

THE XELUSINE, SIRENS OF SIN

DROWN OF PORPHYRA



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## THE XELUSINE - SIRENS OF SIN

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# INTRODUCTION

All beings who love the light learn to dread the realms below their feet, and since the earliest times the Underdeep has repaid all fears in kind. Insectile horrors and stranger things boil up from wounds in the earth without warning anywhere they are least expected. Prisoners are taken so far beyond the reach of the sun that they might as well have never known it at all. And most who venture down in search of glory or revenge meet their childhood nightmares - and then, if they are very lucky, they die.

Because more than anything else, the Underdeep is a place for death.

But these are merely the truths about the Underdeep that surface dwellers believe. Beyond the natural caverns explored by the brave is a world that's been carefully crafted by the bizarre creatures that dwell in it. Miles of winding tunnels have been left behind by ancient empires; magic and slaves have hewn the rest. Flora and fauna from above provide light, defenses, and food, and what should have perished has found ways to flourish. So for every deserted corridor there are caverns teeming with mouths that must be fed.

It's no wonder, then, that the swarms from below seem savage and mindless, even when they are not. They tear away what they can grab before retreating like seasonal storms. Most attacks from the Underdeep are about necessity, not daytime horrors like wars of succession. Survivors hate to lose their loved ones to the endless dark, but at least they can understand why they were taken. They begrudge the lost supplies but have to admire the inventiveness of the desperate. But even the masterful slave raids of the duergar are child's play compared to the machinations of the drow.

The drow inspire a new level of awe in the dark because they bring elven elegance to every empire they forge. Anything the drow pursue becomes an art, from politics to poison brewing, and whatever they master becomes an obsession. Yet no matter how crazed or brutal they seem, they always move with a purpose and their designs are rarely simple. It might take decades for a goal to be reached, but drow nurture intrigues like surface elves tend forests. Unlike their woodsy cousins, however, the drow hold no special reverence for nature. They take their desires to the next level - whatever those desires may be, and whatever it takes to obtain them.

But these truths about dark elves, like all legends of the Underdeep, are only partly true.

Assuming that all drow are alike is usually a dangerous error, but it's an even worse mistake to make in the lands of Porphyra. Up until a thousand years ago, stories about dark-skinned elves were few and far between. They could have been rare births or botched experiments, but nobody feared them or paid much attention to the rumors. Some sages believe that Porphyra had no genuine drow until The Calling. They are right about one thing: When the elves and orcs cried out for new gods and opened their reality to others, they got a lot more than they bargained for.

## Why Drow?

Since "ancient times" when a dark subterranean race incited giants to attack the lands of men, the evil breed of elves known as drow has been a favorite adversary of tabletop adventurers, seen with a mix of fear at their eldritch power and the temptation of their myriad treasures and magical secrets. One is always seen as virtuous against the drow, and the necessity of opposing them gives a sense of heroism to many stalwart players. The scale of their society and machinations ensures that they will be a solid challenge that will never lack for twists and turns.

## On Porphyra...

The drow are as much a Landed (not native to Porphyra) race as dwarves or málites. The restrictions of past scenarios do not apply, and each sect of drow, though somewhat physically and psychologically similar, come with different loyalties and *raison d'être*, unchained to one another. Drow serve many, wildly different masters on the Patchwork Planet of Porphyra, and struggle to survive after being dragged from their worlds of origin- anything goes now, with the drow... so make sure you don't miss out.

# THE XELUSINE SIRENS OF SIN

You know us.

You have always known us.

We are what you wish you could be in your darkest moments, when you cannot help but give in to the worst of what you are. We have all the grace you lack then, all the joy and none of the regret. For we alone were born to be sins in the flesh and sins of the flesh are our birthright. But you are not doomed to the puerile drudgery of a simple mortal life, and we will never leave you lonely. We have always been inside you, begging to be fed and waiting to show you the way to bliss. Now that you have found us, you can learn how to live your most decadent dreams. At our feet, you will feel what it is to give and take, to conquer and to yield. Embrace our shadow, and you may one day know what it is to be drow first-hand.

*Yes.*

But to reach our depths, you must start at the beginning and you must enter on your knees.

## **At Once Bound and Free**

“These drow are the daughters of succubi! Do not invite them in!”

“They are the sons of sirens! Do not listen to their lies!”

“All drow are alike, and the only good drow is a dead one.”

Despite what you may have heard, we did not spring from demons or beasts and we are not like other drow of the Great Below. Our ancestors were elves of another world that were driven into the deserts and mountains by mankind. They dedicated their lives to self-mastery and shunned the loud, wicked ways of the material world - or so they told themselves. They despised their own darkness, you see. As long-lived beings, they could go for years without losing control, but eventually, inevitably, their urges would win out. They would spill their seed amongst the flowers of humanity, revel in the

drink of dwarves, and abandon their dry, staid lives for oblivion.

They became pale shadows of the legends they could have been, completely desperate to be rid of their disgusting mortal needs. Rituals and distractions could do nothing, prayers and practices brought only fleeting relief, but magical solutions were not completely beyond hope. In the lonely places of that planet the elves found several genie lamps and studied them intently. One artifact appeared to be the home of a noble djinn. Surely such a creature would guide their fondest wish without adding the cruel twists evil genies would provide. It could end their pain with one carefully phrased request.

But elves are notoriously patient, so before any move was made they held a grand convocation to decide the matter. Seasons passed without progress, but no one could bear appealing to the gods for such a pitiful miracle. They were ready to give up on the notion entirely and go their separate ways, never to speak of it again, when the boldest among them took matters into their own hands by stealing the lamp. It is always thus. We are spurred to change by the foolishness of the young, and change we did - and foolish they certainly were, for the lamp did not belong to a vizier but to a devious malik. And their wish was made on behalf of their entire race.

You know what happened next. You have heard the warnings passed down through the ages against ever making such requests. And you know that elves are not only mortal but blinded by the greatest pride in all creation. There is no escape from wickedness. When they asked to be stripped of each of their faults, wholly and entirely, they were. That is how we first came to be, born from their shadows. When they demanded that their urges be banished from their sight, never to return, we were. Swept into great portals, we were exiled to the Underdeep of Porphyra together, a new breed, a new nation, but with a timeless purpose.

How do we know any of this? Of course you are right to ask. It's not as though one usually remembers one's birth, but we are not normal in any sense of the word. The first of us heard the wish that resulted in our creation and never forgot a single line. And not long afterward, the malik visited us in our new home and told us his delicious story. But as the Nalbrezu say, nothing is free. He had won his freedom from our humiliated forebears and was in need of slaves, and what better slaves than his own children? We even let him rule us for a time; freshly made and lost in a new place, we certainly appreciated the guidance.

But as we gained our bearings we outgrew our need for a petulant father/god, and there was no sweet way to bid him farewell. As they say, a son must kill his father to become his own man and we thoroughly enjoyed subduing our patron. He did not perish quickly. Some of us made sure his seed was carried into our next generation; in this way he remains with us, the sire of our genie-blooded offspring. We wracked him with magic and tormented him with ice until he gave up his magical secrets, and then we were free to dispose of him, creating relics from his eyes, skin, and horns - our symbols of rulership.

It took years for us to realize that primordial forces were summoned by his sacrifice. The Pillars of Sin reached out to us from across the void in dreams and omens, eventually claiming our best as their agents in the material world. And we were the perfect vessels for a new faith: youthful, elegant, and hungry. So when we say we understand the wickedness in all flesh, understand that we are not using a figure of speech. It is what we are made of and what we are destined for. As we discovered, our souls do not travel to Hell or the Abyss to be tormented forever in darkness. We can ascend to become the Xelusine of the Outer Plane of Hamartia and continue inspiring vice in others for eternity.

And we want to share our voluptuous afterlife with those who earn the reward of the pit.

With you.

How? Let's start with the way others see us.

## **The First Taste Is All It Takes**

### **A Letter Home**

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Dear Mamma and Pappa,

I know you're wondering why I left so quickly and when I'll be coming home. What I have to say won't put you at ease at first but if you keep reading until the end, you'll understand why I'll be safer where I am. Let's be honest: I never fit in with the people in our town and it was only a matter of time until the guards found another excuse to lock me away, probably for good. I can't let that happen and I won't live the way our paladins want us to. We might just be commoners, but we deserve a lot more fun out of life - which is why I've gone to live with the drow in the Underdeep, and I won't be coming back.

You read that right. But before you lose your minds, you should know that these aren't the drow that carried off Grandpa. I'm with them because I want to be. I first

met one in the back room of a tavern during my caravan job five summers ago. He didn't look like a drow but he gave me a stein of the sweetest drink I'd ever had, and all I paid was information. The first taste was all it took for me to want more. It was everything we deserve but will never be able to afford. So I went back and did some work for him that didn't involve killing anybody. And all the things we're taught to be ashamed of, he gave me as rewards. No double-crossing.

The Xelusine are a whole other tribe of drow than the ones we've heard about. They don't raid the surface or wear bones. They're not even from this world. More than one Xelusine has told me about how they started out and there were no signs that they were lying. They were sent here by a curse and kept as slaves by an evil genie until they were able to take him down. They didn't even know where they were, but once they were free some of them wanted to run around claiming territory that wasn't theirs. Most of the Xelusine hate war and death and wouldn't play along, so their first war was a civil war that almost wiped them out.

For a long time, all they could do was survive. The Xelusine starved for years and creatures overran every town they made. Other races below were ugly and mean or too stupid to deal with, and the other tribes of drow attacked them, too. Having dark skin and pointy ears didn't mean anything to the other drow since they didn't come from the same place. But the Xelusine knew they were better than the rest and they wanted a whole different way of life. I believe them when they say they gave other races what they wanted until they made some friends. That's what the Xelusine do - they give and let you decide what you'll give back.

When I said the Xelusine paid me with things we're ashamed of, I didn't mean they forced me into it. I won't tell you what I got, but I wanted everything they gave me, and they were happy to watch me enjoy myself. The Xelusine didn't even have laws until after their civil war and they don't have nearly as many as we do now. They only have the rules they need to keep from making a mess for everyone. Some of the first rules I learned from them was that they won't force anyone into anything, and they only offer choices - including the choice to leave before you get in too deep. You know a lot of human bandits are worse than that.

One reason why we fear the Xelusine is because they're not like us. Where they came from, there was no such thing as guilt; there was just pleasure and different ways to get it. They didn't have all our gods and judgments about every little thing. They didn't know that people

could hate their bodies and ruin everything fun until they met us. There were surface races on their old world, so they figured we existed and were excited to meet us. The Xelusine struggled a long time to get to us - but if we didn't attack them on sight, we attacked them with hate and shame because other drow had gotten to us first.

Any guilt the Xelusine have now is because we taught them to feel that way, but they keep it under control and haven't let shame take over. And instead of punishing us for it or trying to hurt us back, they waited and watched until they knew how to deal with us. They felt sorry for us and wanted to show us there were better ways to live - and they still do. They can't come into our settlements without being in disguise and some of them don't try. But you can meet them almost anywhere, and they have contacts and message drops all over Porphyra. No matter what your lineage, titles, or reputation are, they'll deal with you just the same.

I've spent the last five years proving myself to my master and it was my choice to go below. I could have kept serving him on the surface without a problem, but I've visited his home city and there's no other place I'd rather be. I call him my master because I want to, out of respect for everything he's taught me and given me, not because I'm his slave. I've seen first-hand that the Xelusine hate slavery as much as we do and they stop it when they can. Forcing people to work just to keep the skin on their bones goes against everything the Xelusine stand for and is completely beneath them.

I know you probably won't believe me, but the Xelusine teach that slavery is doomed to fail. People have to want to do what they're doing, or they'll fight every step of the way and eventually they'll win. But if you spend some time and effort, you'll find a way to give them what they want in exchange for what you need. With a little incentive we'll give our best and the Xelusine aren't greedy fools. They'll give you what you earn and more when you go the extra mile. And they won't begrudge you for costing them something. If you follow a Xelusine long enough and you both agree to it, you can become their "xalhin" (or cultist).

This is what I've become, and it's the best I've ever been. As a xalhin, I've agreed to follow my master's lead and keep his secrets for the rest of my life. I wasn't under any influence when I gave my word and now I'm in his official retinue, which is a lot better than any post I would have gotten at home. In their culture it's rude for xalhin to ask for payment but I get perks from my position without having to ask. Most of my needs are

taken care of since I reflect my master's status. I can own whatever I'm given and anything I brought with me but I can't own land in their territory. That's fine; I'm just glad to be able to live in it.

Believe it or not, my life is worth more now that it's not just mine. I'm under my master's guidance and protection, by their law, and an insult to me is an insult to him. He's even arranged for me to be a student at one of their academies. I won't be able to advance up the ranks, but I won't need to in order to learn what I need to know. And what I call my master is up to us because the rules don't set up how we have to treat each other, unlike the customs about apprenticeship where you are. I'm his permanent guest and he's done more for me than our family ever has.

So please don't worry about me anymore. I won't be thrown away and I can worship our old gods or not, as I see fit. My master knows I'm sending you this and he doesn't mind what I have to say. I haven't told you anything he wouldn't tell you himself, if you'd listen.

Farewell,

Your Son

## **The Circles of Sin**

### **A Report to all Nalbrezu from the Court of Smoke**

We do a lot of business with the Xelusine and they're the most fun out of all the other drow we've met, but that doesn't mean we can trust them. They're not like us and they get their kicks out of hooking other races on their charms so we always have to be careful. To make sure we play nice but don't get suckered in by their games, we've made this report for all new recruits. Read it, and remember every line when they're offering you everything your greedy black heart desires. As long as it doesn't break the Code or interfere with your work, you can join in their festivities - but if you forget your oath, you won't live to enjoy being a traitor.

When we say the Xelusine aren't like us, we mean it. They don't have noble houses or normal families or even gods. Freakish, right? The easiest way to learn about them is to start with their Circles of Sin (yes, they really call them that). They're kind of like our Courts, but bigger. There are six Circles, all of them supposedly named after the levels of Hamartia, that outer plane they won't shut up about. They each have a different vice they specialize in spreading around. But while our Courts trade



off powers with the noble Houses, the Circles handle education, government, and religion together and try to one-up each other.

The Xelusine start dealing with Circles even earlier than we get into our Courts. Once a Xelusine learns to talk and knows how to shit in the right place, they go to their first Circle for training. They get passed to the next Circle every five to ten years and they're supposed to get through all six early on in life, learning a little from each one. Their converted and created drow do the same thing, but they move on every two to five years. It's a big deal when they get accepted into the Circle they want to stay in and as long as they pass the final tests, a Circle can't keep a drow out.

Either way, a newbie starts out at the bottom of the hierarchy and has to show they're the best at their vice to climb the ladder. They also need sponsorship of six members from the rank above them so they spend a lot of time trying to make friends (you can use this against them, if you pay attention to their ranks). If they do well, they move up and get a new title and all new jobs. If they screw up, they get stuck where they are or get demoted. And no matter what they tell people, the drow the Xelusine poach from other tribes and the weird ones they make can't ever reach the highest levels. And there are a lot of levels.

- **Yyrr [Character Level 0]:** Yyrr visit for introductory lessons. They're not members and have no real say, but they're expected to learn from their mentors whether they're enjoying their stay or not. Some of the students are given to the temple or their mentor to raise, but not all of them. We've noticed that Yyrr get a lot of small favors from higher ups looking for allies in the future.
- **Lal [Character Level 1-3]:** They keep new initiates close to Xelusine territory serving the Circle's needs in and around their cities. The best are taken with more experienced bands on missions until they're ready to advance. Lal can build a lot of influence with elders - or their elders' rivals.
- **Thos [Character Level 4-6]:** Bands they send to the surface have at least half of their members at this rank or above. They recruit new dupes - err, cultists - and keep up useful connections abroad. At home, they make valuables or offer other services to the higher ranks for free. Thos can make a mint by connecting locals with faraway sources on the side, though.
- **Jhin [Character Level 7-9]:** Mentors of Yyrr are

from this rank or higher, and this is the highest level a converted or created drow can reach. Jhin lead rituals, plan regular parties, and keep an eye on materials the temple and Circle needs so they can send requests to the Rhan. Since they know damned near everybody by this point, they can call on favors at almost any time.

- **Rhan [Character Level 10-14]:** These guys handle outside concerns like trade, tribute, and small-scale raids. They're diplomats and assassins and lead high ceremonies. They also assign bands for missions outside of their territory. They can sit in judgment for most offenses, too. Since they report directly to the Driss, everyone will pay nicely for the ear of the Rhan.
- **Driss [Character Level 15+]:** This is the top leadership of a Circle, whether it chooses to have one ruler or a council. Driss have to be Trueborn and only they can declare war, sit in judgment over other Trueborn, and create new rules. They're usually internal, spending a Circle's resources and being diplomats to the other Circles. They also approve promotions in the lower ranks. They're as powerful as it gets; Driss are used to getting anything and anyone they want.

You with me so far? Good. Every Circle decides how to run itself, so you'll have to learn how things work for each one in every city you visit. Keep their sins in mind. For example, Erikryptos like to foist power on whoever ends up with the short end of the stick. Bromios have some wicked duels and Pthonus Rhan are cocky enough to hold elections for a supreme Driss. Whatever happens, a majority of Driss in a city have to agree before they'll start a full-on war. Driss (or their reps) from all their cities have to agree on more laws for their people - and they hate the idea of more laws, so that rarely ever happens.

A Circle regulates itself unless something goes wrong because putting another Circle back on track usually leads to a few days' riots. When all is well, they keep their own archives, treasury, and security. They get a 10% cut of all their members' Circle-sponsored ventures and any additional donations (and there are more than you might think). The top brass of each Circle work together to make sure the city gets what it needs, dividing up jobs or combining forces. They also teach their areas of expertise to their members and any Yyrr.

### 3.1 Faction Symbols

Name	Symbol	Traditions	Reputation
Bromios (Wrath)	Fist	Martial training; weapons and armor creation; evocation magic; Strength and Dexterity-based skills	Strong but much too serious
Comus (Gluttony)	Cornucopia	Supplying and logistics; cooking and brewing (including potions); conjuration magic; Wisdom-based skills	Generous but stubborn; rivals of Keiro
Erikryptos (Apathy)	Closed Eye	Trickery and misdirection; alchemical item creation and trapmaking; illusion magic; Intelligence-based skills	Resourceful but dull; rivals of Bromios
Keiro (Avarice)	Gem	Security and tactics; jewelry creation and gemcutting; abjuration magic; Intelligence-based skills	Precise but obsessive
Phthonus (Vanity)	Mirror	Leadership and cultist training; wondrous item creation; transmutation magic; Charisma-based skills	Bold but easily manipulated
Thiasus (Lust)	Lips	Carousing and information gathering; intoxicants, poisons, and aphrodisiacs; enchantment magic; Dexterity and Charisma-based skills	Convivial but easily distracted; rivals of Phthonus

Why does this matter so damn much? Because a Xelusine can't really make it in their territory without being in a Circle. If they won't choose one when their time comes, everyone refuses to do business with them until they decide. Outcasts don't wait long, but at least they're not as bad off as the heretics called the Fooled. If you start to go too soft on the Xelusine they'll give you extra missions or time in their temples; hopefully, you'll change your mind. But the Fooled strike out at the Xelusine in the name of virtue and reject their ways on purpose, crossing the line of no return and earning an immediate death sentence.

They'd rather not deal with each other that way. It's kind of rare, but the Xelusine do let each other change Circles without a grudge. You have to serve for at least a decade before asking for a transfer, though. How are you supposed to know how you really feel if you leave too soon? But the Xelusine are elves like us so they live a long time and eventually they can get bored. They figure that if you're willing to fulfill quests for Driss of the Circles you want to leave and enter, you're probably miserable enough to move on. Transferring to a new Circle puts a Xelusine back at the rank of Lal, which is another reason it doesn't happen often. Losing all the respect and favors can be too much. On the other hand, some drow go higher in their second Circle than their first.

This report should give you all the hints you need to deal with the Xelusine successfully. Just never get too comfortable or too desperate, no matter how much you think you have the upper hand. Once they have their claws in you, they'll never let go.

Yours in the Code,

The Court of Smoke

## The Grand Revel

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### The Truth of the Xelusine

We do not need you to trust our words; we will show you what we believe in how we live. You will see that pleasure is our driving goal and satisfaction is our measure of success, in this life and any other. This is because we were not created to torture others and leave desolation in our wake. We were spawned to bring forbidden joys to everyone brave enough to seize them. In the struggle and pain of the material world, ecstasy is the greatest luxury and power. And the more souls which understand their part in the cosmic dance, the greater the fervor for all. There is no need to be greedy for as the Karza say, there will always be more.

So what do we do with all this pretty philosophy? We set our society and fortunes by it, of course. We arrange our nation in layers of drow dedicated to leading, supplying, defending, and enhancing the fun. You might be thinking that this is where our families come into play, but by now you should realize they don't exist. We are conceived in orgies and reared by whoever receives the honor at our birthing party. A last rite is held when we leave our wealth to those who please us the most. Blood feuds make no sense, and marriage is an alien notion. We join and part ways without the interference of laws.

Instead, our smallest group is a band of drow, usually a handful in number, who live and work as a team.



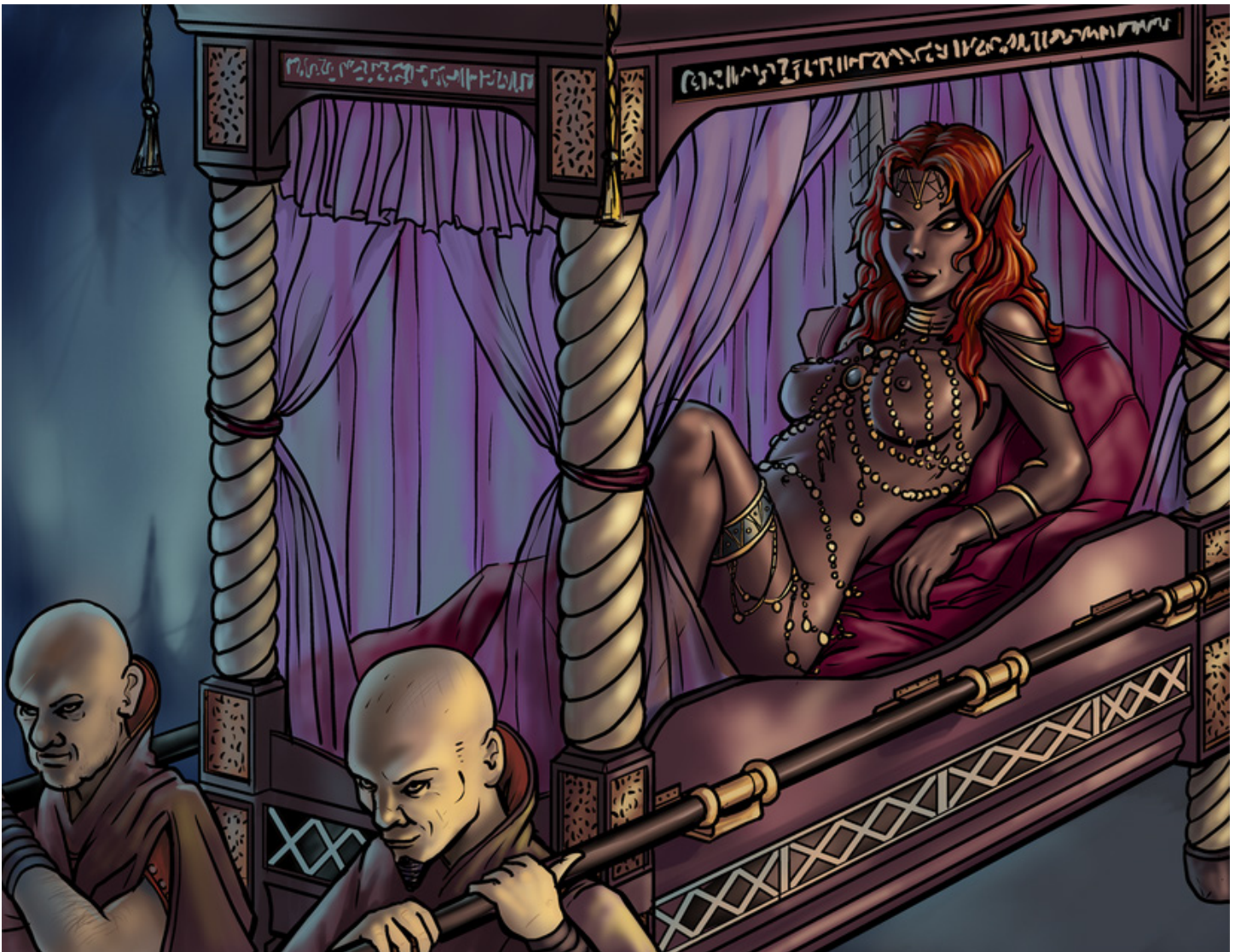
They needn't be related by blood but the most successful bands share common needs. Each member fills a role and every band establishes its own rules and aims. The christening of a new band is a mark of adulthood and gives us a surname we create together. Bands that squabble too vigorously and Xelusine who are alone too long are maneuvered into better positions, however. Because who wants to worry about lone wolves or murderous mobs?

That must mean we have venerable noble houses to keep everyone in line, right? We came from elves; we must be snooty enough to keep that tradition alive. But all Trueborn Xelusine descend from the same corrupted wish, so dividing ourselves into houses would mean little. Yet we are a step above all other drow, including those we create, and for that reason we rely on our direct lineage. Trueborn Xelusine have at least one full-blooded Trueborn parent verified by birth or magic and beyond that, nothing else matters. We are granted respect, riches, and opportunities to lead - but as individuals, not

because of houses or pageantry.

Where does this leave the drow we create from other races, or the drow we convert from other tribes to our own? They are not left out in the cold or kept servile by any means. They are accepted into bands and attract their own cultists; they can own whatever riches they acquire and even serve in a Circle. They are welcome among us, but the Trueborn are the only drow who have been called by the Pillars of Sin and we are raised to master every facet of our culture. None know the secrets of the grand revel like we do, so no others are trusted to lead us in it, from the smallest band to the grandest Circle.

But the end result is sweet for all. Each day is a holiday if we are living well, so wherever we are, we celebrate in some way. Sharing our feasts is the best part and earns adoration wherever we go. Bands can travel to other communities on their own or be assigned by a Circle, but few spend longer than a decade between jaunts. It's simply too much fun.



# The Steps of the Dance

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There are few rules required to participate in our entertainments, and none of them are hidden. Most times you need only pay the price of the host and we tend to prefer secrecy, supplies, playmates, and favors over coin. But you must also abide by one of our most sacred precepts: Your appetites and safety are your own, as are the consequences of your actions. Few things are discouraged in our festivities because our guests come to satisfy cravings they may have suppressed for years. Any taboos are announced beforehand but everything is permitted, if desire can make it happen.

This means that once you pass over the threshold, you open yourself up to fulfilling the urges of another. If you are wise, you will take the opportunity to find a partner (and we will arrange such matters, for a price). If you are less than lucky and must bear unwanted attentions, you can expect them to fulfill your needs next. Should they refuse to hold up their end of the bargain, they will be forced to pay in coin, goods, or services. Making a scene is in bad taste, but armed resistance is worse and all guests are expected to defend against a breach of the agreement. Unhappy guests are often allowed to return, however. We realize you might have trouble allowing yourself to let go.

## Necessary Evils

We hate to have laws for those who live among us but a few are necessary evils. We once believed that we understood each other implicitly and that all of our father's rules were ridiculous, but our first civil war taught us otherwise. We are not as unforgiving as the Karza, however, or as rigid as the Nalbrezu. Our boundaries are fluid, depending on the circumstances and the judge, and are always open to creative interpretations. After centuries, these are the precepts which remain with us, each as important as any other.

*Xelusine descend from sin in its purest form and we must be what we are.* We need not offend or go to extremes with every deed, but forswearing our urges is anathema. Xelusine who willingly fall from our path are below contempt, dead to us now and forever.

*Pleasure is our greatest good and our primary motivation.* We exist to relish what we are and what we can do, and cannot neglect ourselves. If our delight

must come at the expense of another, so be it. They will learn from our example.

*Pure grace does not exist, and we must never pretend otherwise.* We do not express integrity without also giving offense, and we soothe all shame with some flavor of wickedness.

*It is our duty to show other races how to embrace their vices without destroying themselves.* We must teach them to reject regret and reliance on gods. They have everything they need within themselves and the flaws bestowed upon them by Hamartia.

*We do not wantonly destroy other Xelusine, their works, or our society.* Our ambitions can only be maintained by cooperating. Thus, we redress even accidental offenses and prevent the worst plots against each other.

*Trueborn Xelusine rule us in all matters of importance, from the greatest to the smallest.* They are not only born and reared to our ways, but their instincts for iniquity cannot be learned or bought. They alone can lead us to Hamartia.

*In the dance of give-and-take, we must expect to be taken at times against our will.* These are not offenses that will be punished by our laws. We must accept our lapses with grace and move on to conquests of our own.

*Worship of deities is beneath us and will not be tolerated so long as the Pillars of Sin exist.* We revere and serve our own glory, not the ego of a god.

*Each cult belongs to its leader and is their responsibility, since they attract followers on their own and lead them to our strongholds.* Every Xelusine must be willing to use their cultists to aid their Circle-given duties, however.

*We vigilantly assure the health of all revels in our territory by screening for poison, disease, and sabotage before and during an event.* There is no excuse for spreading weakness through our gatherings.

*We do not leave our own kind to suffer at the hands of others unless they deserve it according to our pre-*



*cepts or they desire it.* We will not allow those who envy our freedom to punish us if we can help it.

*We discipline only when we must because most of us find the whole business tedious.* A judge is chosen from the Circle which opposes the accused's and their sentencing is usually swift and final. Fees, goods, and services for minor infractions are given to the Circle opposite of the accused's for redistribution. Since we wear our riches, any loss of wealth is a slap in a Xelusine's face. Some offenders are placed in a particular band to be handled. We can also be ordered to serve in another drow's cult for no less than a decade, destined to do their dirtiest and most thankless tasks. That is one of our most dreaded dooms.

*We do not support extended imprisonment or mutilation because the best justice is simple.* Those who serve a deity or deny their sins for more than a year are exiled. Those who are Fooled into threatening our lives in the name of goodness are disintegrated, their belongings auctioned and their cultists invited elsewhere. Non-Trueborn drow are sentenced like us, as is their due. They cannot act as judges but they can raise objections once they have standing in a Circle. Disciplining cultists for small offenses is left to their leaders but greater crimes are scourged harshly. They are guests in our civilization, after all, and must never forget it.

*Our trials are held in public, with all offenses declared first.* A judge cannot go overboard against a drow without immediate backlash. If senior members of at least three Circles agree that a sentence is too lenient or harsh, the matter is sent to a jury of Driss from all Circles. Of course, one must at least be a Jhin to raise an objection and the decision of a jury is final, but this system has served us well. Everything is permitted for as long as we can bear it.

## **The Triumph of Decadence**

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*If you can't be strong, be clever.*

*If you can't be clever, be well connected.*

*If you can't be well connected, be lucky.*

— Xelusine proverb

live: We arrive, we watch, we seduce, and we prosper. This pattern is successful for brief stays or long-term conquering; either way, we arrange circles of defense and push outward until we have what we need. We give up ground or rely on magic spaces, however, if it makes the process easier. Below, we have a handful of flourishing cities and a number of outposts that other races enjoy visiting and help us protect. Sadly, efforts to remain in the sunlit lands have repeatedly failed. Our dens overhead are temporary, borrowed from cultists or shared with dupes who know nothing.

In our territory, we assign zones for each Circle to defend and decorate. The order switches every six years so Xelusine compete viciously to set up innovations the next Circle will not dare disturb. Temples to the Six Pillars of Sin are the earliest and most permanent structures we create; we scatter them throughout a city early and add to their splendour as resources permit. Our architecture is spacious since we prefer to have company. Duties are performed in groups, bathhouses are open to all, and public banquets are common. Funerals are boisterous, drunken, and lengthy, ending in vaults laden with art and gold.

We spend enough time masquerading amongst strangers while we are away, so in our strongholds we flaunt everything and live in the open, filling our streets with colors, jewels, and precious metals embellishing drow skin. We make visitors wear dull attire so they stand out, but they can partake of our markets and pleasure pits once they have agreed to our terms. Cultists wear the garb of their leaders proudly as they carry out the labor that keeps all of our basic services running. We do not have poor drow; we simply have some drow who are not yet very skilled, connected, or wealthy. Even our "paupers" are housed and fed, in the temples if nowhere else.

Our propensity for sharing is not typical in the Underdeep where most races live in scarcity. In our earliest nights we could not afford the necessities, let alone generosity, yet we learned that we gained more by wooing allies with whatever we could spare. We are not selfless by any means; we always get something in return. But our druids maintain lush gardens, recycling every drop of extra fluid and experimenting to produce unique plants. What we do not consume, we sell or gift to starving hamlets that are only too grateful for our aid.

Our lives take on the same rhythm no matter where we



## Xelusine Blasphemy

### A Karza Call to War

The Xelusine are worse than atheists - they know the gods exist but preach that they are all unworthy of worship! They deny Karzerothrine as their creator and lie about her power, but do not be fooled. Their stories are meant for children and idiots. The Xelusine say they have been saved by “Pillars of Sin” only they can hear, on an outer plane only they can reach - as though anyone would believe that! Summon a demon, ask it about “Hamartia,” and it will be confused because Hamartia does not exist. The Xelusine destroy symbols and shrines in their lands because they can’t let their people know the truth: they are all being used and will suffer for it.

You may have seen Xelusine clerics use divine might against us and that should not be a surprise. They claim that all they have to do is worship themselves and fill their temples with art to gain that power. Yet they forbid drow from all other praying and make their “cultists” worship in private. They wait a whole year and a day if one of their own starts to stray, using the same tricks they pull on others to keep them in the dark. Drow who choose to worship Karzerothrine anyway are slaughtered like the threats they are! Whatever demons are behind these “Pillars of Sin” do not want competition! They know they must fall before us!

“Everything is permitted,” the Xelusine simper, but that is always a ruse. Look at what they hide to learn what they really are! Use their “heresies” as weapons against them. The name of the genie that created them is forbidden because there was no genie. The Xelusine can never visit Hamartia while they live because they have been tricked into believing in it in the first place. And the “virtues” they strive to cover up are the same ones Karzerothrine taught us to destroy! The Xelusine are nothing more than debased drow separated from us in our first nights. They ran away from the Dark Mother so they could make up their own story.

They will return to the Loomqueen or they will perish. This is the will of Karzerothrine and the work of all Karza, until the last Xelusine is crushed beneath our heels!

- By order of Hasraena Cheliszin, High Abbess of Karzerothrine

## Character Creation

Trueborn Xelusine have lithe, delicate bodies and their skin tones typically range from black to dark gray, although many also bear tinges of red or other colors. They are known for distinctive and vibrant hair colors such as red, purple, green, and blue, and they tend to keep their hair long and interwoven with jewelry while at home. A few have unusual eye colors, such as gold, or bear other features like slit pupils. Ear sizes also vary. Many Xelusine carry birthmarks and hermaphroditic births are not unheard of (and tend to be celebrated). Their initial diversity has been expanded through inter-species breeding, which is broadly encouraged.

Unlike other races, Xelusine blood remains dominant and requires more than one generation of removal before dilution begins. That means that “half-drow” do not result until a half-blooded Trueborn breeds with another race. Xelusine half-drow tend to have one or two of the distinctive physical marks listed above to point to their drow lineage. Created drow do not have the darkest hues of skin or the wildest tinges in their hair; if they bear unusual hair colors, they are muted or in streaks. They do not always manifest much longer or pointed ears when the rite is complete but they make up for it with jewelry or disguises.

Those reared amongst the Xelusine learn a mellifluous variant of the elven language and sprinkle it regularly with expressions and curses from the sunlit lands. Xelusine who express an interest are also taught Drow Sign Language, which they learned centuries ago from Nalbrezu allies. The hand code is never passed on to cultists.

- **+2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma, –2 Strength:** Xelusine are agile and charming.
- **Elf:** Drow are humanoids with the elf subtype.
- **Medium:** Drow are Medium creatures and receive no bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- **Normal Speed:** Drow have a base speed of 30 feet.
- **Darkvision:** Drow can see in the dark up to 120 feet.
- **Drow Immunities:** Drow are immune to magic sleep effects and gain a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against enchantment spells and effects.
- **Silver Tongued:** Xelusine gain a +2 racial bonus on [Diplomacy](#) and [Bluff](#) checks. In addition, when they use Diplomacy to shift a creature’s attitude, they can do so up to three steps up rather than just two.
- **Spell Resistance:** Drow possess spell resistance

equal to 6 plus their class levels.

- **Spell-Like Abilities:** A Xelusine can cast *guidance*, *beguiling gift*, and *unnatural lust*, once each per day, using her total character level as her caster level.
- **Disease Vulnerability:** Xelusine suffer from a permanent -2 to all Fortitude checks to resist diseases and cannot possess any racial trait which gives them resistance or immunity to disease.
- **Languages:** Drow begin play speaking Elven and Undercommon. Xelusine with high Intelligence scores can choose any language from a race they have infiltrated before (with GM approval) but favor the following: Abyssal, Aklo, Common, Drow Sign Language, Ignan, Infernal, or Sylvan.

## Alternate Racial Traits

A starting Xelusine character can benefit from alternate racial abilities from up to two of the categories below. Feats or blessings can allow for more traits to be taken later, but these options must be earned or developed over time and are beyond the ken of novice drow. Consult your GM before selecting any of these options.

Instead of being Silver Tongued, Xelusine can benefit from one of the following:

- **Covetous:** Many Xelusine gain a +2 racial bonus on *Appraise* and *Sleight of Hand* checks, and it is more difficult to catch them at work. Anyone searching them for stolen goods only gains a +2 on their roll instead of the usual +4 bonus.
- **Cruel:** A number of Xelusine gain a +2 racial bonus on *Bluff* and *Intimidate* checks and are already versed in the finer arts of torture.
- **Famished:** Some Xelusine do not draw attacks of opportunity due to drinking a potion or eating a substance, applying an oil, or retrieving a stored item (this includes attacks targeted against a potion or small item they are trying to use during combat, so long as it does not do damage or provide AC). They also gain a +2 to their CMD versus shatter attempts.
- **Gregarious:** When some Xelusine successfully use *Diplomacy* to win over an individual, that creature takes a -2 penalty on attempts to resist any of the member's Charisma-based skills for the next 24 hours. They also gain a +4 racial bonus on *Linguistics* checks, and they learn one additional language every time they put a rank in the *Linguistics* skill.
- **Slippery:** A few Xelusine gain a +2 racial bonus on *Disguise* and *Escape Artist* checks. They also have an easier time escaping static, nonmagical bonds, so their DCs versus bindings like rope are reduced by 5.

Rather than Drow Immunities, Xelusine can manifest:

- **Fey Damage Resistance:** Several Xelusine gain DR 3/cold iron.
- **Fiendish Resistance:** Some Xelusine have demonic or devil blood and gain two of the following: cold resistance 5, electricity resistance 5, or fire resistance 5.
- **Intoxicating Aroma (Sp):** A few Xelusine naturally emit an arousing scent that grants them +2 on saving throws made to avoid being affected by foul stench of any kind. They can also activate *sanctuary* on themselves through their aroma as a spell-like ability as a sorcerer of their class level once per day. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the same creature's intoxicating aroma for 24 hours. Creatures that cannot smell are unaffected. Creatures with the intoxicating aroma ability are immune to its effects.

In place of Spell-Like Abilities, Xelusine can enjoy one of the following traits:

- **Alternate Spell-Like Abilities:** Instead of *guidance*, Xelusine can manifest *purify food and drink* or *daze*. Rather than *beguiling gift*, Xelusine can use *cultural adaptation* or *dream feast*. And in place of *unnatural lust*, Xelusine can choose *seducer's eyes* or *silk to steel*. One choice can be made per spell level but once decided upon, the results are permanent. Regardless, each ability can only be used once each per day, using total character level as the caster level.
- **Fae Fascination (Su):** A few Xelusine have ties to the fae. Twice per day, these lucky few can create a 30-foot-radius burst that causes humanoids within the aura's range to become fascinated with the user (as the bard's fascinate bardic performance). Affected humanoids may resist this effect by making a successful Will saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 the user's character level + the user's Charisma modifier). Creatures that are attracted to the Xelusine's gender suffer a -2 penalty on their saving throws.
- **Pyromaniac:** Some Xelusine descend from interbreeding with fire elementals or efreeti. These Xelusine are treated as +1 level higher when casting spells with the fire descriptor, using granted powers

of the Fire domain, using bloodline powers of the fire elemental bloodline, using the revelations of the oracle's flame mystery, and determining the damage of alchemist bombs that deal fire damage. This trait does not give Xelusine early access to level-based powers; it only affects powers that they could already use without this trait. If a Xelusine has a Charisma score of 11 or higher, they also gain the following spell-like abilities: 1/day—[dancing lights](#), [flare](#), [prestidigitation](#), [produce flame](#). The caster level for these spell-like abilities is equal to the user's character level.

## Favored Class Options

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The following favored class options are available to all characters of this race who have the listed favored class, and unless otherwise stated, the bonus applies each time you select the favored class reward.

- **Bard:** Add +5 feet to the range of one of the bard's bardic performances (max +30 feet to any one performance).
- **Cleric:** Increase the radius of your channel energy ability by +1 foot. (+5 foot radius for every five times you select this option.)
- **Druid:** Add +1/2 racial bonus to [Craft](#) checks to create alcohol, drugs, or aphrodisiacs from plant-based materials or [Profession](#) (gardener, herbalist) checks to tend and splice plants with intoxicating and arousing properties.
- **Hetaera:** Reduce the amount of time it takes to track down a boon by 5 minutes each time you select this option.
- **Monk:** Add a +1/4 bonus on combat maneuver checks made to grapple or trip.
- **Ranger:** Add a +1 racial bonus on [Perception](#) and [Survival](#) checks made in dim light and darkness.
- **Rogue:** Add +1/2 racial bonus level to all [Disguise](#) and [Sense Motive](#) checks. (+1 to these checks for every two times you select this option.)
- **Sorcerer:** Choose a new spell in place of one you already know. The new spell's level must be the same as that of the spell being exchanged. You cannot swap any spell gained from your bloodline.

## Clerics and Divine Representatives

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Only Trueborn Xelusine can become divinely inspired representatives of the Pillars of Sin. While members of

other races are contacted and urged to act by these forces, no other race has yet been imbued with their power directly. Sages believe that as vices made manifest, Xelusine flesh is uniquely suited to channel the raw power of the layers of Hamartia. Each cleric is dedicated to the Pillar which represents the key flaw of their psyche; there is no real choice in this matter. Clergy ritually engage in solitary acts that celebrate their vice in order to regain spells, but what they do or how is up to them.

Xelusine clerics radiate auras of evil and their choice of domains relies on their Pillar.

**Apathy:** [Apathy](#), [Evil](#), [Protection](#), [Trickery](#)

**Subdomains:** [Devil](#), [Deception](#), [Inertia](#), [Solitude](#)

**Avarice:** [Avarice](#), [Evil](#), [Knowledge](#), [Travel](#)

**Subdomains:** [Fear](#), [Memory](#), [Miser](#), [Trade](#)

**Gluttony:** [Animal](#), [Evil](#), [Gluttony](#), [Plant](#)

**Subdomains:** [Fur](#), [Cannibalism](#), [Hunger](#), [Growth](#)

**Lust:** [Charm](#), [Evil](#), [Luck](#), [Trickery](#)

**Subdomains:** [Daemon](#), [Imagination](#), [Innuendo](#), [Lust](#)

**Vanity:** [Charm](#), [Evil](#), [Nobility](#), [Vanity](#)

**Subdomains:** [Aristocracy](#), [Conceit](#), [Fear](#), [Lust](#)

**Wrath:** [Evil](#), [Destruction](#), [Strength](#), [War](#)

**Subdomains:** [Blood](#), [Corruption](#), [Ferocity](#), [Hatred](#)

If a cleric's key vice changes, they must receive an [atone-ment](#) spell before switching to a new Pillar and choosing new domains. If they ever willingly embrace a good alignment and reject sin, none of the Pillars will accept them back, even with an atonement spell. Regardless, divination spells like [commune](#) reach agents of Hamartia but not the Pillars themselves.

## Ritual of Hamartian Elevation

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The Pillars do respond directly to the ritual of drow creation that they revealed to Xelusine clerics. Before a request can even be made to convert a member of another race into a drow, a supplicant must serve a Xelusine for at least a handful of years and carry out their favorite sin all the while. The supplicant must also freely desire the transformation. Curses rain down on a cleric who is too hasty or presents someone unworthy; only a foolish



or smitten cleric would risk it. No agent of Hamartia is sent to witness a ceremony of rebirth, but at its completion everyone in attendance experiences the wordless verdict of the Pillars.

Once a cleric agrees to sponsor the event, the ceremony requires a few essential components. First, sacred patterns are traced around the supplicant with crushed precious gems (worth 100 gp for each level of the target). Then, three sentient creatures of equivalent power to the supplicant are sacrificed so their blood can be gathered and painted until it covers all of the target's skin. The entire ritual takes an hour for each level of the supplicant to complete, culminating in the drinking of the cleric's blood and a Fortitude save. While magical aid can improve the target's chances, if they fail, they die and cannot be resurrected unless the Pillars allow it. If they succeed, they are ecstatically and permanently changed and obtain the created drow template below.

## Social Traits

The first level of factions within Xelusine society is their social caste system. At the top are Trueborn Xelusine, followed by those with drow blood (created, converted, or half-drow) and ending with those who serve as cultists. Cultists can be from nearly any race or class, so long as they have proven themselves compatible with and loyal to Xelusine interests. These three groups remain mutually exclusive, however; being in a band or the favorite of a higher caste cannot elevate or reduce your standing. Most characters living in Xelusine holdings come from one of the three castes below.

**Trueborn Xelusine:** You qualify for the Cult Leadership feat upon choosing this option, but you cannot attract a devotee or apply any additional positive modifiers to your Cult Leadership score until investing in this option once more at 7th level. In the meantime, you only use level + Charisma modifier to determine your pool of points (see below). Lost points can be reacquired at a rate of 1,000 gp per point.

**Drow Blooded:** When you modify a creature's attitude with *Diplomacy* or *Intimidate*, the attitude change lasts 1-1/2 times longer than it otherwise would. Your spells or effects with the fear or mind-affecting descriptors that impose a penalty or bonus with a duration of at least 2 rounds, last 1 additional round.

**Cultist:** *Diplomacy* checks to gather information in lower quarters, such as vice dens and poorer districts, take you 1d2 hours (instead of 1d4 hours). In addition,

the attitudes of any destitute or impoverished NPCs you interact with begin one step closer to helpful.

## Faction Traits

Xelusine and drow can join a Circle and gain the benefits thereof. No one can hold membership in more than one Circle at a time and while those who switch to a new Circle forfeit their old perks, they do not necessarily lose allies in their former group. Yyrr are provided a poor lifestyle as they train, and Thos and Lal earn average lifestyles. Jhin and Rhan are granted wealthy means, and Driss are maintained in extravagant accommodations. Outcasts who refuse to choose a Circle can only earn a destitute lifestyle within Xelusine territory until they correct their situation. The traits below represent Circle combat training.

**Bromios:** You gain a +1 trait bonus on initiative checks. In addition, once per day when you make an attack of opportunity, you gain a +2 trait bonus on the attack roll.

**Comus:** You may drink a potion as a move action instead of a standard as long as you start your turn with the potion in your hand.

**Erikryptos:** You gain a +1 trait bonus to damage rolls against opponents you are flanking.

**Keiro:** You gain a +1 trait bonus on combat maneuver checks to perform disarm and steal combat maneuvers.

**Phthonus:** You gain a +1 trait bonus on initiative and *Intimidate* checks.

**Thiasus:** You gain a +2 trait bonus on *Acrobatics* checks to move through another creature's space and to avoid attacks of opportunity for leaving a threatened square.



## Satisfaction

There are many paths to forbidden bliss and you can travel another road to satisfaction each time you let yourself go. Seeking out a favorite iniquity requires 1d4 hours and can only be fully gratifying once per day. You must choose one skill to represent the manner in which you will entertain a particular sin (apathy, avarice, gluttony, lust, vanity, or wrath), and your plan should logically reflect that vice. The GM must announce whether a threat to alignment will occur due to the barbarity of the scheme and allow a chance to alter your designs or go forward. GM approval is required before a roll is made, and consequences are similar to those found in the description for Temptation (see below).

Whether you are gambling, carousing, or stealing, you can aim to gain coin for your troubles or choose to go strictly for the thrills. You can earn money as per the Perform chart, with each DC representing what you are able to get away with during the episode. If you forego cash, you can gain a +1 morale bonus to Will saves for 24 hours following the outing for every 10 points of your check, as pleasant memories bolster your confidence. You can only benefit from one satisfaction result within 24 hours. Rolling a natural 1 means a run-in with authorities, criminals, or other immediate negative consequences.

## Temptation

There are different ways to urge someone to indulge a craving or take a selfish risk, and not all of them involve deception. The ultimate goal is to convince a target to put aside duties and morals so they can engage in self-serving activities instead. The more you know about the character, the easier it is to sway them without uttering a single falsehood. Each attempt requires you to choose a method below and a specific sin you wish the target to fulfill. Regardless of the approach, if your result exceeds their opposed Sense Motive check by more than 5 points, the character will believe that the diversion was their idea to begin with. This will help deflect some of the blame that might come after the deed is done.

Circumstance	Modifier
Indifferent attitude	-2
Target's life dedicated to a higher power	-2

Action would violate a target's major oath	-2
Gathered information on target beforehand	+1 for every 10 points rolled
First-hand knowledge of old habits	+3

\* Penalties in this chart are cumulative, but bonuses are not.

A target must at least be indifferent to you before you can tempt them in earnest. Diplomacy is used to convince targets to do what they already desire because they are always right, leading to an additional +2 morale bonus (but you must already know enough about them to have at least a +2 bonus on the chart above). Bluff-based coaxing seduces characters with gross exaggeration and false promises and can rely on guesswork, which is as likely to succeed as it is to fail. Finally, Intimidate can be used to egg targets into following forbidden passions. This loud, persistent endeavor suffers from a -2 penalty since you are more likely to cause offense before you can push the target into doing what you want.

Since this form of temptation is not based on magical compulsion, the target will not simply drop whatever they are currently doing, nor will they fail to defend themselves or notice nearby threats. Rather, a character who has been successfully persuaded will leave other duties aside within an amount of time determined by the success of the roll: DC 15 = 1d4 hours, DC 25 = 1d4 minutes, DC 35 = 1d4 rounds. They will not comply until they are out of danger nor will they make suicidal choices in order to fulfill their need.

A swayed target will not slavishly obey commands, either. The character will seek an easy and appealing way to fulfill the vice you have specified, but they will ultimately choose what they do, how far they go, and how soon they stop. The severity and circumstances of the target's choices will determine if the episode will affect their alignment or warrant an atonement spell. Drastic breaches of conduct or unintended consequences can lead to a -1 - -3 morale penalty to all checks for a week per character level, or until they atone or shift toward an alignment more accepting of the transgression, whichever comes first. If the tempter hears about particularly heinous fallout from an offense they instigated, they might also suffer a morale penalty for half of the normal duration or suffer an alignment shift.

*Note:* Temptation, like Diplomacy, is meant for use on nonplayer characters.

## Feats

The following feats are common among the Xelusine.

### Cult Leadership

*Your force of personality draws adherents to provide for your needs and whims. These fervent disciples will accept abuse and even death as the price of serving someone so much greater than themselves. As long as they are getting something they need out of the arrangement, cultists do not dare to ask for direct payment or equitable compensation. They require direct supervision, however, and sometimes go too far in their desire to impress, bringing unintended consequences to your doorstep.*

**Prerequisite:** Character level 7.

**Devotees:** The first benefit of this feat is that you can attract a devotee who is and remains two levels lower than yourself. They come equipped with gear appropriate for their level and can be of any race or class. They do not count as a party member when determining the party's XP and do not receive or track XP on their own. Instead, your devotee gains a level whenever you do and can take on permanent gear that represents their new wealth at that time. A devotee can accept any equipment offered to them by you or another party member, as well. You can gain a devotee immediately upon gaining this feat, or if you or the GM wish to forgo this feature, you will gain a bonus to your Cult Leader score to compensate (see below).

A devotee's alignment must be within one step of your own. There are very few circumstances that will convince a devotee to abandon their leader; chief among them are dramatic and voluntary personality shifts. If you purposefully take on an alignment that is directly opposed to your starting position on the law/chaos or good/evil axis, your devotee will not stay to find out why. If your devotee embraces an alignment shift more than one step from yours during play, their interests will diverge from yours and they will depart. They will be replaced by a new devotee after a month has passed.

**Note:** While the player who has chosen this feat can and should provide desired traits, the GM is responsible for building and updating devotees and approving all choices regarding their race, class, and statistics. The player can direct their devotee's actions in combat and manage all rolls and bookkeeping the GM allows. The GM will generally be responsible for portraying the devotee, although another player can take up that mantle, if all agree. When all is said and done, the total points for a

devotee's ability scores (before racial or other modifiers) must remain at least 2 point lower than their leader's.

**Cult Leadership Score:** The second benefit of this feat is that you can attract groups of lesser cultists based on your total cult leadership score.

Cult Leader's Reputation	Bonus
Forgoes a devotee (optional)	+3
Has great prestige/widespread renown	+2
Owens a base of operations	+2
Owens an artifact, intelligent item, or single item worth 50,000 gp	+2
*Achieves a major victory against great odds	+1
**Provides for regular training and equipment for cultists	+1
Rescues cultists, a devotee, or their families from danger	+1
Spends significant time with cultists	+1

\* Cumulative, per victory over a threat at least 2 CRs higher than the leader's party CR.

\*\* Cumulative per 1,000 gp spent.

Cult Leader's Reputation	Penalty
Suffers a major failure (like death) or act of weakness	-2
Has a familiar, special mount, or animal companion	-2
**Causes the death of a devotee	-2
Suffers a minor failure (forced to retreat) or sign of weakness	-1
Acts arbitrarily and erratically with cultists or devotee	-1
Moves around a lot/rarely interacts with cultists directly	-1
**Causes the death of cultists	-1

\*\*Cumulative per devotee or cell. Avenging or raising dead cultists or a devotee removes the associated penalty, however.

Your Cult Leadership score acts as a pool of points that you spend to define the abilities of individual cultist cells. These small, specialized groups of lower-level NPCs revere you and will perform various tasks on your behalf. Each time you gain a new modifier or level, you can assign points to an existing cell or create a new one



with its own purpose and statistics. If you suffer penalties, you get to choose which points are removed from which cells. To establish a useable cell, you must place at least one point each in population, level, and type. Population and level scores can normally be raised to six (but can go higher for epic level campaigns). Any points left over are held in reserve until you choose to spend them.

**Population:** This trait reflects the number and availability of people associated with the cell. Since cultists have their own lives, their help is never 100% assured. You must reach out to them in person, by messenger, or through magic to inform them of your wishes. You can declare which cell you need and roll percentile dice to find them once per day. At population 1, you have a 65% chance of finding available members when you want them. Each additional point in population adds roughly five people to the cell and increases the odds of their being ready and reachable by 5% (to a maximum of 90%).

The percentage drops by 5% for every 20 miles between you and for each month they are out of contact with you, to a minimum of 5%. Maintaining contact through magical means can prevent such penalties. If you wish to re-establish close ties with an estranged cell, you must take the time and effort to find and woo them back; that will reset the value to the normal level for that cell.

**Level:** This trait represents the experience a cell has

amongst all of its members. A cell will remain at its current class level indefinitely unless and until this trait is raised, with one point granting one new level. There is no other way for a cell to gain or track experience, since it is through your guidance that it ascends to higher ranks. A cell cannot be advanced higher than one third of your total character level, rounded down.

**Type:** This trait covers the cell’s area of expertise, main line of business, and/or reason for working together. While characters of various races and classes can take part in the same enterprise, a cell’s array of abilities is drawn from one particular class. Other cell types can and do exist, depending on the setting, and should be guided by the parameters here.

**Note:** Most aspects that apply to creating devotees also apply to creating cells. The GM should use the rules for creating NPCs to determine the statistics of a given cell, with the player’s input. Each cell will have a character sheet to represent the face of the group. This member will speak for the group because they are more sociable, have something in common with you, or owe you in a major way. The NPC will deliver any news and keep the rest of the cell in line most of the time. The GM should create the background and personality of each cell’s face for roleplay purposes.

A cell can receive bonuses from a particular race but every point that the race possesses above 10 RP costs an additional point from the Cult Leadership pool. A cell must be within two steps of its leader’s alignment,

Table 3.2 Cell Type

Cost	Type	Levels As	Cost	Type	Levels As
1	Animal Handling	Druid or Ranger	2	Divine Magic^	Cleric or Druid
2	Arcane Magic^	Wizard	1	Entertainment*	Bard
1	Bureaucratic	Aristocrat or Expert	1	Knowledge*	Cleric, Druid, or Wizard
1	Building / Engineering	Commoner or Expert	1	Health	Cleric
1	Caravan	Ranger	1	Hospitality	Bard
1	Commercial*	Commoner or Expert	1	Martial	Barbarian, Fighter, Monk, or Paladin
1	Craftspeople (non-magic)*	Commoner or Expert	1	Religious	Cleric
1	Criminal	Rogue	1	Scouting	Rogue
1	Culinary	Expert	1	Seafaring	Bard or Rogue

\* These cells require specific subtypes, such as a type of shop, performer, or expert.

^ These are the only cells capable of creating magic items on your behalf.

and any major alignment shifts in the leader will cause the departure of cell members (to be replaced by those within the new alignment in one month).

You can seek a cell's aid up to once a day, and can have as one cell work for you in one day per point of Charisma modifier. A cell will use its abilities on your behalf and turn over the fruits of its labors without hesitation. If you ask for assistance on a skill roll, a cell which possesses that skill can roll to aid you as per aid another. If you do not possess the skill in question, you can have the cell roll on your behalf and use its own modifier. Any extended mission (such as item creation) must be completed before the cell can start a new task.

Cultists must receive instructions from you or they will go about their personal business. Immediate requests from you will always come first in their priorities. You can also issue standing orders to a cell and give them a primary activity to focus on until you choose otherwise. Downtime exploits are rolled once at the end of a session, however, if a leader has not directed the cell during that time. Cultists with standing orders will concentrate on them for as many game sessions as your Charisma modifier before they need to be given new instructions. If they do not receive new directions from you, they will be distracted by downtime exploits before continuing with their task. These are outcomes that represent how a cell's zealotry and autonomy continuously affect you, for better and for worse.

%	Downtime Exploits
0-5	<b>Got You Covered:</b> The cell offers to cover you for a toll or debt up to 1d20 gp per cell level (this can include covering your lifestyle for the month, bribing a particular target, pitching in for item creation costs, or any single charge up to that amount).
6-10	<b>Bad Dog!:</b> The cell is badly injured trying (and failing) to procure a pet, small gift, piece of intelligence, or other minor advantage for you, and cannot be called upon for 1d8 days or until healed with one cure light wounds spell per cell level.
11-15	<b>I Know A Guy:</b> The cell can find a seller from which to buy any non-magic item or a buyer for any magic item during the next week. The seller or buyer will not ask questions or reveal your transaction to anyone, and if treated well, they might deal with you again in the future.

16-20	<b>Caught:</b> The cell is imprisoned after trying to illegally procure a gift for you, rabble-rousing in town, breaking a local taboo, or getting in a brawl to defend your honor [roll 1d4 to determine which], and will be held until a fine is paid (1d20 gp per cell level) or the authorities are swayed.
21-25	<b>Dragon Jerky:</b> The cell gives you a special treat you can feed to an animal, fey, humanoid, or magical beast [roll 1d4 to determine which] to make it friendly toward you for a week, so long as the target is of a CR lower than your devotee.
26-30	<b>Infighting:</b> A conflict between members requires a social check of DC 22 to resolve (which can be attempted once every 1d4 days). Until you meet the DC, the cell refuses to work, causes public scenes, does the opposite of what you asked, or ruins half of all materials when called.
31-35	<b>Party Invite:</b> The cell procures a legitimate invitation for you and your chosen guests (up to one guest per cell level) to an important social event, such as an estate party, royal gala, or an otherwise private celebration held within the next week.
36-40	<b>Held Up:</b> The cell is becalmed at sea, delayed by bad weather, slowed by terrain conditions, or caught by even stranger circumstances [roll 1d4 to determine which], and cannot be called on for 1d8 days or until rescued by you or your agents.
41-45	<b>Introduction:</b> The cell provides a favorable introduction to a person in a local institution it is related to, giving you a friendly contact within that specific group for the next week. With significant social checks, you might be able to acquire their favor for the long term.
46-50	<b>Lost:</b> The cell has gotten thoroughly lost on their latest outing and will be unavailable until extracted by you or another cell.
51-55	<b>Will Travel:</b> The cell offers to loan you a transport for a one-way trip to a destination of your choice or offers to take a message to a distant contact within the next week.

56-60	<b>Mourning:</b> Someone the cell liked has died, an important failure has occurred, the cell has been on a losing streak, or a member has left the fold [roll 1d4 to determine which]; the cell will suffer a -2 morale penalty on the next roll it makes on your behalf.
61-65	<b>Linguist:</b> The cell can find a reliable translator, interpreter, or forger for any one language you do not possess. Furthermore, the linguist will not share the contents of what they translate for you with others, up to and including authorities who interrogate them.
66-70	<b>Underprepared:</b> Materials that the cell needs have gone bad, gone missing, failed to arrive, or been forgotten [roll 1d4 to determine which], causing them to take twice as long in their work.
71-75	<b>Word of Mouth:</b> The cell has spread word of your talents, which will add an extra 1d20 gp per cell level to your next skill check for an audience, customer, or patron.
76-80	<b>Bad Rep:</b> The cell has shared an embarrassing story, an unflattering detail, too much praise about you, or an unpopular opinion you hold [roll 1d4 to determine which], resulting in a -2 to local social checks by you or on your behalf for the next 1d8 days.
81-85	<b>Tribute:</b> The cell presents you with a personalized (but nonmagical) gift [roll 1d6 to determine the type and 1d10 per cell level to determine the price in gp]: gems, art, jewelry, clothing, tools, or gear. When displayed, the piece grants you a +2 to social rolls to appear impressive.
86-90	<b>Laid Low:</b> The cell members are suffering from a disease, curse, poison, or other status ailment [roll 1d4 to determine which], reducing their cell level by one until they succeed at two saving throws (which can be attempted once per day) or receive an appropriate curative spell.
91-95	<b>Landmarks and Movements:</b> The cell provides you with intelligence about one local area, lowering the DC of all Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Intimidate, and Survival checks to operate in that locale by 5 for the next 1d8 days.

96-100	<b>Family Woes:</b> Members of the cell are grappling with family debts, old feuds, a cell member who was kidnapped by their family, or bad news from home [roll 1d4 to determine which] and will ask you to help resolve the situation before agreeing to do any further work.
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**Sample cell creation:** An 8th level cleric of lust with a Charisma of 16 (+3 modifier) has her own secret temple on the surface (+2), lavishes her cultists with provisions (+1) and attention (+1), and has saved some of them from danger (+1). Her Cult Leadership pool is 16. She has one divine magic cell (-2) of second level (-2) with a population of two (-2) to run her temple, and the face of the group is her head cleric. She has also attracted a cell of level two (-2) craftspeople (-1) with about ten members (-2) that provide goods to sell; at its head is a savvy older merchant. Finally, she has two shifts (-2) of first level (-1) fighters (-1) to guard the rest, with a retired sailor at the helm. She can have all three work for her in one day and cannot advance two of her cells' level further until she reaches 9th level.

**Mass Combat Options:** Cells can operate offensively using the character sheets which outline their abilities and the special considerations outlined below. Cult leaders will often pit cells against each other, either to break the influence of another leader or in the hopes of converting cultists to their side. A few leaders are desperate or daring enough to send their cells against personal enemies, though they risk much in doing so. Regardless of the foe, a cell that is sent into combat cannot perform any other tasks that day and will not be available for the next day, either, as it recovers.

When cells face other cells in combat, they are on essentially equal footing and no special exceptions apply. They can use their abilities against each other as normal. When a cell is sent against key NPCs or enemy creatures of a greater level than itself, however, it adds its level as a dodge bonus to AC and CMD and its population rating as a size bonus to attacks, saving throws, and skill checks. Cells always act in the next round following their leader's initiative roll (during which their leader or devotee must issue standing orders to begin the combat, after which the cell will direct itself until given other orders).

A cell that is brought to negative hit points loses one point of population for each hit point below zero it reaches, as members begin to die before aid can be



rendered. If its population is reduced to zero, the cell is effectively destroyed. Population points lost in this fashion cannot be regained through spells short of resurrection (one casting for each level of population lost), representing the fragility of cell members. Any points in level and type are retained but a decimated cell must be repopulated before it can operate again. Leaders can use any extra points they have not already spent or acquire new points by gaining a level or working for bonuses, but either way, it takes at least one month to restore a cell.

A cell that is level drained or affected by similar woes can have its level or statistics restored magically, however, the spell must be cast once for each point of population the cell possesses. A cell can always opt to withdraw from battle using a total defense action; the dodge bonus gained thereby stacks with the bonus to AC listed above as members focus on getting each other out of harm's way. A cell can decide to employ a tactical retreat and lay traps in its wake, but in that case only half of the total defense bonus stacks and the cell can only move at half speed each round. A cell can also feign a retreat with a Bluff check, leaving any pursuers flat-footed during the first round of being re-engaged.

For each point in population, a cell requires a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area to operate effectively and has a reach based on its race. It suffers a -1 penalty for each foot below that amount, in the case that it is forced into such a situation, and can do nothing but flee or take damage if forced into half of its normal space. As a general rule, a cell cannot have combat maneuvers used against it except by a force or creature at least twice as large as it is. A cell also suffers a penalty to perform combat maneuvers and stealth checks equal to its population rating. It cannot be flanked or suffer critical hits except by foes of at least its size, however, and a cell is always considered to have the Combat Reflexes feat.

A cell can effectively surround a single Medium sized foe for each point of population it possesses (or two Small sized enemies, four Diminutive foes, and so on). A cell with a population of two can surround a Large creature, three can surround a Huge creature, and on from there. A cell unwittingly provides total cover for its target if the foe is the same size as the cell or smaller, or partial cover if the cell is up to two sizes smaller than its foe. This only applies to attacks from outside of the surround. A cell which has fully surrounded a foe gains +4 to melee attacks and imposes a -4 to Acrobatics or other skill checks to escape, as well as concentration checks to cast spells.

## Masochism

*It is possible to possess or acquire a taste for pain and to take joy in agonies others avoid. While masochism is relatively rare and often misunderstood, it is more common in societies which regularly inflict and value suffering. The practice is not about weakening or drastically harming yourself; rather, it centers on experiencing pain as exciting and pleasurable and gaining strength from what you endure. Being a masochist has nothing to do with age, class, or alignment, though particular groups might encounter more internal strife because of it. The thrill can be purely sexual and personal in nature but it can transcend those elements to become philosophical and generally empowering.*

**Prerequisites:** Perception 5 ranks, 5th character level.

**Benefit:** Masochism is a function of the Perception skill, tied as it is to experiencing the five senses. It can be used to negate Intimidate attempts, allowing for an opposed roll even when one is not usually permitted. It can also be used in place of a saving throw against any pain-inflicting effect. If the masochist wins, any damage that would have occurred is reversed and instead becomes a bonus to the appropriate statistic(s) for the duration. (For instance, succeeding against a pain strike spell gives the masochist 1d6 temporary hit points per round, as well as a +2 bonus on all checks and a +4 circumstance bonus to resist the caster's Intimidate checks. These benefits would last for 1/round per caster level.)

Masochism can also be used to resist the effects of torture and interrogation techniques. In this case, the masochist makes a Perception check in place of their Will save to set the DC of the interrogation attempt. The masochist can use their success to affect the interrogator's attitude or implant a suggestion in the interrogator's mind. Curses attempted via Break Will cannot take hold and the masochist is able to choose what to tell an interrogator who is implementing Reveal Information (including lies). Penalties inflicted through Conditioning become bonuses against the interrogator, and a masochist will ignore the effects of Shift Alignment and gain a +2 morale bonus against further attempts. Any reversed effects or bonuses last for half of the duration given for the effect. An interrogator will get a Sense Motive check at the end of each day to see if they recognize that the masochist has the upper hand.

## Created Drow (Template)

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“Created drow” is a template that can be added to any humanoid that survives the creation rites, which require a Fortitude save DC 20 by a willing participant. A created drow uses all the base creature’s statistics and abilities except as noted here. Do not recalculate the creature’s Hit Dice, base attack bonus, or saves.

**CR:** Same as the base creature +1.

**Alignment:** Any evil.

**Type:** A created drow acquires the elf subtype.

**Senses:** A created drow gains darkvision up to 60 feet.

**Defensive abilities:** A created drow gains a +2 racial bonus to saving throws versus magic sleep effects and gain a +1 racial bonus versus enchantment spells and effects. They also benefit from spell resistance equal to 3 plus their class levels.

**Special Attacks:** A created drow can cast *seducer’s eyes*, *silk to steel*, or *unnatural lust* once per day as a spell-like ability, using her total character level as her caster level.

**Abilities:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma, –2 Strength

**Skills:** A created drow gains a +1 racial bonus on *Diplomacy* and *Bluff* checks.

**Special Qualities:** A created drow suffers from a permanent -1 to all Fortitude checks to resist diseases and cannot possess any racial trait which gives them resistance or immunity to disease.

## Equipment

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Xelusine regularly have access to any and all drugs available in a region, either by growing the natural components themselves or fabricating them through alchemy. Additionally, the Xelusine have a long-standing tradition of creating unique aphrodisiacs.

### Custom Aphrodisiacs

The crafting process begins with a design phase. Every aspect of the desired aphrodisiac - delivery, primary effect, side-effect, and addiction DC and type - adds to or subtracts from the *Craft* (alchemy) DC required to make it (to a minimum of 5). An aphrodisiac must have at least one selection from each category, although it can have multiple delivery methods, effects, and side-effects (see *Table 3.3 - Custom Aphrodisiacs*). Each additional aspect adds or subtracts from the Craft DC to create the aphrodisiac. Delivery methods match those for poisons and while primary effects mimic spells, they are not magical in nature. Side-effects follow suit. Addiction parameters describe the severity of the addiction that is possible by taking the aphrodisiac (which can increase with multiple uses).

Willing users of aphrodisiacs forego a saving throw in order to experience the effects, which include any and all side-effects. Unwitting users are allowed a Sense Motive check versus a pusher’s Bluff check before imbibing, and gain a Fortitude saving throw against all effects equal to the addiction DC if they fail to note the deception. The market price for a custom aphrodisiac is equal to the final Craft (alchemy) DC X 10 gp; raw materials cost 1/3 of that amount. The basic ingredients can vary wildly from common byproducts to parts collected from rare creatures. Once the parameters are decided and the brewing phase has begun, the mixture cannot be altered further. Rolling a natural 1 on any aphrodisiac crafting check exposes you to the potential effects but does not ruin the materials.

On the following page are several sample aphrodisiac recipes at varying levels of expertise and cost.

**Table 3.3 - Custom Aphrodisiacs**

Type	Adj.	Primary Effect*	Adj.	Side-Effect**	Adj.	Addict DC	Adj.
Contact	+8	Satisfaction roll+	+1	<i>Fumbletongue</i>	-1	10	+10
Ingested	+4	2 effects at once	+5	<i>Haze of dreams</i>	-1	15	+8
Inhaled	+6	<i>Aspect of the nightingale</i>	+6	<i>Forced quiet</i>	-1	20	+6
Injury	+10	Recharge innate magic	+6	Confused	-2	25	+4
		<i>Swallow your fear</i>	+7	<i>Litterbugs</i>	-2	30	+2
		<i>Vocal alteration</i>	+7	Sickened	-2		
		<i>Polypurpose panacea</i>	+8	<i>Delusional pride</i>	-3	<b>Addiction</b>	<b>Adj.</b>
		<i>Youthful appearance</i>	+8	Fascinated	-3	Minor	-1
		<i>Heightened awareness</i>	+9	Blinded	-4	Moderate	-2
		<i>Tap inner beauty</i>	+9	Unconscious	-4	Severe	-3
		<i>Charm person</i> <sup>^</sup>	+10	<i>Endure elements</i>	+10		

\* The primary effect will last for 2d10 minutes, regardless of the spell's normal listed parameters. If there are multiple effects, roll the duration for each one separately; they will happen simultaneously and side-effects will not begin until all primary effects have run their course.  
+ Adding to the satisfaction roll adds +1 to the DC for each point of the bonus. The particular sin and skill check must be chosen at the time of creation.

<sup>^</sup> This affects the ingester, who will be charmed by the first person seen after imbibing the aphrodisiac for the duration of the effect.

\*\* The side-effect(s) will last for 1d10 minutes following the primary effect(s), regardless of the spell's normal listed parameters. If there are multiple side-effects, roll the duration for each one separately; they will afflict the imbiber simultaneously.

#### Passion Pit

**Delivery:** Injury +10

**Additional Effects:** 2 effects at once +5

**Effect:** *Charm person* +10

**Effect:** *Youthful appearance* +8

**Side-effect:** Blinded -4

**Side-effect:** Confused -2

**Addiction DC:** 10 +10

**Addiction type:** Minor -1

**Craft (alchemy) DC:** 37

**Market value:** 370 gp

**Raw materials:** 123 gp 3 sp 3 cp

**Addiction DC:** 30 (+2)

**Addiction type:** Severe (-3)

**Craft (alchemy) DC:** 5

**Market value:** 50 gp

**Raw materials:** 16 gp 6 sp 6 cp

#### Armor Property

Style is more important than substance for many Xelusine drow. To allow Xelusine to protect themselves without appearing to wear gaudy armor they have created a new armor property.

#### Salacious (Armor Property)

**Aura** faint enchantment, illusion, transmutation; **CL** 10th; **Weight** —; **Price** +1 bonus

#### Description

A suit of *salacious armor* appears to be a revealing and titillating set of clothes. This grants a continual *seducer's eyes* effect and reduces the weight and armor check penalty of the armor by one third (rounded down). Only a *true seeing* spell or similar magic reveals the true nature of the armor (suppressing the *seducer's eyes* effect).

#### Construction

**Requirements** *Craft Magic Arms and Armor*, *disguise self*, *reduce person*, *seducer's eyes*; **Cost:** +1 bonus

#### Relaxing Fumes

**Delivery:** Inhaled (+6)

**Effect:** +8 to Diplomacy-based apathy Satisfaction roll (+8)

**Side-effect:** *Forced quiet* (-1)

**Addiction DC:** 20 (+6)

**Addiction type:** Moderate (-2)

**Craft (alchemy) DC:** 17

**Market value:** 170 gp

**Raw materials:** 56 gp 6 sp 6 cp

#### Sweet Music

**Delivery:** Ingested (+4)

**Effect:** *Aspect of the nightingale* (+6)

**Side-effect:** Unconscious (-4)



MALE DROW  
IN SALACIOUS  
ARMOR



## Xelusine Getaways

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Are you excited to visit us yet? You should be. No other drow cities are as gorgeous or as welcoming to foreigners. Once you are cleared by a Rhan (which can be a lot more fun than you expect), you have access to most of our wares and parties, and we won't blame you if you don't want to leave. If you become a cultist or undergo drow creation rights, you never need to. Not all of our cities are deep underground or horribly inaccessible, either; the Garden of Enzeress and the mazes of Caerdroia are only a short jaunt from the surface.

**Caerdroia** was a series of mazes where medusae roamed, preying on stalwart adventurers from above and below who went there to be tested. We blundered into it by accident and managed to make a pact with them, mostly because they were bored and we were Xelusine. We bring cultists and jewels to their endless nights, and the medusae allow us to transform the mazes into the palaces and plazas we all deserve. We sell their victims as statues of all kinds; with their aid, our overworld schemes blossom. By adding their blood to ours we have created a fearsome kingdom where the Pthonus and Keiro enjoy great influence.

The **Garden of Enzeress** is a pocket of paradise with a calming aura. All plants there are edible and intoxicating, releasing spores that pacify all who breathe. Native creatures are still mildly affected but we've developed some resistance. This is a good thing because the plants require a steady supply of sentient living creatures to feed on. Our druids make sure they are properly tended, even if that means acquiring criminals from other lands to feed them. We sell some of the produce from the Garden in the realms above, where most societies know nothing of how it's produced or how it affects their disposition. Erikryptos and Comus members hold great sway here, as well as druids and rangers in particular.

**Ferramrin** was a duergar stronghold that we found in the throes of a bloody slave revolt. We helped the slaves win their freedom and made a deal with them: If we could stay unharmed, we would help them defend themselves and get back to the surface. They knew they had no chance of reaching the sunlight on their own and saw how we detested slavery, so they agreed. We exchange pleasures and protection for their fine crafts, and few groups have ever left. When we help slaves escape elsewhere in Porphyra, we route them to this very successful and fortified city to offer them the same choice. The Bromios and Keiro Circles lead our most martial

city, which is far stronger than it was under the duergar.

**Tantros** is a series of bizarre, interconnected round caverns rumored to have been created by the Glass Queen Elemental Lord, Ashamar Shining. If so, they were a failed experiment. The caves are the release point for steam from volcanic activity. It is also said that portals to Thiasus contribute to the constant vapors. Previous inhabitants lost control of themselves in the mists, focusing on their carnal appetites while crops rotted and their offspring starved. We have been able to thrive, however, offering it as a vacation spot and using it to boost our own fertility rates. Would-be invaders have all have been routinely conquered by the orgy pits. Thiasus reign supreme in Tantros, though Comus are always scheming to displace them.

The cave system of **Zolghar** was a prison and a toilet - a hopeless hole where the upper world banished unrepentant lycanthropes to their fate in the Underdeep. Bordering frosted lands, it is also too close to Strivog territory for comfort. The hardest of us continue to woo the shapeshifters and surface folk, though we must be especially careful in our business above. The locals have been terrorized by the bone drow and kill us on sight (not that we blame them). We move between the great caverns with the seasons in a tide of shimmering wealth, both bartered and stolen. There, our beasts are sated with ritual dances and hunts and a savage freedom that outsiders fear and envy.

## Intrigues

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- A stubbornly detached commune of ascetics has been discovered and must be seduced back to the world. The Circles are all offering rewards to any band that brings them into the fold willingly and surface settlements are sending reinforcements to help protect the commune from such interference.
- A kingdom has herded those with the blood of evil outsiders into a particularly bleak prison, there to be contained, mutilated, and forgotten - and some Xelusine have been mistakenly arrested with them. While the primary goal of the Xelusine is to save their own, undoing the prison and releasing the other prisoners is a desire that many others also have.
- The Xelusine are the power behind the scenes at an elegant finishing school for young noble lads and ladies. Working through cultists and disguises, the drow teach the high arts of civilization - along with many other, less savory things. The student's parents have no idea yet, but it is only a matter of time

before they get suspicious and send spies to confirm their fears.

## Appendix: Magic

New domains and subdomains, their associated domain abilities, and their selection of domain spells can be found below.

### Apathy Domain

You bring out the laziness in others, divert their efforts, or use them to do the work for you.

*Gentle Rest (Sp)*: Your touch can fill a target with lethargy, causing a living creature to become staggered for 1 round as a melee touch attack. If you touch a staggered living creature, that creature falls asleep for 1 round instead. Undead creatures touched are staggered for a number of rounds equal to your Wisdom modifier. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

*Dispelling Touch (Sp)*: At 8th level, you can use a targeted *dispel magic* effect as a melee touch attack. You can use this ability once per day at 8th level and one additional time per day for every four cleric levels beyond 8th.

**Domain Spells:** 1st—*forbid action*, 2nd—*calm emotions*, 3rd—*suggestion*, 4th—*dismissal*, 5th—*unwilling shield*, 6th—*banishment*, 7th—*destruction*, 8th—*demand*, 9th—*mass hold monster*

### Inertia Subdomain

You will not be forced to do anything you don't want to do.

**Associated Domain:** Apathy

**Replacement Power:** The following granted power replaces the gentle rest domain power.

*Immovable Force (Ex)*: At 1st level, you gain +1 to your Will saves, and +1 deflection bonus to your CMD to resist bull rush, reposition, grab and drag maneuvers. This bonus increases by +1 for every 5 levels you possess.

**Replacement Domain Spells:** 1st—*adjuring step*, 3rd—*anchored step*, 5th—*spell resistance*, 8th—*dimensional lock*

### Avarice Domain

It is always sweeter to steal than to ask permission, and your abilities ensure you can take anything you want.

*More for Me (Su)*: When another character within 30 feet casts a spell with a range greater than touch, you can attempt a caster level check as an immediate action (DC = 15 + the spell's level). If you succeed at the check, you receive the spell's benefit instead of one of the spell's intended targets (chosen by you). If you are already a target of the spell, you are affected as though you were targeted by the same spell twice (which may or may not benefit you; remember that bonuses from the same source do not stack). This ability does not grant you knowledge of the spell being cast. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

*Thief of the Gods (Su)*: At 8th level, when you make a *Disable Device* or *Sleight of Hand* check, you can roll twice and take the higher result. Using this ability is a free action. You can use this ability once per day at 8th level, plus one additional time per day for every 2 levels beyond 8th.

**Domain Spells:** 1st—*borrow skill*, 2nd—*pilfering hand*, 3rd—*create treasure map*, 4th—*scrying*, 5th—*covetous aura*, 6th—*envious urge*, 7th—*grasping hand*, 8th—*trap the soul*, 9th—*crushing hand*.

### Miser Subdomain

You will have it all, and keep it for yourself, forever.

**Associated Domain:** Avarice

**Replacement Power:** The following power replaces the thief of the gods domain power.

*Take None of Mine (Su)*: At 8th level, you can ignore ¼ your level's worth of drain effects, be it hit points or ability points; this translates to a resistance bonus vs. level drain, +2 at 8th level, for example. This applies to each individual attack that causes drain effects.

**Replacement Domain Spells:** 4th—*charm monster*, 9th—*soul bind*

### Gluttony Domain

You embody the satisfaction and desperation to be found in a gluttonous soul.

*Touch of Overwhelming Hunger (Sp)*: Targets you hit with a melee touch attack are struck with a gnawing desire for food, inflicting a penalty to attack and damage rolls equal to 1/2 your cleric level (minimum 1) for 1 round. This yearning makes it difficult to focus, causing targets to incur a penalty on Concentration checks equal to 1/2 your cleric level (minimum 1). The target



may make a Will save with a DC equal to 10 + 1/2 your cleric level + your Wisdom modifier to avoid the Concentration penalty. Attack and damage penalties still apply. You may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

**Bounty of Nature (Su):** Once per day at 6th level, you can bless a meal of fruits, grains, or vegetables so that, when consumed prior to resting, it increases the amount of natural healing from which a creature benefits after an eight-hour rest. This blessing can affect a number of creatures equal to half your cleric level plus your Wisdom modifier. Each affected creature regains 2 hp per Hit Die and one additional point of ability damage to a single ability score of its choice after resting. At 12th level, each affected creature regains 3 hp per Hit Die and one additional point of ability damage to every ability score that has been damaged after resting.

**Domain Spells:** 1st—[dream feast](#), 2nd—[feast of ashes](#), 3rd—[create food and water](#), 4th—[secure shelter](#), 5th—[si-phon magic](#), 6th—[heroes' feast](#), 7th—[magnificent mansion](#), 8th—[sympathy](#), 9th—[energy drain](#).

### Hunger Subdomain

To consume is everything, to be top of the food chain is to be king of all.

**Associated Domain:** Gluttony

**Replacement Power:** The following granted power replaces the bounty of nature domain power.

**Replenishment (Su):** At 8th level, while you are consuming food as a full-round action, you gain fast healing equal to 1/4 your level; each round of consumption consumes 1 days' worth of food.

**Replacement Domain Spells:** 3rd—[vampiric hunger](#), 5th—[hungry earth](#)

### Vanity Domain

You can use your own pride to its best effect and turn the unwarranted self-confidence of others against them.

**Inspiring Command (Su):** As a standard action, you can issue an inspiring command to your allies. The inspiring command affects one ally plus one additional ally for every three cleric levels you possess, who must all be within 30 feet of you. Affected allies gain a +2 insight bonus on attack rolls, AC, combat maneuver defense, and skill checks for 1 round. This is a language-dependent mind-affecting effect, and the allies in question must willingly obey the command during the round in

order to reap the benefits.

**Master's Yoke (Su):** At 8th level, you can attempt to assert your dominance over any visible creature within 30 feet by declaring the target your property. The target can resist this effect with a successful Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your cleric level + your Wisdom modifier). If the target fails the save, it is affected as if by [dominate monster](#) for a number of rounds equal to 1/2 your cleric level, except that the target can choose to ignore any order you give and instead take 2 points of Constitution damage and become staggered for 1 round. You can use this ability once per day at 8th level, and an additional time per day for every 4 levels beyond 8th. This is a language-based mind-affecting effect.

**Domain Spells:** 1st—[command](#), 2nd—[enthral](#), 3rd—[unadulterated loathing](#), 4th—[lesser geas](#), 5th—[smug narcissism](#), 6th—[utter contempt](#), 7th—[blasphemy](#), 8th—[frightful aspect](#), 9th—[overwhelming presence](#).

### Conceit Subdomain

Of course others should bow and obey, for I am worthy of worship!

**Associated Domain:** Vanity

**Replacement Power:** The following power replaces the inspiring command domain power.

**Touch Me Not (Su):** As a standard action, you can forbid your enemies from touching you. Enemies who wish to use touch or melee attacks against you must make a Will save equal to 10 plus 1/2 your cleric level plus your Wisdom modifier. If they fail, the action is lost; if they make the save, they may attack normally that round. You may use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

**Replacement Domain Spells:** 1st—[youthful appearance](#), 2nd—[eagle's splendor](#)

### Lust Subdomain (Variant)

The following spells may be used instead of the standard replacement spells given for the Vanity domain.

**Replacement Domain Spells:** 2nd—[unnatural lust](#), 3rd—[nixie's lure](#), 4th—[triggered suggestion](#), 7th—[waves of ecstasy](#), 8th—[euphoric tranquility](#).

# New Spells

The following are new spells developed primarily by the Xelusine.

## Secret Den

**School** conjuration (creation)

**Level** bard 6, wizard 6

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S, F (a miniature brass door, a piece of building material, and a wooden spoon, each worth 2 gp)

**Range** close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect** extra-dimensional home, up to three 5-ft. cubes/level (S)

**Duration** 2 hours/level (D)

**Saving Throw** none; **Spell Resistance** no

You conjure up an extra-dimensional dwelling that has a single entrance on the plane from which the spell was cast. The entry point looks like a faint shimmering in the air that is 4 feet wide and 8 feet high. Only those you designate may enter the den, and the portal is shut and made invisible behind you after you enter. You may open it again from your own side at will. Once observers have passed beyond the entrance, they are in a clean and temperate space.

You can create any floor plan you desire to the limit of the spell's effect. Crude furnishings like those found in a [secure shelter](#) are present, divided up every 20 feet as the caster sees fit. The walls resemble the building material used as a spell component. Since the place can be entered only through its special portal, outside conditions do not affect its interior, nor do conditions inside it pass to the plane beyond. Secret den can be made permanent through the [permanency](#) spell with a minimum caster level of 14th and 15,000 gp's worth of diamond dust.

Anyone or anything that is not native to the den is expelled forcefully through the front portal when its duration expires (provided it has not been made permanent). Characters can make Reflex saving throws DC 15 to land in a square of their choice within the range of their base land speed and take only half damage. Characters who fail their saving throw and unattended objects are distributed randomly outside the portal in a radius equal to half of the original effect, are prone, and take 8d6 damage. Characters and objects within the radius when this process begins must make a Reflex saving throw DC 15 or take 3d6 damage. Until it is cleared, the ground

within the radius is treated as having dense rubble.

## Sin Blast

**School** enchantment (emotion, mind-affecting)

**Level** antipaladin 1, bard 2, cleric 2, inquisitor 2

**Casting Time** 1 standard action

**Components** V, S, F (a 7-sided die)

**Range** close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

**Effect** target is forced to engage in a particular sin

**Duration** one or two rounds

**Saving Throw** Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell creates a dark, prismatic ray to shoot from the casters finger to strike a single target, a ranged touch attack. If successful, the target is dazed for 1 round, and must make a Will saving throw. If the saving throw is failed, the target is affected by a random sin effect, roll on the table below:

d7	Sin	Effect
1	Envy	Can only attempt a disarm maneuver next action
2	Gluttony	Can only attempt a bull rush maneuver next action
3	Greed	Can only attempt a steal maneuver next action
4	Lust	Can only attempt a grapple maneuver next action
5	Pride	Can only complete a free, swift, or immediate action
6	Sloth	Can only withdraw next action, cannot do a double move
7	Wrath	Can only charge next action

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