

# Porphyra



## Assassins of Porphyra Carl Cramér



**Pathfinder**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



## Assassins of Porphyra



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## Assassins of Porphyra

I had been down in the manure chute for three hours, waiting for his lordship to come down to the stables. A tipsy innkeeper told me one of the stable boys told him that the baron goes down to groom his favored mount every night – go figure paladins. I had done my homework, this was the most vulnerable spot in his daily routine, and the poo pit the only safe place—only rats down that passage and the stink covers my scent. Here I was with my blowgun and the specially-tailored toxic dart. A shot to the neck, and the combination of the dart to the spine and the poison should be a certain kill. Best of all, the dart was made of straw and would get lost in the straw, leaving no clue. Now, I just had to wait... And that is when my innards exploded with fire as the red-hot spike up my gut killed me! Rajuk take those Fire Splinters, they just had to protect their territory!

*Notes from a magic interrogation of an unusually talkative corpse.*

Assassins are devoted killers, professionals or zealots with lifelong training in the art of murder. Unlike warriors, who face foes as they come, an assassin has a very specific goal in mind, and any violence except against the target is a distraction. The perfect assassination is never noticed—not even by the victim. Nor are they thieves—assassins might be skilled in infiltration, but their goal is never simple larceny. Still, no job is picture-perfect. Assassins are often pushed into the role of both warrior and rogue by their employer, cult, or guild. Nor is every murder on Porphyra a professional assassination. Why seek out an expensive professional, if a band of barbarians can be goaded into killing your target for ale and glory?

By large, assassins come in two kinds: those that work for an organization, and freelancers. Both hire out for assignments and must be constantly on their guard against both the law and other assassins. Freelance assassins serve only themselves, but organized assassins must always put the interest of their order first. This puts them on the front line of the war of assassins. There is a constant underground war among assassins. Orders are marked by zealotry and paranoia, and actively seek to hunt down any competition and anyone who teaches their secrets, both independents and other orders. That doesn't stop refugees and turncoats from recruiting, seeking to shield themselves behind their students, but the life expectancy of young assassins is short indeed.

Assassination is normally seen as evil, but in war-torn Porphyra it is sometimes accepted as the lesser evil next

to war and tyranny. In a world where the strength and personality of a single warlord can be all that holds a land in bondage, assassins can be liberators as well as slayers. Those who favor this line point to the death of the minotaur tyrant Asterion of the Seven Principalities, how a band of adventurers turned assassins could free that land when armies and rebellions could not.

## Assassin Orders of Porphyra

Most of the assassins of Porphyra belong to an order, or is at the very least trained in a secret that once belonged to an order. Most of these orders are small, local affairs. Leaders may call themselves guild masters, matriarchs, or prophets, but rarely does their power reach further than the knives of their minions, and they frequently have to relocate to escape persecution. Few small orders are open to strangers. Generally all members are blood kin or recruited as children. This insular approach breeds fanatic loyalty, but limits the secrets of the guild to what a single master can teach. Some orders of assassins reach regional power, often through the support of a ruthless government. Such orders control a stable area where they seek to eradicate all other assassins, both to ensure their monopoly and so as to not take the blame for the acts of others. A regional order might be open to strangers that prove themselves, especially if they bring in new skills, but they must take contracts only from the order and generally work as outside consultants rather than full members.

A select few orders stable enough to have developed long traditions are described below. For more information on the places and gods mentioned, see *Elemental Lords of Porphyra*, *Gods of Porphyra* and the upcoming *Lands of Porphyra*.

## Clockwork Security

The Clockwork Lands is the ideal place for assassins, but it is a market that is tightly controlled. Ostensibly a security firm, it is an open secret that Clockwork Security is an assassins guild. Employing both company men and independent contract killers, Clockwork Security is one of the largest and most public assassin orders on Porphyra. The price of this openness is that the corporation keeps independent assassins under its thumb; outsiders are tolerated as long as they act as grease for society by eliminating troublesome worker leaders or facilitate changes in corporate structure, but if they go too far the corporate hammer hits them hard.



## Dusk Lords

Descended from the elven nation of Colothorian that was shattered in the NewGods War, the elves living in the shadow of Morah'Silvanath fight a guerrilla war against the inhabitants of the giant tree. In its shadow they have trained their own assassins, the Dusk Lords adapted to eternal dusk. They are friends to all kinds of vermin and fungi and farm them for poisons, the deadliest of which target plants. Relatively safe inside the guerrilla movement, Colthoria assassins can afford to not be paranoid. Instead they suffer persecution by the Silvanathi elves and harpies.

## Elemental Slayers

It is known that there were tasked slayer genies before the NewGods War, and murder was an accepted path of advancement in the elemental courts. Queen Antropda in the Haunted Sea is but one elemental ruler with assassin abilities. But today elemental assassins are disorganized and fractious, and it is rare to find more than a single master and a few apprentices working together.

## Evening Shades

Supported by House Vark, the ruling house of Tuthon, the Evening Shades are trained by demons and led by the Dark Mistress, the succubus patron of the house. Operating out of the pleasure-fortress of Shadowlight, their ultimate goal is nothing less than the ascension of their demonic mistress to the ranks of the divine. They combine pleasure and death, working the sex trade to gain access to both information and victims. Persistent rumors that some prostitutes in The Jawed City are secretly assassins is just one more kink and seems to attract rather than repel customers. Some of their members are of exotic races, like fetchlings and skulks, and keep a lower profile.

## Fire Splinters

The personal assassins and torturers of the elemental lady of glass Ashamar Shining, the splinter guild has a stronghold in the isolated desert town of Ayishim. Sending assassins out as their first probing agents to see if the land is yet ripe for their lady's return, isolated Fire Splinter assassins can be found across the world, seeking to create deep cover cells. The Fire Splinters pioneered the lingering death ability long ago, which is today common to all assassins. This is used as a cover by the Fire Splinters as they slowly return to the world; since every assassin uses some of the glass assassin's old secrets, signs that these

techniques are resurfacing are taken more lightly than they should.

## Haven of Calopia

Foreign assassins on manhunts in Calopia are often foiled by retired heroes who are not themselves assassins, making the shadow war of assassins impossible here. A retired assassin in Calopia might serve as a mentor or trainer for a young apprentice, but no orders are tolerated. This has made Calopia a refuge for retired assassins—in a place where so many have exceptional abilities and have done extreme acts of destruction, old killers feel right at home.

## Rajuki Dancers

Worshiping Rajuk Amon-Gore in his aspect of The End Of The Dance, the Dancers see killing as a sacred duty, a chance of advancement, and the re-enactment of their gods ascension all in one. Members who thrive on the fruits of their labor may have secret identities as respected members of society. Led by the Black Bishop, whose true identity is unknown to all, the Rajuki are chaotic and have only an informal organization. Rarely do they work together unless one member can gain leverage against the others, often by threatening to disclose their secret identities. Sometimes a visionary can build a large cult and become a real threat. Rajuki assassins use a black hood as their identifier, going hooded at cult meetings so they cannot identify their compatriots, and do their murders hooded to honor their dark god. They tend to use the divine or gruesome secrets, but may be given any secret as a gift from their dark god.

## Patrons of Assassins

There are two main gods of assassins in Porphyra, Shade and Rajuk Amon-Gore. Shade's cult is by far the larger, but Rajuk's is the more feared. Even more terrifying are the rare assassins of the elemental lords.

Shade is the patron of assassins, and most assassins pay at least lip service to him. Some assassins have patrons among the other evil gods as well, depending on their mindset and goals. More frequently, the faithful of other gods employ agents of Shade to do their bloody work. Shade tells his brethren to organize and support each other, but always at a price. The assassin is the point of the blade, the informant is the spine, the poison-maker the edge, the fence is the fuller that bleeds the target dry, the middle man connecting them all is the handle and the client is the pommel that balances the whole. All

work for their own best interest, together they prosper. If one part fails, it can be easily replaced, but if a part becomes untrustworthy the integrity of the whole is in peril. It is better to kill a distrusted partner than to put yourself at risk.

Rajuk Amon-Gore is the god of fanatics, death-cultists, and murder as a spiritual path. He is special in that the kill itself is a holy act, rather than a means to an end. This places him in opposition to Shade's more mercenary approach. Rajuk's assassins in theory belong to a Porphyra-spanning guild known as the Rajuki Dancers, but in practice most are lone madmen or small sects led by a vision of death. The Rajuki believe that the "divine spark" of creativity can be stolen. While some accept commissions like other assassins, they also go out of their way to find young, talented people to kill. Others take over the life of a victim, preferably a rich recluse.

Other notable divine patrons are Ul'Ul and Ferrakus who are special in that they sponsor assassins who are usually not evil. The builder and destroyer recognizes assassination as a useful tool, while Ul'Ul is the inspiration for dream assassins.

Most elemental lords were once served by elemental assassins and would gladly accept the service of any assassin today. Ashamar Shining is notable for having a special order of assassins, the Fire Splinter glass killers, though few remain today. Korufu the Shadow has few mortal servants, but still inspires dark thoughts, dark deeds, and shadow assassins. Wind of Jewels rarely resorted to something as subtle as assassination in her heyday, but her use of death and imprisonment in the New Gods War inspires necrotic assassins.

## The Porphyran Assassin Class

*The porphyran assassin is a highly trained agent of death. Just as death comes in many forms, porphyran assassins are not all the same. From raging fanatics to cold, detached killers-for-hire, the assassins of porphyra are a diverse lot.*

### Class Information

Adventuring assassins are often fugitives or the last survivor of an order lost to the war of assassins. On the run from both the law and other killers, they might be able to earn a place with a larger order of assassins or start their own order in time. Other adventuring assassins are on a long-lasting mission from their order, often ripe with secret objectives and last-minute instructions.

**Role:** In an adventuring party, the assassin is almost

always the point-man and scout, sometimes used as a living trap finder, bait, or canary. Few groups trust assassins fully and many try to keep the assassin in check by threatening to disclose his identity. It is generally impossible for an assassin in a tight and lasting adventuring team to keep his class secret, most assassins reveal their nature to their closest allies. An assassin can pretend to be a rogue, which may make compatriots guard their valuables rather than their lives, but when such a deception is revealed the assassin can be in grave danger from his erstwhile allies.

**Alignment:** Any non-good. Due to its necessary selfishness and callous indifference toward taking lives, the assassin class attracts those with evil alignments more than any others. Neutral characters sometimes become assassins, frequently thinking of themselves as simple professionals performing a job, a pretense that rarely holds. More common is the neutral assassin doing evil deeds for a good cause. An assassin that somehow changes to a good alignment loses that alignment when he next kills a sentient creature with a death attack.

**Starting age:** Assassins are trained, but this training begins at a very early age. They start in the lowest age bracket for their race.

**Hit Die:** d8.

**Starting Wealth:** 4d6 × 10 gp (average 140 gp.) In addition, each character begins play with an outfit worth 10 gp or less.

### Class Skills

The assassin's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (local) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), and Swim (Str). Assassins gain a number of additional class skills depending on their secret.

**Skill Ranks at Each Level:** 8 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

These are all the class features of the porphyran assassin.

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Assassins are proficient with all simple weapons, the hand crossbow, rapier, sap, shortbow (normal and composite), and short sword.

Assassins are proficient with light armor but not with shields.

**Secret Training (Ex):** At 1st level, an assassin must select a secret in which he is being trained. Each secret has a number of class skills, a skill bonus, and often adds to the utility of a skill. At higher levels, secrets also confer special class features on their members, see the assassin's secrets class feature, below.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** If a assassin can catch an opponent who is unable to defend himself effectively from his attack, he can strike a vital spot for extra damage.

The assassin's attack deals extra damage anytime his target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the assassin flanks his target. This extra damage is 1d6 at 1st level, and increases by 1d6 every two assassin levels thereafter. Should the assassin score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied.

Ranged attacks can count as sneak attacks only if the target is within 30 feet.

With a weapon that deals nonlethal damage (like a sap, whip, or an unarmed strike), an assassin can make a sneak attack that deals nonlethal damage instead of lethal damage. He cannot use a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage in a sneak attack, not even with the usual  $-4$  penalty.

The assassin must be able to see the target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. A assassin cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment.

**Poison Use (Ex):** At 2nd level, assassins are trained in the use of poison and cannot accidentally poison themselves when applying poison to a blade. At 3rd level, the assassin gains a +1 bonus on saving throws against poisons and on Craft (Alchemy) checks dealing with poisons. This bonus increases by +1 every three levels after level three.

**Table: Porphyran Assassin**

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day (Spell secrets only)				
						0	1	2	3	4
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Secret training, sneak attack +1d6	2	—	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Poison use, quiet death	3	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Sneak attack +2d6, poison use +1	3	—	—	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Death attack, uncanny dodge	3	0	—	—	—
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Sneak attack +3d6	3	1	—	—	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	First secret, poison use +2	4	1	—	—	—
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	Sneak attack +4d6	4	1	0	—	—
8th	+6/+1	+2	+6	+2	Improved uncanny dodge, lingering death	4	1	1	—	—
9th	+6/+1	+3	+6	+3	Sneak attack +5d6, poison use +3	4	2	1	—	—
10th	+7/+2	+3	+7	+3	Second secret	4	2	1	0	—
11th	+8/+3	+3	+7	+3	Sneak attack +6d6	4	2	1	1	—
12th	+9/+4	+4	+8	+4	Poison use +4, swift death	4	2	2	1	—
13th	+9/+4	+4	+8	+4	Sneak attack +7d6	4	3	2	1	0
14th	+10/+5	+4	+9	+4	Third secret	4	3	2	1	1
15th	+11/+6/+1	+5	+9	+5	Sneak attack +8d6, poison use +5	4	3	2	2	1
16th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	Poison mastery	4	3	3	2	1
17th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	Sneak attack +9d6	4	4	3	2	1
18th	+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	Fourth secret, poison use +6	4	4	3	2	2
19th	+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	Sneak attack +10d6	4	4	3	3	2
20th	+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	Instant death, ultimate fear	4	4	4	3	3

**Quiet Death (Ex):** At 2nd level, whenever an assassin kills a creature during a surprise round, he can also make a Stealth check, opposed by the Perception checks of those in the vicinity to prevent them from noticing the attack or identifying him as the assailant. If successful, and the corpse is not immediately obvious, those nearby might not even notice that the target is dead.

**Death Attack (Ex):** If an assassin of 4th level or higher studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (assassin's choice). Studying the victim is a standard action. Once the assassin has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the death attack within the next 3 rounds. The death attack fails if the target detects the assassin or recognizes the assassin as an enemy (although the attack might still be a sneak attack if the target is denied his Dexterity bonus to his Armor Class or is flanked). If the victim of such a death attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ the assassin's class level + the assassin's Int modifier) against the kill effect, he dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim is rendered helpless and unable to act for 2d6 minutes. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack.

If a death attack is attempted and fails or if the assassin does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 3 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** Starting at 4th level, a assassin can react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. He cannot be caught flat-footed, nor does he lose his Dex bonus to AC if the attacker is invisible. He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized. A assassin with this ability can still lose his Dexterity bonus to AC if an opponent successfully uses the feint action (see Bluff) against him.

If a assassin also has uncanny dodge from a different class, he automatically gains improved uncanny dodge (see below).

**Assassin Secrets:** At 6th level, and every 4 levels thereafter, the assassin gains an ability from the secret training he picked at first level. Each secret has a specific list of abilities taught at each level. Certain secrets give spell-casting abilities instead, as detailed in their description. The spells per day section of Table: Assassin only applies to assassins with secrets that give spells. Most assassins

are not spellcasters and have no spells per day, caster level, or spell list.

**Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** A assassin of 8th level or higher can no longer be flanked. This defense denies other creatures the ability to sneak attack the assassin by flanking him, unless the attacker has at least four more levels in classes that grant sneak attack than the target does in classes that give uncanny dodge.

**Lingering Death (Ex):** At 8th level, the assassin learns how to leave a sliver lodged in the victim's vital organs, a sliver that kills again when someone tries to raise or resurrect the victim. This is a free action when the assassin slays an enemy. The assassin can also use lingering death on a corpse as a full-round action. This can be done surreptitiously with Sleight of Hand opposed by Perception.

If a victim of lingering death is resurrected, it must pass a Fortitude saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 the assassin's level + the assassin's Dexterity modifier) or die again after 1 minute. This is a death effect. A *heal* spell cast after resurrection and before death occurs removes lingering death.

A 15-minute close inspection of the corpse can find and remove lingering death with a Heal check (DC equal to twice the save DC). It is possible to take 20 on this heal check with a 5-hour operation. Burning or otherwise destroying the corpse also negates lingering death, but the dead creature then requires *resurrection* or more powerful magic to be revived.

Lingering death also gives the assassin the ability to use death attack to paralyze (but not slay) creatures that are normally immune to the effects of Fortitude saving throws, primarily constructs and undead. Such a creature that fails its Fortitude save against a death attack is paralyzed until the creature recovers at least one hit point.

**Swift Death (Ex):** At 12th level, an assassin can make a death attack against a foe after only one round of study.

**Poison Mastery (Ex):** At 16th level, the assassin can apply poison to a weapon as a free action. A victim poisoned by the assassin must make two Fortitude saving throws against the initial poisoning and take the lowest result. Subsequent saving throws against the poison are made normally.

**Instant Death (Ex):** At 20th level, each sneak attack the assassin inflicts counts as a death attack, with no study required and regardless of the target's suspicions. The



assassin still needs to inflict damage for this to be effective. A victim need only save against this ability once per round.

**Ultimate Fear (Ex):** At 20th level, a victim slain by the assassin's death attack can be raised from the dead only with great difficulty. The murder was so horrible that the soul of the victim instinctively recoils and refuses to be restored to life unless it makes a Will save with a DC of 20 + the assassin's Charisma modifier. If the soul fails this saving throw, it cannot be resurrected unless a planar quest is made to locate and convince the soul to come back. It is the soul that makes this saving throw, and it does so before it is resurrected; it gains no benefit from any spell or effect on the body, but keeps the saving throw modifier it had when alive and benefits from any inherent resistances. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. Note that a victim that overcomes ultimate fear can still be killed by lingering death, above.

## Assassin Secrets

Assassins base their training on a series of secret teachings. A secret is the life-path of the assassin, sometimes even a spiritual path. An assassin chooses a secret at first level, and is assumed to have been trained in this secret since childhood. Once selected, the secret can never be changed.

Note that secrets and orders are not the same. A small order is likely to practice only one secret, but a larger guild might have access to several, and might even accept a stranger into their organization if he can teach them a new secret.

### Arcane Assassin

Arcane assassins use arcane magic in their deadly work, and are often affiliated with outsiders or schools of magic.

**Class Skills:** Appraise (Int), Fly (Dex), Knowledge (Arcana) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Spellcraft (Int).

**Secret Training (Ex):** Arcane assassins gain no class features from their secret. Instead, they cast arcane spells as a magus, except as noted here. The number of spells of each level he can prepare each day is given on Table: Porphyran Assassin. When Table: Porphyran Assassin indicates that the arcane assassin gets 0 spells per day of a given spell level, he gains only the bonus spells he would be entitled to based on his Intelligence score for that

spell level.

Unlike the magus, the arcane assassin suffers the normal chance of arcane spell failure in any kind of armor or when using a shield.

An arcane assassin starts with a spellbook containing a number of level zero magus spells (cantrips) equal to his Intelligence modifier (minimum 1). At each level, the assassin can add any one spell from his spell list to his spell book, provided he can cast spells of that level.

An arcane assassin can only cast spells of level zero to four, magus spells of level 5 or higher are not on the arcane assassin's spell list. Arcane assassins can prepare a number of cantrips, or 0-level spells, each day, as noted on *Table: Porphyran Assassin* under "Spells per Day." These spells are cast like any other spell, but they are not expended when cast and may be used again.

### Divine Assassin

Divine assassins serve the gods directly and slay at their call. Most serve Rajuk Amon-Gore in his aspect as The End Of The Dance.

**Class Skills:** Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis).

**Secret Training (Ex):** A divine assassin adds half his class level (minimum +1) to all Sense Motive checks and to Disguise checks to impersonate a specific person.

Divine assassins have no secret-specific abilities. Instead, they cast divine spells as a cleric, except as noted here. The number of spells of each level a divine assassin can prepare each day is given on Table: Porphyran Assassin. When Table: Porphyran Assassin indicates that the divine assassin gets 0 spells per day of a given spell level, he gains only the bonus spells he would be entitled to based on his Wisdom score for that spell level.

The divine assassin uses the inquisitor spell list, but cannot use spells that apply to class features he doesn't have (such as judgment). He can only cast spells of level zero to four, inquisitor spells of level 5 or higher are not on the divine assassin's spell list. Divine assassins can prepare a number of orisons, or 0-level spells, each day, as noted on Table: Porphyran Assassin under "Spells per Day." These spells are cast like any other spell, but they are not expended when cast and may be used again.

### Death Slayer

Death slayers operate mainly in the Empire of the Dead, working as agents for undead lords trying to have each



other murdered.

**Class Skills:** Knowledge (Arcana) (Int), Knowledge (History) (Int), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Knowledge (Nobility) (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** Death slayers add half their class level (minimum +1) to Disguise checks to mask themselves as undead and to Knowledge checks relating to undead. They can disguise themselves as corporeal undead of their own basic form (usually humanoid) at no penalty on the roll.

*First Secret: Slay the Dead (Ex):* At 6<sup>th</sup> level, a death slayer can make a poison or death attack that bypasses the undead immunity to effects that require a Fortitude save. A poison affecting an attribute the undead creature lacks, like Constitution, or Strength for many immaterial undead, still has no effect.

*Second Secret: Ghost Touch (Su):* At 10<sup>th</sup> level, any weapon the death slayer uses gains the *ghost touch* weapon property.

*Third Secret: Death Metal (Su):* At 14<sup>th</sup> level, a death slayer ignores any damage reduction or immunity to critical hits or sneak attack an undead creature has.

*Fourth Secret: Pursue Death (Su):* At 18<sup>th</sup> level, when an undead creature within 30 ft. uses a spell or supernatural ability (such as *fly*, *gaseous form*, *teleport*, or turning incorporeal) to move away from the death slayer, the death slayer can take an immediate action to gain an identical ability to the one the undead used and knows exactly where the prey went. This lasts for only one round, but if the death slayer gets within 30 ft. he can use it again the next round.

## Dream Assassins

Dream assassins perform murder inspired by dreams of paradise, but their most insidious ability is to indoctrinate others through the use of drugged visions.

**Class Skills:** Knowledge (Planes) (Int), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** Dream assassins add half their class level (minimum +1) to Sense Motive checks and to Heal checks related to drugs and addiction. They also gain this bonus on opposed Charisma checks related to charm effects (see *charm person*). Finally, they can use assish as if it was an injected or ingested poison with a Fortitude save DC of 14.

*First Secret: Visit to Paradise (Ex)* A victim is brought to a state of sensual bliss through the use of the wisdom-sapping drug assish. While unconscious the victim is brought to a paradisiacal setting, where he is indoctrinated with instructions of the dream assassin's choosing. The dream assassin makes a Sense Motive check to determine what pleasures the target are vulnerable to, with a DC of 10 + 2x the target's Will save bonus. This requires 5 minutes of observation, either before or after administering the drug. These pleasures generally are creature comforts like food and drink, sexually attractive company, loving attention, and a luxurious setting, but vary from person to person. The dream assassin must provide facsimiles of these things, though they can be rather simple as the victim is stupefied by the drug. The entire process takes 4 hours. At the end the victim is subject to one permanent *suggestion* per three levels of the assassin (multiple *suggestions* allows more than one form of conditioning), but is allowed a Will save every 24 hours to throw off the effect, and it can also be broken as outlined in the spell. The DC of this save is 10 + half the dream assassin's Sense Motive skill modifier. Taking a dose of assish (even a cut dose) voids the saving throw for that day. Breaking one effect of visit to paradise breaks all of the effects (see below for possible additional effects). This is a non-magical effect, thwarting effects that detect and remove magic or enchantments.

*Second Secret: Friends of Paradise (Ex)* At 10<sup>th</sup> level, visit to paradise can create a *charm monster* effect on the target, charming him in relation to the assassin. All rules for visit to paradise apply. The Sense Motive DC of sensing this charm is 20 + the dream assassin's Sense Motive

### Assish (drug)

The leaves of the assish bush can be smoked, chewed, or dissolved in wine. Assish brings a quick high followed by a long comfortable period of mellow mood. Assish can be cut down to 1/10 concentration with only recreational effects, taking the cut drug prolongs the addiction and recovery process.

**Type** drug (ingested or inhaled); **Addiction** moderate, Fortitude DC 20

**Effects** 2d12 minutes euphoria during which user is insensate and helpless; followed by 2d6 hours of a comfortable mellow mood and a -4 penalty on Perception and Will saves.

**Damage** 1d3 Wis damage

**Price** 120 gp

modifier.

*Third Secret: Head in the Clouds (Ex/Su)* At 14<sup>th</sup> level, visit to paradise can create a *dominate monster* effect on the target. This is an exceptional effect except when the telepathy aspect is active, at which times it becomes a supernatural effect. All rules for visit to paradise apply. The Sense Motive DC of sensing this charm is 10 + the dream assassin's Sense Motive modifier.

*Fourth Secret: Astral Projection (Sp)* At 18<sup>th</sup> level, the dream assassin can cast *astral projection* once per day as an oracle of his assassin level. This takes the normal 30 minutes, but does not require a material component.

## Dusk Assassin

Dusk assassins were trained in the shadow of Morah'Silvanath and fight a guerrilla war to destroy the great tree and restore their shattered homeland.

**Class Skills:** Knowledge (Dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (Nature) (Int), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** Dusk assassins add half their class level (minimum +1) to Survival checks and to Knowledge (Nature) checks to identify plant creatures, to gather specific plants, and to know the medicinal uses of plants. Dusk assassins know secret methods that allow them to bypass the poison immunity of plant creatures; any poison administered by a dusk assassin affects creatures of the plant type normally, ignoring the poison resistance of the plant creature type.

*First Secret: Spore Breath (Ex)* At 6<sup>th</sup> level the dusk assassin deliberately cultivates a symbiotic mold in his lungs, and can exhale the spores of this mold in a 15 ft. cone as a swift action. Creatures in the cone must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + half the assassin's level + the assassin's Dexterity modifier) or become dazzled for one round. Dazzled creatures are considered distracted as described in the Stealth skill.

The assassin can take a standard action that does not trigger attacks of opportunity to ingest a poison in the same round he uses spore breath. The spores absorb and transmit the poison, all who fail their saving throw against spore breath are exposed to the poison (in addition to being dazzled), regardless of how the poison is normally transmitted.

*Second Secret: Vermin Bond (Ex)* At 10<sup>th</sup> level the dusk assassin forms a link with vermin. Vermin start out with an attitude of indifferent towards the dusk assassin (instead of the usual unfriendly) and generally won't

attack the dusk assassin (or his companions) unless attacked first. The dusk assassin can use Survival as if it was Diplomacy to change the attitude of vermin. The dusk assassin can use Survival as if it was Handle Animal to train vermin to perform tricks as if they were animals, but each vermin can only learn one trick. Both these effects bypass vermin's usual mind-affecting immunity.

*Third Secret: Fungus Bond (Ex)* At 14<sup>th</sup> level the dusk assassin forms the same bond with fungus plant creatures as with vermin, above. Only plant creatures of Intelligence 4 or less have their attitude changed by this ability. The dusk assassin can also use Survival to teach tricks to fungal plant creatures of low Intelligence as if they were animals.

*Fourth Secret: Spore Meld (Ex)* At 18<sup>th</sup> level the symbiotic spores in the dusk assassin's lungs can now reproduce poison. The dusk assassin can continue to use the last poison he imbibed with spore breath again and again, but each use after the first inflicts one point of Constitution damage. Using spore breath in this way is still a swift action. A dusk assassin immune to Constitution damage cannot use this class feature.

## Elemental Assassin

Elemental assassins channel the wrath of the elements.

**Class Skills:** Fly (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (Planes), Survival (Wis), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Su):** At 1<sup>st</sup> level, an elemental assassin gains a bonus equal to half his class level (minimum +1) on Use Magic Device checks and on Stealth checks in environments favorable to his element, as listed here. The elemental assassin must choose one element and gains advantages when using stealth in situations marked by that element; air (mist, fog, strong wind or more), earth (bare stone or soil), fire (smoke, fumes, fire), or water (rain, snow, underwater). He can use the Stealth skill without cover or concealment whenever he gains this bonus, but cannot hide if directly observed, a distraction is needed.

*First Secret: Elemental Fury (Su)* At 6<sup>th</sup> level, as a free action, any melee weapon, natural attack, or unarmed attack the elemental assassin uses can be sheathed in energy that deals an extra 1d6 points of damage on a successful hit, like the *flaming* weapon property. The type of damage depends on the element chosen at level 1; air (electricity), earth (acid), fire (fire), or water (cold). This does not harm the elemental assassin or his weapon. In a sneak attack using elemental fury, the additional dam-

age from sneak attack is elemental damage, and damage from elemental fury and sneak attack stacks.

*Second Secret: Elemental Resistance (Su)* At 10th level, the elemental assassin is protected from the type of energy he deals with elemental fury. The elemental assassin gains resistance to this type of energy equal to his class level.

*Third Secret: Elemental Burst (Su)* At 14th level, elemental fury attacks gain the *flaming burst* property, doing the same type of damage as elemental fury.

*Fourth Secret: Elemental Stride (Su)* At 18th level the elemental assassin gains a movement speed based on the element chosen at level 1. Air: fly 90 ft. (average). Earth: burrow 30 ft. (no tunnel). Fire: +30 ft. circumstance bonus to land speed. Water: swim 60 ft.

## Glass Assassin

Descended from the Fire Splinters that served the elemental lord Ashamar Shining, glass assassins are perceptive and turn glass into a lethal substance.

**Class Skills:** Appraise (Int), Knowledge (Arcana), Knowledge (Engineering), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Su):** At 1st level, a glass assassin gains a bonus equal to half his class level (minimum +1) on Perception checks and on Craft (glassw) checks. Glass assassins can use Craft (glass) to make walls, vehicles and melee weapons that are as durable as those made of common materials, at the normal cost. See the section on new uses of skills for rules on making fragile glass weapons.

*First Secret: Cutting Crystal (Ex)* At 6th level, the glass assassin gains an Improved Critical feat (ignoring prerequisites) that works with all weapons or ammunition made of glass. If this is used as a prerequisite for other feats, those feats also work with all glass weapons.

*Second Secret: Weapon Bottle (Ex):* At 10<sup>th</sup> level, the glass assassin can use Craft (glassworker) to make fragile piercing glass weapons (usually daggers or ammunition, but any piercing weapon works) that double as poison containers. Such a weapon/container can be broken open to access the poison inside (as uncorking a normal bottle) or used as a weapon that breaks inside the target, injecting a particularly concentrated dose of poison, increasing the poison's save DC by +2. Someone that lacks this ability can break a weapon bottle open to access the poison, but cannot cause it to break inside a target. A weapon bottle costs 1/5 as much as a regular weapon, or

double the normal cost for ammunition.

*Third Secret: Lingerin Glass (Ex)* At 14th level, any damaging attack with a glass weapon leaves splinters of glass inside the victim, splinters that counteract healing. Any hit point recovery for the victim are reduced by half, including such means as rest, regeneration, healing, or fast healing. Each day after rest, a victim of lingering glass can make a Fortitude save to expel the glass and negate the effect with a DC of 10 + ½ the glass assassin's level + the glass assassin's Intelligence modifier. Lingerin glass can also be removed in the same way as lingering death.

*Fourth Secret: Glass Shards (Su)* At 18th level, when a glass weapon in use by the assassin breaks, it explodes into a burst of fragments. The main target of the attack is affected normally, and all enemies within 5 ft. must make a Reflex save (DC 10 + ½ the glass assassin's level + the glass assassin's Intelligence bonus) or take a half-damage hit (including sneak attack damage if targets are outflanked or denied their Dexterity bonus to AC). Splash targets also suffer lingering glass. If the glass weapon is a weapon bottle, splash victims are also injected with the poison but at its original save DC.

## Gruesome Assassin

Gruesome assassins revel in the spectacle of death, and use shock and awe to great effect.

**Class Skills:** Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Cha), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** At 1st level, a gruesome assassin becomes a master of intimidation and its opposite, the art of appearing unassuming. He adds half his assassin level (minimum +1) to all Intimidate checks and to Disguise checks to assume a generic appearance rather than to imitate a specific person. The gruesome assassin gains Dazzling Display as a bonus feat and can ignore the weapon focus prerequisite for Dazzling Display and all other feats that have Dazzling Display as a prerequisite.

*First Secret: Fear is Death (Ex)* At 6th level, the gruesome assassin can sneak attack an enemy that suffers from any fear effect.

*Second Secret: Gruesome Death (Ex)* At 10th level, the gruesome assassin can use Dazzling Display as an immediate action after killing an enemy.

*Third Secret: Gruesome Sneak Attack (Ex)* At 14th level, the gruesome assassin can use Dazzling Display as an immediate action after inflicting sneak attack damage.

*Fourth Secret: Gruesome Entrance (Ex)* At 18th level, the gruesome assassin can use Dazzling Display as an immediate action in a surprise round or when revealing himself from disguise or Stealth.

### Necrotic Assassin

Necrotic assassins find power in a mystical union with death. Some hold the elemental lord Wind of Jewels as their patron, though they are not organized enough to be called an order.

**Class Skills:** Knowledge (Arcana) (Int), Knowledge (Planes) (Int), Knowledge (Religion) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** A necrotic assassin adds half his class level (minimum +1) to Use Magic Device checks and to Knowledge checks to identify creatures. He can make such knowledge checks unskilled. Any successful knowledge check the necrotic assassin makes to identify a creature will always outline its immunities, resistances, and damage reduction in addition to the normal information.

*First Secret: Nondetection (Su)* At 6th level, a necrotic assassin can use *nondetection* as a spell-like ability once per day as a wizard of his assassin level. At 10th, 14th, and 18th level, the assassin gains an additional daily use of the ability.

*Second Secret: Angel of Death (Su)* At 10th level, the necrotic assassin becomes a master of death. When the assassin kills a creature with a death attack, he can cause the target's body to crumble to nothing, as the *disintegrate* spell. This prevents *raise dead* (although *resurrection* and *true resurrection* works as normal).

*Third Secret: Resurrection Sense (Su)* At 14th level, a necrotic assassin senses if a creature he has slain has been restored to life and approximately where this happened. The effective caster level of this ability against anti-detection effects is the assassin's level.

*Fourth Secret: Soul Bind (Ex)* At 18th level the necrotic assassin can use *soul bind* at will as a wizard of his assassin level. This also has the effect of the angel of death ability above. When used against a target the assassin has just slain, this is a free action. The assassin needs an appropriate sapphire gem to hold the soul, see the *soul bind* spell.

### Professional Assassin

Professional assassins are highly skilled mercenaries of murder.

**Class Skills:** Appraise (Int), Knowledge (Nobility) (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** At 1st level, a professional assassin becomes a master at concealing his identity and hiding weapons on his body. He adds half his assassin level (minimum +1) to all Disguise checks and to Sleight of Hand skill checks made to hide weapons or draw hidden weapons unobtrusively.

*Secrets: (Ex)* At 6th level, and every 4 levels thereafter, the professional assassin learns a rogue talent, as the rogue class feature. He cannot select talents that expand on class features he does not have, such as evasion. At 10th level and higher, the professional assassin can select advanced rogue talents.

### Shadow Assassin

Shadow assassins gain power from what others fear—darkness. Some hold Korufo the Shadow as their lord, an evil and secretive elemental lord of darkness.

**Class Skills:** Bluff (Cha), Knowledge (Dungeoneering) (Int), Perform (Cha), Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Secret Training (Ex):** At 1st level, a shadow assassin becomes a master at stealth. He adds half his assassin level (minimum +1) to all Stealth checks and to Perception checks to notice hidden enemies. The shadow assassin gains darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. If he already has darkvision, the range increases by 30 feet.

*First Secret: Hide in Plain Sight (Su)* At 6th level, a shadow assassin can use the Stealth skill even while being observed. As long as he is within 10 feet of an area of dim light, a shadow assassin can hide himself from view in the open without anything to actually hide behind. He cannot, however, hide in his own shadow.

*Second Secret: Shadow Pool (Sp)* At 10th level, the shadow assassin gains a reservoir of mystical arcane energy that he can draw upon to use shadow magic as spell-like abilities. These abilities work as if they were spells cast by a wizard of the shadow assassin's class level. This shadow pool has a number of points equal to his Intelligence modifier, and increases by one point for every 2 levels after level 10. The pool refreshes once per day after resting. This allows the use of *silent image* as a spell-like ability as long as he has one or more points remaining in the shadow pool. The shadow assassin can also use the following spells at the cost of one point from the shadow pool: *shadow conjuration*, *shadow step*.



*Third Secret: Silent Shadow Step (Ex)* At 14th level, after using *shadow step* from his shadow pool, the shadow assassin can make a Stealth check to hide, and this Stealth check suffers no penalties for the shadow assassins actions earlier in the round.

*Fourth Secret: Improved Shadow Pool (Su)* At level 18, the shadow assassin can use the following spells at the cost of 2 points from his shadow pool: *greater shadow conjuration*, *shadow evocation*, *shadow walk*, quickened *shadow step*.

## Favored Class Bonuses

Instead of receiving an additional skill rank or hit point whenever he gains a level in a class of Porphyran assassin, the following races have the option of choosing an alternate bonus depending on their race.

**Dwarf:** Add +1 to the Porphyran assassin's CMD when resisting a dirty tricks and disarms.

**Elf:** Add a +1 bonus to salvage poison from creatures using Craft (alchemy).

**Gnome:** Add +1/4 bonus to the poison use ability.

**Half-Elf:** Select one weapon from the assassin's weapon proficiencies. Add a +1/2 circumstance bonus on critical hit confirmation rules with that weapon (maximum bonus +4). This bonus does not stack with Critical Focus.

**Half-Orc:** Add +1 bonus to use the Heal skill to torture opponents.

**Halfling:** Add +1 bonus to use Disguise to hide in a crowd.

**Human:** Select one weapon from the assassin weapon proficiencies to act as your signature weapon. You may add +1/2 damage when attacking with this weapon.

## Assassin Feats

These feats enhance the Porphyran assassin.

### Glasscraft

*Sand is sand; stone or glass, if you know the way of it, it is all the same.*

**Prerequisites:** Craft (glass) 3 ranks.

**Benefit:** You can use Craft (glass) to make walls, vehicles and melee weapons that are as durable as those made of common materials, at the normal cost.

### Stolen Secret

*I will take your life-taking secrets as I take your life; your choice of fast or slow...*

**Prerequisites:** Assassin's secrets class feature, six ranks in one skill that gets a bonus from the chosen secret's secret

training. Stolen Secret requires the assassin to have some source of the stolen knowledge; a trainer, codex, wall painting of practicing assassins, whatever plot device the GM wishes to use.

**Benefit:** Choose one assassin's secret. The assassin learns to use the level 6 ability of that secret. The assassin cannot learn spellcasting abilities this way.

**Special:** This feat can be taken several times. Each time, the prerequisite skill ranks increase by 4, and you learn the secret ability of a level equal to the number of skill ranks in the prerequisite.

## New Uses of Skills

These new uses of skills are available to everyone, but are more common among assassins.

### Craft (Alchemy): Salvage Poison

These rules expand on the rules for poison making from the Craft skill and appendix I of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*.

The poison glands of creatures can be milked for poison, poisonous spores can be gathered, and other natural sources of poison can be found. But such poisons must be processed to remain potent, in their natural state they dry out or become inert very quickly. Instead of using them directly, they can be used as raw materials for a manufactured poison that duplicates the effects of the natural poison. The alchemists binds the toxic substance with oils that conserves it for later use.

Salvaging poison from a creature takes one minute and requires a Craft (Alchemy) check with a DC of 10 + the creature's challenge rating, +10 for a contact or inhaled poison. A success gives ingredients enough for one dose of poison, and every 5 points of margin on the roll gives ingredients for an additional dose. A salvager who lacks the poison use ability and rolls a 1 on the die roll to salvage poison accidentally injects himself. Only one attempt can be made to salvage poison from a creature each day. Poison from a cadaver must be salvaged within 15 minutes of the creature's death or destruction.

The Alchemy DC to prepare the poison is the save DC of the poison. The base cost of a salvaged poison depends on the creature's challenge rating and the type of poison the creature originally had: Ingested or injected: 100 gp times challenge rating. Contact or inhaled: 300 gp times challenge rating. The effect of a finished dose of salvaged poison is the same as that of the poison used by the original creature. The value of salvaged ingredients is 1/3 of the value of a finished dose. Usually all trade in

poison and components of poisons is illegal or restricted, both the law and rival outlaws might react badly to an attempt to trade in poison.

### **Craft (Glass): Craft Glass Weapons**

A glassworker can make one-use melee weapons out of glass at 1/10 of the normal cost of the weapon and one-use ammunition at normal cost. Such glass weapons have Hardness 0, half normal hit points, the fragile quality, and always break after they score a hit. Glass weapons are immune to damage from acid and electricity.

### **Disguise: Hide in Crowds**

By assuming a generic appearance, one that fits with a crowd of people, a character can use the Disguise skill as if it was Stealth as long as he is in a place where the assumed disguise would be ubiquitous. This works even to pass security checkpoints, as long as people of the disguise's general description would be allowed through. All normal Disguise modifiers apply.

### **Heal: Torture**

The Heal skill can be used to inflict pain on a helpless creature with minimal damage. Torture is a mind-affecting fear effect. Targets immune to nonlethal damage cannot be tortured. Performing or ordering the use of torture is an evil action.

The DC of a torture attempt is 10 + twice the target's Will save bonus against fear. Each torture attempt takes a number of hours equal to the target's hit dice (minimum 1 hour) and inflicts 1d6 points of Constitution damage and nonlethal damage equal to ten times the target's hit dice. The torturer can cut this time short but takes a -1 penalty on the Heal check for each missing hour.

A failed attempt at torture allows the victim to present a lie as if it was the truth. Each successful use of torture extracts some information from the target. The accuracy of information gained under torture is highly unreliable. The torturer makes a Wisdom check (DC 11, a die roll of 1 always fails). If this check fails the victim leads the torturer on who receives the answer he expected or hoped for, or what the victim thinks the torturer is looking for, rather than the truth. Repeated torture might yield new information which is just as unreliable.

The GM makes all die rolls for torture, and there is no way to separate true and false information. Not even supernatural means can separate truth and falsehood under torture, the victim has convinced himself what he says is the truth.

Torture can also be used as punishment, or as a vile

type of performance, in which case a successful Heal check means the victim reacts appropriately.

Heavy-handed but fast interrogation tactics, even ones that hurt, are not truly torture and instead covered by the influence attitude part of the Intimidation skill.

### **Sleight of Hand: Innocuous Spellcasting**

Disguising spellcasting as innocuous actions requires a Sleight of Hand check with a penalty equal to the level of the spell and an additional penalty of -1 per type of component being hidden (verbal, somatic, material, and focus). Each observer is allowed one opposed Perception check per round to realize a spell is being cast. Remember range and distraction penalties on Perception checks. It is not possible to hide the components of a spell cast defensively.

Spells with a casting time longer than one round require one roll per round of casting. Casting a spell without being noticed still creates an opening in combat and thus provokes attacks of opportunity, even if the attacker does not understand why. It is not possible to use Spellcraft to identify a spell cast innocuously.

If the spell has any sensory effect (which includes any spell that deals damage), observers become aware you have cast the spell once you are finished, even if they fail their Perception check. A creature that successfully saves against a spell that has no obvious physical effects feels a hostile force or a tingle, but cannot deduce the exact nature of the attack.

## **Sample Character**

*"Who, me? No, I'm afraid I didn't see anything happen to that man. But I did see something in that alley... that's it, a little more into the darkness..."*

### **K. (CR 1/2; XP 200)**

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** Perception +0

#### **Defense**

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12

(+2 armor, +2 Dex)

**hp** 10 (1d8+2)

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

#### **Offense**

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** short sword +2 (1d6/19-20)

**Ranged** dagger +2 (1d4/19-20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +1d6

#### **Statistics**

**Str** 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Craft (poison) +5, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +6, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +6, Heal +4, Knowledge (local) +5, Profession (assassin) +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

**Languages** Common, Dwarf

**SQ** heart of the streets, skilled, secret training (professional assassin)

**Combat Gear** thunderstone; **Gear** 5 daggers, disguise kit, leather armor, short sword, thieves' tools; **Coins** 4 gp

A pleasant young man with a nondescript appearance, K. is an up-and-comer in the field of killing for hire. Why that sinister avocation instead of stealing, warfare, or magic? K. has never thought about it much- it is something that he is called to do, and a little embarrassed that he enjoys it so much. He has thus far avoided recruitment or notice from any formal or informal organizations such as assassin's guilds- probably only because his current base of operations is rather small. If his career and proclivities expand much further, a confrontation with them or the law will inevitably take place.

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