which was quickly followed by their inclusion in the first edition boxed set of *Call of Cthulhu* (*CoC*, 1981). Chaosium's publication and license precipitated the removal of the entire Cthulhu mythos from later versions of *Deities & Demigods*, and the shoggoth would leave the AD&D universe until second edition, when the Argos, essentially small space shoggoths, were introduced.

Shoggoths returned in force with the d20 version of *CoC* by Monte Cook and John Tynes. While a nice addition to the 3.0 D&D rules system, the shoggoth presented is a reskinning of the *CoC* ruleset, and somewhat limited in the context of the *DCC RPG* where characters are much more effective in nature. Jeffrey Talanian includes shoggoths in *Astonishing Swordsmen and Sorcerers of Hyperborea*, and these have some nicely appropriate abilities.

The shoggoth, according to Lovecraft, is so much more. What follows is an exploration of the fantastical nature of shoggoths, as Lovecraft intended them, and then a ruleset that presents the shoggoth in all their glory for DCC.

First introduced in passing in Lovecraft's *The Fungi from Yuggoth Poem Cycle, Sonnet XX* (1929-30), it was not until his masterpiece *At the Mountains of Madness* (1931) that Lovecraft gave them the attention they deserved, slowly building the story to the crescendo of bizarre horror that is best left to experience firsthand. Along the way, though, Lovecraft provided copious tidbits about shoggoths: their origins, history, and physical nature. Notably, shoggoths are creations of the Old Ones, and indeed, preceded life on earth itself, making them truly ancient:

They had done the same thing on other planets, having manufactured not only necessary foods, but certain multicellular protoplasmic masses capable of molding their tissues into all sorts of temporary organs under hypnotic influence and thereby forming ideal slaves to perform the heavy work of the community. These viscous masses were without doubt what Abdul Alhazred whispered about as the "Shoggoths" in his frightful *Necronomicon*, though even that mad Arab had not hinted that any existed on earth except in the dreams of those who had chewed a certain alkaloidal herb. When the star-headed Old Ones on this planet had synthesized their simple food forms and bred a good supply of Shoggoths, they allowed other cell-groups to develop into other forms of animal and vegetable life for sundry purposes, extirpating any whose presence became troublesome.

All quotes from *At the Mountains of Madness*, by HP Lovecraft, 1931.

The shoggoths were slaves to the Old Ones, and they were the economic basis for the abandoned city *At the Mountains of Madness* focuses on in the latter half of the novella. Shoggoths were also incredibly scary creatures. After all, the author of the *Necronomicon* has no problem with the fact that Cthulhu is present on Earth, slumbering and influencing humanity, yet he cannot bring himself to scarcely believe that shoggoths occur in anything other than drug induced dreams.

Shoggoths were grown to immense size for their strength and their ability to form necessary appendages to quarry, move, and assemble the stone structures of non-Euclidean geometry that made up the massive city in the mountains. The limitations and abilities of the shoggoths are described in fairly decent detail by Lovecraft:

They had always been controlled through the hypnotic suggestions of the Old Ones, and had modeled their tough plasticity into various useful temporary limbs and organs; but now their self-modeling powers were sometimes exercised independently, and in various imitative forms implanted by past suggestion. They had, it seems, developed a semi-stable brain whose separate and occasionally stubborn volition echoed the will of the Old Ones without always obeying it. ... Shoggoths ... were normally shapeless entities composed of a viscous jelly which looked like an agglutination of bubbles, and each averaged about fifteen feet in diameter when a sphere. They had, however, a constantly shifting shape and volume—throwing out temporary developments or forming apparent organs of sight, hearing, and speech in imitation of their masters, either spontaneously or according to suggestion.

Shoggoths were mindless organic constructs intended to build whatever the Old Ones needed, but slowly, they gained ever-increasing intelligence. Lovecraft does not explore whether this change is adaptation, whereby all or many shoggoths could be capable of this change, or evolution, with only progressively newer generations possessing increasingly “semi-stable brains” while older generations would not. Eventually, shoggoths gained enough intelligence that they rebelled. The Old Ones acted swiftly and with severity.

The Old Ones had used curious weapons of molecular and atomic disturbances against the rebel entities, and in the end had achieved a complete victory. Thereafter the sculptures showed a period in which Shoggoths were tamed and broken by armed Old Ones as the wild horses of the American west were tamed by cowboys.

The Old Ones fought wars with shoggoths, and these seem to be something right out of the *Mutant Crawl Classics* background, with foul energies and subjugation of the heroes of the story, the shoggoths—a true apocalypse. The Old Ones did not end the shoggoths as they had other life on earth if it grew too rambunctious—instead, they continued manipulating them, even as they fought off other races, such as the Star Spawn and the Mi-Go. Shoggoths remained a primary tool, but the newer ones are smarter, bigger, and faster:

The newly bred Shoggoths grew to enormous size and singular intelligence, and were represented as taking and executing orders with marvelous quickness. They seemed to converse with the Old Ones by mimicking their voices.

The Shoggoth’s pain and horror as slaves have been largely lost in roleplaying material, but Lovecraft summed up near the end of his story with real empathy. The shoggoth is the monster of *At the Mountains of Madness*—the thing stalking the tunnels of the great abandoned city. The shoggoth is not the horror of the story, however. Rather, that honor is reserved for the Old Ones themselves, referred to by the character Dyer “as men.” *At the Mountains of Madness* shows us the post-apocalyptic world “of men”—long after their civilization has succumbed to war and strife, and decadence, their slaves haunt the hallways of their lost cities.

We were on the track ahead as the nightmare, plastic column of fetid black iridescence oozed tightly onward through its fifteen-foot sinus, gathering unholy speed and driving before it a spiral, re-thickening cloud of the pallid abyss-vapor. ... Still came that eldritch, mocking cry—“Tekeli-li! Tekeli-li!” and at last we remembered that the demoniac Shoggoths—given life, thought, and plastic organ patterns solely by the Old Ones, and having no language save that which the dot-groups expressed—had likewise no voice save the imitated accents of their bygone masters.

Shoggoths are versatile creatures, many with evolved abilities. They need to reflect their past as slave laborers, but also their ability to change to a situation.

Basic Traits: In game terms, each shoggoth is unique. Use the tables in this article to randomly determine a shoggoth, or select as you deem appropriate. Roll once on Table 1 and once on Table 2 to build your shoggoth’s base traits; rolls on Tables 3 and 4 are determined by the shoggoth’s age.

Hit Dice: Shoggoths use a d12 for their Hit Dice, with the number of Hit Dice determined on Table 1.

Actions: A shoggoth receives a number of d20 action dice based on their age, as shown in the “Attacks” column on Table 2. These action dice can be used for attacks, or to power certain abilities gained from Tables 3 and 4.

Attack modifier: A shoggoth's attack modifier equals its Hit Dice plus a die roll, as shown on Table 1. This roll is made once and applies to all of the shoggoth’s attacks. It also has three or more attacks as shown on Table 2.

Damage Dice: A shoggoth can have one or more attacks, as denoted under attack types. The attacks do progressively more damage, as indicated:

- Appendage Slaps do 1d6 damage (S)
- Claw attacks do 1d8 damage (C)
- Bite attacks do 1d12 damage (B)
- Feeding attacks do 2d8 damage, but decapitate on a natural 17+ (F)
- Crush attacks do 2d16 damage (X)

Appendage Slaps, Claws, and Bites can be performed as many times in a round as the shoggoth desires, up to the limit of its number of attacks. A Feed attack occurs when the shoggoth has successfully used its Bite attack at least 2 times on a given PC in a single round. The shoggoth may then make a single Feed attack on that PC, so long as it has action dice remaining to

use in that round. A Crush occurs when the shoggoth raises up and slams the majority of its bulk onto its opponent. The shoggoth is limited to one crush per round, except gigantic shoggoths, that are so large that they can raise up two portions of themselves and do damage to two opponents in a single round. Woe be to the party that fights a gigantic shoggoth!

Critical Hits: Shoggoths have their own crit table. A shoggoth scores a critical hit on a natural 20. Since larger shoggoths roll so many attacks, they tend to roll a fair number of critical hits. Enjoy.

Initiative: A shoggoth’s initiative modifier is equal to its Hit Dice.

Movement: A shoggoth’s speed is shown on Table 1. If you doubt shoggoths can achieve such speeds, we refer you to the end of At the Mountains of Madness. Don’t trip.

Saving Throws: A shoggoth’s saves are all the same, each equal to its Hit Dice.

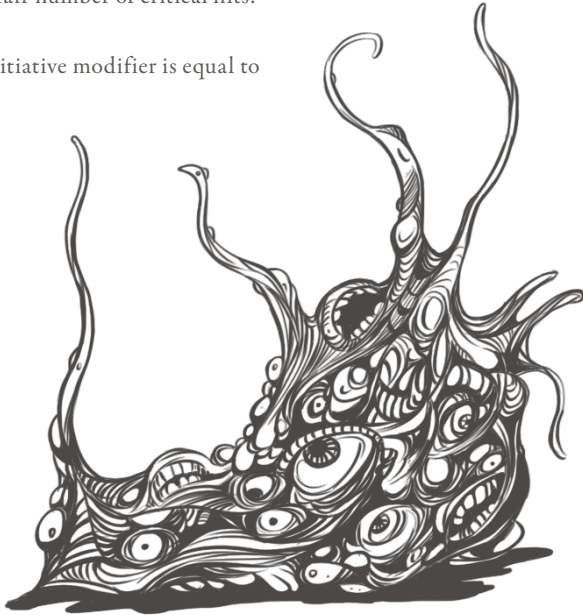


TABLE 1: SHOGGOTH SIZE

D24	SIZE (DIAMETER)	HIT DICE	AGE DIE	SPEED	ATTACK BONUS	ATTACKS	REACH
1	Small (3')	1	1d3	30'	HD+1	S, C	5'
2-5	Medium (5')	1d3	1d3+1	40'	HD+1d3	S, C, B	10'
6-10	Average (15')	1d6+2	1d4+2	50'	HD+1d4	S, C, B, F	15'
11-15	Large (25')	1d8+4	1d5+3	60'	HD+1d6	S, C, B, F	20'
16-19	Hulking (35')	1d10+6	1d6+4	70'	HD+1d7	S, C, B, F, X	30'
20-23	Massive (50')	2d7+10	1d7+5	80'	HD+1d8	S, C, B, F, X	40'
24	Gigantic (75')	2d12+16	1d8+6	90'	HD+1d10	S, C, B, F, X x2	60'

TABLE 2: SHOGGOTH AGE

ROLL*	AGE (YEARS)	ABILITIES			
		ATTACKS	MARTIAL	ESOTERIC	AC
1	Newborn (0-1)	3	1	1	10+HD
2	Very Young (2-20)	3	2	1	10+HD
3	Young (21-40)	4	2	2	11+HD
4	Adolescent (41-80)	4	3	2	11+HD
5	Sub-Adult (81-100)	5	3	2	12+HD
6	Adult (101-200)	5	3	3	12+HD
7	Old (201-400)	6	4	3	13+HD
8	Very Old (401-800)	6	4	4	13+HD
9	Ancient (801-1,200)	7	4	4	14+HD
10	Noachian (1,201-2,000)	7	5	4	14+HD
11	Antediluvian (2,000-5,000)	8	5	4	15+HD
12	Venerable (5,001-8,000)	8	5	5	15+HD
13	Primeval (8,001-10,000)	9	6	5	16+HD
14	Primordial (10,000+)	10	6	6	17+HD

* Use die as determined on Table 1: die used for age.



TABLE 3: SHOGGOTH MARTIAL ABILITIES

D%	MARTIAL ABILITY
1-10	Amphibious. Shoggoth can breathe water and swim effortlessly at its normal movement speed.
11-20	Rubbery Hide. Shoggoth AC increases +4.
21-25	Poison Glands. Appendage slap, claw, and bite attacks cause poison damage. Select poison randomly from Appendix P: Poisons, <i>DCC RPG</i> , p. 446.
26-34	Burrow. Shoggoth can swim through sand and dirt at normal movement speed.

D% MARTIAL ABILITY

- 35-39 **Damage Reduction.** Tough hide reduces damage by 2d4 (roll at creation).
- 40-42 **Adamant Fortitude.** Shoggoth is extremely resilient. Fortitude save +4.
- 43-45 **Fast Reflexes.** Shoggoth is unusually nimble for its size. Reflex save +4.
- 46-50 **Incredible Willpower.** Shoggoth will not bend to the oppressor. Will save +4.
- 51-55 **Smash Attack.** Shoggoth shifts its bulk into the air, altering its crush attack to 2d20+8 (shoggoth of size Hulking or larger only, reroll otherwise)
- 56-65 **Frightful Presence.** Shoggoth visage and sheer mass absolutely terrifying. All who witness must make Will save (DC 10+age category) or flee in terror for at least 1d6 rounds (or until safe—but really, can you ever be safe?).
- 66-70 **Rock Hurler.** Uses appendages to hurl massive rocks as a missile attack. Range: Newborn to Adult: 100'; Old to Noachian: 200'; Antediluvian and older: 300'. Damage die begins at 1d3 and increases +1d for every size category past Small.
- 71-75 **Hypnotic Gaze.** The shoggoth's multitudinous eyes can hypnotize a victim, using one action die to do so. Will save (DC 10+age category) or stand stupefied as long as gaze held. 1 action die is needed each round after the first to hold the victim for additional rounds.
- 76-80 **Immunity.** The shoggoth is immune to (roll 1d12) (1) poison, (2) fire, (3) cold, (4) electricity, (5) curses, (6) paralysis, (7) sleep, (8) gas, (9) suffocation, (10) force attacks, (11) sonic attacks, (12) bladed weapons.
- 81-85 **Infravision.** 100'.
- 86-90 **Magic Resistance.** 50% prior to saving throws.
- 91-92 **Petrifying Gaze.** Shoggoth can use 1 action die to gaze into the eyes of one target. Will save (DC 10+age category) or victim turned to stone.
- 93-94 **Rusting Touch.** The shoggoth exudes a corrosive ichor. Normal metal that contacts the shoggoth turns to dust in 1d4 rounds, while magically enhanced metal gets a Fort save (DC 10+age category) or suffers a similar fate.

D% MARTIAL ABILITY

- Snatch Attack.** On a successful claw attack, a target is snatched. A snatched target takes 1d6 damage each round. As an action, the shoggoth may raise snatched victims off the ground and then hurl them to the earth violently (height = shoggoth starting HD in feet; damage 1d4 per HD).
- Subdivide.** The shoggoth can launch portions of itself at foes within twice its reach distance; this spawn can attack with both a claw and bite attack. This uses 2 of the "parent" shoggoth's action dice. The shoggoth can merge with its childer in lieu of any other movement on a subsequent round.
- Mimicry.** The shoggoth can extend a portion of itself that will mimic the look, smell, and voice of a target the shoggoth has observed for 2d10 minutes. Those not familiar with the mimicked creature notice something wrong on a successful DC 15 Will save. This save is reduced to DC 10 for targets familiar with the targeted creature, and DC 5 for those intimately familiar with the mimicked creature.
- 95-96
- 97-98
- 99-100



TABLE 4: SHOGGOTH ESOTERIC ABILITIES

D%	ESOTERIC ABILITY
1-10	Divisive Nature. When struck by (1) lightning, (2) fire, (3) cold, or (4) magic spells, the shoggoth splits off a portion of itself (1d5 HD, and transfers 7 hit points for each HD split to the spawn). The portion is autonomous from the parent, but retains the first two martial and one esoteric trait of the parent shoggoth. The parent regenerates these lost hit points over the same number of rounds as the number of HD split off.
11-20	Earth Tunneller. Heats and degrades stone and any type of earth into small smooth pebble-sized scree. May tunnel at movement rate while doing this: (1) ¼ normal, (2) ½ normal, or (3) normal. May not “run” using this ability. Leaves a perfectly smooth and tubular tunnel (except for scree on ground).
21-25	Liquefaction. (Shoggoth of size Hulking or larger, reroll otherwise) Shoggoth uses rhythmic strikes and corrosive enzymes to liquefy earth temporarily out to 100'. Each action die the shoggoth devotes to this action causes +1d buffering damage, beginning at 1d4. Creatures within 100' make Reflex save (DC 10 + # of action dice devoted to attack). If failed, they are knocked prone until tremors stop. Once established, the shoggoth must devote ½ the original action dice (round up) per round to maintain the tremors at full force. This action disrupts concentration and can knock people from heights/precarious places.
26-34	Assume Form. The shoggoth can mimic the forms of others. To recognize the assumed form is DC 5 if the character knows the imitated creature well, DC 10 if only somewhat familiar, and DC 15 if unfamiliar.
35-40	Medical Savant. The shoggoth can chew away damaged tissue, leaving raw nerve endings that it then exudes proteins, fats, and enzymes over to rebuild destroyed tissue as good as new. This takes 1d4 minutes per hit point rebuilt in this manner. This ability can save individuals from death even after a “roll the body” check has failed.
41-44	Builder. The shoggoth can intuitively build structures from stone. It can build a 20'x20' structure in a 24-hour period, quarrying the stone, shaping it with acidic enzymes, and constructing it all by itself. The structure will be as if 1 piece of stone, not individual stone blocks.

D% ESOTERIC ABILITY

45-50	Aquatic. While all shoggoths can swim—these are truly adept in the water. These shoggoths can swim at twice the speed of their ground movement to any depth with no ill effects. Further, they become nearly translucent while submerged.
51-55	Detection. This shoggoth was bred to detect something specific. Check is based on range: 0-100': automatic, 101-200': DC 5, 201-400': DC 10, 401-800': DC 15, 801-1600': DC 20, 1601-3200': DC 25, 3201-6400': DC 30, etc. Object of detection (roll 1d5) (1) precious metals, (2) precious gems, (3) iron, (4) steel, (5) living creatures.
56-65	Corrupt. This shoggoth exudes enzymes that make poisonous anything (1) organic, (2) inorganic, (3) magical that it crosses. This corruption can be of several types (1) Strength, (2) Agility, (3) Stamina, (4) Personality, (5) Intelligence, (6) Luck. Fort save (DC 10+age category) or loose 1d4 stat points per touch of the item corrupted.
66-70	Blossom. Hundreds of blossoms adorn this shoggoth's translucent hide. Every round, 1d4 blossoms fall off the shoggoth, each having a 25% chance of lighting upon any creature surrounding it, whereupon they are absorbed into the creature's body and begin germinating. On each subsequent round (up to the shoggoth's age category), there is a 10% cumulative chance that this bud blooms into a mutation (thus, if the shoggoth is Noachian or older, then the bud will be guaranteed to bloom on the 10th round). On a successful Fort save (DC 10+age category), this mutation lasts for 1d30 days; on a failure, the mutation is permanent. For mutations and defects, (1-2) defect, (3-13) physical mutation, (14-20) mental mutation, and consult <i>MCC RPG</i> Table 3-2: Mutations, p. 44.
71-75	Heat. The shoggoth can heat metal or stone to painful levels. Causes 1d6 damage from floors stood on, 1d8 damage from items held, or 1d10 damage from items worn. May heat items up to 100' away.
76-80	Bioluminescence. The shoggoth can form cells that glow in the dark all across its body. These can be used for communication, or defensively. They can be turned on or off almost instantly, blinding observers (either too much light or sudden darkness) who fail a Fort save (DC 5+age category). They can pulse their cells so as to confuse those with infravision—causing debilitating illness (Fort save, DC 5+age category), or seizures (if natural roll of 1 on save). They can create chaotic light shows that make them harder to hit (1 action die to perform, DC 15, every 2 points above target number is +1 to AC).

Camouflage. The shoggoth can form chromatophores that allow it to (1) hide as if a thief (neutral, level = age category) using Hide in Shadows, (2) display fearsome color changes meant to intimidate foes (Will save, DC 5+age category), (3) communicate with other shoggoths.

Encyst. The shoggoth can exude a near-impenetrable shell around itself. This takes 1d6+age category rounds to form and harden. Until hardened, the shoggoth can act normally. Once hardened, AC 30. Absorbs 15 hit points/round, immune to effect of space or other oxygen deprived /absent environments.

Dim. The shoggoth has incredibly low intelligence, and literally forgets about what it cannot see.

Magic Null. The shoggoth blunts magical activity within 50' × age category of itself. Subtract shoggoth's age category from all spell checks.

Magic Pump. Shoggoth augments magical activity within 50' × age category of itself. Add shoggoth's age category to all spell checks. Further, on a spell check roll of 18+ (before any bonuses are added), the spell sets off a random phlogiston disturbance from *DCC RPG*, Table 4-7, p.103.

Spellcaster. Shoggoth can cast 1d4 spells, 1 per round by using one of its action dice. The shoggoth's action die to cast spells is altered as follows: (1) 1d12; (2-3) 1d16; (4-9) 1d20; (10-11) 1d24; (12) 1d30. Spell check = age category. Divide age category by 2 (round up); this is the highest spell level possible. Randomly generate spells known from *DCC RPG* Table 5-8, p. 127.

Mental Mutation. Shoggoth has 1d3 mental mutations, as per *MCC RPG*, Table 3-2: Mutations, p.44.

Mental Mega Mutation. Shoggoth has one mental mega-mutation, as per *MCC RPG*, Table 3-3: Mega Mutations, p.44.

Thaumapomp. Shoggoth twists all magic cast around it. Treat as if every spell cast enters into a spell duel, as if the shoggoth had an opposing spell and was actively dueling the caster.

Find Familiar (Cthulhu)

As with their Old One masters in the past, shoggoths—especially the youngest and smallest of the breed—attach themselves to individuals of raw power. Wizards who are adherents of Cthulhu, any star spawn demi-patrons, Mother Hydra, or Dagon may use the modified find

familiar tables (Table 5, this issue) when casting the find familiar spell. Results up to 17 can use Table 6 to determine the physical configuration of the non-shoggoth familiars; results of 18 or higher should note the size and age specifications for the shoggoth bonded with, and then consult Tables 1 and 2 to determine specifics (hit dice, speed, etc.). Roll randomly for martial and esoteric abilities (Tables 3 and 4, respectively).

For those versed in Lovecraft's oeuvre, many of the non-shoggoth creatures might be familiar (no pun intended!). Because of their otherworldly natures, even more so than the "typical" familiar, judges are encouraged to have players adopt these beasts' traits into their characters—not quite corruption (although, let's be honest—these are Lovecraftian familiars, so corruption will no doubt arise), but more of an assimilation.

Masters of zoogs (The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath), for example, will likely become averse to cats, whilst those with a Jenkin (The Dreams in the Witch-House) might begin to see human-like faces in many lower animals (particularly rodents), or develop an unhealthy interest in mathematics and higher dimensions.

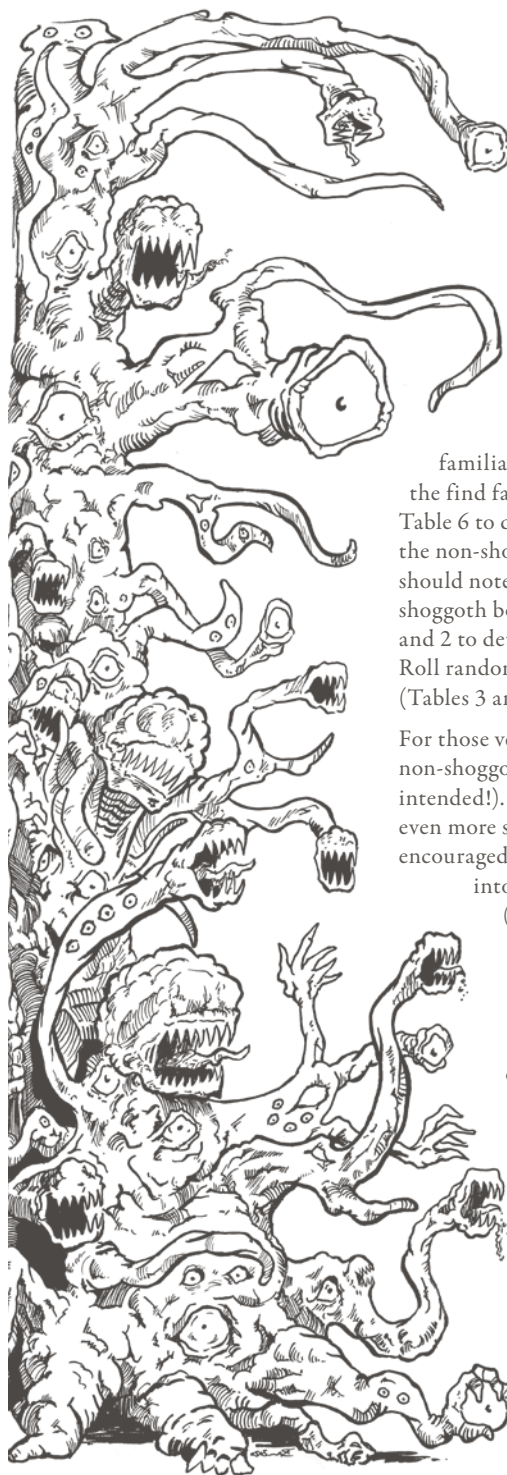


TABLE 5: FIND FAMILIAR (CTHULHU)

1D10	CONFIGURATION
12–13	Guardian or Focal. Wizard’s choice. Use Table 5 for physical configuration.
14–17	Guardian, Focal, or Arcane. Wizard’s choice. Use Table 5 for physical configuration.
18–19	Shoggoth, small and newborn
20–23	Shoggoth, small and very young
24–27	Shoggoth, medium and newborn
28+	Shoggoth, medium and very young

TABLE 6: CTHULHU FAMILIAR PHYSICAL CONFIGURATION (AND MASTER’S BENEFIT)

1D10	CONFIGURATION
1	Zoog (10’ burrow speed, soil and dirt only)
2	Horned Slug (melee attack causes paralysis: Fort DC 12 or paralyzed for 1d4+CL rounds)
3	Ya’ap Gecko (10’ climb speed, even across ceilings)
4	Miniature version of the wizard themselves, but with facial tentacles and undersized leathery wings (absorbs the first effect in a spell duel with no negative effects to wizard or familiar)
5	Gaunt Bat (extraordinary hearing)
6	Jenkin (can speak/understand all languages its master knows; +1 to spell checks on one randomly determined spell)
7	Cat of Ulthar (if the familiar is allowed to roam freely at night, the wizard requires no sustenance the next day)
8	Tiny two-headed viper (extraordinary sense of smell)
9	Salamander (+1 to saves relating to fire)
10	S’ling of Leng (Hide in Shadows as thief of same level)

CRIT TABLE: SHOGGOTH

ROLL	RESULT
1 or less	Stunning Blow. The PC falls to the bottom of the initiative count for the remainder of the battle.
2	Raking Blow. Small teeth form on the shoggoth’s pseudopod as it strikes the PC. This attack inflicts +1d6 damage.
3	Life Burn. The PC permanently loses an additional 2 hit points
4	Knock Down. Shoggoth smashes the PC’s legs, knocking the PC prone. The character suffers –5’ speed until healed
5	Corruption. PC takes on corruption, similar to a wizard casting spells. Roll 1d10 on a corruption table. If the shoggoth has 8 HD or less, use the minor corruption table; if 9-16 HD, use the major corruption table; if 16+ HD, use the greater corruption table.
6	Piercing Blow. Pseudopod pierces PC’s chest and thrashes about! This attack inflicts +2d6 damage and an additional 1d6 damage next round.
7	Lesser Weakening. The PC loses 1d4 points of ability score for one week. Determine randomly: (roll 1d5) (1) Strength, (2) Agility, (3) Stamina, (4) Intelligence, (5) Personality. May be magically healed.
8	Crippling Smash. Blow shatters PC’s arm. This attack inflicts +1d6 damage, and the arm is useless until healed.
9	Anima Wound. The PC loses 1 XP from the vitality-draining touch of the shoggoth.
10	Pseudopod Slap. The force of the shoggoth’s strike flings the PC into the distance, hurtling them 3d6×10’ away in a random direction. If a wall or other obstruction is in the way, the PC slams into it. The PC takes normal damage from the blow plus an additional 1d4 damage per 30’ (or portion thereof) they are thrown, plus an additional 1d6 if they hit a wall or obstruction.
11	Combo Strike. Normal damage and the shoggoth follows up with a second attack of the same type.
12	Shocking Slam. Baleful energies course from the shoggoth in a sizzling flash, enervating the PC, who loses 2d4 Stamina temporarily.
13	Crushing Blow. This attack inflicts +1d12 damage.
14	Greater Weakening. The PC loses 2 points of ability score permanently. Determine randomly: (roll 1d5) (1) Strength, (2) Agility, (3) Stamina, (4) Intelligence, (5) Personality. May not be magically healed.
15	Rupturing Wallop. Strike to torso crushes internal organs. This attack inflicts +1d12 damage, and forces the PC to make Fort save (DC 15) to remain conscious through the pain.

ROLL	RESULT
16	Oozing lesions. Disgusting lesions immediately spread around the wound, causing an additional 2d6 damage and forcing a DC 16 Fort save. Failure on the save causes an additional temporary loss of 1d4 Stamina. The lesions get progressively worse until magically cured, forcing another save each morning against the loss of another 1d4 Stamina.
17	Amoeboid Transference. The PC's body transforms into the same protoplasmic essence as the shoggoth. The PC temporarily loses 1d6 points of Strength, and must make a DC 20 Fort save or collapse into a puddle of putrescent pus for 1d7 rounds.
18	Savage Anima. The PC loses 3 XP from the vitality-draining touch of the shoggoth.
19	Decapitating Tunication. Shoggoth engulfs PC by the neck, creating an inverted sac-like bell structure that exudes digestive enzymes that dissolve the head of the victim into a mass of lifeless goo.
20	Mischance Palpation. The PC's essence is scarred by the unnatural touch of the shoggoth. They permanently lose 1 point of Luck.
21	Spectral Derangement. Striking the PC's head, the wound turns an indescribable colour, and a dizzying madness infects the PC. He temporarily loses 1d6 Intelligence and 1d6 Personality.
22	Sudden Impact. The shoggoths snatches up the PC with a pseudopod and smashes them head-first into the ground. The PC takes an additional +2d8 damage and is automatically stunned for 1d4 rounds.
23	Torn Asunder. One of the PC's limbs is torn from their body. This attack inflicts +2d12 damage, and if the limb is a leg, the PC's speed is reduced by half, as they must now hop everywhere. There is a 50% chance the shoggoth retains hold of the limb, using it as a bludgeoning weapon for 1d4 rounds, inflicting +1d6 damage with any such attacks.
24	Optic Ablation. The shoggoth lashes out at the PC's face, melting away both of the PC's eyes. The character takes no additional damage but is permanently blinded.
25	Essential Consumption. The shoggoth devours life force from the PC. The PC takes an additional 1d20 damage, and the shoggoth heals that same amount (not to exceed its original total hit points).

ROLL	RESULT
26	Abrasive Flensing. In a gruesome display, flesh melts away from the wound, revealing the bones beneath and causing an additional 1d6 damage and 1 point of Stamina loss. Each round thereafter, the radius of melted flesh expands, causing an additional 1d6 damage and 1 point of Stamina loss, and continues to expand until the PC dies. It can only be suspended via magical healing with a spell check of 20 or greater.
27	Spinal Rivening. Attack snaps the PC's spinal column like a twig. The attack causes permanent paralysis, and the PC watches the remainder of the battle from the floor. Can only be healed magically.
28	Engulfing Embrace. The shoggoth engulfs the PC completely. The PC takes normal damage and is now trapped in the shoggoth's gullet, taking an additional 3d8 damage each round thereafter from suffocation, constriction, and corrosive essence. If the PC succeeds in a DC 22 Strength check they can force their hands to move against the crushing strength of the shoggoth's innards, allowing an attack of some kind (e.g., drawing a dagger to try to cut his way out), but he cannot be freed until the shoggoth is killed and he is cut out.
29	Plasmic Perforation. The shoggoth's tentacle pierces the PC's chest, exploding out their back in a shower of bone and viscera. Immediate and instantaneous death.
30+	Protoplasmic Evisceration. Attack rends PC's body into multiple pieces, gore exploding from the remains. Everyone who witnesses the attack must make a morale check (DC 25) or flee (for retainers) or remain stunned and motionless on their next round (for PCs). The shoggoth moves on to the nearest foe, making attacks until it misses.



WE ARE LEGION.

Back in 1989, in a village called Campsea Ashe, England, I began a quiet D&D campaign with a friend of mine, Andrew. He had visited my house a time or two and had seen my D&D boxed sets on the shelf and was eager to try it out, so we did. After a few sessions of just he and I figuring out how to play, a few other friends had heard about this happening and wanted in on the action. We gathered in the back living room of my house, and these guys rolled up characters. One of those friends, Trevor, created Samantha, the Elf, who became the *de facto* leader of this group. Finding a page in the back of the Players book that stated how to hire retainers, I recall Trevor insisting that the party be able to hire some. Thus, Megan and Abby were created.

The adventure started off with the group responding to rumors they heard while in the local Inn at Donovan Village. They set out right away making the long treacherous march to Castle Darkoth. After finding out that her home village had been sacked by the forces under Darkoth, Samantha vowed that she would have her vengeance. It was in the ruins of her village that they found Scum, a dwarf that had just escaped the castle. Somehow, he managed to get the Legion to spare his life ("How much XP is he worth?") in exchange for guiding them into Castle Darkoth. Approaching the castle proved tricky, resulting in the death of one of the retainers. I forget how that demise happened (shot by an arrow, or fell into lava, or both?), only that it did.

Once inside, the party pretty much slaughtered its way through all the randomly generated challenges I set before them. Seriously, aside from a crudely drawn map, there was no forethought in running this game. It was all on-the-fly and random. And we had a blast! Me, hardly knowing at all what I was doing, let alone the rules, had made this band of blood thirsty adventurers very rich indeed. The Legion would stride onward romping their way through my campaign world which was being formed, somewhat ad hoc, as they proceeded.

I could write a continuous column just recounting those games, and they were very different from the standard games most folks who played D&D would have experienced. How often did your party ever sack a thieves guild? Or keep prisoners in a bag of holding? Or make deals with the big bad-guy of the adventure ("If we worked *with* the guy, we could make more money and experience than if we just *killed him!*")? Or made the characters of players who couldn't make it for a session bi-polar psychos only to have them revert to normal when that player showed back up? ("what did I miss last week?" "Nothing, oh nothing at all..." snicker*")? These games were random, script breaking (trust me, I tried) and formed the basis, even today, on how boundless we—Trevor and I—feel the medium of role-playing adventures can and should be.

Thirty years later, while Trevor and the Wyrms crew were putting this zine together, I had an idea for a comic strip that would revisit this period of gaming for us, loosely based off of those games, but mostly based on the common tropes that many other players might have noticed in their own games. Things like random encounters in dungeons with creatures in one room that don't react to what happened in the previous room, or everyone in the party having a 10' pole and somehow being able to be a combat master with one of these things strapped to their back, or how players take things like encumbrance or feeding their characters as an inconvenience when it really should matter. A few quirky dialog snippets came to mind, and a few sketches later, **The Legion** was reborn for a new decade!

This party had a few other characters who were not adapted over into the *Onward Retainer!* comic for whatever reason. Even in the games we played back then, it seemed the nucleus was Samantha and Scum as a sort of duo with the retainers somehow being more significant than the other player characters. I pulled Dormuth and Whizzler from other campaigns that I ran after the first few Legion sessions, but were very much from the same time. Dormuth came from another campaign I ran with Trevor that featured his character Ragorth the Orkslayer (a story that would test your sanity, and question ours) and Whizzler came from a separate campaign altogether, but he's memorable only because I always imagined him as my high school typing teacher and even mimicked his voice after him.

So that's essentially where these characters come from—keep reading the *Onward Retainer!* feature to see where they go from here.

Joel Phillips

Unicoi, Tennessee

4 Apr 2020

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ACROSS

2. The ability to produce many new ideas.

6. A stone pillar, typically having a square or rectangular cross section and a pyramidal top, set up as a monument or landmark.

8. Smelling extremely unpleasant.

9. Extremely hungry.

10. Light emitted after exposure to radiation, or produced by something that doesn't produce flame or heat.

12. Ask (someone) urgently and fervently to do something; implore; entreat.

14. Whispering, murmuring, or rustling.

19. Explanation that makes something clear; clarification.

20. A technique for searching for underground water, minerals, or anything invisible

23. the process or state of emitting flashes of light.

24. Come together to form one mass or whole.

26. An unhealthy pale appearance

27. Relating to the open sea, inhabiting the upper layers of the open sea.
5. Spiteful; bad-tempered, affected by or associated with nausea or vomiting.

7. Suffuse or highlight (something) with a bright color or light.

10. A substance supposed by 18th-century chemists to exist in all combustible bodies, and to be released in combustion.

11. The action of making something obscure, unclear, or unintelligible.

13. A tiny piece of a substance.

15. A literary or artistic assistant, in particular one who takes dictation or copies manuscripts.

16. Showing luminous colors that seem to change when seen from different angles.

17. Loss of awareness of one's identity associated with certain forms of hysteria and epilepsy.

18. A small leather box containing Hebrew texts on vellum, worn by Jewish men at morning prayer as a reminder to keep the law.

21. Salty water or the sea; salty

22. An oppressive or unpleasant atmosphere which surrounds or emanates from something.

DOWN

1. Little known; abstruse.

3. Critical explanation or interpretation of a text, especially of scripture.

4. Strongly reminiscent or suggestive, strongly smelling, sweet or fragrant.
24. Fat, pudgy, rotund.

25. Yielding easily to pressure or weight; not firm: mushy, pappy, pulpous, squishy, squashy.



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