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





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Dedicated to **Nicole Russell** A sister who does more than what is possible.

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2+2 =54

To Slay: Monster-Yes Barmaid-No?





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Agent of Chaos Creature

Chaos has no true rulers but it does have agents; these beings by pure happenstance become the personification of change, free will, creativity, individualism, and, to its evil extreme, madness, savagery, solipsism, and selfish overindulgence. They serve neither good nor evil but seek to promote their own often bizarre agendas to promote change in the world. These creatures bear markings of slowly evolving and changing skin tones and curving sigils.

Creating an Agent of Chaos Creature

"Agent of chaos creature" is an acquired template that can be added to any creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

An agent of chaos uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

CR: +2

Alignment: Change the creature's alignment to Chaotic Neutral.

Defenses/Qualities: *Immunity to magic* (an agent of chaos is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, save for spells with the law descriptor). **Weakness:** *Vulnerability to law* (agents of chaos takes half again as much damage (+50%) from a lawful-aligned weapon or spell with the law descriptor regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed or if the save is a success or failure). It also takes a -4 penalty on saves against spells and effects that cause or use the law descriptor.

Special Abilities: An agent of chaos creature gains the following special abilities.

Chaos Curse (Su) Three times per day, an agent of chaos can make any effect created by her chaos field permanent on a single creature if it is created by a spell 3rd level or higher as if the agent had successfully cast *bestow curse* on the subject.

Chaos Field (Su) Any supernatural, spell or spelllike ability within 10 feet of an agent of chaos automatically causes a mishap. Continuous magical effects such as those created by magic items trigger only once per chaos field and if the spell is negated it is only suppressed for 1d4+1 rounds. Supernatural effects are considered to have an effective caster level equal to the creature's HD and its effective spell level is equal to half the creature's HD.

These effects can be negated with a successful save against the DC of the affected spell or spell-like ability if the spell had no saving throw, this effect is negated by a successful Will Save. The agent can suppress this field as a standard action, reactivating it is a free action.

% Mishap

Spell is negated.

- 2 Spell is negated, the spell slot is not lost nor is a use per day used up.
- **3** Spell backfires dealing 1d6 per spell level to the caster.
- 4 Caster of spell develops hiccups (sickened for 1 round per level of the spell).
- 5 Creatures affect by spell develop blisters in

) <	
	addition to normal effects suffering a -2 penalty
	on all saves for 1 round.
6	Spell is negated and instead summons harmless
-	butterflies.
7	Spell is negated and instead creates harmless
/	fireworks.
0	Spell affects an additional single target within
8	
	range in addition to normal effects.
9	Caster's orifices start to bleed (bleed damage 1d6
	each round for number of rounds equal of the
-	level of the spell).
10	Spell is negated and instead creates a harmless
	rain over caster's head for 1 round.
11	Spell arcs and affects a number of secondary
	targets equal to its caster level (maximum 20).
12	Caster is blinded for 1 round, if the spell is 2nd
	level or higher the blindness is permanent.
13	Spell is negated and instead creates a <i>faire fire</i>
Ŭ	effect around the caster for 1 round.
14	Spell gains the alignment descriptor of the
-	caster's choice and adds +2 to its DC.
15	Most valuable object caster is attending gains the
-0	broken condition.
16	Spell is negated and instead causes all the caster's
	hair to fall out (hair can be regrown).
17	Upon a failed save the spell deals an additional
-/	1d6 points of energy damage per spell level in
	addition to its normal effects (1 acid, 2 cold, 3
	electricity, 4 fire, 5 force and 6 sonic).
18	Caster is confused for 1 round per level of the
10	spell.
19	Spell is negated and instead causes the caster to
19	grow useless tentacles that fall off after 1 round.
20	Upon a failed save those affected by the spell are
20	deafened for 1 round in addition to its normal
	effects. If the spell is 2nd level or higher, the
	deafness is permanent.
01	Caster cowers for 1 round per level of the spell.
21	Spell is negated and instead causes the caster to
22	
00	shout whenever he talks for 1 minute.
23	Spell effect is delayed for 1d4+1 rounds.
24	Caster is dazed for 1 round.
25	Spell is negated and instead causes harmless
	snowflakes to fall in the area of the chaos field for
	1 round.
26	All casters within the chaos field must make a
	Concentration check (DC 10 + caster level of this
	spell) to be able to cast spells; this effect lasts for
	1 round per level of the spell cast.
27	Caster is dazzled for 1 round per level of the spell.
28	Spell is negated and orchestra music can be heard
	by all creatures within the area of the chaos field

8

- for 1 round 29 Roll randomly as a grenade-like weapon from spell's target square. Spell becomes a trap targeting whatever enters that square next. 30 Caster is deafened for 1 round per level of the spell, if the spell is 2nd level or higher the effect is permanent. **31** Spell is negated and a loud flatulent sound can be heard and the whole area of the chaos field smells of an offensive odor (this is harmless). **32** Lower the spell slot used for the casting of this spell by one for purposes of determining spell effects (save DC, damage, duration, etc.). **33** Caster suffers 10 points of damage per caster level of the spell (minimum of o hit points). **34** Spell is negated and the caster is harmlessly covered in mud. **35** Increase the spell's variable numeric effects by 50% or add +2 to the DC of the spell's save (but not both). The spell is negated and the caster gains 1 36 temporary negative level per level of the spell. Negative levels stack. Assuming the caster survives, he regains lost levels after a number of hours equal to his caster level (maximum 15 hours). Usually, negative levels have a chance of becoming permanent, but the negative levels from this effect don't last long enough to do so. Spell is negated and the caster is pelted 37 harmlessly with rotten fruit and vegetables. 38 The spell ignores its current target and fixes on the next closest target that is not the caster within range of the spell. Increase the spell's variable numeric effects by 50% or add +2 to the DC of the spell's save (but not both). **39** The spell is negated and the caster gains the entangled condition for 1 round per caster level from tentacles of chaos magic. The DC of the entangled condition is equal to the DC of the spell. **40** Spell is negated and the caster is pelted harmlessly with cream pies. **41** Those affected by the spell are entangled for 1 round in addition to the spell's normal effects. 42 The spell is negated and the caster gains the exhausted condition. 43 Spell is negated and the caster is harmlessly reduced to the minimum height for his size category for 1 day per spell level. **44** Spells that cause a Reflex save (as the DC for the spell) push those affected by the spell out of spell's area in addition to their normal effects. The spell is negated and the caster gains the 45 fascinated condition for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level. 64 **46** Spell is negated and the caster gains the harmless illusionary appearance of being morbidly obese for his size for one day per level of the spell **47** Double spell's duration; if instantaneous, the spell is recast 1 round later.
- **48** The spell is negated and the caster gains the fatigued condition.

- **49** Spell is negated and the caster gains the harmless illusionary appearance of everything he or she is wearing becoming bright pink for one day per level of the spell.
- **50** If the target is slain within 1 day per level of the spell, the target rises as an undead immediately (undead type is subject to GM adjudication).
- **51** The spell is negated and the caster loses all remaining actions and gains the flat-footed condition until the beginning of his next turn.
- **52** Spell is negated; all of the coloration of the caster's body fades quickly to gray and remains that way for one day per level of the spell. In addition, the caster is mute for one round per level of the spell.
- **53** Those affected by the spell, in addition to its normal effects, gain 1 temporary negative level per level of the spell. Negative levels stack. Assuming the victims survive, they regain lost levels after a number of hours equal to its caster level (maximum 15 hours). Usually, negative levels have a chance of becoming permanent, but the negative levels from this effect don't last long enough to do so.
- **54** The spell is negated and the caster gains the frightened condition for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- **55** Spell is negated and the caster is harmlessly pelted in the face with playing cards that then disappear.
- **56** Those affected by the spell, in addition to its normal effects, are afflicted with the shaken condition for a number of rounds equal to the spell's caster level.
- **57** The spell is negated and the caster gains the incorporeal condition for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- **58** Spell is negated and the area of the chaos field is filled with the sound of a harsh and shrill cry of alarm for 1 round.
- **59** Those affected by the spell, in addition to its normal effects, suffer 1 points of damage per level of the spell to a random ability score (roll 1d6: 1 Str, 2 Dex, 3 Con, 4 Int, 5 Wis, 6 Cha).
- **60** The spell is negated and the caster gains the invisible condition for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- **61** Spell is negated and the area of the chaos field is filled with harmless, multi-colored flashing lights and the sound of dance or festival music for 1 round.
- **62** Those affected by the spell, in addition to its normal effects, are knocked prone.
- **63** The spell is negated and the caster gains the nauseated condition for 1 round.
- **64** The spell is negated and the caster gains the harmless illusionary appearance of always making a rude and insulting gesture to everyone who sees him or her for 1 day per caster level.
- **65** Those affected by the spell, in addition to its normal effects, are panicked for 1 round.
- **66** The spell is negated and the caster is stunned and

knocked prone for 1 round.

- The spell is negated and the caster gains the harmless illusionary appearance of always appearing as an onlooker's most hated enemy for 1 day per caster level.
- Add a +20 circumstance bonus to overcoming spell resistance or a +10 circumstance bonus to the spell DC vs. one creature affected by the spell in addition to its normal effects.
- The spell is negated and the caster is paralyzed for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- Spell is negated and the caster's clothing and equipment are rendered invisible as *improved invisibility* for 1 round per spell level.
- 71 Spell also creates a *summon monster* effect in addition to its normal effect as a *summon monster* spell of half the spell's level (min. 1).
- The spell is negated and the caster is petrified for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level. If the spell is at least 6th level or higher, the caster is permanently petrified.
- Spell is negated and the caster is harmlessly covered in tar and feathers for 1 day per spell level.
- In addition to its normal effect, the spell grants the use of the spell to the caster 3/day as a spell-like ability for one day.
- The spell is negated and the caster is shaken for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- The spell is negated and a harmless illusion gives the appearance that the caster is constantly uttering obscenities for 1 round per caster level.
- 77 Maximize the spell's variable numeric effects or increase the spell's caster level or DC by 2 (but not both).
- The spell is negated and the caster is sickened for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- The spell is negated and a harmless illusion gives the appearance that the caster's sex and attire have changed to the exact opposite of his or her current state.
- Increase the damage dealt by this spell by 50% and transform the damage type to nonlethal or increase the spell's DC by 2 (but not both).
- 81 The spell is negated and the caster is staggered for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level.
- The spell is negated and confetti starts raining down on top of the caster.
- 83 The spell is cast as a free action
- The spell is negated and the caster is stunned for 1 round.
- The spell is negated and a flock of doves harmlessly fly up out of the caster's hands and then disappear.
- Any creature affected by the spell that is slain in the next 24 hours cannot be raised or resurrected.
- **8**₇ The spell is negated and the caster is rendered unconscious for 1 round.
- The spell is negated but every creature in the chaos field who would be attracted to your gender is now charmed by you and is sexually attracted to you.

- Any creature affected by the spell is covered in acidic slime that deals 1d6 points of acid damage per round.
- **90** The spell is negated and the caster is rendered blind and deaf for 1 round; if the spell is 2nd level or higher both effects are permanent.
- The spell is negated. The next time a creature makes a successful melee attack against you it also then hugs you (a harmless action) as a free action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.
- Double the spell's area of effect or double its number of potential targets (but not both).
- The spell is negated and the caster suffers a -6 penalty to all stats for 1 round; if the spell is 6th level or higher the effect is permanent.
- The spell is negated and an illusion covers you making you appear to all senses to be the most famous public figure you know for 1 day per spell level.
- Any creature affected by the spell is nauseated for 1 round.
- The spell is negated and the caster's ability to speak coherently is compromised. Any time he attempts to communicate (including casting spells with verbal components), whatever he says comes out as gibberish.
- **97** The spell is negated and in the chaos field everyone's voice sounds extremely high pitched and squeaks.
- Any creature affected by the spell suffers 10 points of damage per caster level (in addition to the spell's normal effects).
- The spell is negated, the caster's age increases to its maximum age minus one year. (Take the venerable age for the target's race, then roll as normal for maximum age and subtract 1 from the result. Dragons are immune to this effect.) This is a permanent effect.
- The spell gains the law descriptor and the chaos field is suppressed for 1d4+1 rounds.

Change Shape (Su) Agents of chaos can assume any form three times per day as if using *polymorph*.

Infusion of Chaos (Su): All of the base creature's attacks gain the chaos alignment descriptor, and all supernatural attacks, spells and spell-like abilities that deal damage are altered so that half the damage is dealt by chaos (gaining the chaotic descriptor) (regardless of alignment bypassing certain resistances).

Pandemoniac Corruption (Su) If the base creature is an outsider, it no longer reproduces through normal means. Rather, it infects its victims with a supernatural substance, somewhere between a poison and a plague. Any time someone is injured by its natural attacks, he must attempt a Fortitude save (DC 10 +1/2 the agent's HD + its Constitution modifier). If he succeeds, the injected substance does not take hold in his system, and he is immune to the agent's pandemoniac corruption for 24 hours.

If the victim fails, a faint oil secreted by the agent of chaos works its way into his bloodstream. The victim appears perfectly normal and healthy for 3d6 days. Once that time expires, the victim suddenly grows deathly ill. He develops open lesions all over his body, which slowly leak a strange, dull gray fluid. His eyes glaze over with a green film, and he begins to cough up mucus tainted with blood and that same gray sludge. He suffers a penalty of 1d10+5 to all ability scores (roll separately for each), to a minimum of 1. At any point in the process, even before symptoms are visible, a remove disease spell destroys the substance in the bloodstream. Once symptoms are visible, a DC 25 Heal check can also save the victim. Because this requires various herbs and substances that are toxic in their own right, however, each Heal attempt (successful or not) requires that the victim make a Fortitude save or suffer 1 point of Constitution damage.

The victim dies 3d12 hours after symptoms first appear, unless he has been cured. If the victim was a spellcaster who drew on extraplanar sources for his magic (such as a cleric who called on a specific deity, or a wizard specialized in conjuration spells), the corpse immediately bursts open in a cloud of corruption and decay, and a new agent of chaos outsider of the same type and racial hit dice emerges.

Warpwave (Su) A creature struck by any of the agent of chaos's melee attacks must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the agent's HD + its Constitution modifier) or be affected by a warpwave.

d20	Warpwave effect
1	Target takes 2 Strength damage.
2	Target takes 2 Dexterity damage.
3	Target takes 2 Constitution damage.
4	Target takes 2 Intelligence damage.
5	Target takes 2 Wisdom damage.
6	Target takes 2 Charisma damage.
7	Target gains 1 negative level.
8	Target is blinded or deafened for 1d4 rounds.
9	Target is confused for 1d4 rounds.
10	Target is entangled by filaments of energy for
	1d4 rounds.
11	Target becomes fatigued.
12	Target becomes nauseated for 1d4 rounds.
13	Target is stunned for 1d4 rounds.
14	Target is sickened for 1d4 rounds.
15	Target is staggered for 1d4 rounds.
16	Target gains 4d6 temporary hit points.
17	Target is affected by a <i>heal</i> spell (CL = agent's
	CR).
18	Target is turned to stone.
19	Target is affected by <i>baleful polymorph</i> (CL =
	agent's CR).
20	Portions of target's body burst with energy of a
	random type (choose between acid, cold,
	electricity, or fire), dealing 4d6 points of damage
	of the appropriate type to the target.

Spell-Like Abilities: An agent of chaos with an Intelligence or Wisdom score of 8 or higher has a cumulative number of spell-like abilities set by its HD. Unless otherwise noted, an ability is usable 1/day. All of

the creature's spell-like abilities's caster levels equal the creature's HD (or the CL of the base creature's spell-like abilities, whichever is higher).

HD	Abilities
1-2	entropic shield 3/day
3-4	lesser confusion
5-6	blink 3/day
7-8	freedom of movement 3/day
9–10	baleful polymorph
11-12	major creation 3/day
13–14	prismatic spray
15-16	polymorph any object
	prismatic wall
19–20	prismatic sphere

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +4 (+2 to melee attack and damage, +2 to Climb and Swim skill checks, +2 to Strength, and CMB checks, +2 to CMD), Dex +4 (+2 to ranged attacks; AC and touch AC, Initiative, and Ref saves, +2 to Acrobatics, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth checks, add +2 to all of the base creature's Dexterity-based DCs), Con +6 (+3 hp per HD, +3 to Fortitude saves, and all of the base creature's Constitution-based DCs), Int +2 (add 1 bonus language, add 1 skill point per HD, +1 to Appraise, Craft, Knowledge, Linguistics, and Spellcraft checks, and +1 to all of the base creature's Intelligence-based DCs), Cha +4 (+2 to Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Perform, and Use Magic Device checks, attempts to influence others, and channel energy DCs, +2 to all of the base creature's Charisma-based DCs). Reduce the base creature as follows Wis -4 (-2 to Will saves, -2 to Heal, Perception, Profession, Sense Motive and Survival checks, and -2 to all of the base creature's Wisdom-based DCs).

Feats: The base creature gains the following bonus feats though it must still meet the prerequisites for the feat in order to gain its benefits:Quickened Pandemoniac Corruption, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*confusion, lesser*), and Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*confusion*).

Organization: Solitary

New feat

Quickened Pandemoniac Corruption (Monster)

Prerequisites: Pandemoniac Corruption, Ability Focus (pandemoniac corruption), Knowledge (the planes) 9 ranks, outsider native to a chaos aligned plane. **Benefits:** Your pandemoniac corruption only incubates for the duration of the encounter after your victim has been injured by your natural attacks. One full round after the disease manifests the creature suffers 1 point of Constitution per round until he dies at 0 Constitution (which may be immediately considering the 1d10+5 penalty to Constitution).



XP 6,400

Agent of Chaos Water Nymph CN Medium fey (aquatic, amphibious) **Init** +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12 **Aura** blinding beauty (30 ft., DC 23) chaos field (80 ft.)

Defense

AC 27, touch 27, flat-footed 19 (+9 deflection, +7 Dex, +1 dodge) hp 84 (8d6+56) Fort +18, Ref +22, Will +16 DR 10/cold iron Immune magic Weakness vulnerability to law

Offense

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.
Melee mwk dagger +12 (1d4+2/19–20)
Special Attacks chaos curse, stunning glance infusion of chaos, warpwave (DC 21)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)
1/day-dimension door, lesser confusion (16)
3/day-blink, entropic shield, freedom of movement

Spells Prepared (CL 7th)

4th-summon nature's ally IV
3rd-cure moderate wounds, cresting waves (2 DC 15)*
2nd-barkskin, flame blade (2), resist energy,
1st-charm animal (DC 13), endure elements, entangle (DC 13), obscuring mist, produce flame
0-detect magic, guidance, light, stabilize

Jactics

Before Combat: Due to her magic immunity, Slyona does not cast ability-increasing spells upon herself, instead using them as boon gifts for her allies. She is known to suppress her chaos field and disguise her form to hide her blinding beauty until she is forced into battle (or until a true seeing spell reveals her true form and the onlooker must save).

During Combat: If forced into combat she releases her chaos field and reverts to her true form as free actions and then sets about casting *cresting wave*, using her dagger only against mages.

Sylona never fights to the death; though she is a gambler, when she does retreat she flees into the water if possible.

Statistics

Str 14, **Dex** 25, **Con** 24, **Int** 18, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 29 **Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 29

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Casting, Dodge, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*confusion, lesser*)^B, Weapon Finesse

Skills Diplomacy +20, Escape Artist +18, Handle Animal +17, Heal +9, Knowledge (nature) +15,

Perception +12, Sense Motive +12, Stealth +18, Swim +21, Use Magic Device +20. Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan SQ change shape (*polymorph*, 3/day), inspiration, unearthly grace, wild empathy +23

Ecology

Environment temperate aquatic **Organization** solitary **Treasure** standard (dagger, other treasure)

Special Abilities

Blinding Beauty (Su) This affects all humanoids within 30 feet of Sylona. Those who look directly at Sylona must succeed on a DC 23 Fortitude save or be blinded permanently. Sylona can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Inspiration (Su) Sylona can choose an intelligent creature to inspire and serve as a muse by giving that creature some token of her affection (typically a lock of her hair). As long as Sylona retains her favor for this creature and as long as the creature carries Sylona's token, the creature gains a +4 insight bonus on all Will saving throws, Craft checks, and Perform checks. A bard who has Sylona for a muse in this way can use his bardic performance for an additional 9 rounds per day. Sylona retains a link to her token and its carrier as if she had cast a *status* spell on the carrier. Sylona can end this effect at any time as a free action. Sylona may only inspire one creature at a time in this manner.

Spells Sylona casts spells as a 7th-level druid, but cannot swap out prepared spells to cast summon spells.

Stunning Glance (Su) As a standard action, Sylona can stun a creature within 30 feet with a look. The target must succeed on a DC 23 Fortitude save or be stunned for 2d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Unearthly Grace (Su) Sylona adds her Charisma modifier as a racial bonus on all her saving throws, and as a deflection bonus to her Armor Class.

Wild Empathy (Su) This works like the druid's wild empathy class feature, except Sylona has a +6 racial bonus on the check. Sylona's effective druid level is equal to her HD for determining her total modifier to the check.

Description:

"I was the one who stole your children, leaving you with changelings, so that your offspring could become the taskshapers, and then I was the one who later told the changelings about their true natures and helped the taskshapers win free of Auberyon the Solstice King. Do not think for a moment that you know me." -Excerpt from <u>Wild Cards</u> by Qwilion of Questhaven.

Many speak of my loveliness as if that summed up the whole of my nature. What I enjoy about my beauty is its ability to inspire those whom I favor. I personally am not always content with my petite frame and wish I were a bit taller, so I often take the form of someone



taller than myself. Some find the alien marks the directors of chaos have made upon me disturbing, these, however, I find fascinating and quite stunning. But really what is a form, I can change mine at will and do so quite often.

I am trying to grasp this odd concept mortals have which they refer to as "empathy" and also their odd attachments to this incarnation of existence; if you die you will either be reborn again, or move on the halls of your deity in an immortal form, so why cling so hard to mortality? I have started many experiments and efforts to change this foolish notion in the mortal races but as of yet I have had no success. There is no rush; I have been working for less than a millennium on the problem.

I have decided that this incarnation of my life will be about change and making vast changes using a small group of dedicated individuals. I plan to start with a bard in the city of Questhaven; no one would ever suspect a bard of being behind anything truly important or devious, how I shall prove them wrong.

I was the one who helped Eshu the Deceiver, trickster phouca of Questhaven take the children of the Evocative City to the court of the Solstice king to fight in the Chimeric Amphitheater upon the Plane of Dreams. I was also the one who helped Iudos the Betrayer, a gremlin filcher, to show those same taskshapers grown to full maturity the way home. I still do not understand why they cry about it, being 100 summers since they left.

Jore

(Knowledge (planes))

Common (DC 22): This wild yet lovely nymph is Sylona of the Shifting Shore;, she is an instrument of turmoil and a wild card in the society of the City of Questhaven. This reveals all fey traits.

Uncommon (DC 27): Other creatures similar to this are known as "Agents of Chaos;" read excerpt from *Wild Cards*.

Rare (DC 16): The mere sight of Sylona's alluring form can blind most creatures while her very presence can cause bizarre mishaps to all forms of magical spells and effects, and she can make some of these mishaps permanent curses. Yet the Lady of the Shifting Shore is still able to arouse great works of art from the souls of the gifted. She is highly resistant to most forms of physical harm and nigh-invulnerable to magic. She can alter her form at will and possesses an innate ability to swim above and beneath the waves. Her physical attack can alter the nature of reality, gifted as she is by bedlam and strife. A simple glance from her can leave others stupefied. Her sylvan and anarchic nature grants her personal arcane magic as well as the divine power of a druid.

Obscure (DC 26): Spells and supernatural powers that embody the ethos of law and/or weapons of iron aligned with that self-same ethos are the best attacks to use against the Sylona.

Epic (DC 36): While capricious and alien to the idea of empathy, Sylona is not evil; a gifted bard could

easily earn her favor and find her to be a valuable, if somewhat fickle ally. It is far better than allowing her to favor a potential rival.

Monster Feats Greater Warpwave [Monster]

"The bizarre serpentine creature pointed at me and I was transformed into a lamb made of stone."

Prerequisites: Warpwave or Inflict Warpwave; Ability Focus (warpwave or inflict warpwave), Improved Warpwave, Con 13

Benefits: You roll twice on the warp wave chart for each warp wave you would inflict and select one to be the actual effect.

Improved Warpwave [Monster]

"The bizarre serpentine creature's claws touched me and my body and filaments of energy wrapped about me while at the same time the world went dark." **Prerequisites:** Warpwave or Inflict Warpwave; Ability Focus (warpwave or inflict warpwave), Con 13 **Benefits:** You inflict a second warpwave in addition to your first.

New Spells

Cresting Waves

School: Conjuration (Creation) [Water];

Level Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3 Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: V, S

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Line-shaped group of crashing waves emanating out from you to the extreme of the range

Duration: 1 round/4 levels

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates; Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell creates waves of water (which move at approximately 50 mph) that originate from you, affecting all creatures in their path. All creatures in this area (10 ft. wide by 10 ft. high) that are Large or smaller must make a DC 20 Swim check or be blown back $2d6 \times 10$ feet, knocked prone, and take 1d6 points of damage per ten feet moved. Large or smaller creatures must make a DC 25 Swim skill check to move against the force of the waves.

Huge or larger creatures may move normally within the *cresting waves* effect.

This spell can move a creature beyond the limit of its range.

In the area of the *cresting waves*, all non-siege ranged attacks are negated, all Perception checks fail, and it automatically extinguishes all flames (*wall of fire*, torch, lanterns etc.).

In addition to the effects noted, a *cresting waves* can do anything that a string of 10-foot waves would be expected to do. It can overturn wooded, unsecured buoyant structures, heel over a small boat, and blow gases or vapors to the edge of its range. Rite Publishing Presents

The Secrets of Divine Channeling



By Jonathan McAnulty

Discord and Disorder: Clerics of Chaos by Jonathan McAnulty

Often misunderstood, frequently destructive, always unpredictable, chaos is the force of creation and entropy alike. More than the mere absence of laws, chaos is defined as behavior so unpredictable as to possess the appearance of randomness. Disorder and confusion are the typical result of chaos, yet while the results of chaos are often undesirable, it is possible for good to come of it as well. Thus, though frequently associated with the destructive workings of vile demons, chaos transcends mere right and wrong, good and evil. Indeed, the chaotically-aligned azata argue that chaos alone makes free will possible and that good works performed apart from the binding restrictions of law are, of necessity, more meaningful than any mandated act of charity.

Clerics come to the study of chaos and reverence for the gods of chaos in very different ways. Some, such as those who are also aligned with the forces of good, see chaos as the best way to break the stranglehold of restrictive laws, freeing individuals to pursue happiness according to their own desires. Such clerics are fiercely opposed to slavery, bureaucracy and tyrannical governments everywhere. Priests of chaos aligned with more demonic forces understand chaos as the best tool for the spread of suffering and sorrow. They teach that free willed creatures should do as they wish, regardless of the consequences. Still other clerics, especially those who venerate the protean powers, see chaos as an end unto itself. They believe truth is found only in disorder and that all life comes from chaos and ends in chaos. For such as these, there is no force more powerful or primal than chaos, and its fundamental nature in the universe compels them to serve and honor it. Despite the differences in chaotic dogmas and philosophies, clerics of chaos all have this in common: they reject anything predictable and structured. Chaotically-aligned churches rarely have strict hierarchies and their actual doctrines are few, and often subject to change. While it is impossible for a mortal to be entirely free from the constrictions of laws, especially natural laws, the ultimate goal of chaotic religions is to transcend the flesh and ascend into a spiritual realm without restrictions.

Sacred Tomes of Chaos

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

Into the Black

This collection of odd poems is purported to contain arcane secrets from the dawn of time. Written by a crazed, drug-addled priest who lay dying of leprosy, reputable scholars consider the tome too dangerous



for casual reading. The poems speak of chaotic energies, cruel eternal intelligences and the death throes of worlds. Those who spend more than an hour reading the book must make a DC 18 Will save or suffer 1d3 Wisdom damage. Those who succeed at the save receive a +4 divine bonus to Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (planes), and Knowledge (religion) for 6 hours.

Numbers of the Void

This strange book is a collection of seemingly random numbers. Priests of Chaos claim that it is a divinely inspired book and by decoding the numbers one can glean great insights into the past, the future and perplexing questions of life. No two students of the book completely agree on the proper method for interpreting the mysterious numbers and every few years a new prophet, or mad scholar, will claim to have found a new key. Surprisingly, a multitude of methods seems to produce intelligible thoughts from the numerical conundrum. Besides being popular with clerics devoted to chaos, the book also finds its way into the homes of fortunetellers, numerologists, mathematicians, cult leaders, and puzzle enthusiasts. Though reading the book provides no in-game bonus, Numbers of the Void has induced more than one occult leader to embark on a rampage of terror.

Theopaternon

Some religions teach Chaos was the father of the first gods. The *Theopaternon* is a collection of rambling essays dealing with this primal god-figure. As befits a tome dedicated to chaos, there seems little rhyme or reason to its method and most sane people find it of



little value. However, for a true devotee of chaos, the tome is an invaluable tool for freeing the mind from the limits of material thought. Those who spend an hour reading the book and meditating upon its disjointed words gain a +1 bonus to all Will saves for 24 hours.

New Feat

The following feat is available to divine casters possessing the chaos domain, or one of its associated subdomains.

Mutator

You can use the divine energies of your god to warp the biological makeup of a target.

Prerequisites: Ability to channel energy, Chaos Domain (or a related subdomain), caster level 5th

Benefits: By expending three uses of your channel energy ability and making a melee touch attack, you can cause a target to begin mutating over a period of days. The target is allowed a Fortitude save, each day, to prevent the effect for that day, the DC of which is equal to 10 + 1/2 your class level + your Charisma modifier. The effect lasts for a number of days equal to the amount of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 days, 4d6 equals 4 days, etc.). The effects of the mutation can, if desired, be reversed by the use of *restoration*, *wish*, or *miracle* (any ability increase is also removed through the use of restoration when ability damage is healed). The mutation process itself can be stopped through the use of *remove curse*, *wish*, or *miracle*. For each day of mutation, first determine whether the subject increases an ability or takes ability damage. Next determine the ability affected. Finally, roll to see if there are any outward physical changes to the subject. Changes to appearance are small at first (small tuft of feathers, scales on shoulders, etc.) but multiple applications of the same effect over a period of days produce more significant changes.

d6	Daily Ability Mutation Effect
1	Target suffers 2 damage to random ability
2-4	Target suffers 1 damage to random ability
5	Random ability increases by 1
6	Random ability increases by 2
d10	Random Ability Mutation
1-2	Strength
3-4	Dexterity
5-6	Constitution
7	Intelligence
8	Wisdom
9-10	Charisma
d10	Outward Sign of Mutation
1	No outward effect
2	Subject grows 1d4 inches
3	Subject shrinks 1d3 inches
4	Subject gains 2d20 pounds
5	Subject loses 2d10 pounds
6	Subject grows scales
7	Subject grows feathers
8	Subject's hair changes color
9	Subject's skin changes color
10	Subject gains +1 natural armor as skin becomes thicker

Channeling Effects for Chaos and its Subdomains

The following effects use and supplement rules from <u>*The Secrets of Divine Channeling.*</u> 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*.

For chaos and its subdomains, to simulate the nonformulaic nature of chaos, the following effects are not grouped according to the ideological subdomains of chaos. Rather, any cleric of chaos, or one of its related subdomains (azata, demon, protean), with access to channeling effects should choose the effects they most desire for their cleric from the options provided. Each character may, after taking the appropriate feats, possess, per domain, a single minor channeling effect, one combat channeling effect and two major channeling effects. The choice of which effect a character has access to should be made as soon as the character gains the ability to use the effect. Once made, the choice cannot be changed.

Sensorial Imagery: The divine energies of chaos manifest dark, with streaks of crimson. Frequently the manifestation of such energies brings about a feeling of vertigo in those affected by them. Demonically powered energies tend to have greater amounts of scarlet, and azata-related energies frequently have golden highlights.

Minor Channeling Effect: Entropic Touch: You can, as a standard action, use one of your uses of channel energy to cause food to immediately rot. Affected food must be within range of your channeled energy and for each die you would normally roll when channeling energy you may affect one serving of food (enough food to feed one man for one meal).

Minor Channeling Effect: Soul of Chaos: This effect is detailed in *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*. Minor Channeling Effect: Step of Chaos: You can, as a standard action, employ one of your uses of

channel energy to make your movements supernaturally erratic. For one round you gain a dodge bonus to AC equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (1d6 equals +1 dodge, 2d6 equals +2 dodge, etc.).

Combat Channeling Effect: Cloud of Chaos: This effect is detailed in *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*.

Combat Channeling Effect: Elemental Chaos: You can use one of your uses of channel energy to infuse all weapons within range of your channeling with a sliver of bound chaotic power. When these weapons strike, they release this power. It is impossible to predict what the weapon does until it strikes. When an infused weapon does strike a target, the effect is determined by rolling a d6 and comparing it to the following chart.

D6	Weapon infusion effect
1	The weapon deals fire damage.
2	The weapon heals instead of damages.
3	The weapon deals cold damage.
4	The target takes Wisdom damage which
	lasts for 1d4 rounds; Will save halves.
5	The weapon deals electrical damage.
6	The weapon deals acid damage.
The	a count of domestic (on booling) is determined by

The amount of damage (or healing) is determined by rolling a number of dice equal to the amount you would normally roll when channeling energy (2d6 equal 2d6 of damage or healing, etc.). This chaotic charge lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice that would be rolled and is discharged as soon as the weapon strikes a target. A weapon may hold only one such charge at a time.

Combat Channeling Effect: Zone of Entropy: You can, as a standard action, utilize one of your uses of channel energy to create a zone in which entropic forces are stronger. Those within the area of effect suffer a -2 penalty to all Fortitude saves and all damage done by a weapon or effect is increased by +2 per die rolled. 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.).

Major Channeling Effect: Light of Chaos: You can, as a standard action, employ one of your uses of channel energy to create a light source, of sorts. The light produced has a radius equal to the range of your channeled energy but only serves to illuminate the area for chaotically-aligned creatures. For all other creatures, the light functions as a *darkness* spell. The effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).

Major Channeling Effect: Breath of Chaos: You can, as a standard action, employ one of your uses of channel energy to stimulate and provoke the minds of all those within range of your channeling (creatures with no Intelligence score are immune to this effect). Those affected by this effect can resist it with a successful Will save. The effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.). The exact effect is random and is determined with a d4 roll on the following chart.

D4	Breath of Chaos effect
1	The creature is panicked.
2	The creature is affected as with <i>rage</i> .
3	The creature is sickened.
4	The creature is stunned.

Major Channeling Effect: Strength of Chaos: You can, as a standard action, use one of your uses of channel energy to infuse all those within range of your channeling with a random Strength adjustment. Each round, each affected creature gains a 1d8-3 Strength adjustment. It is possible that this adjustment results in a Strength penalty instead of a Strength bonus. Creatures can choose to resist the effect on the first round of the effect by making a Fortitude save. The effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).

Major Channeling Effect: Touch of the Warp: You can, as a standard action, utilize one of your uses of channel energy to create a field of warped space extending out to the range of your channeled energy. All those within the area of effect must make a Will save each round or be moved 5 feet in a random direction. The effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).

Major Channeling Effect: Vertigo: This effect is detailed in *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*.

Major Channeling Effect: Zone of Chaos: This effect is detailed in *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*.

Malevolent Manifestation

By T. H. Gulliver

Rafikabeer, the Exalted Necropolis

Rafikabeer sits on the southwestern corner of the Many-Storied Empire. Once a thriving city of trade and art, it is now a city of the dead. Until the noxious rains fell, Rafikabeer was the marketplace of the tribes of the southern jungles and a place of culture and meditation to nobles from the kingdoms of the northern planes. When the Days of Dark Rain began, the denizens of those northern kingdoms fled to Rafikabeer in great numbers. The city locked its gates to all but the wealthiest until the House of Tamar arrived and opened those gates by force. The people of Tamar ruled Rafikabeer briefly.

The aberrant life that fell from the sky in the form of a dark oily rain poisoned the rivers that flowed past Rafikabeer. Those rivers watered the city's vineyards and filled its wells. Many who lived in Rafikabeer grew strange and died. Within two years of the Days of Dark Rain, tombs filled the once great gardens. Soon, the dead outnumbered the living. Rafikabeer as a city of the living reigned over the Land Where the Rivers Meet; as city of the dead, it reigns over the Land of Tombs.

In the forthcoming #30 Trapped Tombs, Rafikabeer serves as a location for a collection of tricky traps, most of which combine two or more traps to make for dynamic and challenging encounters. Game Masters can keep these traps in the Exalted Necropolis or relocate them to a dungeon that needs a few more surprises.

Necromancer's Chessboard Trap

During the rise of the Necromancer-Pharaohs, the devout reclaimed an area of Rafikabeer's gardens for a life-sized version of a chess-like game. The 40 ft. by 40 ft. clearing is divided into sixty-four squares, half white stone and half dark earth. Throughout the game board, well-preserved corpses or skeletons lie just beneath the ground. A living creature stepping (or forced) onto the game board triggers *animate dead* traps or *create undead* traps if they step into the proximity of a trapped square. The *animate dead* trap animates zombies or skeletons. The *create undead* traps creates ghasts. The traps only trigger if they detect a living creature; the spell *hide from undead* tricks the traps' triggers.

animate dead Trap CR 5

Type magic; **Perception** DC 29; **Disable Device** DC 29

Effects

Trigger proximity (*alarm; detect undead*); **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (animate dead, caster level 12)

create undead Trap CR 7

Type magic; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

Effects

Trigger proximity (*alarm; detect undead*); **Reset** automatic

Effect spell effect (create undead, caster level 12)



Cavern of the Bats

By Creighton Broadhurst Publisher, <u>Raging Swan Press</u>, Illustration by Brittany Michel

Cavern of the Bats (EL7; XP 3,200)

While travelling to their next adventure, the PCs are journeying through a forest or hill range when they discover the river they have been following tumbles over a waterfall into a deep cave. Alternatively, the PCs could be investigating reports by local hunters of something killing off the game dwelling in the surrounding woodland.

Ahead, the river you have been following abruptly falls away into a large sinkhole. The roar of the river is louder here and spray rises from the sinkhole.

A small flock of dire bats (led by an advanced dire bat and her mate, a giant dire bat) dwells in the cavern; they only emerge at night to hunt and feed. Thus, if the PCs pass by the cave during daylight hours they will likely not encounter the bats.

Their depredations, however, have had a noticeable effect on game in the surrounding area; hunters have begun to notice the mysterious lack of game and several have found the slashed and partially-eaten corpses of deer, wolves and even a bear.

Tactics

The bats lairing in the cavern attack any intruders daring to enter their subterranean realm. Using their flight ability, they spring from their roosts and attack climbing or flying creatures in preference to all others. The bats' tactics are unsophisticated; they simply attack the nearest target.

A bat reduced to fewer than one-quarter hit points flees the cavern, never to return.

Sinkhole Features

The sinkhole has the following features:

Sinkhole: The sinkhole is 30 ft. in diameter and the river flowing into it fills the westernmost 10 ft. Several sturdy trees - suitable for tying off the party's ropes - grow close to the sinkhole.

Cavern Features

The cavern has several features of note:

Light: Sunlight streams into the cavern through the sinkhole. The sunlight illuminates much of the chamber. The remainder is in darkness.

The floor and walls within this light abound with slippery moss and lichen. Characters running or charging through squares containing moss must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check or fall prone in the first such square they enter.

Stench: The stench of bat guano is so strong, that characters with scent cannot use it to track or pinpoint creatures in the cavern.

Waterfall: Water tumbles through the sinkhole into a large pool.



The roar of falling water inflicts a -2 penalty on hearing-based Perception checks made in the chamber. Additionally, the waterfall creates a cloud of spray that emanates from the pool for 15 ft. in all directions. Creatures in the spray have concealment (20% miss chance).

Ceiling: The cavern is 80 ft. deep. A character falling into the pool from the surface suffers 2d3 nonlethal damage and 4d6 lethal damage, and tumbles into the pool.

Pool: A pool of chill water fills about half the cavern floor.

The water is calm (DC 10 Swim check), except in squares adjacent to the waterfall (DC 15 Swim check) and 20 ft. deep. The bottom is thick with mud. It costs 3 squares of movement to walk along the bottom of the pool but this stirs up the mud (granting 20% concealment in every square moved through). **Natural Walls**: Small crevices and ledges stud these rough and natural walls. The spray thrown up by the waterfall, growths of moss and lichen, and guano deposits make the walls slippery.

Characters can scale the walls with a DC 20 Climb check.

Guano: Piles of guano and partially-eaten corpses of game lie heaped about the chamber.

It costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square containing guano. Additionally, disease lurks within the guano. A character injured in the chamber, or that searches the guano, is exposed to red ache.

Red Ache: *save* DC 15 Fortitude [2 consecutive cures]; *onset* 1d3 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d6 Str damage.

Corpses: If the PCs search the cavern and make a DC 10 Perception check they discover the remains of two badly decomposed and partially eaten humanoid corpses buried amid the guano. Characters searching the guano or corpses must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be infected with red ache (see above).

Both the corpses' mundane equipment is badly damaged or similarly decomposed. A few items of note remain, however:

Items: A masterwork cold iron dagger, a bone pipe decorated with intricate carvings of rats (faint [DC 16 Knowledge {arcana} identifies] conjuration; *pipes of the sewers* [DC 17 Spellcraft identifies]).

Gems: Four translucent light green stones (jade worth 100 gp each) and one transparent violet stone (a garnet worth 500 gp). A DC 25 Appraise check identifies each gem.

Scaling the Encounter

To modify this encounter, apply the following changes:

EL 6 (XP 2,400): Remove the advanced dire bat and the giant dire bat. Remove the garnet.

EL 8 (XP 4,800): Remove the dire bats and add four advanced dire bats. Add one garnet and two jades.

Development

If the GM desires, he can determine that several tunnels lead away from the bats' cave. These caverns could lead to other, deeper caverns.

Alternatively, the water from the pool must drain away somewhere. PCs searching the pool discover several narrow, submerged passages that descend even deeper. These water-logged passages eventually lead to a small self-contained cave system containing a small tribe of degenerate troglodytes trapped here for centuries by the flooded passages.

Advanced Dire Bat CR 3 (XP 800)

This giant, powerfully-built furry bat is the size of a small horse and has dark, leathery wings.

N Large animal Init +4; Senses blindsense 40 ft.; Perception +10 (+14 using blindsense), Sense Motive +6 Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good) ACP 0; Acrobatics +4 (+0 jumping), Escape Artist +6 Fly +11, Stealth +6 AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 14; CMD 23 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +5 natural) Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +5 hp 30 (4 HD) Space 10 ft.; Base Atk +3; CMB +9 Melee bite +7 (1d8+7) Abilities Str 21, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 18, Cha 6 Feats Alertness, Stealthy Skills as above

Giant Dire Bat CR 3 (XP 800)

This gigantic, furry bat is the size of a warhorse and has dark, leathery wings. N Huge animal Init +1; Senses blindsense 40 ft.; Perception +8 (+12 using blindsense), Sense Motive +4 Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good) ACP 0; Acrobatics +1 (-3 jumping), Escape Artist +3, Fly +6, Stealth -1 AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 14; CMD 21 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural)Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3 hp 30 (4 HD) Space 10 ft.; Base Atk +3; CMB +10 Melee bite (reach 10 ft.) +6 (2d6+7) Abilities Str 21, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6 Feats Alertness, Stealthy Skills as above

Dire Bat (2) CR 2 (XP 600)

This giant, furry bat is the size of a small horse and has dark, leathery wings. N Large animal Init +2; Senses blindsense 40 ft.; Perception +8 (+12 using blindsense), Sense Motive +4 Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good) ACP 0; Acrobatics +2 (-2 jumping), Escape Artist +4, Fly + 9, Stealth + 4 AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 12; CMD 19 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural) Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3 hp 22 (4 HD) Space 10 ft.; Base Atk +3; CMB +7 Melee bite +5 (1d8+4)Abilities Str 17, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 6 Feats Alertness, Stealthy Skills as above

MINOTAURS OF THE BLACK HILLS

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#30 Intelligent Magic Items



By J. H. Gulliver

Twenty Questions with Greg A. Vaughan

By Steven D. Russell

1. Could you tell us a little about yourself?

I live in Oklahoma City with my wife and children. My dad brought home the purple-box Basic set when I was 6, and I've been hooked on the game ever since. Like many new players, I started designing my own adventures to take my older brother through fairly soon afterward. I thought (and still think) that the advent of Dungeon Magazine was one of the watershed moments in gaming. I started submitting adventure proposals when I was 15, and after a mere 15 years I finally had one accepted (thank you Chris Thomason!). Erik Mona took over the magazine shortly after that and we had a mutual love of the Greyhawk campaign setting which probably helped me get several Greyhawk adventures published. This led me to the Dungeon adventure paths, which made for a natural transition to the Pathfinder line. And here I am now, lucky (and/or stubbornly persistent) enough to get to write adventures for the greatest game ever made and even get paid for it!

2. What is your home game like?

Though I am only able to game once a month, the thing I really appreciate about these all-too-infrequent get-togethers is that I've had my steady gaming group now for 17 years—through two 2e campaigns and now about to wrap up our first 3.5e campaign. It started as my college roommate and I, then he brought in some additional friends he met from school on a trip to Europe, then they brought in some of their friends, etc. For a period of time we were averaging about 13 players per game (which can really bog down a game in 3.5e); but as folks have moved away and whatnot, we've settled down to a stable 6 to 8 that meets on the regular schedule.

One of our regular players moved to California and one moved to Canada, but they are techie enough (some of my players, not me) to have rigged up a number of webcams and maptools so that when we play we project the battle map onto the wall and the other guys hook in through Skype so we can see and hear each other and everyone can use the same battle map. It's all pretty cool and way over my head but works exceptionally well. As a guy who still draws his maps with pencils and graph paper it amazes me when I peer over my pile of papers and notebooks behind the GM screen at the phalanx of laptops that line the game table and think about how far this game has come.

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

It's funny, I get asked that question all the time, and my answer is usually whatever project I worked on most recently because I'm still all jazzed about it. However when I take a step back and look, I think I have to actually go with the *Into the Darklands* guide to Golarion's subterranean realms. First, it's the





quintessential D&D setting harking back to the old Giants and Drow adventures from the early days, which have always been a favorite of mine. Second, I got to work on it closely with James Jacobs, whom I believe to be one of the premier writers of gaming materials. No seriously, I'm not just kissing up-the guy started getting published in Dungeon when he was like 12 or something. Anyway, I think his ideas are brilliant, which brings me to: third, James Jacobs basically assigned half of the book to me and told me to write two of the three strata of the Darklands. This was a big deal to me not only because of the trust he put in me but also because this was actual world building on a grand scale. It's always a rush for me when I see some other writer using material that I created for his own work, and Into the Darklands provided a vast stage on which I could work.

4. You have done a lot of work for Frog God Games, how did that relationship start and how would you characterize it today?

Frog God Games actually came about because I wrote a three-part mega adventure for Bill Webb and Clark Peterson of Necromancer Games called Slumbering *Tsar*. It tied in with some of their other adventures and, in my opinion, was a pretty cool deal. Unfortunately, just as the first part was about to be released, 4e came along and pretty much killed the 3.5e market for awhile as retailers looked towards the next thing. The book was stopped before going to print and Necromancer basically went on hiatus. I spent the next several years shopping the book around-I had written nearly 500,000 words for it, and I wasn't ready to give up on it yet. I talked about several options with Paizo, and with Necromancer games, and with Paizo and Necromancer in conjunction, but nothing ever really developed.

Then I don't know what happened exactly, but whatever small momentum I had created for it gave Bill Webb the publishing bug again, and he came up with the idea of starting Frog God Games just to publish the adventure as a 14-part serial PDF subscription and then combine it at the end into a massive hardcover for everyone who had subscribed. However, the response was far greater than we had anticipated and we suddenly found ourselves with cash in the bank, and Bill started thinking bigger. He managed to work a printing deal with Troll Lord Games to bring out soft covers of the original chapters and started looking at the other titles in Necromancer's backlog that had been killed before going to publishing due to the market change. We converted them to Pathfinder RPG and released them and they started doing pretty well also.

Then Bill got together with Matt Finch and some other folks and worked a deal for Frog God Games to produce the oe retroclone Swords and Wizardry and its compiled rules as a hardback book called *Swords & Wizardry Complete*. It was well received, and we started producing all of our adventures (by now we were soliciting new adventures from authors, having cleared out the backlog of Necromancer titles) in both Pathfinder versions and Swords & Wizardry versions



in order to service two different markets of hard-core gamers. And that's pretty much where we are today. As the new products bring in more success, Bill has new ideas for bigger and better things. Our current super project to go along with the *Slumbering Tsar Saga* and the multiple lines of adventures we're producing is an update of the three Necromancer Games *Tomes of Horrors* (classic monster books from the heyday of 3e) into one giant compilation called <u>*The Tome of Horrors Complete*</u> with both a Pathfinder edition and a Swords & Wizardry edition. It's big, it's bad, and it's got a serious thud factor on your game table.

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

I think for this I'd have to go with the aforementioned Tome of Horrors Complete. It's unlike anything I've ever worked on before in that rather than writing a bunch of stuff I'm serving as the lead editor, compiling a team of game designers to convert the 700+ monsters from 3.5e, assigning the monsters and keeping track, editing and formatting the work of these converters after the fact so that it all matches, filling in any gaps in the original descriptions, fixing typos and errors (though at least one typo will remain going into its third incarnation now-an Easter egg of sorts), and just working with a large group of people to pull it all together. I've had great folks to work with and I'm wholeheartedly sick of reviewing monster stat blocks with a fine-toothed comb as I've been doing for the last several months. It's nearly done, though (I'm formatting the lone "Z" monster now-the brine zombie), but there are still a half dozen appendices to go through and organize.

So, you ask, "Why is that your favorite? It sounds like it has been a living hell for you." That wouldn't be far from the truth, but I think it's a super important book. The original *Tome of Horrors* by Necromancer Games opened up the OGL to a whole bunch of classic D&D monsters that had not been otherwise released through a deal that Necromancer worked with Wizards. Then the following volumes brought in a bunch of new monsters. Now there have been a lot of good monster books, I know, but if you look at what Paizo has been releasing both in their 3.5 days and now through Pathfinder RPG, I believe you'll find that no other set of books have appeared more frequently in their products as third-party sources than the Tomes of Horrors. The excellent Advanced Bestiary by Green Ronin has filled this role in regards to monster templates, but for straight monsters, I don't think anything else has come close in numbers or frequency to the stuff in the *Tomes*. I'm proud to be a part of its update and compilation and think it will see as much use as a third-party source as probably anything out there, it's just such a great utility and source for classic materials.

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

Strangely enough, it was creating the Table of Contents. Sure it was just listing 700-odd monsters in alphabetical order, but I'm kind of an OCD-type guy who obsesses over details and to actually be listing out each of the monsters to be found in that book and to see the sheer magnitude and scope that it was offering to the gamer was really kind of freakishly exciting to me. Yeah, I know that sounds kinda' weird, so I won't say anything about caressing the synthetic gorgonhide covers that we were looking at binding the book in...

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

When we set out to make two versions of the bookone for the Pathfinder RPG and one for Swords & Wizardry—we quickly realized that the average S&W stat block was about a quarter the length of the average PF RPG stat block, but we didn't want to issue one version of the book that was a ponderous tome and one that was a thin little pamphlet, so Bill had the idea of including bonus material in the S&W version. For this he tapped John Stater, creator of the magazine NOD and writer of Frog God's Hex Crawl Chronicles, to create sample lairs for the various beasties to be found in the book. So for those who purchase the S&W version of The Tome of Horrors *Complete*, they get not only the monsters but lairs for those monsters from the master of old-school "hexploration" himself. But not to leave the buyers of the Pathfinder RPG version out in the cold, those lairs will also be made available as a free PDF through the Frog God Games' website at talesofthefroggod.com so they can download them for use with their purchase as well. Something we like to refer to as "bi-winning."





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

Being responsible for the compilation, timely conversion and editing of between 700 and 750 monsters (I don't know how many exactly yet because as of this writing I'm still working on it). I think doing this book could literally be a full-time job for me, and between my real full-time job, my family, and classes for school, I've been pretty obsessed with it in every spare moment. I'll be extremely happy to be done with it and have a big ol' honkin' hard cover copy of it to put on my coffee table and prop up the TV stand (just kidding about that last part).

9. Did you learn anything while working on it?

Not surprisingly I learned a lot about Pathfinder RPG stat blocks, having done about 100 of the conversions on my own and taking part in the editing and format of the rest. One of the reasons I was willing to take on this project and thought that I could actually handle it was because of some preparatory work I did for it. Last year I was one of four freelancers brought in by Green Ronin to update their Freeport Companion to a Pathfinder RPG edition. My share was a massive chunk of the NPC stat blocks (there's something like 120 of them in the book), so I got real good at doing Pathfinder stat blocks. However, they were primarily NPC blocks with class levels rather than monsters, so one of my biggest challenges early on was coming up with a style guide and tip sheet to get my monster converters (who all had different degrees of experience with Pathfinder stat blocks) all on the same page and looking for the same subtle nuances that make up the differences between 3.5 e and PF RPG stat blocks. At the surface it looks like you just change a couple skill names and add CMB and CMD, but there's really A LOT more to it than that. I thought I knew PF stat blocks but was amazed to discover how much I didn't know.

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

Well, I wouldn't have started with my own work in the category of "best" anyway. I think I do serviceable work but when I look for the best, I look at my peer freelancers in the industry and I'm continually amazed. If I see something that has a WereCabbages Freelancers Guild logo on it (and just look closely, you'll see it on tons of books from a great variety of publishers) then I know it's going to be good stuff. But to give it up to one of the elder statesmen of the field and master craftsmen, I think what Wolfgang Baur is doing with Open Design and Kobold Quarterly is probably about as important as anything going on in PF RPG-compatible products right now. Kobold Quarterly has done a lot to fill a hole left vacant by the departure of the Dragon and Dungeon print magazines, and Open Design has opened an avenue for gaming fans who may not be writers themselves but who have a lot of good ideas for writing to get in on the design of some great adventures and products. It's a tough call between all the really great third-party





design going on out there (ahem, in which I do include Frog God Games, of course), but if I had to cast a single vote, I'd probably go there with it.

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

I don't mean to sound overly critical, but in the early days of 3e and the OGL, there were a ton of great ideas (and some not so great ones) but there wasn't always consistent execution. One of the things that I think is really important to PF RPG-compatible products (and something I know that the Paizo guys stress) is for the products to not only be great ideas but to have solid execution as well. While you don't see as many PF RPG third party producers and products as you did with the advent of 3e, I think you see an overall increase in the quality, playability, and utility of what's being produced, which I think makes a world of difference.

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

If I'm just going to sit down and read something, then it's Richard Pett, hands down. He has this creative, genius, twisted mind that comes up with the neatest ways to look at things and all with a big dash of proper British perspective. It sometimes reminds me of reading H. Ryder Haggard...if H. Ryder Haggard had been committed to Arkham Asylum for murdering and eating 22 people.

13. What advice would you give to would-befreelancers?

Some of you are brilliant freaks of nature who have awesome ideas as easily as changing your socks. You're like the many freelancers I have been around and worked with. But most of you are probably like me; you work hard to come up with a single good idea and then you gnaw at it and work it over in your mind endlessly to finally get it into shape to where it's the equal of even one of those brilliant ideas the other guys have come up with. Don't give up, though, because a good idea is a good idea. Stick with it, be flexible about it, but don't abandon it. If it's good you can make something of it, even if it takes years. If it's not working, move on to work on another idea, but don't throw the first away. Hang onto it and come back to it later when you can work on it with a fresh perspective. I've had many books published whose source lies in ideas that I came up with more than 20 years before. I firmly believe that almost anybody is creative enough to be a successful writer, but I believe that most of those people will not stick to it long enough to reach that point. A lot of persistence and discipline cannot be overstated if you really want to write.

14. Who is your favorite Illustrator?

Probably one of the classics like Otus or Trampier. Necromancer Games used a guy for a long time



named Brian LeBlanc, and I'm a big fan of his work too. Frog God has been using James Keegan and Rowena Aitken quite a bit, and I really like their stuff as well. It's fun to actually create the art order for a project and then watch it develop with the illustrator, and I like a variety of styles, so it's hard to settle on just one.

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

The one that sticks the most in my head and that I'm probably proudest of on a personal level was a letter to the editor back in the days of Dungeon Magazine. It was in response to my Greyhawk adventure called "The Coming Storm" (the root elements of which I originally designed in the 5th Grade—see #13 above) that had come out a few months earlier. Anyway, it was very favorable response and then the letter writer used a phrase that I will never forget; he said that when he picked up my adventure he "read it as fiction." I took it to mean that for whatever reason, to his tastes, the adventure that I wrote transcended being a game mechanic and was to him like reading a short story. My goal in adventure design has always been first and foremost to tell a good story, and that comment stuck with me and made me think, "Yes! I nailed it with that one." I'll always remember that reader's comments and appreciate that he shared that with me.

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

Oh, um, *The Tome of Horrors Complete* I guess. Hmmm, I think I might have let that cat out of the bag a little bit earlier...

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

Sure, becoming independently wealthy by designing RPGs. In the meantime I'll settle for just getting paid at all, which is still pretty cool. Actually, I'm pretty content with where I am. It's very much a hobby for me, and as one where I get a lot of freedom to write what I want and actually receive payment for work

that I probably would've written for free, just for my own use, seems like icing on the cake. Being with Frog God makes it even better, since if I come up with an idea I like I can pretty much make it happen rather than shopping it around for someone to hopefully publish. That is probably the true culmination of my game designer goals, artistic freedom yet within an actual working business model. Now, of course, everything I think of is not publishing gold, so I've still got to filter most of it myself, but it's still a good place to be and something that I would wish on everyone who has a desire to be a game designer.

18. Will there be any playable races in the *Tome of Horrors Complete* and how will you be handling those?

With The Tome of Horrors Complete we set out to do a straight update of the prior material rather than a reinterpreting or anything like that. So if it was a playable race in one of the original three books, it remains a playable race in *TOH Complete*. Now in the Pathfinder RPG bestiaries they've pretty much only made races with no racial HD to be playable races since they balance best with 1st-level characters, and we did not use that constraint since there were so many where that was not the case. So we make no claims to balance for a low-level party. If you're going to allow a CR 5 creature as a playable race, then I'd recommend not playing with a party lower then 5th level, but we wanted to leave it as open and free and up to the individual GMs as possible in regards to what to allow or not allow. The Tome of Horrors *Complete* is intended to open up options as much as possible, not tell gamers how to use those options. They can figure that out on their own to their own tastes.

19. You've talked about Frog God Games products quite a bit and how it got started, what can you tell us about the company itself? I like to think of Frog God Games as the spiritual heir to Necromancer Games. Necromancer was one of the greatest publishers of third-party material under the OCL and did fontactio things with their philosophy of

OGL and did fantastic things with their philosophy of "3rd-edition rules, 1st-edition feel." When the company went on hiatus, I think it left a noticeable void in its absence. When Bill Webb started to get the urge to publish again, Clark was still too engaged in his regular career and was unable to get on board at that time. So Bill started a new company that would still have access to Necromancer IP in order to keep the continuity of their prior products (which still sell pretty well, by the way) while branching into new game systems and a new business model. I think Frog God has done this well possibly even extending to an even more old school feel by branching into Swords & Wizardry.

Frog God Games produces primarily short adventures good for 1 or 2 game sessions through the One Night Stand, Saturday Night Specials, The Northlands Saga, and Hex Crawl Chronicles lines, and all at a reasonable price. Plus they're all available as either Pathfinder RPG or Swords & Wizardry rules and all as



COMPLETE RULEBOOK

either print or PDF. In addition, we do some rules and supplement stuff (such as with the *Swords & Wizardry Complete* rulebook) and try to do a megaadventure subscription each year, with *The Slumbering Tsar Saga*, a 14-part super adventure taking characters from level 7 to 20+ as our current series. Folks can find out about all this stuff and more at talesofthefrgogod.com.

20. Is there anything else that folks should know about you and/or your work? It is entirely 100% free of trans fats and low carb to boot. What more could you want?



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101 0 - Teyel Spells

by Rite Publishing Review by Dark Mistress

<u>101 o-Level Spells</u> is 24 pages long. It starts with a cover and credits. (2 pages)

Spell Tables (3 pages) Bards – 43 Cleric – 41 Druid – 34 Wiz/Sorc - 82 Abjuration – 7 Conjuration – 9 Divination – 10 Enchantment – 7 Evocation – 14 Illusion - 7 Necromancy - 8 Transmutation – 20

Spells (16 pages)

Here is the description for all the spells in the book. Here is a few of my favorites.

Animate Tools – Think Micky in Fantasia.

Antagonize Wounds – take one damage a round if fort save is failed Askew Balance – make save or fall down

Blossom – Makes flowers bloom Create Snow – you make it snow... I do have one issue with this spell. It has a volume instead of a area of effect. I would have preferred something like you can create heavy snow in a 10 by 10

area, moderate snow in a 20 by 20 or light snow in a 40 by 40 per level(this is just a example to make a point and not accurate) instead of creating X gallons of snow per level, fitting in what ever area can hold it or up to three times as large. Dark Bubbles – Makes shadows become deep shadows. Like the spell but silly name.

Discern Health – over several rounds can tell the health of living creatures.

Dim – lowers the light in a area.

Encrypt – Make something written encrypted and hard to read.

Light my Fire – start a normal fire.

Parry Strike/Shot – two spells that do the same, gain a +2 AC vs the next attack made against you, one is melee and one ranged.

Quill – Summons a phantom quill/pen that needs no ink.

Shadow Snag – touch a shadow and on a failed save the owner of the shadow is under the entangled condition

Smoke Image – can make a complex image our of smoke.



Summon Natures Alley, Minor – You can summon a tiny creature.

It ends with a OGL, Ads. (3 pages)

Closing thoughts. The art is black and white, ranges from fair to good. Editing and layout where both very good. There was a few spells I thought where a little silly, like Pants that just removes a targets pants. Some that was cute but of little use like Smoke Image, but these are cantrips and I liked the vast majority of them and even the ones I didn't care for was more a matter of taste than anything wrong with the spell. I really have nothing negative to say, really my biggest issues was with the Create Snow spell and how they worded it. So whats my rating? Well going to go with a 5 star. If you like cantrips you will love this and if you liked the rest of the series I recommend it.

Trust me, I'm a Succubus.

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WHITEN AND CHARLED BY HEY GAPTON CHAPTER ONE OF THE DARY VEL CANTONS MIC 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

FINDER



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



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Minotaurs of the Black Hills

By Raging Swan Press Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff 5 out of 5 Stars!

Minotaurs of the Black Hills is 26 pages, 1 page front cover, 1 page blank inside front cover, 1 page sub-header, 1 page editorial, 1 page ToC (including once again a great rhyme), 1 page back cover, 1 page advertisement and 1 page SRD, leaving 18 pages for the tribe of minotaurs. It should be noted that the pdf comes (as all Raging Swan books that are part of the dual format initiative) with an additional version optimized for e-readers. Without further ado, let's check them out!

After the obligatory page explaining how to read stat-blocks to novice DMs, we get 2 pages of fluff text on the minotaurs. The question you all want answered, of course, is whether this installment of the TRIBESseries once again manages to add a different twist to a classic monster trope. To be frank: Yes, it does - the scarlet axe minotaurs are made unique via several ideas: First of all, they are rather civilized, eschewing the barbarism and rage usually associated with the horned beasts. Another distinguishing mark would be the minotaur's special breeding. Serving an elder race on the decline, the scarlet axes have an aptitude for sorcerous power due to the mingling with their dread Yith masters. Suffice to say, we

also get lore sections on the tribe, their masters and even some information on the black hills, their home.

Following the tradition of the TRIBES-line, we also get a huge box detailing the environment in which the minotaurs might be encountered and several locations that might serve as nice adventure locales/hooks for further adventures. We also get a one-page map of the black hills & the bleak moor, the haunt of the minotaur's archenemies. I should also note that the hills get stunning original pieces of b/w-artworks, as do the minotaurs.

On the crunch-side, we get the new Yith-bloodline for sorcerors, a new ranger-variant and 4 battle-feats that help displaying the unique fighting style of the tribe. I liked the bloodline and had no problems with any of the feats. We also get 4 new sorceror spells focusing on maneuverability and taking on aspects of the Yith as well as two new magic items (boots and a quiver), complete with their own artworks and lore-sections.

After that, we get to the stats: We get normal and elite warriors (CR 5 & 7), Scouts (CR 7), Sorcerors (CR 7) and 3 sample encounters. In addition to the sample ideas for minotaurs given in



the fluff section, we also get 2 fully detailed NPCs that get the Raging Swan NPC-treatment, i.e. we get distinguishing features, mannerisms, hooks etc. In addition, the two NPCs get their own artworks. The final two pages are devoted to the bat-like humanoid masters of the minotaurs, the Yith, which get 3 variant spell-lists, full stats and e.g. ecology & society sections as well as their own artwork.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice a single mistake. Layout adheres to the clear and elegant standard established by Raging Swan Press. The quality of both writing, stat-blocks etc. is superb. If I had to nit-pick, I'd say that I didn't particularly care for the battle-feats or the variant ranger and that the Yith-artwork is "only" good. That's it. The b/wartworks are STUNNING and belong to the best I've seen in quite a while and the tribe per se, once again, is almost perfect. For the lack of flaws and the excellent writing as well as the overall supreme quality, I practically have to rate this installment of the TRIBES-series 5 stars and add the Endzeitgeist seal of approval - once again, Raging Swan delivers an excellent quality product for a very affordable price. P.S.: The Kobold-tribe has been updated with additional information on terrain.



Creature Codex Volume 2:

Infernal Index By Demiurge Press Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff 5 out of 5 stars!

<u>Creature Codex Volume 2:</u> <u>Infernal Index</u> is 9 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial and ToC and 1 page SRD, leaving 6 pages for the monsters, one per page, so let's dive in!

You actually get two versions of the book, one beautiful full-color version and one printer-friendly b/w-version. Nice.

The monsters are:

-Daemon, Ungudaemon (CR 5): A disturbing, almost cthulhoid-looking creature that tries to make serial killers out of regular people.

- Devil, Feathered (CR 7): Bureaucrats of hell, they also serve as bankers and get cool rune-like abilities.

-Div, Khorkhore (CR 13): Gluttony and famineassociated creature that can cause people to consume everything due

to lethal hunger. I didn't like the artwork, though.

-Kyton, Baboulas (CR 8): Also known as Scissormen, these nobles of Kytons absolutely rock - they use deadly, mutilating scissors and are the consummate sadists. I love them.

-Hanakada Oni (CR10): Deadly Oni that taught the Tengu their swordmastery. Can use their fans to create hurricane-level winds. Another very cool monster.

-Piasa (CR 17): An incarnation of the Abyss's fury, these beasts might not be too bright, but they have tremendous destructive potential.



Conclusion: Editing and formatting are top-notch, the artworks by Heather Frazier are beautiful, especially for the low price. While I didn't notice any mistakes, I found the fact that the Baboulas-artwork separates the text in the middle, which made it a bit harder to read, but that's nitpicking. More importantly, I didn't notice any mistakes with regards to statblocks and all the monsters felt somehow iconic and as-of-yet unseen rather than redundant. The pdfs don't feature bookmarks, but at such a short length, I won't detract a star for it. What's my final verdict, then? Due to there being two files, one full-color and one printer-friendly, the high quality of the monster write-ups, the very well editing job etc., I'll ignore my minor points of criticism (the formatting decision and the one artwork I didn't enjoy): My final verdict is 4.5 stars, rounded up to 5.



Centaurs of the Bleak Moor

By Raging Swan Press Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff 5 out of 5 Stars!

<u>Centaurs of the Bleak Moor</u> is 26 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page blank inside the front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page ToC, 1 page explaining how to read stat-blocks to novice DMs, 1 page back cover and 2 pages advertisement, leaving 18 pages for the centaurs, so let's have a look at them!

The TRIBEs-line of Raging Swan has provided us with some great sets of monstrous tribes to set upon our PCs and this latest installment is a take on the roaming tribe of centaur. In tradition with the recent Raging Swan files, we get a cool rhyming verse on the ToC-page that serves as a nice bardic verse to introduce and sum up the tribe. After that, we get an introduction to the peculiarities of the tribe, including appearance - we get a little table to customize the individuals, which I consider a ncie touch. Raging Swan products have a tradition of nice b/w-artwork and this one is no different - in fact, it goes further and features some beautiful, evocative pictures of the bleak moor, home to the centaurs and new setting beyond the tangled forest. Even better, we get a map of the new region. The write-up of the moor also includes extensive information on the terrain, serving as another proof that Creighton Broadhurst keeps in touch with his fan-base and continuously improves his products. The battle-feats to customize the individual tribes of the line have become a staple of the series, and this pdf is no exception - we get 5 new battle feats focusing on the centaur's giant eagles and devastating sling combat style. Fans of halflings might want to check this file out just for the sling-feats from manystone to stunning hits and rapid sling loading, these new feats rocks. In contrast to other installments, though, we also get alternate class features for both the druid and the rangers of the centaurs and the full stats for their giant eagle companions. Furthermore, we get 4 new spells focusing on terrain control in the bog and a new magical sling as well as two kinds of enchanted sling ammunition and a new exotic double weapon (the double morningstar) for their berserkers. The sling and ammo get their own artworks.

The crunchy part of the pdf is separated into different section: Minor encounters, major encounters and characters.

Minor encounters feature the rank-in-file warriors, berserkers, druids and scouts as well as two sample groups. Major encounters include ready stat-blocks of both experienced berserkers, sling-specialists, veteran warriors and greater druids. They also come with two sample groups. Finally, we get the warleader of the centaurs, Corafel Ferareen (Advanced centaur barbarian 4/Moorland Ranger 3, CR 11) and Solavel Verynn (Advanced centaur druid of the bleak Moor 7,



CR 11). Both get the raging swan NPC-treatment with mannerisms, distinguishing features, hooks, etc. However, Corafel, due to space-reasons, doesn't get much text. Solavel makes up for this by a cool adventure hook involving a debased fey. It also doesn't hurt that both get their own pieces of artwork.

Conclusion:

Editing is top-notch, I didn't notice any mistakes. Formatting adheres to the 2-column standard. Layout is clear, concise and printer-friendly and the deal includes an e-reader-friendly version of the pdf. The pdf is also extensively bookmarked for ease of reference. As has almost become tradition with Raging Swan publications, this pdf is extremely easy to use and endeavors to take as much weight as possible from the shoulders of the GM and easily succeeds in this. The sling-feats are cool, the spells rock, the fluff of the tribe is cool and rife with some nice ideas and the b/w-artworks of the moor are stunningly beautiful. Moreover, while it's a pity that the fluff of one of the NPCs fell a bit on the short side, the other one makes up for this and we get the quality statblocks we've come to expect of the series. The map and the potential connection to the upcoming minotaur-book is another factor in favor of this pdf. What else can I say? Raging Swan Press has once again surpassed its own by now ridiculously high standard, delivering an installment of the TRIBESline that even surpasses the more than excellent Half-Goblins of the Tangled Forest. Ladies & Gentlemen, my final verdict is, as it should be, 5 stars - highly recommended, not only to people who want a tribe of centaurs.

The Golden Spear An adventure recommended for 4 characters at 5th level



Jonathan McAnulty





Faces of the Tarnished Souk: The Ghosto Tight that Dreamed, Gozutozawa

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

I've always enjoyed the fact that Pathfinder uses the same stats for creatures and NPCs that it does for player-characters. This is not only a nod towards ease of use – since what's good for the PCs is good for the monsters and vice versa – but also allows for some interesting combinations when you begin to freely mix and match. Case in point, Faces of the Tarnished Souk: The Ghost-Light That Dreamed, Gozutozawa.

Gozutozawa, the Ghostlight That Dreamed, is an excellent example of a monster using PC-oriented resources, fleshed out with some new material, that creates a truly innovative character. In this case the eponymous Gozutozawa is a will-o-wisp with levels of summoner...and its eidolon is a human named Lucky.

The base form of Gozutozawa, which has an impressive amount of levels as well as two templates, is a hefty foe at CR 21 (with full stats for its eidolon, of course).

The book also presents two lower-level versions for GMs interested in introducing this unique character to their group before it's reached the pinnacle of its power.

Of course, this PDF is far more interesting for what it presents that round out the character. For example, we're told what Gozutozawa's hope, aspiration, and goals are should you place the character within the context of Coliseum Morpheuon (though the character works anywhere) along with a sidebar about ways to integrate the character into the game.

It's after this that we see the new mechanics (and a few reprinted from other sources), and these are what truly make the character. Along with two new feats that let a creature like a will-o-wisp cast when it has no arms or voice, there's a method for implanting ioun stones in a creature's body, and a series of new



magic items which include a generous number of new ioun stones.

Finally, we come to the new summoner archetype – the monstrous summoner. This doesn't truly swap out any existing class abilities. Instead, it makes their eidolon have a humanoid form with a few mechanical modifications, and opens up some new potential evolutions. Finally, we have the new Crafty and Tough templates, which are tightly focused in strengthening a creature in their respective areas.

Gozutozawa isn't just an incredibly innovative character, it's also a great sourcebook for making characters that blend the line between monsters and characters. A will-o-wisp that summons a person is just the beginning of the possibilities that are presented here. The Ghostlight That Dreamed is a sweet dream that will bring a lot to your campaign. Rite Publishing Presents:









Jen Questions with Illustrator Rowena Aitken

By Steven D. Russell

1. could you tell us a little about yourself and your background doing illustration for RPGs? I graduated from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design in 2006 with a degree in Animation and since then i've had a few jobs doing stuff I wasn't interested in and then found myself doing freelance illustration and pet portraits. I kinda fell into it really, it seemed a good fit for what I enjoy drawing.

2 What are your influences as an artist?

Nature mostly, you see some crazy-beautiful things out there in the big wide world! Organic things, very sort of Mucha style; flowing hair, flowing bodies, dynamic poses, multi-limbed cephalopod molluscs, water, the colour teal. Very girly things really that are the complete opposite of what I've been drawing lately!

1. What technique/medium do you use and what do you prefer to use?

Well I love working in pencil but sadly I seldom do these days, something I want to get back into. It's Photoshop CS5 and a Wacom Intuos 4 XL on a custom built PC - I wish I could tell you what's in it other than 3 drives, 2 of which are back-up drives, i5, 8gb of ram and a terrible graphics card which is next on my list to get upgraded. I also use 2 monitors, 1 for main artwork - the other for music, ref images, dvds etc.

4 Why do you make art?

Because I get great satisfaction out of doing it and it's the only thing that truly engages me.

5. What is your studio/workspace like?

It's small, it's the spare bedroom in my boyfriend's flat which I share with him, but it's mine during the day. It's cozy and probably a little messy but it works.

6. What do you listen to or watch while working?

It depends on my mood. Sometimes it's Rebus audiobooks, sometimes random music - cheesy pop and high BPM music seems to work well on really macabre pieces!

7. How much research do you do for any given piece of art?

It depends entirely on the piece. I look up bits and pieces as I go but I <u>always</u> get reference. Even with otherworldly creatures you cannot make it look real without at least knowing how the anatomy would work. I find it an incredibly important part of the job.

8. Do or have you played tabletop RPGs and if so what is your home game like, if not why not?



I honestly never have and I feel embarrassed saying it. I just enjoy creating the art and RPGs are a good place to showcase my work. Besides, it's never dull!

9. Tell us a little about your work on the Cover for a Frog Gods Games book. (short anecdote)

Right now i'm working on the cover for the re-release of Black Monastery which is proving a real challenge as architecture isn't my forte! Loving working on it though and I think it'll be a really great image when it's complete. I normally work from greyscale to colour to get the levels right before making it pop with colour. On this piece I took a rough 3d shape made in 3D Studio Max and worked in the architecture as I went. There was a very detailed brief to follow for this so I just systematically went through each item as I went. FGG are great in letting me just get on with things after i've sent in a rough idea (and by rough I mean really rough!). It's going to be such a great piece with an interesting colour palette and a lot of atmosphere. This of course is created in Photoshop CS5 with a Wacom Intuos 4 XL - 100% digital, with the aid of several cups of coffee!

10. Is there anything else that we should know about you?

My website can be found at <u>www.rowenaaitken.com</u>, I like my coffee strong with a drop of milk and I am currently accepting commissions. My email address is <u>rowena.aitken@gmail.com</u>

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Book Review The Hole Behind Midnight By William Hughes

Royden Poole is having a very bad day. Follow the Hole Behind Midnight into a world of oracles and monsters, kings and usurpers ... follow it into the 25th Hour. A darkly comic postmodern urban fantasy crime/mystery noir/pulp tale-of-suspenseand-magic-and-cursing, this is a story of the 25th Hour for mature audiences only.

Upon recommendation from a friend, I read <u>The Hole</u> <u>Behind Midnight</u> by Clinton J. Boomer. It's an urban fantasy novel featuring a non-traditional protagonist unraveling a grand scheme for power and control; I enjoyed the story.

The non-traditional protagonist sold the book for me. No longer did I listen to some orphan child grow up to manhood and lose his old mentor vowing revenge/justice. The mature dialogue also gave a sense of actual friendship and much enjoyed contemporary realism. I liked the novel's flow overall—I disagreed with the flow only a couple of times. The genre was slightly foreign; but, I appreciated the in-world explanations. The action sequences were done well.

My only real gripe was I found almost all characters one dimensional. With the exception of the protagonist and main antagonist, the rest seemed almost cardboard-ish. I attributed that to the firstperson narrative style chosen. I would have liked more depth with some of the secondary characters on both sides.

In conclusion, I also recommend the book to readers enjoying something slightly different. I would definitely read another novel featuring the main character. 4 out of 5 stars.





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101 Monster



regits

By Steven D. Russell

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