

SHADOW PLANES POCKET WORLDS

A DARK ROADS AND GOLDEN HELLS
SUPPLEMENT



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CREDITS

Lead Designer: **Dan Voyce**

Designers: **Jarrold Camiré, Sarah Hood,
Chad Middleton, UMBER Phillips,
John Pope, Burt Smith, Brian Suskind,
George “Loki” Williams**

Editor: **Scott Gable**

Cover Artist: **Malcolm McClinton**

Interior Artists: **Rick Hershey, Marc Radle,
Hugo Solis, Corey Trego-Erdner**

Cover Design and Interior Layout: **Marc Radle**

Publisher: **Wolfgang Baur**

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PLANES OF WONDER

The experience of visiting the planes in an RPG should always be one of wonder and surprise, of demons redeemed, of mysteries for warriors and combat among philosophers. This collection of the strange and the mysterious contains all the elements that just couldn't fit into the main volume of planar lore from *Open Design*, the *Dark Roads & Golden Hells* sourcebook. But these elements are just as wondrous and strange, and the monsters, the dark plane, and the hazards described here are useful to any adventurer who forsakes ordinary realms for stranger planes.

Interestingly enough, the demi-plane of Mora presented here was considered “too evil” by some patrons of the *Dark Roads & Golden Hells* project. It is certainly a vile place, but perhaps that makes heroes visiting it seem more virtuous by comparison. Certainly Mora is the first location *Open Design* has ever published that made someone quit a project in protest. I'm not sure that's a moment to be proud of, exactly, but *Open Design* does have a long history of the experimental, the weird, and the oddball material that larger publishers don't exactly embrace. It's possible that this strays over the line for some readers—that judgment is up to you.

As so often at *Open Design*, this project was spearheaded by Dan Voyce, but the work was done by a talented group including members of the *Planewalker.com* fan site. I think that *Shadow Planes & Pocket Worlds* provides a lot of worthy material for gaming, and hope you find it likewise useful and entertaining.

Onward!

Wolfgang Baur

Wolfgang Baur
Kirkland, WA

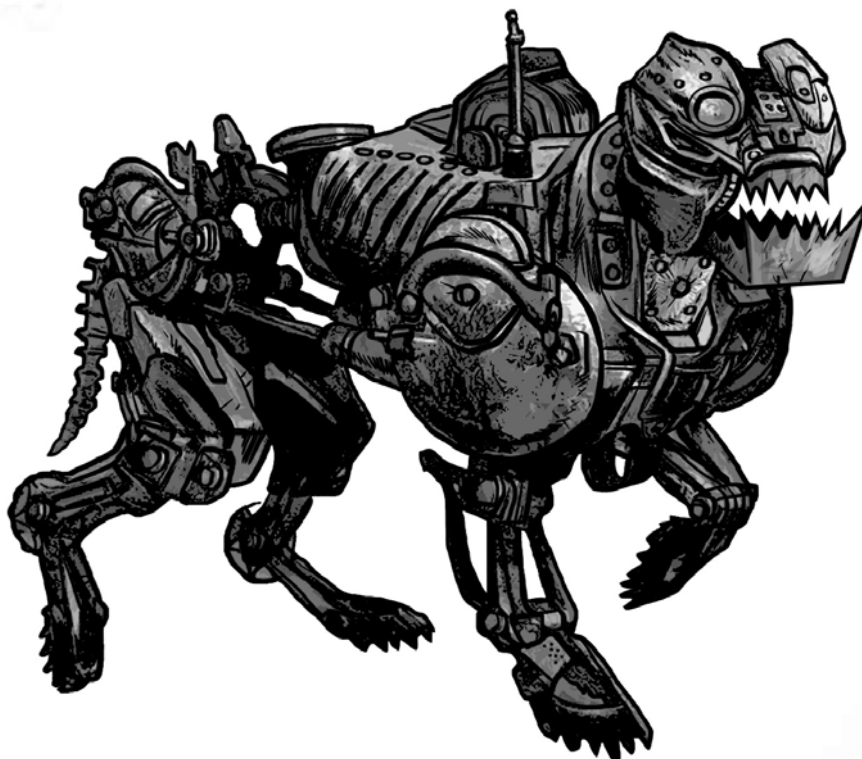


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MORA, THE CHILDREN'S TABLE

By Umber Phillips

“There is a realm that exists on the outskirts of rational thought, flickering between phantasmal dreamscapes and the black Sea of Id. A hideous continent shrouded in the most primal recesses of the collective consciousness. All beings that hope, fear, dream, or doubt have at one time or another glimpsed its grotesque heights, scraped its skeletal branches, and fought its slurping soils.

“It is a joke among demons and the shame of Heaven. It is the enemy of decent men and a worthy goal for heroes. I’m no hero, but good luck.”

—Cicerone the Upfallen

Mora is a foreboding, fog-choked isle cast in the center of a black, restless sea. Its location in the wider cosmology is a mystery, recessed somewhere without stars. The outlier of Mora consists of innumerable shards of darkened stone jutting from the waters, like teeth pointing inward, as if some monolithic kraken were about to surface and swallow the isle whole. The mists intensify, masking the exact shorelines, and cover a sprawling, haunted moorland before eventually slipping away along the hills and highlands. The land grows steeper and narrower, defying natural limits and taking on the quality of a singular, needling spire. An ancient and crooked stair winds around this Lonely Spire, culminating in a small, forested tableland and the much-maligned Children's Table.

PLANAR TRAITS

Mora is a lonely planar isle rising from a sea of darkness and impenetrable fog.

- **Self-Contained Demiplane:** Finding Mora is difficult but escaping its gloomy sprawl is harder still. The only consistent means of entrance and exit exists in the bogeymen's Bleakhouse, the crossings beyond the Gnash, and intermittent portals scattered across the realm.
- **Sentient:** Mora is a sadistic entity. Survival checks suffer a –4 penalty. Location-based spells have a 30% chance of failure.
- **Strongly Evil-Aligned**
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells with the fear descriptor are enhanced in Mora. Furthermore, specific spells become more powerful. Spells that produce any kind of mist or fog are considered enlarged as per the metamagic feat. Subjects of the phantasmal killer spell suffer a –2 to Will saves to disbelieve the figment.
- **Impeded Bonus:** All morale bonuses suffer a –1 penalty.

HISTORY

Legends abound of the realm's origin, but many believe Mora was once a primordial being or celestial mother cast out for betraying her sacred duties—for preying upon children instead of protecting them, for wounding instead of nurturing, for frightening instead of comforting. Mora was flung into the blackest depths, only to survive a broken, wretched, spiteful thing. There was said to be a great weight cast upon her so that she might never rise again: the stone that would become the Children's Table or perhaps the isle itself. Through long eons, the separation between Mora the isle and Mora the supposed chthonic mother blurred, and the realm's malicious nature suggests they have become one and the same.

The She

The undisputed rulers of Mora are the she: free-willed, feminine aspects of the sentient isle itself, which are known to spring out of the black earth and blasphemous mires without apparent cause. Sharing little else besides a mother, the she are as varied as the monsters they command, and most attract subservient creatures of like kind. While Mora no doubt has a purpose for the she, nothing has materialized out of their existence beyond petty rivalries and squabbles for dominion, for the she are bound to Mora and may never leave it.

Ranging in power from lowly hags to grand fiends, the she inherit bits and pieces of Mora's personality, such as its hatred for children, thirst for blood, and desire to rule. Few are content to work their malice solely in Mora, and many she extend their reach through loyal underlings, powerful spells, and cunning manipulations across worlds. Thusly, Mora and its daughters sustain all kinds of extraplanar villainy and lie at the heart of many devious plots.

The Faceless Queen

The Faceless Queen stands above all other she, oldest of Mora's surviving daughters. She looms, an eternal figure in a land otherwise mercurial and contested, having triumphed over hundreds of her

sisters and interlopers from realms celestial, mortal, and fiendish. While few have looked upon her face, her reclusive nature does not hinder the venomous potency of her will. A vast network of spies and underlings act in her interest. These hordes are comprised of wicked prowlers and murderous nannies across dozens of worlds—angry ghosts, night hags, and nightmarish oni—but her predominant soldiers are the stalkers, abductors, and traffickers of children with whom she shares a special affinity: bogeymen.

The queen's forces control the Lonely Spire and the majority of its tableland, drawing wealth and power from the child auctions and the alliances they bring. When her soldiers, knights, and other servants need to descend into lower Mora, they operate like unchallenged thugs and secret police, answering only to higher authority within the queen's pecking order. Even she are loathe to interfere with the queen's minions for fear of their eldest sister, though bogeymen and other underlings have been known to have "accidents" or simply disappear when they push too hard.

Some believe the Faceless Queen nothing more than a phantom concocted by the bogeymen to maintain their supremacy, but those fools pay dear prices eventually. She know better. The Faceless Queen is real, she is watching, and if it moves her, she will descend with a fury as irresistible as the coming of night.

GEOGRAPHY

Gnash

Circumscribing Mora is a labyrinthine ring of razor-sharp rocks in placid, dark water. Most have a slight curvature, aimed toward Mora, and glisten in the weak light of a distant moon.

Known as the Gnash, the ring's "teeth" range in size, some large enough to be named islands in their own right, filled with cold, dripping caves and riddled with slippery ledges, while others are just small enough to go unnoticed by sharp-eyed captains until the hulls of their ships are ripped out from under them. Very few dare to sail these waters and, even then, frequent only two or three of the innumerable channels.

Mists along the outer-most teeth are thin and discernible, but the closer one comes to Mora's shore, the more twisted and obscured the way becomes. Fog thickens, offering concealment and total concealment in places, coupled with varying depths of darkness. While difficult to notice in the gloom, the teeth also shift from time to time, opening and closing passages with only the slightest lapping and faint breezes heralding their movements. Teeth have been known to come upon vessels suddenly, crushing all but the quickest and most wary.

Dread Sound: In a long, narrow pass between two immense rows of teeth, confounded with shelves and shallow caves, sirens and harpies lair in alarming number. Beautiful and passionate songs echo across the channel, filling the shadows with a misplaced allure. The dark hides the smears of feces, blood, and entrails upon the steep walls, and gnawed bones crowd the lowest ledges. Dread Sound is a place of monstrous feasting and revelry where bird women carry their squirming meals for dissection and dance upon the gusts in bloody ecstasy. They've been known to hunt far and wide but very rarely descend upon Mora. The flocks know of secret crossings where the Sea of Id connects to earthly waters. Often, they'll use these points to launch terrestrial raids, only to return with spoils. When the opportunity presents itself, they'll even lure entire ships across the planar border as a fine feast for their she queen.

Just below the waters of the sound lurks a nightmarish creature

of myth, an immense and ancient she known as Nythes (Gargantuan she scylla). With each revelry, the bird women make sacrifices in her honor, dropping live prey screaming into the chasm. Those poor souls never reach the water, instead captured in crushing green tentacles and fed to Nythes' writhing, snapping mass of scaly wolf heads. In the rare instances Nythes has need to speak with her flocks, her elusive nymph frond emerges from the deep and calls to them with the most beautiful voice in Mora.

Nythes is a brilliant foe, utilizing planar crossings along the Sea of Id to unleash her flocks in calculated attacks across dozens of different waterways. In so doing, Nythes controls numerous trade routes and can manipulate the fortunes of all ships within her flock's reach. Pirates have begun courting her favor, particularly the Brotherhood of Lovkar, coordinating their raids with harpy and siren ambushes. In return, they provide Nythes with treasure, information, and a presence outside of Mora. Only one she has proven more cunning and well connected than Nythes—the Faceless Queen, whom the scylla counts her bitterest rival.

Shadowbox: Impaled upon the heights of the Gnash's largest tooth tilts a lantern of grand proportions: a castle of aged, angled timber and stretched parchment, folded and fastened many times around the stone, like a paper cocoon. A mysterious light source rivaling Mora's own sickly sun glows golden from within, visible during those rare times when the mists relent or an unfortunate ship sails too near its rise. The singular beacon emanates warmth and casts many exotic shadows upon its faces. Men, women, fantastic animals, and shifting inkblots, these shadows mesmerize and make even the strongest yearn.

When visible from the mainland of Mora, the shadows duplicate the effects of the haze of dreams spell (DC 15), compelling those affected to travel ever nearer the Shadowbox. When visible from the Gnash, the shadows duplicate the effects of charm monster (DC 22) so long as the Shadowbox is visible, plus 1 day following that. Those charmed are compelled to reach the Shadowbox and enter, which is a very treacherous intention indeed, climbing the slick cliffs to the summit, never mind passing beyond the threshold.

What lies within the Shadowbox is the topic of broad speculation, but Nythes and her flocks avoid it at all costs. Common theory holds little answers, but the wildest speculations claim another, more powerful she dwells in the Shadowbox. Laughable rumor or a goddess in exile, the Shadowbox is given the widest berth whenever possible.

Creeps

Beyond uneven shores lies a dense bank of fog hovering over a sodden moorland known as the Creeps, named for its slimy hills and moldy rises, serpentine streams and meres, and most of all the stalkers in its soupy gloom—groping ghouls, banshees, hags, and vampires among them. An unshakable chill dominates the Creeps, and the persistent fog provides concealment throughout the moors and total concealment in lower-lying areas. The effectiveness of any spell or other effort to displace this fog is halved.

Ancient structures are strewn about the Creeps, neck-deep in the mires, linked by a meandering crosshatch of old roads. Fortresses of weathered stone, cloven monoliths, flattened manors, and shattered bridges speak to the rise and fall of uncounted she and many more of their adherents. Over the ages, the moors have become a sort of neutral graveyard for secretive meetings and clandestine alliances. Monsters mostly congregate here, skulking in the shadows of the monuments, waiting for a queen to rise or perhaps return again.

Memoriasmas

Mora's reality is difficult to accept, and the haunted fog of the Creeps can push minds to their utmost limits. When panic is at its ripest, Mora embraces a victim's ardent desire for home and happiness and turns it into the perfect prison. A DC 20 Will save is required to resist the plane's illusory advances, which recreate an isolated pocket of memory in the victim's mind, perhaps a bedroom, party, or some small element from a happy thought. Within it, a victim plays out a cyclical fantasy on a tiny stage over and over again, believing everything is normal and all right.

Whenever the memoriasma is intruded upon by direct contact with the victim, perhaps by an attacking monster or an ally unwittingly trying to snap a friend out of the stupor, the delusion bursts. The victim suffers 150 negative energy damage and is panicked by the intruder for 1d4 rounds.

Mora, if particularly pleased by the reaction, may see fit to plunge the victim into yet another illusion, forcing another Will save. The isle has been known to keep "pets" for years on end, found on occasion pantomiming aimlessly throughout the countryside. The more sadistic Moranians allow those poor souls to pass unimpeded, taking pleasure in their victimization.

Memoriasmas can be overcome without ill effect, but it requires gentle appeals and more than a little cleverness to walk a person out of temporary psychosis (3 consecutive Diplomacy checks, DC 15, 20, 25). Spells that access the mind and certain psionic disciplines might provide a +2 circumstance bonus toward this end. If successful, the victim suffers 75 negative energy damage and is shaken for 1 round.

Hell's fugitive souls, warlocks shunning their pacts, and debtors hiding from brutal planar paymasters have also been known to take refuge here or, more accurately, trade one agonizing existence for another.

Mibben Filt: Huddled upon a rocky mound and mossy foundation of what once was a great fortress, the village of Mibben Filt wallows. Its wet thatch huts and crude stone cottages house a collection of gibbering hags known as the Mibben Wives. Squat, obese, toothless creatures, the Wives employ a network of thieving faeries and strong-arm spriggans for the sole purpose of collecting ivories. Their slimy fingers are constantly caressing the latest procurements, testing, appraising. They pay obscene amounts of coin and magic for particularly fine specimens.

The wife's obsession with teeth, nails, horns, and bones stems from the ancient past and the history of the plot they haunt. Mibben Filt was once the site of the Palace Pale, stronghold of one of the only he in all of Mora's history. While the she are reflections of Mora, once in a great while, the isle produces a true son and heir. Like a she, a he is a paragon of his kind, possessed of powerful magic and dread influence. However, unlike his sisters, a he is fully capable of departing the isle and returning at whim. The unfair advantage catapulted the he known as the Prince of Ivories into a position to conquer Mora ages ago, backed by an army of extraplanar horrors. She after she fell to his might, and his campaign created at least half of the Creeps' ruins. It took an unprecedented alliance of she

to defeat him and barely at that, led by the three most powerful daughters the isle had ever seen: the sultry Moira, the hag-faced Maera, and the mother of the bogey herself, the Faceless Queen. The Prince of Ivories was reduced to splinters, and the remainder of his forces driven into the deep, foggy places.

The wives are a collection of loyal pariahs, pining for the return of their lord and set upon the impossible task of reconstructing him. Though most consider the coven mad, they have uncovered fragments of their beloved prince, and with their skill and fervor and fresh supplies of quality ivory, perhaps the he's rebirth is not such a crazed notion after all.

Tielgrauf: In the heart of a nameless bog stands the colony of Tielgrauf, a young settlement built upon sturdy piers and stilts. Its lodges are connected by various bridges and walkways, sheltered under weeping willows well fed upon sorrow and grown thick as castle turrets and nearly as high. Gnarled roots and mortared stone provide a sound fortification for the predominantly mongrelmen residents.

Peaceful and hideous outcasts, the first Tielgraufan mongrelmen were led to Mora by their patchwork hero Dosselrud (Mongrelman ranger 2/wizard 7). The unique mongrelman possessed enough bogeyman parts to activate one of the fraternity's secret doors, leading a party of persecuted brethren to a new life in the masking shroud of the Creeps. Dosselrud has since managed to craft a portal unique to Tielgrauf—the hollow of the oldest willow in the colony—and his people have traveled back and forth between worlds offering shelter, acceptance, and new beginnings for the persecuted and shunned. Many have accepted the invitation, and the village contains a fair number of lepers, deformed creatures, tragic burn victims, and ungainly half-breeds.

Tielgrauf manages to thrive despite everything Mora embodies, making something good in its misery and isolation. With the existence of a portal outside the she's control, Tielgrauf has been faced with increasing attack by the servants of two local she, Iskarimsa (she troglodyte druid 3) and Gresia Pikkens (she swamp giant barbarian 4). Ironically, these attacks have accelerated what the she feared most—the mongrelmen inviting heroes and challengers onto the isle. In recent months, Tielgrauf has been a launching point for outsiders hunting missing children or seeking vengeance against the she.

Weaklight Inn: The trod of hooves, hundreds of dim lights, and a creaking of gigantic proportions marks Weaklight's approach. Groaning on four carriage wheels the size of watermills, a mobile inn on a rickety wooden chassis materializes. A lone, hooded driver sits the bench, overlooking an immense team of skeleton beasts, lanterns dangling from their ribs and necks, candles set in their empty sockets.

Lamps and lanterns overwhelm the manor: beautifully wrought of silver, brass, and other metals; paned with decorative glass; lit by various candles and oils, some scented or burning eerie greens and blues. The house is old and settled, its roofs slouching. Its walls are marked with highly detailed carvings in the gray, weathered wood: dancing skeletons, baying hounds, and hooded congregations walking in long trains. If an inn could serve has a holy place, then Weaklight Inn is more a church than a stopover. Travelers are welcome to stay, served by the resident, monk-like Order of Beaconers.

Beaconers are one of the few Moranian orders not under the influence of a she and which maintain absolute neutrality in all the dark isle's politics. Their sole mission is to guide others to their appointed destinations, for the beaconers themselves renounce all homes and places of belonging. Recognized by their obscuring robes

and their shepherds' staves, each beaconer also possesses a unique and personalized beacon, lamp, lantern, or some other means of providing light. Beaconers brave the moors and beyond to light the way for their charges, a duty they consider akin to geas. To help them fulfill their vow, beaconers possess strange powers. Whatever light remains in beaconers' grasps can never be extinguished, and upon the foul earth of Mora, beaconers never lose their way. Such gifts have raised them as the only true guides in Mora, and they are highly sought after by travelers, bounty hunters, adventuring parties, and bogeymen.

The head of the beaconers is referred to as Lord Innkeeper, currently a white-robed cenobite known as the Skeleton Man. His is a black-iron shepherd's staff with a glowing, golden skull hung on a chain from the crook. His voice is dry and wispy, and his frame suggests little more than bones. Exemplifying the tenants of the order, the Skeleton Man is without judgment or leaning, focused only on the maintenance of the inn and its beaconers, but he possesses a vast knowledge of Mora and the foul things that go on within it. As the one who accepts payment for the beaconers' services (paid always upfront and usually in coppers), added donations have been known to convince the Lord Innkeeper to part with rumors, news, and warnings.

Weeps

Closer to the Lonely Spire, Mora develops rough highlands and mountains, which create a maze of uneven cirques and corries. Many of these fissures are flooded and hundreds of lochs and meres make islands of summits and hilltops. The slopes are soggy messes, prone to landslides and riddled with peat and quicksand.

What rock and solid earth endures is clearly marked by crowded stands of trees, waterlogged whitebeams, beech, and elms, collected wherever they can take root. These scattered woods are considered precious by the creatures of the Weeps, and more often than not are claimed by primal fey, territorial monsters, and savage she.

Isle of Rood: The oldest tree in Mora is known as the Rood, an inoculated beech, like three torsos fused at the chest. The ways its boughs have grown over a thousand years are eerily reminiscent of arms reaching skyward. Their aerial roots stretch, like so many muscular striations along the lengths. It stands in the center of a copse of lesser trees, the canopies teeming with hungry crows.

Consumed by iron nails and stained a spectrum of browns and reds, the Rood has bore thousands of crucifixions over

Mora's long history. Those who've died upon the Rood numbered the enemies of many she—ferried to the neutral isle for the agonizing touch of the most sadistic creature in Mora, the dark dryad Dearga Dul (she dryad vampire druid 4/inquisitor 7).

Standing only 5 ft. in height, Dearga exudes menace like a corpse exudes stench. Funerary shrouds cling to her lithe form, glued by sour-smelling saps and embalming paste. Upon her face is a mask of petrified elm, possessing the likeness of a child and driven into her head by 16 iron nails. Infectious pus glistens about the spikes, and where eyes should be are simply wet, sticky holes.

Dearga never speaks: her purpose is conveyed solely through her despicable acts. To aid her in her work, she's cowed the bestial wights native to the wood, who follow her like hounds and lap the blood from her feet. The she is known to derive great pleasure with



every victim mounted upon her tree, bleeding as it bleeds, suffering as it suffers. The Rood is a pained thing and so is its dryad. Dearga revels in such a deplorable mix of agonies.

Lonely Spire

Rising above Mora's murk is a cylinder of stone, a great, narrow mountain that defies gravity. Treacherous cliffs and precarious ledges—17 miles long—are caressed by mournful winds and stretch from the isle's wet base into a dim sky, cold and terribly clear. Only the distant moon offers light, and it is weak and leaves much to shadow and second-guessing. Mildew, fungi, and ice cover the most dangerous precipices as if by malign design and the air becomes very thin.

The Lonely Spire allows for expansive views of the starless darkness and the Sea of Id, horizons of oppressive nothing, inspiring overwhelming hopelessness throughout the journey. The climb has led to the suicidal plunge of many would-be climbers, requiring a DC 15 Will save after every battle and between rests. The DC increases by 1 with each new save opportunity.

The spire would be unscalable if it weren't for the Crooked Stair, cut by unknown tools wielded by unknown hands—though the markings suggest fingernails and blunted teeth. No one has ever bothered to count the steps, but a million would not be a ridiculous estimate. Some are very small and short while others require picks and pitons to mount. It could be that many different races had a hand in carving the stair, but the reason why is a perplexing one. All that waits at the top are the sorrows of the tableland, and lining the spire are nothing but dreadful landmarks and maniacal predators.

Bleakhouse: Recessed near the top of the Crooked Stair, the foreboding headquarters of the bogeymen waits. Its high turrets, exaggerated peaks, and skinny, prison-like windows are carved from the rock itself. The interior is a clutter of baroque furnishings and pilfered gains. A labyrinth of claustrophobic chambers sit at deranged angles and slanted pitches, teeming with dead-ends, cyclical staircases, and doors without hinges or knobs. Sometimes proportion ceases to function normally amidst its turns, as if a madman scrawled his insanity on paper and ordered it built.

Bleakhouse serves as boarding house for transient bogeymen between hunts and holds more permanent accommodations for

esteemed child-snatchers. Here lairs the dread sire of the bogeymen, Torbalan the Bag Man, and many of the Vicious Circle. Some even wonder if, in one of the more guarded wings, the Faceless Queen holds court.

Bleakhouse is more than a twisted manor; it is also a hopeless corral. The bogeymen gleefully scare children into blind races through its corridors, and the music of little screams can be heard from every corner. Bleakhouse has no obvious means of escape: every door and window is a portal back to itself. Only the bogeymen recognize the true ways in and out and, like minotaurs and their mazes, can locate hidden pathways throughout the sprawl. These portals lead to the Narrowd and can be found anywhere. Kitchen cauldrons, broom closets, butler's pantries, or laundry shoots might all access hidden portals. Finding these portals is extremely difficult in the manor's clutter and requires a DC 30 Perception check. Most children are only temporary residents, awaiting their time on the Children's Table, but those who get sufficiently lost simply starve or go mad before finding even one portal, never mind the right one. Very rarely, though, someone escapes.

Few outside the bogeymen realize that Bleakhouse is alive and that it derives nourishment from children's pawing and scurrying. As children push the boundaries of its mazes, Bleakhouse develops new halls and chambers to accommodate them. In such a way, the manor has grown vast over centuries, and some suspect it could meander through the whole of the Lonely Spire. It is a direct reflection of the health and success of the bogeymen's fraternity.

Door to Dreaming: A titanic stone face contorts in agony along the rising cliffs, its yawn a sealed door sized for giants and set with massive iron rings. The Door to Dreaming is the most puzzled-over landmark in Mora. Its name alone gives rise to wild speculation. Perhaps it's a gateway to the infinite fields of mortal dreams? Could it be the portal to higher planes, the Heaven that Mora was banished from? Or like so many things in Mora, could it be nothing more than a deception? Is the door false hope, an object to look upon and futilely long for or, worse, some sort of trap, opening to a place even more despairing? Some claim it is the entrance to the Faceless Queen's palace, a dungeon extending the interior of the Lonely Spire. Regardless of what lies beyond, there have been no accounts of the doors ever opening.

Tableland

A skeletal wood casts claw-like shadows across the tableland, called by some the Forest of Dead Dreams. Briar and thistle grow thick and fierce across the floors, infested with diminutive fey and stalked by a unique breed of mangy, ashen dweomercat. Mora is its most malicious here and all Survival checks suffer a -8 penalty. All locating spells have a 50% chance of failure.

Bogeymen extend their reach from the Lonely Spire and to the heart of the wood, where rests the Children's Table. They operate numerous outposts and guard winding trails between it and Bleakhouse. The proverbial big, bad wolf Maudrdr (werewolf ranger 8) and his wargs patrol the trails on behalf of the Faceless Queen.

The remote wilderness, however, is entirely the purview of the Bairn, child rangers, druids, and shaman, empowered by fey magic. Their war has been raging the last hundred years, making the tableland a heavily contested battlefield often marked by guerilla skirmish.

Children's Table: In the heart of the Forest of Dead Dreams, there is a ring of monolithic cairns weathered into hideous shapes like hunched, wailing figures. Their frozen faces reflect all creatures

The Narrowd

The gaps between walls, crawlspaces, sewer pipes, attics, and chimneys, the Narrowd is a planar road comprised of every uncomfortable, tight, dark space out of plain view and linked together through spacial bending. Proportions alter strangely on the Narrowd, allowing Medium creatures to travel the nexus of oppressive pathways but forcing them to inch, squeeze, and eek their way through. Likewise, regularly Tiny creatures sometimes find themselves growing much larger, making deadly predators of standard rats and spiders. The Narrowd is the preferred means of travel for smallfolk, particularly household fey, but is not limited to wererats and bogeymen. Its entrances and exits consist of awkward and out-of-the-way places, like under beds, out of cupboard cabinets, between cramped, derelict buildings, and behind cellar doors..

in their moments of basest horror. In their sprawled shadows, the bogeymen convene, dragging their catches, kicking and squealing, to the Children's Table, an ancient, immovable slab where monsters gather for the infamous child auctions.

Kicked, prodded, pinched, and paraded, terrified youth are driven onto the block for purchase by the ravenous crowds, gathered twice a month under the full and new moon. Hags, ghouls, werewolves, devils, shadow fey, the bidders are an evil menagerie from Mora and beyond. Most come of their own power, others are escorted from portals in Bleakhouse, up the Crooked Stair, and through well-guarded trails to the site. The auctions are heard and seen for miles, marked by billowing vulgar smoke, illuminated by strangely colored fires, and by miserable choruses of cackles, howls, and depraved festivity.

There is no singular currency at auction, every bogeyman requiring payment befitting his particular fancy. Some value coins and gems, others magic, still others a particular service. No offer is taboo, and the child-nappers are normally quite willing to make a deal. Similarly, there is no expected etiquette so long as the business of the table continues without interruption. Those who needlessly complicate sales, are unable to pay their bids, or otherwise tamper with the merchandise quickly find themselves on the receiving end of the bogeymen's wrath.

Torbalan the Bag Man

Torbalan the Bag Man (unique bogeyman rogue 10): The quintessential bogeyman with his stained sack cast over one warped shoulder: the bag kicks and weeps and begs in muffled voices whether empty or full. Tall and crooked, he just barely passes as humanoid in the shadows of unlit streets and darkened rooms. Torbalan has three times as many joints as a normal bogeyman, one too many fingers and toes, and twice as many teeth shoved into an overlong jaw. Warts, tumors, and deformities across his face and body suggest foreheads, elbows, chins, cheeks and hips where there oughtn't be and make it a difficult task to look him dead on.

The Bag Man spends very little time exposed with help from his quickness and cloak of pure shadow in addition to his small trove of magic rings, belts, bracers, slippers and tunics, all of which he wears in excess. Because of his many bumps and almost-appendages, each item bestows its enchantment upon him regardless of normal limitations, making for an extremely formidable foe—not even accounting for his ancient cunning and prowess.

Torbalan is general of the Faceless Queen's forces. He suffers no challenge: his sole rule of the bogeyman fraternity over the ages is proof enough of that. Through a grand mastery of fear tactics and an iron will, Torbalan manages the queen's vast network across the planes, and despite its universal infamy, the Bag Man has ensured not only that the organization continues but also that it flourishes.

Such power and prestige has drawn a very prominent admirer, the witch-queen Baba Yaga. She is rumored to share an intimate bond with Torbalan, and he is the witch's sole provider of baby teeth, rendered fat, locks of hair, and all her other child-borne spell components.

Though the table is used but twice a month, the bogeymen's work never ceases. It's always night somewhere, and bogeymen are driven to fill as much of Bleakhouse as they can between auctions.

Garden of Innocence: The tree fortress of the Bairn is a village of living woods, vine bridges, and gossamer hammocks within a pocket of starry twilight, unabashed greenery, and the sweet smells of juniper, strawberries, and hazel. Faerie magic stays Mora's gloom and bars evil from entering. Not even time passes, and those who enter are immune to all forms of aging. The garden is the launching point for all Bairn activities and a sanctuary for when the bogeymen threaten to overwhelm them.

Created by the faerie king Pwyll Pwun, his people thrived for years beneath the notice of the she. When the bogeymen rose to power, Pwyll challenged them for dominion of the tableland, but he was ultimately no match for the Faceless Queen. The Bairn fled into a garden dimension of Pwyll's own making, but in order to mask it from evil's notice, he was forced to enter an eternal twilight state. He dutifully made the sacrifice and welcomed, beyond his own, the various children who'd managed to flee the bogeymen.

These children, the Bairn, remained ever since, fiercest among them the boy Shyah (human druid 16), who has spent 100 years mastering Bairn magic, despite appearances. In many respects, he has replaced the comatose Pwyll as shaman king and has slowly recruited an army of freed children to end the affront of the table.

Imaginary Friends

It is quite possible, while exploring the Forest of Dead Dreams, that visitors encounter imaginary friends from their childhoods. Visitors who survive 1d3+1 days in the forest have been known to stumble upon old friends sitting patiently for a "tea party" or have had creatures resembling their stuffed animals and forgotten toys leap to the rescue in a time of dire need.

These reunions are often emotional, as heartstrings from earlier, happier times are pulled into the now. Imaginary friends recall their children's childhoods perfectly and are almost always proud of how their children grew up. Imaginary friends remain fiercely loyal and aid their children in whatever ways they can. Sadly, their existence cannot extend beyond the forest, and without a person to sustain them, they soon fade.

The Bairn make good use of their imaginary friends, who've fought long years by their side against the bogeymen. Shyah's own, the bird-dog Zonzur (imaginary friend owlbear fighter 3), is the sworn enemy of Maudrar, and the two have fought many vicious battles to stalemate.

RUSTY GEARS

By Jarrod Camiré

“The tale of Rusty Gears is the tale of Charun and Ariadne, of clacking looms and grinding cogs, of things cast aside and broken, and of how they’re born anew from junk. It’s a place of masks, and they’re never safe.”

—Arachne

Charun stared at the beautiful young woman sitting in the middle of his dark vessel. The hot sea breeze was caressing her, as a lover would have done, playfully blowing the side of her rose pink dress up to reveal the shapely leg underneath. Her coppery skin gleamed under the sun like a promise leading to more intimate treasures. Hard to believe that this nubile mortal had already been a princess, the lover of the minotaur’s slayer, wife to a god, sentenced to Hades, and brought back.

Another time, another world, another reality altogether thought the grim ferryman as he continued to scan the waters ahead of his old skiff. The Styx was like a current standing apart from the seemingly infinite ocean around them, an unmovable element that nothing could influence. The robed figure was rowing indefatigably with his poll, all his senses buzzing by the very presence of Ariadne, which placed him in a disturbing state that he hadn’t experienced in ages.

He had ferried countless millions of souls, rubbed shoulders with heroes, but rarely was he moved by a mind as brilliant as hers or, forced to admit, aroused by the sensuous presence of a lady such as this one.

An incomplete spirit, but not for long.

As on cue, Ariadne looked at him, smiling. Rare were those who’d smiled at Charun down the eons, but hers was genuine, untainted by fear or doubt, as if she’d placed her trust in him long ago. Charun read all this in her mind as if she’d been an open book. Such thoughts were but a reminiscence of another time, long gone. Soon she would understand the very connection between them, between her and the millions of spirits surrounding this terrible craft, those souls adrift in the wind, invisible to the former princess, but not to him, never to him. Charun admired Ariadne longingly, intoxicated by her delicate perfume and supreme femininity both, envious of her innocence while knowing well that the last vestiges of this false mortality would soon be stripped from her.

Ariadne must have sensed the ferryman’s uneasiness. Charun’s conflicting feelings and her desire to return home igniting the spark required to perceive the surrounding seascape in a new way. Hundreds if not thousands of threads suddenly materialized all around them, like colorful ribbons carried along by the gentle wind. Ariadne laughed merrily and began to scoop the filaments by the dozens. Many were blood red and a few shined like gold, though the majority were silver-gray.

Ariadne turned in the ferryman’s direction, excited like a young girl while exclaiming, “They shall serve later!”

Lost souls saved by the Spinner of Fate. Yes, they’ll serve all right somehow, sometime.

Charun said nothing and only nodded in agreement, as Ariadne admired the handfuls of fine strands with a mitigated expression.

“My own thread isn’t like these, nor is yours.”

Again Charun remained silent but shivered strongly when Ariadne conjured into view two complex lines representing their very own destinies beside many more pertaining to countless other souls. This time the brilliant lattice was completely anchored by the woman whose blouse had taken on a metallic sheen, and for a very brief moment, this perfect vision brought elation to Charun. The tangled fates of so many, restored at last. When Ariadne fingertips brushed the darkest rope of the ensemble, she knew. Looking at the rower, she seized the full extent of his desires, understanding his complexity and dutifulness along with the sense of this strange journey.

“A mask, I am but a mask... a fragment sent elsewhere to learn about another world.”

Yes. In a way we all are. Soon you will be complete, however—whole again.

“This is my fate..”

It is our duty, until the end of all things.

Ariadne acknowledged this inescapable truth just as Charun tenderly cupped her chin in his callused hand. They shared a brief regard. Words were now meaningless. The boatman returned at the stern just as a floating mass that defied imagination appeared, barring the entire horizon.

“The Plane of Gears,” whispered Ariadne softly.

The vessel passed at once through the plane’s border, as if the metallic wall had never existed, and Charun adroitly guided the vessel around moving gears as vast as continents to finally draw alongside the base of a gigantic shaft-like structure. Ariadne looked one last time at Charun, exchanging with him a silent farewell. Gears not visible a moment before materialized and parted soundlessly to reveal a stairway that Ariadne began to ascend. As she climbed higher and higher, memories flooded into her, each image taking on substance. Gears, cogs, engines, looms, and fantastic devices were appearing all about her to her sheer delight. The long flight of stairs finally ended and yet another mechanical door parted to reveal her private sanctuary.

Ariadne took off her shoes and began a light-hearted dance. As she spun round and round, a myriad of filaments brushed against her hips, and she felt each and every one of them, knowing about all these lives, about their dreams and hopes, joys and deceptions, while gladly accepting her role as Spinner of Fate. As she turned once more, she briefly caught her reflection in a silvery mirror. The woman who looked back was wearing a strange mask of moving gears, and Ariadne felt complete again. With a simple thought, she willed this mask and countless more to dissolve into nothingness. Here, she had naught to hide. Ariadne had finally returned home, but she wondered if, in truth, she had ever left at all.

PLANAR TRAPS, HAZARDS & AFFLICTIONS

HAZARDS

Aleph

Drifting through the beyond like giant incorporeal dandelion heads or three-dimensional snowflakes, alephs are wispy nodes of sparkling light. Every aleph is a mobile conjunction of all existence, a compression of infinite possibilities, containing every other point in space and time. Alephs are most common on chaotic planes and those undergoing upheaval but can be found anywhere. They typically last 1d6 days.

Magical effects rather than physical objects, alephs shed light as a torch, are insubstantial and vulnerable only to dispel magic and similar effects (treat the aleph as a 30th level effect). They typically occupy a single 5-ft. square and float 1d6 × 5 ft. in a random direction each round (although they can sometimes remain stationary for random periods). They ignore terrain and pass through solid objects.

Objects or creatures entering an aleph find themselves transported to a random plane (as if by plane shift; creatures bull rushed or otherwise forced into the area may make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid the aleph). Creatures can also pass into it voluntarily and can attempt to focus on a particular destination but must roll on the teleportation accuracy chart (see teleport) as if the location was “viewed once” even if they’re more familiar with it. Creatures that stay in contact with each other usually travel to the same destination.

Anyone who gazes into an aleph can see everything in the universe from every angle simultaneously—a mind-blowing experience that causes 1d4 Wisdom damage/minute. A viewer gazing into an aleph for at least 1 minute can attempt to scry; otherwise, there’s only a 5% chance/round of a viewing character seeing something relevant or recognizable.

Dead Stone

Taken from the Underworld and most commonly encountered there, somehow the very concept of stone has been killed or drained from it. Dwarves are said to weep at the very touching of it, for they feel no kinship or connection to it.

Dead stone is unaffected by magic designed to control normal stone or earth, such as rock to mud or stone shape.

Liminal Slime

Thought to emerge from Between, liminal slime is a nauseating, green-brown ichor, punctuated by bubbles that look uncannily like staring eyes. Physically, it is harmless (although disgusting), but should a character in its vicinity use astral projection, dimension door, plane shift, teleport, or similar magic, the slime’s deadly power is revealed.

Liminal slime causes teleportation effects to go haywire. Any such magic used within 100 ft. of a patch of liminal slime forces the teleporting character to roll on the teleport accuracy table (see teleport) as if the location had only been “viewed once,” regardless

of how well known it is. Also, apply the table’s results to plane shift attempts (which may result in travelers ending up on the wrong plane), and dimension door overshoots or misses the target by 1d8 squares. Other spells generally have side effects based on the worst-case scenarios.

Every time it affects a teleportation, a patch of slime expands by 1d10 ft., plus the level (in feet) of the spell used. Liminal slime can be destroyed by normal means.

Non-Euclidean Angles

It’s possible to find non-Euclidean angles in both Order- and Chaos-infused planes. One represents impossibly complex folds of space-time, and the other denies physics entirely. The game effects are identical.

Angles of objects seem to change when viewed from a different perspective or when no one is looking at them: concavity become convexity, angles dance between obtuse and acute, things that are small and things that are far away are difficult to differentiate (or perhaps objects are both at the same time?), and every time you count an object’s sides, you get different results.

Terrain containing non-Euclidean angles is a profoundly unsettling sight, sometimes driving those who look upon it insane. This functions like a gaze attack, allowing victims to avert their gaze (looking at their feet or not concentrating too hard on their environment). Other observers must typically make a DC 15 Will save every 1d6 minutes or become shaken.

NON-EUCLIDEAN ANGLE, CR 10 XP 9,600

Type magical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** —

Trigger proximity; **Reset** automatic

Effects A character can avoid stepping into a non-Euclidean angle with a DC 15 Reflex save. Otherwise, roll on the table below:

1d12	Effect
1	Target is never seen or heard from again, and magic cannot uncover their fate. Only wish or miracle can recover the target.
2–3	Target is teleported to a nearby plane.
4–6	Target is teleported to a random location on the same plane.
7–12	Target is teleported 4d10 × 10 ft. in a random direction and takes 2d6 damage (possibly more if they materialize in an object).
13–15	Target walks partly out of existence and becomes incorporeal for 1d6 rounds
16–20	Target is teleported 1d6 × 5 ft. in a random direction.

A non-Euclidean angle’s effect varies each time it is entered. It affects

non-living objects cast or fired into it as well as living creatures and some magical effects that enter it (at GM's discretion).

Tesseracting Terrain

Tesseracting terrain moves its contents in a predictable pattern, typically every round or minute. A tesseract can connect points across any distance but, typically, connects points within 400 ft. If it occurs at a location that's coterminous or coexistent with another plane, the tesseract can cross planar boundaries as well (often changing plane but not physically moving).

Each tesseract consists of a sequence of 4 squares or groups of coterminous squares. At the end of each period (usually a round), the contents of each square shifts to the next location in the sequence: the contents of the first square are teleported (as if by plane shift) to the second square, the contents of the second square to the third square, and so on. The contents of the fourth square move back to the first square.

Creatures partly in an affected square may make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being teleported. Objects partially in the area have a 50% chance of sliding entirely into the area and being teleported and a 50% of being partially transported, becoming broken or destroyed.

Timeflowers

Golden timeflowers grow only on a site of disruption to the fabric of the Creation. Where planes have cracked and split, where mass teleportation has gone awry, where the winds of time spell has been cast. They feed on time like other flowers feed on sun and rain. A profusion of timeflowers gives any area the erratic time planar trait.

The pollen of a timeflower allows users to relive an event of their past. A DC 15 Will save or concentration check allows the user to experience a memory of their choice. Failure means the user basks in a random good or bad memory. In either case, the user sleeps for 1d6 hours. Creatures wandering through a field of blooming timeflowers are subject to the equivalent of a lullaby spell (DC 11).

Crushing a timeflower, even accidentally, releases the pent-up time within it. The wielder is targeted by haste for 1 round/level or HD but must make a DC 15 Fort save or be aged 1 year/round under the effects of haste. Rolling a 1 on this check, the target still ages but is affected by slow instead.

Hazards of the Ever River

Magic sluices through the great, eternal river of the planes. It's a rare stretch of water that does not harbor some power or property related to its environs. Named after some of its most famous stretches, according to Midgard lore, here are some sample hazards and terrains.

ACHERON

The River of Pain is not as terrible as its name suggests. Its waters are a place of healing, not punishment—of cleansing and purging the sins of mortals, of soothing the guilt that torments every soul. Lantern archons swim beneath and dance on top of the surface of the water, giving it a flickering golden glow.

Heaven's realms contain many streams and pools of Acheron, going by many names. Here, newly arrived souls are urged to bathe in the sparkling waters and let the concerns of their mortal lives be washed away. For the newly dead, this cessation of care is invaluable. Living creatures, however, may get more than they bargained for.

- The water of Acheron is cool and refreshing but never chill. A draught provides nourishment equivalent to a good meal and leaves the consuming character feeling rather introspective. It's altogether pleasant to consume... too pleasant in fact; the water of Acheron is like a drug.

Water of Acheron

Type drug (ingestion); **Addiction** slight, Will DC 16 **Price** 500 gp **Effects** 4 hours; **Damage** 1d4 Cha +1d4 Wis.

- Bathing in the river for 1 hour grants a sincere character atonement.
- Characters partially (or more) immersed in the waters become reluctant to leave and require a DC 13 Will save to perform any action that isn't relaxing in the water and contemplating life. Treat this as a calm emotions spell that also inflicts a -5 penalty to Perception checks and a -2 penalty to Will Saves, and the effects persist for 1d10 hours after leaving the water.

GJOLL

A thunderous cacophony accompanies the river as it passes through and around the realms of Helheim, Valhalla, Niflheim, and other homes of the northern gods. Foam churns, spray flies, and the sound is almost deafening (inflicting -10 to Perception checks based on sound). Those who draw closer see the cause: the white water is filled with tumbling weapons—axes, daggers, and swords. Most are chipped and broken, but a few have distinctive fine workmanship—masterworks and possibly magical blades spinning in the torrent.

The Gjoll seems to function as an afterlife for weapons. At the GM's discretion, a character that has lost a highly prized martial weapon (magical or mundane) that was completely destroyed, has a 5% chance to catch sight of it in their first glance at the raging river. A DC 30 Perception check is required to keep track of the item's tumble through the torrent. Retrieving it is another matter entirely.

- The waters of the Gjoll bestow the ghost touch quality on any weapon immersed in it. Weapons removed from the torrent retain this property for 1 day.
- Creatures exposed to the water take 15d6 damage. If the exposure is brief, a DC 20 Reflex save can be made for half damage. Incorporability is no defense.
- Plucking a specific weapon from the River Gjoll requires a DC 30 Sleight of Hand check. Grabbing a random weapon is DC 25. Dipping a weapon in the waters requires a Strength or Sleight of Hand check (DC 20). For every point by which the attempt fails, the character takes 1d6 damage (maximum 15d6), and anything they were grasping is lost to the flow.

LETHE

Known as the River of Unmindfulness, the Lethe winds its way through the Underworld. Even a brief touch brings forgetfulness while a draught of it erases more than mere memory—it wipes a soul clean. Those who emerge do so untainted by good or evil, order or chaos; a blank canvas waiting to be rewritten.

The Lethe's effects vary depending on the degree of exposure.

- **Minor Exposure:** A splash, being speckled with spray, causes absent-mindedness and forgetfulness, numbing the bite of painful memories but inflicting a -2 penalty on all Intelligence-based skills for 1 day.
- **Brief Exposure:** Characters must make a DC 30 Will save every round they are exposed (such as sticking your hand in or drinking

a potion-sized measure of the Lethe). Failure causes the target to forget everything that's happened in the last 24 hours.

- **Partial Immersion:** Characters that wade in up to the knees for 1 round or get a quick soaking (such as, a wave crashes over them, causing them to fall in, but they clamber out within 1 round) inflicts the above effects plus 1d3 negative levels (a DC 30 Will save negates this). Caused by loss of memories rather than negative energy, these negative levels cannot be restored by usual means (such as restoration), but the victim can make a DC 20 Will save each day to recover them, as per the normal rules. Memory net (see *Dark Roads & Golden Hells*, page 86) also restores lost memories. Negative levels inflicted by the Lethe cannot kill a character per se, but if reduced below 1st level, they suffer the effect below.
- **Full Immersion:** Being submerged for more than 1 round has life-changing results. Those affected must make a DC 30 Will save each round they are exposed. A success subjects them to the effects above, but on a failure, a target's entire life is wiped clean. The victim emerges from the water as a 1 HD newborn with no memories whatsoever.

It takes 20 weeks minus a character's Intelligence score to be re-educated in the basics of life and communication. The wiliest of devilish lawyers might be able to argue that they are the same creature as before their transformation, but the process essentially makes the character a brand-new 1st-level character in all respects.

PHLEGETHON

The boiling, flame-topped waters of Phlegethon light the sky for miles around with a ruddy, flickering glow. The crackle of flames mixes with the cries of those caught within it: demons and devils love submerging sinners in the bloody, boiling water.

- The area is fire-dominant and strongly evil-aligned.
- Phlegethon is effectively a river of alchemical fire. Treat minor exposure exactly like being hit by alchemical fire. Characters fully immersed in the river take 10d6 fire damage/round.

STYX

The Waters of Hate are commonly encountered in the Underworld and the Hells. Evil souls are forcibly and repeatedly drowned within, harvesting their bitterness and hatred. Its name also arises from the fact that dead souls gather on the bank to jealously gaze upon the land of the living.

- The Styx is a strongly evil-aligned locale.
- The river counts as unholy water although it loses this property if removed from the river for more than 1 day. It also carries the hatesoak affliction.
- Creatures that break an oath "sworn by the Styx" have a 50% chance to be subject to a curse. They do not need to be on or near the waters for this to take effect.
- Anointing the body completely with Styx water wards a creature against harm from both the living and the dead, granting them the equivalent of mage armor for 1 day, but this also subjects them to hatesoak.
- The waters radiate antipathy to all dead and undead creatures (even mindless ones). Treat as the spell effect (DC 22). Even sailing over the river requires a check.

DISEASES

Dreamcaught

This is a common affliction among those new to the planes, especially within the Shadow Realm, Ethereal, and Astral.

Type disease, contact; **Save** Will DC 14

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 50% chance of experiencing vivid dreams or nightmares while sleeping (equivalent to the nightmare spell), which manifests in the waking world as a creature or object summoned by shadow conjuration; a natural 1 on save produces a *phantasmal killer* instead; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

Dyscrasia

Dyscrasia is famed as the disease carried by cambium.

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 21

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d2 Wis damage; **Cure** 4 consecutive saves

Special If a cambium's serum is taken by an infected creature, it counts as an automatically successful save and restores 1 Wisdom. If the infected creature loses more than half its original Wisdom ability score (round down), it is considered dominated (as the appropriate *dominate* spell) by any cambium within 30 ft. (Will DC 23 negates).

Hatesoak

Hatesoak is an affliction caused by exposure to the Styx, when the waters and their attendant hate worm their way into a character, body and soul. Hatesoak is a curse but functions similarly to a disease:

Type curse, contact; **Save** Will DC 12 negates

Onset immediate; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect target acts in evil manner at next opportunity (as a *suggestion* spell); **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

Protean Aphasia

The Protean language is ever changing, never the same twice and never predictable. Yet the proteans themselves never seem to have trouble communicating. Learning it is like attempting to predict the exact order that the raindrops will strike you while being caught in a hurricane. And there are consequences.

Protean aphasia is a magical disease that affects only creatures who speak Protean and the tongues of similarly chaotic creatures. Victims begin to randomly jumble words from the various languages they speak, soon being unable to communicate in anything other than Protean.

Type disease, contact (special); **Save** Will DC 16

Onset 1 day; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect -4 penalty to all skill checks involving language or communication

Effect after 2nd failed save; target loses access to all but original language and reads and writes only Protean

Effect after 3rd failed save; target can communicate only in Protean; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

Protean aphasia only affects creatures who know Protean. Proteans and similar chaotic outsiders seem immune to its effect although they can be carriers. Infected characters can pass on the aphasia by speaking within earshot of others who know Protean—even through writing. Magic is ineffectual against it. In fact, targeting the victim

with a spell like comprehend languages or tongues exposes the caster to the disease.

Rust Drake Tetanus

A disease spread by rust dragons, fallen inevitables, and other denizens of the Rusty Gears (see *Dark Roads & Golden Hells*, page 62).

Type disease, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 19

Onset 1d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect 1d3 Con damage and 1d3 Dex damage and target is paralyzed

Cure 3 consecutive saves

The Starks

A common disease from the Shadow Plane and other locations where light rarely shines. Fey are immune.

Type disease, contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Onset 1d3 days; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect color is leached from target (including clothes and items), leaving black and white form; 1d4 Str damage and targets taking 3 or more Str damage are glum and cannot benefit from morale bonuses but gain a +2 bonus to saves against fear effects;

Cure 2 consecutive saves

DRUGS AND POISONS

Amrit

Amrit, sometimes known as ambrosia, is a nectar-like liquid formed from crystallized belief. It occurs in all planes naturally although in different ways and different places: in flowers, the tears of condemned or graced souls, bubbling in natural springs, trapped beneath the surface like oil. It has many uses—the gods dine upon it, and its power is used to maintain the magic and majesty of the planes. “Liquid miracle” is a common name for it.

One dose of amrit provides fallen or risen outsiders with succor—for a time. It’s as if they were back in the good graces of their former life, but the “down” is a ferocious assault of doubt and depression. It is dangerously addictive.

Type drug, ingested; **Addiction** major, Fortitude DC 20

Price 1,500 gp

Effects (outsiders only) 1d3 hours; +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and skill checks, +1 alchemical bonus to the DCs of spell-like abilities

Damage 1d3 Wis and 1d3 Cha damage

Angel’s Tears

Nothing more than the sincere tears of a celestial, weeping at the sins of the world. If even a few drops pass the lips of an evil outsider, they’ll quickly become ill.

Type poison, ingested or injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Price 500 gp

Onset 1d6+1 minutes; **Frequency** 1/min. for 7 min.

Effect sickened; **Secondary Effect** nauseated; **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

Asphodel Leaves

The tar-like nectar and leathery black leaves of the asphodel flower, one of the few native to the Underworld, is prized as a drug among the dead. Chewed or smoked, asphodel has the rare quality of soothing

the restless undead. Even mindless creatures find its scent pacifying.

Creatures who partake of asphodel relive old memories in a dream-like state that’s as near to sleep as undead can get. Creatures reduced to 0 Strength by taking asphodel transform into undead shadows. Specialist “shadow catchers” prowl asphodel dens to catch them and take them to a new home on the Shadow.

Type drug, ingested; **Addiction** moderate, Will DC 20

Price 200 gp

Effects (*undead*) 1d6 hours; slow as per the spell, –20 penalty to Perception checks

Effects (*living*) 1d6 hours; unconscious

Damage 1d3 Wis and 1d3 Str damage (see above)

Blinding Nectar

A glowing golden syrup taken from evanescent night flowers in the Elflands, blinding nectar produces pleasurable swirls and bursts of color. The target is blinded but rarely unhappy with their state. It also makes them docile and easily manipulated. Aftereffects include spots and flashes in vision, synaesthesia, and visual hallucinations.

Type drug, contact (eyes); **Addiction** minor, Fortitude DC 13

Price 4,500 gp

Effects 1 hour; blinded and fascinated (Will DC 13 negates fascinated condition; injury allows new save)

Damage –5 penalty to Perception checks for 24 hours

Dream Spittle

The spittle of a hundun is a prized if highly addictive drug. Artists, artisans, and philosophers all value this tincture. Easily identified, it changes color randomly (including indescribable alien colors), and if stared at long enough, it seems to contain hints of shapes not quite formed in your mind’s eye.

Type drug, ingested; **Addiction** major, Fortitude DC 22

Price 600 gp

Effects 1 hour; confused

Effects 8 hours; +1 bonus to initiative and +4 alchemical bonus to Craft and Intelligence checks

Damage 1d4 Wis and 1d4 Cha damage

Lethe’s Kiss

Lethe’s kiss is a potent poison that removes all memory from a user of the last 24 hours. Many ne’er-do-wells use it to cover their tracks, but cunning adventurers, assassins, and plotters carry them in order to prevent knowledge of their recent deeds falling into the wrong hands through charm or torture.

Type poison, ingested; **Save** Will DC 25

Price 750 gp

Onset 1 minute

Effect memory loss of last 24 hours; **Cure** 1 save

Lethean Ale

Lethe ale is brewed partly from the waters of forgetfulness. Like a handful of its namesake, it causes absent-mindedness and forgetfulness, but it also numbs the bite of painful memories. Tavern-keepers often serve it slyly to troublesome customers since it quiets them down and prevents trouble.

Type drug, ingested; **Addiction** minor, Fortitude DC 12

Price 1 gp

Effects 24 hours; –2 penalty to Intelligence-based skills

Damage 1 Int damage

EFFECTS

Abstraction

Visitors who spend an extended time unprotected on the Astral Plane, Ethereal Plane, or other empty or ephemeral locales, such as the Nine Stairways, may find their individuality bleeding away, leaving behind a creature ever more notional or archetypal. First, their appearance slowly changes to the absolute average for their race. Then their memories and personalities become “averaged” until they think and act in entirely stereotypical ways. In extreme cases, victims find their physical form dissipating entirely becoming the mere idea of their former self—or perhaps melding with their race’s template on the Plane of Archetypes.

Abstraction

Type planar effect; **Save** Will DC 15

Onset 1 week; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect abilities higher than a target’s racial average decrease by 1, and abilities lower than a target’s racial average increase by 1; once abilities equal 11 (plus or minus racial modifiers), target gains 1 permanent negative level (targets reduced to 0 disappear forever);

Cure 3 consecutive saves

Creatures native to the Astral Plane or Ethereal Plane are immune although most inhabitants tend to be abstracted to one degree or another anyway.

Alternate Personality Disorder

This disorder can strike victims of teleportation mishaps (such as from teleport and plane shift spells) and creatures who enter and emerge from non-Euclidean space. Some have suggested that this isn’t a mental disorder but that victims have actually exchanged consciousness with another version of themselves in a parallel reality.

Alternate Personality Disorder

Type insanity; **Save** Will DC 19

Onset immediate

Effect –1d6 penalty on skill checks; target believes self not native to this universe; 5% chance that any Knowledge check is erroneous

Compulsive Ukase

The overwhelming order to be found on Lawful planes seeps into the psyche, rendering targets easily commanded and fervent devotees of law.

Compulsive Ukase

Type planar effect; **Save** Will DC 15

Onset 1 week; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect –6 penalty to Will saves against command and similar magic; unable to knowingly break law; gains ability to detect chaos 3/day

Fortune’s Warp

A side effect of time in highly chaotic planes, the victim’s luck vacillates wildly between very lucky and very, very unlucky.

Fortune’s Warp

Type planar effect; **Save** Will DC 15

Onset immediate; **Frequency** 1/day

Effect the next time target rolls 1 on a d20 roll, count as natural 20; after that, the next time rolls 20 on a d20 roll, count as natural 1; and so on

Beyond the effect on actual dice rolls, the victim experiences an

oscillating knack for being either in the right place at the right time or the very wrong one. One day, the character is finding diamond rings dropped in the street, and the next, it’s scorpions in the boots.

Heaven’s Dolor

Heaven is like a drug, an intoxicating mix of beauty and purity—the best of all possible worlds. It is amongst the most beautiful places in the multiverse, awe inspiring and often indescribable to those who have glimpsed its profoundly simple yet infinitely elegant grandeur.

Mortals unused to this majesty often find its colors, scents, and sounds to be an overwhelming, hyper-stimulating experience that makes other realms pale in comparison. When they return to other realms, they find worlds that seem drab, gloomy, harsh, ragged edged, devoid of Heaven’s glory, and filled with wickedness and filth. For many people, such a world is more than they can bear.

Type insanity; **Save** Will DC 16

Onset 1 day

Effect –4 penalty to all Wisdom- and Charisma-based skill checks; target is withdrawn and becomes shaken in presence of filth, disease, evil, suffering, and so on

The effects disappear if the target returns to Heaven for 1 hour or more or is subject to a benevolent spell-like ability from a celestial. Sufferers find themselves drawn to portals or good-aligned outsiders, desperate for a “fix” of heavenly experience. Many sell all their possessions or go to extreme lengths to gain another glimpse of Heaven’s perfection.

A variant of this dolor also affects visitors to the Elflands.

Temporal Sheer

Temporal sheer is a danger for those who travel between planes with different time traits, most famously when returning from the Elflands to Midgard. Victims find themselves immediately ageing or growing younger as their body adapts to its “proper” age by the rules of the destination plane.

The sheering occurs when the target first touches the ground in the destination plane. It can be avoided indefinitely by not touching the ground—by means magical or mundane—such as by flying or riding an animal.

Temporal sheer

Type planar effect; **Save** Fortitude DC 15

Onset immediate

Effect target loses any age gained while on previous plane; target ages (or grows young) by the amount of time that has passed on the destination plane; target is exhausted (Fort DC 25 reduces to fatigued)

Xaosanoia

Spending time on highly chaotic planes isn’t a healthy experience for the mortal mind. Characters suffering from xaosanoia become extremely jumpy and expect the world to abruptly change about them. In their minds, cause and effect no longer necessarily follow each other.

You can develop xaosanoia like any other insanity but also by rolling a 1 on any save against a confusion effect while on a highly morphic plane.

Xaosanoia

Type Insanity; **Save** Will DC 15

Onset 1d8 days

Effect +1 bonus to Initiative, –4 penalty on Reflex saves and Wisdom-based skill checks

TRAPS

Infinite Pit

An infinite pit works like a normal pit trap and can be operated by any number of magical or mechanical mechanisms. However, the pit literally has no bottom: a falling character never takes damage from the fall—they merely fall away from their companions at a rate of 175 ft./round—but may actually fall so long that they starve to death. (The opportunity exists to recover the victim by magic, however).

Infinite Pit Trap, CR 8

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

Trigger proximity; **Reset** none

Effect bottomless pit; DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area); attempts to grab sides of pit result in 5d6 damage and require a DC 35 Athletics check in order to grab hold

MAGIC ITEMS

CURSED ITEMS

Dead Man's Food

Gray cheese, dry bread, and bitter black wine. Tasteless honey as clear as liquid glass. The food of the Underworld comes in many forms—none too palatable for the living, but edible. Though it will sustain a character, a meal of dead man's food harms the living and heals undead as if they'd been recipients of inflict minor wounds spell. If eaten in the Underworld, the living may also be subject to a curse.

The law of the Underworld states that those who eat the food of the dead have stolen from Death's domain and may not leave until their debt is paid. Characters who partake of native food or asphodel leaves while in the underworld are judged to have broken this ancient law.

Type curse, ingestion; **Save** Will DC 15 avoids, Fortitude DC 20 negates

Onset immediate; **Frequency** when leaving Underworld

Effect target may not leave Underworld by means of spell or planar road; **Cure** break enchantment, free the soul; the blessing of a powerful outsider native to the Underworld or a god with the Death domain

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Shield Special Ability: Fractal

The fractal shield is formed of interwoven patterns made up of smaller versions of the whole that seem to draw in the eye in an endless spiral of infinite variation. Upon command of the wielder, 3/day, the pattern moves in such a way that algorithms, axiomites, hundun, proteans, and similar outsiders of lawful neutral or chaotic neutral alignment within 30 ft. that see the shield must make a DC 14 Will save or be fascinated for 1d4 rounds.

Moderate evocation; CL 7th; **Price** +1 bonus.

Weapon Special Ability: Impossible

When swung, this weapon is surrounded by ghostly versions of itself, playing out alternative outcomes to every cut and thrust. Afterimages and unrealized possibilities surround it, allowing you to strike with not one solid blow but many possible ones. You may activate or deactivate the properties of this weapon as a swift action.

When rolling to hit, you roll twice and may select either result. If you hit however, damage is halved as some of the damage done occurs in other realities. Attempts to sunder or disarm the weapon while it is active have a 20% miss chance as do your own attempts to sunder or disarm with it.

Moderate conjuration; CL 6th; Craft Arms and Armor, impossible weapon; **Price** +1 bonus.

WONDROUS ITEMS

ANGEL FACE

Aura transmutation (polymorph); CL 5th

Slot head; **Price** 30,000 gp; **Weight** —

Description

They say that for bad liars, falsehoods are written all over their faces. For angels, that's sometimes literally true.

An angel face is created when a lawful good outsider engages in prolonged deception and subterfuge. If they wear a mortal visage for too long—especially if they're forced into dishonesty and guile—their celestial spark rebels, pushing the lie onto its outer flesh. In time, the metaphorical mask forms a literal one: a second skin over the angel's own face. When they return to the higher realms, a wise celestial pulls off their mask—though few can bring themselves to destroy it outright. Scattered throughout the Heavens in the lonely caves and isolated towers, some ancient celestials store hundreds of their former faces, which flutter like lost moths in search of home.

An angel face masks both flesh and soul. When donned, its wielder assumes the form and features of a Small or Medium humanoid, which might be an existing creature or a persona the angel made up. You detect as that creature. Treat this as alter self. The wearer's true race and alignment is also disguised, as if by misdirection.

Uncontained angel faces flutter mindlessly, like butterflies (treat as Tiny animated objects with a clumsy fly speed). If a creature within 30 ft. attempts to lie or misrepresent itself, the angel face will attempt to attach itself to their face. Removing an unwanted face requires a Will save (DC same as spell like abilities of the creature it came from). This save can be attempted 1/day.

Construction

Not applicable. Angel faces aren't made, except by the deception of celestials.

BEZOAR

Aura varies (good, necromancy); CL varies

Slot hand; **Price** 17,900 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

Like angel faces, bezoars grow from the bodies of outsiders who stray from their natural state. In this case, they form like cysts in the bellies of fiends who stray from wickedness with acts of restraint, honor, love, or similar emotions.

Each bezoar is unique to the fiend that spawned it: they might manifest as a sticky mass of hair, a hunk of stone, or a ball of spongy spiked flesh. Bezoars typically fill the palm of a human hand—but there are exceptions. Bezoars radiate good and magic to a degree based on the HD of the creature they come from. (The creature's HD is also the CL of the bezoar, if necessary.)

Just looking at a bezoar makes most evil outsiders uneasy, granting a +2 item bonus to Intimidate checks against them. If used in conjunction with casting a spell with the good descriptor, the result is empowered (as per the metamagic feat), and if the spell affects an evil outsider, it also lowers the target's SR by 5.

Against the actual outsider from which it was harvested, these effects double (+4 to Intimidate checks, lowers SR by 10, and spells are maximised), and it can be used as a substitute to knowing the creature's name for magic like planar binding. Squeezing or damaging a bezoar makes the fiend it comes from sickened for 1 round unless they make a DC 25 Fortitude save. There is no maximum range for this effect; even planar boundaries are no hindrance to inflicting it. Destroying the bezoar makes the creature automatically sickened for 1 round for every HD it possesses.

Construction

Bezoars cannot be made although they can be harvested.

BOTTLED MEMORY

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 1,400 gp (recreational), 1,650 gp (informative), 2,000 gp (useful); **Weight** —

Description

Fished from the Lethe or stolen by memory nets, bottled memories can contain just about anything: a first kiss, a moment of triumph, the giddy glee of getting away with murder. The vintage (and cost) of a memory depends entirely on its contents—rare memories or those useful in blackmail or espionage are often worth many times the base value.

Recreational memories are pleasant, diverting, or distinctive events that are relatively common (1,400 gp market value). Informative memories provide lots of detail of events unlikely to be experienced by the majority of people—murder, a coronation, and so on—or feature hard to reach places like the palaces of archangels (1,650 gp market value). Useful memories provide significantly useful information—such as a password, the combination to a safe, or how to disarm a specific trap (at least 2,400 gp market value, frequently more).

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, memory net or a memory of creator's own; **Cost** half market value

CHRONIKER

Aura faint divination; **CL** 5th

Slot head; **Price** 5,400 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

Chronikers are simple devices that resemble oversized pocketwatches. A chroniker perfectly tracks time on two planes. It has a normal clock face but two sets of hands. To set the time to a particular plane, the user merely has to set the hands to the current time while on that plane.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, augury; **Cost** 2,700 gp

CLOAK OF FALLEN FEATHERS

Aura strong abjuration [evil]; **CL** 15th

Slot shoulders; **Price** 136,250 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

Woven from the feathers that dropped from the wings of a falling celestial, this cloak appears perpetually scorched and bloody. It provides four powers to its wearer:

- The cloak offers complete protection from spells and devices that would gather information about its wearer through divination magic, up to and including miracle and wish.
- The cloak contains 10 flight feathers, which can be plucked and touched to a creature in order to cast confusion on them. Only a creature wearing the cloak can identify which feathers these are.
- The cloak's wearer can fall any distance unharmed.
- The cloak's final power consumes it utterly when used: the wearer may plane shift to Hell (arriving in a random realm or layer). The cloak burns away to nothing when used up.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, featherfall, mind blank, plane shift; **Cost** 68,125 gp



DEAD MAN'S EYES

Aura faint necromancy (shadow); **CL** 5th
Slot head; **Price** 1,650 gp; **Weight** —

Description

Dead man's eyes are said to be created whenever Saint Charon handles an offering to the dead. They're named after the coins placed over the eyes of corpses as an offering. They're slowly spreading throughout Creation as a macabre form of information.

Placing the coins over your own eyes allows you to experience the last few moments (30 seconds or so) of a dead soul's life, as seen through their eyes.

Charon's power lingers in the coins another way: a dead or undead creature who freely accepts a gift or payment of dead man's eyes for some service is bound to honor their agreement by a geas/quest.

Construction

Requirements Dead man's eyes are created by St. Charon or powerful aeons.

EGG OF WORLDS

Aura strong evocation; **CL** 16th
Slot —; **Price** 40,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

Torn from the heart of a hundun, an egg of worlds is creative potential incarnate. It can create just about anything: ideas, philosophies and religions, magical items, "mundane" things (like palaces or towering trees), demiplanes, creatures of the reincarnated dead. Any act of creation can be invoked by breaking the egg and unleashing its raw creation (equivalent to a wish), but the results are not always exactly to the user's desires.

Construction

Requirements Eggs of worlds are found in the hearts of hundun.

FAERIE FOOD

Aura faint conjuration and necromancy; **CL** 5th
Slot —; **Price** 938 gp; **Weight** —

Description

Not every edible thing in the Elflands is faerie food, but it's easy to produce and a common and well-known trick among the fey. Fey food typically has a tantalizing smell and mouth-watering appearance, and it tastes as good as it looks. Many victims believe it's the best food they've ever tasted, but the effects are usually far from pleasant.

Faerie food comes in a variety of styles, and a single creation typically has enough food to feed up to 15 people. Even a single bite afflicts the eater with a curse, which typically manifests as charm, geas/quest (usually to serve the fey who provided the feast), deep slumber or baleful polymorph.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, bestow curse, create food, creator must be fey; **Cost** 469gp

HUNDUN BLOOD

Aura strong evocation; **CL** 14th
Slot none; **Price** 4,500 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

A powerful catalyst, hundun blood enhances creative magic of all kinds. If mixed into a potion (a full round action requiring a DC 10 Craft (alchemy) check), it increases all the potions variable effects by 50%. It has a similar power when drunk by spontaneous casters: any spells they cast in the next round are empowered, as per the metamagic feat without any increase in level.

Hundun blood may also have other creative effects, such as ensuring fertility, causing enhanced growth in animals and plants, and automatically stabilizing a dying character if rubbed into their wounds. The GM should arbitrate the results of any experimentation.

Construction

A fresh, intact hundun corpse provides enough blood for 1 vial/HD, which can be consumed raw if fresh enough (within 2d10 minutes), provided the user can stomach it (Fort DC 15).

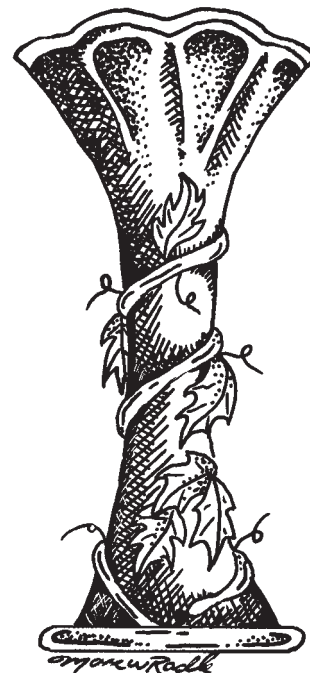
Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, hundun blood; **Cost** 2,250 gp

LIQUID MIRACLE

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd
Slot none; **Price** 4,000 gp; **Weight** —

Description

Liquid miracle is made from distilled amrit (see DRUGS AND POISONS). It fills the user with a sense of connection to the divine. One dose of liquid miracle refreshes one divine spell slot or previously cast divine spell of 1st–2nd level of the user's choice. The spell or slot must be used within 1 round or it becomes useless. If



taken by a non-divine caster, the potion instead invests them with a faith that grants them the benefits of a bless spell.

Although not addictive like pure amrit, liquid miracle has the dangerous side effect of degrading a user's faith. The next time their spell slots refresh naturally, for each dose taken, the user must make a DC 15 Wisdom check or one of their 1st–2nd level slots becomes unavailable for 1 day.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, distilled amrit; **Cost** 2,000 gp

SOUL LAMP

Aura strong necromancy; CL 15th
Slot —; Price 324,000 gp; Weight 2 lb.

Description

These lamps are created to transport or imprison souls. Designs both beautiful and grotesque can be found depending on who created them. Highly prized among soul smugglers, most outsiders firmly believe these items should be kept from the hands of mortals.

Speaking the command word draws the nearby spirit or soul into the lamp, unless it succeeds at a DC 22 Will Save. When occupied, the lamp glows with pale light and a ghostly image of the incumbent's face floats within the glass. The lamp does not affect souls housed in living bodies, but it can draw in outsiders (making their bodies disappear), dead souls such as petitioners, and incorporeal undead. The soul can be freed by the wielder at any time, and it is also released if the lamp is destroyed.

The lamp's wielder may question the spirit as per speak with dead as often as desired. The wielder may also command the spirit to use one of its spells or spell-like abilities (if they are known to the wielder). A total of 9 levels of spell or spell-like ability may be invoked each day.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *speak with dead*, *trap the soul*; **Cost** 162,000 gp

TENEBOUS GLOVES

Aura moderate illusion (shadow); CL 9th
Slot hand; Price 6,000 gp; Weight —

Description

Originally created by the scaithesidhé to allow their shadow servants to interact with material objects, these gloves are also prized by ghosts and similar undead. They allow an incorporeal creature to handle physical objects as if by mage hand. Corporeal creatures who don the gloves may touch, grapple, or punch incorporeal creatures, as if they were wielding a ghost touch weapon.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *mage hand*, *shadow walk*; **Cost** 3,000 gp

SAMPLE REMNANT PEARLS

The Pearl of Jale

Jale is a color no longer found in the mortal world, and it's exceptionally rare elsewhere. It's been described as somewhat like olive without any trace of green, but also "damply amphibian" and it's said to invoke feelings of grief and loss. The pearl is, of course, jale in color.

- **Grief-Aligned:** Living creatures in the area suffer a –1 morale penalty to all rolls. This is a mind-affecting effect.
- **Jale Terrain:** All terrain features become jale in color. Creatures not wearing jale colored clothing stand out, suffering a –4 penalty to Stealth checks.
- **Changed Magic:** All spells cast manifest in shades of jale.

Wielders of the Pearl of Jale can counterspell any prismatic spell (the light becomes jale and harmless except for a slight feeling of loss) and may invoke dancing lights, light, or daylight—all of which are tinted jale.

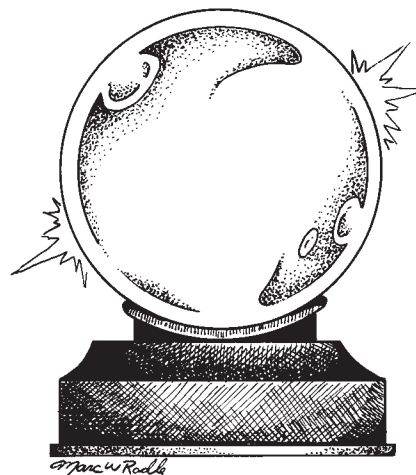
The Pearl of Urt

Urt is the place left over, the forgotten remainder, the loose strand of thread, or the one cog that's never used. Every time something is created, from a wooden spoon to a planet, it leaves a residue or a few scraps that no one ever sees. These form the Plane of Urt.

The holder of the Pearl of Urt can invoke the following planar traits:

- **Mildly Neutral aligned**
- **Highly Morphic:** As a remainder of Creation, Urt is full of potential.
- **Impeded Magic:** Urt is almost entirely empty of elemental magic: spells with the air, earth, fire, or water descriptors are impeded.

Urt's wielder can invoke the following powers: major creation, minor creation. It can also be used as a rod of metamagic to extend a spell (using up a number of spell levels equal to the spell cast).



NEW TEMPLATES

IMAGINARY FRIEND (CR +2)

Natives of Mora, imaginary friends are quite real.

“Imaginary friend” is an acquired template that can be applied to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid creature. An imaginary friend’s quick and rebuild rules are the same.

Rebuild Rules: **Alignment** any good; **Type** fey (augmented); **Senses:** low-light vision; **AC** increase natural armor by +2; **Defensive Abilities** gains DR 10/magic or cold iron, resistance cold 10 and electricity 10; **Ability Scores** +2 Dex, Int, and Wis, +4 Cha; **Skills** +4 racial bonus to Acrobatics, Bluff, Fly, Perception, Sense Motive, and Stealth; **Feats** gains Acrobatic, Alertness, Deceitful, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Persuasive, and Stealthy as bonus feats; **Special Abilities** see below; **Languages** gains Sylvan and Celestial.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Always with You (Su)—All imaginary friends have a permanent telepathic bond to their friend, and they both know each other’s exact location while within the Forest of Dead Dreams.

Long Step (Su)—Imaginary friends can teleport up to 10 ft./HD as a move action. They may do this 5 times/day plus their Charisma modifier.

Tea Party (Sp)—Imaginary friends can conjure a tea party, 2/day. This a magical effect similar to heroes’ feast, save that it only takes 5 minutes, casts remove curse, and heals hp instead of granting temporary hp. (CL equals the imaginary friend’s total HD.)

Vanish (Su)—As a swift action 5/day, an imaginary friend may vanish for 1 round as if it were invisible.

SHE (CR +2)

“She” is an acquired template that can be applied to any female creature. A she’s quick and rebuild rules are the same.

Rebuild Rules: **Alignment** NE; **Type** outsider (augmented); **Senses** gains darkvision 60 ft.; **AC** increase natural armor by +2; **Defensive Abilities** gains DR 10/magic and silver, resistance cold 10 and fire 10, fast healing 4; **Weaknesses** panicked within 30 ft. of laughing child (Will DC 25 reduces to shaken) for duration plus 1d4 rounds, unable to leave Mora; **Special Attacks** aura of fear (cause fear, 10 ft., CL 13th); **Spell-Like Abilities** dread powers 5/day + Cha modifier (can cast (CL 13th) any combination of following: *baleful polymorph*, *bestow curse*, *children of the night* (as per the vampire ability), *cloudkill*, *dominate*, *polymorph any object*); **Ability Scores** +2 Str and Dex, +4 Con, Int, and Cha, –2 Wis; **Skills** gains +4 racial bonus to Bluff, Perception, Sense Motive, and Stealth checks; **Feats** gains Alertness, Diehard, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, and Lightning Reflexes as bonus feats.

NPCs

ARACHNE

This strange creature looks like a beautiful human woman with the legs of a giant spider, emerging from her back. But there are only six such legs instead of eight.

Proud and terrible in her wrath, Arachne's quixotic quest is to replace Ariadne as weaver of fate. Despite her status, she carries herself as an exiled empress: a volatile mix of cunning, courtesy, and rage. She's a dangerous but powerful ally in the Loom or Rusty Gears.

ARACHNE, CR 12

XP 19,200

Female expert 11

CG Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 19, **touch** 18, flat-footed 11 (+8 Dex, +1 natural)

hp 60 (11d8+1d10)

Fort +4, **Ref** +15, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft., **climb** 35 ft.

Melee +2 dagger +22/+17 (1d4+2/19–20/x2)

Ranged dagger +20/+15 (1d4/19–20/x2)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

Constant—*deathwatch*

At Will—*mending*, *make whole*

3/day—*web*

TACTICS

Before Combat Arachne isn't a strong tactician and rarely comes up with a plan before the hostilities begin. She'd rather seduce someone instead of fighting them.

During Combat Arachne prefers to keep some distance between her and her enemies and tries to impede assailants with web. She throws daggers at those who are caught, hoping to discourage them with her deadly precision.

Morale Arachne is a survivor that prefers to flee whenever possible although she never lets down a true friend. Surrender is a perfectly reasonable option if her captors are creatures of honor.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 27, **Con** 10, **Int** 17, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +12 **CMB** +12 **CMD** 30 (42 vs. trip)

Feats Athletic, Combat Reflexes, Fleet, Improved Initiative, Master Craftsman, Skill Focus (Profession (weaver)), Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +18, Climb +19, Diplomacy +19, Heal +15, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +15, Profession (weaver) +36, Stealth +23, Survival +19, Swim +14; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Climb, +4 Survival

Languages Celestial, Common, Elven, Sylvan

Combat Gear +2 dagger, 10 daggers

Other Gear artisan's masterwork tools, *bag of holding* (type I), jewelry and many square yards of silk worth a total of 5,500 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Nimble Fingers and Mind (Ex) Arachne's dexterity is exceptional, and despite her transformation, she has retained this gift from the goddess. Arachne's talent is such that she adds both her Dexterity



and Intelligence bonuses to the following skills: Craft (cloth), Craft (clothing), and Profession (weaver).

Still Human (Ex) Arachne has retained most of her humanity despite the transformation she has endured and thus kept her human racial traits.

BACKGROUND

Arachne is a vain mortal that has defied the goddess Ariadne and paid the price for her insolence. Transformed into a half-human, half-arachnid monstrosity, it's a lesson that Arachne has barely registered, regardless of her a long imprisonment in the Loom and subsequent exile in Rusty Gears.

Motivation & Goals

The overly arrogant Arachne still wants to prove to Ariadne that she's the best weaver that's ever existed, no matter the consequences. In an effort to gather belief and support, she frequently takes herself and her "court" to other planes in search of allies.

Schemes & Plots

Arachne is currently hiding in the Spinning Wheels Quarter where she tries to get an audience with Berthia of Swabia, one of the most important figures of the Plane of Gears and probably the oldest spinning hag alive. Arachne hopes to learn secrets about her art and also to discover everything she can about Ariadne herself, sincerely hoping that this gambit will help her to finally convince the Spinner of Fate of her absolute talent.



CICERONE THE UPFALLEN

"Here I am, poor Cicerone the Upfallen. Neither angel nor devil, nor anything between. By careful balance, I am my own creation. I take nothing from nobody, I owe allegiance to no one, and my soul—if I have one—is in no god's grasp. Can you say the same?"

You might mistake him for an astral deva at first glance but not for long. There are tiny horns budding from his brow, just beneath the halo, and a sinuous tail swishes behind. The wings still have their glorious white feathers however, even if the air around him no longer shimmers with purity and light.

He'll smile and assure that he's no devil but never claims to be virtuous or your friend.

Cicerone the Upfallen, CR 19

Fallen Astral Deva, Bard 6

XP 38,400

N Medium outsider (extraplanar)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +26

Aura aura of balance

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 23 (+4 Dex, +15 natural [+2 deflection against chaos, evil, good, and lawful creatures])

Hp 234 (15d10+6d8+120)

Fort +18, **Ref** +18, **Will** +16; +4 against poison, +2 resistance against chaos, evil, good, and law

Defensive Abilities uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/evil; **Immune** acid, cold, petrification; **Resist** electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., fly 100 ft. (good)

Melee +2 disrupting warhammer +30/+25/+20 (1d8+14/×3 plus stun) or slam +27 (1d8+12)

Bard Spells Known (CL 6th)

2nd (5/day)—*blistering invective* (DC 18), *blood biography* (DC 19), *eagle's splendor*, *suggestion*

1st (6/day)—*adoration*, *anticipate peril*, *beguiling gift* (DC 18), *charm person* (DC 18), *delusional pride* (DC 18)

0—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *lullaby* (DC 16), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *unwitting ally* (DC 16)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th)

At Will—*continual flame*, *detect chaos*, *detect evil*, *detect good*, *detect law*, *dictum* (DC 23), **discern lies** (DC 20), *dispel good*, *dispel magic*, *holy word* (DC 23), *invisibility* (self only), *plane shift* (DC 23), *remove curse*, *remove disease*, *remove fear*, *unholy word* (DC 23), *wave of chaos* (DC 23)

7/day—*cure or cause light wounds*, *see invisibility*

1/day—*banishment* (DC 22), *heal or harm* (DC 22)

TACTICS

Before Combat Cicerone prefers talk to violence, and he engages in wiles and bluff, charm and enthrallment, rather than physical violence.

During Combat Cicerone prefers to inspire others to do his fighting for him. He rarely kills (or saves people) because of the possible repercussions to his alignment.

Morale Cicerone fights only when absolutely necessary and prefers to evade combat as quickly as possible, either by parleying or simply flying away or using plane shift.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 19, **Con** 21, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +19; **CMB** +27; **CMD** 41

Feats Alertness, Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (warhammer); Patronage Feats Aeon Trained, Balancer, Prehensile Tail

Skills Acrobatics +22, Diplomacy +24, Fly +26, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (planes) +31, Knowledge (religion) +28, Perception +26, Perform (Singing) +29, Profession (gambler) +22, Sense Motive +32, Spellcraft +13, Stealth +28, Use Magic Device +19

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; truespeech

SQ bardic abilities, change shape (alter self)

Combat Gear +2 disrupting warhammer, 1d6 other random magic items

Other Gear fine clothes and jewelry; 1d10 hangers on

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Balance (Su) Cicerone's rejection of extreme alignments generates an aura that impedes the attacks of chaotic, evil, good, and lawful creatures. It functions as a magic circle against chaos, evil, good, and law, providing a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 resistance bonus on saving throws to anyone within 20 ft.

Stun (Su) If Cicerone strikes an opponent twice in 1 round with his warhammer, that creature must succeed on a DC 25 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Strength-based.

BACKGROUND

Once an astral deva, Cicerone fell countless centuries ago, lured away from Heaven's grace by excitement and new experiences, a gambler's love of danger, and growing desires that there was more to the

multiverse than fighting the good fight. He didn't fall as far as Hell (which he still holds in contempt) but became a free agent, beholden to none. A rogue in the truest sense of the word.

Motivation & Plots

Cicerone is above all a seeker of experience. New thrills, dangers, treasures, and rewards. His Heaven-given talents allow him to prosper as a performer, but his nature drives him to keep moving on. His pride, and perhaps a trace of his former self, demands he act as sage or guide for those seeking the strange and unusual. He makes a fine ally, but companions should never forget that he's tallying score, weighing good deeds against evil, order against chaos, and eventually he has to balance the books.

Schemes & Plots

Cicerone still revels in travel and planar adventures. Now, however, he travels only where the mood takes him, helping and hindering in equal measure. Planning is certainly not his strong point—he usually becomes involved in others' plots out of chance circumstance or boredom. He is a creature of his own creation and carefully maintains a personal balance between law and chaos, good and evil. He has come to champion neutrality, and the aeons favor him for their unfathomable reasons. In honor of his commitment, they allow him access to their timeless repository of wisdom but, in exchange, send him images that must be acted upon for the greater good of the eternal balance.

LADY LILIAM

A stygian-haired beauty, clad in figure-hugging garments made from the supple hide of a young black dragon.

She looks like a fallen angel or mortal seductress, but she's an instrument of pure vengeance, available for hire to those dead who were wronged during their lifetimes. She follows the code of vendetta with absolute devotion. She does not offer justice, and there's no line she will not cross. She never stops once vengeance is underway.

Lady Liliam, the Black Avenger, CR 14

XP 38,400

Erinyes rogue 5

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, true seeing, Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+7 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

Hp 145 (9d10+5d8+70)

Fort +12, **Ref** +17, **Will** +8

DR 5/good Immune fire, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (good)

Melee +2 longsword +16/+11 (1d8+9/19-20)

Ranged +2 composite longbow (oathbow) +16/+16/+11 (1d8+7/x3) or +19 against a sworn enemy* or rope +18 touch (entangle)

(*see oathbow, *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

Constant—*true seeing*

At Will—*fear* (single target, DC 19), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lb. of objects only), *minor image* (DC 17), *unholy blight* (DC 19)

1/day—*summon* (level 3, 2 bearded devils, 50%)

TACTICS

Before Combat Lady Liliam tries to find a secluded spot to prepare her attack, then hides on a higher position and awaits her prey although not for long.

During Combat The erinyes doesn't give up easily. If pressed, she summons bearded devils. She fights with no regard for honor and fair play.

Morale Lady Liliam has known many forms of imprisonment and servitude, and she doesn't want to experience more. She'll die before being captured, but she backs off from a fight if she can escape to begin the hunt again.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 25, **Con** 21, **Int** 15, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +12 **CMB** +17 **CMD** 34

Feats Combat Reflexes, DodgeB, Far Shot, Manyshot, MobilityB, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run, Skill Focus (Escape Artist)

Skills Acrobatics +24, Bluff +22, Diplomacy +19, Escape Artist +28, Fly +25, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +21, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +21

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal, telepathy 100 ft.

SQ evasion, fast stealth (rogue talent), resiliency (rogue talent), trap sense +1, trapfinding, uncanny dodge

Combat Gear +2 longsword, oathbow (30 arrows, 2 screaming arrows, 5 silvered arrows, 5 sleep arrows)

Other Gear amulet of the planes, black dragon leather armor.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Entangle (Su) Lady Liliam carries a 50-ft.-long rope that entangles opponents of any size, as animate rope spell (CL 16th, DC 20). She can hurl her rope 30 ft. with no range penalty. An erinyes's rope

functions only for the erinyes who made it and no other. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

Manacles' Mistresses' Pupil (Ex) Lady Liliam has spent an undetermined period of time inside The Veil of Chains—a one-of-a-kind brothel located on the Plane of Gears—in order to learn how to escape from all kind of restraints. This has provided her with a +4 circumstance bonus on Escape Artist checks and a +2 circumstance bonus solely on her ranged touch attack using her rope.

BACKGROUND

Some souls that reach the abode of the dead drag with them vows of revenge that transcend even life itself. These vindictive essences seek out ways to accomplish their great or petty vengeance.

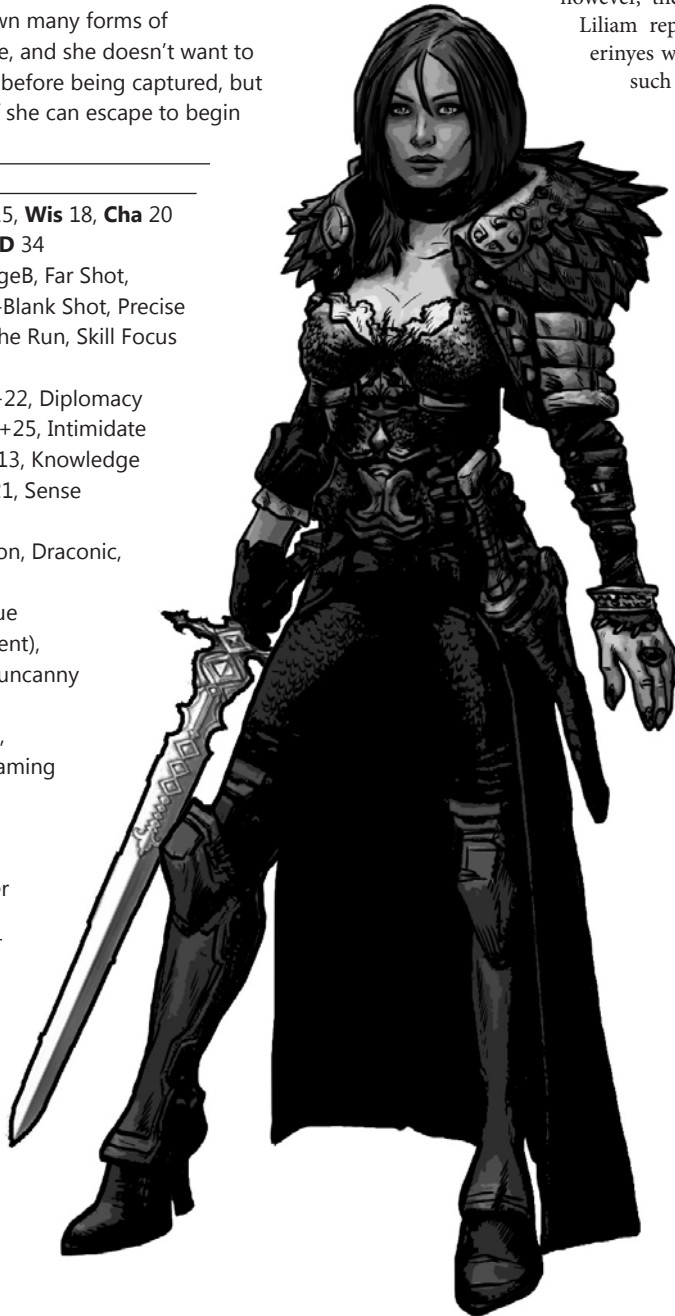
Because they generally can't leave the Underworld, however, they need an agent who can. Lady Liliam represents the perfect surrogate, an erinyes with a troubling eagerness to accept such deeds.

Motivation & Goals

Many believe that the Black Avenger's sole motivation to dole out all these retributions is that she was once denied such satisfaction herself and that she cannot suffer to see others deprived of its bittersweet pleasure. While this rumor isn't far from the truth, the matter is more complex since her voluntarily incarceration within the walls of the Veil of Chains. Kyttons known as the Manacles' Mistresses have rekindled in Liliam an emotional state that she believed she had utterly lost. This long period of imprisonment has awakened in this devil a desire for freedom and free will and a renewed appreciation for hedonism.

Schemes & Plots

Lady Liliam seeks vengeful clients as an excuse to visit other planes, allowing herself leaves of absence from Hell that get longer each time. While she still carries the avenging wishes of her customers, she no longer rejoices in the torture and killing as once she did. If her masters ever discover her change of mood, the Black Avenger will find herself in a lot of trouble.



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