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## Insanity Aules

his system allows you to introduce an element of dark horror into your game. In campaigns using these rules, characters gain a new attribute called Sanity. This statistic functions like an ability score in some ways, but it has its own unique mechanics that represent the character's descent from a stable and healthy mental state into confusion, dementia, and mental instability. As a character encounters monsters, witnesses horrible acts, master forbidden knowledge, or cast spells, his Sanity score, and his corresponding ability to function as a normal member of his race, deteriorates. This gradual descent is balanced in part by the powers that characters gain each time they overcome a horrific foe or grow in skill and expertise, but even as those characters grow in power, they know or fear that an even greater peril lays ahead: the threat of becoming permanently insane.

### WHAT IS SANITY?

Sanity is the natural state of ordinary life. Normal mental balance is endangered when characters confront horrors, entities, or activities that are shocking, unnatural, and bewildering. Such encounters cause a character to lose points from his Sanity score, which in turn risks temporary, indefinite, or permanent insanity. Mental stability and lost Sanity points can be restored, up to a point, but psychological scars remain.

Insanity occurs if too many Sanity points are lost in too short a time. Insanity does not necessarily occur if Sanity points are low, but a lower Sanity score makes some forms of insanity more likely to occur after a character experiences an emotional shock. The character's Sanity may be regained after a few minutes, recovered after a few months, or lost forever.









A character may regain Sanity points, and even increase her Sanity point maximum. However, increasing a character's ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill (see below) always lowers her maximum Sanity by an equal amount.

### SANITY POINTS

Sanity points measure the stability of a character's mind. This attribute provides a way to define the sanity inherent in a character, the most stability a character can ever have, and the current level of sane rationality that a character preserves, even after numerous shocks and horrid revelations.

Sanity is measured in three ways: starting San-

ity, current Sanity, and maximum Sanity. Starting and current Sanity cannot exceed maximum Sanity.

### STARTING SANITY

A character's starting Sanity equals his Wisdom score multiplied by 5. This score represents a starting character's current Sanity, as well as the upper limit of Sanity that can be restored by the Heal skill (see the Heal Skill and Mental Treatment, later in this section). After creation, a character's current Sanity often fluctuates considerably and might never again match starting Sanity. A change in a character's Wisdom score changes her

Seeing certain atrocities can cause severe shock.

starting Sanity in terms of what treatment the Heal skill can restore. Current Sanity, however, does not change if Wisdom rises or falls.

### CURRENT SANITY

A character's current Sanity score fluctuates almost as often as her hit points.

Making a Sanity Check: When a character encounters a gruesome, unnatural, or supernatural situation, the GM may require the player to make a Sanity check using percentile dice (d%). The check succeeds if the result is equal to or less than the



character's current Sanity.

On a successful check, the character either loses no Sanity points or loses only a minimal amount. Potential Sanity loss is usually shown as two numbers or die rolls separated by a slash, such as 0/1d4. The number before the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if the Sanity check succeeds (in this case, no Sanity is lost); the number after the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if the Sanity check fails (in this case, between 1 and 4 points).

A character's current Sanity is also at risk when the character reads certain books, learns certain types of spells, and attempts to cast them. These

Sanity losses are usually automatic (no Sanity check is allowed); the character who chooses to undertake the activity forfeits the indicated number of Sanity points.

In most cases, a new sanity-shaking confrontation requires a new Sanity check. However, the GM always gets to decide when characters make Sanity checks. Confronting several horribly mangled corpses at one time or in rapid succession may call for just one Sanity check, while the same corpses encountered singly over the course of several game hours may require separate checks.

#### Going Insane (this is where it gets fun): Losing more

than a few Sanity points may cause a character to go insane, as described below. If a character's Sanity score drops to 0 or lower, she begins the quick slide into permanent insanity. Each round, the character loses another point of Sanity. Once a character's Sanity score reaches -10, she is hopelessly, incurably insane. The Heal skill can be used to stabilize a character on the threshold of permanent insanity; see the Heal Skill and Mental Treatment below for details. A GM's description of a Sanity-shaking situation should always justify the threat to a character's well-being. Thus, a horde of frothing rats is horrifying, while a single ordinary rat usually is not (unless

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the character has an appropriate phobia, of course).

### MAXIMUN SANITY

Ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill simulate a character's comprehension of aspects of the dark creatures at the edge of reality. Once gained, this horrible knowledge is never forgotten, and the character consequently surrenders mental equilibrium. A character's Sanity weakens as his comprehension of these hidden truths increases.

A character's current Sanity can never be higher than 99 minus the character's ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill. This number (99 minus Know edge [forbidden lore] ranks) is the character's maximum Sanity.

### LOSS OF SANITY

Characters ordinarily lose Sanity in a few types of circumstances: when encountering something unimaginable, when suffering a severe shock, after casting a spell or when learning a new spell, when being affected by a certain type of magic or particular spell, or when reading a forbidden tome.

### SEVERE SHOCKS

A shocking sight of a more mundane nature can cost Sanity points. Severe shocks include witnessing an untimely or violent death, experiencing personal mutilation, losing social position, being the victim of treachery, or whatever else the GM decides is sufficiently extreme. The following list gives some examples of severe shocks, and the Sanity loss each one provokes.

### TYPES OF INSANITY

There are three types of insanity: temporary, indefinite, and permanent. It is possible to cure the first two types of insanity, however the third type of insanity, permanent insanity, cannot be cured. Permanent insanity occurs when characters' Sanity points are reduced to -10 or lower.

### TEMPORARY INSANITY

Whenever a character loses Sanity points equal to one half his Wisdom score from a single occurrence of Sanity loss, the character has suffered a significant shock that the GM must ask for an additional Sanity check. If the check fails, the experience proves too much for the character to comprehend and goes temporarily insane. If the check is successful, the character does not go insane, but he may not remember

### Table I-I: Sanity Examples

Sanity Lost' Shocking Situation

-	<b>e</b>
0/Id2	Surprised to find a mangled animal car-
	cass.
0/1d3	Surprised to find a human corpse.
0/1d3	Surprised to find a human body part.
0/Id4	Finding a stream flowing with blood.
I/Id4+I	Finding a mangled human corpse.
0/Id6	Awakening trapped in a coffin.
0/Id6	Witnessing a friend's violent death.
I/Id6	Seeing a ghoul.
I/Id6+I	Meeting someone you know to be dead.
0/1d10	Undergoing severe torture.
1/Id10	Seeing a corpse rise from its grave.
2/2d10+1	Seeing a gigantic severed head fall from the sky.
Id10/d%	Seeing an evil deity.

<sup>1</sup> Loss on a successful check/loss on a failed check.

### Table I-2: Duration of Temporary Insanity

<b>d%</b>	Temporary Insanity Type	Duration
01-80	Short-term	Id10+4 rounds
81-100	Long-term	IdI0x10 hours

exactly what happened.

This type of insanity may last for a few minutes or perhaps even a few days. The character may acquire a phobia relevant to the situation, faint, or even suffer a minor nervous breakdown. Regardless what happens, he is able to run and hide from the immediate threat.

A character suffering from temporary insanity remains in this state for either a number of rounds or a number of hours; roll d% and consult Table 1-2: Duration of Temporary Insanity to determine whether the insanity is short-term or long-term. After concluding the duration of the insanity, roll d% and consult either Table 1-3 or 1-4 to identify the specific effect of the insanity.

In order for the player to role-play the situation accordingly, the GM is encouraged to describe the effect to the inflicted character. The Heal skill may alleviate or erase temporary insanity (see below) Temporary insanity ends when the duration has elapsed or earlier should the GM decide it appropriate to do so.

### INDEFINITE INSANITY

Should a character suffer a loss of 20% (one-fifth) of their Sanity score or more in the space of 1 hour, he goes indefinitely insane. An episode of indefinite



YPES OF INSANITY





Table 1-3: Short-Term Temporary Insanity Effects		Table I-4: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects		
d%	Effect	d%	Effect	
01-20	Character faints (can be awakened by vigorous action taking I round; thereafter, character is shaken until the duration expires).	01-10	Character performs compulsive rituals (constantly washing hands, praying, never step- ping on cracks, and so on).	
21-30	Character is frightened.	11-20	Character has hallucinations and delusions (at the discretion of the GM).	
31-40	Character is panicked.	21-30	Character becomes paranoid.	
41-50	Character shows physical hysterics or emotional outburst (i.e. laughing, crying, and so forth).	31-40	Character gripped with severe phobia (refuses to approach object of phobia except on a suc-	
51-55	Character babbles in incoherent speech or in a torrent of coherent speech.		cessful Will save [DC 20]).	
56-60	Character gripped by intense phobia, and suffers from the cowering condition.	41-45	Character has aberrant sexual desires (necrophilia, nymphomania, and so on).	
61-65	Character becomes homicidal, attacking nearest creature (a familiar counts as part of subject's	46-55	Character develops an attachment to a "lucky charm" and cannot function without it.	
66-70	self). Character has hallucinations or delusions.	56-65	Character develops psychosomatic blindness, deafness, or the loss of the use of a limb or limbs.	
71-75	Characters say or do whatever those nearby say or do.	66-75	Character has uncontrollable tics or tremors (- 4 penalty on all attack rolls, checks, and saves,	
76-80	Character is gripped with a strange or deviant		except those purely mental in nature).	
	eating desire (dirt, slime, human flesh, and so on).	76-85	Characters have amnesia (All of the character's Knowledge skills are useless).	
81-90	Character falls into a stupor (assumes fetal posi- tion or oblivious to surrounding events).	86-90	Character has bouts of reactive psychosis	
91-99	Character become catatonic or nauseated (can		(delusions, hallucinations , and so on).	
	stand but no willpower or interest; may be led or forced to perform simple actions).		Character looses the ability to communicate via speech or writing.	
100	Roll on Table A3-4: Long-Term Temporary In- sanity Effects.	96-100	Character becomes catatonic (can stand but no willpower or interest; may be led or forced to perform simple actions).	

insanity lasts for 1d6 game months (or as the GM dictates) and the symptoms may not be immediately apparent.

This allows the GM to determine exactly the nature of the Indefinite Insanity. Table 1-5: Random Indefinite Insanity offers the GM an aid in choosing what particular form a character's indefinite insanity takes.

Though many of the indefinite insanity results seem deliberating, it is still possible for players to continue playing these characters. The character may stumble madly through the rest of the adventure, but with a weakened grasp of reality, such a character can pose a danger to himself and others.

The Heal skill can be used to restore Sanity points during this period, however the underlying insanity remains. Even if the character is cured of



GAME ENHANCEMENT | Insanity

effects of the indefinite insanity, the experience has changed the character forever.

### PERMANENT INSANITY

A character whose Sanity score falls to -10 goes permanently insane. The character becomes an NPC under the control of the GM. A character who has gone permanently insane can never be normal again. He is forever lost in his own world and from the reality of the environment that surrounds him. The character may be a ravening lunatic or outwardly indistinguishable from a normal person; however, the character has fallen into a deep, internal corruption by searching forbidden knowledge.

A GM may use Table 1-5: Random Indefinite Insanity to outline the disorder a permanently insane character suffers.





### **Table 1-5: Random Indefinite Insanity**

d% Mental Disorder Type

01-15 Anxiety (includes sever phobias).

16-20 Dissociative (multiple personalities, amnesia).

21-25 Eating (anorexia/bulimia).

26-30 Impulse control (compulsions).

31-35 Mood (maniac/depressive).

36-45 Personality (various neuroses).

- 46-50 Psychosexual (nymphomania, sadism).
- 51-55 Psychospecies.
- 56-70 Schizophrenia/psychotic (delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, catatonia).
- 71-80 Sleep (night terrors, sleepwalking).

81-85 Somatoform (psychosomatic conditions).

86-95 Substance abuses (alcoholic, drug addict).

96-100 Other (megalomania or GM's discretion).

### GENERAL MENTAL DISORDERS

The following disorders exemplify those depicted on Table 1-5: Random Indefinite Insanity.

### ANXIETY DISORDERS

Anxiety disorders generally develop from a variety of risk factors including personality, genetics, and life events that burden the character. When this anxiety builds over a prolonged period of time (especially when combating frightful creatures), the character may begin to develop an anxiety disorder.

**Generalized Anxiety Disorders:** The character suffers from a variety of physical and emotional symptoms that can be grouped into certain categories.

*Motor Tension:* The character suffers from jitteriness, aches, twitches, and so on. All attack rolls, Fortitude and Reflex saves, and all checks involving Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution take a -2 penalty.

Automatic Hyperactivity: The character suffers from immense sweating, a racing heart, dizziness, clammy hands, and so on. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a -2 penalty.

*Expectations of Doom:* Anxieties culminate into a fear and an anticipation of misfortune. All at-

tack rolls, saves, and checks take a -2 morale penalty.

*Vigilance:* The character suffers from distractions, inability to focus, insomnia, and so on. All Will saves and checks involving Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma take a –4 morale penalty.

Agoraphobia: The character has a fear of open places. The character becomes very nervous outside familiar surroundings and must make a Will save (DC 15) in order to leave home or engage socially. The character may also develop a related phobia, such as uranophobia (fear of the sky), baraphobia (fear of the loss of gravity), or xenophobia (fear of strangers).

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder:** This malady develops into two forms: obsessive thoughts or compulsive actions. Some characters may exhibit both.

*Obsessions:* The character cannot help thinking about an idea, image, or impulse incessantly, often involving violence and self-doubt. Obsessive impulses pose dangerous situations when coupled with auditory hallucinations. There might be "voices" urging the character to take a dangerous or aggressive course of action.

*Compulsions:* The character insist on performing ritual actions, such as locking and unlocking doors, before entering or leaving their apartment. The need to perform these actions are so great, a character may ignore their survival in order to perform these actions. Performing a ritualistic compulsion lasts 1d10 rounds.

**Phobia or Mania:** A character afflicted by a phobia or a mania persistently fears a particular object or situation.

*Phobia:* A Will save (DC 15) is required for a character to be able to force themselves into (or remain within) the presence of the object of their phobia, and even then the character takes a -2 morale penalty as long as the object of the fear remains.

*Mania:* Manias are rarer than phobias. A character affected by a mania is inordinately fond of a particular stimulus and takes great pains to be with or near it. This behavior might turn into a fetish. For example, a character with Hematophobia has a fear of blood while a character with Hematophilia has an unhealthy (possibly sexual) attraction to the act of bleeding.

### DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS

A character who becomes dissociative suffers from a lack of connection to thoughts, memories, feelings, actions, or sense of identity. Certain ordeals are so







horrifying for the character that it becomes too terrible to remember. **Table 1-6: Personality Disorders Type Effect** 

**Dissociative Amnesia:** This is the inability to recall important personal information by trying to avoid unpleasant memories or events. The character must make a Will save (DC 20) to recall such details or the cause of amnesia.

**Dissociative Fugue:** The character flees from home or work and cannot recall their past. Characters may assume a new identity.

**Dissociative Identity Disorder:** This is the infamous multiple personality disorder that has provoked the production of many films and books. Each personality a character harbors has a distinct name, behavior, and possibly, even gender. The player needs to keep track of each of the character's different personalities (each character has the same ability scores and games statistics, but different goals, outlooks, attitudes and so on).

### EATING DISORDERS

These disorders are dangerous as they might lead a character to starvation. The two most common are Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa.

Anorexia Nervosa: The character has an overwhelming fear of becoming fat and constantly loses weight, as well as taking Constitution damage at the rate of 1d8 points per week.

#### IMPULSE CONTROL DISORDERS

These disorders include compulsive gambling, pathological lying, kleptomania, and pyromania.

### MOOD DISORDERS

These affect the character's outlook and attitude to the point where it impinges on their abilities.

**Depression:** This disorder may include symptoms of weight gain or loss, too much or too little sleep, persistent feelings of guilt or worthlessness and can lead to hallucinations, delusions, stupor, or thought of suicide.

All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –4 morale penalty.

**Mania:** The character possesses a constant euphoric or irritable mood. This includes talkativeness, great delusional self-esteem, no need for sleep, easily distracted, and so on. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –4 morale penalty.

**Bipolar Mood Disorder:** The character changes between the two mood states staying in one mood for weeks at a time or rapidly switching from one to another without notice.

Туре	Effect
Antisocial	Reckless behavior, habitual liar, and so on.
Avoidant	Low self-esteem or socially withdrawn.
Borderline	Impulsive or unable to control.
Compulsive	Perfectionist, authoritarian, or indecisive.
Dependant	Lacks self-confidence or subordinate.
Histrionic	Craves attention and excitement; may threaten suicide.
Narcissistic	Craves attention and admiration.
Passive- Aggressive	Stubborn and deliberately inefficient.
Paranoid	Jealous, humorless, or secretive.
Schizoid	Aloof, has few friends; indifferent to praise or criticism.

#### PERSONALITY DISORDERS

These disorders cause an unpleasant behavior, making it difficult for characters to interact with others. The character takes a -4 penalty on all Charismabased checks.

In addition, the attitudes of NPCs the character encounters are shifted in the negative position. On a successful Diplomacy check, the attitude of the NPC in question shifts one step toward hostile; on a failed check, the attitude of the NPC in question shifts two steps toward hostile.

See Table 1-6: Personality Disorders for more types of this disorder.

### **PSYCHOSEXUAL DISORDERS**

Types of this disorder include transsexualism, nymphomania, paraphilia, necrophilia, and so on.

### **PSYCHOSPECIES DISORDERS**

Characters with this disorder might believe they are a

different type of creature: animal, undead, aquatic, and so on.

### SCHIZOPHRENIA DISORDERS

Characters suffering from this disorder suffers a break from reality. Symptoms include hallucinations, delusions, and cognitive impairment.







Insomnia and narcolepsy are two of many types of sleeping disorders. These disorders cause disturbance in the character's daily activities. Characters performing demanding tasks such as engaging in combat or casting a spell may, when stressed, need to make a Perception check (DC 15) to stay awake and not put themselves in a dangerous situation.

### SOMATOFORM DISORDERS

These disorders are diagnosed when a character suffers from physical symptoms without actual physical injury or disease.

**Somatization Disorder:** The character suffers from a physical ailment or disease-like effect. Symptoms can include dizziness or impotence to blindness and intense pain. The character does not believe that their symptoms represent a specific disease. All attacks rolls, saves, and checks take a -2penalty.

**Conversion Disorder:** The character has dysfunctions that suggest a physical disorder, though involuntary, the symptoms actually provide a way for the character to avoid some undesirable experience. All attacks rolls, saves, and checks take a -2 penalty.

### SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDERS

Characters with a substance abuse disorder finds comfort in using a particular drug. This includes alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, hallucinogens, marijuana, and so on.

Characters should feel a daily personal struggle and Will saving throws might be used to resist or succumb to such cravings. All attack rolls, saves, and checks, take a -2 penalty because of withdrawal symptoms.

### GAINING OR RECOVERING SANITY

During the events of a campaign, a character's Sanity score can increase. Although it can never exceed 99 minus his Knowledge (forbidden lore) ranks, his maximum Sanity and current Sanity can exceed his starting Sanity.

Level Advancement: A character's current Sanity can become higher that their starting Sanity as a result of gaining levels. Whenever a character gains a new level, they roll 1d6 and add the result to their current Sanity.

Story Rewards: The GM may reward increases

# THE HEAL SKILL AND MENTAL TREATMENT

Sanity rules provide a new use for the Heal skill. Allowing trained healers to help recover Sanity points.

Immediate Care: When someone suffers an episode of temporary insanity, a therapist can bring them out of it by making a Heal check (DC 15) as a full-round action.

A therapist can also use immediate care to stabilize the Sanity score of a character whose current Sanity is between -1 and -9. On a successful check (DC 15; requiring a full-round action), the character's Sanity score improves to 0.

Long-Term Care: Providing long-term care means treating a mentally disturbed person for a day or more in a place away from stress and distractions. A healer must spend 1d4 hours per day doing nothing but talking to the patient. If the healer makes a Heal check (DC 20) at the end of this time, the patient recovers I Sanity point. A healer can tend up to six patients at a time; each patient beyond the first adds I hour to the total time per day that must be devoted to therapy. The check must be made each day for each patient. A roll of I on any of these Heal checks indicates that the patient loses I point of Sanity that day, as they regress mentally due to horrors suddenly remembered.

in a character's current Sanity should they foil a great horror or other evil enterprise.

### MENTAL THEREPY

To give useful therapy, a healer must have the Heal skill. Intensive treatment can return Sanity points to a troubled character. However, Sanity points restored in this manner can never cause the character's Sanity score to exceed their starting Sanity or maximum Sanity, whichever is lower. A character can have only one healer at a time.

Such treatment may help a character instantly snap out of an episode of temporary insanity, however recovery from indefinite insanity only comes with time (typically 1d6 months).

### TREATMENT OF SANITY

While treatment of temporary insanity can end with a moment of consultation and a quick Heal check,





treatment of permanent insanity is pointless since a character can never recover regardless of the therapist or facility.

Thus, indefinite insanity is the only form of mental illness that might be addressed by intervention and treatment.

After 1d6 months, if undisturbed by further trauma and with an agreement with the Game Master, an indefinitely insane character finds enough mental balance to reenter the world. There are three kinds of care that may help the character regain Sanity points during this recovery period. The type of care a character receives are based on the resources the character has, either personal or through family and friends.

### PRIVATE CARE

This involves the character finding care at home or in some friendly environment (i.e. a church or the home of a wealthy relative or friend) where constant vigilance and nursing are available. It is a place where personal care is undistracted by the needs of competing patients.

If mental healing or alchemical medications are available, roll d% for each game month that one or the other is used. A result of 01-95 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points for either therapeutic or alchemical medications, whichever is used (but not both). On the result of 96-100, the healer fumbles the diagnosis or the character rejects the alchemical treatments. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress is made that month.

### INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Commitment in a good insane asylum is the next best

alternative. Therapy using the Heal skill is usually the only treatment available, however primitive institutions might undermine treatment.

Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of an institution. A result of 01-95 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 96-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

### WANDERING AND HOMELESS

If the two previous cares are not available, an insane character may end up homeless, babbling incoherently as he or she struggles for survival. Such a character gains no Sanity points unless he or she is able to join a group of the homeless and find at least one friend among them. To find a friend after joining such a group the character can make a DC 15 Charisma check once per month. If a friend appears, the character recovers 1 Sanity point per game month thereafter.

For each game month during which an insane character lives as a derelict, roll d%. On a result of 01 -95, the character survives. On a result of 96-100, the character dies as the result of disease, exposure, or violence.

### TREATMENT IN A FANTASY OR HISTORIC CAMPAIGN

The treatments listed above are methods intended for a high-fantasy campaign setting. But what if you are not playing a high-fantasy campaign or what

### **REAL WORLD HISTORY**

As the number of people living in cities increased, there became an increasingly large population of urban mentally ill. Generally speaking, in rural areas the mentally ill had been able to rely on local charity and support, or managed to simply "blend in" with the rest of the population. However, under the demands of larger cities they faced a higher degree of difficulty and had a much greater chance of causing disruption or simply being noticed. This led to the building of the early asylums which were little more than repositories for the mentally ill -- removing them from mainstream society in the same manner as a jail would for criminals. Conditions were often extremely poor and serious treatment was not yet an option. The first known psychiatric hospital, Bethlem Royal Hospital (Bedlam) was founded in London in 1247 and by 1403 had begun accepting "lunatics." It soon became (in) famous for its harsh treatment of the insane, and in the 18th century would allow visitors to pay a penny to observe their patients as a form of "freak show". In 1700 it is recorded that the "lunatics" were called "patients" for the first time, and within twenty years separate wards for the "curable" and "incurable" patients had been established, representing the beginning of a clear shift in the attitude towards mental illness towards a disease of some form.





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something a bit more gritty? Well, it is your campaign and the rules listed above are fine to use in any campaign setting, however the rules presented below offers methods based on historical accounts. This allows to bring in an entirely different atmosphere to your game.

### MID or LOW-FANTASY

In a traditional fantasy campaign based on a medieval setting—or prior—adequate treatment for those suffering from mental illness looks bleak. They are essentially two venues a character has available in getting treatment: go to a monastery or wander.

A monastery is a refuge away from the world and is a place where a character can peacefully collect their thoughts. Some monasteries dedicated themselves wholly to this

cause. In order to enter into a monastery, one must give the Abbot all of his or her possessions. This is used to support the monastery and the new addition.

Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of a monastery. A result of

05 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 06-95, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 96-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

Another method is to continue wandering about the countryside and hope that the companionship with friends pulls the character through. As long as the group the character continues to travel with at least one companion of a good alignment, the character recovers 1 Sanity point per game month thereafter. Otherwise, a character may make a DC 15 Charisma check once each game month to recover 1 Sanity point. Also, while traveling with a group that does not have at least someone with a good alignment, the character is considered to be derelict.

If the character is without a traveling group, then use the "Wandering and Homeless" treatment outlined above.

#### Alchemical Treatments in a Fantasy Setting

In a fantasy game, the Game Master should decide whether rare herbs and alchemical substances can provide the same benefits that modern psychiatric drugs can deliver. Therefore, a Game Master need only decide how easily he wants characters to overcome Sanity loss and insanity effects. Once the desired tone of the campaign is known, the Game Master can determine whether alchemical treatment is available. You may decide that the Sanity variant assumes that skilled alchemists can create sub-

stances that offer the same benefits that psychiatric drugs can provide. However, you may feel that, like real world history, very few alchemists bothered brewing poultices for curing the mentally ill, but instead tried to create a formula of turning lead into gold for their rich patrons.

As long as a character can afford the correct herbs and alchemical substances and is able to ingest them, the symptoms of indefinite insanity can be ignored. In-

gesting these alchemical substances and drugs does not make a character immune or even particularly resistant to further Sanity losses. A DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check is needed to accurately prepare the correct herbs and substances and administer the correct dosage.

Long-term alchemical treatment can restores lost Sanity points, just as use of the Heal skill can. For each month the character takes an accurately prescribed psychiatric medication, the character regains 1d3 Sanity points. As with treatment through the Heal skill, long-term drug therapy can never raise a character's current Sanity score above her starting Sanity.

A character cannot regain Sanity from both treatment with the Heal skill and alchemical treatment in the same month.

### Restoring Sanity with Magic

The way Sanity loss and magic healing interact can greatly affect the feel of your game. At one extreme,





the Game master can rule that magic can easily cure Sanity loss, in which case Sanity becomes little more than a specialized version of "mental hit points" that include some neat side effects (insanity). In such a case, characters can usually restore themselves to full Sanity with a day or two of rest and spellcasting.

At the other extreme, the campaign might be structured so that magical healing can do little or nothing to restore Sanity, and even powerful divine spellcasters capable of curing the most deadly physical malady shy away from those encounters that might drain away Sanity points. The spells that can potentially restore Sanity points are discussed below. The Game Master should feel free to choose which of these spell effects are present in the game, but once established, these effects should not be changed in mid-campaign.

Atonement: Although this spell does not usually restore Sanity, it can be used in those rare cases when a character's own actions inadvertently lead to an evil act that causes the character to lose Sanity points. If a *geas/quest* spell is combined with the *atonement* spell, Sanity points are not restored until the task is completed. A successful use of the *atonement* spell can restore all Sanity loss through the direct result of the evil acts for which the character atones.

*Calm Emotions:* This spell cannot restore Sanity directly, but it can temporarily mitigate the effects of temporary or permanent insanity. While the spell is in effect, the targets act calmly and ignore behavior changes caused by Sanity loss.

*Heal:* In addition to its normal effects, *heal* restores 10 Sanity points and removes all forms of temporary insanity.

*Mind Blank:* While the spell is in effect, the subject is immune to Sanity loss.

*Miracle:* This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity even if his current Sanity has dropped to -10. *Miracle* even heals permanent insanity.

*Restoration:* If the caster chooses, *restoration* can restore 1d6 Sanity points per two levels to the target creature (5d6) instead of having its normal effect.

*Restoration, Greater:* If the caster chooses, greater restoration can restore the target creature to its maximum Sanity instead of having its normal effect.

*Restoration, Lesser:* If the caster chooses, *lesser restoration* can restore 1d4 Sanity points to the subject instead of having its normal effect.

### FANTASY AND HISTORIC KNOWLEDGE (HUMOURS)

A new skill called Knowledge (humours) can serve as the primary way to treat those who have suffered Sanity loss. Knowledge (humours) is a Intelligence-based skill that cannot be used untrained. If you use this variant, characters with the Heal skill can only offer immediate care, and cannot offer long-term care. The Knowledge (humours) skill allows both types of treatment.

Note: If magical means of restoring Sanity are present in the campaign, the Knowledge (humours) skill is generally not worth including as a separate skill, because characters are better off simply using magic rather than devoting precious skill points to such a narrow-focus skill. If magic means is much more important, and Knowledge (humours) should probably exist as a separate skill.

*Wish:* This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity even if his current Sanity has dropped to -10. *Wish* even heals permanent insanity.

Limited Wish: This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity even if his current Sanity has dropped to -10. Limited Wish does not heal permanent insanity.

#### HISTORIC

Many different periods in history dealt with mentally ill patients in many ways. Though there were many individuals that began to look at the mentally ill seriously throughout history, it is really until the late 20th century that curative treatments were becoming truly beneficial. If the character is without care, then use the "Wandering and Homeless" treatment outlined above. Otherwise, use the methods of institutionalization below depending on the time period.

The Age of Revolutions (1700s): Institutions were beginning to emerge during this time. Though there is private care, it was really meant to isolate the person in question from the rest of society rather than an attempt to cure the infliction.

Use the "Institutionalization" method as described above except change the following:

Roll d% for each game month a character is in





the care of a monastery. A result of 01-10 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 06-90, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 91-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d8 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

The Age of Industrialization and Victorian Era (1800s): During this time, many counties and regions, especially where there were a lot of growth, were expected to build asylums to house the mentally ill. Treatment was a step up from the previous century, however not by much. Dorothea Dix and other advocated for more progressive treatment for the mentally ill as well as more humane standards of livings. Most institutions were set away from urban centers because the land was cheap and also it was isolated.

Use the "Institutionalization" method as described above except change the following:

Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of a monastery. A result of 01-20 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 06-90, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 91-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

**Pulp Era and Onward (1930s to 1960s):** Things continued to get better until the 1930s were only 14% of patients were able to be cured rather then the higher average of 20% in 1900.

Use the "Institutionalization" method as described above except change the following:

1930s: Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of a monastery. A result of 01-15 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 16-90, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 91-100, the character rebels against the

environment. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

1940s: Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of a monastery. A result of 01-25 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 26-90, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 91-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d8 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month (the period of lobotomies and electro-shock therapy as curative treatments).

1950s: The first use of psychiatric drugs to treat patients was during this period. Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of a monastery. A result of 01-35 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 36-90, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 91-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

1960s: People began to recognize mentally illness early and attempted to correct the problem before institutionali-

zation became an option. Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of a monastery. A result of 01-45 is a success: add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present.

On the result of 46-95, no Sanity is gained. On the result of 96-100, the character rebels against the environment. He or she loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

### SANITY AND MONSTERS

When people perceive creatures and entities of unspeakable horror, this experience costs them some portion of their minds, since such creatures are intrinsically discomforting and repellent. We never lose awareness of their slimy, fetid, alien nature.



GAME ENHANCEMENT | *Insanity* 

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Table 1-7: Sanity Loss from Creatures provides some default Sanity loss values for encountering creatures, based on their type and size. These are only default values—the Game Master can and should adjust individual monsters he deems more or less horrible than others of their size. An aasimar, for instance, hardly represents a Sanity-shaking sight, and should probably be treated as a humanoid rather than an outsider. On the other hand, a vargouille—a Small outsider appearing much like a flying, batwinged head—might provoke a much more visceral reaction than other Small outsiders.

In addition, certain types of monstrous behavior might force additional Sanity checks, much like those described under "Severe Shocks." For instance, a mind flayer is an unnerving sight, but watching one consume the brain of your best friend should certainly force another check, with losses appropriate to the situation.

In most d20 fantasy games, no character should need to make a Sanity check when encountering an elf, dwarf, or other standard humanoid race from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*, or for encountering domesticated or otherwise commonplace animals. In some cases, even humanoid races such as orcs and goblins might be so common as to not cause Sanity loss either.

**Specific Monsters and Sanity:** Some monsters have additional or variant special abilities when using the Sanity variant.

*Allip:* The allip's madness ability causes the loss of 2d6 Sanity points rather than the normal effect.

Derro: The derro's madness ability protects

these creatures from any further Sanity loss. Sane derro (especially derro player characters) track Sanity points normally.

Monstrous Characters and Sanity: In most cases, the Game Master does not need to keep track of a monster's Sanity score, but sometimes, especially when in the hands of a player, monsters need Sanity scores just as other characters do.

Although most campaigns that use the Sanity variant limit players to creating characters from the races described in the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, it's still easy to envision a world where one or two monstrous races are so common or so integrated into the culture of other races that the Game Master wants to present them as viable player character op-In these cases, the monsters available as tions. player character races should never provoke a Sanity loss from other characters or NPCs, and these creatures should have a Sanity score and track their Sanity losses just like characters made with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game races. A monster should never lose Sanity for seeing others of its races (spectres don't lose Sanity when encountering other spectres, and so on). In all cases, what causes Sanity loss for a specific creature is in the hands of the Game Master.

### SANITY AND SPELLS

Magic relies on the physics of the true universe. By casting spells, characters visualize the unimaginable, warping their minds to follow alien ways of thought. These visualizations wound the mind. Although spellcasters expose themselves to such traumas voluntarily, they are shocks all the same.

In this variant, casting a spell drains a certain amount of Sanity. This rule represent the fact that spellcasting forces the mind into strange patterns and thought processes with which it is poorly equipped to deal. The Game Master can choose from the three options presented in the table below,

Monster Type	Up to Tiny	Small	Medium	Large	Huge	Gargan- tuan	Colossal
Aberration, dragon, ooze, outsider, undead	I/Id4	I/Id4	1/1d6	1/1410	ld4/ld1 0	1d6/1d10	Id6/2d10
Elemental, fey, plant, vermin	0/Id4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d8	1/1d10	Id4/Id10	l d4/2d6
Construct, giant, magical beast, monstrous humanoid	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d6	I/Id6	2/2d6	2/2d6	3/3d6
Animal, humanoid	<b>0/0</b> <sup>1</sup>	0/1 <sup>1</sup>	<b>0/1</b> 1	0/1d41	0/Id4	0/Id4	0/Id6

**Table 1-7: Sanity Loss From Creatures** 

<sup>1</sup> Only animals or humanoids of truly bizarre or ferocious appearance force such a check.







SANITY AND SPELLS

Sanity points from a character who casts a spell. In a campaign featuring low Sanity loss, a spellcaster is rarely penalized for casting a spell, especially if the Game Master also chooses to give characters Sanity resistance (see the sidebar) in such cases. In a campaign featuring moderate Sanity loss, spellcasters face a slightly higher risk of insanity than members of the other classes, even if they have Sanity resistance. When using this option, players should, for the most part, choose spellcasting levels only as multiclass options. In a campaign featuring extreme Sanity loss, spellcasters have a difficult time participating in adventures regularly because they find it hard to use their classes' primary abilities without soon going insane.

In addition to the guidelines presented for each campaign option above, the Game Master is free to impose additional modifiers on the Sanity loss caused by spells of a certain type, a certain school, or even individual spells. Here are some example conditions that a Game Master could choose to incorporate into a game.

- •Abjurations cost 1 less Sanity point to cast.
- •Divine spells cost 5 additional Sanity points to cast.
- •Druids suffers only half the Sanity loss from spellcasting (round fractions up).
- •Healing spells drain no Sanity when cast.
- •The *invisibility* spell, and any variation thereof, costs 1 additional Sanity point to cast.
- •Necromancy spells costs 2 additional Sanity points to cast.
- •Spellcasters of some classes follow the same guidelines of one campaign option, while spell casters of other classes follow the guidelines of another campaign option.

#### deducting a low, moderate, or extreme number of Table 1-8: Sanity Loss From Spellcasting

	•	1	0
Spell Level	Low Sanity Loss	Moderate Sanity Loss	Extreme Sanity Loss
	Samey Loss	Samey Loss	
lst		2	l d6
2nd	2	4	2d6
3rd	3	6	3d6
4th	4	8	4d6
5th	5	10	5d6
6th	6	12	6d6
7th	7	14	7d6
8th	8	16	8d6
<b>9</b> th	9	18	9d6
Еріс	10	20	10d6

#### Learning Spells

Learning spells, like casting them, exposes a character to unknowable secrets and can damage and warp the mind. In this variant, whenever a spellcaster learns a new spell, he loses Sanity points. In most cases, the Sanity loss is equal to the spell's level, but if the spell is included in a tome of forbidden knowledge (see later), the loss can be greater.

The rules for Sanity loss for learning spells work fine for wizards, sorcerers, and other arcane spellcasting classes that learn spells one at a time or in small groups, but this loss can easily overwhelm a cleric, druid, or other divine spellcaster who gains a new spellcasting level (thereby "learning" an entire level's worth of new spells all at once). In such a case, the player and the Game Master should work together to determine a specific number of spells learned once access to a new spellcasting level is gained. When in doubt about how many spells to allow a spellcaster to learn at any given level, the spell acquisition rate of the wizard class serves as a good baseline.

Game Masters wanting to add Sanity rules to a magic-rich campaign, or those wishing to preserve

#### **Restoring Sanity with Magic**

The Sanity mechanic was originally created to mimic the effect of unspeakable horrors would have on normal folk from a world much like our own. Since d20 fantasy characters live in a world of magic and monsters, however, the Game Master might want to make them less susceptible to Sanity loss caused by encountering strange creatures (see Table 1-7: Sanity Loss From Creatures) by allowing them to have a measure of Sanity resistance, which is tied to one of two attributes.

Each character can be allowed to have Sanity resistance equal to his character level. Alternatively, each

character can be allowed to have Sanity resistance equal to his Wisdom modifier. (Obviously, the second alternative will produce lower Sanity resistance figures in most cases.) This number is the amount of Sanity loss a character can ignore when he encounters a creature that requires a Sanity check.

The Game Master may decide that Sanity resistance also applies to certain kinds of severe shocks (although it might not apply to personally horrific experiences, such as seeing a close friend die) and to the casting or learning of spells.







 Table 1-9: Sanity Loss From Fear Descriptors

Spell	Sanity Loss on Failed Check	Sanity Loss on Successful Check
Bane	—	—
Cause Fear	l d6	I
Doom	l d6	—
Fear	2d6	I
Phantasmal Killer <sup>2</sup>	_	—
Scare	l d6	Ι
Symbol of Fear	2d6	—
Weird <sup>2</sup>		

<sup>1</sup> Bane works normally because its effect is less severe than that of the shaken condition.

 $^2$  Phantasmal Killer and weird work normally because those spells so not produce shaken, frightened, or panicked effect (the GM could rule that a Sanity check takes the place of the Fortitude save to avoid dying from fear; in such a case, failing the check results in permanent insanity).

more of the flavor of a normal fantasy game, can allow any spellcaster to learn a small number of spells at each level without losing any Sanity.

### Sanity-Affecting Magic

The following types of magic and specific spells have different or additional effects when the Sanity variant is in use. For the effects of healing spells and magical means of recovering Sanity, see Restoring Sanity with Magic, presented earlier.

Fear Effects: Whenever a

spell, creature, or other factor produces a fear effect that causes its target to become shaken, frightened, or panicked, replace the saving throw to avoid the effect (if applicable) with a Sanity check. On a failed check (and sometimes even on a successful one), the subject loses a number of Sanity points rather than 
 Table 1-10: Sanity Loss From Contact Other Plane

Plane	Sanity Loss
Elemental Plane	1
Positive/Negative Energy Plane	1
Astral Plane	2
Outer Plane (demigod)	Id6
Outer Plane (lesser deity)	2d6
Outer Plane (intermediate deity)	3d6
Outer Plane (greater deity)	4d6

experiencing the normal effect of the magic. The table below provides a summary of the Sanity loss associated with each spell that has the fear descriptor:

In this variant, *remove fear* does not automatically suppress an existing fear effect on its subjects, but if it is cast on a creature that lost Sanity because of a fear effect within the last 24 hours, that Sanity loss is halved (to a minimum of 1 point) and the creature's current Sanity is adjusted accordingly.

**Illusions:** Illusions, when that are believed, cause Sanity loss just as if the real horrific monster or event were present. The Game Master can reduce

the Sanity loss caused by illusions (or eliminate it entirely) if such spells appear frequently in the campaign.

> **Bestow Curse:** When using Sanity rules, this spell can cause a Sanity check rather that a Will save. If the victim fails the Sanity check, she loses 3d6 points of Sanity. Unlike normal Sanity loss, this number is also subtracted from the character's maximum

Sanity. Magic that removes the curse can restore the character's normal maximum Sanity, but separate magic or the use of the Heal skill is required to restore the character's current Sanity.

**Contact Other Plane:** When using Sanity rules, characters casting this spell risk loss of Sanity instead

### Forbidden Knowledge

The Sanity rules assume that some knowledge is so alien to human understanding that simply learning of its existence can shatter the psyche. While magic and nonhuman races form an everyday part of a adventurer's life, even a seasoned character cannot conquer or understand some things. Knowledge of these secrets and creatures is represented by a new skill that

goes hand in hand with a character's Sanity score: Knowledge (forbidden lore).

This type of knowledge permanently erodes a character's ability to maintain a stable and sane outlook, and a character's current Sanity can never be higher than 99 minus the modifier that character has in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill. This number (99 minus Knowledge [forbidden lore] ranks) is the character's maximum Sanity.





of Intelligence and Charisma. Whenever a character casts this spell, she must make a Sanity check. If the check fails, the character loses Sanity depending on the plane that the character was trying to contact, according to the table below. Unlike the Intelligence and Charisma reduction caused by the normal version of the spell, the Sanity loss does not go away after a week-the loss is permanent until restored by another spell or through the use of the Heal skill.

Commune: When using the Sanity rules, replace this spell's XP cost with a Sanity check (1d6/3d6), made as a free action immediately after the spell's duration expires.

Insanity: Instead of experiencing this spell's normal effect, characters who fail the saving throw to resist the spell become permanently insane as described in this variant (but suffer no Sanity loss).

Moment of Prescience: In addition to the spell's normal benefits, a character with an active moment of prescience effect can make one Sanity check as if her current Sanity equaled her maximum Sanity. The character need not use the effect on the first Sanity check she is required to make, but must choose whether or not to use this benefit before

making any Sanity check during the spell's duration.

Status: In addition to the spell's normal effect, the caster can sense whenever the subject suffers Sanity loss, temporary insanity, indefinite insanity, or permanent insanity during the spell's duration.

Summon Monster: If a character summons a monster that causes Sanity loss by means of a summon monster, summon nature's ally, planar binding, or *planar ally* spell, she suffers the usual Sanity loss for casting the spell and must also make a Sanity check because of the monster's presence.

Symbol of Insanity: Instead of experiencing this spell's normal effect, characters who fail the saving throw to resist the symbol become permanently insane as described in this variant (but suffer no Sanity loss).

### FORBIDDEN TOMES

Obscure tomes add ranks to a character's Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill and teach arcane spells. Studying and comprehending these books causes all that we know to become like shadows. The burning power of a greater reality seizes the soul. Whenever

#### KNOWLEDGE (FORBIDDEN LORE) (NONE)

You know That Which Should Not Be Known. You have had horrible supernatural experiences and read forbidden tomes, learning truly dark secrets that have challenged everything you thought you knew. Since these revelations defy logic or commonly accepted fact, it does not matter how intelligent or wise you are when using this skill—only how much exposure to these dark secrets themselves you have experienced.

DC of 10 (for really easy questions), 15 (for elementary ble creatures. Each rank you gain in this skill permaalmost no really easy questions associated with this reality, the less capable you are of leading a normal life. dark knowledge.

their special powers or vulnerabilities. In general, the DC of such a check equals 10 + the monster's HD. A information about that monster. For every 5 points by which your check result exceeds the DC, the Game edge (forbidden lore). Master can give another piece of useful information.

subject to the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill and no maximum rank; your level does not limit the number which monsters are subject to one of the Knowledge

skills described in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*.

Action: Usually none. In most cases, making a Knowledge check doesn't take an action—you simply know the answer or you don't.

Try Again: No. The check represents what you know, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something that you never learned in the first place.

Special: You cannot gain ranks in this skill by Check: Answering a question about the horrible spending skill points. You can only gain ranks by readdeities and secrets that lurk at the edges of reality has a ing forbidden tomes or having experiences with horriquestions), or 20 to 30 (for difficult or really tough nently reduces your maximum Sanity by I point: the questions). Unlike in other fields of study, there are more you know about the horrible truths underlying

A character's first episode of insanity (that is, an You can use this skill to identify monsters and occurrence of temporary or indefinite insanity) bestows 2 ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill, thereby lowering his maximum Sanity by 2 points. Each time a successful check allows you to remember a bit of useful character fails a Sanity check and endures another episode of insanity, he gains an additional rank in Knowl-

You cannot take the Knowledge (forbidden lore) The Game Master can decide which monsters are skill during character creation. However, the skill has of ranks in Knowledge (forbidden lore) that you can acquire.





#### Table I-II: Example Forbidden Tomes

Examination	Knowledge (arcana) DC to	Number of Spells Contained	Initial Sanity	Sanity Loss upon	
Period	Understand Tome	in Tome	Loss	Completion	ranks gained
I week	20	0	1	I d4	I
l week	20	l	ld4	I d4	1
I week	25	2	l d4	2d6	l I
2 weeks	25	l d4	l d6	2d6	2
2 weeks	25	l d6	Id10	2d6	2
2 weeks	25	3	l d6	2d6	2
2 weeks	30	d6+	l d6	2d6	3
3 weeks	20	d4+	Id10	2d6	2
3 weeks	25	l d6	l d6	2d10	2
3 weeks	30	l d4+5	1d10	3d6	3

we try to retreat from the experience or hunger greedily for more, it destroys our confidence in what we once believed, opening us up to the allencompassing truths of dark deities.

For each such book encountered, the Game Master must set the examination period, the Knowledge (arcana) DC to understand it, the number of spells contained in it, the Sanity loss that occurs upon beginning the examination, the Sanity loss that occurs upon completion of the examination, and the ranks of Knowledge (forbidden lore) gained from studying the book. While the Game master is free to set these parameters at any values that he feels are appropriate, Table 1-11: Example Forbidden Tomes provides some suggested combinations of each of these parchments.







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