# Weekly Wonders

# Arcamostatic

# Corruption

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# Introduction

Players have long wanted a chance to play as monsters, and GMs are always on the lookout for new and creative ways to torment their player characters. *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Horror Adventures* provided new rules for corruptions as a potential way to kill both of those birds with one stone, giving players access to exciting and monstrous abilities, while simultaneously tainting them and eroding their humanity and sense of self. While the eleven corruptions presented in *Horror Adventures* provide a wide array of options to choose from, there are far more things that can strip away humanity than those presented in that book.

This book focuses on a new source of corruption, arcanostatic energy. Mad scientists and their tragic experiments are a staple of horror in all its forms, and this is equally true for arcane experimenters, as well. By meddling in forces beyond our comprehension (or, in the truly tragic cases, being meddled with against our will), we invite disaster upon ourselves. The arcanostatic corruption follows this idea to the place where the hubris of wizards and scientists overlap. Creatures afflicted with this corruption find themselves suffused with powerful arcane energy, but each time they use it (and many other times besides) they risk a catastrophic outburst, which may eventually claim their life—and quite possibly the lives of those around them.

### Arcanostatic Corruption

Your body is suffused with arcane energy that is bursting to escape. This energy can be harnessed in a variety of ways, but may also prove too much for your body to handle.

### Catalyst

An arcanostatic corruption occurs when a creature builds up an unusually large amount of arcane energy within their body, without being able to properly release it. Sometimes, this is caused by exposure to massive amounts of arcane energy, which somehow becomes grounded in the creature's body, and must be carefully released without causing a catastrophic energy outburst. In more serious cases, a source of arcane energy is somehow embedded within the creature, whether from a mystical link to such an energy source, an implanted arcane or technological device, a spell gone awry, or some other means. In these cases, the energy continues to build within the creature until the source can be removed, a tricky prospect with the volatile nature of the energy.

#### Progression

The arcane energies that suffuse your body are highly volatile, and subject to sudden and extreme outbursts, some of which can worsen your condition, but you are also able to harness this energy and use it for a variety of purposes. You gain a pool of arcanostatic energy with a number of points equal to 1 + your manifestation level. This pool replenishes at the start of each day, and each manifestation allows you to spend these points to gain various benefits. There is a risk of having an arcanostatic outburst each time you spend one or more points from your arcanostatic pool, as well as whenever any of the following occurs: you fail a concentration check to cast or maintain a spell, you fail a Use Magic Device check of any kind, you suffer 5 or more points of damage from a spell or spell-like ability, or you are the target of a spell whose spell level exceeds your manifestation level. A single spell or check can never result in more than one chance of an arcanostatic burst.

Whenever you are at risk of an arcanostatic outburst, you must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC = 15 + your manifestation level) or the outburst occurs. Each manifestation's stain provides a possible result of an arcanostatic outburst. Whenever one occurs, the GM chooses the result from among these options, and can select a number of effects up to 1/3 your manifestation level each time an arcanostatic outburst occurs (minimum 1). Once an effect has been chosen, the GM cannot choose it again until all other available effects have been chosen for arcanostatic outbursts, or until the next time you rest. Once an arcanostatic burst occurs, you automatically succeed on all checks made to resist an arcanostatic burst for the next minute.

**Corruption Stage 1:** The first time you roll a natural 1 on a saving throw to resist an arcanostatic outburst, your body begins to shed an unnatural blue light which increases the light level by one step, to a maximum of normal light, in a 20-foot radius. You have no control over this effect, but it can be suppressed for 1 hour with a *dispel magic* spell. Treat this as a 2nd-level light spell for determining how it interacts with areas of magical darkness. The effect's caster level is equal to twice your manifestation level.

Corruption Stage 2: The second time you roll a natural 1 on a saving throw to resist an arcanostatic outburst, you radiate a strong magic aura, and arcanostatic energy can occasionally be seen arcing along your body in crackling blue bolts that dance across your skin. This imposes a penalty equal to twice your manifestation level on Disguise checks and Stealth checks. Additionally, you radiate a strong evocation aura when viewed with *detect magic* or similar effects. **Corruption Stage 3:** The third time you roll a natural 1 on a saving throw to resist an arcanostatic outburst, your body is unable to contain the unstable arcanostatic energy within you any longer, and you explode, dying instantly in a cascade of uncontrolled arcane energy. In addition to the normal effects of the arcanostatic burst, for every 3 manifestation levels you possessed, the GM may choose a single evocation spell from the sorcerer/wizard spell list, whose spell level is less than or equal to your manifestation level, and have the spell take place immediately, with your body as its origin point. The caster level for these effects is equal to twice your manifestation level. This process completely destroys your body and any worn or carried possessions, as though with the spell disintegrate.

#### **Removing the Corruption**

Removing an arcanostatic corruption requires finding a safe way to siphon off the built-up arcanostatic energy within you, and, most likely, stopping the source of whatever is causing it to build up within you in the first place. This typically requires specialized arcane or technological equipment, in conjunction with spells like *antimagic field* and *greater dispel magic*, and may even require *mage's disjunction*. Sometimes, in order to permanently remove the corruption, the corrupted creature must permanently abstain from using arcane magic.

#### Manifestations

The following are manifestations of the arcanostatic corruption.

#### Arcane Instability

Your body is suffused with unstable arcane energy, which can protect you from hostile spells, but can also cause you serious physical harm.

**Prerequisite:** Deflective Aura, manifestation level 6th. **Gift:** As a move action, you can spend two points from your arcanostatic pool to gain spell resistance equal to 11 + twice your manifestation level. This spell resistance lasts for 1 minute. If you expend three points from your arcanostatic pool, you can activate this ability as a swift action, instead. **Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that the outburst causes you to begin bleeding internally. If the outburst includes this effect, you suffer an amount of bleed damage equal to 1d4 per manifestation level. This bleed damage can be stopped with a Heal check (DC 15 + twice your manifestation level) or with any amount of magical healing. Even if neither of these occurs, the bleed damage ends automatically after 2d4 rounds.

#### **Arcane Reflection**

You can redirect magic back at its source, but occasionally are overcome with arcanostatic feedback, causing your body to convulse uncontrollably.

Prerequisite: Arcane Instability.

Gift: Whenever a spell fails to affect you due to spell resistance (whether from the Arcane Instability manifestation, or another source), you can spend two points from your arcanostatic pool to reflect that spell back at its source, as though with the spell *spell turning*, except that only that spell is affected, regardless of its spell level. Stain: Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that the outburst causes you to have a minor seizure. If the outburst includes this effect, you are stunned for 1d4 rounds. During this time, each round, on your turn, you provoke an attack of opportunity from each creature that threatens your space, as you convulse uncontrollably.

#### Arcane Surge

You can draw on incredible reserves of magical might, but other times magic seems to leave you entirely. **Gift:** Whenever you cast a spell, you can spend one point from your arcanostatic pool to increase your caster level for the purposes of that spell by an amount equal to 1/2 your manifestation level (minimum +1), and increase the spell's saving throw DC, if any, by an amount equal to 1/4 your manifestation level (minimum +0).

**Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that magic ebbs away from you, making it difficult to cast spells. If the outburst includes this effect, you suffer a spell failure chance for each spell you cast equal to 5% per manifestation level. This spell failure stacks with any other source of spell failure, and applies even to casters not normally subject to spell failure. This effect lasts for 1 minute.

#### Sidebar: Useful Corruptions

The rules for corruptions in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Horror Adventures* includes two variants, Useful Corruption and Vile Corruption, which alter how gifts and stains are gained. While the Vile Corruption variant works easily with the arcanostatic corruption, the Useful Corruption variant presents some difficulties. If you intend to use this corruption with the Useful Corruption variant, we recommend choosing one of the following adjustments.

Basic Outburst: In addition to the outburst effects granted by stains, whenever you have an arcanostatic outburst, the GM can always choose to have you suffer an amount of electricity damage equal to 3d6 + twice your manifestation level as one of the effects of an arcanostatic outburst. This ensures that the GM always has at least one option to choose from when you have an arcanostatic outburst.

*First Stain Mandatory:* The first time you gain a gift for the arcanostatic outburst, you must also accept the stain. This ensures that the GM always has at least one option to choose when you have an arcanostatic outburst. After the first stain, you can choose not to accept future stains as normal.

#### Aura Sight

You can see hidden energies surrounding creatures and objects, but sometimes this occludes your normal vision. **Gift:** As a move action, you can spend one point from your arcanostatic pool to gain the benefits of your choice of either *arcane sight* or *analyze aura*<sup>OA</sup>. In either case, the caster level is equal to twice your manifestation level. In the case of *analyze aura*, you can cease concentration and resume it later, but the spell effect ends after 1 round per caster level. **Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that your vision becomes overwhelmed with magical auras, blocking normal vision. If the outburst includes this effect, you gain the benefits of both *arcane sight* and *analyze aura*, but are otherwise rendered blind. Both the spell effects and the blindness last for 2d6 rounds.

#### **Deflective** Aura

You can cause an aura of arcane energy to surround you, deflecting attacks, but this energy can also unravel magical effects on you.

**Gift:** As a move action, you can spend one point from your arcanostatic pool to surround yourself with a shimmering aura of arcane energy, which grants you a deflection bonus to AC equal to 1/2 your manifestation level. This effect lasts for one minute.

**Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that an aura of magic-absorbing energy surrounds you. If the outburst includes this effect, you and all magical equipment in your possession are subjected to the effects of *greater dispel magic*, with a caster level equal to twice your manifestation level.

#### Sidebar: Random Outbursts

While the default rules for arcanostatic outbursts call for the GM to choose effects to apply for each outburst for simplicity's sake, if the GM and player both agree, having the effects of an outburst be chosen randomly can add an additional layer of excitement to an arcanostatic outburst. Because different characters will gain different stains at different times, there is no easy way to present tables to roll on to determine which arcanostatic outburst effects will occur. However, we recommend the following general guidelines for how to randomly determine which effects apply:

- Unlike when the GM chooses which effects to apply, each possible effect should be available for each arcanostatic burst, even if it was in the last arcanostatic burst.
- Count the number of available effects. If the number is 2, 4, 6, 8, or 10, assign each effect to a number (either in alphabetical order by manifestation name, or in the order they were gained, or any other order you choose), and then roll the appropriate die (if the appropriate number is 2, flip a coin).
- If the number of available effects is 3, 5, 7, or 9, assign each effect to a number, as above, and roll a die with one more side than the number of effects available. If the result of the die roll is the highest possible amount (the number not assigned to an effect), the GM chooses an effect from the list.
- For every 3 manifestation levels you possess, repeat the above process. Before you do, remove the effect chosen on the previous roll from the available effects; each effect should occur only once per arcanostatic burst.

#### **Energy Bolt**

You can discharge bolts of energy, but sometimes you accidentally release energy that attracts unwelcome attention.

**Gift:** As a standard action, you can spend one point from your arcanostatic pool to fire a bolt of energy. Treat this as a ranged touch attack with a maximum range of 120 feet, and no range increment. On a successful hit, the bolt deals 1d6 points of electricity damage per manifestation level. **Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that the flare of energy serves as a beacon to an extraplanar creature, diverting a summoning or calling spell to your location. If the outburst includes this effect, the GM determines a creature or group of creatures that can be summoned with a *summon monster* spell whose spell level is equal to your manifestation level. The chosen creature or creatures appear in unoccupied spaces within range of you, and attack you and your allies to the best of their ability, as though they had been summoned by one of your enemies.

#### **Energy Form**

You can transform your body into pure energy, but sometimes find yourself sliding out of phase with reality. **Prerequisite:** Static Field, manifestation level 6th. **Gift:** As a standard action, you can spend three points from your arcanostatic pool to cause your entire body and all of your worn or carried gear to transform into pure arcane energy. You gain the incorporeal subtype and incorporeal universal monster ability. Additionally, while in energy form, you can make an incorporeal touch attack as a standard action, which deals 1d6 points of electricity damage per manifestation level on a successful hit. Further, any creature that hits you with a natural attack, unarmed strike, or melee weapon made primarily of metal while you are in energy form suffers 1d6 points of electricity damage. You remain in energy form for a number of rounds equal to your manifestation level. This is a polymorph effect.

**Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that your body begins to rapidly shift in and out of phase, blinking between the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane. If the outburst includes this effect, it is incredibly disorienting for you, and causes you to suffer a 20% miss chance on all attacks, as well as a 20% chance that any spell you cast activates just as you become ethereal, in which case it typically does not affect the Material Plane. Your foes do not have any trouble striking you as you phase in and out of existence, and in fact gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls made against you, as the process leaves you highly disoriented and unable to effectively defend yourself. This effect lasts for one minute.

#### **Energy Reserves**

Sometimes, you have a seemingly endless well of magical might to draw on, and other times your arcane potential is tapped all too quickly.

**Prerequisite:** Arcane surge, manifestation level 4th. **Gift:** As a move action, you can spend one or more points from your arcanostatic pool to regain the use of a single expended spell or spell slot. The number of points you must spend in this way depends on the spell level of the spell or spell slot to be restored, and is equal to 1 + 1 per three spell levels (2 points for a 4th-level spell, 3 points for a 7th-level spell, etc.). Once the spell or spell slot is restored, it can be used to cast the spell normally.

**Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that some of your magical energy is stripped from you. If the outburst includes this effect, you lose a single prepared spell or unused spell slot of the highest spell level that you have remaining.

#### Static Field

The arcanostatic energy in your body can harm those around you.

**Gift:** As a swift action, you can spend one point from your arcanostatic pool to cause your body to be surrounded by a crackling field of defensive energy for one minute. While this energy field is in place, any creature that damages you with a melee attack with a natural attack, unarmed strike, or weapon made primarily of metal suffers 1d4 points of electricity damage per manifestation level. You may spend additional points from your arcanostatic pool whenever you activate this ability. For each point you spend in this way beyond the first, the damage dice the ability inflicts increase by one step, to a maximum of 1d12 (for example, a character with manifestation level 4th who spent two points would inflict 4d6 points of electricity damage, but if the same character spent three points, she would inflict 4d8 points of electricity damage, etc.).

Stain: Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there

is a chance that a wave of explosive energy erupts from your body. If the outburst includes this effect, it deals 2d6 points of damage per manifestation level to each creature within 20 feet. A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + your manifestation level + the highest of your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifiers) halves this damage, but because the burst originates from within your body, you automatically fail on this saving throw, and suffer full damage.

#### **Telekinetic Control**

You can create telekinetic fields, but in an outburst, this can cause objects to telekinetically attack you.

Prerequisite: Manifestation level 3rd.

**Gift:** As a standard action, by spending one point from your arcanostatic pool, you can cast *telekinesis* as a spell-like ability, except that you can only telekinetically affect objects, not creatures. Your caster level for this effect is equal to twice your manifestation level.

**Stain:** Whenever you suffer an arcanostatic outburst, there is a chance that you create a telekinetic field, which propels small objects directly towards you. If the outburst includes this effect, a number of unattended objects of Tiny size or smaller equal to your manifestation level fly towards you. The objects nearest to you are affected first. For each object, the GM makes a ranged attack roll, with a bonus equal to twice your manifestation level + the highest of your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifiers. Each object that hits deals 104 points of damage to you. At the GM's discretion, certain objects may deal more or less damage, as outlined in the spell *telekinesis*.

## New Spells

The following spells offer greater than normal arcane power, but are able to do so only because certain aspects of the spell are fundamentally unsafe, bringing the caster in touch with powerful and unpredictable arcane energies that can result in gaining the arcanostatic corruption. These spells are banned or restricted in most places where the use of spells is overseen by any sort of authoritative body, but because there is always a demand for quick routes to power, they continue to be used, despite all of the dangers. The exact danger varies from spell to spell, and is included at the end of the spell's description, in a section labeled arcanostatic risk.

Depending on how a character gains access to these spells, they may or may not contain warnings about the risks posed in casting them. If, as a GM, you choose to include a spellbook, scroll, or other source of these spells which, for one reason or another, does not contain obvious warnings about the spell's effects, you should allow anyone reading the spell to make a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the spell's level) to determine the risks it poses. If the character succeeds, she should be fully informed of the information in the spell's arcanostatic risk entry. If the character fails by less than 5, she gets a sense that the spell does not contain certain normal safeguards, and may have additional effects besides those that are intended, but she does not gain any specific information, and is not entitled to the information in the arcanostatic risk section. If she fails by 5 or more, she gains no indication that the spell is in any way unusual.



#### ARCANOSTATIC BOLT

School evocation [electricity]; Level bloodrager 3, magus 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3 Casting Time 1 standard action Components V, S Range 120 ft. Area 120 ft. line, 15 feet wide Duration instantaneous Saving Throw Reflex half; Spell Resistance yes

This functions as *lightning bolt*, except as noted here. The spell deals 1d12 points of electricity damage per caster level to each creature in its area, instead of the normal amount.

**Arcanostatic Risk:** When you cast this spell, you must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC equal to *arcanostatic bolt's* saving throw DC) or immediately gain the arcanostatic corruption. If you gain the arcanostatic corruption in this way, your first manifestation is Energy Bolt. If you cast this spell while you already have the arcanostatic corruption, you must immediately make a saving throw to resist an arcanostatic outburst, with a -4 penalty. Further, if you fail this saving throw by 5 or more, your corruption progresses to the next stage, as though you had rolled a natural 1.



#### **ARCANOSTATIC SHIELD**

School evocation [electricity]; Level alchemist 3, bloodrager 3, magus 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, summoner 3, unchained summoner 3 Casting Time 1 standard action Components V, S Range personal Target you Duration 1 round/level

Your body is suffused with electrical energy that damages those that attack you. Creatures striking you with natural attacks, unarmed strikes, or melee weapons made primarily of metal suffer an amount of electricity damage equal to 1d6 + 1 per caster level. If the attacker has spell resistance, it applies to this effect. Creatures wielding melee weapons that are primarily made of stone, wood, or similar substances are not affected.

While under the effects of this spell, your body is visibly wreathed in sparks and arcing bolts of electricity, increasing the light level within 10 feet by one step, up to normal light. You suffer only half damage from electricity-based attacks.

Arcanostatic Risk: When you cast this spell, you must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC equal to *arcanostatic shield*'s saving throw DC) or immediately gain the arcanostatic corruption. If you gain the arcanostatic corruption in this way, your first manifestation is Static Field. If you cast this spell while you already have the arcanostatic corruption, you must immediately make a saving throw to resist an arcanostatic outburst. You must roll twice on this saving throw, and take the worse result.

#### **ARCANOSTATIC TRANSPOSITION**

School conjuration (teleportation) [electricity]; Level magus 4, sorcerer/wizard 4, summoner 4, witch 4 Casting Time 1 standard action Components V Range long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level) Target you Duration instantaneous

This functions as *dimension door*, except as noted here. You are able to take actions normally after using this spell. Additionally, when you leave your point of origin, you create a burst of arcanostatic energy, which deals 5d6 points of electricity damage to each creature in a 5-foot-radius burst centered on the location you were in when you cast the spell. A successful Reflex save halves this damage.

Arcanostatic Risk: When you cast this spell, you must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC equal to *arcanostatic transposition's* saving throw DC) or immediately gain the arcanostatic corruption. If you gain the arcanostatic corruption in this way, your first manifestation is Energy Form, even if you don't meet the prerequisites. You gain the stain for this corruption immediately, but do not gain the gift until you meet the manifestation's prerequisites. If you cast this spell while you already have the arcanostatic corruption, you must immediately make a saving throw to resist an arcanostatic outburst, with a -4 penalty. For this saving throw, treat any result of 1, 2, or 3 on the die roll as though it were a natural 1. Permission to copy, modify and distribute the files collectively known as the System Reference Document ("SRD") is granted solely through the use of the Open Gaming License, Version 1.0a.

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