**Rite Publishing Presents** 

TIA

20 Questions with Tim Hitchcock

April 2011 Issue 2

Aff

Top Reviews by Dark Mistress, Endzeitgeist, Megan Robertson, and Shane O'Connor

Free Map Tiles by Micheal Tumey

Articles by Creighton Broadhurst, Jonathan Mcanulty, Michael Welham, T. H. Gulliver, and Steven D. Russell



## IRONHILL CITADEL VIRTUAL BOXED SET<sup>©</sup> THE MOST DETAILED CITADEL EVER MAPPED!

**IRONHILL CITADEL** 

**BLUEPRINTS** 

IRONHII

CITADEI

IRONHILL CITADEL

輸出

副物

El la

HALL BEERS

L

5

- SEVEN ORIGINAL PRODUCTS FORMING THE IRONHILL CITADEL
- A Spiffy "aced" poster map of the whole citadel (exclusive of this boxes set)
- A BIRD-EYE VIEW OF THE CITADEL (EXCLUSIVE OF THIS BOXED SET)
- TWENTY-FOUR MAPS DETAILING THE DUNGEON (EXCLUSIVE OF THIS BOXED SET)
- TWENTY-FOUR MAPS DETAILING THE ROOFTOPS (EXCLUSIVE OF THIS BOXED SET)



the first d20 pdf publisher of the world

www.Øonegames.com

## ADD SOME MENTAL MIGHT TO YOUR GAME



## What people are saying about *Psionics Unleashed*

Nathan Collins - RPGNow Featured Reviewer: Psionics Unleashed is the kind of supplement you need to have in your arsenal. You can plan an entire game around around the new mysteries of psionics, or add it to your world when the PCs go to some unknown land.

**Dabbler:** I'd recommend it to any player or DM looking to complete their OGL upgrade to Pathfinder.

**DungeonmasterCal:** *I love the new Psionics Unleashed. It's the first product I've ever purchased from Dreamscarred Press, and they now have a new fan in the fold.* 

**Landon Winkler:** *If you want to use classic D&D psionics in your Pathfinder game, this is the book you're looking for.* 

**Shane O'Connor - RPGNow Featured Reviewer:** *Psionics Unleashed delivers in spades. Fixing what needs it and leaving alone what doesn't, this book is a true Pathfinder upgrade to 3.5's psionic legacy.* 

**Michael Briggs:** Overall, this is a great addition to the Pathfinder game. If you like psionics, get it! If you don't, give it a chance. This book is worth the effort.

Get it in print from Amazon, Dreamscarred Press, Paizo, or your local game store!

Also available for download at www.dreamscarredpress.com and other fine PDF distributors



## Jable of Contents

**Cover Image** Ardon-nue "Breaking Fire" Foreground image by **Eric Lofgren**, Background image by James "*Devin Night*" Hazlet

Page 4 Table of Contents

**Page 6** Guest Editorial by Ben McFarland

#### Articles

**Page 8** Pyroclastic Creature and Ardon-nue by Steven D. Russell; Illustration by Eric Lofgren

**Page 14** Sacred Beasts: Priests of Fur and Feathers by Jonathan McAnulty Illustrations by Arthur Rackham and Public Domain

**Page 18** Malevolent Manifestation by T. H. Gulliver Illustrations by Arthur Rackham and Public Domain

**Page 21** Synergixxik by Michael Welham Image by Public Domain

**Page 25** The Riderless Horse By Creighton Broadhurst Illustration by Dr. John Johnston

#### Interview

**Page 30** Twenty Questions with Tim Hitchcock! By Steven D. Russell

#### Reviews

**Page 33** Inkantations by 4 Wind Fantasy Games Review by Dark Mistress

**Page 35** #30 Haunts for Ships and Shores by Rite Publishing Review by Dark Mistress **Page 37** Lizard of the Dragon Fang By Raging Swan Press Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf

**Page 40** Faces of the Tarnished Souk: Le Loup Solitaire By Rite Publishing Review of Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf

**Page 42** NeoExodus Chronicles - World of Exodus By Louis Porter Jr. Design Review by Megan Robertson

**Page 44** #30 Unique Magical Blades By Rite Publishing Review by Megan Robertson

**Page 46** Advanced Feats: Visions of the Oracle By Open Design Review by Shane O' Conner

Page 48 101 9th Level Spells By Rite Publishing Review by Shane O' Conner

**Page 49 Bonus Article** Compassionate Sons (Paladin Archetype) by Steven Russell Illustrations by Arthur Rackham and Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Page 51 Open Game Licence

Attached Free Map tiles by Michael Tumey! See the Back Cover for Details!

Editor in Chief: Dave Paul Advertising Manager Hans Cummings Publisher Steven D. Russell

Compatibility with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game requires the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game from Paizo Publishing, LLC. See <u>http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG</u> for more information on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. Paizo Publishing, LLC does not guarantee compatibility, and does not endorse this product.

Pathways #2 © 2011 Steven D. Russell, Open Gaming License Copyright © 2007 Wizards of the Coast. All rights reserved, Pathfinder is a registered trademark of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility Logo are trademarks of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and are used under the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility License. See <a href="http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility">http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility</a> for more information on the compatibility license. All product covers are the trademarks of their respective companies and are used with permission.

4

## YOUR SOURCE FOR UNIQUE ADVENTURES AND ACCESSORIES FOR YOUR PATHFINDER GAMES





WHITEN AND CHARTED BY BEY GEFTON CRATTER ONE OF THE DARY VEL CARRANG AND DATHFINDER "With the pencil-sketch art, the simple layout and the old-school stat blocks, it feels at times like something you might have created during 9th period study hall. And I mean that in a positive way — it really feels like a return to the core of what we love about RPGs."

-Ed Grabianowski, RobotViking.com

"What makes this module unique and exciting is the simple but interesting plot that builds in the background as the party investigates the various events that occur around them. I'm excited to see how this module leads into future adventures and how the campaign arc as a whole comes together."

-Danny "Bartoneus" Rupp, CriticalHits.com

#### Available in PDF or Print on Demand from DriveThruRPG.com

"The illustrations and maps found within The Manor of Deceit are fantastic! The printable battlemaps are full color and include the 1" grid. For easier running of the adventure, smaller representations of these maps are included throughout. The layout is very professional and each encounter is properly described and detailed. Blackbyrne Publishing has produced a very highquality adventure module filled with great combat encounters and a wellwritten storyline. The full-color printable battlemaps enhance the value of the adventure module and the PDF itself. "

-Roleplayers Chronicle

"The art is well-done, far above what you expect in independent RPGs. The last section of the PDF has full-scale 1" grid maps of every encounter that you can print out. You don't have to try to draw the barge and river, just lay down the tiles that depict it. I love this feature, and it really puts Blackbyrne's modules a cut above."

-Ed Grabianowski, RobotViking.com Available in PDF or Print on Demand from DriveThruRPG.com

nd<del>g</del>r'



BP-1 THE MAITOR OF DECEIT AN ADVENTURE FOR 4-6 PLAYERS OF 2ND LEVEL COMPATIBLE WITH PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME AND CHAPTER TWO OF THE DARK VEIL CAMPAIGN. WRITTEN AND CREATED BY JEFF GUPTON



WWW.BLACKBYRNEPUBLISHING.COM



David Paul had a conference to attend so **Ben McFarland** is writing a guest Editorial for us this month. Ben is an ENnie award winning designer (*Tales of Zobeck*) and is the lead designer on *The Breaking of Fostor Nagar* and *Streets of Zobeck* 

#### How much is too much?

In *Brewster's Millions*, Richard Pryor is given a ridiculous sum of money and told, "Spend it all, and I'll give you even more. Fail to spend everything, and you get nothing." He is forced to mindlessly purchase and donate, buy lunches and artwork, trying to burn through his smaller inheritance so that he can enjoy even more. Hilarity ensues as John Candy and Richard Pryor hard work to furiously churn out that constant stream of expenditures, and the exercise's lesson is straightforward: appreciate what you have and use it wisely.

When I look at the current state of the Pathfinder market, I wonder if we, as an audience, are not encouraging a certain amount of thrashing product generation. Twitter and Facebook give us immediate access to designers. Forums offer up regular and constant communication, and chat rooms provide the next best thing to catching a publisher or designer at the supermarket. Our ability to interact with people who create the hobby has never been greater, but with it has come a heightened pace of discourse.

But so what? What difference does it make that we enjoy a golden age of nearly unfettered and instant interaction with designers, artists, cartographers and publishers, where our every question can be answered in hours if not moments? Why does matter?

#### The answer is this: pace.

We are seeing new products announced and released everyday. New systems. New games. New settings. New supplements. New rules. New options. New. New. New. New.

#### New.

There's so much material being generated out in the ether that I worry we're dangerously close to a sort of Brewster Thrashing, a furious generation of output with an unspoken fear that if we don't create something new and bright and shiny and offer it up to the Pathfinder audience yesterday, we won't be given a tomorrow. We figure out some idea, any idea, carve out a bit of the marketplace and begin making things we love—but too fast, I think. How much from these new products can we manage to incorporate into our games?

In a world of tweets, streaming updates, constant emails and 24-7 forum posts, I think there is something to be said for taking our time with design and publication. I think we, as a community, would benefit from longer production periods and bigger projects. There is something to be said for tackling a 100+ page supplement or adventure anthology. We've all grown so accustomed to immediate gratification, clattering at our keyboard and having something novel appear on our screens in moments, we forget about the sense of accomplishment inherent in reaching for something grand and maybe just a little too ambitious, and succeeding. Its why I enjoy patronage projects.

It has been said time and again—what we enjoy in this hobby is a labor of love. You will not grow rich doing it, and in fact, the surest way to make a small fortune in this business is to start with a large one. Considered in that light, why do we rush? Why does there seem to be this mad need to publish, publish, publish? Our industry is much different than it was in its hoary days of wargamers and white boxes, but the social nature of our hobby has remained the same. Do we hurry at the table so we can power through as many encounters as possible before the session ends, or do we laugh and joke, tell stories and collaborate, having fun while we play a game with friends?

This is a slow hobby, one we savor and indulge like a fine liquor or an expensive meal. We invest days, weeks, even months and years into the development of plotlines and characters, building experiences and friendships which can last even longer. It should not feel as if taking a vacation means sacrificing participation in a score of community discussions or having a dozen new products slip away into the ether of the next forum page.

#### So what do I suggest?

I would like to see greater plans and grander schemes. I want big frameworks, with lots of story seeds and a pack of interesting supporting characters I can spin into other adventures. I want to see mechanics experimentation combined with solid design and rigorous playtesting, wrapped up with a tight manuscript littered with insights from the creator about why certain choices were made and what were the paths not taken. I want the tools to expand the material beyond the initial arc and better integrate it into my own existing games so I can create a more ubiquitous experience-one my players can relate to other gamers and enjoy a shared cultural background. Think about it. Old school players will fondly recall old adventures and settings, joking about details and situations they all know, despite never playing with one another. We have to dream bigger in order to create the sort of stories with that impact and it may mean slowing down. We should strive to create those dreams now.



## WWW, **MOBLEKNIGH**, **COM** 'Where the Out-of-Print is Available Again'

## oble Knight Games

Specializes in New & Out-of-Print RPG's, CCG's, Wargames & Miniatures

#### Deep discounts on new books and games

- Over 30,000 unique products in stock and ready to ship
- Easy to use website with shopping cart and secure checkout
- Worldwide shipment
- Fast and friendly customer service
- Receive your order within 3-7 days
- Weekly email update with new and rare finds
- Accurate grading methods for the discerning collector
- Fair and reasonable prices for out-of-print and rare items
- We pay CASH or TRADE for your unwanted gaming items



View our full inventory online at www.nobleknight.com or email us at nobleknight@nobleknight.com No computer? Call 608-758-9901 or write for a free catalog to: 2242 Kennedy Rd. Janesville, WI 53545

## Pyroclastic Creature Jemplate

Deities and extradimensional lords with dominion over volcanoes sometimes grant their agents special powers, infusing them with the essence of the combined elemental forces of air, earth and fire. These powers remain a legacy to the creature's descendants and, sometimes, can even be passed on in secret ceremonies in such a way that pyroclastic creatures occasionally become races unto themselves.

Pyroclastic creatures share a special bond. They look as if there were made of naught but brimstone. They tend to be heavy-bodied with a dark, ashen color. Their bodies often bear cracks that are red, orange, or yellow in color.

#### Creating a Pyroclastic Creature

"Pyroclastic" is an inherited or acquired template that can be added to any corporeal creature. A pyroclastic creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

#### **CR**: +1

**Type:** The creature gains the elemental subtype of the elements that infuse it: air, earth, and fire.

**Defenses/Qualities**: Not subject to critical hits or flanking. Does not take additional damage from precision-based attacks (such as sneak attack), does not breathe, eat, or sleep; **Immune** acid, bleed, electricity, fire, paralysis, poison, sleep, sonic, and stunning; **Weakness** vulnerability to cold

**Speed:** A pyroclastic creature retains the base creature's speeds and gains a new speed according to the element that infuses it, as given in the following sections. If the base creature already possessed the mode of movement that the element would grant, the pyroclastic creature adopts the higher of the two speeds.

- *Fly Speed:* (perfect maneuverability) equal to its highest speed or increase existing fly speed and maneuverability to equal its highest speed.
- *Burrow Speed:* equal to half its base speed or increase existing burrow speed to equal its base speed.

**Special Abilities**: A pyroclastic creature gains the following special abilities.

Lava Burn (Ex) A pyroclastic creature's melee attacks deals 2d6 fire damage in addition to damage dealt. Those affected by the lava burn ability must also succeed on a Reflex save or catch fire, taking 2d6 for an additional 1d4 rounds at the start of its turn (DC 10 1/2 pyroclastic creature's HD + pyroclastic creature's Con modifier [or its Cha modifier if it is a construct or undead creature]). A burning creature can attempt a new save as a full-round action. Dropping and rolling on the ground grants a +4 bonus on this save. Creatures that hit a pyroclastic creature with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take fire damage as though hit by the pyroclastic creature and must make a Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. If a pyroclastic creature is hit with a manufactured weapon, the weapon takes fire damage as though hit by the pyroclastic creature's lava burn ability and must make a Reflex save to avoid catching on fire. Weapons that can deal additional cold or fire damage, such as a *flaming* or *icy burst* weapons, are immune to this effect. This effect does not avoid or ignore hardness.

*Pyroclastic Aura (Ex):* A pyroclastic creature exudes a smoky poisonous gas in a 50-ft. radius that causes 1d6 points of Constitution damage per round if inhaled (Fort save negates: DC 10 + 1/2 pyroclastic creature's HD + pyroclastic creature's Con modifier [or its Cha modifier if it is an construct or undead creature], the DC increases by 1 per previous save). The smoke obscures vision, giving concealment (20% miss chance) to characters within it. A pyroclastic creature can suppress or activate this ability as an immediate action.

Pyroclastic Breath Weapon (Su): Using this breath weapon is a standard action. A pyroclastic creature can only use its breath weapon attack once every 1d4 rounds, even if it possesses more than one breath weapon (such as a dragon). A pyroclastic breath weapon always starts at an intersection adjacent to the dragon and extends in a direction of the pyroclastic creature's choice. A pyroclastic breath weapon is a cone with a range based on the base creature's size (as a true dragon, see Pathfinder Bestiary). This breath weapon deals 1d10 points of damage per HD the base creature possesses with half the damage being bludgeoning and the other half being fire. Those caught in the area can attempt Reflex saves to take half damage. The save DC against a breath weapon is 10 + 1/2 pyroclastic creature's HD + pyroclastic creature's Con modifier (or its Cha modifier if it is a construct or undead creature). In addition, the cone of gas is poisonous; creatures that are exposed must make a successful Fortitude save (same DC negates) or suffer 1d6 points of Constitution damage per round A pyroclastic creature can use its breath weapon when it is grappling or being grappled.

**Abilities:** Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +6 (+3 to melee attack and damage rolls (and thrown weapon damage rolls), Climb and Swim checks, CMB, CMD, Strength checks, and any of the base creature's Strength-based DCs), Con +4 (+2 to Fort, +2 hp per HD, and the pyroclastic creature's Constitution-based DCs) if the base creature has a Constitution score.

**Environment:** As base creature, plus any mountain and elemental borders of air, earth and fire.

#### Ardon-nue "Breaking Fire"

CR 23

**XP 819,200** CE Colossal dragon (fire)

Init +2; Senses dragon senses, smoke vision; Perception+38

**Aura** fire (10 ft., 2d6 fire), frightful presence (360 ft., DC 30), pyroclastic (50 ft., DC 35)

#### Defense

AC 39, touch 0, flat-footed 39 [20 % miss chance] (-2 Dex, +39 natural, -8 size) hp 507 (29d12+319)

Fort +27, Ref +14, Will +24

**Defensive Abilities** lava burn (DC 35), not subject to critical hits or flanking, does not take additional damage from precision-based attacks (such as sneak attack), does not breathe, eat, or sleep

**DR** 20/magic; **Immune** acid, bleed, electricity, fire, paralysis, poison, sleep, sonic, and stunning; **SR** 33 **Weaknesses** Vulnerability to cold

#### Offense

**Speed** 40 ft., burrow 20 ft., fly 250 ft. (perfect) **Melee** bite +40 (4d8+28+2d6 fire/19-20), 2 claws +37 (4d6+19+2d6 fire), 2 wings +35 (2d8+9+2d6 fire), tail slap +35 (4d6+28+2d6 fire)

**Space** 30 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft. (30 ft. with bite) **Special Attacks** breath weapon (70-ft. cone, DC 35, 24d10 fire; or 29d10 bludgeoning and fire plus poison —contact; *save* Fort DC 35; *frequency* 1 round; *effect* 1d6 Con; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitutionbased, crush (Large creatures, DC 35, 4d6+24), incinerate, lava burn (DC 35), manipulate flames, melt stone, tail sweep (Medium creatures, DC 27, 2d8+24)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 29th; concentration +35) At will—*detect magic, discern location, find the path, pyrotechnics* (DC 18), *suggestion* (DC 19), *wall of fire* 3/day- quickened *suggestion* (DC 19)

**Spells Known** (CL 19th; concentration +25)

9th (4/day)—*time stop, one step beyond*\*

8th (6/day)—khan's command\*, prismatic wall, screen

7th (6/day)—limited wish, spell turning, steal the painful memory\*(DC 23)

6th (7/day)—bind group\* (DC 22), contingency, greater dispel magic

5th (7/day)—deliver message (DC 21), polymorph, telekinesis (DC 21), teleport

4th (7/day)—charm monster (DC 20), enervation, greater invisibility, stoneskin

3rd (7/day)—dispel magic, displacement, haste, protection from energy

2nd (8/day)—alter self, detect thoughts, invisibility misdirection, see invisibility

1st (8/day)—alarm, grease (DC 17), magic missile, shield, true strike

o (at will)—arcane mark, bleed (2), light, magehand, mending, message, open/close, read magic

#### Jactics

**Before Combat**: Ardon-nue always has a *one step beyond* active and a *contingency* (*teleport*) ready if he becomes helpless. He often casts *time stop* followed by *protection from energy* (cold), *displacement*, *haste, see invisibility, spell turning* and *stoneskin* (often quickening these spells).

**Combat:** The following round he uses a quickened *dispel magic* on a single opponent followed by his pyroclastic breath weapon, then moves in so that next round he can engage in melee and threaten as many foes as possible taking advantage of his three auras. He uses wall spells or quickened *suggestion* to stop those who flee that he wants to detain.

**Morale:** Fearless, as Ardon-nue depends on his teleport contingency to remove him from danger.

#### Statistics

Str 49, Dex 6, Con 33, Int 22, Wis 23, Cha 22

Base Atk +29; CMB +56; CMD 64 (68 vs. trip) Feats Cleave, Critical Focus, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Quicken Spell-like Ability (Suggestion), Staggering Critical, Vital Strike, Wingover

**Skills** Appraise +38, Bluff +38, Diplomacy +38, Fly +14,Intimidate +38, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Knowledge(history) +38, Perception +38, Sense Motive +38,Spellcraft +38, Stealth +14, Use Magic Device +38

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Giant, Ignan, Orc

#### Ecology

**Environment** Questhaven Caldera **Organization** solitary **Treasure** triple

#### Special Abilities

**Fire Aura (Su)** Ardon-nue is surrounded by an aura of intense heat. All creatures within 10 feet take 2d6 points of fire damage at the beginning of the dragon's turn.

**Incinerate (Su)** Ardon-nue can incinerate creatures in its fiery breath. A creature reduced to fewer than o hit points by its breath weapon must make a Fortitude save (DC 35). Failure indicates that the creature is reduced to ash. Creatures destroyed in this way can only be restored to life through *true resurrection* or similar magic.

**Manipulate Flames (Su)** Ardon-nue can control any fire spell within 10 feet per age category of the dragon as a standard action. This ability allows it to move any fire effect in the area, as if it were the caster. This ability also allows it to reposition a stationary fire effect, although the new placement must be one allowed by the spell. Finally, for 1 round following the use of this ability, the dragon can control any new fire spell cast within its area of control, as if it were the



caster. It can make all decisions allowed to the caster, including canceling the spell if it so desires.

**Melt Stone (Su)** Ardon-nue can use its breath weapon to melt rock at a range of 100 feet, affecting a 5-foot-radius area per age category. The area becomes lava to a depth of 1 foot. Any creature in contact with the lava takes 20d6 points of fire damage on the first round, 10d6 on the second, and none thereafter as the lava hardens and cools. If used on a wall or ceiling, treat this ability as an avalanche that deals fire damage.

**Smoke Vision (Ex)** Ardon-nue can see perfectly in smoky conditions (such as those created by *pyrotechnics*).

#### Description:

"I have seen a swarm of ants take down a lion, and this is what the Questor's Society is, a swarm of adventurers. They have the potential to take down any great wrym, but especially if that dragon is a fool. This is why I move cautiously, this why I move clandestinely. It is also, why I must break them.

Excerpt from *Dragons of Questhaven* by Qwilion of Questhaven.

My sleek frame belies my size and power, and from a distance many do not appreciate that I am truly a great wyrm. I care not, for in reality few ever see me in my true form. I often travel about in the form of other creatures, walking the very streets of Queasthaven, or flying about disguised as other dragons, making use of their good name or tarnishing the names of other dragons. I do not allow my pride to rule this form and I have appeared both as prince and pauper.

I do not have allies, I have tools, which I value, but I understand when I am the best tool for a job. I do not serve, but others do serve my goals. I also do not engage in the petty evils of my cousins as it wastes valuable assets and may even turn a tool against me. I still believe in the polite forms of old, and being helpful so long as it does not cost me. First and foremost, though, I am in a grand war against a vast force of adventurers. I take chances but I do not ignore the odds.

You have to understand I came here for the challenge. The Questor's Society overthrew a lich's empire that had lasted for a thousand years. For now I manipulate the enemies of the protectorate into confrontations with the society, sapping their strength and assuring the defeat of these potential enemies. I have even corrupted a few companies into my service, though only a loyal few know who they truly work for. However, if the Questors do kill me, that shall truly release the Breaking Fire. I also am looking for the right mate to continue my line but finding a true equal has been a lonely task, so I have stopped limiting myself to my own species.

I helped create the Questor Society to overthrow Cynmark the Dread Lich. Now I have set myself upon the path of destroying the Questor's Society. I have defeated Biisir, "Discord's Essence," a body-jumping spirit of an entropic dragon. I granted him quarter as I did not wish to see such a wonderful tool destroyed. He now serves me as a tool to make the Society work to stop a civil war, but that is not my true plan, or is it?

#### Jore

Knowledge (local)

*Common (DC 23):* This elemental dragon is Ardon-nue, "The Breaking Fire", a manipulative and powerful beast that seeks out challenges it deems worthy of its abilities.

Uncommon (DC 28): Related to a red dragon, other creatures similar to this are known as "pyroclastic creatures;" read excerpt from <u>Dragons of</u> <u>Questhaven</u>.

*Rare (DC 33):* The Breaking Fire is difficult to discern as it is immune to divination and is often either in disguise or surrounded by a cloud of toxic super-heated gas, and when people do see him, they often flee. Attacks against him must overcome the elemental energy sustaining him. Nearly all physical and energy attacks are useless and only archmages have a chance of affecting him with magic. Beyond the powerful attacks associated with dragons, Ardon-nue earned his epithet using his devastating volcanic breath weapon, which leaves nothing of its victims but ash and can turn normal stone into lava. Ardon-nue also has a supernatural control of all forms of fire.

*Obscure (DC 43):* Spells and effects that result in freezing temperatures and can overcome his defensive spells are the most likely to succeed.

*Epic (DC 53):* If one wishes to avoid being destroyed by the Breaking Fire one need only prove useful to him, as he is loath to discard what he perceives as a valuable resource.

#### New Spells

#### Bind Group

School: Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]; Level: Brd 6, Sor/Wiz 6 Casting Time: 1 standard action

**Components:** V, S, F (tiny anchor)

**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

**Target:** One creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart and one geographic location, building or conveyance.

**Duration:** Permanent (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates;

Spell Resistance: Yes

You bind a group of people to a specific place. Those bound are unable to leave the chosen site (a ship, a building, a dungeon complex, etc.). They may act normally, but cannot move beyond the place's confines. They can climb to the top of the building, descend into the bowels of a cellar, or shoot arrows from the porch or whatever they choose, as long as they do not leave the site. If they are forcibly removed from the site they make every effort to return to the site as soon as possible, by the fastest means possible. The spell will even hold a group to the location if the place is ruined, sinks, or has been disintegrated. The spell only ends if the spell focus is broken, ruined, dispelled or the focus is taken beyond the range of the spell. Often the focus is hidden by the caster some 100 ft. or so outside the site.

#### Deliver Message

School: Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]; Level: Brd 5, Clr 5, Sor/Wiz 5 Casting Time: 1 standard action Components: V, S

**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels) **Target:** One creature

**Duration:** 1 week/level or until discharged (D)

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; **Spell Resistance:** Yes You tell the subject to deliver a message to a third person. The subject is compelled to say exactly what you tell him to say the next time he encounters the other person. Until the message is delivered, the subject is compelled to find the person as if under the effect of a *lesser geas* spell. Although the subject knows he must fulfill his geas, he cannot actually recall the message until he has delivered it. Creatures often use this spell to deliver secret messages to their followers. All of the effects listed in *lesser geas* involving the prevention of the target's fulfillment of the geas apply to *deliver message*.

#### Khan's Command

School: Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]; Level: Sor/Wiz 8

Casting Time: 1 standard action

**Components:** V, S, M (2,000 gp diamond) **Range:** Unlimited

Target: One named creature

**Duration:** See text

Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: Yes

A specific creature you name (a creature without a name is immune) must travel, using its fastest means possible (including magical items or spells if prepared or available), to appear before you, standing close enough to touch. Once the creature arrives at that spot, the spell ends.

The creature may have to go through threatened or dangerous areas (passing by guards or moving through a wall of fire) or may even have to break through a barrier (like a *wall of ice*) to get to you. A barrier that requires more than 10 rounds to get through is considered impassable for the purposes of this spell. The spell ends immediately if the creature physically cannot reach you-including a situation forcing the creature to pass through an area that would, without a doubt, kill it. For example, a creature with only 25 hp that must navigate a pool of lava to reach you is unaffected by the spell, as is a creature on another plane that has no planar travel ability. If you cast the spell and then move to a spot where the creature cannot reach you, you have freed it from the compulsion.

While under the effects of *protection from evil* or a similar spell, the subject can ignore the compulsion,

but such a ward does not prevent establishing *khan's command*, nor dispel it.

#### One Step Beyond

School: Abjuration; Level: Clr 9, Sor/Wiz 9 Casting Time: 10 minutes Components: V, S, M (1,000 gp gem per creature) Range: Touch Target: One creature per level Duration: One day/level Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless); Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless) The targets protected by this abjuration remain

completely immune to divination spells of any level, including *discern location* and even a *wish* or *miracle* spell used as a divination. Similar to *mind blank*, this spell provides foolproof protection against scrying and mind-reading attempts of any kind, and the subjects cannot be seen with a spell like *arcane eye*. An invisible character protected by this spell would also not be seen by *see invisibility* or *true seeing* spell.

#### Steal the Painful Memory

School: Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-affecting]; Level: Clr 7, Sor/Wiz 7

Casting Time: 1 hour

**Components:** V, S, F (accurate written record of the event)

Range: 1 mile/level

Target: See text

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates;

Spell Resistance: Yes

Sometimes information is best left unknown. Perhaps a village doesn't want to remember a particularly horrible murder, or the shameful act of one of its members. In this case, a powerful spellcaster can use steal the painful memory to remove all recollection of the event from the minds of the community. Steal the painful memory allows you to strip away all memories of a particular event. You must be able to describe the event in approximately 12 words or less. For example, any of the following would work: "Forget that Shaeryn ever existed"; "Forget that Shaeryn was murdered"; or "Forget that Prince Korrin murdered Shaeryn." The gap in memory will be filled in by the simplest solution, and all people affected by the spell will share this memory. Told to forget a murder, they will believe that the victim moved away; told to forget the identity of the murderer, they will believe that the crime was never solved or that the unknown murderer escaped. The targets of steal the painful memory must be linked in some way. They could be members of the same community, the same guild, the same religion, or the same party of adventurers. The power of the spell spreads out in a radius from your location until it reaches the maximum range. A successful dispelling restores the memories of a single individual; it requires a *limited wish*, *miracle* or *wish* to restore all the memories of those affected. Touching the spell focus restores your memories as well. Destroying the spell focus restores the memories of all the affected creatures.

## PRODUCTS FOR PLAYERS. PRODUCTS FOR GM's.

SETSOMETICES

Learning

## TRICKY OWLBEAR HAS YOU COVERED!

 $\sim$ 

The Favored of

Sker

For a limited time, you can purchase all of these PDF titles at the low price of \$24.99! That's every Pathfinder-compatible product plus fan-favorite "Behind the Spells: Compendium". Look for this special bundle at RPGNow & Paizo.com





## Sacred Beasts: Priests of Fur and Feathers

by Jonathan McAnulty

The beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, fill the world around us, playing a myriad of roles in an intricate dance of life. From the smallest to the greatest, each is a masterful work, perfect for the task assigned to it. Priests with access to the animal domain celebrate the existence of each animal and seek to learn spiritual truths through the study of the same. The exact nature of how a religion glorifies animals is largely alignment-dependent. Evil beastworshipers frequently focus upon the violent aspects of the animal kingdom, glorifying predators over prey and finding encouragement for their own base deeds in the primal nature of the wild. Neutral clerics with the animal domain are likely to focus on the intricate balance between all forms of life. Good-aligned religions tend to view the animals as gifts from the gods, provided for the good of all, and in need of care and nurturing.

Even within the doctrinal tenets suggested by alignment, various religions with an interest in animals will have vastly different positions concerning the role of beasts in the world. Indeed, one of the most important things to know, in order to properly understand the doctrines of a religion in regards to its views on animals, is the relationship they perceive to exist between man and beast. There are basically three positions. Most hold intelligent life to be inherently superior to unintelligent life. In such a worldview, man is master and the animals are servants. Meanwhile, some teach that all life, regardless of intelligence or size, has equal worth and there is no difference in the eyes of the gods between the life of a man and the life of an ant. Finally, a few religions hold animals to be inherently superior to the intelligent races.

In discussing religions with animal-centric dogmas, one should never forget the central role of the divine. While there are some religions which worship the creatures themselves as inherently praiseworthy, most accept that the animals are the creation of a higher power. In these churches, animals are not worshiped, rather, the nature of the animal helps to reveal the nature of the divine. Even here the lessons learned still vary from one religion to another. Theologians serving kindly gods frequently derive lessons from the animal kingdom regarding divine wisdom and benevolent forethought. Others, worshiping less benign masters, teach dogmas concerning the savage power and ruthless nature of their god.

There are two major subdomains within the animal domain: fur and feathers. The fact that some priests with access to the animal domain instead choose one of these subdomains generally has less to do with dogma than with the personal interest of the priest. Certain minor deities, however, do possess a greater



interest in one sort of animal over another. Generally, such religions do not have full access to the animal domain and priests must always choose the preferred subdomain.

#### Sacred Jomes of Beasts

GMs can use the following texts as religious books in their campaigns. Each of the following sacred writings is associated with the domain of animals, or one of its associated subdomains.

#### Sayings from the Ancient Wood

A collection of animal-oriented parables and proverbs, diligently compiled from a number of divinely approved sources, this popular book teaches simple lessons in an engaging way. The practical advice within deals with issues of morality and day-to-day life, providing guidance for families, business and governance. Though it is regarded as scripture, *Sayings from the Ancient Wood* finds employment in any number of settings. Priests use it for homilies. Parents use it for a bed-time story book and entertainers frequently memorize the stories to share with their audiences.

#### The Feathered Chorus

This illustrated hymnal contains a collection of fifty spiritual songs, each with an avian theme. The title of the book is taken from the title of the first song within the book. The hymns were written by a talented priest and they are generally accepted as having been divinely inspired. Celebrating different aspects of life, these psalms are frequently used in informal gatherings and are quite popular, even among those who do not belong to animal-oriented faiths. Because of the popularity of the songs, characters who use the hymnal in conjunction with a Perform (sing) skill check receive a +2 circumstance bonus to the effort so long as the audience is good or neutral in alignment.

#### The Red Tooth

This seven-chapter book is a tome used by evil cults and is always bound in dark red leather. Each chapter describes a different natural predator, from large to small (bear, tiger, shark, wolf, snake, tarantula and mantis), detailing its method of hunting and deriving spiritual applications from the same. The book glorifies stealth, strength, and violence. Doctrinally it advocates using whatever means necessary to bring down one's enemies and nestled within its natural lessons are many perverse doctrines. Though goodaligned religions detest the book, it occasionally finds its way into the homes of naturalists and hunters where it works mischief. Anyone using the book to study or hunt any of the animals mentioned may add a +2 circumstance bonus to Knowledge (nature) or Survival skill checks. There are rumors of more powerful copies of the book capable of magically increasing the faithful's ability to intimidate and deceive.

#### New Feats

#### Artistic Focus (Animals)

Your ability to create aesthetically pleasing animal images enhances the value of your crafted items.

Prerequisites: Craft (any) 3 ranks

**Benefits:** So long as you include an image or figure of an animal somewhere in or on an item you make using the Craft skill, the selling price of that item increases by 30%. This increase in price does not affect the cost or difficulty of crafting the item, only the market value of the item. The additional value is added after calculating the initial price. Thus an item which cost 50 gp to make, and would normally sell for 100 gp, would instead have a value of 130 gp.

**Normal:** The normal price of an item is double the cost of crafting an item.

#### **Divine Animal Whisperer**

Your channeled energies are capable of blessing, calming and soothing animals.

**Prerequisites:** 3rd level Cleric or Druid with the animal domain or one of its subdomains

**Benefits:** As a standard action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you may use one of your uses of channel energy to remove the frightened,



shaken or panicked condition from any animal within range of your channeling. All animals within range of your channeled energy also receive a +1 sacred (or profane) bonus to all d20 rolls for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling (2d6 equals 2 rounds, 3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).

#### Natural Theologian

Your study of theology has broadened your understanding of the natural world.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (religion) 5 ranks, must possess either the animal or plant cleric domains

**Benefits:** For every 5 ranks you possess in Knowledge (religion) you gain a +1 competence bonus to Knowledge (nature) skill checks.

#### **Persuasive Theologian**

Your study of theology and the scriptures makes you more persuasive.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (religion) 5 ranks, must personally possess at least one copy of a book of scriptures relevant to your personal faith

**Benefits:** For every 5 ranks you possess in Knowledge (religion) you gain a +1 competence bonus to Diplomacy and Performance (oratory) skill checks, so long as the things you are advocating or speaking about are in harmony with your chosen faith.

#### **Skilled Combat Handler**

Animals respond quickly and smoothly to your commands in combat.

Prerequisites: Handle Animal 3 ranks

**Benefits:** Trained animals under your command, and your animal companions, have a +2 bonus to initiative. Additionally you have a +2 competence bonus to any Handle Animal skill checks made while in combat.

#### Channeling Effects for the Feather and Fur Subdomains

The following effects use and supplement rules from *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*. If you do not have that book, sensorial imagery describes noticeable effects which accompany the use of channel energy. Minor channeling effects are available to characters

through either GM fiat, or the possession of the appropriate trait or class. Combat Channeling effects and Major Channeling effects are made available to a character through the acquisition of the appropriate feats. The DC of any saving throw is 10 + 1/2 character level + Charisma modifier. Effects granting bonuses are either sacred or profane bonuses. None of the effects stack with themselves, though they may stack with other, similar effects. For more information, consult *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*.

#### Feather Domain

**Sensorial Imagery:** Light brown energy, tinged with a shifting kaleidoscope of colors, and a soft trilling sound

**Minor Channeling Effect: Light as a Feather:** As a free action, you can utilize one of your uses of channel energy to make yourself temporarily lighter, reducing the amount of damage taken from a fall, similar to the effects of a *feather fall* spell. When channeling reduce the amount of damage by 10 ft. for each die you would normally roll for channeling (1d6 would deduct 10 ft., 2d6 would deduct 20 ft., etc.). This effect must be used at the time of the fall and affects only a single fall.

**Combat Channeling Effect: Song of Confusion:** As a standard action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you can use one of your uses of channeled energy to create an overwhelming cacophony of sounds similar to a chorus of hundreds of songbirds. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (2d6 equals 2 rounds, etc.) and affects all those within range of your channeling. The effect makes verbal communication impossible within the area of effect for creatures more than 5 ft. away from each other. Additionally, anyone other than yourself trying to cast a spell while within the area of effect must succeed at a Concentration check to do so, where the DC is equal to 10 + the level of the spell they are casting. Creatures immune to sonic energy are immune to this effect.

**Major Channeling Effect: Swift Flight:** As a swift action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you can utilize one of your uses of channel energy to increase your flight speed by 60 ft. (40 ft. if you are wearing medium or heavy armor). This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.). If you did not have a fly speed prior to this effect, you gain a fly speed of 60 ft. (or 40 ft. if you are wearing medium or heavy armor) for the duration of the effect.

**Major Channeling Effect: Swallow's Blessing:** As a standard action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you can use one of your uses of channel energy to temporarily improve the flight skill of all those within range of your channeling. All those affected by this effect gain a bonus to any Fly skill checks equal to the amount of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals +3, 4d6 equals +4, etc.). This bonus lasts for a number of minutes equal to the number of dice you would

normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 minutes, etc.).

#### Fur Domain

**Sensorial Imagery:** Light brown energy, slowly darkening as it expands, a low grumbling sound, similar to a growl, and the faint smell of musk

**Minor Channeling Effect: Heightened Senses:** As a swift action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you can utilize one of your uses of channel energy to momentarily improve all of your senses, adding a bonus to a single Perception skill check. The amount of the bonus is equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (1d6 equals +1, 2d6 equals +2, etc.).

**Combat Channeling Effect: Animal Reflexes:** As a swift action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you may employ one of your uses of channel energy to grant all those within range of your channeling a bonus to their Reflex save. This bonus is equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling (2d6 equals +2 to Reflex saves, 3d6 equals +3, etc.) and lasts for 1 round. This effect is not subject to Selective Channeling.

**Major Channeling Effect: Nimble as a Beast:** As a free action you can utilize one of your uses of channel energy to temporarily make yourself more nimble and quick, adding a bonus to your Dexterity and increasing your speed. For every die you would normally roll when channeling, you add +1 to your Dexterity and increase your speed by 5 ft. (3d6 would equal a 15 ft. increase in speed and +3 to Dexterity). This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to half the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling (3d6 equals 1 rounds, 4d6 equals 2 rounds, etc.).

**Major Channeling Effect: Beast Tongues:** As a standard action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you may use on of your uses of channel energy to grant the gift of *tongues* to any animal within range of your channeling. All animals affected by this effect can verbally communicate as if affected by the *tongues* spell. The effect only affects creatures with the animal type. It does not affect magical beasts or augmented animals. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).



Rite Publishing Presents

# The Secrets of Divine Channeling



By Jonathan McAnulty

## Malevolent Manifestation

By T. H. Gulliver

In Peter Underwood's *Gazetteer of Scottish Ghosts*—a collection of legendary hauntings of castles and rocky moors—I find very few of the dangerous haunts that you might use to tear your PCs' sanity from them, to push them off of towers, or set their clothes ablaze. The majority of hauntings in our world are fairly mundane, disturbing but relatively harmless. In <u>#30</u> <u>Haunts for Houses</u> and <u>#30 Haunts for Ships and Shores</u>, I call these minor haunts.

The minor haunts below are fairly common, consisting of an unexplained noise, a fleeting glimpse of something that should not be there, or an unseen force that pokes about in the material world. Use haunts like these to get your PCs on their toes, ramp up the tension, and make them uncertain when to channel positive energy at some ghastly apparition. By substituting different visual, auditory, or kinesthetic effects, you can quickly populate a haunted dungeon or castle. I provide examples inspired by Underwood's *Gazetteer*.

#### Common House Haunt CR 3

#### **XP** 800

LE minor haunt (5 ft. by 15 ft. area), persistent **Caster Level** 3

**Notice** Perception DC 13 (to notice the sudden chill in the air, a gust of wind, a door opening, or the candles flickering)

hp 13; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 day

**Effect** This haunt duplicates the effects of *unseen servant*. An invisible and shapeless force:

- tugs at the horse's reins
- pulls keys from a hook and throws them across a room
- breaks the glass of a window
- takes swords from their rack and tosses them at the floor
- · rolls a ball across the floor and down the stairs
- knocks books from a shelf
- opens a book to a certain page
- · blows candles out or knocks candles over
- lifts a torch from its sconce and throws it beneath the tapestry
- breaks crockery
- overturns furniture
- tips sculptures from shelves
- pulls bed sheets tightly over a sleeper's head
- pulls a poker from the fireplace
- knocks from inside the wall
- brushes against someone's face
- · gently shakes someone to wake them
- opens the door to a kennel or barn
- · opens a chest and rummages through the contents



- sets a chandelier spinning
- shifts the position of a coffin so it faces toward a window
- tosses a holy symbol into the fire

This haunt is persistent. The effect may persist for several minutes, be repeated several times, or stop and start over the course of an hour. The haunt is considered active until it stops and remains dormant for its reset period of one day. While the haunt is active, it can be neutralized by channelled energy.

#### Common Creaks and Groans CR4

#### **XP** 1200

LE minor haunt (10 ft. by 10 ft. area), persistent **Caster Level** 4

**Notice** Perception DC 16 (to smell something, e.g. burnt ashes, a wet dog, rotted meat, blood, damp earth, or foul breath)

#### hp 18; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 hour Effect

This haunt duplicates the effects of *ghost sounds* (Will DC 10 disbelief). A volume of sound rises, recedes, approaches, or remains at a fixed place. It may seem to originate from outside of the area of the haunt, ending when the creature that triggers it exits the area. Those inside the area hear:

the meowing of an unseen cat

- · screeches and chuckles
- whispering voices
- footsteps walking slowly across the floor of an empty room
- footsteps almost keeping time with your own
- the baying of a distant hound
- heavy panting close behind you
- snoring from an empty bed
- a chest being dragged across a wooden floor
- three bumps followed by three crashes
- a distant battle
- a horn blowing mournfully or a drum beating ominously
- · something hard striking flesh and bones
- a harp playing a familiar tune
- animals scratching at a door
- animals whimpering or whining
- ghastly shrieks
- a pounding on a door

This haunt is persistent and continues for up to three minutes. It appears to cease if creatures leave the proximity during those three minutes, perhaps to investigate the sound, but then can be heard again if they return to the area of the haunt.

#### Common Ghastly Apparition CR 5

#### **XP** 1600

LE minor haunt (5 ft. by 25 ft. area; or 10 ft. by 10 ft. area; or 7 ft. radius circle)

Caster Level 5

**Notice** Perception DC 21 (to notice a shadow forming, a dimming of the lights, or a wisp of smoke) **hp** 10; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 minute

**Effect** This haunt duplicates the effects of the spell *silent image* (Will DC 11 disbelief if interacted with), creating a visual illusion. This image moves but only within the area of the haunt and then disappears within one round. Creatures within the area see:

- a scowling woman in green
- a hairy hand, cut from its wrist
- a long-haired old man, mouth open in a silent scream
- a giant standing on a boulder
- blood on their own hands
- the upper half of a woman's butchered body, gliding quickly across the room
- the lower half of a woman's butchered body, walking
- a man by the road, in wet a cloak, waiting for a lift
- wet paw prints appearing one after the other on the floor
- a horse and rider charging toward them
- a child standing in the ruins
- a bloody and twisted body suspended on hooks on the wall
- a body lying across the road in front of their wagon
- a man with three hunting dogs
- puddles of water turning bloody on the old battlefield

- a face staring back through the glass
- a wretched figure only visible in the mirror
- a phantom fire spreading up the walls
- thick mold appearing on a patch of wall, quickly spreading before vanishing
- a rotting man dressed in the clothes used to dress kings for burial

With a short reset of one minute, it can quickly reappear somewhere else within the area.

#### Destruction

If a haunt is annoying enough to the PCs, finding a way to permanently neutralize it has the potential to drive the plot forward. Few of these haunts are very troublesome. GMs could link their conditions for destruction to those of other, more difficult haunts. Some examples of conditions for destruction are:

- finding a sword buried in the yard and putting it in a place of honor
- returning a borrowed stone to an old temple
- returning a stolen object to its rightful owner
- draining a pond and retrieving an old chest, a table, or a door
- unearthing some old clay jars full of ashes and bones
- · returning the a skull to its rightful owner
- blessing an object
- offering food
- reclaiming an object thought cursed or damned
- spending a night in the haunted space
- · burning the building where the offense took place
- discovering the truth behind a lie
- identifying a corpse by name

Only award XP for these minor haunts when they are combined with other dangers or when PCs find a way to destroy them permanently.





## A DARK STAR FELL FROMITHE SKY BRINGING WITH IT THE END OF ALL THINGS!

THE SANCTITY OF THE WORLD KNOWN AS ABADDON WAS SHATTERED WHEN A GLOBAL APOCALYPTIC EVENT OF A METEOR IMPACTING THE PLANET CAUSING A DESTRUCTIVE ECOLOGICAL AND ELDRITCH CHANGE. NOW THERE IS NO DAY OR NIGHT, JUST NEVER ENDING TWILIGHT.

AN UNDEAD WORLD RULED BY FEAR AND HORROR. UNDEAD NIGHTMARES PROWL THE DARKEST FOREST WITH **MALEVOLENT GHOULS, GRIM DEMONIC** FIENDS AND HORRIFIC VAMPIRES PREY ON A FEARFUL POPULACE. THE WORLD IS DEMINATED BY THE MENSTREUSLY POWERFUL IMMORTAL VAMPIRIC LICH LORD KNOWN AS CALIX SABINUS REIGNS SUPREME OVER THIS WORLD. AND WITH ALL THIS THE MYSTERIOUS FORCE KNOWN AS NIGHTWALL. EVIL DOMINATES THE WORLD TO BE CHALLENGED BY NOBLE HEROES FIGHTING TO TAKE BACK A WORLD THAT SHOULD BELONG TO THEM.

#### ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE UP THE FIGHT?



LEARNIMERE ABEUT BSIDIANITWILIGHT AT WWWAPPIDESIGNCEM



BATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

#### Synergixxik By Michael Welham

The oversized, green, stick-like insects move about independently until they perceive a threat. At that point, they rush toward each other, adjoining legs until one creature, ten times as large as the individual insects, remains. The combined creature spits a glob of acidic goo.

#### Synergixxik Builder CR1

**XP** 400 N Small vermin **Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

#### Defense

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size) hp 13 (2d8 + 4) Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +0 Immune mind-affecting effects

#### Offense

Speed 20 ft. Melee bite + 2 (1d6 + 1) Special Attacks merge, spit

#### Statistics

Str 12, Dex 17, Con 14, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 3 Base Atk +1; CMB +1; CMD 14 (22 vs. trip) Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

#### Ecology

**Environment** any **Organization** solitary or team (4-8) **Treasure** none

#### Special Abilities

**Merge (Ex)** As a full round action, a group of at least 4 builders combine into a gestalt form. The resulting creature becomes size Medium, increasing its speed to 30 ft. The creature gains +2 to its natural armor—including the size change, its AC becomes 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13). For every 2 builders (up to a maximum of 8) in the combined creature, add 10 hit points, +2 to its base attack, CMB and CMD, and +1 to its bite damage. For example, a creature composed of 4 individual builder synergixxik would have 33 hit points, and its bite attack would have a +6 to hit, doing 1d6 + 3 damage. Additionally, the combined creature's spit attack improves such that the Reflex saves increase to 15, and the goo does 1d6 points of acid damage per round.

**Spit (Ex)** By succeeding at a ranged touch attack (+4 to attack), a builder hits the target with a glob of



spittle which affects its opponent as a tanglefoot bag (DC 13 Reflex saves, rather than DC 15). This effect is Constitution-based. A builder may use this ability once every 4 rounds.

A synergixxik builder acts as the "drone" of a synergixxik colony, foraging for material which it then uses to help the colony build its mobile hive. An individual builder eats plants suited for binding materials to girders (described below), or to dissolve material no longer necessary for the hive's functioning. When a creature threatens the foraging group, builders spend a round to join together, increasing to a single, Medium-sized creature and undergoing a metabolic change which makes the material they carry highly acidic.

As with all lower synergixxik, royals spawn builders are genderless until the hive loses a royal and one of these creatures spontaneously develops into a new royal. No one has been able to successfully predict the selection process. Kings also groom the strongest and most capable builders to become replacement girders (typically due to those creatures dying of old age, since a girder's destruction in battle usually heralds the hive's destruction).

These large, brown, stick insects prowl the plains, apparently spoiling for a fight with anything getting in their way. When they spot an opponent, they combine into an incredible specimen with mandibles which wickedly gleam with newly forged power.



### Synergixxik Soldier CR3

XP 800 N Medium vermin Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

#### Defense

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 natural) hp 26 (4d8 + 12) Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +1 Immune mind-affecting effects

#### Offense

Speed 30 ft. Melee bite + 5 (1d8 + 2) Special Attacks merge Statistics

Statistics Str 14, Dex 14, Con 17, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 3 Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 17 (29 vs. trip) Skills Perception +8, Stealth +10; Racial Modifiers +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

#### Ecology

**Environment** any **Organization** solitary or team (4-8) **Treasure** none

#### Special Abilities

Merge (Ex) As a full round action, a group of at least 4 soldiers combine into a gestalt form. The resulting creature becomes size Large, taking 10 feet of space and gaining a 10-foot reach as well as a new speed of 40 ft. The creature gains +3 to its natural armorincluding the size change, its AC becomes 18 (touch 11, flat-footed 16). For every 2 soldiers (up to a maximum of 8) in the combined creature, add 15 hit points; +2 to its base attack, CMB and CMD; and +2 to its bite damage. As part of the merge, the creature's bite attack becomes the equivalent of a +1 weapon, adding to its attack roll and damage. If 7 or more soldiers merge, the creature's bite attack also gains a +1 equivalent melee weapon special ability (typically flaming, frost, or shock). For example, a gestalt creature formed by a group of 6 soldiers would have 71 hit points, and a bite attack with a +12 bonus to attack which does 1d8 +9 damage.

Synergixxik soldiers defend the hive and carry out their queen's battle plans for the colony's frequent wars. Stronger individually than builders, they see an even greater increase in power when they combine, growing to size Large and improving their bite attack to the equivalent of a magical weapon.

Soldiers are genderless creatures birthed by synergixxik royals. They never have the opportunity to advance beyond their station like the occasional builder would, but soldiers frequently perish in various skirmishes, so they do not have a lifespan where this would be a concern.

Massive gray stick insects are fused together into a hive-like structure. Smaller insects of various colors swarm around the larger creatures which placidly move forward as a single unit.

#### Synergixxik Girder

CR5

**XP** 1,600 N Large vermin **Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

#### Defense

AC 18, touch 8, flat-footed 18 (-1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size) hp 59 (7d8 + 28) Fort +9, Ref +1, Will +2 DR 10/piercing; Immune mind-affecting effects

#### Offense

Speed 20 ft. Melee bite +10 (2d8 + 5) Special Attacks merge Statistics Str 20, Dex 9, Con 18, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 3 Base Atk +5; CMB +11 (+15 bull rush); CMD 20 (36 vs. trip) Skills Perception +4; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception

#### Ecology

**Environment** any **Organization** solitary, siege engine (4-8), or foundation (15-20) **Treasure** none

#### Special Abilities

Merge (Ex) As an action requiring 2 full rounds, a group of at least 4 girders combine into a gestalt form. The resulting creature becomes size Huge, taking 15 feet of space and gaining a 15 foot reach. The creature's DR improves to 20/adamantine and piercing, and it gains a +6 bonus to its natural armor-including the size change, its AC becomes 23 (touch 7, flat-footed 23). Girders in a siege engine gain power in a similar fashion to smaller synergixxik: for every 2 girders (up to a maximum of 8) in the combined creature, add 20 hit points, +2 to its base attack, CMB and CMD, and +1 to its bite damage. Additionally, the creature gains a slam attack which has the same attack bonus and damage as its bite attack. The slam attack has the added benefit of bypassing an object's hardness as if the creature were made of adamantine. For example, a group of 5 girders forms a siege engine which has 99 hit points, and a bite attack (as well as a slam attack) which has +14 to hit and does 2d8+7 damage.

Girders forming the foundation of a hive lose their attacks, have hit points equal to the number in the foundation times 15, and lose damage reduction—instead replacing it with hardness 20. If the foundation is reduced to 25% of its original hit point total, the foundation breaks apart, reverting to 5 individual girders (each reduced to 14 hit points).

Ponderous synergixxik girders form the literal foundation for their colony's mobile hive. Unlike other lesser synergixxik, girders carry out most of their lives fused with other girders as the underlying structure of the hive. Occasionally, a cadre of girders gets the honor of breaking off from the hive to form a powerful siege engine which the queen employs to batter down defenses.

As described above, girders derive from the builder ranks. No girder has ever hatched directly from an egg.

Two plump insects fly amongst the hive's inhabitants, one with the builders and the other with the soldiers. An electric hum pervades the air around the creatures and throughout the hive, as if one could feel the constant communication from the royal creatures to their subjects.

#### Synergixxik Royal XP 2,400



N Medium magical beast Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10

#### Defense

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+5 Dex, +3 natural armor) hp 68 (8d10 + 24) Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +3

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good) **Melee** bite +8 (1d6), sting +8 (1d8 + 2 plus poison) **Special Attacks** coordinate

#### Statistics

**Str** 10, **Dex** 21, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12 **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23 (31 vs. trip) **Feats** 

**Skills** Fly +20, Perception +10, Stealth +10 **Languages** Common; telepathy (60 ft.)

#### Ecology

#### Environment any

**Organization** solitary, pair, or court (1-2 royals, 20-40 builders, 10-20 soldiers, 15-20 girders) **Treasure** none

#### Special Abilities

**Coordinate** A royal synergixxik within telepathic range of a builder or soldier improves its ability to protect the hive. A queen grants a +2 morale bonus to all soldiers' attack and damage rolls, while a king's coordination grants a +2 morale bonus to Armor Class and saving throws to all its builders.

**Poison (Ex)** Sting—injury; *save* Fort DC 19; *frequency* 1/round for 8 rounds; *effect* 1d3 Dexterity damage; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Odd for social insects, a synergixxik hive features both a queen and king, which ensures the smooth operation of the colony and constantly relay orders telepathically to lesser synergixxik. The king actively directs the colony's builders, while the queen gives soldiers their orders. The only occasion when they are together is during a new moon, when they reproduce, resulting in 10-100 eggs which open in a week's time. The royals birth more soldiers than builders out of necessity, but they always produce an appropriate ratio of both types depending on the colony's needs.

Unlike lesser synergixxik, royals cannot merge with other synergixxik. Scholars postulate the pair's high intelligence adversely affects the gestalt mind of a combined creature. Their telepathic ability offsets this disadvantage by allowing them to effectively coordinate builders and soldiers.

The adage "greater than the sum of its parts" definitely applies to the synergixxik (whose spelling is the same for the singular and the plural). Far larger than typical insects, all synergixxik other than royals have the capability to combine together, creating a gestalt creature in the same image, except much larger and with greater offensive and defensive power.

Synergixxik royals devote their lives to the construction of the hive and warring against other creatures—including other synergixxik colonies. A king sees himself as a great architect and devises elaborate building plans for the hive, directing builders to seek out better materials which allow the hive to withstand constant battles. A queen views herself as a powerful general, crafting strategies and marshalling her soldiers to overrun her foes.

The drive for conquest and expansion seems inherent to a synergixxik royal, and a builder "promoted" to royal after the death of its predecessor takes on this attitude immediately. If a colony conquers land approximating 10 square miles, it seeds the conquered territory with 2-3 smaller colonies led by a newly created king and queen. This new colony starts with a friendly disposition to the parent colony, but the synergixxik warlike nature ensures this peaceful situation does not last long. This internecine warfare keeps synergixxik colonies from expanding too far, but rumors exist of a massive colony whose hive dwarfs the greatest pyramids.

**Arctic synergixxik:** This variant species retains all of the base statistics of the synergixxik, with the exception of a beetle-like shape and the following: A builder has a light blue coloration and its spit attack has the same effect as liquid ice (as opposed to a tanglefoot bag) for an individual builder and the composite creature's spit inflicts cold damage equal to 2d6 + 1d6 for every 2 builders. A soldier is white; a creature composed of 7 or more soldiers forces the victim to succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 19, Constitution-based) or be paralyzed for 1d6 rounds.







"This Product is a Godsend" \*\*\*\*



## Go to JonBrazer.com

to find out more about these and other exciting titles. We Enhance Your World and Your Game.

## Available NOW!

## The Riderless Horse

By Creighton Broadhurst Publisher, <u>Raging Swan Press</u>

#### (EL 3; XP 800)

As the PCs journey along a trail or track in a borderland or wilderness area, a riderless horse gallops towards them. The encounter starts when the horse is 6d6 x 40 ft. away.

The drumming of hooves heralds the arrival of a galloping, riderless horse. Foam flies from its mouth and its flanks heave as it nears exhaustion. Streaks of blood splatter its saddle and barding; of its rider, there is no sign.

If the PCs let the horse pass by, the encounter ends. If they try to calm the horse, refer to the relevant sections below.

#### **Calming the Horse**

If the PCs choose to calm the horse, they have several options.

Wild Empathy (DC 15): A successful check improves Thunder's attitude from indifferent to friendly. A failed check unnerves the beast and it becomes unfriendly. A DC 20 Wild Empathy check returns it to indifferent; PCs failing this check renders Thunder hostile and he flees.

Handle Animal (DC 20): A successful check calms Thunder. A failure increases the DCs of subsequent checks by 5. If the PCs fail a DC 25 Handle Animal check, the horse runs away.

**Ride (DC 20)**: A character making this check grabs Thunder's reins and uses them to calm the terrified beast. A failure indicates Thunder makes a full attack on the character. A character first leaping into the horse's saddle (DC 15 Ride check) gains a +5 bonus on subsequent checks.

**Modifiers:** Healing Thunder's wounds gives the PCs a +10 bonus on any subsequent checks made to calm it.

**Spells:** Spells such as *calm emotions* and *calm animals* can resolve the situation (dependent on Thunder's saving throws).

**Success:** If the PCs calm Thunder, award them 800 XP.

**Failure**: If the PCs fail to calm Thunder, he canters away.

#### **Further Investigations**

With a DC 4 Survival check, the PCs follow Thunder's trail down the track. Several miles away, the PCs discover obvious signs of battle. Successful skill checks reveal additional information in this area (also see "GM's Notes" for further information):

**Perception (DC 15)**: Blood splatters the ground. The placement of the pools and spatter indicates at least one attacker was wounded. **Heal (DC 15)**: A large pool of drying blood on the trail strongly suggests that Thunder's rider was badly injured.

**Survival (DC 9)**: The trail of a half-dozen or so individuals leads away from the road.

#### Thunder Warhorse

#### CR3

(XP 800)

N Large advanced animal

**Init** +4; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +10, Sense Motive +3

Speed 35 ft., base speed 50 ft.

ACP -3; Acrobatics +1

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +6 armor [mwk breastplate barding], +2 natural); CMD 23 (27 vs. trip)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

**hp** 38 (currently 24) (4 HD)

Space 10 ft.; Base Atk +3; CMB +9

Melee bite +7 (1d4+5), 2 hooves +0 (1d6+2)

Abilities Str 21, Dex 18, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 17, Cha 11 SQ trained for war

**Feats** Armor Proficiency (Light), Armor Proficiency (Medium), Endurance<sup>B</sup>

**Gear** as above plus bit and bridle, military saddle, saddlebags, feed (4 days)

Treasure

The warhorse and all its equipment is worth 1,326 gp. Additionally, if the PCs search Thunder's saddlebags they find:

A bundle of fine clothes wrapped in a fur-lined cloak. A small pouch of mixed coins (total worth 38 gp).

Three days' worth of trail rations, two full wineskins and one full waterskin.

Miscellaneous camping gear including a bedroll and winter blanket.

Additional items that may lead into the next adventure or provide clues as to Thunder's owner's identity.

#### GM NOTES

A GM can use this encounter simply as a chance for the party's druid or ranger to shine, as an opportunity to introduce needed treasures or plot devices or as the prelude to the party's next adventure (or side trek).

At the GM's discretion, the ambush site can hold clues to the horse's attackers and even tracks leading to the site of their next adventure. The GM should tailor the clues found at the ambush site to suit the next adventure's main protagonists.

Alternatively, the PCs can learn nothing more at the ambush site – simply keeping Thunder and the items in his saddlebags as the spoils of an adventurous life.



The drumming of hooves heralds the arrival of a galloping, riderless horse. Foam flies from its mouth and its flanks heave as it nears exhaustion.



# AND SO IT BEGINS

TIM HITCHCOCK

GENILER



**ROB MANNING** 

INFE

DATHFINDER

## THE GREAT CITY WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

ION

FP

JATHFINDER



DATHFINDER

URBAN ADVENTURES

SEASON I \* PILOT

URBAN ADVENTURES

Pathfinder and associated marks and logos are trademarks of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and are used under license. See paizo.com/pathfinderRPG for more information on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

WWW.CONEGNMES.COM

## Twenty Questions with Tim Hitchcock

By Steven D. Russell



#### 1. Could you tell us a little about yourself?

Yeah sure, I've been a freelance RPG designer for over a decade now. I primarily write for Paizo and followed them from their beginnings with Dragon and Dungeon Magazine into their own setting and finally the Pathfinder RPG. Some Pathfinder projects I've written or worked on (in no particular order) include: Carnival of Tears, Demon Within, Pathfinder Bestiary 2, Heart of the Jungle, Pathfinder Annual #1: Season of the Shadow Lodge; House of the Beast, Seekers of Secrets, Ultimate Magic, and Stolen Land. Other projects I've worked on include Slaine d20 and Purgatorium (Mongoose Publishing), Oathbound (Bastion Press), Eyes of the Lich Queen and Monster Manual 4 (WotC), The Great City Campaign Setting (oOne Games). There's a quite bunch more stuff, but you said "short".

#### 2. What is your home game like?

I like to run big games with lots of players (usually between 10 and 20). I always have, it just sort of works out that way. My current game has 9 players in it, a bit smaller than what I'm used to. Because of the size of my games, there's a very 1st edition feel to them, in that I try to avoid a battlemat. It can be tough with a lot of the mat-based feats used in current rules, so I might use a mat to show certain things in combat (or at least some basic combat markers). I also have a copy of d20Pro, which I've been using quite a bit. I'd use it more if I had a laptop to drag about to gamesbut I don't. It's an awesome product though. It makes combats run incredibly smoothly. My current game is set in Golarion (Pathfinder's campaign setting). Though the PC's don't know it yet, they're about to try their hand at mammoth jousting.

### 3. What is your favorite Paizo product that you worked on and why?

I'm always most excited about the most recent thing I've written. For Paizo, that was "<u>Broken Moon</u>"- the third installment of their next Adventure Path. Without spoiling anything, I love the new lycanthrope



template! I think it really allows a GM to expand on existing rules and create some wonderfully challenging critters just by tweaking the base animal. For my home game...dire wooly were-rhino.

#### 4. You have done a lot of work for Mario Barbati's oone games (Zero-one), how did that relationship start and how would you characterize it today?

Mario used to work for the Italian publishers of *Dragon/Dungeon* magazine. He sent me a copy when they released one of my *Dungeon* adventures (Morte Di Lashimire). When he started oone, he contacted me about doing some short pieces for his awesome maps. Initially, he gave me free reign to do whatever I wanted as well as allowed me to bring in associates from a collective freelancers group I work with known as the Werecabbages. That said, Mario's got lots of great ideas. He'll send me a concept for a product line or something, I'll develop it and then I'll either crank something out or pull in one of my fellow Werecabbages to finish the work.

## 5. What is your favorite *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible product you worked on and could you tell us a little about it?

I'm extremely proud of the <u>Great City Player's Guide</u> which one a gold ENnie last year for best electronic book. I pulled in a horde of Werecabbages for the



project and it shows a real collaborative effort on their behalf, yet still retains a solid and focused voice. It's kind of an oddball product designed to support Oone Games *Great City Campaign Setting*. It's got some core classes and spells and stuff, specifically geared towards the Great City or a similarly urban styled fantasy setting. Like the Campaign Setting, it's got a strong gas-light, almost steampunk vibe to it. It's pretty stylized stuff, which I think is difficult to pull off and still remain useful in contexts outside of a specific setting. I think the book does a good job of that, which translates into some neat new character options for players.

## 6. What was your best moment working on that product?

Tough question. I mean, I suppose I have "best moments" working on projects, however I'm kind of always looking forward to what's next, so nothing specific stands out. When I work on something, I often get spurts of "ah-ah" moments when ideas seem to click together. Those are always fun, but I can't remember anything specific. Similarly, I can get really excited by one of my collaborator's posts (we Werecabbages collaborate via a secret website where we post thousands of project threads). I remember being really excited about Adam Daigle's guttermage concept. But again, I'd be hard pressed to grab a best moment.

## 7. What do you feel was the most ingenious part of that product?

I suppose I like the idea of chemical waste, alchemical by-products brought on by the result of burning

certain alchemical fuels used to power various automatons and golem-like items. I think John Ling did a really good job of putting that section together.

## 8. What was the most challenging aspect of working on it?

Editing and playtesting are the biggest challenges toward the completion of any RPG product. These tasks are the most time-consuming and the easiest to screw up. I always feel like a piece needs more editing and playtesting. Game balance is a real easy thing to disturb, especially with the sheer volume of overlapping rules.

## 9. Did you learn anything while working on it?

Absolutely. I learn something each time I work on a project. With the *Great City Player's Guide*, I think I got much better at throwing away tons of text. It's hard to dump a few thousand words, especially if they're really good words. But in the end, not everything is appropriate for a project. I'm always trying to get better at figuring out what belongs in a book and what doesn't.



## 10. Other than your own work, what is the best *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible product out there?

I'm kind of partial to Tim Connors so Tales of Old Margrave has a certain amount of appeal to me, but I also really love Golarion so I suppose I'll go with Brandon Hodge's Open Design project <u>Sunken</u> <u>Empires.</u>

## 11. What in your opinion makes a good *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible product?

A good product needs to be properly edited and playtested. The greatest concept in the world becomes poop if it's poorly unbalanced. I also really like products that try to go their own direction using Pathfinder's core rules. I like it when someone takes chances and tries to create new elements for the existing structure or creates a new type of setting (rather than their own version of an existing setting.) So concepts such as what you're doing with *Kaidan* or *Coliseum Morpheuon* hold a certain appeal to me, because they're not trying to do what Paizo is doing. I could say the same thing about the new release of *Oathbound Seven*.



## **12.** Who is your favorite designer of *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible products?

You're asking the guy in the writer's collective to pick which one of his friends is his favorite?

I'm mean, it sounds like a politically safe, blow off the question, but the truth is, I don't have a favorite. I like different authors for different things. Right now, I'm really excited to see what kind of adventure Willie Walsh is going to release for oone Games. Willie probably wrote half the back catalogue for *Dungeon Magazine* and I really miss his style of gonzo-adventure writing. For rules based stuff, I think Owen K Stevens over at <u>Super Genius Games</u> writes some super tight stuff. I wish my rules work was that tight.

#### 13. What advice would you give to wouldbe-freelancers?

Aside from avoid passive text, know your rules, edit your work several times and playtest your projects to make sure they're not broken... Make sure what you're writing about going to be fun for the people using it, write games because you like designing games, if you really want to write short stories or novels ... go write short stories or novels. Lastly, know what you want to write about. Find projects you want to work on and try to work on those-that's where you'll do your best work, because that's what you'll be happiest writing. I'd also suggest starting small-articles and small adventures are best because you can spend more time editing and playtesting them. You'll make mistakes, so, the smaller project, the easier it will be to find them. The less work you leave for the editor, the more likely the editor will want to work with you.

#### 14. Who is your favorite Illustrator?

Simon Bizley. He's basically a comics guy, however Mongoose has used his work in their *Judge Dread* and *Sláine* lines (though we're not in Pathfinder territory here). Of course I like classics as well. I mean, I'm sure there's one person who'll claim they don't like Wayne (the face of Pathfinder) Reynolds, but I won't believe them. I also like Erol Otis and Chuck Lukacs.

## 15. What has been your most memorable fan response to your work?

Charles Evans recently roasted me on the Paizo chat night, damning me to a miserable death after reading my Nisroch article in *Cities of Golarion*. He absolutely abhorred it and found it entirely and unnecessarily offensive, an otherwise fantastic book. Apparently, I am his dark cloud. There is nothing quite so satisfying as being publicly berated on a live chat.



## 16. Could you give us an exclusive hint or teaser about an upcoming product you're working on?

Currently, I'm developing a pretty neat project for Mario over at oone called <u>"The Sinking."</u> It's a semiepisodic, non-sequential series of short adventures set in the Great City, each one having some sort of tie (either minor or major) with the recent appearance of a massive sinkhole that struck the epicenter of the city. It's kind of like a TV series, though the long term goals of the PCs will be more player driven and less driven by a metaplot. I wrote the series pilot, in which the Sink Hole first appears. It's kind of a throwback to 70's disaster films, in that the PCs are underground,

Really?

investigating criminal activity in the sewers when the first tremors hit, causing them to become trapped there by cave-ins.

## 17. Do you have any goals as a game designer that you have yet to obtain or overcome?

Yeah, absolutely. I want to be able to rattle off the Pathfinder core rules from memory. I'd love to get a copy of them on tape so I could listen to them while driving. I'd also like to attend more conventions, because I like cons and running cool events. I think playing is really crucial to game design. Unfortunately, time and money create serious constraints. I've never done Open Design. I'm still curious about that, but I'd need the right project and I've been (fortunately) too busy to think of one. I'm working harder at getting my manuscripts tighter before I send them in. That's a matter of me learning to increase my efficiency. I kind of need to improve time management and organization.



## **18.** Can you talk a bit about winning your ENnie award? (grumbles about being beaten by you) Which one?

But seriously... I was in Gen Con at the time running the Pathfinder Special, so I couldn't attend the ceremony. I told Josh Frost (who was in charge of the Pathfinder Society at the time) that since he'd damned me to run a game during the ENnies, he could go to the ceremony and pick up my award when I beat him (he was also up for an award for the best electronic book). So I GMed a game with 70 some odd people in it while watching the awards over a live feed. It was awesome! I mean, award ceremonies are cool and all, but nothing is cooler than running a massive game for everyone that voted for you. I was so pumped up and Pathfinder fans are the greatest! It was a lot of fun, which of course is the point. It also feels great to have your work acknowledged like that, especially when it's work you created with your friends.

#### 19. Wait? You won two ENnies?

Yes, best adventure and best e-book, but really the awards go to the publishers, not the designers. The simple truth is Rite Publishing won an ENnie, Tim Hitchcock did not. I helped write two books that won ENnies, however a lot of people go into writing and designing a book and it's the proper distillation of all those elements that produce the final result. Good god, without James Jacobs and Wesley Schneider my adventure would be a scattered and undecipherable pile of notes. Seriously, Ed Greenwood (Forgotten Realms) did the monsters in the appendix, and there was an article by Steve Kenson (Mutants and Masterminds). I mean, with back up like that...

## **20.** Is there anything else that folks should know about you and/or your work?

Yeah, all my work is secretly penned by Charlie Sheen, thus all the ENnies... it's the tiger blood that makes it winning.





#### Inkantations

*by 4 Wind Fantasy Games Review by Dark Mistress* 

<u>Inkantations</u> is 52 pages long. It starts with a cover, ToC, and credits. (4 pages)

#### **Introduction (3 pages)**

This section talks about tattoos, by race, by culture, by social standing, talking about what may or may not be popular and why.

#### Tattoo's and Body Art (11 pages)

This section starts off about the skills and variations for crafting, knowledge etc. Next it gets into new feats, there is 27 new feats. Some of the feats are used to help create tattoo's and others are for exceptional tattoo's that add mods similar in power to other feats. Types of tattoo's, it gets into the different types of tattoo's from text(words), to abstract, symbolic, and enhanced ones which are created with the help of magic.

Crafting tattoo's is the next, using the crafting skill to make them, charts for cost, DC's based on size of tat and the max size a tattoo can be based on the size of the creature getting it. It also has a small section on how to take care of a tattoo. Afterwards it gets into body art, which is branding, piercing, scars etc. After that we get into equipment section. This has all the gear one would need to make tattoo's and the like. The final part of this section gets into removal of tattoo's.

#### Magical Tattoo's (16 pages)

There is 57 sample wonderious item tattoos. Such items take up a magic item slot. Different magical tattoos take up different slots, just as if the PC had a magic item in that slot. It also gets into spell tattoo's which work basically like a scroll, only they can be images instead of text for the spell and of course they used your flesh instead of paper. I really liked the idea of spell tattoos, anyone can get one and use them with out UMD skill and they don't obviously look like a scroll either. Once used the tat remains but the magic is released. The only thing I didn't like and I felt it really needed, was a mechanic for recharging said spell tattoos. I mean you could just use the same price again, but it would have been nice if they had included a sidebar about it.

#### Inkantationists (9 pages)

This section is about classes that specialize in tattoos. There is a new wizard specialist, Socr bloodline, and a 10 level PrC. The PrC is d8, 4 skills, low BaB, 2 good saves, +6 spell casting levels, and then a host of special abilities dealing with tattoos. There is 8 new spells, most of them deal with tattoos but a couple do not. There is also 13 new magic items, some of them are very cool magic items.

#### Organizations and Guilds (5 pages)

This section has 3 sample groups that use tattoos a



lot. Each one is about a full page, with history, what they do and key members in the group.

It ends with a OGL, back cover and 1 ad. (4 pages)

Closing thoughts. The artwork is black and white and ranges from pretty good to very good in a couple of cases. The layout and editing was good, I didn't notice any obvious errors. It is pretty print friendly. The feats mostly seem well done and well thought out and for the most part well balanced. There was a couple I was unsure of but would take play testing for me to make up my mind. Same is true of some of the magic items as well. This book pretty heavily covers everything you might want to know or need to know about tattoos and how to add them to your game. It is not perfect there was a few things that should have been added like how to recharge the scroll tattoos.

Also I was very surprised not to see a new domain, this pretty much seemed to scream to me it needed a Tattoo domain. While I know this is about tattoos I would have liked to have seen more on other body art. Like Piercings and magic items for that, another 2-6 pages would have been nice covering that, same with scaring. The book is good, but I felt it could have been better. So whats my rating? I am going to settle on a 4.5 star. It is good, even very good for much of it. It gives you all you need to make tattoos a important part of any campaign, but it also left a few things on the table that could have helped push it up to great.

Trust me, I'm a Succubus.

# Questhaven

## Campaign Setting Patronage Project

Rite Publishing is seeking patrons for its default campaign setting for the Pathfinder Roleplaying game. This is a chance for wide open world building!

- The project's guidelines are as follows:
- 145,000 words (approximately 195 pages)
- Adventurers literally rule the city-state as an oligarchy
- Questhaven is a magical fantasy renaissance society taken to the logical extreme
- Each piece of Questhaven will maintain a modular design that can placed in your campaign.
  - Everything in Questhaven uses something beyond the Core Products.
  - o Silver and Gold Level patrons will gain access to every Questhaven product





Find out more at www.RitePublishing.com



#### \*30 Haunts for Ships and Shores

by Rite Publishing Review by Dark Mistress

*#<u>30 Haunts for Ships and Shores</u>* is 17 pages long. It starts with a cover and credits. (2 pages)

#### IC Introduction (2 pages)

The next part is a introduction told from Pers Veilborn's point of view. It is a very interesting IC introduction. After the later to his friend it talks about 3 haunts form a IC point of view.

#### Understanding Haunts (1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> pages)

This part talks about what haunts are, how they work, how to use them etc.

#### Haunts (6 1/2 pages)

Next it gets into the 30 haunts, some are or can be connected while others are always stand alone. Star-Cursed Sky

Mutiny's Shadow (can be tied to Star Cursed Sky) Grumbling and Grief (can be tied to Mutiny's Shadow)

The Sound of Munity (can be tied to Grumbling and Grief)

Drunk Crew

The Deep One Rises (can be tied to Drunk Crew) Common Cry Haunt

Common Drowned Man (can be tied to Common Cry Haunt)

Feeding Frenzy (can be tied to Common Drowned Man)

Blasphemer's Bell – This is the first haunt I had a problem with, I like the haunt but it makes no effort to explain why the bell is allowed to stay, when apparently most blame the bell for the problems. Bloody Tide (can be tied to Blasphemer's Bell) Wrath of the Wrecked (Can be tied to Bloody Tide) Flooded Hold (list haunts from 30 House Haunts book it can be combined with)

Common Biting Wind

X Marks the Spot

Head Strong Wave (Can be tied to Common Biting Wind) There is a white space gab in the text. I am not sure if it was suppose to be a new paragraph or what, It is a minor issue but noticeable. Hungary Sea Haunt (Can be tied to head Strong

Hungary Sea Haunt (Can be fied to head Strong Wave)

Raging Squall (Can be tied to Hungary Sea Haunt) Dreaming of a Watery Grave Driving Sleet Exhausted Crew Fog Reavers Rock Jaws that Bite Past Sin Sailing Blind Shadowy Tentacles The Hailstorm The Hunger The Northern Lights Worms and Maggots



#### Pers Veilborn (2 pages)

This is the NPC that gave the IC introduction, this is also the same NPC from 30 Haunts for Houses, though he has gained a few levels since then. It has a complete stat block for the NPC.

It ends with a OGL and 2 pages of ads (3 pages)

Closing thoughts. I like this one better than the previous haunts. I thought they was better done and it was nice that they was laid out to be used on their own or how to use them in chains of haunts. I didn't feel any of the haunts was to strong or to weak. My only two critics I already mentioned. Most of the haunts make sense and give a bit of fluff on how they came about, I would have liked about a paragraph more fluff on each, some more than that. But all and all they was well done. So what's my rating? Well it does have a couple of minor errors so I am giving it a 4.5 star rating.

Trust me, I'm a Succubus.



## Jords of Gossamer and Shadow

Patronage Project Powered by Erick Wujcik's Diceless Roleplaying

This world is but one of untold many, a flux of chance caught between shadow and light. It is a world poised between great powers that shape and define all matter, one of many battlegrounds in an epic struggle between form and cacophony. The lords and knights in this battle move between realms with impunity: they are the creators, shapers, and destroyers of worlds.

In *Lords of Gossamer and Shadow*, the player-characters are agents caught up in this immense, multi-dimensional struggle. Born into it, their birthright is one of unimaginable power... and with it great danger! They will bear unique and idiosyncratic magical artifacts, command legions drawn from the myriad of otherworlds, and wield incredible powers that alter the very substance of reality. They are players in a Machiavellian conspiracy with the greatest of stakes, and arrayed against them are the deadliest of foes... each other!

The *Lords of Gossamer and Shadow* patronage project is an original sourcebook and roleplaying game using Erick Wujcik's diceless rules system. Lords of Gossamer and Shadow will be a standalone product, but is fully compatible with the existing rules system and can be readily used in new and existing campaigns.

Lead Designer: Jason Durall

(Amber Diceless Role-Playing, Shadow Knight, A Game of Thrones RPG, Supernatural RPG)



Illustrator: Jason Rainville




#### Lizard of the Dragon Fang

*By Raging Swan Press Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf* 

*Lizard of the Dragon Fang* is 23 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page inside of front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page back cover and 1 page containg SRD and ads, leaving 18 pages of content.

As with all recent TRIBEs-installments, we once again get some lines from a poem/song/prophecy about the tribe on the ToC-page - nice. We also, of course, get the obligatory page introduction to reading the statblocks for novice DM.

After the one-page chapter title, we get 2 pages on the history, religion, nomenclature and tactics of the tribe. Some potential for strife within the tribe is also given here.

Then, we get a page containing 3 new battle feats for use by members of the tribe:

-Pierce: You may use a ranged attack to attack an enemy within range increments of your weapon as a standard action. If you hit, make another attack at -2 against a target no more than 10 ft. away from the first one. The second target also has to be within the first range increment of your weapon.

-Great Pierce: You may use a ranged attack to attack an enemy within range increments of your weapon as a standard action. If you hit, make another attack at -2 against a target no more than 10 ft. away from the first one. The new target also has to be within the first range increment of your weapon. You can continue to make these attacks until there are no more valid targets or you miss.

-Improved Combat Casting: Stacks with Combat Casting, gain a + 2 to Concentration when grappled, reroll one concentration check per day prior to the result of the first one being known. You have to take the second one.

Ok, I'll have to comment this. I think "Pierce" and "Greater Pierce" should also work for piercing weapons, but ONLY against additional targets behind the first one. Otherwise you get a rather comical and ridiculous image of a javelin ricocheting through a party of PCs. That's just my 2 cents, though. We also get new spells:

-Snake Staff (Clr 5, Drd 5): This spell is reprinted from the APG, courtesy of Paizo, and is marked as such.

-Acid Bolt (Sor/Wiz 3): Either send clinging acid via touch attack to your enemies or coat a weapon in it.

-Bite of the Viper (Adp 2, Drd 2): Grants you a poisonous bite weapon. Why is this not on the Witch's



spell list? I think the spell practically screams "Witch". Oh well.

-Swamp Kin (Adp 1, Drd 1, Sor/Wiz 1): Negates some penalties of moving through bogs. Another spell that should also be available to Witches.

-Swamp Kin, Mass (Adp 3, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3): As above, only mass. Dito on the Witches.

The page also includes a modified spell-list for Adepts of the Dragon Fang tribe.

The tribe also has 3 unique magic items, complete with lore sections and their own pieces of artwork:

-Blood Spiller: A human bane spear that returns to the thrower and is made from darkwood.

-Dragon Fang: Made from the fang of a black dragon, this dagger may add acid damage on critical hits.

-Staff of the Serpent: The staff can cast poison and snake-related spells, including *Snake Staff*.

After that, we'll get the statblocks of the Lizardfolk, complete with three encounters (Raid EL 7, Kobold Emissaries EL 4 and Swamp Ambush EL 8 - all with information to modify them). Even better, though, we get a cool sample ceremony of the tribe - exactly that is what makes a tribe come to life in my opinion. Awesome! Thankfully, in contrast to e.g. the Kobolds and Troglodytes, the Lizardfolk get an extensive sidebox on environmental modifiers to help you run encounters in the tribe's given environment, the swamp. The stats are:



-Elite Dragon Fang Warrior [warrior 4](CR 3)

-Dragon Fang Scout [expert 4](CR 3)

-Dragon Fang Shaman [adept 2] (CR 3)

-Lizard Familiar (of the normal Dragon Fang Shaman)

-Dragon Fang Greater Shaman [adept 6] (CR 5)

-Lizard Familiar (of the Dragon Fang Greater Shaman)

Two variant Lizardfolks are also provided:

-Cliffborn Lizardfolk (CR 1): Better climbers

-Unseen Lizardfolk (CR 1): Chameleon Lizardfolk

We also get the war trident weapon as well as all the information to make Lizard Kings.

The tribe also features several important personalities of the tribe and it is here I thought "YES!" to myself: The personalities come with personality, distinguishing marks, mannerisms and hooks. Apart from the King, that is.

-Sesskarr, the Lizard King [Lizardking sorceror (black dragon bloodline) 9] (CR 11): Sesskarr comes with almost half a page of his own tale on how he became what he is now. I loved it and I think it's a nice substitute for the roleplaying information of the other personalities!

-Groth [Troglodyte Druid 10] (CR 10): A twisted, dark Druid, he urges the tribe and its king toward evil. -Alssarrass [Lizardfolk Adept 12] (CR 8): Peaceful wife of Sesskarr and foe of Groth.

-Brethikk [Kobold Fighter 9] (CR 8): Wielder of Blood Spiller, this former Kobold King now serves as Sesskarr's bodyguard.

#### **Conclusion:**

Editing, layout and the b/w-artwork are top-notch, as I've come to expect of Raging Swan products. While I personally don't like the Pierce-feats, that's just a personal opinion. I'd also like to see information/support for the APG-classes and still think that some of the spells should be on the spell-list of e.g. Witches. Apart from that, though, this installment of the TRIBES-series once again goes up and beyond what one would come to expect and finally, we get mannerisms, hooks, etc. for all the important personalities. The items rock, too. I would have liked to see more on the tactics of the tribe, but due to this being my only true criticism of the file, I'll settle once again for a five-star rating - an excellent addition to the series.



IN THE COMPANY OF KAPPA

We are a people of laughter and good cheer. True, our humor is not always understood by others, we find the sound of breaking bones to be hilarious, but we amuse ourselves first and others second. We love loud jokes, large second, we hold jokes, large meals and a good wrestling match. There are many stories told of us, that we eat children, or delight in drowning swimmers. Certainly, we have had our share of villains, but, taken as a whole, we are no more wicked than any other race. Most of us want nothing more than to humble the proud and make the wise man feel foolish. We like to think we are well suited to these tasks. And let us not forget, not only did we break the first bone, but we afterward showed the man how to set it.

A player character race designed for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Gam



ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



### Breaking of Forstor Nagar City of Grinding Ice

Written by ENnie award winning designer Ben McFarland (Tales of Zobeck) Cartography by Jonathan Roberts (Kobold Quarterly Maps of Fantasy)

A Pathfinder Compatible patronage project for use with virtual tabletop programs Maptool, Fantasy Grounds and TTopRPG





Pathfinder and associated marks and logos are trademarks of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and are used under license. See paizo.com/pathfinderRPG for more information on the Pathfider Roleplaing Game.

#### Faces of the Tarnished Souk:

**Le Joup Solitaire** By Rite Publishing Review of Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf 5 out of 5 Stars!

#### Faces of the Tarnished Souk: Le

*Lup Solitaire* is 10 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD, 2 pages of ads, leaving 5 pages for the 3 incarnations of Le Loup Solitaire.

The pdf kicks off, as the other FotTS-books, with a one-page background of the NPC in question, including dreamburning information, a loresection and a how-to-use-box, containing several possible usages for the NPC.

After that, we get the 3 incarnations of the lonesome freedom fighter who singlehandedly opposes the Khan. It should be noted that Rite Publishing has taken my criticism of the last FotTs-character to heart and this time, we once again get three complex characters that might be an evolution of the same being, but could also be used parallel in the same campaign as different beings. NICE!

Who or what is Le Loup Solitaire? Let's start in an inverted order, at the lowest CR:

-His CR 6 incarnation is a rather mundane half-orc fighter 3/rogue 4. Ok, but nothing too far out.

-His mid-level incarnation (CR 13) goes one step further: Here, he is a inflicted werewolf half-orc fighter 7/rogue6 and we get stats for both his humanoid and his hybrid form. However, what truly blew me away was:

-His high-level incarnation (CR 21, baby!) is a natural werewolf pack lord half-orc fighter 8/rogue 11 with a magic, silver-bayonet-studded rifle that can be loaded with wands (before all the gunpowder haters start groaning - read again - it's a wand-rifle!). He also gets the Alpah Cap, which gets it's own piece of artwork and 2 statblocks are provided - one for his non-animal hybrid form and one for his animal form. His statblocks are a beauty to behold and he just oozes coolness.



#### **Conclusion:**

Layout adheres to the 2-column-RiP-standard, the two pieces of original b/w-artwork (Le Loup and the cap) are nice and I didn't notice any editing mistakes, nor any typos. This is it, once again - beautiful statblocks, one (or three!) character(s) you immediately want to implement into your campaign. Statting Lycanthropes, especially at this level, is a royal pain and the weapon that will one day be his own undoing is just rife with tragedy and coolness. I don't have anything to complain about, this is an excellent addition to the series, on par with Ahnkar-Kosh - my final verdicts is 5 stars. **Rite Publishing Presents** 

# 101 0-Jevel Spells



By Steven D. Russell

350

#### Pathfinder RPG: NeoExodus Chronicles - World of Exodus

By Louis Porter Jr. Design Review by Megan Robertson <u>RPG Resource Review</u> 5 out of 5 Stars!

Serving as an introduction to the setting, <u>NeoExodus</u> <u>Chronicles-World of Exodus</u> jumps straight in with the history of Exodus. Long and turbulent, and with strands running through that affect what is going on there today, the backdrop against which adventures take place.

Over two thousand years ago the world was under the control of the First Ones, whose precise nature is lost in legend, spoken of today as bogeymen and beings of horror. Apparently their rule was not kind, so eventually the best of humanity banded together to rise up against them. Few records remain of precisely what happened as both First Ones and the champions of humanity - a combination of intellect called the Kaga - disappeared, and even though the Kaga still seem to be around, they're not saying much about what went or what they have been doing since. The science and magic of the First Ones faded as humanity lapsed into barbarism, with but a few scholars attempting to understand: these few became powerful sorcerer/kings... and came into conflict with a race of rodent-like beings, the Cavians, who developed the powers of the mind. Neither were interested in 'ordinary' people save as workers and a source of tribute or warriors when they squabbled. But even after they'd fought themselves to a standstill, leaving space for the barbarian hordes to arise, they in their turn replaced the rule of the mage or the psion with equally despotic warlords who relied on brute strength of the sword-arm rather than power of mind or knowledge to dominate others. At least the Kaga reappeared, and attempted to teach them something more...

And so matters continued throughout the ages, with warring tribes raiding one another and fighting for dominance. Warbands carved out domains, empires rose and fell, the usual sort of thing. A rich tapestry of history that makes a world a living, breathing alternate reality based on a past as real there as our history is to us. The culmination of warring nobles, through kingdoms and empires to a final bloodbath of a century in which just about everyone was embroilded in grinding war was finally brought to a juddering halt by a little-known cult or order that combined martial prowess and psionic strength, and who commanded the warring factions to make peace and form a global union of the four main empires, in which such all-encompassing war would be fought no more. Nor was it, for the better part of fifty years, but then various factions and skirmishes, dissent from within and without, while not destroying the Union,



ensured that knowledge of how to use a sword remained important. Attempts to cement even greater union, by marriage between the imperial houses, came to naught, and tensions are once more rising as the present day - some 90 years after the union approaches.

It is an interesting approach: most people presenting their campaign setting concentrate on the geography and hang the history on the places that are described... here, the history is paramount with but a single world map at the end so you can find out where the events mentioned in the history occurred. Moreover, the history concentrates on matters political and that most significant ramification: the military events that transpire as an extension of the politics. Apart from some mention of religion, and that mostly as it influences the political landscape, very little is told of the history of ideas or the development of scientific or medical knowledge. Who were the authors and artists of the ages? Whose architecture or songs have been remembered long after builders and composers were in their graves? It brings a powerful introduction yet leaves many spaces which the inventive may populate for themselves.

For those seeking a developed alternate reality, rooted in a coherent history and moving forwards in a dynamic manner, this is well worth a look. It promises interesting times, in the Chinese sense of being as much of a curse as an opportunity for participants...

Are your characters ready?

**Rite Publishing Presents** 

### Faces of the Tarnished Souk: The Dark Lady Ninyantë, Mistress of Venom



By Matt Banach and Justin Sluder

#### \*30 Unique Magical Blades

By Rite Publishing Review by Megan Robertson <u>RPG Resource Review</u> 5 out of 5 Stars!

Beginning with the tagline 'Because every blade should tell a story' <u>#30 Unique Magical</u> <u>Blades</u> lays out details of an armoury-full of distinctive and interesting weapons, the sort that any hero worth his place in a bard's repertoire should aspire to wield.

There's a table listing the weapons in value order, from a mere snip of just over 4,000gp for a glaive-guisarm called Horse Daughter's Kiss up to a staggering 175,000gp for Ice Queen, a spectacular sword magically-forged from a single piece of steel. Each weapon then gets about a third of a page to itself, with necessary game mechanical details, a paragraph giving its history and another with a vivid description of the item... and a full-colour picture. A reasonably tech-savvy GM could no doubt extract the pictures if he wants to display them to characters picking through treasure hoards or receiving rewards from grateful potentates - despite the 'price list' at the beginning, these are not the sort of thing you pick up at the corner weapons store!

Several of the weapons are truly unique, not just in terms of story or even powers, but having been crafted to original designs. For example, a pair of hand-blades were created at the behest of a halfling monk who worked as a chef - and Slicer and Dicer bear a passing resemblance to something you might chop herbs with in the kitchen! Or if you really want strange, how about an axe which can change from throwing-axe to great axe according to its wielder's whim...

There is plenty of scope here, from something unusual to spice up a treasure hoard - and give the characters something to research - to inspiration for a whole campaign revolving around one of thse unique magical weapons. The stories are self-contained enough that they can be dropped into your existing campaign world with minimal changes if so desired.



Even the mages and clerics might be interested, and those characters who use edged weapons will be eager to get their hands on any that they hear about! A fine example of how to devise individual, interesting items. **Rite Publishing Presents** 

## MONK ARCHETYPES



## By Frank Carr

C





#### Advanced Feats: Visions of the Oracle

By Open Design Review by Shane O'Conner 5 out of 5 Stars!

The oracle class is something I was surprised it took so long to see. It fulfills several niches that have been waiting for quite some time now. Mechanically it gives us a spontaneous divine spellcaster, and thematically it gives us a character that's chosen by the gods, rather than choosing a god of their own. All of which is well and good, especially with some interesting new mechanics based around an oracle's curse, mystery powers, and revelations...

But it's nothing that Sigfriend Trent and Open Design can't make better.

Advanced Feats: Visions of the Oracle is part of Open Design's Advanced Feats series, each of which introduces 30 new feats as well as a class breakdown and several sample builds. In this book (as in all of them) the majority of the feats are thematically appropriate to the class in question, but only a few of them are specific to that class.

The book begins by examining the various parts of the class, weighing its strengths and weaknesses. We're told about the class's spellcasting potential versus its skills versus its multiclassing viability, for example. Each mystery is given a brief look as well, which was a nice bit of insight.

The real meat of the book is its feats, however. Designer Sigfriend Trent has beaucoup experience with feat design, being the editor behind the famous Netbook of Feats, and it shows here. Trent gives a few sentences of commentary on each feat, offering glimpses behind that curtain that make for great easter eggs.

Being that the oracle is a full-progression spellcasting class, many of the feats here deal with magic use in some regard. Magic Sense, for example, lets you automatically sense magic items and spell effects around you, and know exactly what a magical effect would have done if you successfully save against it. Tactical Spellcasting is basically the spellcaster's equivalent of Spring Attack. Spell Retention lets you retain a spell if you fail a concentration check when trying to cast. These and others like them offer great new options for spellcasters.

Apropos of that, one-sixth of the feats in question are metamagic, ranging from things such as the general purpose Concentration Spell (increase your spell's duration via concentration to the highly specific Spiritual Armaments Spell (create ghostly weapons/armor/equipment on undead that you



create or summon). Beyond this, several feats deal with metamagic without being metamagic feats themselves. Scroll Metamagic lets you apply a metamagic feat to spells cast from a scroll, for instance.

Following this are three new example builds. Each build specifies a large number of the character variables you should choose to make a character that's tailored toward a specific area of expertise. The Visionary Healer, for example, tells you what mystery, curse, feats, ability scores, etc. to take to be a powerful healing character. The Phoenix is a combination healer and fire-wielder, being able to blast foes with flame and revitalize allies. Finally, the Savage Seer is focused around the oracle's battle abilities, being capable of dealing damage with sword or spell.

Overall, Visions of the Oracle provides a great mixture of feats for characters of all stripes, particularly spellcasters, and quite a few for the oracle specifically. If you're overwhelmed by what to make your oracle character, pick up this book and receive a vision of what he could become.



#### 101 9th Jevel Spells

By Rite Publishing Review by Shane O' Conner 5 out of 5 Stars!

I once heard someone say that playing a fullprogression spellcaster in Pathfinder is like opening long-term stock а portfolio; you're taking a number of risks over a period of time in hopes of generating great returns. In this case, those returns are the 9th-level spells you get, allowing you to unleash some of the strongest effects in the game. It's in that spirit that Rite Publishing brings the conclusion to its 101 Spells series: 101 <u>9th Level Spells</u>.

Forty pages long, the PDF full nested has bookmarks and allows for copy-and-pasting. The pages have very ornate borders on all sides (standard for Rite Publishing) and there are several black and white illustrations scattered throughout, meaning that this may be tough to print.

The book opens immediately to the spell lists.

Unfortunately, the APG classes aren't given lists here (nor are they in the individual spell level listings) which is hopefully something we'll see in an update. Having said that, the spells themselves are what you'd expect for the top of the line in spellcasting power.

While it's impossible to review all of the spells in here, most of what I saw impressed me. Spells like Behind the Curtain basically let the GM tell you a major plot point...but if you tell anyone else you're instantly destroyed and reality changes to make the revelation untrue. Psychic Clone basically inserts a mental avatar of yourself into someone else's mind, prodding them and guiding them with various effects and powers in accordance with your wishes. Ultimate Insight lets you know virtually all knowledge for a few seconds, and in that time you can accomplish almost anything.

It's like that for one hundred and one spells.

If you're about to hit that level where you can cast the strongest spells in the game, you owe it to yourself to pick up 101 9th Level Spells and let the rest of the party know just who's the archmage now.

**Rite Publishing Presents** 



#### Compassionate Sons

(Paladin Archetype) Bonus Article by Steven D. Russell Illustrations by Arthur Rackham and Dante Gabriel Rossetti

The compassionate sons of Our Queen of Wisdom and Mercy (Questhaven deity of charity, childbirth, contrition, dogs, healing, lambs, mercy, peace, forgiveness, leadership, redemption, and wisdom) are unique for unlike the other high and might dogooders on horseback they dedicate themselves to the protection of a singular worthy individual rather seeking to promote the cause of righteousness in the world at large. In addition, the compassionate sons are an exclusive brotherhood containing no woman; their primary role within the Healing Hall of Mercy appears to be the protection of the matriarchs, who are constantly going into the gravest dangers battlefields, leper colonies, evil lands - in their efforts to do Our White Lady of Wisdom's works. I have encountered a compassionate son warding a male cleric of Our Grandmother Earth and according to him; it is not uncommon for their deity to guide them to protect a creature that while not a member of the church serves its purposes. Some compassionate sons are pacifists who seek only to keep their ward from harm, while others are nearly as militant as the hawks of vengeance seeking to allow nothing to threaten their charge, but the majority of them fall somewhere in between.

#### -Owain Northway

Paladins of *Our Queen of Wisdom and Mercy* have focused their gifts on the protection of those who spend their lives caring for the downcast. Unleashing this power takes near utter devotion to the needs of another singular individual. Compassionate Sons have the following class features.

**Power of Compassion (Su)**: At 4th level, a compassionate son learns to use the power of his faith for multiple effects. This class feature replaces the paladin's spells class feature. A compassionate son does not gain any spells or spellcasting abilities, does not have a caster level, and cannot use spell trigger or spell completion magic items.

At 4th level, the compassionate son as a fullround action can call upon his deity's blessing to aid in the casting of another's creatures Conjuration (healing) spell. The affected Conjuration (healing) spell is maximized like an application of the Maximize Spell feat but does not adjust the spells level. A compassionate son can do this a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma bonus (minimum +1).

At 8th level, the compassionate son can grant the blessings of her deity with a touch. As a standard action, she can grant 1d6 temporary hit points for



every two-paladin levels he possesses. These temporary hit points last for 24 hours or until lost. The subject also gains immunity to any effects and/or conditions that would be removed by his mercy ability for 1 minute per paladin class level he possesses. This counts as a use of his lay on hands ability.

At 16th level, a compassionate son can as an immediate action, for 1 minute per paladin class level, cause all damage dealt to living creatures within a 200-ft. radius of the compassionate son to be transformed into nonlethal damage. The compassionate son can use this ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma bonus (minimum +1)

At 20th level a compassionate son can twice per day as an immediate action open up a brief but powerful divine conduit between himself and any creatures he chooses within 75 ft., taking on the damage and any other effects and/or conditions that creature suffers from. When a creature in range is hit by an attack or fails a saving throw, he can activate this ability and the wounds and/or effects are magically transmitted to him instead of the original recipient. The compassionate son is affected as if he was hit by the attack or failed the saving throw, taking all the damage and suffering all of the adverse effects. Any resistances or immunities the compassionate son has are applied normally, but he cannot otherwise reduce or negate the damage or effects in any way. You can use this ability against an effect that also targets you or includes you in its area; you suffer the effects for yourself and the targets you spared, potentially taking damage or suffering other consequences multiple times.

**Divine Bond (Sp):** Upon reaching 5th level, a compassionate son forms a divine bond with his god. This bond is different from the normal two forms a paladin can take. The compassionate son cannot choose the other two forms normally taken by paladins.

The compassionate son's bond allows him to become the defender of a special creature selected by his deity (his ward). This ward is usually a cleric of his deity but his deity could select another creature important to the faith. If this creature dies, the

compassionate son is treated as an expaladin until he gains atonement or the ward is returned to life.

Once per round, as an immediate action, if the compassionate son is in a square adjacent to its ward and the ward is subject to an attack, including an area effect, the compassionate some can subject himself to the attack in the ward's stead and the ward takes no damage. Resolve potential attacks against the compassionate son normally, including to hit rolls and saving throws.

Once per day, as a full-round action, a compassionate son may magically call his ward to his side. This ability is the equivalent of a spell of a level equal to onethird the compassionate son's paladin class level. The ward immediately appears adjacent to the compassionate son (no save). A compassionate son can use this ability once per day at 5th level, and one additional time per day for every 4 levels thereafter, for a total of four times per day at 17th level.

At 8th Level a compassionate son and the ward always knows the direction where the other is located, as long as they are on the same plane, they also share a permanent *status* spell in relation to each other.

At 11th Level a compassionate son and his ward share a permanent *shield other* ability with each other as the subject of the spell effect they can suppress and resume this ability as an immediate action.

At 14th Level a compassionate son's *shield other* ability grants them the ability to use the other's saving throw bonus instead of their own.

At 17th Level a compassionate son's *shield other* ability allows him or the ward to choose to take on any and/or all the detrimental effects and conditions the other suffers under. However, if it has a numeric value (energy drain, ability damage/drain/penalty, morale penalty etc.) the compassionate son or the ward can only choose to take on half or none that numeric value rather than its total effect.

At 20th Level, a compassionate son can cause a *true resurrection* to affect his dead or destroyed ward. Once the ward is returned to life though the use of this ability the compassionate son is rendered dead (or destroyed). If the soul of the ward chooses not to return to life or is unable to be returned to life, the compassionate son does not die (nor is he destroyed). A Faithful soul can use this ability once per day, and can even use this ability if he is an ex-paladin.



#### **OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a**

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a)"Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b)"Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d)"Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that

are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3.Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5.Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6.Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the

ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.  Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

All proper names, Logos, Company Names, Images, Graphics, editorials, interviews and reviews are product identity all other content including translated common names are open gaming content.

#### Open Content is the designated as follows: All common names on stat blocks, domain abilities, skills, monsters, templates, classes, magic items, spells, and feats.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10 Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12 Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13 Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14 Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

#### 15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000–2005, Wizards of the Coast, Inc. d20 System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2005, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, and Bruce R. Cordell, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook. Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

The Book of Experimental Might. Copyright 2008, Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved.

Tome of Horrors. Copyright 2002, Necromancer Games, Inc.; Authors: Scott Greene, with Clark Peterson, Erica Balsley, Kevin Baase, Casey Christofferson, Lance Hawvermale, Travis Hawvermale, Patrick Lawinger, and Bill Webb; Based on original content from TSR.

Advanced Player's Guide. Copyright 2010, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn.

Pathways #2 Copyright 2011 Steven D. Russell;

### **Endless Terrain** Battlemaps

Unfortunately most RPG terrain maps lose their value the second time you use it, as it looks exactly the same as the first time.

Endless Terrain Battlemaps are four 11 x 17 inch double-sided, geomorphic map tiles that allow you hundreds of layouts on your tabletop with just a single set. (Square, Hex or No Grid)

Each month you can expect a different terrain design: arctic, desert, jungle, dungeons, alleyways, and many more!



#### **Monthly Subscription** Rate is \$19.95 plus shipping

Single set purchases for \$24.95 plus shipping

Every month we offer **FREE** downloads of maps from every set, as well as 10 map objects for the sets too. Visit our website today for free downloads.

#### **Other Services We Offer:**

- RPG Map POD shop
- Freelance Map Commissions
- Sell your maps from our site
- Custom Battlemap Design
- Map Lamination Service
  - World wide shipping



