

The logo for 'Obsidian Apocalypse' is centered on the page. The word 'OBSIDIAN' is written in a large, bold, red serif font with a white outline and a slight glow. The letter 'O' is replaced by a red circle with a white cross inside. Below 'OBSIDIAN', the word 'APOCALYPSE' is written in a smaller, red, blocky font with a white outline and a slight glow. The letter 'O' in 'APOCALYPSE' is also replaced by a red circle with a white cross inside. The entire logo is set against a dark background with a repeating pattern of light gray, ornate floral and scrollwork designs.

OBSIDIAN
APOCALYPSE

THE WORLD OF ABADDON

CHAPTER



THE WORLD OF ABADDON



100 YEARS AGO THE HEAVENS CRY OUT

From out of the dark and forbidding heavens hurtles a great meteor, black as night itself; it carves through Abaddon's atmosphere, calves into massive sections and rains down upon the world in great shards. It obliterates cities, shatters the living rock, sends tidal waves swamping over islands and drowns the coasts, ignites volcanoes, and sets the ground quaking.

Eight in ten or more of the sentient population of Abaddon are killed in moments. No sorcery, no prayer, no force of arms, nor cunning with the builder's craft can stand against the destruction. Those who survive find themselves in the ruins of civilization, surrounded by the corpses of their nations, overwhelmed by death, and living beneath a soot-black sky.

Their suffering does not end there. The meteor was a black, hellish thing, infused with vast amounts of necrotic energy. The survivors witness in horror as the power of the meteor's fragments and its dust wakes the dead. Few of the remaining cities survive the onslaught of their own deceased.

The deaths, the trauma, the spiritual and necromantic energy, all released at once, change something fundamental on Abaddon. A rarity and a curiosity before the cataclysm, psionic abilities start to manifest amongst the survivors and those few children born of these years, apparently as a reaction to the failings of magic and prayer. It is a sea-change of the mind, a singular gift that permits a few to survive.

PANDEMIC OF ASH

Particles of the obliterated meteor, combined with volcanic ash, vaporized water, and the miasma rising from the charnel piles of the deceased create a great ash fall that comes down all over Abaddon. No region of the world is spared from this blanket of greasy soot. Within it come varied necromantic plagues, infused with horrible persistence and beyond all the healing magics yet known. These diseases cut a swathe through the surviving plants, animals and people and what they do not kill are often changed, made strange, and adapted to this dark and death-ruled world.

COLD BLACK WINTER

The Pandemic of Ash fills the sky with dust and smoke that still persists to this day. While today the sky is a perpetual twilight, a dim gloaming, a gray-black cloud that blocks out sun and stars and moon, at its inception it looms as black as night, and the warmth of Abaddon's sun can barely penetrate it. In its wake, a great winter falls and the glaciers march from the poles, swallowing up lands that have already passed into legend, slaying the great forests and jungles and reducing them to frozen rot. Crops do not grow, animals cannot graze and only

magic and alchemy keeps the huddled survivors alive in their ruins and caves. A century later, that cold is abating, though with terrible slowness.

THE NIGHTWALL FALLS

Though few if any comprehend how or why, rarely the necromantic and psionic energy suspended in Abaddon's atmosphere blends and creates storms of energy that ground out into Abaddon's surface at random. These events are known as 'Nightwall' and when the energy falls, like a necrotic aurora borealis, those caught within it are empowered psychically and charged with negative energy, strengthening the undead while they stand within its unearthly glow. Nightwall events persist today, but at the time immediately following the cataclysm the energy was stronger. Survivors recall that over much of the land the Nightwall was all but permanent, a golden age for the undead and for the power of the mind.

DEATH WALKS

It is in the Tomb Cities of the Shaan that the first great undead empire arises from the ashes. The great warrior-kings of the past wake with their servants and warriors and open the sealed portals of their necropolis, united under the banner of the Shaan's greatest king, the mummy Asi Magnor. He rips through the surviving living Shaan and the shambling hordes of directionless undead the cataclysm had birthed to create his own empire of the damned in the aftermath. Ruthless and brutal, he seems the natural inheritor of a dead world.

75 YEARS AGO

THE DYING WORLD

After the impact of the meteor, the world is at first glance dead or dying and very few spots of true life persist in what seems like a seething cauldron of unlife. There are still living folk yet, hidden away in the few surviving cities, towns and villages, huddled in caves, even hiding in vaults deep underground. To these secret people the first generation of post-cataclysm children are born and, perhaps in compensation for all the deaths that have occurred, and are occurring, families are large and fecund – and begun in youth. Out of those that do survive childhood many more than usual manifest psychic or magical abilities. Despite this, things continue to worsen, slowly now rather than disastrously and abruptly, and these tiny communities must weather not only the scant resources and many dangers of their new world but also the apparent futility of their struggle.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The worst effects of the Cold Black Winter have begun to ease and a little warmth is returning to Abaddon. The icecaps cease their advance and hold steady, but they have swallowed up much of the sea and much of the moisture from the air. Abaddon is now a colder, drier place than it has been for tens of thousands of years, a place of frozen deserts and permafrost, of ashen dunes where the only heat comes from the great cracks in the earth, the volcanoes and the few unshrouded places that

THE CATACLYSM

The fall of the meteor is known by many names, as is the meteor itself and its remnant fragments. Most common of these names is "the Cataclysm," but different races and peoples have their own terms, such as Night Fall, The Rising, The End of Times and The Blackness. The meteor itself is frequently nameless, talking of it being widely considered bad luck as though it might call another, though a few call it The Father of Death, Godshatter, Fallen Sky and The Omenstone.

NECROMANTIC DISEASE

Even today the Pandemic of Ash is not yet over. Wanderers in the wastes or those who happen upon fragments of the meteor may find themselves infected with strange new diseases, bringing them back to civilization as short-lived plagues before they burn themselves out. Some of these infections are even rumored to be intelligent and to be able to infect the dead, or even the inanimate rock itself.

THE DEATH OF THE FORESTS

The jungles and forests of Abaddon are all but destroyed, in a few places here and there magic and sacrifice was able to keep a germ of life alive and seeds have drifted in from other planes but even so there is little but rot where once the great woods rose and the jungle canopies made the sky dark and green. Famine is only ever a hair's breadth away and the only reliable sources of sustenance are magic, or aphotosynthetic fungi.

CELESTIALS & FIENDS

Celestials and fiends alike have been trapped on Abaddon in large numbers following the cataclysm. While opposing forces they find themselves with a common resentment over their entrapment and common enemies in the undead who regard both as dangerous wild cards – though angels more than fiends. Both have been forced to settle and have interbred with the mortal populace, or even each other.

THE SHAAN

The Shaan people were a great empire long before the cataclysm, but they were an empire that had fallen into decline. Renowned as philosophers, artists and alchemists. their warlike past was long forgotten until the legions of old rose from the tomb cities after the cataclysm. There is nothing left now of the Shaan save empty tombs and some dimly remembered philosophies of calm and detachment that seem to have little to no application on Abaddon today.

CHAINS OR DEATH?

It may seem that there is little choice between slavery and death but no freedom can be enjoyed if one is dead. Many of Abaddon's people have a pragmatic and fatalistic mindset and slavery is considered better than death. In the domains of a few undead lords favored slaves are all but free, save for the ability to leave, and in others some are pampered, like pets or prized possessions. Slavery wears many faces though it is always a constriction upon one's freedom.

Abaddon's sun can reach and heat. The dust and smoke remains in the atmosphere, sustained and held aloft by the erupting volcanoes and the smoke pouring from the cracks in the crust, resulting in a perpetual twilight that will last centuries.

TRAPPED

New people and beings begin to arrive on Abaddon and are unable to leave. The necromantic and psionic energy infusing the planet, combined with the souls of the dead, act as a vast trap allowing entities to enter Abaddon, but never to leave. Travelling adventurers, angels, spirits, demons and elementals, and planar beings of all kinds, are trapped on Abaddon like insects in a jar and are forced to try and make a new life and place for themselves on the shattered world.

LIFE PERSISTS

Living survivors and their children begin to emerge, to try to found new settlements on the surface and to pick over the ruins of the lost cities for anything that can help them rebuild and live on. News of other survivors comes as a welcome surprise, but these fragile settlements are easy prey for the undead armies.

THE HUNGER

With so many undead in the world and so few mortals to feed upon, the different undead factions begin to battle one another over the spoils and their hunting grounds. Asi Magnor draws perhaps a third of the known world beneath his sway when his first real challenger appears: a vampire named Calix Sabinus. Sabinus thwarts one of Asi Magnor's armies at the Battle of Black Crescent and defies the mummy's imperial ambitions, uniting many lesser undead powers under his banner, against the emperor.

THE ANGRIEST ANGEL

A celestial angel, known as Zebadiah, arrives and is trapped upon Abaddon. An agent of Law and a servant of the gods of light on another plane, Zebadiah is appalled and horrified by what he finds on Abaddon and begins to formulate a plan to change things. Unnoticed by the warring undead powers, he moves amongst the living, learning and scheming to make a better future.

50 YEARS AGO WARS OF THE DEAD

The decades of wars of the undead consumed many years, many lives, and many unives. The great factions clash with one another and their constant demand for new troops and new sustenance makes any living survivors the most valuable resource for either side. 'Farms' are set up by the more canny undead to raise flesh to feed and renew their armies and many fledgling survivor communities are simply swallowed up into the unliving empires. Foul experiments and punishments intended to control the populations, or make self-sufficient spawn lead to the first true instances of Harrowed being born, half-dead abominations that could not exist on any other world.

These atrocities become seemingly mundane hardships of war poured on top of the daily struggle for mere survival.

THE CHANGE

Losing ground against a renewed assault by Asi Magnor, Calix Sabinus switches to defensive tactics of war by attrition, and spends his empire's looted treasure to pay plane-trapped mercenaries to fight in his stead. Meanwhile he frenziedly studies lost, forgotten, and forbidden arts. Finally empowering himself, he transcends the vampiric to become a lich. His power renewed, and his armies rebuilt, he goes back on the offensive and with his new-found power appears to be virtually unstoppable.

THE CHILDREN OF ZEBADIAH

While the undead powers continue to war with one another, Zebadiah discovers and unites other stranded celestials. They move in secret amongst the mortal populace, fathering hundreds of children upon mortal women and taking mortal seed to their own bodies in order to birth new young infused with their angelic power. These children, called Exalted, are destined to become protectors and foci of hope for the living survivors, though fear and resentments surround many of these pregnancies.

BATTLE OF THE DEAD

Asi Magnor's legions and Calix Sabinus' army of mercenaries, personal spawn and alliances of lesser undead clash repeatedly throughout Abaddon. Both the undead emperor and the vampiric lich lord lend their strength personally in many of these battles. The struggle is epic, but Calix Sabinus' adaptability and cunning wins the day in most of these confrontations. Some surviving living communities aid Sabinus, enslavement being considered a better prospect than death at the hands of Asi Magnor's ravaging hordes. Asi Magnor is slowly, but surely, beaten back to the gates of the Shaan necropolis.

OF GODS AND DEVILS

Taking his opportunity following the great battle at the gates of Asi Magnor's necropolis, Zebadiah and a wing of celestials sweep in, hoping to strike down Calix Sabinus. In the mighty battle many of Zebadiah's cohort are destroyed. Calix is severely wounded but Zebadiah is defeated and brought low. His broken body is used as a battle standard by Calix Sabinus' mortal mercenaries for this last great battle. Calix banishes the angel to live, forever, beyond his lands in the wilderness, binding his command with great magics and consigning Zebadiah to an eternity as a mere observer.

SABINUS' TRIUMPH

With Zebadiah's broken and tortured form as a battle standard, Calix Sabinus' mortal mercenaries penetrate Asi Magnor's lines as a hot knife will cut through butter, the undead falling before the angel's radiance as a candle melts before a flame. Following this spearhead Calix Sabinus' forces overwhelm Asi Magnor's battle lines and the undead emperor is cut down,



burned and scattered to the winds. Calix Sabinus is now the uncontested ruler of the known world.

BLOOD AS FLESH

Destroyed in the necromantic inferno of the cataclysm, beings called the Khymer finally learn to overcome their bodiless state and begin to appear, walking the land in their old bodies, a source of consternation to undead and mortal alike. Their cities are considered dead, their people destroyed, but now they come, remembering the past, and seeking relics and knowledge from before the cataclysm to make themselves whole.

THE RETURN OF LIFE

So much undead strength has been spent in the wars that mortal settlements freely colonize Abaddon's wastes. The living occupy some of the old ruins and the unmolested towns and cities begin to grow. Birth rates are still high and the arrival of wanderers from the other planes often forms the nucleus around which a new settlement can grow. True to his word, Calix Sabinus offers living slavery to the human settlements under his sway but it will take some time before his armies can renew themselves and reassert his authority over his demesne.

10 YEARS AGO

LIFE IN CHAINS

In the decades following the war Calix Sabinus imposes his dominion over his lands, placing virtually every mortal settlement in chains and servitude to an undead lord, their pyrrhic reward for their loyal wartime service. His vassal lords squabble with each other over crumbs from Calix Sabinus' table and take a variety of different approaches to the mortals

under their care: from cruel tyrants to callous indifference, even treating them patronizingly as pets. People continue to struggle as they have since the cataclysm, but despite the depredations of their lords the mortal population continues to grow and grow as their rulers and superiors fight and posture.

DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

The mortal mercenaries who fought for Calix Sabinus have not won their freedom but they have won some security for themselves and their families. Where Asi Magnor would simply have had them killed, eaten or made into undead for his armies, Calix Sabinus and his allies are more interested in 'farming'. Some are still taken and suffer horrible ends, but most are simply slaves, supplying their toil and blood, and the occasional person is selected as a tithe in exchange for safety, security and protection. In the dire circumstances of Abaddon this does not seem such a terrible deal to strike.

RISE OF THE EXALTED

The Exalted are now to be found all across Abaddon, seeded by Zebadiah and his angels and still brought into being by those celestials who escaped massacre at the hands of Calix Sabinus. Later generations of Exalted, fathered or mothered by other Exalted, are now being born and while they never gather in great numbers, the presence of these light souls is a comfort to the enslaved populace. Bands of Exalted and their allies begin to prey upon the slavers and trade caravans of the undead lords in acts of unprecedented open defiance.

OUT OF THE WILDS

From the deep wilds, the Lykians, previously little but a rumor, make themselves felt; traveling as traders, hiring on as merce-



naries, and preying upon unwary travelers. Perhaps they have always existed, hidden as lycanthrope tribes, but with the cataclysm they have come into their own, both unable to hide and lacking any need to hide any longer, as they are uniquely well suited to life on Abaddon and surviving. So successful are they that they have swelled in numbers and have been forced out of the deep wilds and the frigid deserts into contact with civilization – such as it is.

THE HARROWED GHETTOS

As the towns and cities have settled, and as the undead lords have taken their seats, many have found themselves ‘diversions’ amongst the mortal populace or and their undead troops have acted like all occupying armies, with or without official sanction. Some lords have punished their serfs with foul visitations for both true and imagined slights or rebellions. This has led to an explosion of Harrowed, ‘royal’ bastards and the foundling children of undead rule. This glut has come of age. Neither fully mortal nor fully dead, they have founded their own communities in the undead cities and towns, seeking a place for themselves and causing trouble as they do so.

THE SLAVE TRADE

The undead lords trade with each other the one commodity that they all really need, mortals. With no need for ordinary food or the staples of many other forms of trade, living people have become the cattle of Abaddon. Skilled, strong, or merely fertile, slaves are the stock that the lords vie for, buying and selling, even selling the future born before they wail their first cry, and using their slaves as a basis for currency. Slaver

caravans crisscross the wastes from settlement to settlement, transporting the life blood of the trade, and slaving parties, both undead and mortal, scour the wastes searching for bands of survivors they can turn in for a reward.

THE PETTY WARS

Calix Sabinus’ alliance was never the strongest and without the common enemy of Asi Magnor to unite them the petty undead lords have turned upon each other. Open warfare has not yet erupted, but there are constant clashes and deadly intrigues between the various powers. For whatever reason, Calix Sabinus has not seen fit to put a stop to this and some suggest that he may even be behind them. Certainly, all the infighting prevents any minor undead lord from uniting his peers and challenging Calix Sabinus’ position. These pointless clashes, along with gladiatorial contests between the slave champions of different lords, do provide a way in which a slave can earn the status of ‘Chainless,’ a true free man, one of very few in this benighted world.

New

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

With the undead lords concentrating on their infighting, and the withdrawal of Calix Sabinus into the lofty seclusion of imperial rule, the time has come for the mortals to reassert themselves over the unnatural rule of the damned. Generations after the cataclysm, the children of the new age do not suffer from nightmares of those fateful years, nor the memory of things lost. They dream of what might be and chafe under the

rule of the undead, not content to be safe, but wanting to be free. Rebellions are on the rise and the peoples of Abaddon trade stories of the Exalted and other heroes around their night fires, inspired and emboldened by the tales. The ruins of the past hold secrets that many seek to restore their people. But to get to the lore and treasures of the greatest value the undead aristocrats must be toppled, as an obstacle to the reclamation of the living's rightful place as masters of their own destiny.

THE OSIRIAN UPRISING

The Osirians have long been targets for the undead, as ever since the cataclysm they have been a thorn in the side of the undead lords and have retained some of the few free cities to be found on Abaddon. This has not prevented a great many of them falling to the chains of slavers or to the executioner's axe. Their vaults have been invaded and their people dragged out, killed or captured on the whims of the undead lords. The Osirians have, however, known freedom and more than any other people they chafe under the whips and bonds of their undead overseers. This has spilled out as a direct rising against the ghastr lord Kalbna. He has managed to keep the state of affairs largely secret but an army of former slaves, Osirians and others, has taken several settlements in his domain and their numbers swell with every passing week, readying themselves to take on the lord himself.

HOPE'S LIGHT

For the first time in generations the light of Abaddon's sun has been seen to pierce the clouds that blanket the sky. Here and there, now and then, a shaft of light will strike through the darkness, seemingly blinding in its intensity and then the clouds will close and snuff it out once more. Even so, this brief and blinding glimpse of radiance is enough to reignite feelings of hope in people who have all but given up, and strike fear into the cold hearts of those undead who are vulnerable to its light.

FOOTSTEPS OF ZEBADIAH

Zebadiah is barred from Calix Sabinus' lands, but he prowls the edge of his binding like a tiger in a cage, wandering the ashen deserts and meeting with bandits, adventurers, refugees and wanderers in a variety of guises, desperate for news and dispensing wisdom and aid where he can to continue to stir things up within Calix Sabinus' empire. His words and his influence still breach the border, even if he does not.

DISUNITY OF DEATH

Calix Sabinus' alliance is falling apart at the seams. The undead lords cannot keep their ambition or their mutual hatred under wraps for long and their squabbles and skirmishes are rapidly becoming assassinations and battles. They are forming their own alliances outside of Sabinus' hierarchy. Some factions even risk spreading mortal and undead dissent against their emperor's rule. They have become a house divided against itself. Some of the undead lords are even said to have sympathies with the rebels, or at least are willing to ally with the rebellions for some short term gain against their rivals.

ANGRY GHOSTS

The spirits released during the cataclysm were scared, confused, and barely sentient, an outpouring of pain and suffering that would lash out at anything that came close to them, being little more than necromantic energy themselves, free and wildly animating the dead. In the years since the cataclysm however, the character of the dead has changed. Those who die today die with hatred for the lords on their minds, with revenge and cries of freedom on their lips. The ghosts of today are the spirits of vengeance, and are no allies to the lords or to Calix Sabinus. Even the dead themselves are turning against the powers that be.

THE SPIRIT KNIFE

Psionics were virtually unknown before the cataclysm but they did exist. What little tutelage was available for psions came from the secretive order, known as the Spirit Book. With the cataclysm and the rising of so many more psions the Spirit Book, virtually shattered along with every other pre-cataclysm organization, took on new purpose and strength and, as the undead began to extend their rule, became a force against them. The Spirit Book became the Spirit Knife, training and honing psychic warriors, ready for the time that they might be able to strike a blow for freedom against the undead oppressors. This was not only the fulfillment of their modern passion for freedom but also dream of the psions of old, to become a force as strong and as important as magic in the world.

CHANGES TO THE WORLD OF ABADDON

When the Dark Star fell, it brought with it a massive amount of negative energy, intermixed with wild and uncontrolled magical energy born of unknown stars and the emptiness of the void. From the moment it hit the atmosphere, to the second it struck the world, and in the minutes, days and years thereafter, that energy has roiled through the planet and wrought catastrophic changes on the planet, its inhabitants, and even the very magic that permeates the world.

The first consequence of the Cataclysm was the complete disruption of the dimensional field of the planet. Pocket dimensions tied to the world imploded, sucking in massive amounts of wild and negative magic, and annihilating all within. Bags of holding and similar items became conduits for killing blasts of dark, matter-twisting magic as they were ripped asunder.

Teleportation spells and those that naturally or frequently traversed dimensions found themselves transported through a miasma of ripped dimensions, negative energy, and chaotic magic. Teleporters and plane shifters seeking to flee the disaster were ripped apart in transit, and the exit and entry points became holes in space that disgorged massive amounts

of destructive magical power, in many cases destroying the very places and people they were fleeing from and fleeing to.

Lastly, a wave of wild magic spread with the shockwave around the world, disjuncting magical items and spells and making them centers of attraction for magical energies. Those laden down with items and spells of magic, or in magically defended abodes, were ripped apart by explosive wild magic and negative energies as their spells failed or were triggered en masse. In particular, those flying and who thought themselves out of danger found themselves in often very long distance falls even if they survived the destruction of their magic.

The combined effects of this disruption virtually annihilated the most powerful, wealthiest, and most experienced figures on the planet, as they were the locus of the most powerful spells and magical items. The only magical items that survived this shockwave were those buried underground or sealed away in non-magical surroundings. The gutting of magical knowledge and power by the destruction of the magically powerful and their abodes was incredible.

The combination of planar trauma and negative energy temporarily prevented the flow of positive energy, so that healing power was almost completely lost. Uncounted numbers of people perished from wounds that a mere short time before could have been magically healed away. Those attempting to channel such powers found themselves instead fonts of uncontrolled negative energy that killed them and all those nearby when invoked.

The living perished by the tens of millions, and in the dark storm of negative energy, arose by the tens of millions. Even uncontrolled minor undead have an inborn hatred of the living, and the powerful undead now had next to no resistance to their strength. Bodies erupted out of graveyards shorn of their blessed protections, and those slain by cataclysm twitched and rose to their feet, and turned to prey upon the living.

The saviors of the living during this time period were a highly unlikely pairing – the ghouls and their ghastly masters, and the vampires.

Ghasts and vampires realized that their specific hungers required the living to satisfy, or they would simply devolve into maddened desires for blood and flesh that would simply no longer be available. After temporarily exulting in their new power, and their newfound ability to rove free upon a land that had no sun and slaughter and feed as they wished, they soon came to realize the rapidly increasing scarcity of the living, and began to take at first hesitant, then extremely forceful steps to protect their own future.

Other undead, not tied to such corporeal appetites, had no such qualms. Still, the intelligent among them realized that undead do not reproduce themselves, it takes the living to generate more undead. As the monstrous egos of the undead lords and masters began to clash, and their armies to take shape, the idea of replacing fallen minions stirred a pragmatic and ruthless

desire to shepherd living assets, and so living survivors were corralled and rounded up to serve as breeding stock for a new generation of undead.

Free-willed and roving undead possessed of no desire but to hunt the living were themselves hunted down by their undead kin to safeguard the priceless humanoid cattle. Surviving members of the living were gathered up to serve as breeding stock and slaves, or slain and converted into more compliant undead minions if they resisted.

The combination of wild magic and negative energy that swept the world inflicted catastrophic harm on the natural ecology. With the lack of sunlight, the only plant life that survived was that which spontaneously mutated to being able to endure on the energies of death and rot, and fungi which could naturally survive on the decaying plant life around itself. In so doing, many of the plants turned poisonous or inedible to normal creatures...or became predators themselves.

Bodies and spirits were inundated with necromantic and wild magicks, and even sentient creatures began to rapidly change and adapt. Elves, ever part of the environment, changed with uncanny speed to reflect the new world they lived in, or, rarely, managed to defy it and cling to an old, non-existent paradigm. The dwarves fought the change with all their tenacious willpower, and succeeded only in cursing their entire race. Gnomekind's emotional links to the First World were crushed under a tide of negative energy, giving the entire race a black mindset and affinity for the undead. The Halfling race degenerated from a lucky, easy-going race of content folk with ties to the land, into feral, seemingly cursed savages clawing for survival.

Humankind shifted and split. Those shepherded by ghosts and vampires, or clinging defiantly to ancient ways, grew tough and resistant, veritable fountains of life energy their masters found appealing, made the best of cattle. Those who survived under the cares of wights, mummies and other undead were born with affinity for negative energy, and became almost half-undead themselves, dispirited and grim souls slaving away until their masters decided to convert into undead. One free race of Men underwent a mass magical ceremony, forever branding themselves with evolving tattoos to resist the necromantic powers around them.

The tearing and healing of the dimensional tides had several more effects. The first and most noticeable of these was the effect on Summoned and Conjured beings.

As the negative tides of magic settled down, the ravaged dimensional barriers lost their ability to serve as conduits for travel. While passage from outside could be punched through the Obsidian Veil, it proved impassable in the opposite direction. The making of dimensional hidey-holes, teleporting, and similar dimension-afflicting magic decayed into either extremely short durations, risked exposure to wild death ener-

gies prowling the Obsidian Veil, or were sharply limited in distance.

Called creatures brought through the Obsidian Veil found themselves stranded and unable to return home. Their essential natures rapidly and forcibly changed, so that even death or destruction would not send them home, but instead kill them forever. Summoned creatures fared even worse, with their true selves being called and hurled into battle by callous spellcasters, and only the end of the spell returning them to self-control rather than returning to their point of origin.

Those extraplanar beings who survived their first battles, and the almost inevitable turning on their masters or escape, spread rapidly into the wild, and quickly intermixed with the native wildlife, to the point that summoning extraplanar entities as breeding stock and food became a common practice for arcane casters. Such creatures were hardly free of extraplanar influences, which spread to those that consumed them. Outside the Obsidian Veil, spirits and entities marked the world as a black hole that all who responded disappeared into, and could only be gathered in by brutal force.

The new Obsidian Veil has the effect of absolutely barring the divine traffic of souls and prayer, such that no individual deity can see into, hear, or gain power from their followers on the world. The souls of the departed do not pass the Obsidian Veil to other worlds, but either dissipate into the ravaged world-aura of the planet, or are infused with negative energy and returned as the motivating forces for yet more undead. Minions sent inwards to assess the situation were unable to return home, so the divine powers are unsure if anything lives on the world at all.

The chaotic and negative energies of the world have had a temporizing effect on the outsiders brought in here, redefining them less as exemplars of their alignments and into compromises resembling mortal mindsets and views. Knowing they can be slain forever on this world, and there are no more of their kind willingly coming, as well as being severed from the static and extreme influence of their home planes and greater entities thereon, has resulted in behavior unthinkable 'mortal' in term and view from the outsiders trapped here. They, too, have been gathering, herding, recruiting, and capturing mortals, with an eye towards creating progeny that can carry onwards if they themselves are slain...while instinctively furthering the cause of their alignments, and granting them the emotional subsistence they crave.



REAL HEROES DO NOT PRAY FOR AN EASY LIFE,
REAL HEROES PRAY FOR STRENGTH TO ENDURE A DIFFICULT ONE.



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