

THUNDERSCAPE™

THE WORLD OF ADEN



THUNDERSCAPE WORLD 06

Mind & Mystery

Psionics and the Occult in Aden

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



THE WORLD OF ADEN ORIGINALLY CREATED BY SHANE LACY HENSLEY

Thunderscape World 6:

MIND & MYSTERY

PSIONICS AND THE OCCULT IN ADEN

Written by Shawn Carman & Chris Koch



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THUNDERSCAPE

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Thunderscape World 6: Mind & Mystery - Psionics and the Occult in Aden

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MIND & MYSTERY

PSIONICS AND THE OCCULT IN ADEN

The force of magic permeates the world of Aden in many, many ways. It is so commonplace that hardly a day goes by when the average citizen does not see some form of magic performed in one way or another, if they are not performing simple folk magic themselves.

PSIONICS IN THE WORLD OF ADEN

Magic has always been an incredibly pervasive force in the world of Aden, and as such the people of that world have come to depend upon it a great deal, rarely giving thought to how it might change them. Magic is, in essence, a fundamental force of nature, as universal as gravity or the cycle of day and night. It can be accessed via arcane or divine methods, with very little difference save in the minds of those who channel it. The nature of psionic power, however, is somewhat less clear.

There are two major schools of thought concerning the nature of psionic ability in the world of Aden, or at least there were prior to the destruction of the Burning Coast and the academies of magic where such things were studied. The first and most pervasive is that the manifestation of psionic powers is simply a different means of accessing the power of magic, different from the arcane methodology of doing so just as the latter is different from the divine ritualistic methods.

Picking & Choosing

This installment of Thunderscape Worlds is intended to permit players and GMs to incorporate as much or as little as they would like of new and exciting material into the world of Aden. In this particular instance, the new material being addressed comes from one of two sources: *Ultimate Psionics*, published by Dreamscarred Press, and *Occult Adventures*, by Paizo Publishing. To facilitate the organization of material, we are separating the text into two broad sections, Psionics and Occult, which refer to the two aforementioned books respectively.

Psionics

The contents of *Ultimate Psionics*, produced by Dreamscarred Press, include numerous unique races and classes that are mechanically suited to the systems included in that work. We at Kyoudai Games believe that Thunderscape is a setting that can and should be enjoyed by everyone, no matter what type of character they wish to play. Our friends at Dreamscarred Press have created a system that is a great deal of fun to play, so we want to make it as easy as possible to utilize it in the world of Aden.

The other, less accepted idea theory is that psionics are a completely separate but equally natural force of nature, as unique from magic as fire is from water. Advocates of this theory point to the radically different forms that psionic manifestation takes when compared to the relatively similar forms of arcane and divine magic as proof that they are separate forces at work. Although this theory has never been completely proven, neither has anyone been able to prove that it is not correct (although its detractors have always been eager to point out that one cannot prove a negative).

Psionic Races

The Known Lands are incredibly vast and diverse, with a great deal of unique peoples and cultures, many of whom (like that naga, the salamanders, and the slurghithians, just to name a few) prefer to remain apart from the greater civilization of Aden. Accordingly, it is entirely possible for entire races to exist secreted away from prying eyes, living out their own lives and their own stories with only occasional interaction with other people. Keeping that in mind, it is possible to incorporate the races of *Ultimate Psionics* in many different ways, including (but not limited to) the following:


✧ **Blues** – Just as the goreaux are an evolutionary offshoot of the goblin race, so too do the blues exist in Aden, in even smaller numbers and of more secretive nature. Blues are exceptionally rare, perhaps no more than a hundred or so in existence in any generation, and take great pains to protect themselves from inquiries into their nature and abilities.

✧ **Dromite** – Insectile in nature, the dromites can be found only in the deepest recesses of the Kyan wilderness. Their origin is unknown, but it is possible that they are a unique caste of the ilithix race, and as such some of them might have broken free from the Brood Mother in the same manner as the ilithix exiles. Alternatively, they may be another race altogether, related to the ilithix by some distant and ancient ancestor, but unique and free from the Brood Mother's influence while still suffering the prejudice of the Kyanites because of their resemblance to their cousins.

✧ **Duergar** – Duergar is the name that the deep dwarves have given themselves in order to distinguish themselves from the usurpers above; they are the larger portion of the dwarf race that remained beneath the surface and that actively hungers for the destruction of the entire surface world.

✧ **Elan** – As an artificially created people, the Elan are similar in many respects to the ferrans. Their origin is unclear, due partially to their extreme rarity, but it is believed that an attempt to recreate the lost ritual that gave rise to that race of beast men might produce a more human-seeming race such as the Elan. This rumor, while completely unsubstantiated, most often ascribes their creation to the Exarches of Le'Ciel; given their focus on perfection, such a goal would not be out of character for those powerful and extremely reclusive individuals.

✧ **Forgeborn** – There are many parallels that can be drawn between the Forgeborn and the golemoids that exist in limited numbers throughout Aden since the Darkfall. Prior to the acceptance of golemization, something that only occurred in the desperate times after the Darkfall, the attempt to create self-aware life via heavily-enchanted golems was a



pursuit many eccentric mages undertook. The Forgeborn are the result of such experiments, although precious few of them survived the destruction of Aramyst.

✧ **Half-giant** – It is often said that the Misari tribesmen of the Misland Republics have the blood of giants in their veins, and that may well be the case. Regardless, use of the half-giant race to represent this distinct subgroup of humanity would be an excellent way to incorporate these rules from *Ultimate Psionics* into the world of Aden. Failing that, it has been established that the giants once held domain over much of the Known Lands, particularly the western reaches of the continent, and half-giants might be all that remain of many of their more powerful bloodlines.

✧ **Maenad** – As a semi-aquatic people, the secretive Maenads may represent another endeavor by some party in Aden's past to arcane-engineer a unique race for one specific purpose or another. Like the ferrans, this may have been a very explosive history that could have resulted in the Maenad seeking isolation for themselves.

✧ **Ophidian** – The ophidians are extremely reclusive and xenophobic, with very few ever choosing to participate in the greater community of the Known Lands. It is believed that they may be a hybrid race between humans and Naga, although there is a competing rumor that they are a semi-stable reptilian offshoot of the ferran race, the reptilian branch having been believed largely extinct since the days following the War of the Beasts.

✧ **Noral** – The Noral deviate considerably from the norm in Aden, and can best be represented as a human-like race that exists in small numbers in some isolated region, perhaps an archipelago off the coastline or even from within the great Skar itself. The Noral's symbiotic relationship with the dreamscars is something that, in the world after the Darkfall, strikes many as being far too similar to the relationship between the corrupted and the Darkfall. Despite that the Noral most likely predate the Darkfall by centuries, the suspicions on the other races will not be easily overcome.

✧ **Xeph** – The Xeph are something of a difficulty to fit into Thunderscape because they are rather indistinct from other races, particularly humans. The best way to incor-

porate them might be as an off-shoot of humanity, possibly one that is geographically isolated or have been exposed to a unique arcane incident that might allow for their abilities and differences from other humans.

Psionic Classes

The various psionic classes detailed in *Ultimate Psionics* represent a wide range of abilities and implementation. Although quite uncommon in the Known Lands, when they do appear, individuals with psychic powers can expect to be treated as follows:

✧ **Aegis** – The manifestation of external armor is clearly one of the most blatant uses of psionic power, and as such, one that is impossible to conceal. Those few aegis who have been known to exist in Aden are fortunate to have such comprehensive protective abilities, because they rarely have allies to stand at their side; the uncertainty that so many have toward those who possess psionic abilities is simply too much for them to overcome.

✧ **Cryptic** – Due to the nature of their abilities as well as the mindset that often accompanies them, the psionists known as cryptics generally prefer to keep out of the public eye as much as possible. The largest known group of cryptics was affiliated with the Seer order up until the Darkfall, when they died alongside their brothers-in-arms. Like the seers, however, some small number of them may have survived that cataclysm and remain in hiding, seeking to thwart the Darkfall at all costs.

✧ **Dread** – The unnatural fear and terror generated by a psionic dread is, too many, a clear marker for the touch of the Darkfall, and in truth there are many similarities between dreads and certain members of the corrupted. There are occasions when dreads themselves become corrupted, and in such cases they are daunting foes indeed, capable of gripping entire settlements in absolute terror.

✧ **Marksmen** – Marksmen of all sorts, both mundane and psionic, are greatly appreciated in Aden for their combat prowess. Anyone skilled enough to take a heavy toll on the nocturnals assaulting any given settlement will be welcomed by its inhabitants, regardless of whether or not they have some questionable practices that may or may not be psionic in nature.

✧ **Psion** – In many ways the most forthright expression of psionic ability, the basic psion is looked upon by those who understand what he is as if he were the most bizarre and eccentric manner of wizard imaginable. Names like "freak" and "lunatic" are often applied to psions, although rarely at such volume as to be overheard by the psion himself. Prior to the Darkfall, the only place one could typically find psions in any significant numbers was in Aramyst, where they were often paid handsome fees by the arcanists of Reggora to study their abilities.

✧ **Psychic Warrior** – If the psion is the quintessential expression of psionics, then the psychic warrior is the embodiment of its most visceral aspect. Psychic warriors are looked upon as strange and eccentric, just as psions are, but are generally more feared than disdained, primarily because of their terrible combat capabilities.

✧ **Soulknife** – Soulknives are perhaps the rarest form of psionist, or perhaps merely more adept at concealing themselves. Soulknives frequently find themselves among the ranks of the greatest thieves and assassins, using their psionic abilities to augment their own natural talents to such an extent that they are invariably among the most talented in their profession. If such individuals can be found in Aden, they would most likely be located in the criminal havens of Rook's Roost or Synthica.

✧ **Tactician** – Tacticians are capable of exercising their abilities on a small scale, typically within a band of adventurers or mercenaries, without readily giving away the nature of their abilities to those who have not yet earned their trust. As a result, those few tacticians who have graced Aden in the past, including a former arbiter of the Church

of All Saints who ascended to a position as the Saint of Warfare upon his death, have never been widely recognized as utilizing psionics at all.

✧ **Vitalist** – Few people understand the nature of a vitalist's abilities, but even fewer particularly care. Quite frankly, vitalists were extremely valuable to any group fortunate enough to work alongside one prior to the Darkfall, and since then they are literally invaluable. No one cares what kind of magic they are using if they can keep others alive on the scale that a vitalist can.

✧ **Wilder** – The raw, primal, emotional fury that a wilder unleashes as part of their psionic portfolio is something that often terrifies those unfortunate enough to witness it. These are rarely individuals capable of fitting into a constrained society, and as such they are most frequently found living among the wilderness. The Rhanate, the High Steppes, and Kyan are the place one could most readily find such individuals, if one were inclined to look and if they were inclined to be found.

Psionic Classes & Firearms

The prevalence of firearms in Aden does not ignore psionic classes. Just as with the core classes, there are certain proficiencies that are extended to them based on the likelihood that such individuals will have encountered and utilized such weapons in the past.

- ✧ Free Firearms Proficiency Feat: Marksman, Psychic Warrior, Tactician
- ✧ Holdout and Pistol Proficiency: Aegis, Cryptic, Dread, Soulnknife
- ✧ Sniper Rifle Proficiency: Marksman
- ✧ No Firearm Proficiency: Psion, Vitalist, Wilder

Psionic Resonance

There are locations in the world of Aden that seem to have a close tie with the manifestation of psionic abilities. The reason for this is unknown, or at least no better understood than why certain areas resonated strongly with arcane or divine magic. Some believe that these locations are an indicator that psychic energy was one much more prevalent throughout the Known Lands, and that it now exists only in a handful of ebbing locations, which explains the relative scarcity of individuals born with psionic abilities. Others posit the opposite, suggesting that while magic has been around for all of recorded history, psychic energy is just now beginning to blossom in full effect, and that its resonance in certain areas is an indication that it will soon begin more aggressively in other locations, leading to more and more psychically endowed individuals born until they are as common as those born with the an affinity for magic. Regardless of the reasons, any character with psionic abilities may well find themselves drawn to such places for one reason or another.

The Blue Ruins

Eastern Aden has a more significant occurrence of ancient ruins than the somewhat more extensively settled nations of the west. The two most notable such locations are the pre-existing foundations of the great cathedral of the Church of All Saints in Carraway, and the ruins from which the Kazan Tovar constructed his stronghold in the city of Bulgrak in the High Steppes. These are far from the only such places, however, and in the central region of the northernmost provinces in the High Steppes, there is an ancient location known as the Blue Ruins, called such for the vaguely luminescent nature of the stones that mark where something massive once stood.

The name of the ruins is somewhat ironic, or perhaps a memory of what the ruins once stood for, because members of the Blue race are supernaturally drawn to this area. The effect seems to radiate for a distance of several hundred miles, so much so that any Blue that finds himself in Carraway or the High Steppes, and even parts of the Rhanate, is likely to find the siren call of the Blue Ruins irresistible. When the diminutive creatures arrive, they linger until nightfall and then fall into a deep, coma-like state. When they awaken, usually the next morning

but occasionally after days of slumber, the siren call is gone and the urge to remain has faded. Most report that they have experienced very vivid, specific dreams, but are unable to recall exactly what the dreams contain. They do not seem troubled by this, however, and claim that they somehow know that they will remember when the time is right, whenever that happens to be.

The Free Thinkers of Columbey

High in the Wall Mountains, a group of academics and political dissenters who call themselves the Free Thinkers of Columbey have created a home where they can live free from the tyranny of Lord Urbane, whom they refer to as a dictator and usurper. They have vowed not to rest until he is dethroned, but of course they have accomplished very little to achieve such a lofty goal. Most of the time, the Free Thinkers devote themselves to the simple subject of survival, and to the pursuit of a wide and unfettered number of academic interests. Perhaps because of this unrestricted emphasis on learning and expanding the boundaries of the mind, or perhaps due to some completely different and as yet unidentified reason, a small number of Free Thinkers have awakened psionic abilities unexpectedly.

In perhaps any other settlement, these individuals would be suspected of cavorting with the Darkfall or perhaps simply manifesting previously unknown sorcerous abilities. Among the Free Thinkers, however, such oddities are a matter of curiosity rather than suspicion, and the subject of psionic abilities has received more study and discussion here than anywhere else in Aden, at least of any location that survived the Darkfall. The Free Thinkers are naturally suspicious of outsiders, always fearing spies sent by the Inquisitors of the Eye, but once they have been convinced that a newcomer means them no harm, they are always keenly interested in any visitor who displays new and undocumented psionic abilities, which they hope to add to their ongoing study of such things as soon as possible.

NEW MECHANICS

Golemind (Psychic Warrior Archetype)

Like many other warriors, there are those with psionic ability who have embraced golemization. These psychic warriors eschew following a warrior's path to instead master the combination of mind and augmented body.

True Golemoid: At first level a Golemind is considered a True Golemoid for the purposes of the wasting, and gains a steam reserve equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ his level + his Wisdom modifier. He develops new implants just as a Golemoid does, as per Table: Shining Knight and Mechanized Ranger Implants in the Thunderscape Campaign Setting. For the purposes of all implants, the Golemind may use his Wisdom modifier in place of his Constitution modifier. This replaces Warrior's Path, Expanded Path, Path Skill, Twisting Path, and Pathweaving.

Mental Spark: At 9th level, a Golemind may expend his psionic focus as a free action to generate 1 steam point. This steam point must be spent on the turn it is generated or it is lost. This replaces Secondary Path.

New Blade Skills (Soulnknife Skills)

Steamreaver Mind Blade: The soulnknife can form her mind blade to replicate a steamreaver weapon, chosen when she takes this blade skill. The soulnknife is proficient with her mind blade in this form and the mind blade functions in all ways as the chosen weapon. As long as she maintains psionic focus, the soulnknife's mind blade is considered powered when in a steamreaver form. The soulnknife may spend power points as if they were steam points to activate the steam ability of her mindblade. This blade skill may be taken multiple times; each time, it allows the soulnknife to form her mind blade to replicate a different steamreaver weapon.

Mindgun: The soulknife can form her mind blade to replicate an Aden firearm (any firearm from a Thunderscape product), chosen when she takes this blade skill. The soulknife is proficient with her mind blade in this form and the mind blade functions in all ways as the chosen weapon. As long as she maintains psionic focus, the soulknife may reload a mind blade in this form as a swift action; otherwise it takes the normal action for a firearm of its type. This blade skill may be taken multiple times; each time, it allows the soulknife to form her mind blade to replicate a different Aden firearm.

THE OCCULT IN THE WORLD OF ADEN

The world of Aden has always been, and presumably always will be, suffused with magic. For the most part, the source of magic is neutral in nature, and is used for good or ill based upon who commands it. There have been occasions throughout history when, for reasons not understood to modern citizens of Aden, the force of magic has become twisted and warped. This is far more likely since the Darkfall, but as if in response to this, there has been an increase in the number of those who are capable of unlocking latent, previously concealed magical energy, either within objects or within themselves. There are some who have suggested that this may be some sort of response by the natural world in an effort to counter the influence of the Darkfall. Assuming that such a theory might be correct, no matter how strange or unlikely that might be, it seems that the imperfect nature of mortal beings has ensured that channeling it ensures it is used both for good and evil, just as other forms of magic always has been.

Occult Classes

The classes from *Occult Adventures* have a feel less that they are harnessing an existing power and more so that they are unlocking something dormant, either within themselves or within an external source.

✧ **Kineticist** – Although classified as magic due to their incredible and obviously supernatural nature, the abilities of a kineticist are not magic as it is conventionally understood, and as such, are often found highly suspicious by the common folk of the Known Lands. Like oracles and, less frequently, witches and sorcerers, kineticists are looked upon with fear that their abilities may in fact be a manifestation of the Darkfall. In some instances, this may be the case! In most, however, it is a spontaneous expression of psychic or occult energy that manifests in certain individuals without apparent rhyme or reason. There are those who wish to better understand this phenomenon, but in post-Darkfall Aden, such concerns must ever take a back seat to mere survival.

✧ **Medium** – Due to the similarities between the medium and thaumaturge classes, it is suitable to just envision the medium as an alternate class of thaumaturge. The two both specialize in channeling the abilities and powers of bygone spirits, and it seems redundant to have both working at cross purposes in the world at the same time.

✧ **Mesmerist** – Although they lack the sheer power commanded by a true psychic, mesmerists tend to be more skilled and specific in their application of power. More so than others, they seem to be the source of their own power, drawing not from some vast, unknowable reserve of arcane power, but solely from the power they unlock within their own minds. Most mesmerists are careful not to draw attention to themselves, because even before the Darkfall, the idea that one's neighbor could be controlling your thoughts was enough for even the most rational citizens of the average settlement to break out the torches and pitchforks.

✧ **Occultist** – Much of Aden's history before the Great War is lost, perhaps forever. There are those who are both interested in its recovery

and possessed of a unique ability to unlock the supernatural potential sealed away in artifacts that herald from those ancient days. Occultists are rare magician-scholars who, unlike the average spellcaster, are capable of utilizing latent arcane energy stored within various objects. Most citizens of the Known Lands do not differentiate between the occultist and the average wizard, although this is mostly because they do not understand how different the two really are.

✧ **Psychic** – Easily the most potent wielder of psychic power, a proper psychic tends to unlock more and more of their power as they age, usually following some kind of violent first manifestation during the adolescent years. In the Known Lands, those who manifest psychic powers on this level tend to have somewhat unstable emotional states, and their powers are often tied to them in one way or another. Because of this, many psychics are feared, and often for good reason.

✧ **Spiritualist** – The intrusion of otherworldly spirits, whether undead, planar, elemental, or whatever their nature, into the mortal realm is historically quite common in the Known Lands. The sort of close, exclusive bond forged between a spiritualist and his phantom, however, is another matter altogether. Such a close and visceral relationship between the two at best sparks suggestions that the spiritualist is haunted (which is not entirely inaccurate), while at worst it can be suggested that the spiritualist consorts with evil spirits or even the Darkfall itself.

Occult Classes & Firearms

The prevalence of firearms in the Known Lands applies equally to those who manifest psychic abilities.

- ✧ No Firearms Proficiency: Kineticist, Psychic
- ✧ Pistol & Holdout Proficiency: Medium, Mesmerist, Spiritualist
- ✧ Free Firearms Proficiency Feat: Occultist

Resonance with the Occult

As previously mentioned, there are locations in the Known Lands that have been suffused with a dark and twisted energy, some of which predate the Darkfall by a very long period of time. Whether these places are linked to that event in some way is something that no one has been able to determine, but which some suspect is an essential step in attempting to understand what the truth behind the Darkfall may be. Regardless, however, for the time being these locations tend to have a link, whether beneficial or malevolently, to those who have learned to unlock the latent power of the mind or world.

The Decayed Tomb

This ancient structure was created by King Tirrian, a legendary figure in the history of Arasteen. Some years after the creation of the Radiant Order, Tirrian and his knights fought against a strange and terrible figure known as the Lord of the Pale. This entity, whose origins are unknown, brought plague and misery to the people of Arasteen, and its defeat came at a terrible cost for Tirrian and his men; many knights perished in the battle. Ultimately, however, their sacrifice allowed King Tirrian to seal the Lord of the Pale away in a stone tomb that was reinforced with every manner of ward and ritual that the Arastinians had at their disposal. For centuries, as far as can be determined, the tomb was successful in its intended purpose. Since the Darkfall, the Lord of the Pale has reappeared, so presumably the event somehow released the entity. Since then, the tomb has been regarded as cursed, and for ample reason, for no one in the village near the tomb was survived the Darkfall.

Even before the Darkfall, however, the area around the tomb was slowly twisted and changed, perhaps by the energy of the Lord of the Pale, or perhaps by some related power source. The area was originally a pleasant grassland with a small lake nearby, but over the course of centuries it became a swamp, and a pervasive sense of unease

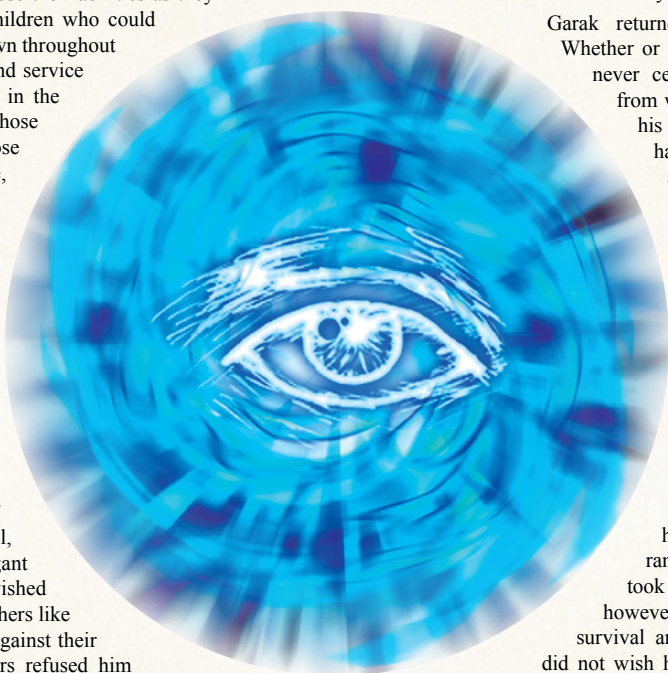
began to permeate the region, making most people avoid it as much as possible. Items taken from the region, whether stones, debris, manufactured goods, or anything else, seem to have a very high degree of latent energy. They are particularly popular with individuals of the occultist class, and there have been a number of psychics and kineticists who hail from the area as well.

The Lost Village

There are countless villages that once graced the land of Aden which have now been eradicated in the decade of violence since the Darkfall. Sadly, most have been forgotten, with the majority of those who dwelled within long since gone themselves. A small number, such as the tragic Longou in Arasteen, are remembered. There is one, however, which is both remembered and forgotten.

The village once stood on an island off the northern coast of the High Steppes, a region known for its harsh climate and unforgiving nature. Despite this, however, the village prospered, and for reasons known to none, a large number of its young children manifested abilities as kineticists. Many would lose their abilities as they grew older, but stories of the children who could command the elements were known throughout the High Steppes, and many found service in the forces of various Kazans in the era prior to the Darkfall. Those whose talents were not as strong, and those whose talents faded with time, remained within the village, and their bloodlines only added to the power of the young kineticists who were born there.

When the Darkfall occurred, the village's island location and the power of its denizens ensured that it survived the cataclysm itself, as well as the many threats that presented themselves in the months and years that followed. It was a young man of promise, a kineticist of great skill, who doomed the village. Arrogant and impatient, the young man wished to be given leadership over the others like him so that he could lead them against their enemies. When the village elders refused him time and time again, he grew angry and bitter. Eventually, he turned to the Darkfall and became corrupted. At his hands, every man woman and child in the village perished, and it was burned to the ground. Less than a dozen villagers were absent from the village during his purge, and they alone survived into the present day. They alone remember the name of their village, but they will not speak it, at least not until the man who murdered their home is brought to justice.



Scouts are heralded as heroes almost universally. Garak Devries was one of the first Thunder Scouts, and has been considered by many of his comrades a leader among their ranks. Even after the trails had all been blazed, Garak continued to roam the Known Lands, fighting nocturnals at every turn and defending the citizens of Aden whenever it became necessary. His fame grew, and continued to grow up until the moment of his death.

Garak was in the High Steppes, fighting against a sorcerer with strange, ectoplasmic abilities that had allowed him to terrorize a few small villages that the Grand Kazan did not care enough to protect. The battle was a lengthy one, and it took every trick that Garak knew to overcome his foe, but eventually he did. In a desperate, determined move, Garak crashed his beloved and highly customized thunder cycle into the sorcerer, killing the villain and destroying the vehicle in a fiery explosion, which mortally wounded Garak as well. As he lay dying, covered in arcanelly suffused ectoplasm amid the burning remnants of his vehicle, Garak lamented that he would die before he had finished "his ride."

Death was remarkably brief.

Garak returned to consciousness at dawn.

Whether or not it was the next dawn he was never certain, but nothing had changed from when he had blacked out. Parts of his flesh were burned away, leaving half of his face gaunt and almost skeletal. The ectoplasm that the sorcerer had wielded had seeped into his skin, changing him. He found that he could no longer utilize magic, but his skills had not changed. Garak knew his way around the wilderness without difficulty. By the time he had managed to return to civilization, he was healed, or as healed as he could be given the extent of his physical injury. Fortunately the village he reached first was one of the ones he had saved from the sorcerer's rampage, and some of the villagers took him in as gratitude. Others, however, were highly suspicious of his survival and, being intensely superstitious, did not wish him to stay. After a week's time, a group of angry villagers assembled and prepared to remove him from the village, or perhaps from life itself.

Garak confronted his would-be-attackers, and in a fit of rage, ectoplasm poured from his body and formed an exact replica of the thunder cycle that he had sacrificed to destroy the sorcerer some time previously. Whether the villager or Garak was more surprised, no one could say for certain, but Garak used his new vehicle to affect his escape from the area without need for further violence.

Since his death and rebirth, Garak has remained an active combatant in the war against the Darkfall, the nocturnals, and those who have embraced it as its corrupted agents. He is not the same, however. Once gregarious, bombastic, and always quick to make a joke at the expense of his enemies, Garak is now dour, uncompromising, and ruthless in combat. Those who knew him before find very little of the man they once knew in the Garak who returned, and there are those who believe that he may not, in fact, be the same man. If any of them bothered to ask him, Garak would likely agree.

Garak's most obvious ability, one that he believes may be completely unique (and he may be correct) is his ability to manifest the memory of his beloved thunder cycle out of arcanelly charged ectoplasm that suffuses his physical being. He is capable of manifesting other forms of vehicles, and each time he manifests it, he can alter its equipment and abilities to suit the circumstances.

Personage of Note

Individuals touched by energies that they cannot explain or control, and which have changed them forever, are sadly more common since the Darkfall occurred. Most can be represented by use of the fallen class, but the occult classes from *Occult Adventures* can also represent such individuals.

Garak Half-Dead

The Thunder Scouts are a hardy and well known group, famous throughout the Known Lands for forging the Thunder Trail. The formal group is much smaller than the number of people with comparable training who claim membership, mostly because the original Thunder

Garak Half-Dead

Male goreaux thunder scout (cursed pilot) 8 - CR 7

CG Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; Senses darkvision; Perception +13

Defense

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 armor)

hp 54 (8d8+16+2)

Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +7

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 longsword +9/+4 (1d6+1)

Ranged +1 wheellock pistol +12/+7 (1d8+2)

Statistics

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 8

Base Atk +8/+3; CMB +9; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Point Blank Shot

Traits Folk Magic (*mend*), Ruffian

Skills Craft (Machinery) +12, Disable Device +8, Knowledge (Engineering) +12, Knowledge (Local) +12, Perception +13, Ride +8, Stealth +14, Survival +13

Languages Eastern Common, Lowland, Western Common

SQ expert handling, pilot training, scout's mobility, scout techniques (gear sense, hardheaded, ramming speed, vehicular agility), spectral vehicle

Equipment +1 longsword, +1 wheellock pistol, masterwork scale mail, ranger's kit, two *potions of cure serious wounds*

NEW MECHANICS

Cursed Pilot (Thunder Scout Archetype)

Burdened by massive exposure to ectoplasm, the cursed pilot has no need of external vehicles, because he can summon a ghostly vehicle of his own that manifests from the otherworldly stuff.

Spectral Vehicle: As a full round action, the cursed pilot can disgorge a massive amount of ectoplasm from his flesh, his eyes, his mouth. This ectoplasm instantly takes the form of a basic vehicle, which is solid if slightly transparent and clearly otherworldly in appearance. This counts as a signature vehicle for all abilities that specifically mention a signature vehicle. Each time the spectral vehicle manifests, the thunder scout may choose which bonus features it may include, which may be from any bonus features normally available to the thunder scout. This ability replaces Signature Vehicle (including additional vehicles gained at higher levels) and the thunder scout's spellcasting ability.

Advanced Spectral Vehicle: Beginning at 11th level, the thunder scout may choose for his spectral vehicle to manifest as an advanced vehicle rather than merely a basic vehicle. This replaces Advanced Vehicle.

Superior Spectral Vehicle: Beginning at 17th level, the thunder scout may choose for his spectral vehicle to manifest as a superior vehicle rather than a basic or advanced vehicle. This replaces Superior Vehicle.

Corrupted Blast (Kineticist)

Some gain their powers from allying with the Darkfall. In the case of the fallen or certain sorcerer bloodlines, the result of this unholy pact can be immediately obvious. In the case of others, it can be more primal and immediate. Those who are granted power by the Darkfall manifest it in strange ways, and some display abilities similar to kineticists.

Element - Corruption: This option is similar to aether for kineticists in many ways, and uses the same list of wild talents. Kineticists who use corruption are simply called corrupted (which is also true from the standpoint of their relationship with the Darkfall). All kineticist class effects used by a character with corruption as their element have a sinister, black affect and generate a sense of unease in anyone who witnesses them, much less is targeted by them. The class skills that a kineticist gains by selecting corruption are Bluff and Stealth (in place of Knowledge: Engineering and Sleight of Hand for aether).

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