Otherworldly Invocations Advanced Witch Patrons

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ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

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Introduction

It is not always the case, but it is nonetheless still rather common that most books produced by Necromancers of the Northwest ultimately begin life as an attempt to solve a "problem" with the game as it exists. In the case of this particular book, that "problem" is the fact that the patron mechanic for the witch class, introduced to the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* in the *Advanced Player's Guide*, simply does not live up to the promises that were made by the class's flavor. In essence, a witch's patron is supposed to be this strange, powerful, otherworldly entity that grants her spells as part of some vague pact, much like how medieval European folklore had it that witches gained their powers by making deals with the devil. This is a very cool, resonant, and flavorful idea, but the game mechanics that support it don't really do it justice: most patrons are abstract concepts, rather than actual entities, and are things like "wisdom" or "the moon," and what they actually *do* is provide the witch with a list of bonus spells, one of each spell level, like a sorcerer's bloodline might (except without all the cool powers that a sorcerer gets, and the fact that witches can learn any number of spells, making a handful of extras less exciting).

There's nothing wrong with taking this approach. While it might have been nice to see witch patrons look more like bloodlines as far as having more unique special abilities and a bigger mechanical impact, the fact of the matter is that it was never going to really feel like there as an actual *patron* involved. That would require that the mechanics came with needs and demands, after all, patronage is rarely without a few strings attached, and the complexities of meeting the demands of a diverse group of unknowable extraplanar entities does not make for simple class features. That said, while it may be a bit on the complex side to include as a default part of the class, we know that at Necromancers of the Northwest, a large amount of our audience are advanced gamers who are willing to get a little more complex, if they see something worth getting complex for. We decided that creating witch patrons that actually delivered on the flavorful promise of an otherworldly entity that is actively interested in what its agents do was something that would be worth a little extra effort.

In a way, this book actually got its start quite some time ago, when we were writing *Advanced Arcana III*. One of several appendices in the book was devoted to tackling this issue, and we actually created 5 new witch patrons in that book that work along very similar lines to the ones presented here. We were quite happy with what we came up with, and knew that it was only a matter of time before we came back to "advanced witch patrons." Obviously, that time has come. Hindsight allowed us to make a few tweaks on the formula we use to lay out the patrons, and readers who are familiar with the patrons from *Advanced Arcana III* will find that there is a lot more information on each patron's background, personality, goals, and how a witch goes about interacting with them. We also classified the patrons into three groups based on how much of an impact we wanted them to make mechanically. Some patrons, like Baba Yaga and Thyrvinistar, are relatively hands-off, and will have a much lesser mechanical impact on the witch than patrons like Al'Rajan or Bach-Farajh, which are more demanding, and have many more benefits and drawbacks, giving players a choice as far as how much they want their advanced patron to impact their play experience. Overall, we're quite pleased with the patrons we came up with, and we hope that you will be, too.

Sales Pitch

Elyse pulled the slim black leatherbound book from her satchel again and held it open in one hand as she looked around the corner of the alley in which she was hiding, trying to avoid being seen. Silently, she made a gesture, and words began to appear on the page, magically plucked from her mind.

I have found him. He is here as you said that he would be. I haven't been seen. Shall I strike now?

She glanced nervously around the corner again. Across the dimly-lit cobblestone street, she could still make out the silhouette of the man that she had been following standing in front of the open door of some manor, speaking with one of the residents. The man's name was Jarrel, and she had faced him before. He was a powerful warlock, and a servant of her mistress's greatest enemy, but Elyse was confident that with the benefit of surprise, she wouldn't have any trouble putting an end to him once and for all. She glanced back to the pages of the book, and saw more words appearing just below her own, in a spidery, flowing script. But unlike the line above, these words did not come from Elyse's mind.

No. Not like that. See is after a girl who lives in the house. One has the potential to be a very powerful witch. Win her confidence, and bring her into the fold. Only the minions of the deceiver is of less importance than acquiring the girl.

Elyse grimaced. This was not the first time that she had been instructed to persuade a youth to make a pact with her patron, the mysterious entity known only as The Silent One; the same pact that Elyse herself had made what seemed so very long ago. It wasn't that Elyse didn't believe in the product she was selling, she wouldn't walk away from magic now, even if she thought that The Silent One would let her, but it was never exactly an easy conversation to begin, in the best of times. It took time and effort to gain trust and to learn about the target's dreams and desires. Simply walking up, introducing yourself as a witch, and asking if a young man or woman wanted magic powers rarely ended well. But with a rival party working against her, trying to win the girl's trust so that she would make a pact with his patron instead of Elyse's, the task would be more than twice as hard. And that bastard Jarrel had a head start, too. Elyse wondered privately to herself if this girl was really going to be worth it.

She didn't wonder for long, however, as she noticed the alley's other occupant. Seated languidly on a pile of crates a few feet away from her was a large, black cat, its eyes glowing with an unnatural red light. It stared at her with a snide look of derision plain on its feline features, as it casually licked its fur. Elyse immediately recognized the creature as Jarrel's familiar, and cursed herself for her stupidity, realizing that Jarrel had probably been aware of her the entire time. Frowning, she considered simply incinerating the cat with a spell, but thought better of it, as doing so would almost certainly attract attention from the household, and no doubt Jarrel had already begun poisoning their minds against her. Instead, she stuck her tongue out at the cat with a sulky petulance, all the while reporting back to her patron via the same spell as before.

Jarrel knows I'm here. His familiar is watching me. What now?

Before she could get a reply, however, she was distracted by a loud thunderclap. Looking up, she realized that the sky had filled with dark and ominous-looking clouds, though she could have sworn it was full of stars just minutes ago. There was another thunderclap, and then the clouds parted, and a beam of light shone down onto the street just in front of the manor, where Elyse could now see Jarrel's shocked and dismayed expression as he, too, looked up at the strange disturbance in the sky. *Serves him right*, Elyse thought to herself with a bit of smug satisfaction, before considering how this changed things.

Her suspicions as to the origin of the light were confirmed when a winged angel, bearing a golden trumpet in one hand, began to descend down the shaft of light. Yet another party was apparently interested in claiming this girl as one of their own. Very interested, Elyse corrected herself. The angel would no doubt be a representative of the celestial general, Irashen, and his crusade to foster holy witches. This was not his usual recruiting method, and with as much fanfare as this, the girl must really be something special.

By the time the angel landed, Jarrel and the person he was speaking to, which Elyse could now see was a young girl, probably the one they were after, had come out from the front door to meet it. Though it was clear that the angel was trying to speak softly, its voice still boomed throughout the quiet town's streets.

"SASCHA COVINGTON, THE HEAVENS HAVE NEED OF YOU. I HAVE COME TO OFFER YOU A CHANCE FOR SOMETHING GREATER, TO PROTECT AND SERVE YOUR FELLOW MORTALS."

Damn, thought Elyse, as Jarrel's familiar ran away, much as she suspected Jarrel wanted to do right about now, though the angel had not deigned to acknowledge him, yet. Winning the girl over now would be next to impossible. It wasn't that she wished she had signed on with the angels instead of The Silent One, or anything, but they certainly had a good pitch. Still, she knew that her mistress wouldn't be happy if she simply walked away and conceded, even to an angel. Steeling herself, and placing a ward on her person that would hopefully serve as some small protection should the angel turn hostile, she emerged from the shadows and walkd over to where the angel was continuing to talk to the scared, confused-looking young girl.

Al'Rajan, the Chained Master

When was the last time you felt truly powerful, that you could shape the world by snapping your fingers and exerting your will? Never, I imagine. I can grant you such cosmic powers that you will never be able to understand even a fraction of what you wield. You will be able to reshape the world; to go forth and exert your will upon the very universe itself. You will be the arbiter of others' fates: the one to whom they supplicate and beg for aid. And though the magic itself may involve some small amount of service, when princes and kings fall at your feet and beg for your kindness and generosity, you will truly know who is master.

Description

Al'Rajan appears as a man garbed in loose-fitting robes embroidered with gold. A silver chain hangs around his neck, which bears a pendant that shows a crown wreathed in chains. He has no legs: where they would be, there is instead a cloud of roiling purple smoke. His ocean-blue eyes seem to be fathomless. He has no hair of any kind, and his face is devoid of lines or wrinkles. He holds an ivory pipe between his many sharp, needle-like teeth, and it belches jet-black smoke with every puff. Black lines cross and twist across his purple skin, and looking closer, they appear to form a chain fashioned from black ink and arcane runes that shimmer in the light.

Al'Rajan was once a powerful efreeti, though he was bound by an even more powerful curse, and is now something far more. This curse also serves as the source of much of his power, and ironically his greatest strength is also his greatest weakness: while he has the power to bend reality to his will, that power is mostly limited to fulfilling the wishes of others, and he is unable to refuse wishes that are demanded of him. While anyone who knows the proper words can force him to grant their wish, this usually ends with disastrous results, as Al'Rajan makes a point of doing his best to twist such wishes to bring harm instead of good. Despite this, there is no shortage of people who see only the possibility of quick and easy gain, or who are certain that they shall be the exception to the rule, and outwit the genie. In an effort to escape these endless requests, Al'Rajan tempts mortal witches into accepting some small fraction of his power—and his curse—granting them spellcasting abilities and magical power in exchange for granting wishes on his behalf.

Background

Al'Rajan was an efreet for a very long time before he attained his current status. A proud efreet from a very noble family, he was well known for being far too proud to use his natural efreeti power to grant wishes under any circumstance (a position with which many efreeti sympathize, but which circumstances almost invariably make unrealistic). As time went on, rumors began to spread that the reason that Al'Rajan would not grant wishes was that his magic was more potent and powerful than that of the lesser efreeti, and that he would only deign to grant the greatest of wishes. Much to his annoyance, pilgrims began to come to his palace from around the multiverse seeking his blessings. Unmoved by their pleas, Al'Rajan enslaved those that his palace guards could overpower, and turned away the rest.

One day, an old man came to Al'Rajan's palace with a beautiful young woman. The man introduced himself as Horash, and explained that the woman was his daughter, Niraya, the product of a union between himself and a dryad. As Niraya's mother was immortal, she had never considered the possibility that her daughter might be anything else, and it was breaking the dryad's heart to watch her daughter age, knowing that she would eventually die. Horash explained that Niraya's mother had become depressed and withdrawn, and was near death herself, and begged that Al'Rajan grant his daughter immortality, in order to save both her life, and that of her mother. The efreeti prince decided to order his guards to attack the pair, instead, planning to kill the old man and claim the daughter for his harem.

To his surprise, the old man proved to be a powerful wizard, and he defeated the efreeti's palace guards handily. Rather than press his advantage, however, the old man simply asked again for Al'Rajan to find it in his heart to grant his request. Instead, the efreeti prince called upon a great red dragon that he kept as a pet, ordering it to devour the insolent old man, but, again, the old man's magic protected them, and drove the dragon off. One last time, Horash implored Al'Rajan to grant his wish, but the efreeti's heart was like coal, and so instead he attacked the wizard himself, blinded by pride, and further reasoning that he must be out of spells by now. This went no better for the efreet than the previous conflicts, however.

Bitter at being beaten, Al'Rajan decided to grant the wizard's wish in the most horrible way possible, in order to get revenge. So he agreed to grant the wish, and then proceeded to turn her into living stone, keeping her alive and aware of her surroundings, but completely unable to speak or act. Laughing at his own cleverness, Al'Rajan declared that he would keep the statue as payment for his services.

This was finally too much for Horash, who, despite his power, could not override the power of the noble efreeti's *wish*. Instead, he drew upon all of his remaining power to curse the efreeti, sacrificing himself in the process. His final words turned to iron-black glyphs and sigils in the air, and these wrapped themselves around Al'Rajan, forming a chain of powerful magic that bound him to answer any wish asked of him—no matter what it might be—until he had granted as many wishes as there were grains of sand in all the planes in the multiverse.

No longer properly an efreeti, Al'Rajan was empowered with much greater magic, though he was always a slave to anyone who knew how to summon him, information that spread quickly. Constantly harassed for petty wishes, Al'Rajan's pride suffered, and he vowed that he would never grant a single wish that was not perverted, though this somehow failed to have an impact on the number of mortals summoning him for favors. Eventually, someone wished for magical powers, and Al'Rajan decided to try to foist his curse off onto the poor individual. He wasn't able to rid himself of the curse completely, but he was able to share it, giving the mortal power but also the ability to grant wishes on his behalf. Once Al'Rajan discovered this, he began actively recruiting witches willing to take on part of his duty in exchange for access to his power.

Goals

Al'Rajan continues to rage over the indignity of his condition, and his highest priority is to free himself of his curse. To this end, he makes pacts with would-be witches throughout the multiverse, granting them magical ability in exchange for helping him work off his "debt" of wishes. Each wish that one of his witches grants with his powers is one less wish that Al'Rajan must grant himself, and brings him that much closer to finally being free.

Like most efreeti, Al'Rajan used to be involved in interplanar slave trading, and he still dabbles in that business, and has an enviable network of connections in that business. Al'Rajan keeps a slowly growing collection of rare or unusual slaves, and will often reward those of his agents (witches or otherwise) who will capture and trade or give him rare and unique slaves for his collection.

In the aftermath following Al'Rajan being cursed by Horash, the efreeti prince's palace was flung from the elemental plane of fire, and lost to Al'Rajan, who has spent a great deal of time trying to find it and reclaim all his old possessions, slaves, and the like. The palace also contains Horash's still-petrified daughter, unless it has already been found and looted. Al'Rajan has made it clear that anyone who can find and recover the palace for him will be rewarded handsomely, though considering the nature of the wishes he grants, such promises should be taken with a grain of salt.

Familiar

One result of Al'Rajan's insistence on fulfilling each and every wish in as horrible a way as possible is that he transforms quite a few of his would-be masters into animals: someone who summons him wishing for the power of flight is likely to become a bird, while those wishing for stealth are liable to become cats or mice, and so on. In fact, ever since he began making pacts with witches—and therefore had to provide them with familiars—he has started going out of his way to turn those who demand a wish from him into a familiar that he can pass on. As a result, the familiars granted by the chained master are almost universally poor souls who were punished for making a wish by being transformed into a familiar, and then press-ganged into serving one of Al'Rajan's witches.

These familiars usually hold a deep-seated grudge towards Al'Rajan and the witch he binds them to. They hate their masters, and will often find ways to twist their orders, much the same way that the familiar's own wish was corrupted. Of course, the familiars don't have the raw power of Al'Rajan or his witches, and so they must be careful not to make their rebellions too obvious, lest they suffer punishment (witches who grow fed up with their familiar's antics retain the option to return the familiar to Al'Rajan in exchange for another, more cooperative one. The fate of the returned familiar is rarely pleasant). As a result, Al'Rajan's familiars usually vent their frustrations in minor ways, which do not actually risk the witch's wellbeing, favoring sarcastic remarks, quiet brooding, and obeying the letter of the witch's orders, while subverting their spirit in inconvenient but not critical ways. One thing that Al'Rajan's familiars love to do at inconvenient moments is to loudly announce to passerby that the witch grants free wishes, almost ensuring that she will be mobbed by greedy townsfolk desirous of a wish. If scolded or berated for doing so, the familiar will explain in its best innocent and hurt voice that Al'Rajan gave the familiar to the witch to help her grant wishes, and that's all that it's trying to do.

Familiars granted by Al'Rajan are more-or-less the same as familiars granted by most other patrons, physically speaking, though they can usually be identified by chain markings on its fur, skin, or scales, which resemble those borne by Al'Rajan himself.

Followers

Though there are exceptions, witches in the service of Al'Rajan are usually just as bad as he is when it comes to actually fulfilling wishes, and usually ensure that most of the wishes that they grant end horribly. Even those who are initially excited to be able to grant wishes and do good in the world often become jaded over time, and tire of the constant demands for their aid, and sooner or later nearly all of Al'Rajan's followers deliberately pervert the wishes they grant, though they are not always as clever as Al'Rajan himself in such things. Even "small" wishes aren't immune to this effect: one man might wish his house rid of rats, only to find that a mob of weasels has eaten all the rats and moved in in their place.

Even those rare witches that grant wishes for Al'Rajan in good faith have a distressing tendency for those wishes to "go wrong," however, and produce unintended negative consequences, simply because of the source and nature of the magic. For this reason, the most benevolent of Al'Rajan's agents usually caution those who would ask wishes of them to be very careful, for even the witch herself does not have complete control over the outcome. Followers of Al'Rajan walk a fine line. While they enjoy spreading woe through magical wishes, they do not enjoy being dragged into the everyday problems of people. It's not uncommon for entire villages to flock to the witch and start forming lines once they discover that she must grant their wishes. Even the knowledge that the consequences are often horrific doesn't dissuade everyone, as many yearn for what they cannot have, and secretly believe that they will be able to avoid such consequences. As a result, witches who follow Al'Rajan tend to hide that fact, except at such times that they are actively looking to grant wishes, for witches who avoid granting wishes at all quickly earn the ire of the exefreeti, who does not like giving out magic power "for free."

In addition to being bound to grant any wish put to her, a witch in the service of Al'Rajan is also occasionally required to answer a summons for the chained master himself. When someone attempts to magically summon Al'Rajan to grant a wish, they often receive one of his witches, instead, who are whisked off to answer the summons whether they want to or not. These brief sojourns are generally few and far between, and do not typically require much more than granting the wish in question, but occasionally can turn into the beginning of much larger adventures, and it is not uncommon for a witch's allies to be caught in the summoning effect and dragged along, as well.

Rituals

Rite of Wishing

When someone wishes to have Al'Rajan solve one of his problems, but does not have one of his followers on hand to grant the wish, he must complete this ritual to have Al'Rajan answer. More often than not, it is one of Al'Rajan's followers, not the efreet himself, who answers the call and grants the wish. In order to perform the summoning, the subject must take something that is personally significant to him, bind it in twine, and then wrap it in iron chain. Then, upon a bier built from evergreen boughs and anointed with scented oils, he must burn this bundle. After invoking Al'Rajan's name, either the efreet or an emissary will arrive shortly to grant the user's wish. Because most of Al'Rajan's witches started their career by summoning Al'Rajan and wishing for magical power, this is also how most witches who serve the chained master initially contact him.

Day of the Unbound

On the day before the new year, Al'Rajan and his followers are granted a brief respite from their confines. For this entire day, they do not need grant wishes or answer summons. During this time, Al'Rajan is free to wander and do as he wishes for this day. He usually spends this day creating new business deals with slavers, or searching for his lost palace. Similarly, most of the witch's in Al'Rajan's service devote this day to personal efforts, and refuse to offer service.

Al'Rajan as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Al'Rajan as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Al'Rajan, as well.

Spells: 2nd—beguiling gift^{APG}, 4th—detect thoughts, 6th—bestow curse, 8th—debilitating portent^{UC}, 10th—baleful polymorph, 12th—flesh to stone, 14th—insanity, 16th antipathy, 18th—wish.

Pact Boons

By taking Al'Rajan as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Al'Rajan. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Al'Rajan becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Grant Wishes (Sp): As much a curse as it is a gift, witches who serve Al'Rajan are both empowered, and required, to grant wishes to those who ask them. This requirement only extends to requests for wishes from characters that are specifically asking the witch to use her magic to aid them, and are phrased as either a request or beginning with the words "I wish." If the witch is unable to grant the wish in question by using this ability, or by casting a single spell that she currently has prepared and available to use, then she is not required to grant the wish.

Due to the magic of the curse that the witch shares with Al'Rajan, she is unable to use this ability to grant a wish that benefits her in any way. She cannot use this ability except to fulfill the requests of other individuals. While she can fulfill those requests any way she sees fit that meets the letter of the request, she must do so in a way that does not benefit her directly. If she would benefit from granting a wish in this way (such as by granting a peasant's request to become a knight by making herself the king and then knighting him), then either the wish automatically manifests itself in a way that is not beneficial to her, or she suffers from the effects of a *bestow curse* spell (no save) which cannot be removed until she gives up all benefit that she gained from granting the wish, and suffers an appropriate penance (at GM's discretion). The witch is allowed to "benefit" from granting wishes indirectly (such as by deriving amusement from a cruel twist on a wish, or by granting a harmful wish to an enemy of hers). Witches that abuse this ability consistently may find that punishments grow even more severe than a bestow curse effect, and may even lead to the wishes deliberately turning against her.

Finally, once the witch has granted a character a single wish, she is no longer obligated to grant that character any further wishes. She can still do so, if she wishes, although once she has granted a character three wishes, she cannot use this ability to grant that character's wishes ever again. In order to grant these wishes, the witch can cast any spell from the sorcerer/wizard spell list as a spell-like ability. She cannot cast spells that are of a higher spell level than she is capable of casting normally as a witch. She can (and, if a request is made, must) use this ability any number of times per day, as outlined above.

Additionally, beginning at 9th level, the witch can use *limited wish* once per day in order to fulfill a request, even though she would not normally be able to. The number of times per day she can use *limited wish* to fulfill a request increases by one for every two witch levels she gains beyond 9th. At 13th level, she can use *wish*, instead, though the number of daily uses remains the same. At 17th level she can use *wish* to fulfill a request any number of times per day.

Expanded Magic (Ex): Witches who serve Al'Rajan are able to use a wider variety of magic. At 2nd level, the witch may select a 1st-level spell from the sorcerer/wizard spell list. The witch's familiar immediately learns the chosen spells, and the witch treats those spells as though they were on the witch spell list. At 3rd level, and every two levels thereafter, the witch may select an additional spell from the sorcerer/wizard spell list.

level spell she can cast. The witch's familiar learns that spell, and the witch treats it as though it were on the witch spell list.

Sense Desires (Sp): Witches who serve Al'Rajan for a long time develop the ability to know the innermost desires of those they meet. Beginning at 12th level, the witch can use *detect thoughts* as a spell-like ability at will. The DC for this effect is equal to 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence bonus. Further, while she is using this ability, as a standard action, she can focus on an individual whose thoughts she can read, in order to learn that creature's deepest desires. Depending on the target (and subject to GM discretion), information about a target's deepest desires may be general (such as a desire for "fame," or "respect," or "belonging,"), or very specific (such as a desire to "become the king," or "marry my childhood sweetheart," or "avenge my father's death,"), or somewhere in between. The target himself may or may not be aware of his own desires, but this does not prevent the witch from learning what they are.

Immortal Ascension (Su): Witches who serve Al'Rajan for a very long time take on genie-like characteristics, making them more than mere mortals, and

Sidebar: Selfish Wishes

Adjudicating when and how a witch can benefit from the wishes she grants is not easy. It must be possible for the witch to be able to gain some benefit from her grant wishes ability, if she works at it, but at the same time, if left unchecked, in the hands of some players it will quickly become broken and harmful to the health of the game. Unfortunately, there are a lot of possible scenarios, and it is impossible to create one set of guidelines that truly covers them all. That said, here are some guidelines that can help dictate what is and isn't too self-interested for the witch to be able to do with this ability without suffering consequences.

Trading Wishes: The witch should never be bartering her wishes. This covers both getting payment in exchange for the wish (ie. "I'll grant you a wish if you give me 10,000 gold), and paying others to make certain wishes (ie. "wish for me to be incredibly rich, and I'll give you half,"). The first should rarely be an issue, because once the wish is asked for, it has to be granted, but if it does come up, it automatically counts as a wish that benefits the witch. That said, as long as the witch does not ask for payment, or in any way encourage it, if it is offered freely, she is free to take it.

Unnecessarily Complicated Wishes: These are the most difficult to adjudicate, and largely depend on just how far you feel the witch is reaching, and what effect is has on the campaign. Suppose the witch has a rivalry with the local wizard, and the wizard's apprentice requests that he get a tower of his own, and the witch decides to grant the wish by causing the wizard to die of heart attack, and his apprentice inheriting the tower. Alternatively, suppose she really wants to get rid of the owner of a local merchant's consortium, who also happens to live in a tower, so she arranges for him to die, instead, and for the tower to be available for sale at a price the apprentice can afford. Ultimately, if you try hard enough, nearly *any* wish can be used to justify *any* outcome. Similarly, while the first example would probably be fine if the wizard in question was a minor NPC, it becomes a problem when he's a major villain. Generally speaking, if it seems like the wish could have been granted without directly benefitting the witch, it probably should be, unless the witch's result is very intuitive and seems appropriate.

Wishes in the Party: Perhaps the most dangerous type of wishes is wishes made within the party. This is part of the reason that any given character can only benefit from a specific witch's grant wish ability three times, but even then, party members will often have goals that align with the witch's: if the party is trapped in a flooding room, and one member wishes for the water to go away, it benefits the witch as much as anyone else. Similarly, a wish for the main villain to choke on his food and die serves the party as a whole, including the witch. Generally speaking, these wishes should be considered to be selfish, and either fail or suffer the appropriate penalties, but there may be some exceptions where it's okay, especially if the GM is looking for an excuse to get the party out of a tight spot.

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granting them more powerful bodies which will never age or die of natural causes. While in most ways this is a blessing, it also means that the most powerful of Al'Rajan's servants effectively share their master's curse eternally. At 18th level, the witch's type changes to outsider, and she gains a fly speed equal to her land speed with perfect maneuverability. This transformation also grants a +2 bonus to each of her physical ability scores. A witch who undergoes such a transformation no longer needs to eat, drink, or breathe.

Pact Price

Al'Rajan's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Wish Granter (Su): As described under the grant wishes ability, the witch must grant any wish that is asked of her, if she is able. Additionally, she must make sure that she meets a quota of granted wishes. The witch must grant at least five wishes per week with her grant wishes ability, or else she begins to lose access to her magic. For each wish less than five that she granted in the previous week, her effective caster level is treated as one lower than it actually is. Missed wishes "carry over" to the next week, increasing the amount of wishes she must grant to remove the penalty (*for example, a wish who granted two wishes in a week would have her caster level reduced by 3, and would need to grant eight wishes* the following week. If she granted all eight, then she would no longer suffer any penalty, and if she granted five, she would continue to have the -3 penalty to her caster level, but if she only granted two again, then the following week she would not have a -6 penalty, and would need to grant eleven wishes).

For every -3 penalty to the witch's caster level granted by this ability, she also loses access to her highest-level spell slots (so a witch who could cast g^{th} -level spells who was suffering a -6 penalty to her caster level would not be able to cast any spells higher than τ^{th} -level).

Mark of Al'Rajan (Su): Beginning at 2nd level, a witch in the service of Al'Rajan is marked with eldritch chains that crisscross her skin. Normally, these chains are invisible, but they can be seen with *detect magic*, or any other effect that allows one to see magic auras. Additionally, these markings become visible to normal sight any time that the witch is suffering penalties as a result of not granting enough wishes (see wish granter, below). However they are seen, a successful Knowledge (Arcana) or Knowledge (Planes) check (DC 15) identifies the markings and the fact that the wish is able—and obligated—to grant wishes.

Curse Susceptible (Su): Witches who serve Al'Rajan for an extended time become more susceptible to curses. Beginning at 12th level, a witch in service to Al'Rajan suffers a -4 penalty on all saving throws made to resist curses or hexes.

Genie's Curse (Su): Witches that undergo the transformation into a genie-like immortal state find that it is much easier for mortals to summon them and demand their services. Beginning at 18th level, in addition to being susceptible to planar binding spells, such witches can also be summoned by anyone that completes a special ritual, which requires one hour and a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check to perform. This ritual effectively functions as a specialized version of a *lesser planar binding* spell, except that it can only summon witches with this ability, and there is no Hit Dice limit. If the result of the Knowledge (arcana) check is 25 or higher, then he effect also includes a *magic circle* which traps the witch, and if the result of the Knowledge (arcana) check is 30 or higher, it also includes a dimensional anchor effect, as well. A witch that is successfully summoned into a magic circle is trapped and can be made to perform services, as outlined in lesser planar binding. For more information on lesser planar binding, magic circle, and dimensional anchor, and how they interact, see the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook.

Baba Yaga, The Great Crone

How bold of you to come to me, asking for favors! I don't recall asking for one of your sort! Hmph! I warn you now, if you're wasting my time, I'll gobble you up whole, without another thought. Actually...you do smell rather tasty... perhaps I will anyway. But, if it's magic that you want, I have it, and I'm willing to give it to you...if you think you can earn it.

Description

There have been many depictions of Baba Yaga throughout the centuries, and many of the details vary from telling to telling, but there are usually a few features that remain similar in all reports of the mysterious woman. She almost always takes the guise of a very old woman, bent and stooped, with a great long nose and an ugly, frightening countenance. She is said to be incredibly thin (despite her rather infamous eating habits) and is often described as bony-legged. While this is typically just a poetic way of describing her frail-looking and slender frame, but a handful of those who claim to have seen her insist that this is a literal description, and that there is no flesh on her body below the waist. There are too many sightings of this sort to simply dismiss, though they are still fairly rare amongst reports of Baba Yaga, leading some to speculate that one of the two might refer to an impostor, or that her sometimes-skeletal appearance may have something to do with her diet, and that when she does not consume enough, the flesh falls off her as she transforms into a corpse.

Whatever the case, she is always portrayed as hideously ugly, and frequently supernaturally large. Those who have visited her famous chicken-legged hut and lived to tell the tale frequently report that she is so monstrously huge that she fills the hut all but completely, with her feet crammed into opposite corners, and that she must stoop in order to keep her head from bursting through the ceiling. She is said to travel in a giant mortar, tucked in with her knees practically touching her nose, and propelling herself along the ground with a giant pestle, as though it were an oar. Some reports claim that she can use these objects to fly through the air, as well.

Whatever she looks like, Baba Yaga is a well-known figure in many folklores, albeit a very mysterious one. She has long been associated with witchcraft, and is believed to have once been a mortal witch herself, though few can say for certain. Now, however, she has ascended to some state greater than mortal but less than divine, and is practically a force of nature unto herself. While Baba Yaga is well known in folklore for her penchant for devouring children, what is less known is that she also makes a habit of consuming lesser witches, and it is for this reason that she acts as a patron to would-be practitioners of magic, essentially farming witches for her own nefarious purposes.

Background

No one knows exactly where Baba Yaga came from or how she managed to reach her current state. Theories vary wildly, with some claiming that she was once a fertility goddess or similarly kind matronly deity, who in some way became corrupted, and fell to her current state. Others believe that Baba Yaga is a sort of elemental force, grown from the fear of those that are unknown or different (especially witches), and the resentment of those that were wrongfully persecuted for not fitting in. Most, however, believe what the legends say, that once, long, long ago, Baba Yaga was a powerful but entirely mortal witch, who reached her mythical status by earning it with many famous (and infamous) deeds, which are immortalized in song and story.

Whatever her origin, a determined Baba Yaga is a terrifying and seemingly unstoppable force. Her famous chicken-legged hut, which seems to have a mind all its own, is said not only to be able to walk about and dance, but even to somehow travel between worlds and dimensions, taking its mistress to strange places throughout the multiverse, and distant worlds. In one such world she is said to have conquered an entire nation at the head of a massive army of icy monsters, and handed its rulership over to her daughters. Others claim that she spends much of her time in a dark and twisted swamp in the lands of the fey, where she masquerades as a hag that is, in turn, masquerading as an elderly woman. She commands three riders, a white, a red, and a black, who, according to some myths, are said to have direct control over the movements of the sun and moon, and can change day into night. She is said to be all-knowing and all-seeing, and while this is almost certainly an exaggeration, the fact remains that she is very wise and privy to many occult secrets that even powerful archmages may not know about.

For all her terrible and awesome power, and her cannibalistic tendencies, Baba Yaga is not all bad. Many a questing hero has come to her seeking aid, especially in the form of information, in order to complete their quest. While some of these find that Baba Yaga turns on them and attempts to devour them, most are given what they seek, assuming that they are able to pass the various tests and trials that Baba Yaga almost invariably sets before them. Those that fail are almost always eaten, and their skulls used to adorn the great crone's fence, which is made entirely of bone.

While Baba Yaga has a taste for the flesh of children, she gains little from it besides her enjoyment of the taste and texture. Unbeknownst to many, but whispered secretly by a few, is the fact that Baba Yaga's longevity and power are due, in part at least, to her regular consumption of powerful witches, whose latent magical energies she uses to keep herself alive. The more powerful the witch, the more she gains from devouring their essence. Baba Yaga has numerous methods of ensuring that she keeps a steady supply of witches for her to consume in order to extend her existence, but one of the main ones is acting as a patron: in effect, Baba Yaga plants the seeds of magical power in witches who make pacts with her, then allows them to grow into powerful, fullydeveloped witches, at which point she uses the nature of the pact to devour them. Some of these witches manage to escape her clutches, and some are claimed by the perils of adventure, but all in all Baba Yaga reaps a steady crop of magical energy in this way.

Goals

If Baba Yaga has any particular long-term goals, they are far too mystic and inscrutable for most mortals to be able to follow, and far too well obscured, for the great crone is very protective of her secrets and privacy. Her various actions and travels seem whimsical in nature, and no one can truly guess why she does what she does. She seems to be struck with sudden fits of inspiration, suddenly leaping across worlds to perform strange or terrible deeds without any apparent reason. Underneath it all, though, it is a safe bet that she is far more cunning than she lets on, and that her apparently wild behavior is, in fact, all part of a greater, calculated scheme.

Of course, Baba Yaga has a voracious appetite for witches and their magic, and her first concern is often ensuring that she keeps a steady supply, much the same way that a farmer or hunter thinks first and foremost about putting dinner on his plate. She has various schemes and plans that ensure her a fairly steady stream to consume, however, giving her the leisure to pursue other, more mysterious activities.

Familiars

For the most part, Baba Yaga's familiars are not easily distinguished from the familiars granted by other patrons. She has a tendency towards granting "traditional" familiars associated with witches of folklore, especially black cats and ravens, but she grants familiars of all sorts, when the mood strikes her. Those witches who make their pacts with Baba Yaga in person generally report that she stares at them in intense silence for several minutes, as though viewing their soul, past, and future all at once, before declaring the type of familiar she will grant. Few are foolish or brave enough to request a different type of familiar, and those that do seem to have an equal likelihood of being granted their request with a matronly smile and a "I'm not sure it's wise, but if you're sure it's what you want...", or being shoved into Baba Yaga's oven and devoured.

Baba Yaga's familiars tend to be either unusually fat or unusually scrawny, though there seems to be no particular pattern as to which. Either way, they all have a voracious appetite, and tend to be very lazy, with the exception of occasional bursts of frantic activity. In general, familiars granted by Baba Yaga are fickle with their loyalties, and have been known on many occasions to betray masters who do not treat them overly well in favor of strangers who show them kindness. In some cases, it can take as little as a piece of choice meat or a delicious cookie to turn such a familiar against its master, though masters who ensure that their familiars are well-cared for and have no complaints have little to fear from this. In general, Baba Yaga's familiars are not terribly finicky, and tend to share her pragmatism and general shamelessness, worrying more about what works, and less about whether or not it looks ridiculous doing so.

Followers

The great crone has many followers, which take many different forms, and span many different worlds, and even planes. Entire nations and cultures, scattered throughout the multiverse, live in fear of her, and, in different places, her minions can range from empires openly ruling in her name to secret cults that worship her as a quasi-deity to individual agents or even simply the birds and beasts of the forest.

When it comes to the witches that she serves as a patron to, however, they are not so much her followers as her food. At best, they might be considered apprentices in a very deadly and dangerous profession, but ultimately, the system is designed in order to ensure that the majority of the witches to whom Baba Yaga grants her power wind up serving to sustain her.

There are generally two ways in which a potential witch comes to be able to make a pact with Baba Yaga. The first is fairly simple: the would-be witch learns a certain ritual that allows her to contact the great crone, and then performs it. The nature of the ritual makes it work only for those with as-yet-unharnessed magical potential, ensuring that Baba Yaga is not pestered unnecessarily, and that the ritual cannot be used against her. Once contact is established, if Baba Yaga finds the applicant acceptable, she makes the pact, and the two go their separate ways, for the time being. Otherwise, Baba Yaga ends the communication, and often takes the extra step to drag the failed applicant through a *gate* in order to cook and eat her.

The second way for a witch to make a pact with Baba Yaga is to come across one of the many portals that she has seeded throughout the multiverse for just such a purpose. These can take various forms, such as a particularly strange ring of rocks or trees, or a cave whose mouth resembles a grinning skull or a cruel old woman, but usually take the form of an abandoned and neglected hut, deep in the forest. These portals, much like the ritual to contact Baba Yaga, are designed in such a way that they only function for potential witches who are likely to make pacts with Baba Yaga, and oftentimes they can't even be found except by potential witches, young children, and others that Baba Yaga wouldn't mind dropping in on her, let alone actually used. Of course, Baba Yaga herself, and those who are in her favor, can use these portals freely, creating a network between the various vast and disparate places Baba Yaga claims as her own.

Once a potential witch travels through this portal, she arrives a short walk from Baba Yaga's famous dancing hut (wherever it might be) and must make her way there, past the fence of bone and any scavengers or guardians that might stop her from reaching the great crone. Once she actually meets Baba Yaga, the pact is made in much the same way, though there is a somewhat greater chance that Baba Yaga will decide that she'd rather just eat the applicant now, instead of waiting for her to magically "fatten up."

For her own part, Baba Yaga is surprisingly up-front about her habit of devouring witches. Those who contact her are promptly informed that they had best not be wasting her time, or else she will "gobble you up," and, again, when the pact is actually made, Baba Yaga warns the witch to whom she grants power that if he or she does not prove strong or capable enough, Baba Yaga will devour them. Of course, the exact metrics of what constitutes "strong or capable enough" are not discussed, and it is all but indisputable that Baba Yaga continues to serve as a patron only because so many fail, but it is true that the exceptional witches who are able to avoid or withstand the hidden snares in the contract, are left alone and unmolested by Baba Yaga, who would likely have no trouble tracking them down and making a meal of them. Whether or not this is a reward for proving strong enough, or the cowardice of someone who does not want to pick a fight with someone who might have even a chance of being too strong for her, is up for debate, though, if one is wise, not anywhere that the great crone might hear.

Rituals

Rite of Contact

Those witches who did not accidentally stumble across Baba Yaga's hut via one of her many extradimensional portals typically gain her as a patron by performing this ritual. The applicant must carve a potato in her own image, and coat it in honey, then grind it into paste with a mortar and pestle, being careful to grind it counter-clockwise exactly fourteen times, while singing one of several different children's nursery rhymes. The resulting paste must then be mixed with the blood of a fresh-killed rooster, and consumed at precisely the stroke of midnight. If done properly, and the person performing the ritual is a good candidate to become one of Baba Yaga's witches, then he or she falls into a deep sleep, and in her dreams she visits Baba Yaga's hut. If she makes the pact, she awakens to find her familiar perched atop her, staring into her eyes. If she does not, she may simply awaken with nothing to show for it, or may watch, helpless in her dream state, as the dream Baba Yaga opens a gate and drags her own sleeping, helpless form into her hut and roasts it in the oven.

Baba Yaga as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Baba Yaga as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Baba Yaga, as well.

Spells: 2nd—ray of enfeeblement, 4th—hold person, 6th—cackling skull^{UM}, 8th—crushing despair, 10th reincarnate, 12th—eyebite, 14th—plane shift, 16th—horrid wilting, 18th—cursed earth^{UM}.

Pact Boons

By taking Baba Yaga as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Baba Yaga. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Baba Yaga becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Potent Hexes (Su): A witch that selects Baba Yaga as her patron finds that her hexes are more difficult to resist than those of other witches. The saving throw DCs of the witch's hexes, major hexes, and grand hexes are increased by +1. At π^{th} level, this bonus increases to +2.

Contact Baba Yaga (Sp): Beginning at 6th level, the witch gains the ability to call upon Baba Yaga for additional information and guidance. This functions as contact other plane, except that it always contacts Baba Yaga. When contacting Baba Yaga, the witch always receives a true answer on a result of 1 – 60, receives an answer of "don't know" on a result of 61 – 75, receives a lie on a result of 76 – 90, and receives a random answer on a result of 91 – 100. Because Baba Yaga expects that more powerful witches should address their problems on their own and not bother her, the saving throw DC to resist Intelligence damage is equal to 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence modifier. Unlike contact other plane, however, if the witch fails this saving throw, she only suffers 1d4 points of Intelligence damage, though this Intelligence damage can't be healed by any means until 24 hours have passed. The witch may use this ability once per day at 6th level, plus an additional time per day at 12th level, and a 3rd time per day at 18th level.

Pact Price

Baba Yaga's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Troubled Dreams (Su): A witch with Baba Yaga as her patron is plagued by disturbing dreams and nightmares, which interrupt her rest. Each night, when she rests, the witch must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence modifier) or have her rest disturbed. If the witch's rest is disturbed, she regains half as many hit points as she normally would from resting, and is able to prepare one less spell of each spell level that she can cast than she would normally be able to the next day (for example, a witch that could normally prepare three 2nd-level spells and four 1st-level spells would be able to prepare two 2ndlevel spells and three 1st-level spells, instead).

Hag-Like (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch who chooses Baba Yaga as her patron becomes physically warped and twisted, gaining a hag-like appearance. Even young and pretty witches find their skin covered with warts, their hair lank and stringy, their skin color changing to a dull and pallid tone, and so on. As a result, the witch suffers a penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks other than Intimidate equal to 1/2 her witch level. Further, any creature that can see the witch has its starting attitude toward her reduced by one step, although this cannot reduce a creature's attitude towards the witch below unfriendly. If the witch is able to hide her appearance (either magically, or with a successful Disguise check opposed by the observer's Perception check, with the witch suffering a -5 penalty), these penalties do not apply.

Bach-Farajh, Many-Voiced Madness

Many patrons can grant power, but are you sure that you want to throw your lot in with them? What are they going to want you to do with that power? Why are they so happy to hand power away to you? Those who select me as their patron need only do one thing: have a good time. My price? Just let me come with you, as a part of your mind, and enjoy the party with you. What other patron actually asks that you use your powers just to have fun and excitement? And what good is power if you can't use it the way that you want?

Description

In truth, Bach-Farajh has no physical form, and is not even a real creature, per se. Rather, it is a sort of hivemind formed from among the members of a constant, never-ending party. It exists as a collection of thoughts and dreams and wants and needs and sensations from the minds of all the various creatures that make up the party's guests, somehow brought together by the nature of the never-ending celebration and the mind-altering drugs, food, and drink that are freely partaken of by all members. Bach-Farajh cannot exist independently of these creatures, and does everything in its power to keep the party going, and prevent its members from leaving.



The party itself is truly an overwhelming thing. It can be heard miles away, with the sounds of many shrieking, laughing, raucous voices echoing throughout the valley that has been entirely taken over with revelry. The sound is clearly merry, but also tinged with a slightly frantic pitch, setting listeners on edge and warning of an underlying madness. The party's guests form a wide menagerie of creatures from many planes and worlds, all gathered and engaged in the most colossal celebration the planes have ever known. The smell is overpowering, and is a heady mix of blood, sweat, alcohol, tobacco, and all kinds of delicious foods and spices from all the most exotic locales. The party is wild, and those who aren't dancing or drinking are fighting, cheering, or even mating. Sometimes more than one.

Background

Once there was a satyr known as Tagan. Like many satyrs, he loved a good celebration, and one day he decided that he was going to throw the biggest party that anyone had ever seen. He prepared over the course of a year, buying as many supplies as he could, and sending invitations to powerful and interesting characters throughout the multiverse. He also worked hard and paid exorbitant fees in order to ensure that some of the multiverse's greatest performers would serve as the entertainment.

When the day of the party came, it was everything that Tagan had ever hoped it would be. The guest list was massive, and that party was a huge success. It raged on and on for days, and, since everyone was having such a good time, it kept going as days became weeks, and weeks even became months. Though some of the individual guests came or went, and of course had to sleep during this time, at any given moment the majority of the revelers continued their celebration unhindered.

During this time, Bach-Farajh was born. This bodiless, psychic being was born from all the uninhibited and wild partying, and from the wild emotions of so many party guests concentrated in one place for such a long time. A sort of hive-mind, Bach-Farajh actually exists in a small part in the minds of each and every participant in the party, but only so long as they remain together, and remain partying. The exact nature of the mental links that allow Bach-Farajh to be are unclear, but those who wander away from the party for too long are severed from the entity, and if the party were to stop completely, Bach-Farajh is certain that it would cease to be, in the same way that scattering the bricks that make up a building cause the building to be destroyed, even if each individual brick survives. As a result, the psychic composite did his best to keep the party going.

After a little over three months of non-stop partying, Tagan the satyr was quite tired, and ready for the party to be over. He started telling people to go home, but they ignored him. He stood up on the table and shouted, but no one paid any attention. He began begging and pleading with the crowd, but to no avail. Desperate, he grabbed the nearest partygoer and began shaking her, trying to get her attention. This was finally something that the partygoers could not ignore, and the party momentarily went silent as each partygoer within sight of Tagan turned and stared at him malevolently, then, all speaking at once, announced that he was not welcome, and had to leave. Tagan, perhaps suffering from a lack of sleep, and unaware that his party had given birth to a very territorial hive-mind, did not detect Bach-Farajh behind the reaction, and rather determined that this was a joke at his expense. He explained to the crowd that this was his home, and it really was time for them to leave. Bach-Farajh took this as an attack against him, and had already given Tagan all the warnings he was going to get. Wordlessly, the party-goers turned on Tagan and tore him limb from limb, feasting on his flesh and bathing in his blood. Then, they resumed their revelries, as though nothing had happened.

The party raged on for some time, but eventually the food and drink ran out. Not just from the party itself, but from the entire surrounding countryside. Using his influence over the partygoers, Bach-Farajh compelled them to move the party onwards, in order to find a new place where the party could continue. As the party traveled, it grew, and so did the might of Bach-Farajh.

Goals

In many ways, Bach-Farajh can be treated as two separate entities: there are the partygoers themselves, who comprise the mental construct much like grains of sand can form a beach. Their wants and needs are straightforward and simple: they want to have fun, keep partying, and indulge in all their lusts, whether they be for food, drink, blood or passion. They appreciate novelty, but mostly just want to have a good time. Bach-Farajh's influence compels them to take what they need in order to support their lifestyle of constant debauchery, and as a result they have become a wandering horde that strips the land clean of resources wherever they go, and are not above kidnapping talented entertainers or pretty playthings while they're at it.

Bach-Farajh himself is a somewhat more complicated entity, though its motivation is perhaps even simpler: Bach-Farajh wants to survive. In order to do so, he must keep the party going, While any one member of the party is utterly expendable, the group as a whole is vital to Bach-Farajh's existence, and were the party to stop or the members to disband, he would simply cease to be. While this means that the party's continuance is his most immediate concern, in the long term, he hopes to find a way to transcend his component parts, either by simply connecting himself to so many creatures that it would be virtually impossible for him to be completely undone, or, better yet, to find some way to ascend to a state where he is not dependent on other creatures for his continued survival at all. This is the main reason why he employs witches, as they are able to spread his mental tendrils throughout the multiverse, and serve as hubs in his collective consciousness.

There is more to Bach-Farajh than simple survival, however, and he is very much colored by his origins. Much like those from whom he is made up, he is an enthusiastic debaucher, though being bodiless means that he indulges his desires in other ways. In specific, Bach-Farajh craves strong emotions, effectively indulging himself in proxy by experiencing things vicariously through others. Understandably, he is somewhat deadened to the constant gratification that his component members perform, and so one thing he highly values in his witches are strong emotions, which, through the power of their pact, he can revel in and enjoy.

Familiars

Though it vastly prefers naturally intelligent creatures, Bach-Farajh is capable of connecting to the minds of animals, as well. This is a fairly rare occurrence, and usually only happens when members of the revelry find some animal that they choose to take as a mascot, or entertainment. If that creature stays within the group for long enough (and is not killed or eaten), it can become connected to Bach-Farajh much as the celebrants are. When this happens, Bach-Farajh usually keeps the animal safe, and gives it to the next witch to join his service, making it her familiar.

Once away from the influence of Bach-Farajh's eternal celebration, the animal largely acts like any other familiar, though such creatures are inevitably touched by Bach-Farajh, and in most cases, it shows. Physically, there is nothing to distinguish one of Bach-Farajh's familiars from any other patron's, but emotionally they are much like the creature that transformed them: lazy, selfish, and extremely self-indulgent. A familiar granted by Bach-Farajh is almost certain to be drawn to creature comforts, lavish accommodations, and novelties of every sort. They almost universally loathe work of any kind, and tend to have much less patience for things that bore them, or which are unpleasant, than most other familiars. When they don't get what they want, they typically complain loudly and incessantly to their master, whining and wheedling that they should be out having fun. Particularly strong-willed familiars may even wander away from their master to go pursue whatever debaucheries take their interest, or find ways of forcing their master to indulge in the behaviors that they want.

Followers

The most obvious group of Bach-Farajh's followers are the individuals from whose minds he is formed, the vast majority of which are guests at the endless party that spawned him. Bach-Farajh's connection to these creatures gives him a certain amount of control over their actions, which varies depending on the strength of the connection. Those that stay with the party for long periods of time form deep connections with the entity, allowing it to take complete control over their actions for short periods of time, with a certain expenditure of effort. Even among those whose connections to Bach-Farajh are more tenuous, such as those that it is connected to by its witch servants (see below), Bach-Farajh is able to subtly influence their mood and emotions, which can sometimes have profound effects on their actions.

In general, the longer a creature spends around Bach-Farajh, the stronger a connection he can make with that creature. Similarly, when a creature moves away from Bach-Farajh and others touched by him for long periods of time, that creature's connection to Bach-Farajh withers and dies, unless it is reinforced by some other means. For this reason, Bach-Farajh keeps the majority of his followers close together, and is careful about sending them away from the group for any reason, though sometimes circumstances dictate such things as necessity. The only exception to this rule is witches in Bach-Farajh's service, as their bond with him is magical, and requires no reinforcement to maintain.

For this reason, the witches who serve Bach-Farajh are his major means of influencing the world beyond its small cluster of followers, and his primary means of spreading. Witches in his service have the ability to spread his influence to others, and can act as a sort of "foothold" in areas far away from Bach-Farajh's main center of power. In a few cases, dedicated witches have actually managed to create entirely separate, independent parties much like the one from which Bach-Farajh was spawned, and he remains linked to all of these half-dozen or so collections of followers, though the first remains by far the largest, and most important to Bach-Farajh. Witches in his service can also be called upon occasionally to help scout for new locations for one of Bach-Farajh's parties. Further, their mental link to Bach-Farajh allows him to experience all of her emotions, which is his main pleasure in life. Perhaps most important of all, though, from Bach-Farajh's perspective, is that because his connection to these witches is different from—and in many ways greater than—his connection to his other followers, if the worst were to happen and his followers were wiped out, it would take only a single witch for him to survive, and be able to begin rebuilding himself, though being reduced to such a state would dramatically limit the magical abilities he was able to bestow upon that witch, likely removing all but the most rudimentary of her spellcasting abilities.

In general, a potential witch first comes into contact with Bach-Farajh through another of his witches, who sees potential in her for whatever reason (usually a dispensation towards debauchery of one form or another, and an underlying desire for power, though the two need not be related, and there are other reasons a potential candidate might be chosen). The witch then approaches the candidate, explaining that she can grant the potential witch great power, and offering to introduce the prospective witch to her magical patron. From there, it is only the matter of a simple ritual for the new witch to join the fold. When necessary, Bach-Farajh can communicate via telepathy, though he rarely does so. With witches in his service, he communicates mostly empathically, reassuring the witch when he is pleased with her and warning the witch when he is not. Even this communication is relatively rare, however, and for the most part Bach-Farajh is willing to allow the witch to do as she pleases, since she is likely to spread his influence as she does so.

Rituals

Rite of Initiation

This ritual, used to seal the pact between a witch and Bach-Farajh, is little more than a big, wild party, other than a few incantations (which, not surprisingly, adapt very well to popular tunes, allowing them to sung rather than chanted, and pass quite nicely for a nonsense bar song). The ritual requires an existing witch of Bach-Farajh to participate, and help facilitate the linking process, but otherwise it is mostly a free-form celebration, with the new witch as the guest of honor. Whether or not the majority of the guests are aware of the reason for the celebration, they will almost certainly not be told that it is not just the new witch who will be linked with Bach-Farajh. Each participating member (of which there must be at least a dozen) is touched by the psychic conglomerate, as well, and serve as a sort of sacrifice for the new witch, although unless these bonds are maintained, they quickly wither away.

Bach-Farajh as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Bah-Farajh as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Bach-Farajh, as well.

Spells: 2nd—*charm person*, 4th—*enthrall*, 6th—*rage*, 8th—*moonstruck*^{APG}, 10th—*envious urge*^{UM}, 12th—*heroes' feast*, 14th—*waves of ecstasy*^{UM}, 16th—*euphoric tranquility*^{APG}, 18th—*pied piping*^{APG}.

Pact Boons

By taking Bach-Farajh as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Bach-Farajh. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Bach-Farajh becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Mental Contagion (Su): Whenever a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron casts a spell with the mindaffecting descriptor, if that spell allows a saving throw, any target that fails his or her saving throw becomes mentally linked to Bach-Farajh, gaining a connection with a strength of 1.

See Connection (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron can concentrate on a creature in order to determine what kind of connection he has to Bach-Farajh. As a standard action, she learns the potency rating of the character's connection to Bach-Farajh, as well as how long the character has been at that potency rating, and whether it was previously higher or lower. This is a mind-affecting divination effect. Anything that would prevent a character from being affected by *detect thoughts* also prevents this ability from working on them.

Exploit Connection (Sp): Beginning at 12th level, a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron can mentally influence characters with a connection to Bach-Farajh, in a way similar to what Bach-Farajh himself can do. As a standard action, the witch can attempt to influence any character within 60 feet that she can see. The target may make a Will save (DC 10 + the connection's potency) to resist the effect, the exact nature of which depends on the strength of the target's connection. If the target's connection has a potency of o, this has no effect. If the target's connection has a potency of 1-4, they are affected as though by the spell charm monster. If the target's connection has a potency of 5 - 7, they are affected as though by the spell suggestion. If the target's connection has a potency of 8 - 10, they are affected as though by the spell dominate monster. In all cases, the duration of the effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the potency of the target's connection. The witch can use this ability three times per day at 12th level. At 16th level, and every four levels thereafter, she can use this ability an additional time each day.

Foster Connection (Su): Beginning at 18^{th} level, a witch that has selected Bach-Farajh as her patron can create a mental link to Bach-Farajh simply by her touch. In order to use this ability, the witch must touch a humanoid creature. If the creature is not willing, this requires a successful touch attack. If the witch successfully touches the target, he must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence modifier) or have the strength of his connection to Bach-Farajh increased by 4 steps. Even if the target succeeds on this Will save, the strength of his connection to Bach-Farajh is increased by 1. The witch can use this ability at will, but cannot use it on a given creature more than once.

Pact Price

Bach-Farajh's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Emotional (Su): Whenever a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron makes a saving throw to resist an effect with the emotion descriptor, she must roll twice and take the worse result.

Spell Drunkenness (Su): Beginning at 6th level, the magic channeled by a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron becomes subtly intoxicating. Any time that the witch casts a spell, if she also cast a spell the previous turn, she must

Sidebar: Mental Links with Bach-Farajh

A character can gain a mental link to Bach-Farajh in a variety of ways, but typically do so either by spending an extended period of time with large groups of people who are already linked to Bach-Farajh, or by being affected by mindaffecting spells cast by a witch that has Bach-Farajh for her patron. The exact effects of being mentally linked with Bach-Farajh depends on the strength of the connection, as defined by the connections potency, which ranges from o to 10. Different potency ratings have different effects, as outlined below.

Potency o (No Connection): A character whose mental link to Bach-Farajh is at potency o is not mentally linked to Bach-Farajh at all. This is the default for all characters.

Potency 1 – 4 (Weak Connection): A character whose mental link to Bach-Farajh is between potency 1 and potency 4 has only a weak connection, which is easily sundered, and does not allow Bach-Farajh much control. Whenever the character is presented with an opportunity to engage in self-indulgent behavior (such as splurging on food, enjoying a party, satisfying carnal desires, etc.), he must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + the connection's potency) or take that opportunity. The character cannot be forced to make a Will save in this way more times in a given day than the potency of the connection. A character who fails this saving throw 5 or more times in a given week has the potency of his connection increased by 1 (to a maximum of once per week). A character who does not fail any of these saving throws in a given week has his potency reduced by 1. If the character succeeds on the saving throw, but then proceeds to act in the manner that he would have been forced to, anyway, is treated as having failed his saving throw for this purpose.

Potency 5 – 7 (**Moderate Connection**): A character whose mental link to Bach-Farajh is between potency 5 and potency 7 has a moderate connection, which allows Bach-Farajh somewhat more control over the character's actions. In addition to the effects of having a weak connection, Bach-Farajh can attempt to directly compel the character to engage in self-indulgent behaviors. This functions as *suggestion* (DC 10 + the connection's potency), except that the suggestion must always involve some kind of self-indulgence or other pleasure. Bach-Farajh can use this ability a number of times each week equal to the connection's potency. If the character fails 3 or more saving throws to resist this effect in a single week (or succeeds on the saving throw but acts on the *suggestion* anyway), then the potency of the connection increases by 1.

Potency 8 – 10 (Strong Connection): A character whose mental link to Bach-Farajh is between potency 8 and potency 10 has a strong connection, which allows Bach-Farajh to take direct control, and also helps to reinforce mental links in those that spend a lot of time around the character. The character is subject to all the effects for a moderate connection. Additionally, once per day, Bach-Farajh can gain control of the character as though with *dominate monster* (DC 10 + the connection's potency), except that the duration is only an hour. Further, any character whose connection to Bach-Farajh has a potency rating of 7 or less that spends at least four hours per day with a character that has a strong connection to Bach-Farajh for an entire week has the potency rating of his connection increased by 1 (this can cause a character with a potency of o to gain a potency of 1 and forge a mental connection to Bach-Farajh). Finally, for every two weeks that a character continues to have a connection with a potency of 8 or more, the potency of that connection increases by 1 (to a maximum of 10).

Other Ways to Gain and Lose Potency: A character that goes an entire week without interacting with any creature that has a connection with a potency rating of 4 or higher has the potency of his connection decrease by 1 step. Spending at least 8 hours performing hard labor each day for a week decreases the potency rating of a character's connection by 2, but the character must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + potency rating) or find himself unable to work, compelled to shirk his responsibilities, slack off, etc. This does not count against the number of times in a day or week that Bach-Farajh can use its influence on the character, and success or failure on this Will save has no bearing on the character's potency rating (other than that caused by performing the work).

Other Ways of Influencing the Connection: Anything that prevents a character from being affected by mindaffecting effects protects them from the effects of the connection, suppressing it for as long as the protection remains in place. If the protection remains in place long enough, this can allow the character to reduce the potency of his connection to o with relative ease. If the protection is removed before this time, however, the effects of the connection reassert themselves. Finally, a *break enchantment* or *atonement* spell, or a *wish* or *miracle*, can reduce the potency of a character's connection to o immediately. Finally, a *bestow curse* spell can be used to give a character a connection to Bach-Farajh with a potency of 3. If cast by a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron, the potency is set to 4, instead.



succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the spell level of the spell she is currently casting) or be nauseated for 1 round.

Magic Addiction (Su): Beginning at 12th level, the magic channeled by a witch with Bach-Farajh as her patron becomes outright addictive. If the witch does not cast all of the spells that she prepared by the time that she rests and regains spells again at the end of the day, then she is fatigued on the following day until she has cast at least half of the total number of spells that she is capable of preparing in one day. Additionally, whenever the witch casts a spell of 5th level or higher, she must succeed on a Will save (DC 15 + the spell's level) or be forced to cast another spell of the same spell level or higher on the following round. If the witch does not have any more spells of that level or higher prepared, she becomes fatigued, and must cast a spell of the highest spell level that she has remaining. If the only spells that the witch has remaining are cantrips, she becomes exhausted, instead. If the witch does not have any cantrips prepared, and has no spells to cast at all, she becomes exhausted and is stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Sympathetic Magic (Su): Beginning at 18th level, the witch's connection to Bach-Farajh makes her vulnerable to feedback from spells that she casts on creatures that are also connected to Bach-Farajh. Whenever the witch casts a spell that allows a saving throw that is not denoted as harmless and has a single target, if that target has a connection to Bach-Farajh with a strength of 4 or higher, and the target fails his or her saving throw, then the spell may affect the witch as well. In this case, the witch is treated as being targeted by the spell as well, and must save to resist its effects, as normal. For every two points by which the strength of the target's connection to Bach-Farajh exceeds 4, the witch suffers a -1 penalty on this saving throw. Regardless of whether or not the witch succeeds on the saving throw, her sympathetic magic ability does not apply to that target for the next 24 hours, and any subsequent spells she casts on that target during this time are not affected by this ability.

Irashen, the Iron Son

What use is power, if it is squandered on petty and evil aims? There are many who would offer dark gifts to you, in order to use you as a tool, make you a slave, or have you corrupt others on your behalf. But what if you did not have to give up your inner goodness in order to gain the power you seek? What if someone was willing to offer you power, and ask only that you use it to do good, to help defend the defenseless, and to serve a cause greater than yourself? What I ask may require more courage than those others, and it will require a steadfast heart that does not shy away from doing the right thing, but at the end of the day, the rewards are far greater, not only in the afterlife, where an ascension to the blessed heavens awaits you, but also each night, as you go to sleep, content in the knowledge that you have done the right thing.

Description

Irashen is clearly angelic, with a pair of luminous, feathery wings that glow with a radiant light, and appear to be made of a very beautiful white gold. His appearance is otherwise more-or-less human, though his eyes are an entrancing shade of amethyst, and his head is adorned with a brilliant golden halo that matches his wings. He wears a brilliantly-polished silver breastplate, complete with incredibly intricate engravings bearing a heavenly motif, and he wears a long, crimson cloak, which always flaps and waves dramatically, even when there is no wind. He smiles kindly, and his gaze is filled with compassion, and, behind it, a strong sense of assuredness. Strangely, this warrior carries no weapons, clearly comfortable with being unarmed. His hair is the color of well-worn iron and cropped short. Wrinkles cross his face, adding character, but no anger. When he speaks, his fatherly voice simultaneously instills those who hear it with a desire to do as he says, and knowledge that they are loved and valued.

Irashen is an angel, a celestial general who is in command of the Iron Legion, a special heavenly army which recruits exclusively from good-aligned mortals, forming a sort of celestial alternative to the dark cults sponsored by demons and devils. This volunteer army is a relatively new celestial development, but has been quickly growing in recent decades. They spend most of their time battling demons in the abyss, and their main goal is to prevent incursions from the lower planes into the material plane.

Background

Irashen has a long history of crusading against the denizens of the lower planes in general, and the demons of the abyss in specific. Long ago, he was a rank and file soldier in the Platinum Legion, one of the more elite of the celestial armies. He spent centuries in ongoing conflicts in the abyss, and slowly rose through the ranks. He developed a reputation for both his resolve and his compassion—while many other angels began to see fighting demons as an end in and of itself after a few centuries of campaigns, Irashen always remembered what it was that they were fighting for, and though he assessed situations tactically, he did not consider any losses to be "acceptable," especially in the case of mortals and bystanders, and did everything in his power to minimize the casualties of war.

His greatest victory was over a lesser demon prince by the name of Nogryn, who had been actively searching for a way to open a massive rift between the material plane and the abyss, and was close to achieving that goal and effecting a massive demonic invasion, when Irashen's detachment received word of his plans, and made a daring raid deep into the abyss in order to put a stop to the demon prince's plans. Though the casualties of this assault were high, and most of his forces did not survive, he was able to prevent the rift from opening, and in so doing saved countless mortal lives. At the end, he was forced to face Nogryn one-on-one, and the two fought in an epic battle. Nogryn was too powerful for Irashen to kill, and so the angel was forced to settle for skewering the demon prince through the heart with his sword, Iron Dawn, and binding the demon, sending it into a coma for 1,000 years. The sword remains in Nogryn's sleeping body to this day, buried under the ruins of his dread fortress.

After this victory, Irashen was promoted to a general. Removed from direct combat, he had more time to look at the larger picture, and he came to the conclusion that the war, as it was currently being fought, was unwinnable. He pointed out the numerous dark cults being fostered by fiends throughout the material plane, and the numerous witches and other spellcasters seduced into serving evil by the offer of easy magic power. He voiced his concerns to the other celestial generals, and the heavenly war council, and proposed the creation of a new legion, one made up of volunteer recruits from among the pure-hearted mortals, which could be used to combat evil. His suggestions were met mostly with skepticism, and may angels predicted that the experiment would only end in corruption. Others took the position that it was not the place of mortals to fight, though Irashen argued that, if they were willing, then there was no reason why mortals should not be allowed to fight to defend their homes from fiends. Eventually, the Iron Legion was formed, and to date, it has been a marked success, with swelling ranks and numerous victories to its name.

Goals

Irashen's goal remains what it has always been: to protect mortals, and the rest of the multiverse, from the predations of the various denizens of the lower planes. The Iron Legion focuses mainly on the abyss, in part because, being infinitely large, it contains the greatest number of portals and potential for breach into the material plane, but also because demons are likely to pose the most immediate threat should a breach occur. In order to accomplish this, Irashen is constantly on the lookout for new recruits to the Iron Legion, both in the form of irregular troops, such as the witches that he serves as a patron for, and in the form of rank-and-file soldiers, as the Iron Legion is comprised primarily of regiments full of pure-hearted paladins, fighters, cavaliers, and the like willing to lay down their lives to protect their home plane. In general, Irashen places the lives and souls of those he is sworn to protect above all else, and given the option, he will always choose to save innocent bystanders over killing demons.

Much to his chagrin, Irashen's position as general forces him to spend more time on heavenly politics than he would like. While the Iron Legion's success has won over all but the most reactionary of the members on the heavenly war council, many members still have reservations about Irashen's practice of providing patronage to witches, specifically. Some of Irashen's political opponents make regular bids to try to end that aspect of the Iron Legion, and Irashen would gladly welcome anything that might help cement the value of holy witches in the minds of his peers.

Familiars

The familiars granted by Irashen are unusual, in that they are actually the souls of those who have died fighting for the side of righteousness, and have been allowed to be reborn in this state to continue the fight. Typically, these familiars are witches who died while fighting on behalf of the Iron Legion, but sometimes they are the souls of goodhearted and valiant mages who died for a good cause, or even lesser angelic spirits who are eager to do something useful in the fight against evil. Irashen gives these souls the option though he never forces it upon them—to become a familiar, instead, reincarnating them in an animal form suited to their personality, and sending them to serve as guides and mentors to witches who serve him.

In general, Irashen's familiars tend to be slightly more beautiful than most animals, with idealized features. Animals with fur tend to have silver- or gold-tinted coats, and almost always have light colors, while animals with scales tend to be exceptionally glossy and gleam in the light. Regardless of their form, Irashen's familiars all have two physical traits in common: first, they each bear a tiny pair of white, angelic wings, which are capable of bearing them aloft. Second, their eyes are always a bright silver in color.

Moreso than many other familiars, Irashen's familiars tend to be very opinionated, and, to their critics, could be considered preachy, or even bossy. Because these familiars are living their second lives in a fight against evil, and have all memories of their previous existence, they tend to feel that they know what they are doing better than their master does. Further, being specifically sent to be a mentor and guide to the witch leaves the familiar feeling that it is his duty to instruct the witch in the ways of ethics and morality, or in other cases tactics and strategy, as much as in the use of magic. While all familiars serve as teachers to their witches in that they provide them with their spells, in the case of Irashen's familiars the teacher/student dynamic is much stronger, and many of these strong-willed familiars consider themselves partners, or even superiors, to their witch, rather than seeing the witch as their "master," as traditional familiars do. In rare cases, Irashen's familiars have been known to withhold spell knowledge until a witch heeds its wisdom, though this practice is rare, and frowned upon by Irashen unless the witch is planning to perform a very evil act.

Followers

Irashen has a great number of followers, and relatively few of them are witches. The bulk of those in Irashen's employ serve as regular soldiers in the Iron Legion. This is a standing army, and Irashen is constantly recruiting able-bodied and strong-hearted men and women willing to leave their homes and march to the abyss (or other terrible lower-planar locales) in order to fight for righteousness in defense of the innocent everywhere. Tours of duty typically last for one year. The pay is slightly better than what an average soldier would expect, and though the actual fighting is far more horrible than mundane wars, the other benefits in the form of knowing that one is fighting for a virtuous cause, and a guaranteed place in celestial paradise after death, make the rigors worth it to a surprisingly large number. Only one tour of duty is necessary to assure one's place in the afterlife, but most soldiers who complete their first tour come back for another, convinced of the importance of what they do.

Serving Irashen as a witch is somewhat different. While Irashen is certainly happy to accept witches as regular, full-time soldiers (and, for that matter, other spellcasters, as well), he does not make this a requirement of gaining his patronage. Instead, such witches serve as reserve troops, and, for the most part, are able to do as they please, provided that they further the cause of good. In this way, a witch serving Irashen can spend most of her time near her home, rooting out goblins, cultists, or any other evil force, without having to devote her time to the abyss. Most witches who choose this path join adventuring parties, and further the cause of good by pursuing great quests with those adventurers.

Irashen does require some direct military service from his witches, however, and will occasionally summon them to serve during a particularly important battle or in a crisis. The witch (and any of her companions who might be willing to accompany her) become aware of the summons, and where it will take them, and can choose whether or not to consent. Those that do are transported to the front lines to take part in the fighting, and returned whence they came when the battle is done. Those that do not consent are not transported. The witch's companions are obviously under no obligation to attend, though the witch herself risks losing Irashen's patronage unless she can provide a very compelling reason for withholding her service.

For the most part, the Iron Legion operates on other planes, so as to prevent incursions and provide maximum protection to the material plane, but when a breach occurs, the fighting spills over into the material plane, and the Iron Legion acts as protectors to the places involved. This has given them some recognition, though for the most part they still remain fairly obscure, except to those who study planar activities. Still, recruitment drives for the Iron Legion are an increasingly common sight, with wandering paladins, clerics, and sometimes even lesser angels travelling from town to town and collecting volunteers to fight in Irashen's crusade.

Rituals

Day of Peace

Irashen greatly values peace, and thus his greatest holiday is dedicated to it. At dawn on the day of the summer solstice, his followers rise and cleanse themselves in natural water formations. They do not wear their weapons or armor on this day, instead tying these into a bundle with twine, and then leaving to join with other followers of Irashen for the day. Throughout the day there is feasting, music and festivities, and everyone does their best to forget about their battles and war. While there are contests of strength and skill, none of these contests involve weapons of any kind. Of course, this festival is much harder to observe while actively on campaign, and only about half of any given regiment of soldiers is able to participate, the other half remaining on active duty, to defend against any demonic assaults. As a result, the Iron Legion has begun celebrating the day twice a year, the other day of peace being on the winter solstice, and allowing those who missed out on the summer celebration to take their turn.

Rite of Dedication

This rite is completed regularly by followers of Irashen. He doesn't dictate how often or when they should complete it, so it is left to the witch's discretion. Witches will usually perform it when they feel particularly troubled or have committed something they consider a sin. At dusk, they must wash themselves in water, preferably from a natural water source. They must diligently scrub, sharpen and clean their weapons. After all their gear has been maintained, a fresh vine must be woven through their clothes. This is then followed by the witch practicing with her weapons until morning. When the sun rises, the witch must brew a potion made from fresh berries, mixed with shavings of iron. Under the dawn sun, she must rededicate herself to Irashen and his causes by drinking this potion and reciting special mantras.

Irashen as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Irashen as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Irashen, as well. **Spells:** 2nd—protection from evil, 4th—align weapon (good only), 6th—archon's aura^{UM}, 8th—holy smite, 10th—hallow, 12th—planar ally, 14th—bestow grace of the champion^{UM}, 16th—holy aura, 18th—winds of vengeance^{APG}.

Pact Boons

By taking Irashen as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Irashen. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Irashen becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Angelic Familiar: Regardless of the exact familiar that she selects, a witch that selects Irashen as her patron gains a familiar with wings. This grants the familiar a fly speed equal to its movement speed, with good maneuverability. If the familiar already had a fly speed, its maneuverability increases by one step, and its fly speed increases by 10 feet. Additionally, the familiar can cast *detect evil* as a spell-like ability at will. At 7th level, or any time thereafter, the witch may choose to have the familiar "ascend," shedding its animal body and becoming a lantern archon.

Spell Smite (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Irashen as her patron can call out to him to empower a spell that she casts on an evil-aligned creature. Her caster level for this spell is treated as 2 higher than it actually is, and the saving throw DC is increased by +1. If the target is an outsider with the evil subtype, an evil-aligned dragon, or an undead creature, then her caster level is treated as 4 higher, and the saving throw DC is increased by +2, instead. The bonuses to caster level apply to any checks made to overcome spell resistance, as well. If the spell has any targets that are nonevil, or has no targets, then this ability has no effect. At 6th level, she can use this ability once per day. At 9th level, and every three levels thereafter, the witch may use this ability one additional time per day.

Punishing Spell (Su): Beginning at 12th level, whenever a creature fails a saving throw against one of the witch's spells by 5 or more, if that creature has an evil alignment, it suffers an amount of damage equal to twice the witch's caster level.

Pact Price

Irashen's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Code of Conduct: A witch that selects Irashen as her patron must obey a strict code of conduct. Such witches must maintain a lawful good alignment, and adhere to the paladin code of conduct. Additionally, the witch may not cast any spells with the evil descriptor, and cannot gain the blight, beast of ill-omen, poison steep, or scar hexes, nor can she gain the cook people major hex. At the GM's discretion, she may also be unable to gain or use certain other hexes of particularly unsavory nature, not found in the Advanced Player's Guide or Ultimate Magic.

Failure to uphold this code of conduct causes the witch to lose her class features, in the same fashion as a paladin that violates her code of conduct. She regains her abilities and advancement potential if she atones for her violations (see *atonement*), as appropriate.

Spare the Righteous (Su): Beginning at 6th level, the witch's spells become less effective against non-evil creatures. Creatures of good alignment receive a +4 bonus on saving throws made to resist the effects of the witch's spells and hexes, and creatures that are of neither good nor evil alignment gain a +2 bonus on saving throws made to resist the effects of the witch's spells and hexes. Additionally, outsiders with the good subtype that are forced to make saving throws to resist the effects of the witch's spells or hexes may roll twice and take the better result.

Angelic Oversight (Su): Once a witch with Irashen as her patron reaches a certain level of magical talent, her magic use is overseen by one or more celestial bureaucrats, who may interfere with her spells. Beginning at 12th level, whenever the witch casts a spell of 5th level or higher, there is a 10% chance that the spell has no effect. At 14th level, and every two levels thereafter, the minimum spell level of spells affected by this ability increases by 1 (6th-level spells and up at 14th level, 7th-level spells and up at 16th level, 8th-level spells and up and 18th level, and 9th-level spells only at 20th level).



Jodan, the Mad Jester

Life is just one big, mad, crazy joke, and you're one of the ones that gets it. I can tell. It's always better to be the one laughing than the one laughed at, but at the end of the day, isn't the world a better place for everyone with a little bit of humor? Whether you're bringing the pompous down a peg or brightening an otherwise boring and uneventful day, who doesn't like a good joke? Of course, the really good jokes are hard to pull off. But, with a little bit of help from me, you can have the power to make all the great jokes you can think of come to be. Doesn't that sound fun?

Description

Jodan has been known to appear in many forms, and is capable of taking just about any shape or form that he can imagine. However, for the most part, when he is not taking a form specifically to pursue a practical joke or other comical purpose, he tends to gravitate towards a specific one, which has led many to speculate that this is his "true form." In this state, he appears at a glance to be a young jester, dressed in a colorful motley outfit. Upon closer inspection, however, one finds that the pattern on the motley is unusually symmetrical and perfect, and the fabric seems simply to be growing out of his skin, rather than something altogether separate. Looking even closer reveals that the jester's skin is smooth and featureless in an unnatural way, and that his eyes are completely white, devoid of iris or pupil. Similarly, even when he speaks, and his mouth and lips move, his mouth remains in a perfect, rigid grin.

Jodan is a twisted spirit that has grown outside of its station and struggles to understand and interact with the world around it. Now transformed into an embodiment of the very concept of humor (and irony, in specific), it does not actually understand the very thing that it is supposed to represent. Its attempts at humor range from the bland to the terrifying, and the only thing that Jodan is sure to leave in his wake is chaos, not laughter.

Background

Jodan began life as a toshigami, one of the more powerful kami spirits (see the *Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 for more information on kami, and toshigami in particular). Jodan was the spirit of a particularly old and sacred cherry tree located in the main courtyard of the spring palace of the Immortal Jade Emperor. For centuries he was quite content to be the spirit of this particular tree, and lived in contentment and peaceful harmony.

One day, however, visitors came from the west, from strange and far-off lands, and entered into trade negotiations with the Immortal Jade Emperor. Ambassadors were given residence in the spring palace, and they brought with them a jester, who was to entertain the Immortal Jade Emperor with his jokes and songs. The Immortal Jade Emperor was not very impressed by his humor, but his daughter, the Illustrious Opal Princess, was quite taken with the young man. Of course, it would have been unthinkable for the two to become romantically involved, as the jester was far below her station, and a foreigner, as well. The Illustrious Opal Princess was heartbroken, knowing that her love could not be, and would often sit beneath Jodan's cherry tree and cry to herself, lamenting cruel irony that the man who she loved so much, and who lived to bring laughter to the world, had only doomed her to sadness.

Jodan was moved by her sadness, and, what's more, intrigued by the irony of her situation. Using his spiritual powers, he took the form of the jester and sought the Immortal Jade Emperor's permission for the two to be wed. The Immortal Jade Emperor responded by ordering him executed, though of course the palace guards did not expect their opponent to be a toshigami, and he quickly escaped, taking the unfortunate jester and the Illustrious Opal Princess with him. She was overjoyed to be freed from her father and able to be with her love, but the jester himself explained that he was already married, and that he had two children awaiting his return with his wife. Jodan, responded by transforming the pair into cherry tree saplings, and causing their forms to grow together and intertwine, so that they would be together forever.

No longer truly a cherry tree spirit, Jodan continued to grow and evolve into his new perceived role as a spirit of humor itself, and attempts to spread and cause humor everywhere that he goes. Though he believes that he is an embodiment of humor, he still does not truly understand humor, at least as humans perceive it. His practical jokes are as likely to cause confusion or horror as they are actual laughter, and even his most beneficent tricks tend to be bittersweet. Though he seems wholly alien in his thinking, some of his followers suggest that he understands humor quite well, and that the *true* joke of his existence is the very idea of a spirit of humor acting in a way that makes him seem as though he does not understand the very thing he represents.

Goals

Jodan seeks to spread humor in a misguided belief that he is making the world a better place with each and every practical joke that he makes. He wanders the world looking for opportunities to practice his own bizarre brand of humor, which mostly involves practical jokes, irony, and the bizarre. Jodan is as likely to cause a blizzard in the middle of summer (without any regard to how this will affect the local crops or wildlife) as he is to cause all calves born in a certain community for the next year to have two heads. Sometimes he might turn a beggar to pure gold (without regard to the beggar's wellbeing), or transform all the loyal and hardworking members of a corrupt city watch into dogs. In rare cases, his jokes are more benevolent, or at least harmless, such as causing beautiful and exotic flowers to bloom on the graves of all of a serial-killer's victims, or enabling events to conspire to put a particularly inept (but too stubborn to control) farmer on the throne of a kingdom.

Behind all of Jodan's various acts of humor is an underlying desire to truly understand the concept that he attempts to embody, and, some would argue, even champion. Jodan does not truly understand what it is that makes people laugh (or, at least, he acts like he doesn't understand. Some claim that it is all part of a larger joke), and though his attempts usually manage to touch vaguely on realms that are similar to humor, they tend to cause more horror than mirth, and he truly does not understand why. He goes out of his way to watch those who routinely make others laugh, in order to better understand how they do so, and is constantly revising his theories of humor. Occasionally he will confront individuals directly and ask them to explain themselves, or even whisk them away to an otherworldly realm for a longer interview. These encounters tend to end poorly for the object of Jodan's interest.

Familiars

Jodan creates his familiars completely out of nothingness, and each of them is purely an extension of his will, like a piece of himself that he cuts off and forms into whatever shape he desires. Jodan's familiars are carefully sculpted in both body and mind to make the perfect partner for the witch he gives them to, and are a very personal affair. Of course, Jodan's definition of a perfect pair can sometimes leave a bit to be desired.

Typically, one of Jodan's familiars is specifically created to contrast its master in pseudo-ironic ways. A sevenfoot tall witch may well receive a mouse for his familiar, while a particularly beautiful witch may receive a hairless hyena covered in red spots as hers. This contrast need not always be physical: particularly timid or gentle witches might receive aggressive, snarling mastiffs, while bloodthirsty and cruel witches receive kind-hearted rabbits, and so on. Because Jodan is so intimately involved in their creation, he is able to "hand-craft" the familiar's personality, as much as its appearance, and can create a perfect foil to his witch in every way, if desired. Similarly, because the familiar's body is made from thin air, his familiars often have colorations or patterns in their fur or scales that don't appear in nature.

Jodan loves nothing if not variety and unpredictability, however, and so not all of the familiars he grants are comical opposites. Many are caricatures, instead, taking on exaggerated traits from their masters until they become almost a mockery of the witch that they are given to. Sometimes, especially if the witch is a fairly well-balanced individual (a rarity, among those that serve Jodan), the intended hilarity of the familiar is not related to its master, but rather self-contained. This could include anything from a particularly energetic and impatient tortoise to a beautyobsessed toad, or even a hawk or raven with a fear of heights. Except when the needs of his humor dictate to the contrary, Jodan's familiars share his enthusiasm for humor, and, unfortunately, his taste in it, as well. His familiars, in general, have a tendency towards playing pranks, and while their power to do so may be much more limited than Jodan himself, they still manage to engage in pranks that are more upsetting than truly humorous, even if one can usually see the logic behind the attempt.

Some rumors claim that Jodan is able to actually see and hear through the senses of the familiars that he creates, and that he is drawn to the sound of laughter, such as that whenever one of his familiars starts laughing, he borrows their senses to find out what's so funny, and get in on the joke. It's unclear whether or not this is the case (and probably impossible to prove, either way), but nonetheless many witches in his service consider it wise not to let their familiar see or hear anything that they wouldn't want Jodan to.

Followers

There are a variety of ways and reasons why one might willingly choose to follow Jodan. Most of his followers genuinely appreciate what he does and how he does it: some of them believe that his humor is a step forward, and that it is he who is teaching us what is funny, rather than not knowing it himself; others believe that he is well-intentioned, and that if he can simply be shown true humor then he will brighten the world with laughter and smiles; still others say that he already knows humor just fine, and that's half the joke, while still others simply find the chaos that he leaves in his wake to be absolutely hilarious. Many of his followers don't actually believe in the ideal that he represents, though. It is not uncommon for criminals—from simple thieves to arsonists, murderers, or rapists—to do what they do in Jodan's name, or use the humor spirit as an excuse for their crimes. In opposite cases, a growing number of people actively teach the philosophy of Jodan's humor in the hopes that this will somehow appease him and convince him to leave them alone.

When it comes to witches in Jodan's service, there are two kinds: those that became witches willingly, and those who didn't. The first are much like witches who serve any patron, and they seek out Jodan either because they believe in what he represents and actively want magic to champion his cause, or because they believe that the price he asks for their magic is the easiest for them to pay, or simply because he was the first patron that they learned about, and they jumped at the chance for magic powers. Jodan does not particularly care who he gives power to, and, almost predictably, finds the idea of an irresponsible and hands-off patron handing power to mortals without any real supervision to be the height of both irony and hilarity.

In fact, so fond is Jodan of this concept that sometimes he bestows magical power on those who don't even ask for it (some of his followers believe that the "humor" of this situation actually comes from the fact that so many mortals are so willing to give up their souls for power like this, and he gives it away to those who don't even ask for it). Such witches simply awake one morning to find their new familiar in their bed, or else are stopped in the middle of their daily business when Jodan descends from on high and declares her a witch. Whatever the case, those who have his gift suddenly bestowed on them find that trying to pretend that it didn't happen only results in uncontrolled bursts of magic, and eventually learn to accept their new lot in life as a powerful spellcaster.

Because there is so little oversight of Jodan's witches, and he himself is so chaotic in nature, his witches don't fall into any single pattern as far as how they behave or what they do. Generally speaking, most of them have a fondness for irony and practical jokes (whether because this is what attracted them to Jodan in the first place, or because it grew on them over extended exposure), though they usually have more normal views of what constitutes acceptable humor than their patron does (this, of course, is not universally true). Typically, these witches do their best to add a little variety to the lives of those around them through humor, and use their magic to help them do so. They do not usually associate with one another any more than they do with other witches in general.

For the most part, non-witch followers of Jodan tend to behave in the same way, and they do not generally form large groups or organizations, though there are some exceptions. One such group, called the Loudest Laugh, is devoted to Jodan only in name, and was actually formed to protect its members from his predations. Its founder was the only survivor of a small hamlet that suffered from one of Jodan's jokes. What began with him warning others about the spirit slowly morphed into explaining Jodan's humor and ideology to those who are unfamiliar with him and it. They are well known for constantly smiling in every situation, no matter how they feel, and for long rituals that involve ritual chant-like laughing for hours at a time. They promote Jodan's humor in a positive light, and explain how Jodan's philosophy is good for the world, and that laughter is the best response to every situation. All of this is so much lies, however, as the entire organization is built on the misconception that what Jodan wants is for others to accept his humor and laugh. The organization believes that by seeming to do what they believe the humor spirit wants, they can avoid the effects of his jokes. It remains to be seen whether or not this will be effective in the long run, but as of yet none of their members seem to have been affected.

Rituals

Day of Folly

On the third day of spring, followers of Jodan hold a festival in his honor. There is much celebration, and of course many pranks. However, these pranks differ slightly from the pranks that his followers usually practice. First, all of the pranks must be done by mundane means, and without the assistance of magic. This is designed to challenge his followers to use their creativity and ingenuity in applying their craft, and is also considered by many of his followers to make things "more sporting." Second, the pranks are generally far less harmful, and quite a bit more playful. Most of Jodan's followers treat this as a day designed to bring others into the fold, and show them the ways of Jodan. Of course, a fair number of his followers ignore the day entirely, or take advantage of it to perform truly terrible "pranks" when everyone's guard is down.

Jodan as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Jodan as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Jodan, as well.

Spells: 2nd—beguiling gift^{UC}, 4th—hideous laughter, 6th—cackling skull^{UM}, 8th—confusion, 10th—major curse^{UM}, 12th—mass suggestion, 14th—foe to friend^{APG}, 16th—irresistible dance, 18th—wish.

Pact Boons

By taking Jodan as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Jodan. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Jodan becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Wondrous Magic (Sp): Beginning at 1st level, a witch with Jodan as her patron can channel stored spell energy into a burst of random wonder. The witch can "lose" a prepared spell of the highest spell level that she can cast in order to produce a random effect. This functions as a *rod of wonder*, except that activating the ability is treated as casting a spell. If the spell sacrificed in this way is 5th level or higher, then she may roll twice and take whichever result she prefers. The witch can use this ability three times per day.

Magic Variance (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Jodan as her patron has magic of variable potency. Whenever she casts a spell, she rolls 1d4. Her caster level for the purposes of that spell is equal to her actual caster level minus 2 plus the result of the die roll. As she increases in level, the die that she rolls and the amount that she subtracts from her caster level are adjusted accordingly, as indicated on Table 1-1: Magic Variance.

Table 1-1: Magic Variance

Witch Level	Die Rolled	Base Caster Level
ıst - 5th	None	Witch's caster level
6th - 8th	1d4	Witch's caster level - 2
9th - 11th	1d6	Witch's caster level - 3
12th - 14th	1d8	Witch's caster level - 4
15th - 17th	1d10	Witch's caster level - 5
18th+	1d12	Witch's caster level - 6

Additionally, for every two levels that her effective caster level for a spell is higher than her actual caster level, the saving throw DC of that spell (if any) increases by +1. In the same way, for every two levels that her effective caster level for a spell is lower than her actual caster level, the saving throw DC of that spell (if any) decreases by -1. This only applies to the difference in caster level caused by this ability, and anything else that impacts her caster level does not apply.

The witch can prevent this ability from impacting a spell that she casts as a free action made as part of casting the spell, but can only do so a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Intelligence modifier. Otherwise, this ability affects all spells that she casts.

Pact Price

Jodan's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Uncontrollable Magic (Su): The unpredictability of Jodan's magic occasionally affects a witch's spells even when she doesn't want it to. Whenever the witch casts a witch spell, if it has been at least 10 minutes since the last time that she cast a spell, there is a 5% chance per witch level she possesses (to a maximum of 50% at 10th level), that a random effect occurs, instead. This functions as the witch's wondrous magic ability, but does not count against the number of times that she can use that ability that day, and she may not roll twice and take her choice of results, regardless of the level of the spell used. No more than three spells can be replaced by a random effect in this way per day, and once three spells have been replaced, this penalty does not apply until the next time the witch rests and regains her spells.

Out of My Hands (Su): Jodan's magic can be difficult to control at the best of times, and as a witch's bond to Jodan increases, she begins to have difficulty controlling more complicated spells. Beginning at 6th level, whenever the witch casts a spell which requires that she make a choice other than the spell's target or area (*for example, what kind of creature to summon with* summon monster I or which version of a plant growth spell to use, or what penalty is imposed by a bestow curse spell, etc.), that choice is determined randomly (or, if determining randomly is not feasible, is determined by the GM). Once per day, the witch may choose to bypass this drawback, and make the choice normally, but she must declare that she is doing so before learning the results of randomly determining the choice.

Kaillan, the Wandering Witness

I can tell that you are someone who longs for more. Not more power, though it's always nice to be able to protect yourself. No, just more life. More everything. More experiences, emotions, people, places, and things. What is the point in living if you don't find something wonderful and beautiful and fantastic in every single day, or, for that matter, every single breath? If you want a reason to see the world, to experience wonder and beauty, then let me be the one to give it to you.

Description

At first glance, Kaillan seems to be little more than a man garbed in a well-worn outfit, stained from dust and weather. His clothes are unremarkable in every way, except to denote him as someone who has been traveling for some ways. His hair and beard are long and grey. He wears a large backpack that is frayed at the edges, and from which the ends of numerous curious knick-knacks and supplies poke out. Upon his person hang a great many tokens and trinkets, from a wide variety of places and cultures. He does not wear boots, but instead has only a pair of thin, black leather sandals upon his feet, which are habitually caked with dust and grime. He carries a gnarled staff in one hand, and a pipe carved from bone between his teeth.

Most who meet Kaillan never learn of his true nature, which is precisely the way that Kaillan prefers it. Kaillan is an eternal traveler and tourist, wandering endlessly in search of new sights to see, and new experiences to enjoy. In truth, he is actually a powerful fey, but he prefers to travel incognito, because doing to allows him to more genuinely experience life as a mortal commoner, and Kaillan is a stickler for authenticity.

While those who know of Kaillan naturally assume that he travels in search of grandiose and magnificent wonders, like upwards-flowing waterfalls, sunsets in the celestial heavens, and so forth, the truth is that, while Kaillan does appreciate such sights, he actually places more value on the small things that are often overlooked or which go unnoticed. Were he to attend a lavish wedding, for example, he would likely spend more time appreciating the flicker of fear and doubt on the groom's face—and the way that it was quickly washed aside—or the play of sunlight on the bride's veil, than he would the elegant diamond chandelier or the various dresses made in the latest fashion and expensive enough to be worth a small kingdom.

Even when in disguise, however, Kaillan's very nature is such that his presence subtly warps and twists the world around him, and no matter how hard he tries, it is virtually impossible for him to avoid changing that which he observes. As a result, he has taken to acting as a patron to witches, empowering them with a piece of his magic in exchange for their pledge to travel, see the world, and share their experiences with him through mysterious dream stones.

Background

Kaillan is a powerful lord of the fey, and his ancient office was one of great renown in the fey world. Appearing as a lithe, graceful man with long, pointed ears, stag-like antlers, and long, flowing silver hair that would blow even without wind, he was the ruler of the Granglen, a stretch of incredibly wild, primal land untouched by even the fey version of civilization, except for a single, magnificent palace in the very center of his realm, which had been grown entirely from a single plant, but towered up above the clouds. In the spring and summer the entire Granglen palace was blanketed in beautiful flowers, whose various colors made it seem to shift and shimmer in the observer's sight.

All this was good for a time, but as the lord and warden of Granglen, Kaillan was not able to leave its boundaries except for one night each year. He began to spend more and more time dreaming of the outside world, of all the wonders that he was missing because, wondrous and impressive as Granglen was—and there are many immortal fey who would be more than happy to live with what it offered, alone—it was not the entire world. Kaillan became obsessed with all that he was missing, and began to shirk his duties, allowing trespassers to leave freely if they could give him interesting news or provide him with precious books or other knowledge about the world outside.

Eventually, Kaillan determined that he must find a way to free himself from Granglen. He beseeched his queen to release him from his holdings, and pass them on to another, but she refused. Eventually, in a fit of desperate frustration, he burned the entire realm to the ground, reducing it to ash. This destruction was enough to free him from his title, and he immediately set out to enjoy his newfound freedom.

For centuries, he traveled the planes, as well as all the worlds of the material plane, in search of unique wonders and other great and majestic attractions. He loved every moment of it, at first, but as time went on, he began to find that even though each of the places he visited was more fantastic and awe-inspiring than the last, he found his appreciation for them waning: somehow, even though none of these places was anything like any of the others, the very novelty of novelty itself was fading for him.

From the beginning of his travels, Kaillan's nature as a displaced fey lord—and the lingering magic of Granglen which still clung to him—had been subtly affecting the world around him, though he was barely aware of the fact, himself. His very presence caused colors to brighten, tastes to become stronger and more potent, emotions to be more powerful. Everywhere he went, he amplified the world around him, not just for himself, but for others. Unusual events were more commonplace when he was around, as well. This was bad as often as it was good, and anger and sadness were exaggerated just as much as happiness and joy. But it always served to make Kaillan's journeys larger than life.

As Kaillan began to grow weary of the grandiose, however, he developed a strong taste for the mundane and banal. He came to appreciate the subtleties of human interaction, the overlooked beauties of the everyday, and the poetry of normal, quiet, uneventful lives. Now, his nature of changing the world around him became a burden, rather than a treasure, and prevented him from experiencing all that he wanted to experience. Several times he tried to settle into mortal life as a baker or farmer, or some other simple commoner's job, but each time he stayed in one place too long he would create a whirlwind of chaos simply by being there, and his life would take dramatic turns not suitable for what he had in mind.

Though he resigned himself to the fact that he would likely never be able to live such experiences first-hand, for try though he might he could not remove this wild aspect of himself, he did not give up. Instead, he travelled in search of an answer to his problem, and eventually found it in the form of mysterious dream stones. First crafted by shamans on a faraway world, these stones would allow the user to record memories, and others to experience them. Inspired, Kaillan mastered the art of creating dream stones, and began seeking out mortals with wanderlust and a traveler's heart, offering them a taste of his magic in exchange for providing him with chronicles of their travels.

Goals

For the most part, Kaillan is largely content with things the way that they currently are. He is always hungry for new experiences, and is always happy to expand the number of witches who are experiencing the world on his behalf and sending him their memories via dream stones. Though he does not yet realize it himself, a small part of Kaillan hopes that one day he will have enough memories being sent to him that he can find a place to settle down and retire for a while, and live entirely through these vicarious memories, putting at least a temporary stop on his travels.

Though Kaillan would gladly give much in order to rid himself of the magic that affects the world around him, and would give even more to be able to be truly mortal, he has long ago given up on such dreams. Still, if an opportunity were somehow to present itself, he would leap at the chance, and be eternally grateful to anyone who could arrange such a thing for him.

Familiars

Familiars granted by Kaillan are irrevocably touched and altered by his magic. A dog familiar that he grants may have a vibrant rainbow coat, or perhaps paws with opposable thumbs. A rabbit familiar might possess a pair of majestic stag's antlers (on a slightly smaller scale). Even such strange things as eagles with butterfly wings or snakes with scales made of literal gold. These differences are largely cosmetic, however, even the more dramatic ones, and for the most part, other than being particularly unique in appearance, the familiars granted by Kaillan are not exceptionally different from those granted by most patrons. As a general rule, the strange appearances that are typical of Kaillan's familiars are far more likely to cause a sense of wonder and awe in those that see them than they are to inspire fear, terror or disgust, though there are occasionally exceptions to this rule.

Moreso than most other familiars, those granted by Kaillan are curious about the world around them. They have

an innate sense of wonder, and oftentimes view the world in a much more naïve and youthful way than the familiars of certain other patrons might. Those that are capable of asking questions tend to ask lots of them, which can sometimes become irritating to their master, as well as anything that they are able to speak to with their ability to speak with others of their kind. They tend to be quite excitable, for the same reason, and tend to suffer from intense mood swings, both positive and negative.

Combined with this rash, impulsive nature is the fact that Kaillan's familiars view themselves as being special and unique—a view that is especially difficult to dislodge when faced with the fact to their strange appearance. As a result, many of Kaillan's familiars have a bit more of an ego than familiars granted by other patrons, though they tend to be fairly good-natured when dealing with the "lesser, mundane people" that they meet, sometimes including the witch herself, in the familiar's eyes.

Followers

Kaillan recruits his followers from among those that he meets in his travels. When he finds someone who he truly feels is a kindred spirit full of wonder, curiosity, and more than a little bit of wanderlust, he offers that person a chance to gain some magic to aid her in her travels, in exchange for providing him with records of her journeys. Kaillan is very picky about who he makes this offer to, however: he is only interested in becoming a patron for those who honestly hold a great joy of discovery in their hearts, and who are naturally curious and seek out new things, situations and experiences. While there are certainly those who abuse his power once it is granted, for the most part Kaillan prefers to avoid such things by only offering it to those who would be likely to do what he wants them to do, anyway. In this way, Kaillan's magic is almost as much a reward given to like-minded travelers as it is part of a magical contract.

What Kaillan gains from these transactions are memories, which his witches give to him via special dream stones. As soon as a witch enters Kaillan's service, she is given one of these magic dream stones, which is made specifically for her by Kaillan. This stone has a special link to Kaillan's own dream stone, which functions across any distance, and even across planar boundaries. The witch must use this thought stone regularly, entering into a trance while holding it, focusing on the memories she wants to give to Kaillan, and then sending them through the psychic link to Kaillan's own stone, from which he can experience the memories as though he were living through them himself. A witch who fails to perform this task slowly loses her magic over time, but luckily for those who lose or break theirs, it is possible for the witch to make a new one

A small part of Kaillan's natural ability to magnify the world around him is granted as part of the bond between Kaillan and his witches, as much as the wanderer might wish that this were not the case. Though much weaker than Kaillan's own aura, this can have a subtle effect on the world around the witch, particularly when she has strong emotional outbursts. Luckily, the effects tend to be subtle, and the range is fairly short. While there is nothing strictly prohibiting Kaillan's followers from staying in one place for extended periods of time, the fact that he deliberately chooses individuals with similar temperaments to himself means that it is very rare for one of Kaillan's witches to remain in one place for any extended period of time. The only real exception is those who have grown old and retired. Retired followers of Kaillan typically tend to settle down into businesses that cater specifically to adventurers and other travelers, such as running inns and hostels, or serving as sherpas or guides in a local area. A few even settle down in areas that attract an exceptional number of visitors and provided guided tours for the purpose of entertainment and education.

One enterprising witch in Kaillan's service has actually turned the dream stones into a business model. This witch, named Derrick Pendrigar, is the founder and master of the Sensation Stone Consortium, a traveling merchant caravan which peddles mass-produced dream stones prestocked with all kind of wondrous experiences. Derrick also barters in memories themselves, granting dream stones or sometimes even paying out gold for particularly exciting memories, which he stores in dream stones and sells to others, after ensuring that he sends a copy to Kaillan first, of course.

Rituals

Days of Rest

While Kaillan and his followers are dedicated to travel, even they can understand the value of rest. During the first heavy snowfall each year, followers of Kaillan (and the wanderer himself) seek shelter, even if they have an important deadline to meet, or would normally be able to press on. While any shelter will do in theory, it is an important part of this ritual to take shelter with others, if possible. The witch must attempt to find a nearby home and make an offering to the owner, preferably of an item of emotional value, but with gold, if necessary. If they are refused shelter, they must travel to the next home, and repeat the process. Once they find a place to stay, they settle in for exactly seven days, trading stories of their journeys for tales of the homeowners' lives. During this time, the witch does all that she can to enrich and better the lives of those whose home she is borrowing.

Rite of the Crossroads

Whenever one of Kaillan's followers comes to a major fork in the road or path that she is following, she must stop at the fork and wait for one hour, meditating on the path in front of her. If any travelers come down either path during this time, she must call out to them, asking them where they travel to, and whether they bring good tidings, or bad. Regardless of the answer, she must offer succor to any such travelers, even if all she has to offer is a few berries and twigs. At the end of this time, she must light a fire, and cast dust from each potential path before her into the fire, one at a time. If done correctly, the dust from one of the paths will not affect the fire at all, and that is the path she is meant to take. Of course, this does not mean that it is the one that will take her to the destination she seeks the quickest, and it may, in fact, take her in the wrong direction entirely, but she is sure to find adventure and excitement along the way.

Kaillan as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Kaillan as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Kaillan, as well.

Spells: 2nd—mount, 4th—levitate, 6th—clairaudience/ clairvoyance, 8th—dimension door, 10th—overland flight, 12th find the path, 14th—plane shift, 16th—discern location, 18th astral projection.

Pact Boons

By taking Kaillan as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Kaillan. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Kaillan becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Alter Fate (Su): The very presence of a witch with Kaillan as her patron is enough to warp fate in her favor. Whenever any creature within 60 feet of the witch makes a d20 roll of any kind (attack roll, ability check, skill check, saving throw, etc.), she can force the target to roll twice. Each time that the witch uses this ability, flip a coin: if the result is heads, the target takes the worse result, and if the result is tails, the target takes the better result. The witch may use this ability any number of times per day, but no more than once per round. Additionally, three times per day, the witch may use this ability and choose whether the target takes the higher result or the lower result, instead of flipping a coin.

Empathic Field (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Kaillan as per patron projects an empathic field which affects nearby creatures whenever she is subject to an effect with the emotion descriptor. Any time that the witch is affected by a spell or ability with the emotion descriptor, each creature within 30 feet of her is affected by that ability, as well. If the ability allows a saving throw, each creature may make a saving throw to resist the ability separately. Creatures that leave the affected area are no longer affected by the ability, and may make a new saving throw if they re-enter the area later. As soon as the ability stops affecting the witch, it stops affecting all other creatures that were affected as a result of this ability.

Empathic Imposition (Su): Beginning at 12th level, a witch with Kaillan as her patron projects her mood upon her surroundings, causing them to brighten or darken as a reflection of her spirit. This ability can have one of two effects, depending on whether the witch is in a fair or foul mood. The effect is not immediate, however, so even if the witch's mood changes, it takes 1d10 minutes for the effect of the empathic imposition to change.

As long as the witch is in a fair mood, this ability grants all creatures within 30 feet of her a +2 morale bonus on

attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Alternatively, as long as the witch is in a foul mood, this ability instead causes all creatures within 30 feet of her to suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Regardless of the witch's mood, this ability affects all other creatures within 30 feet of her, ally and enemy alike. The witch is never affected by her own empathic imposition ability.

Pact Price

Kaillan's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Dream Stone (Su): A witch with Kaillan as her patron is expected to provide a steady stream of recorded memories via a dream stone that Kaillan gives her when he becomes her patron. In order to do so, the witch must spend at least one hour every two days holding the dreamstone and meditating. Generally speaking, Kaillan is not picky about the memories that are sent, and even a relatively uneventful week may be full of things that Kaillan finds interesting. A witch who fails to send memories in this way for an entire week is treated as one level lower for the purposes of how many spells she can prepare each day. This effect stacks if the witch goes for multiple weeks without sending memories. A witch can create a new dream stone to replace a lost or stolen one (or just because she wants to have an extra). Treat this as a magic item with a market value of 3,000 gp, a material cost of 1,500 gp, and a construction requirement that the crafter must be a witch with Kaillan as her patron. The witch does not need Craft Wondrous Item to create a dream stone.

Wandering Mind (Ex): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Kaillan as her patron becomes uncomfortable when she stays in one place for too long. As long as the witch has not moved at least 20 feet since the beginning of her previous turn, she suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and AC, and must succeed on a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) to cast any witch spells. These patrons end immediately as soon as the witch has moved at least 20 feet since the beginning of her previous turn.

Wanderlust (Su): Beginning at 12th level, a witch with Kaillan as her patron suffers from a constant wanderlust, making it difficult for her to stay in one place for an extended period of time. At the end of each week, if the witch is not at least 100 miles away from the location she was at at the beginning of the week, she becomes fatigued. If she continues to stay within 100 miles of her initial location for a total of three weeks, she becomes exhausted, instead. These conditions cannot be removed until the witch travels at least 100 miles away from her initial location.

Sylthavra, The Barbed Mistress

I will give you the tools to punish this wicked world. You can commit every cruel torture your twisted mind has imagined. You will sow pain, and spread it throughout the land. You shall have the power to bring suffering to those you wish. You really think you have a choice, don't you? That's so precious! I have broken far more impressive victims than you, without even breaking a sweat. I want you whole. I want you to submit. Kneel before me, worship me, serve me, and I shall give you the power to force others to do the same to you.

Description

Sylthavra appears as a beautiful woman, with porcelain-white skin and coal-black hair. She frequently goes unclothed, and when she does don clothing, it is always of the most provocative nature available. Her demonic nature is betrayed by the pair of sleek, black, bat-like wings that sprout from her back, and glisten in the light. Her beautiful features are marred by the dozens of gleaming metallic spikes and barbs which jut out from her skin, covering her entire body in a loose network of razor-sharp blades, perhaps half an inch long, and about an inch apart. Two exceptionally-large iron spikes form a pair of pseudo-horns on her forehead. While she is able to retract these spikes beneath her skin, and has seemingly flawless skin when she does so, she does not do this often, and typically only hides her barbs in order to reveal them later for shock value. She can also extend the metal barbs, as well, and enjoys creating spiked, barbed chains which jut from her wrist, which she uses in her almost-constant torture sessions, and in the very rare occasions she is forced into combat.

Sylthavra was once a succubus, but can no longer strictly be referred to as such. While succubi are creatures of sexual lust, and are certainly no strangers to such concepts as sadomasochism, Sylthavra has moved beyond all of that, and now lives purely for pain itself, with only the barest hints of sexuality still lingering. A creature of pain, not pleasure, she is considered to be corrupted by other succubi, though most others consider this a lateral move, at worst. A unique entity, she is no longer a succubus, and no other type of known demon, either having achieved some new status that may be the beginning of a new race of demons, or may be her first step on the road to ascending to godhood. She seeks to spread pain, and, more importantly, to pervert and corrupt the very idea of lust and pleasure itself, attempting to spread her own sadomasochistic tendencies throughout the planes.

Background

For millennia, Sylthavra was a succubus like any other. She spent her time seducing and tempting mortals, corrupting their souls and their seed, and spreading the taint of the abyss. She lusted for power more than anything else, however, and when she had the opportunity she attached herself to various upwardly-mobile demons, serving as a concubine for a time, only to leave her paramour in order to attach herself to his immediate superior. She was not content with simply being the lover of a powerful demon, however, and was frustrated with her lack of personal power, outside that of whatever lover she was with at the moment. Eventually, she turned her eyes to a minor demon prince by the name of Ul'thabrax. A green-skinned, six-armed brute who was said to be twelve feet tall, Ul'thabrax was not the most intelligent of demons. Sylthavra attached herself to him in the same way that she had her previous steppingstone lovers, but this time she decided to take a different approach. Rather than using Ul'thabrax to reach some other, more powerful demon, she instead used her closeness to the brute to overthrow him. She did not do this directly, but rather arranged to ensure that Ul'thabrax would be in a certain place at a certain time, away from his fortress and vulnerable, and also ensuring that word of this got to Irashen, a powerful and charismatic angel in command of a legion of holy warriors, who were battling Ul'thabrax's forces elsewhere in the abyss.

Unfortunately for Sylthavra, while Ul'thabrax was not particularly intelligent, the brute's vizier, Selvithicus, was, and he had no intention of allowing Sylthavra to replace his master. Selvithicus did not interfere in Sylthavra's plot directly, and allowed Ul'thabrax to be killed, but upon what she thought would be her triumphant return to her new fortress, Sylthavra was captured by what were now Selvithicus's men. Selvithicus put her through a great deal of torture, of nearly every sort imaginable. The worst torture that he devised, however, was to force her to swallow a shard of telekinetic metal, which he could mentally control. Once inside her, he force this shard to grow and expand within her, changing its shape and growing the various barbs which, to this day, still cover every inch of her body. Selvithicus enjoyed inflicting pain on the succubus, and would reconfigure the spikes and barbs within her regularly, a process that she found extremely painful.

As time went on, Sylthavra eventually learned how to control the shard herself. It was only a little at first, but as time went on she was eventually able to control it better than Selvithicus. When the time was right she fought back, using his torture implement to defeat him, as well as his guards. She declared herself the new mistress of the fortress, and her first act was to begin subjecting Selvithicus to tortures even worse than the ones that she, herself, had endured.

Sylthavra emerged from this process changed. No longer interested in matters of lust, she cared only for pain, both inflicting it and having it inflicted upon her. Nothing else mattered to her: pain was the only thing left that she enjoyed. Some metaphysical scholars suggest that this may be a side-effect of the strange metal that still inhabits her body, while others suggest that the change was simply a psychological one, which, because of the metaphysical nature of demons and other outsiders, manifested physically. Whatever the case, she now draws her nourishment and power from the infliction of pain, and the enjoyment of giving or receiving that sensation. Whenever a mortal harms another purely for the sake of making them suffer, she feels it, and grows ever so slightly more powerful.

Goals

Sylthavra thrives on pain, and so wants to see cruelty and sadomasochism spread throughout the multiverse. She instructs those who follow her to cause pain wherever they can, and to revel in pains inflicted upon them. More importantly, she instructs them to spread the love of pain, to teach others to glory and revel in the feeling of power when inflicting suffering on another mortal, or to learn the joys of searing, blinding pain, finding a transcendent bliss in its thorny embrace. In her ideal world, mortal society would view cruelty as an admirable trait, and consider it a right for the strong to torture and abuse the weak, who would thank them for the privilege. She hates love and kindness, and even has a strong distaste for sexual lust and base pleasure, and other things that are usually bread and butter for demons. To Sylthavra, the only lust should be for pain itself, and pain is a worthy goal, rather than a means to another end. She wants only to spread that vision across the multiverse, and to reap all the delicious suffering that that causes.

Though she is certainly one of the most accomplished torturers in the entire lower planes (no small feat), Sylthavra is always on the lookout for new techniques or practices that she can use to inflict pain on others. Though she prefers raw, physical pain, she has been known to enjoy psychological suffering from time to time, and has been branching more in this direction. She rewards anyone who can teach her a new technique for torture lavishly, or bring her an accomplished torturer to play with (with or without his consent), though with her twisted views, the reward is as likely to be a week in her torture chamber as it is to be a pile of gold.

Familiars

Familiars granted by Sylthavra were once normal animals, which Sylthavra, or one of her minions, tortured horribly for fun. Sylthavra prides herself on her ability to make unintelligent animals respond to pain in unusual ways, and conditions them to crave such suffering. Unsurprisingly, many animals don't survive this process. When she is done with the creature, she feeds it a small piece of the metal shard which infuses her own body, and inflicts a suffering on the creature similar to that which she, herself endured. At the end of the process the creature develops a rudimentary intelligence, though only Sylthavra knows for certain whether this is an effect of the metal, or whether she is actively imbuing intelligence in them in order to make their suffering more dramatic and exciting. At this point, the pain-conditioned, metal-infused semi-intelligent animal is given to a witch in Sylthavra's service, and made to serve as a familiar.

These poor, wretched creatures are not to be pitied, however, for while they may be horribly scarred by their experience with the barbed mistress, as soon as they are released into a witch's custody they take it upon themselves to begin spreading and inflicting pain and misery. Such familiars love to torture others, and seem to undergo a personality shift not unlike the one that Sylthavra herself went through after being suffused with the strange metal. Different familiars display these sadistic tendencies in different ways. Most amuse themselves by torturing and slowly killing other, smaller animals (and creatures already known for toying with their prey, like cats, becomes even worse about such things). Others choose to make victims of those larger than themselves, either finding a thrill in torturing creatures larger and more powerful, or simply refusing to allow size to be an issue. Such familiars take

to biting ankles, scratching exposed flesh, and otherwise making a nuisance of themselves. Many familiars of this sort implore their witch to give them subdued humanoids to torture, and, if their requests are granted, will torture the victim to death, a terrifyingly slow process when the familiar is a simple cat or even toad.

Many of Sylthavra's familiars also develop a love of having pain inflicted upon them, as well. These are by no means mutually exclusive with the previous type, and most enjoy both. Those that enjoy pain often go out of their way to cause mischief or otherwise annoy their witch, in the hopes that they will be punished for being "bad." This may also explain the familiars who choose to inflict suffering through being a nuisance, as they are secretly hoping to be caught and "punished."

Followers

Sylthavra's agents in the material plane are mostly witches and other occultists in her service. Though witches can come to serve Sylthavra in a number of different ways, most of the time she seeks out mortals with particularly strong sadistic tendencies. Sylthavra finds these potential minions through the pain that they cause, and psychically projects herself into their dreams. Once there, she offers the sadist power and magic in exchange for service. Most refuse at first, whether because they disbelieve her offer, or simply because they are too proud to willingly submit. Whether they agree or not, however, Sylthavra proceeds to torture her chosen witch in her own dreams, and each night becomes a hellish nightmare of pain and suffering as Sylthavra slowly uses pain to mold the prospective witch in her image.

Once she is satisfied with her progress, and the mortal shares Sylthavra's love of both inflicting and receiving pain and suffering, Sylthavra then grants the witch a small portion of her power, and releases her into the world to do as she wills. Sylthavra does not manage any of these witches directly, and they have but a single goal: go forth, and promote suffering. As long as the witch continues to cause (and suffer) pain for pain's sake, Sylthavra is happy, and since that is precisely what the witch wants to do, there is rarely much need for the barbed mistress to follow up. Of course, even Sylthavra's masterful tortures are not enough to win some people over to her way of thinking. Such stubborn victims usually die in terrible agony in their sleep, as Sylthavra continues to push her nighttime tortures further and further, or else eventually outlast the ex-succubus's interests, and are left to their own devices.

Besides the witches that follow her, Sylthavra also has several devoted cults which worship her, something that is not uncommon for a powerful demon. Most of these cults are headed by at least one witch in Sylthavra's service, but some become worshippers of the barbed mistress in other ways. The most common of these is The Fellowship of the Rose, which appears to be a religious sect which stresses the importance of overcoming adversity, and preaches messages such as "anything worth having is worth working for," and "it is always darkest before dawn." Their motto to the outside world is "would a rose be as beautiful, if one didn't have to endure the thorns?" Only when one reaches the inner circles of the organization, however, does one receive the revelation that it is not the triumph over adversity that is to be savored, but rather the adversity itself, which supposedly purifies the sufferer. This inner circle uses a thorny rose stem, without the flower, formed into a circle, as their symbol.

Rituals

Day of Suffering

This holiday, adhered to by almost all of the cults that are devoted to Sylthavra, is held on the last day of summer, and marks the anniversary of Sylthavra's triumph over her one-time captor, Selvithicus. On this day, those followers who are able are encouraged to travel to Sylthavra's fortress to engage in a massive orgy of pain and suffering, and those who are not are encouraged to create such spectacles where they are. Because both the abusers and those they abuse are so exuberant in their love of this torture, things frequently get out of hand, and it is not uncommon for a few deaths to occur. Sylthavra mourns these losses, though more because she can never revel in their pain again than for any other reason. A few of Sylthavra's chosen, who perform most admirably on this day, are given small pieces of the strange metal that infuses her, and are made to consume them, taking permanent positions in her stronghold.

Ritual of Invitation

Sylthavra encourages those in her employ to bring her attention to those who would be good candidates for being made into witches in her service. Though this is not compulsory, nearly all of the cults devoted to the barbed mistress engage in this practice to swell their ranks, and even solitary witches often do so because they enjoy the thought of inflicting the tortures of Sylthavra on the victim they mark. When a suitable candidate is found (and sometimes the definition of a "suitable candidate" is just someone that the ritual's performer wants to see suffer terribly), the witch must create a mixture of her own blood, her intended victim's sweat, and the tears of someone that is held dear by the intended victim. This mixture must be boiled, and the remaining residue used to draw a sigil on the target's forehead while she sleeps. If done correctly, the target will be visited in her dreams by Sylthavra that night, and every night thereafter, until she either submits, dies, or proves resilient to Sylthavra's predations.

Sylthavra as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Sylthavra as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Sylthavra, as well.

Spells: 2nd—interrogation, 4th—fester^{APG}, 6th excruciating deformation^{UM}, 8th—crushing despair, 10th symbol of pain, 12th—eyebite, 14th—harm, 16th—horrid wilting, 18th—symbol of strife^{UM}.

Pact Boons

By taking Sylthavra as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Sylthavra. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Sylthavra becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Painful Touch (Su): Beginning at 1st level, a witch with Sylthavra as her patron can inflict pain with a touch. Any time the witch touches another creature, that creature must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence modifier) or be sickened for as long as it maintains contact, and 1d4 rounds thereafter. The witch can use this ability offensively on an unwilling target by succeeding on a melee touch attack, but it also affects creatures that touch the witch, such as by hitting her with an unarmed strike or natural attack, or who attempt to grapple with her. The witch can resume or suppress this ability as a swift action (though if she attempts to touch another character, she must spend the normal action to make the touch attack). The witch can have this ability active for a number of rounds per day equal to her witch level. This is a pain effect. The witch cannot affect herself with her own painful touch.

Accelerated Healing (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Sylthavra as her patron is able to heal wounds more quickly, and recovers twice as many hit points from resting (two hit points per Hit Dice for a night's rest, four hit points per Hit Dice for full rest, etc.). This applies only to hit point damage, and does not allow her to recover ability score damage more quickly.

Sadistic Glee (Su): Beginning at 12th level, whenever a witch with Sylthavra as her patron successfully affects a creature with a spell or effect with the pain descriptor (the creature fails its saving throw and suffers the spell or effect's full effect), she gains a +2 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls for a number of rounds equal to her Intelligence modifier. During this time, she also treats her caster level as two higher than it actually is for the purposes of spells that she casts.

Corrupt Healing (Su): Beginning at 17th level, a witch with Sylthavra as her patron can pervert healing that occurs near her, causing it to inflict wounds, instead. As a standard action, the witch can prepare to corrupt any healing spell or spell-like ability that happens within 60 feet of her before the beginning of her next turn. If a creature within this range is the target of a healing spell or spell-like ability (including the effects of potions, scrolls, and wands), she can interfere with that healing, preventing the target from healing any damage, and instead suffering an amount of damage equal to the witch's class level. This applies only to hit point damage, not ability damage or other forms of healing. The witch can use this ability a number of times per day equal to her Intelligence modifier.

Pact Price

Sylthavra's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain

sacrifices, as outline below.

Pain Addiction (Ex): Beginning at 1st level, a witch with Sylthavra as her patron becomes addicted to receiving pain. If the witch goes for eight hours without being subjected to significant pain (a spell or effect with the pain descriptor, or suffering an amount of hit point damage equal to 1/5 or more of her maximum hit points within a single hour), she becomes fatigued, as she enters withdrawal. If she goes a full 24 hours without being subjected to significant pain, she becomes exhausted, instead. These conditions can't be removed until the witch is subjected to significant pain, though *lesser restoration* or more powerful magic can suppress the effect for one hour.

Stunted Healing (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch with Sylthavra as her patron becomes resistant to magical healing. Whenever she would regain hit points as a result of a spell, spell-like ability, supernatural ability, or magic item, the witch regains only 1/3 as many hit points as she normally would.

Love of Pain (Ex): Beginning at 12th level, a witch with Sylthavra as her patron is immune to any effects with the pain descriptor, though her love of pain can still make these effects distracting for her. Whenever the witch would be subject to a spell or effect with the pain descriptor, she instead must succeed on a Will save (DC equal to the saving throw DC of the effect, or equal to 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence modifier, if the effect doesn't allow a saving throw) or become engrossed in the pain. If she fails, the witch is dazed for a number of rounds equal to the effect's effective spell level (or for 1d4 rounds, if it does not have an effective spell level). Even if she succeeds on the saving throw, the witch is shaken for the same duration, instead, as her enjoyment of the pain serves as a constant distraction on her mind.

Perverse Magic (Su): The most powerful spells granted by Sylthavra have a tendency of turning on those who cast them. Beginning at 17th level, whenever the witch casts a 9th-level spell that allows a saving throw that is not denoted as harmless, there is a 5% chance that the spell targets her, instead of its intended target. If the spell does not have a target, then she is the center of the spell's area, or is otherwise affected by the spell's harmful effects in the most complete way possible.

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Tesherazz, Weaver of Words

A word spoken, never forgotten. A promise forged, never rotten. Perhaps the greatest power never recognized is that of speech. The difference between a rebel and a hero is but a word. The difference between a cruel despot and a wise leader is but semantics. That which is named can become more powerful from its name, or the name itself can strip away the majesty and mystery. These are but a few examples of the power of mortal words. I offer access to words beyond those of mere men, words which resonate with the very fabric of reality. With a simple phrase, you could level a mountain or stop a man's heart.

Description

Tesherazz is usually found clad in vibrant emerald green, and lounging across the arms of a throne carved from black stone. There are hundreds of mouths set into the throne, each one depicting a silent scream. His skin is a dull and dusty red, his hair as dark as night, shut short and carefully oiled until it gleams, as does his similarly-manicured goatee. His eyes glow with a deep and verdant green, and sparkle with an inner, eldritch fire. His legs are cover in brown hair, and end in a pair of cloven hooves, while a pair of curved horns emerge from his brow and bend backwards, parallel to the top of his head.

Tesherazz is a powerful devil that that creates verbal contracts with outsiders and mortals alike. Trading knowledge, he specializes in rare languages, including a supernatural "first language," called Wydnish, which is supposedly comprised of the will of the multiverse made into words. Tesherazz uses this eldritch language to imprint his will upon reality. He is happy to teach this language to others, granting them magical power by doing so, and in exchange these disciples act as his agents, and he gains a certain measure of control over them, in the form of a unique name, in Wydnish, which he bestows upon them.

Background

Like many devils, Tesherazz began with far more ambition than actual power or even ability. He toiled for millennia as a scribe in one of the many infernal pits where contracts were produced en masse, laboriously writing out incredibly lengthy agreements by hand and in advance, with which to arm the devils that did the actual tempting and corrupting. Though he was far from the only devil in that situation to be filled with a burning desire to rise above his station, he was more driven than most to actually act on such feelings.

Through treachery, deceit, and cunning, Tesherazz rose through the chain of command by tricking, enslaving, or otherwise removing each of his immediate superiors. Eventually he rose to a status that afforded him a bit more freedom about what to do with his time, and he began accumulating personal power. Always preferring to resolve conflicts through words (and contracts) than through violence, he invested centuries into research, and it was in so doing that he discovered rumors of a tome which contained the knowledge of a language which, supposedly, could be used to rewrite reality itself.

Tesherazz immediately sought out this tome, and, using his infernal status and minions, eventually procured it. He learned the secrets of this powerful language, which he called Wydnish, and then burned the book, so that no others could gain its secrets. The language was not able to simply rewrite all of reality, as he had hoped, and his plans to erase Asmodeus with a single word were not fulfilled, but the language was still a potent tool. He transformed himself with the words, ascending beyond his status as a mere devil and becoming something greater—though no less malevolent.

His connection with words and his mastery of Wydnish have caused Tesherazz to specialize in the power of the spoken word, and his seemingly perfect memory for spoken words and conversations, as well as his ongoing rivalry with another entity known as Name Eater, who draws power from the written word, have caused him to eschew writing of all kinds, drawing information from books and then burning them, and forming all his agreements verbally.

A failed coup attempt by Tesherazz against the infernal lord Geryon caused Tesherazz to be driven out of the infernal hierarchy, and he now acts as a lone agent, gathering souls and consolidating power for his own inscrutable ends, and preparing for the day when he can return to the nine hells in glorious triumph. In order to aid in these ends, Tesherazz recruits mortals hungry for power, offering them magic and a taste of his powerful Wydnish language in exchange for serving his interests in the material plane.

Goals

Above all else, Tesherazz seeks power. He is currently amassing large quantities of souls in his palace, which he ripped from the hells with the power of Wydnish when he was forced to flee Geryon's wrath. As the number of witches in his service grows, and Tesherazz continues to attract a growing number of demonic and mortal mercenaries, many find themselves wondering exactly who the enigmatic exdevil is marshaling his forces *against*, precisely. While many believe it to be Geryon, the devil who drove Tesherazz out, others think he may be preparing to slay Name Eater, his enigmatic rival, and perhaps claim her mastery over the written word, while others wonder if perhaps he might be reckless enough to attempt a coup against Asmodeus himself.

Additionally, Tesherazz has recently begun to doubt whether or not he has truly mastered all that Wydnish has to offer, and has become all but convinced of the existence of a second tome, which, if he were able to find it, would allow him to re-write the entire multiverse, and put himself at the center, in the ultimate place of power. As yet, his search has been in vain, but that does not mean that he has given up hope.

Finally, Tesherazz has recently become enamored of a lillend by the name of Rusellia, who is supposed to have an indescribably beautiful voice, and supposedly her song can make even mighty demon princes weep or laugh with joy. Tesherazz is determined to have this beautiful voice for himself, but his agents have so far been unable to capture Rusellia, who is always accompanied by a trio of angelic bodyguards. Tesherazz has made it well-known that he will handsomely reward anyone who helps him capture the lillend.

Familiars

The familiars that Tesherazz grants are created whole-cloth by word alone, as Tesherazz simply speaks in his secret language of Wydnish, and the familiar springs into existence, as though it had always been. This does not make the ex-devil's familiars any less real, but it does mean that each of them is undeniably shaped by Tesherazz's own personality, and in a way, each of his familiars is a part of his very essence.

The familiars that Tesherazz grants appear to be animals in most regards, but many have traits that are fiendish in nature. Some breathe out smoke, while others have glowing red eyes. Many of them smell faintly of sulphur and brimstone, and some have tails that end in a typical devilish point, even though animals of that sort do not have such tails. The one physical factor that is unique to all of Tesherazz's familiars though is their mouth, as each familiar grants has a mouth full of undeniably human teeth. This is most noticeable on familiars like frogs and hawks that normally lack teeth altogether, but is no less disturbing when it is applied to cats and dogs.

This change seems to have been made to allow all of Tesherazz's familiars to speak, and, indeed, any familiar granted by Tesherazz is able to speak Common, in addition to its normal abilities. In fact, Tesherazz's familiars are quite fond of talking, and witches in Tesherazz's service either go to great lengths to get their companions to be silent, or else learn to live with the constant babble. The change in teeth also changes the familiar's diet, and Tesherazz's familiars universally adapt a human-like, omnivorous diet.

Their propensity for talking is not limited to idle banter, and most of Tesherazz's familiars absolutely love making deals and bargains of every sort. This seems almost as much a love of haggling and the process of making a deal as it is about trying to "get ahead," and often these familiars will manufacture situations to create pacts and reach agreements, even when they stand to benefit very little from doing so. This can occasionally lead them to expend great amounts of energy pursuing small matters, such as haggling for an hour over an extra dinner ration in exchange for a warm blanket, for example.

Followers

Much like Tesherazz himself, his followers tend to place great value on verbal communication and the spoken word. Overall, they tend to be talkative, and are more easily made uncomfortable by silence than others. Some simply make small talk, others express their love of words through endless lectures, constantly instructing others on some point of minutiae or other, and still others prefer to constantly sing, hum, or even recite poetry as they pass the time. Like Tesherazz, his followers tend to avoid the written word, which is not to say that they will not read, but rather that they will not write their knowledge down, preferring to trust it to memory and communicate it through spoken words, instead. Because of their respect for words, and their mystical understanding of the power that the magical words of Wydnish have on the world around them, followers of Tesherazz are reluctant to lie outright, though this does not prevent them from phrasing things in such a way so as to deceive while technically telling the truth.

This is partially due to a longstanding feud between Tesherazz and an entity known as The Silent One, which has great influence over writing, and has been known to spy on the words that Tesherazz's followers write, or else completely strike them from existence in a form of petty revenge. In return, Tesherazz encourages his followers to compose nonsense writings and lies (or hire scribes to do so on their behalf) in order to misinform and diminish The Silent One.

Part of the process of coming into Tesherazz's service involves accepting a name that he bestows upon the witch, in Wydnish. This "true name" is said to encapsulate the very essence of the witch's soul, and in doing so give her strength, and in a way this is true, but there is a slightly darker twists that Tesherazz does not bother to inform prospective candidates about: the name he bestows can do more than simply reaffirm the witch's existing nature, but can actually alter it, albeit only slightly. A witch who is proud might become arrogant, while another witch might remain the same...except for a few moral or ethical codes that suddenly seem less important. In general, any changes that Tesherazz enacts when bestowing this "true name" must not change the core of the witch's personality, or else the name will fail to "stick." Further, the name does not prevent the character from changing or growing over time, though it can provide a certain amount of supernatural resistance to attempts to do so. Even still, the amount of control that Tesherazz can enact with these names is enough to give witches who learn about it pause.

In exchange for their power, Tesherazz expects his witches to act as his agents in the material plane, and is chiefly concerned with their ability to bring him souls through various pseudo-infernal contracts (these are always verbal contracts, never written ones, for reasons outlined above). The witches' power of Wydnish allows them to make these contracts magically binding, much to the dismay of those who try to cheat them, thinking that a verbal contract cannot be enforced.

Tesherazz has relatively few mortal followers who are not witches. Like any powerful fiend, Tesherazz attracts his share of potential cultists, but because he finds his arrangement as a witch patron so successful, he often grants magical power to prominent members of these cults, and they become witches in their own right. One growing cult devoted to Tesherazz, known as the Order of the Profound Word, specializes in discovering new Wydnish phrases from obscure sources. The cult is advertised as a path to spiritual enlightenment, but, in fact, nearly all members of the organization have their souls claimed as part of a pact cleverly disguised as a prayer. Tesherazz keeps a close eye on this cult, as his desire to unlock more power through forgotten words of Wydnish is tempered only by his growing concern that the cultists may discover some part of Wydnish that he is deliberately keeping to himself, and may grow more powerful than they are useful.

Rituals

Rite of Cleansing

Whenever followers of Tesherazz find a source of written knowledge that they wish to gift to Tesherazz and deny to The Silent One, they carry out this ritual. First, they create a special ink substance by mixing regular ink with their own blood and the ashes from a burnt piece of paper. They mix this all with sand, water, and wine and let it ferment for several hours after burying it in the ground. After this is done, the witch ritually purifies herself, using incense and singing to mentally prepare herself for the ritual. After that is done, she reads the book aloud, committing it to her master's memory. When she has finished the book, the witch drowns the book in the mixture of ink, preventing anyone from reading it.

Rite of Declaration

This ritual is used every morning, to reaffirm the witch's "true name," bestowed upon her by Tesherazz. The witch faces the rising sun, extending her hands towards it and speaks her "true name" three times. Each time that she speaks it, she must ring a small, silver bell. This rite usually bestows a sense of calm and certainty upon the witch, but if she has undergone dramatic change since receiving her "true name," it will fill her with unease, instead. This usually prompts the witch to confer with Tesherazz on the subject, allowing him to keep tabs on his agents who "go astray." In some cases, he will bestow a new "true name" upon the witch, and, in this way, can gradually change the witch's personality one name at a time in a way more profound than he can do with a single name. If the witch is moving away from his designs, however, he may threaten or cajole her, or simply end the relationship and mark her for death.

Festival of the Spoken Word

On the day of the spring solstice, followers of Tesherazz recommit themselves to her and her cause by gathering together. For three days, they eat, drink and share stories orally. Many bards come to such events, as they know they will hear stories here that can't be heard anywhere else. These three days are a flurry of song and sound. The rites can usually be heard for miles around, as all the witches' voices coalesce into a great, supernaturally-powerful din. There are usually bonfires made from books that have already been read aloud. Often, the people in the surrounding areas flee until the festival is over, as the sounds they do not understand unnerve and terrify them.

Tesherazz as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Tesherazz as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Tesherazz, as well.

Spells: 2nd—ventriloquism, 4th—steal voice, 6th suggestion, 8th—shout, 10th—commune, 12th—legend lore, 14th—power word blind, 16th—power word stun, 18th—power word kill.

Pact Boons

By taking Tesherazz as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Tesherazz. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Tesherazz becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Word Magic (Su): Witches who serve Tesherazz gain Eschew Materials and Still Spell as bonus feats at 1st level. Additionally, once per day, the witch can apply Still Spell to a spell she casts without using up a higher-level spell slot or increasing the casting time. At 6th level, and every six levels thereafter, the number of times she can use this ability each day increases by one (to a maximum of four times per day at 18th level).

Universal Language (Su): Beginning at 6th level, witches who serve Tesherazz are able to communicate with any creature that has a language. Whenever the witch speaks, all listeners hear what she says as though it had been said in their native tongue, and the witch hears all languages as though they were in her own tongue. In this way, it is impossible for the witch to identify what language a character is speaking, but she always knows exactly what is being said, and vice-versa.

Binding Contract (Su): Beginning at 12th level, witches who serve Tesherazz are able to form magically-

binding verbal contracts. In order to use this ability, the witch must make a verbal agreement with another creature, or be present when two other characters make a verbal agreement. Characters to be affected by this ability need not be aware that their verbal agreement will be made magically binding, but must willingly make the agreement, and agreements made under the influence of charm or compulsion effects, or even under mundane duress, cannot be enforced by this ability.

Activating this ability is primarily an act of will, though the witch must "close" the agreement with a statement declaring the contract complete. Most witches typically develop a common phrase that they use for this purpose, such as "so mote it be," or "before the world, so it be known," but others prefer to be more subtle. The witch can enforce any verbal agreement made with her in this way (as long as it is not compelled), but cannot make a verbal agreement between two other characters binding in this way unless at least one of the two characters is willing for her to do so. Any character involved in the bargain that is not willing to have it magically enforced may make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Intelligence)modifier) in order to avoid being affected. If any character involved succeeds on this Will save, the entire effect fails. Creatures that fail their saves are not aware that anything supernatural has occurred, though those that succeed on their saves feel a faint tingling sensation.

Characters that have made a pact or deal that has been reinforced in this way are magically bound to fulfill the exact letter of their obligations, as laid out in the terms spoken when the deal was made. Characters can deliberately avoid fulfilling the spirit of those obligations, as long as they fulfill the letter of them. Any character that fails to meet the letter of the agreement (as interpreted by the GM) suffers a -1 penalty to each of his ability scores after 24 hours of being in breach of the contract. Each day, this penalty increases by an additional -1, to a maximum amount equal to the witch's class level. No ability score can be reduced to less than 1 by



Sidebar: Tesherazz and Souls

Witches who serve Tesherazz are able to bargain for other characters' souls. This is a specialized use of the binding contract ability, in which the other party offers to give up his soul as his end of the bargain. The witch is magically bound to fulfill any obligations made as part of the bargain, as normal. The party giving up his or her soul is not affected until he or she dies, at which point his soul immediately becomes the property of the witch (or Tesherazz, or someone else, depending on how the bargain was worded). The character's soul is immediately trapped in a specially-prepared container (which must cost at least 1,000 gp per Hit Dice of the character in question) in the possession of its new owner. If the new owner does not have an empty container for the soul, it is free, and the bargain is wasted. If the soul is successfully trapped in a container, however, then the creature that gave up his soul cannot be resurrected by any means as long as the soul remains trapped. A witch in possession of a trapped soul gains no special ability to use it, but can expend it or trade it in any way that any other trapped soul could be used or bartered.

Tesherazz expects his witches to send him souls regularly, as this is the main reason for which he became their patron. There are no set quotas for how many souls the witch must send to Tesherazz, or how often, but he keeps a close eye on such things. Any time that one of Tesherazz's witches makes a soul bargain, Tesherazz becomes aware of it, as well as to whom the soul is promised. At least 70% of souls that a witch gains from soul bargains should be going to Tesherazz, rather than someone else, and if this is not the case, then Tesherazz is likely to intervene with the witch and express his displeasure. Witches who produce a prodigious amount of souls may have more leeway in this regard. Tesherazz always keeps a large supply of soul vessels handy, and is always able to trap any souls sent to him.


this effect. This is not ability damage or ability drain, and cannot be healed, but the penalties vanish immediately as soon as the character fulfills his end of the contract. Note that the witch herself is also bound in this way, and can suffer the same penalties, if she breaches such a contract herself. Only a *wish* or *miracle* spell can free a character from the effects of this ability.

Pact Price

Tesherazz's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Speech Dependent (Su): Witches who serve Tesherazz must use verbal components in order to cast their spells. They cannot apply the Silent Spell feat, or any other ability that would allow them to avoid using verbal components when casting their spells. Additionally, the witch treats all spells as having verbal components, even if it normally does not have them.

Honest (Su): Because of their close connection to language, witches who serve Tesherazz suffer mystical backlash if they speak things that are not true. Beginning at 6th level, any time that the witch speaks an outright lie or falsehood, she suffers a -2 penalty to each of her ability scores. This penalty cannot be removed by any means, and lasts for a number of days equal to 1/2 the witch's class level (rounded up). The witch can still deliberately mislead others, but must be careful to do so through clever word choice, implications, and phrases that are technically true but misleading. The GM is the final arbiter of what is and is not considered to be a lie, though a witch who spends a moment considering what she is about to say can always determine in advance if it will trigger this effect.

Named (Su): Beginning at 12th level, the "true name" that Tesherazz imposes on his witches can also be used to better target them magically. Any creature that speaks a witch's "true name" as part of casting a spell can attune the spell to her, causing her to suffer a -8 penalty on saving throws made to resist the spell. This also makes the spell easier to resist for others, however, and any targets other than the named witch gain a +2 bonus on their saving throws to resist the spell. If the caster uses the wrong name, his target will still gain the +2 bonus (and won't suffer the -8 penalty).



The Silent One

You are a seeker of power, and, therefore, of knowledge. This is not simply because "knowledge is power," but because power, without knowledge, is wasted. Strength, without direction, is useless. Guile deployed at random is selfdefeating. Knowledge is not only a means by which power can be attained, but also a prerequisite for its use. I have access to knowledge beyond any that you can imagine, and I am willing to share it with you, for a small price...

Description

The Silent One's true form is largely unknown, and, at this point, irrelevant. She is a bodiless entity, who does not exist in any one discrete place or time. Though she was once a woman, and of some measure of beauty, she is now a creature of pure thought. She has no voice, and cannot speak. She has no form, and cannot be seen. She communicates with others exclusively through writing, causing words to appear magically on a page as though written by an invisible hand. Her handwriting is a beautiful, flowing script that is full of curves and twists, and her writing appears without ink, in a deep shade of sapphire.

The Silent One was once mortal, but transcended her human form when she wished to gain access to all of human knowledge. The result was that her mind was linked to every piece of writing, and she merged into the very fabric of the universe itself, simultaneously connected to every book, every scroll, every cave painting and every love note, scattered throughout the multiverse. This gave her access to the knowledge she sought, but also crippled her, leaving her without a body and practically imprisoning her. Though she is able to interact through writing, spying on others' messages and communicating by making text appear, she is otherwise impotent, and unable to act directly on all he knowledge she has at her disposal.

Background

Very few know what The Silent One's identity was before she ascended to her current state, and she expends a considerable amount of effort to keep things that way. As a creature almost literally composed of knowledge and words, The Silent One is painfully aware of the power to be had in knowledge, and does not want any information about her past that might be used against her. That said, there is general consensus that she was once a witch or wizard of no small power and, supposedly, great beauty. She had a desire for knowledge, and made a deal with the devil Tesherazz (this much, at least, is virtually known to be fact, and Tesherazz confirms this part of the story, for whatever his word is worth), in order to gain access to all knowledge, in exchange for her soul. Tesherazz gladly claimed her soul, though his version of fulfilling the bargain as simply to scatter her mind across the multiverse and tie it in to the very concept of the written word, leaving her inextricably linked with writing of all kinds. To his chagrin, this process left her soul hollow and worthless, and ultimately the exercise served more to create a powerful enemy than anything else, for The Silent One considers herself to have been betrayed by the devil, and the two have been feuding ever since.

Trapped as she is between words on a page, The Silent One raged for some time at her situation. She longed for the physical sensations she had enjoyed in life—beautiful sights, gentle touches, the sound of music, the taste of good food, and so on, and, of course, the ability to act directly and influence the world around her. In her current state, she has none of these things. Her world is an endless sea of text and information. Before long she even began to hunger for sensations like pain or hunger, anything to end the eternal nothingness that she was seemingly doomed to.

Over time, however, she realized that she could influence the text, as well. Though this was hardly as satisfying or immediate as acting with a body, it did allow her limited influence over the rest of the multiverse. By conversing through text with various creatures, she could exchange knowledge for favors, getting others to act on her behalf. In the same way, she could also trade her knowledge for information not found on a piece of paper, or simply deliver sensitive information which, on its own, would alter events to her liking. In this way, The Silent One has begun to develop a web of informants and agents who act on her behalf. More recently (in the past century or so), she has begun granting magical knowledge in exchange for greater service, and so begun a career as a patron of witches.

It is worth noting that while The Silent One has access to all written knowledge, and while she is able to retain much more of that knowledge at any given time than even the most capable of mortals, she is not actually omniscient, and does not automatically become aware of every single word put to paper as it happens. Though she is able to keep a close eye on any information that closely relates to her interests, there are always a few documents that slip past her notice, and others which may contain information she seeks buried deep within a large amount of unrelated information. If she has the time and persistence to do so, she can eventually uncover any information that has been committed to paper, but usually she only becomes immediately aware of the writings of her followers and enemies, or which directly pertain to her goals.

Goals

Above all else, The Silent One seeks control. She has virtual omniscience, and the knowledge at her disposal is staggering, but she cannot act on it directly, and that still bothers her. She grows frustrated at having to operate through agents, and knows deep down that ultimately she would be impotent if all her followers were to abandon her. As a result, she does everything that she can to spread her influence, gaining more and more agents and bending them to her will. That way, if one of her minions chooses to turn its back on her, she has three others ready to enact a swift and deliberate vengeance. No amount of minions will satisfy her need for control, however, and she will always remain insecure about her ability to make her will manifest unless she can find some way to interact more directly with the world, preferably by taking physical form. She constantly scours the writing at her disposal—an endless task—for any obscure hint that may give her insight into how this can be done, and encourages her followers to seek out any related knowledge that may not be written down.

To a lesser extent, The Silent One seeks to preserve and expand the written word. When a piece of writing is destroyed, she loses access to it, and, eventually, memory of its contents. As a result, she instructs her followers to seek out and preserve rare texts, and to transcribe copies of any worthwhile tome that comes into their possession, ensuring that she will have access to the knowledge even if the book is destroyed. Similarly, she encourages her followers to commit as much knowledge as they can to ink and paper, in order to expand her knowledge into those few areas that her practical omniscience does not yet extend.

Finally, The Silent One continues to uphold her ongoing feud with the ex-devil Tesherazz, and instructs her followers to battle his whenever and wherever they can. Tesherazz has been remarkably successful at thwarting her by doing away with written words altogether, and simply relying on speech, and the virtual silence that The Silent One receives from Tesherazz and his followers fills her with fear. She wants to see the ex-devil destroyed before he spreads this practice any further, as well as to fulfill her personal vendetta.

Familiar

Witches who gain their powers from The Silent One are unusual in that they do not gain a familiar, like other witches do. Instead, they are given (or instructed on how to make for themselves) a special spellbook, much like those used by wizards. These spellbooks are quite precious to The Silent One, however, as they serve as a direct link between herself and the witch, and so they carry special protective enhancements, which make them difficult to damage, and prevent their text from being erased or destroyed. The spellbooks also serve as the primary means by which the witch can contact The Silent One, and vice versa, granting these witches a much more direct connection to their patron than most witches enjoy, which may or may not be welcome, depending on the witch.

The Silent One can differentiate each witch's spellbook, and instantly becomes aware of anything written in it. She uses the books to give orders and advice, and encourages her witch to use it to ask her for information or other aid. The Silent One can sometimes be a very demanding patron, and manages her witches much more closely than many other patrons do, in part due to her innate need to control things, and in part because she has such a direct link with each and every follower, and can almost effortlessly converse with several of them at any given time. The Silent One often requires regular status updates, and, depending on how invested she is in the witch's current activities, may inundate her with minute orders or demands every few minutes. While the witch in question may not always appreciate this close scrutiny, most know that failure to at least make reasonable efforts to meet with their mistress's demands is likely to end in another agent hunting them down and slaying them.

While The Silent One can easily identify the witch's book, she cannot identify the writer, something that is true of any written word, but can have more dire circumstances in the specific case of the witch's spellbook. Careless followers of The Silent One have been known to have their books fall into the hands of their enemies and used to feed their master with lies and misinformation, so these witches tend to be even more protective of their spellbooks than their wizard counterparts.

Followers

The Silent One has been slowly but surely developing an ever-spreading network of followers, who perform a variety of tasks that, when taken together, all work together to ensure the spread of her influence and power. Witches are but one group of her servants, and the bulk of those devoted to The Silent One are actually far more harmless in appearance. A large portion of her followers are actually scribes and historians, who she merely instructs to get into positions of power and information, and ensure that they write accurate and detailed information about daily events, so that she can stay up to date on current information, and remain well-informed. Similarly, many of her agents do little more than copy existing books, and recover books from ancient ruins or moldy dungeons. In places where periodicals such as newsletters are produced, she does everything she can to gain influence over those responsible for them.

In this way, many of The Silent One's agents can be found in relatively good standing in the community, and organizations that ultimately answer to her, including numerous monasteries and brotherhoods devoted to copying and protecting ancient texts, are considered to be benevolent institutions, and held in high regard. This does not mean that The Silent One does not have more unsavory servants, however, and, in fact, much of her power comes from blackmail, as any secrets written down on paper are an open book for her, and she can leverage them to get what she needs. Originally, she did this directly, forcing victims to serve her by causing blackmail threats to appear before them, but now she prefers to act through intermediaries, so as not to reveal herself, and employs numerous agents that do little more than carry out her blackmail instructions. She also keeps a large number of thugs, who are good for little

more than physical violence, whose sole purpose is to enact physical violence on those who refuse to listen to her words of wisdom.

Witches in service of The Silent One are generally called upon to perform all of these tasks, and more. Treated as special, generalist agents, witches in the employ of The Silent One can be called upon to perform any task that is important enough to require a witch's magical might to ensure that the job is done correctly. Of course, The Silent One knows better than to try to treat her witches as slaves after all, if too many of her followers turn away, she will be powerless to do anything about it. As a result, they are not required to be in her service constantly, and, depending on the witch, may be free to pursue their own interests the majority of the time. Each deal made between The Silent One and a witch serving her is different, and while one witch might be forced to spend almost all of her time in service, another witch might barely be used at all. It depends on exactly how much The Silent One is giving the witch, and how shrewd a bargainer she is. Witches unfortunate enough to be in a position to be blackmailed by The Silent One generally find themselves forced to perform more tasks for her.

Of course, The Silent One's most feared servants are her Nameless Ones. These were once normal servants, who were tricked, coerced, or otherwise convinced into giving up their names to The Silent One. This magical ritual stripped them of their identity and sense of self, and made them slaves to The Silent One's will. These unfailing servants are few and far between, but are almost always formidable opponents, and are used exclusively to spy on and police other servants, of whose loyalty The Silent One is beginning to have doubts.

Cults and organizations devoted to serving The Silent One can be found in many locations, and many different guises. On the surface, these often have very little to do with one another, although they usually tend to either be unknown or well-liked: it is rare for one of The Silent One's organizations to have a poor public image. Because they can be so different and difficult to identify, servants of The Silent One who need to find such an organization (for aid or comfort) usually contact their master for assistance in locating one nearby.

Rituals

Rite of Ink-Making

One way to ensure that The Silent One notices a given piece of writing is to write it in a special ink. The witch first boils nightroot and bark from an ash tree, which both must have been harvested under the full moon and mixed with a drop of the witch's own blood. The witch must then harvest juice from rotten grapes, and after adding it to the mixture, she must toss in an item or trophy of special significance to her. What this item is isn't important, but it must have some kind of story surrounding it. By adding various other ingredients, ranging from berries to ores, the witch is able to choose what color the ink will be. This mix must be boiled for several hours, and then the witch has her ink.

Day of the Telling

Telling stories on a cold winter night is a tradition that many hold, but the followers of The Silent One keep this ritual with a slight twist. Rather than tell stories through word of mouth, on this day they instead pen strange tales upon pages. The story must be one the follower experienced, or perhaps involve something interesting and personal about himself. The followers gather where they can and share the stories with one another, trading pages and pages of paper to spread the stories to others. Celebrants are expected to refrain from talking all day, but may still drink, feast, and make merry as they swap hand-written tales. Some organizations have adapted the ritual in such a way as to make it open to all, relaxing the prohibition on speaking in exchange for requiring that all attendants share a story, and that all stories be recorded, thus granting The Silent One access to a wider variety of tales.

The Silent One as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects The Silent One as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to The Silent One, as well.

Spells: 2nd—comprehend languages, 4th—blood transcription^{UM}, 6th—illusory script, 8th—symbol of slowing^{UM}, 10th—symbol of pain, 12th—symbol of persuasion, 14th symbol of stunning, 16th—symbol of insanity, 18th—symbol of vulnerability^{UM}.

Pact Boons

By taking The Silent One as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to The Silent One. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with The Silent One becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Seek Knowledge (Su): Once per day, a witch who has selected The Silent One as her patron may call upon her mistress for information. She may write any question in her spellbook, and have The Silent One answer it to the best of her ability. The Silent One then makes a Knowledge check on her behalf (she has a bonus equal to 10 + the witch's class level for the purpose of this ability, as she devotes more effort to finding information for more powerful servants). The Knowledge check made is whatever is most appropriate to find the information in question, or, if it would be more appropriate, a Diplomacy check made to gather information (the bonus is the same). If the information cannot be gained with a skill check, then this ability automatically fails, unless the witch is of 9th level or higher, in which case it functions as *commune* for one question only. If even a *commune* spell would not be able to provide an answer, this ability fails, although any time that the ability fails, the witch at least learns that the information could not be found. Regardless of success or failure, writing the reply and receiving an answer takes 1d4 minutes.

The witch gains an additional daily use of this ability at 6th level, and every six levels thereafter (to a maximum of four daily uses at 18th level).

Spellbook: A witch that has selected The Silent One as her patron gains her spells from a spellbook, instead of a familiar. She must study her spellbook each day to prepare her spells. She cannot prepare any spell not recorded in her spellbook, except for *read magic*, which she can prepare from memory.

The witch begins play with a spellbook containing all o-level witch spells, plus three 1st-level spells of her choice. She also selects a number of additional 1st-level spells equal to her Intelligence modifier to add to the spellbook. At each new witch level, she adds two new spells of any spell level or levels that she can cast (based on her new witch level) to the spellbook. The witch can also copy spells from a scroll or another spellbook, and this functions identically to the process of copying scrolls into a wizard's spellbook.

Unlike a wizard's spellbook, the spellbook of a witch devoted to The Silent One has a few special properties. First, it can hold any number of spells. Second, it has hardness 10, and the text within the book is immune to water damage.

Scroll Expert (Su): A witch devoted to The Silent One is an expert at using scrolls. Beginning at 6th level, whenever the witch casts a spell from a scroll, she uses her own caster level instead of the scroll's normal caster level. If the scroll has a higher caster level than her own, she can choose to use the scroll's caster level, instead, assuming that she is able to successfully cast the spell.

Scrollmaster (Su): A witch devoted to The Silent One has a powerful connection to the written word and can garner additional use out of magical writing. Beginning at 12th level, a witch that has selected The Silent One as her patron can cast a spell from a scroll without expending the scroll as part of the casting process. She can use this ability once per day at 12th level. At 16th level, and again at 20th level, she gains an additional daily use of this ability.

Pact Price

The Silent Ones's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Familiar: A witch who has selected The Silent One as her patron does not gain a familiar. If she would gain a familiar from another source, she may still do so, but it does not function as a witch's familiar, and cannot store spells, or be used to prepare her spells.

Somatic Focus (Su): Witches who serve The Silent One must use somatic components in order to cast their spells. They cannot apply the Still Spell feat, or any other ability that would allow them to avoid using somatic components when casting their spells. Additionally, the witch treats all spells as having somatic components, even if the spell normally does not have them.

Weak Voice (Su): Beginning at 6th level, a witch who has selected The Silent One as her patron begins to show the signs of neglecting her verbal mastery of magic in favor of her other focuses. Whenever the witch casts a spell with a verbal component, that spell is treated as though her caster level were 1 lower than it actually is.

Weakness to Words (Su): Beginning at 12th level, the witch's connection to The Silent One proves to be a liability when she is faced with words of power. The witch is treated as having only half her actual number of hit points for the purposes of the effects of any spells with the words "power word" in the spell's name (*such as* power word kill, power word stun, *etc.*).

Thyrvinistar, Don of Dragons

You want power. That is an admirable goal. But power is a costly commodity. Others will offer to grant it to you, but they will ask high prices indeed. A soul may not seem like so much, but when you take the long view of things, it is precious indeed. I do not require that you risk your life on some crusade, nor do I have designs to steal your body, or any of the other insidious schemes that the others who offer you power all have up their various and sundry sleeves. Nor do I care what you do with the power that I give you. All that I ask in exchange for my patronage is a simple, physical thing: for no more than base, raw currency, the power of magic is yours to command.

Description

Thyrvinistar is a colossal dragon, who can almost always be found lounging on one of the biggest piles of gold and treasure assembled in all of the multiverse. The hoard of coins, gems, and artwork of all sorts is literally the size of a small mountain, towering hundreds of feet up, and taking well over an hour to walk around the base. While the bulk of the pile is made of gold coins from every corner of every world, it is studded with treasure chests full of gems, various pieces of jewelry, even life-sized gold statues. In a few places on the golden mountain, there are even whole treasuries or grand, golden buildings which have been uprooted and moved onto the dragon's hoard, and the pile is studded with the occasional golden-domed roof of an opulent palace or temple.



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The dragon himself is truly massive, easily twice, and perhaps three times the size of an average great wyrm red dragon. Though it is clear that he is a red dragon, his scales are no longer what anyone would consider red, and have faded to a sort of dusty brown. Much of his bulk comes in the form of fat, and the dragon is clearly overweight. Judging from the fact that, at any given time there are usually half a dozen servants clambering over his scales and meticulously cleaning them, it seems unlikely that he has left his perch in quite some time. The bored look he almost always has in his unusually-colored purple eyes conveys a sense of disinterested curiosity.

Thyrvinistar is amongst the oldest of dragons, having lived for countless millennia. In this time, he has amassed incredible quantities of wealth, and has created for himself a vast network of servants, agents, and spies, all of which he uses to continue amassing wealth. One of the richest beings in the multiverse, Thyrvinistar adheres to the old draconic view that wealth equals both prestige and power, and that there is no higher goal in life than to amass as much wealth as possible, which is precisely what he has done. He has grown fat off his success, both literally and figuratively, and is no longer able to leave his extraplanar lair, as he has grown too large. Instead, he relies on agents, including but not limited to the witches that he patronizes with his incredible draconic magic, to operate for him in the world at large, bringing back wealth and entertainment to satiate his desires.

Background

Thyrvinistar is, perhaps, the oldest dragon still alive. There are records of a great wyrm red dragon calling itself Thyrvinistar as far back as 3,000 years ago, and the dragon himself claims to be over 5,000 years old. As far as history is concerned, Thyrvinistar acted much like other red dragons of his age, terrorizing the countryside and demanding massive tributes. As he grew older and more powerful, beyond even the power of a great wyrm, he began to make a habit of deliberately hunting down and killing very old and ancient dragons, determining that it was more efficient to kill them and take their hoards than to squeeze treasure out of local peasants (not that this kept him from doing both). Eventually he was receiving tribute from a great number of dragons who wanted to avoid being killed, and he leveraged these unwilling followers into helping him conquer a prosperous kingdom and forge a fledgling empire for himself.

This lasted for perhaps a hundred years or so, with Thyrvinistar steadily losing interest in the managing of his kingdom. He passed more and more power on to various stewards and seneschals and retreated into a pocket dimension that he had created to store his unbelievable wealth. He found himself growing tired and sluggish in his old age (according to his own reports, he was around 2,400 years old, at this point). Eventually, the don of dragons entered a deep hibernation while secluded in his secret lair. The rest of the world assumed him dead with cautious optimism, and his empire was torn apart by the various petty regents attempting to claim it for themselves.

When Thyrvinistar awoke again, 1,000 years or so ago, he discovered that he had grown too large to leave his lair. Various servants had remained with him during his slumber, passing down a tradition of service through the generations as they continued to labor for the dragon while he slept. Thyrvinistar is much less active than he once was, and his age and laziness shows in his growing preference to conquer through currency, rather than by force and awesome displays of draconic might. This is a sensitive subject with the dragon, however, and any suggestion that he might not be as young as he once was is typically met by an order for his servants to bring the offender up to him so that he might be devoured.

As Thyrvinistar has worked to restore his previous power and ensure that he is not forgotten (and to amass more wealth, of course), he has turned to a wide variety of lesser agents. Among these are the various witches to whom he grants magic in exchange for regular tribute, as the ancient dragon has developed incredible magical power far beyond that of mere great wyrms. These witches are only one of the many faces of his power structure, however, and he considers them no more or less important than the numerous assassins, spies, bodyguards, merchants, and politicians in his employ, and less important than the slowly-growing number of dragons that he is bringing, willing or not, into his fold.

Goals

Thyrvinistar's primary goal is simple; he wants more. To this dragon, life is little more than a game, and whoever amasses the most treasure wins. By this logic, it's safe to say that the dragon certainly seems to have a substantial lead, as there are few creatures in the multiverse who can claim to command wealth worth even a tenth of the dragon's massive fortune, but Thyrvinistar is not one to merely rest upon his laurels. He wants more treasure, more gems, more jewels, and more coins. Further, he wants the kind of power that can be used to get him more of these things more quickly and more efficiently.

Since becoming trapped in his extraplanar home, Thyrvinistar has become somewhat restless, and is always eager for anything novel or entertaining. He has begun to develop an interest in items that are not, in and of themselves, valuable, and cannot be sold for any real sum, but which are important because they were a part of history, or belonged to an important individual. He has begun a collection of historical memorabilia, which is quite impressive, and is arranged on a single wall, some 200 feet high and 300 feet wide, at the moment, allowing the dragon to peruse his entire collection, as he could not enter a more traditional museum. Thyrvinistar is always on the lookout for new items to add to his collection, though woe betide anyone foolish enough to try to pawn off a fake on the dragon.

It is rumored by some that there is a special, magical source to Thyrvinistar's longevity, and that dragons simply don't live as long as he has without magical assistance. Thyrvinistar refuses to comment on the subject (his age is a sensitive topic, and broaching it is likely to result in being eaten), but the rumors persist. Some say that the effects only last for so long, and that Thyrvinistar is covertly sending agents in search of that source, so that he can renew his long life before his time is up. Others believe that the dragon would like to see this magic source destroyed, but is unable to do so, and so constantly has agents watching other powerful dragons to ensure that they do not stumble across it and become potential rivals.

Familiars

When a witch officially gains Thyrvinistar as a patron, he gives her a gift to seal the bargain. This gift comes in the form of a coal-black egg, roughly one foot in diameter, which is, in fact, one of the dragon's own offspring, produced with one of his many draconic concubines. As much a duty as a gift, it is the witch's responsibility to care for the egg until it hatches. This requires ensuring that the egg gets enough warmth, and, of course, protecting it from predators. Though Thyrvinistar does not explicitly say so, any witch who sells her egg or fails to protect it is sure to face the dragon's wrath at the hands of one of his many agents, unless the witch clearly acted in good faith and lost the egg despite her best efforts, in which she will likely be spared, and a new egg granted, once she provides Thyrvinistar with a handsome gift to soothe his rage at the loss of a child.

Even before it hatches, the witch is able to commune empathically with the egg as long as she maintains physical contact with it, and is able to learn and prepare spells from the egg in this way, though the two cannot communicate with words unless additional magic is involved. Similarly, spells can be added to this egg familiar in a fashion similar to adding them to a normal witch's familiar, but instead of feeding the brew to the egg, the witch simply steeps the egg in the resulting arcane mixture. Luckily, the egg's hardness makes it unlikely that it will be damaged by most conditions, and it requires relatively little heat to incubate, making it a fairly easy task for even a witch leading a lifestyle of dangerous adventure.

After a time, the egg will hatch, cracking open and bringing a new dragon into the world. The color varies, as Thyrvinistar has many concubines of a variety of types, and there is no way to know for sure what type of dragon it will be until it hatches, though regardless of the color of their scales, all of Thyrvinistar's progeny have purple eyes, like their father. The newly-born wyrmling continues to serve as the witch's familiar.

Familiars granted by Thyrvinistar all share their father's greed, though because greed is so common in dragons of all sorts, this is sometimes hard to notice. Still, these familiars expect their witch to dote upon them with various gifts and trinkets, and to be treated to all the luxuries that they ask for. Particularly stingy witches may find that their familiars become sullen and resentful, or even threaten to call on their father to punish the witch for her insolence. While Thyrvinistar does not really care that much about such things as long as his progeny are not abused, or treated in a manner he considers beneath the station of a dragon, and if such matters do come to his attention he will likely give the witch a reminder to treat the dragon with respect, but this is more posturing than anything else, and Thyrvinistar expects his children to be able to provide and manage for themselves.

Followers

Thyrvinistar has many followers, but he does not really consider those witches he patronizes to be among them. For Thyrvinistar, the arrangement he has with his witches is a business arrangement, pure and simple: he has excess magical talent that he is not using, so rather than let it go to waste, he parcels out the magic to those that are willing to pay him for it. It is a business transaction, pure and simple. Though it may be dressed up with symbolic gestures such as him giving away one of his many progeny into the care of the witch, the fact of the matter remains that, at the end of the day, Thyrvinistar is more of an arcane landlord than he is a master, and he does not have even the slightest interest in what his witches do with the power that he grants them, as long as they pay the fees.

That said, if an individual witch proves herself capable and expresses an interest, Thyrvinistar has, on some occasions, been willing to accept the witch as a more devoted agent, gaining payment from her in the form of services rather than in gold. This is somewhat rare, however, and, as Thyrvinistar's network of agents expands, it becomes rarer still, for the dragon usually has enough talented people in his employ that he does not need to hire the witch, and would rather continue getting payments from her than benefit from her services.

A prospective witch first learns of Thyrvinistar from one of his many agents, some of whom do little with their time but approach those with arcane aspirations but who lack the patience or talent to become proper spellcasters, and offer them Thyrvinistar's patronage in exchange for gold. Such agents usually target struggling apprentices at arcane universities, but some wander the countryside looking for youths with far-off, wistful looks in their eyes. Whatever the case, once the prospective witch is tempted, she is taken to the dragon's lair and given a tour, then introduced to Thyrvinistar himself. If she agrees, a pact is made and magic power is hers, and she is returned to the mortal world with instructions on how her payments are to be made. If not, she is usually returned, though occasionally those that offend the dragon (or visit at a very poor time) are simply devoured for wasting his time, instead.

For the most part, witches who gain their power from the don of dragons have little in common and don't bother interacting with one another any more than they interact with witches of other patrons. Since there is little tying them together, there is not much reason to do so.

This does not mean that Thyrvinistar does not have mortal agents, however. He has vast networks of spies, merchants, assassins, and mercenaries which act in his name, and he takes a keen interest in their doings. While some of these belong to obvious organizations that are tied intrinsically to the dragon, such as the Red Wyrm trading consortium which has been growing in spread and power over the last decade or so, he also owns and operates numerous other, smaller ventures, which are not obviously tied to him, and which one might never realize was run by the dragon. As varied as the operations and faces of his various organizations might be, there is one thing that is constant throughout everything that Thyrvinistar touches, which is that everything boils down to the bottom line: the dragon is nothing if not ruthless, and anything that doesn't turn a profit and can't be exploited is fit only to be ignored or destroyed.

Thyrvinistar also has a growing number of draconic agents and allies, and when it comes to his own kind, he is far more ruthless than he is with mortals. As his sphere of influence and power has expanded once again, he has made a point of bringing other dragons into his fold: forcing them to either kneel and accept him as their liege, or else killing them outright. Though few dragons agreed to serve him at first, over time his reputation grew, and more and more dragons of every color agreed to serve him rather than die. Most find that this servitude is not so onerous, other than to their pride: dragons that take him as liege must pay tribute in gold, and are obligated to perform one or two services for him each year, but they are otherwise left to their own devices, as long as they don't act against their "lord." Of female dragons, the services Thyrvinistar demands typically involve time in his harem, and he keeps a rotating collection of dragons of every color, which sire his innumerable offspring.

Rituals

Rite of Tithing

The Rite of Tithing is how Thyrvinistar's witches pay him for their continued magic. While he always prefers that they bring the tithe to him directly through a portal into his lair or other planar travel, this is not always feasible, and so this rite was arranged for witches unable to pay him in person, in order to ensure that his payments continued on time. The witch must take what she is giving to Thyrvinistar, and place it upon a clear spot of land. Then, she must trace a thirteen-point sigil around the tithe with a piece of elm carved by her own hand. After this has been done, she must begin tracing arcane runes on each of the points of the tracing. The ritual is completed when she snaps the stick in half, and all the contents in the circle are transported directly to the dragon's processing vault, with an arcane signature indicating who sent it.

Thyrvinistar as a Patron

In addition to learning spells, a witch who selects Thyrvinistar as a patron gains a number of additional abilities as she increases in level, though she also suffers from a number of penalties as a result of her connection to Thyvinistar, as well.

Spells: 2nd—burning hands, 4th—resist energy, 6th—fly, 8th—fear, 10th—fabricate, 12th—form of the dragon I, 14th—form of the dragon II, 16th—form of the dragon III, 18th greater create demiplane^{UM}.

Pact Boons

By taking Thyrvinistar as her patron, a witch gains a number of special boons, specific to Thyrvinistar. As she gains levels in the witch class, and her association with Thyrvinistar becomes stronger, she is granted additional boons, as outlined below.

Charismatic Caster: A witch with Thyrvinistar as her patron uses her Charisma score, rather than her Intelligence score, to cast her spells. This means that to learn or cast a spell, she must have a Charisma score equal to at least 10 + the spell's level, rather than an Intelligence score of that amount. Further, the Difficulty Class for a saving throw made to resist a spell she casts is 10 + the spell's level + the witch's Charisma modifier, rather than her Intelligence modifier. Similarly, she receives bonus spells per day for having a high Charisma score, rather than a high Intelligence score.

This ability also alters her hexes. The saving throw DC to resist one of the witch's hexes is equal to 10 + 1/2 the witch's level + the witch's Charisma modifier, rather than her Intelligence modifier. Further, any effects of individual hexes that depend on the witch's Intelligence score or modifier (such as the charm hex, which normally lasts for a number of round equal to the witch's Intelligence modifier) depend on the witch's Charisma score or modifier, instead.

Familiar: All witches with Thyrvinistar as their patron gain a dragon egg as their familiar. The dragon egg cannot move or speak, but can still be used to grant the witch spells, and can still be taught spells. The egg is effectively helpless, but has hardness 10 and has acid, cold, electricity, and fire resistance 10. Beginning at 7th level, whenever the witch gains a new witch level, she should roll a d% and consult Table 1-2: Dragon Hatching Results to determine whether or not the egg hatches, and, if so, what color dragon is the result. A result of "none" indicates that the dragon does not hatch yet, and the witch will need to roll again at the next level. The higher level the witch is when the egg finally hatches, the more powerful the resulting dragon is likely to be.

All other results indicate that the egg hatches into a wyrmling dragon of the specified color, which serves as her familiar. If the entry is marked with an asterisk (*), then the wyrmling also gains the advanced template. Regardless of what type of dragon hatches, it gains all the normal benefits of being the witch's familiar, and retains all spells it possessed while it was an egg. The witch's familiar ability otherwise functions as normal.

Fear Aura (Su): At 6th level, a witch with Thyrvinistar as her patron is able to project an aura of majesty and power similar to that projected by dragons. While this ability is active, all creatures that enter or begin their turn within 20 feet of her must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the witch's class level + the witch's Charisma modifier) or become panicked. A creature panicked in this way may make a new saving throw each round to end the effect (at the same DC), and remains panicked until it does so, to a maximum of one minute. Creatures that succeed on the saving throw are shaken for 1 round. The witch can activate or end this ability as a swift action. She may activate this ability for a total number of rounds each day equal to 3 + her Charisma modifier. At 10th level, and every two levels thereafter, the range of this ability extends an additional 5 feet (to a maximum of 50 feet at 20th level).

Table 1-2: Dragon Hatching Results

	Witch Level									
d%	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th
01 - 05	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Green
06 - 10	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Copper
11 - 15	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Blue
16 - 20	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Blue
21 - 25	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Black	Bronze
26 - 30	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Brass	Bronze
31 - 35	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	Green	Red
36 - 40	None	None	None	None	None	None	White	White	Green	Red
41 - 45	None	None	None	None	None	None	Black	Black	Copper	Red
46 - 50	None	None	None	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Copper	Red
<u>51 - 55</u>	None	None	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Blue	Red
<u>56 - 60</u>	None	None	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Blue	Silver
61 - 65	None	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Copper	Bronze	Silver
66 - 70	None	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Copper	Bronze	Silver
71 - 75	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Copper	Blue	Red	Gold
<u>76 - 80</u>	None	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Copper	Blue	Red	Gold
81 - 85	None	White	Black	Brass	Green	Copper	Blue	Bronze	Silver	Gold
86 - 90	White	White	Brass	Brass	Copper	Copper	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Red*
91-95	Black	Black	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Red	Red	Gold	Red*
96 - 100	Brass	Brass	Copper	Copper	Bronze	Bronze	Silver	Silver	Gold	Gold*

Pact Price

Thyrvinistar's power does not come without its consequences, and in serving him, a witch must make certain sacrifices, as outline below.

Tithe: Whenever a witch with Thyrvinistar as her patron gains a new witch level, she must pay a tithe to the great dragon, in order to gain access to the next level of power. If the witch fails to pay this tithe, she is unable to advance further in the witch class. The amount that the witch must pay depends on the new witch level she will have, as indicated on Table 1-3: Tithe Prices. Note that the entry at each level is the amount that must be paid at that level, not the total amount paid at that point (*for example, a witch with Thyrvinistar as her patron would pay 100 gp upon reaching second level. When she reaches* 3rd *level, she will need to pay an additional 200 gp, for a total amount of* 300 *gp paid* to the *dragon*).

Table 1-3: Tithe Prices

Tithe Price
100 gp
200 gp
300 gp
450 gp
550 gp
750 gp
950 gp
1,3 <mark>00 gp</mark>
1,600 gp
2,000 gp
2,600 gp
3,200 gp
4,500 gp
5,500 gp
7,500 gp
9,500 gp
12,000 gp
15,5 <mark>00 gp</mark>
19,5 <mark>00</mark> gp

Sidebar: Managing Tithes

The amounts listed in Table 1-3: Tithe Prices add up to more or less exactly 10% of a character's wealth by level. In essence, if the witch receives exactly as much treasure as she should, then she should be paying exactly 10% of it in tithes. This will not, of course, always be the case. We could have simply set the tithe to be equal to 10% of whatever she earns, and have her pay it once per week, which would certainly be simpler, but there is a reason that we didn't. If a witch goes to great pains to acquire more treasure than she is supposed to have, we don't want that to be negated by the tithe. Similarly, a witch shouldn't be able to say "I'll skip my share of the treasure guys...oh, and by the way, Jim, I'm not sure why you bought that wand you can't use, but if you wanted to loan it to me I'd really appreciate it wink wink." Basically, if the witch is going out of her way to have more or less treasure than normal, her tithe should not be adjusted as a result. On the other hand, some GMs like to run games with a lot more or a lot less treasure than is recommended. There's nothing wrong with this, but you should adjust the tithe amounts accordingly. If the witch has half as much gold as she normally would, simply because you put less treasure in the game, that isn't her fault and her tithe amounts should be adjusted to reflect that. At the same time, if everyone has twice as much treasure as normal, then the tithe costs listed here aren't really sufficient as a drawback. Similarly, a witch character created at a level above 1st should have the cost of her previous tithes subtracted from her starting gold.



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Patrons Like You've Never Seen Them Before

Wizards get their magic from studying tomes. Somerers inherit their magic from their parents. Clerics get their magic from their god. Druids get their magic from nature. And witches get their magic from an eldritch pact made with a supernatural patron...at least in theory. But the mechanics behind the witch's patron class feature just don't promote that sort of thing. When choosing between patrons like "wisdom" and "moon," and knowing that the only real effect is a handful of bonus spells, the excitoment of choosing an otherworldly patron seems to just fade away.

This book takes witch patrons in a wild new direction that greatly expands them into something that can be fun and interesting at the game table. The book contains to new patrons, each of which is an individual entity rather than a vague concept, and each of which has extensive descriptions of his or her personality, background, and goals, as well as the types of familiars that the patron typically grants, information on other followers of the patron, and so on.

Even more exciting, choosing one of the patrons in this book does more than grant you bonus spells. Each patron comes with a number of mechanical benefits and drawbacks associated with making a magical pact with them, which function similarly to an archetype, meaning that one's choice of patron is meaningful mechanically, as well as flavorfully. With 10 patrons to choose from, there are plenty of options, including:

• Al'Rajan, a crafy directi cursed to grant any wish asked of him, who attempts to pass this burden on to those to whom he grants magic.

 Irashen, a celestial general who is happy to loan out some of heaven's power to mortals who will use it to fight evil.

. Jodan, an insane spirit obsessed with humor, whose magic is incredibly unreliable.

• Tesherazz, a powerful devil who empowers witches in his employ with the ability to make magically-binding contracts.

 Thyrvinistar, a powerful dragon who is willing to share his magic in exchange for nothing more than raw gold.

· And many more!

So if you've ever wished that your witch's patron was a little less one-dimensional, or just want some new options and archetypes for the witch class, this is the book for you. Even if you don't care one bit for witches, GMs looking for powerful cosmic entities to serve as enemies, allies, patrons, or temptations for their party will find a wealth of ideas and useful information on the various entities included in this book. Don't miss out on this chance to make your game a little more magical.

