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Editorial

Recently, a few of us here at Rite Publishing have been having a great time watching copies of our hardcover 1001 Spells sell out at a couple of places. This has been immensely satisfying for me as I was the editor. Because I was on the project from the very beginning, I was able to see hundreds upon hundreds of spells pass my desk. Somewhere, from within the creative recesses of Steve's mind, these spells would come flowing out. I, like a sort of weird spell midwife, was there at the delivery to inspect each one to see if it had the requisite number of fingers and toes. (And, of course, not all of them did.)

I've long been a fan of creating my own spells. Probably one of the aspects of the very earliest editions of the D&D predecessor to Pathfinder that I loved the most was that the game was mine. When a group of us got together to play, we had our own characters, we played in the GM's own world, and we very often had characters who had created their own weapons and spells to counter monsters that the GM had created on his own. This aspect of the game, this personalization, was probably the single greatest element it had that so many others lacked, that kept me coming back to it again and again.

Over a couple decades of playing the game, I found different GMs had different ways of adjudicating the process of a player submitting a spell, having a character create a spell, and, ultimately, adding a spell to the game. I had a number of players who were often eager to develop their own spells, but, no one in my group came close to me for driving the GM crazy with new ideas. (And, probably, one of the reasons they wanted me to GM so much was because I could get all this worked out of my system by giving all this new stuff to NPCs, and not have to bother the other GMs with my ideas.)

Let me take you back to the mid-1980s....

Several friends of mine were playing in a 1e campaign run by another friend who had recently come back home for the summer from college. One of the players had a magic user who had managed to survive long enough to actually begin researching his own fairly powerful spells. Here's what he wanted: an anti-magic shell out of which he could still cast spells. Nifty idea. A wizard who has no need to fear incoming spells but who can at the same time continue to deliver a barrage of magical assaults is a thing to fear. Further, he wanted the zone of protection to be very tight-in effect, he wanted something like a Star Trek shield but for his body.

The GM required the magic user to do a lot of testing. This was a riot. Watching a fellow player's character subject himself to the hazards of magical testing is actually a lot of fun. It was made even more fun by the fact that this particular magic user had a mentor who was a little like Professor Snape to Harry

Potter. The mentor, being older and wiser, chose not to reveal this mistake or that mistake in the magic user's planning and so, when it came time for Meril's Magic Shield to get a trial run, the mentor knew that it was going to fail. So, when the mentor asked Meril if Meril was ready for a test spell to be shot at him, and Meril said yes, the mentor let him have it. (The GM, of course, advised the player, after the fact, that his character was voluntarily giving up his save as part of the test.)

Much of this is no longer incorporated in the game, and that's okay; not everyone finds that this adds to their joy of playing. But, for us, it was great. That summer was one of my favorites because of that campaign and those players. For as much fun as we had, though, such a system is far from the most efficient or effective for the creation of spells.

Over the course of about a year, we (Steve mostly) churned through at least 1100 spells to get us to the 1001 (1010, actually) in that great big book. And, while some of them probably took a fair turn at a gaming table, many of them didn't have to. One of the really nice things about Pathfinder is that it has benefitted from the trial-and-error of its predecessors (not just D&D) and exists as a rather stable system into which all manner of "new stuff" can be added. I'm not going to end this editorial by saying that writing spells is easy, or that writing a thousand spells is something anyone can do. But, thanks to a beautifully designed system, writing spells is easier than it ever was before, and writing a thousand spells is something anyone can try.

For as great a product as it is (and it is great), what really impresses me about the game is that there's room for more.

David Paul Editor-in-chief







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Blood Magic Creature Template

By Steven D. Russell; Illustrations by Gordon Napier

Bloodletting is binding, symbolic, magical, and disturbing even more so in a world of high fantasy. Blood may be a symbolic sacrifice, or the draining of life force can feed fell eldritch powers. Some forms of blood depending on the world and even the region within that world can be more powerful than other forms of blood. Common types are sorcerous blood, royal blood, the blood of a special lineage, dragon's blood, unicorn's blood, a innocent child's blood, or the blood of virgin. Those who make use of this power and become corrupted by it are sometimes transformed into a blood magic creature, their coloring quickly taking on a reddish tone.

Creating a Blood magic Creature

"Blood Magic" is an acquired template that can be added to any creature with an Intelligence of 4 or higher (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

A blood magic creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

CR: +2

Alignment: Changes to any Evil.

Defenses/Qualities: Regeneration (equal to 10 points per HD the blood magic creature possess [Maximum 150], this effect costs 6 blood points; Bludgeoning, Fire, and Acid)

Special Abilities: A blood magic creature retains all the special abilities of the base creature, plus the special abilities as described below:

Blood Point (Su): When a blood magic creature inflicts the dead condition upon a non-plant living creature, it gains 1 point in its blood pool. If it kills a creature with blood designated as special (GM adjudication) its blood pool is filled. The maximum number of blood points it can possess in its pool is equal to 10 + its HD + its Cha modifier. Any points above its blood pool's maximum are lost. A blood magic creature can activate this templates special abilities by expending blood points or it can be used to enhance any of the creature's abilities. Spending a blood point is a free action that cannot be used to create the same effect or provide more than one of the benefits listed below in the same round. Spending a blood point grants the creature any of the following benefits;

- +2 to any one d20 roll.
- +2 to the DC of any extrodinary, spell, spell-like or supernatural ability.
- During any round in which a blood magic creature takes a full attack action, it may spend 1 blood point to make an extra attack at his highest base attack bonus. Blood points may be used in this way with both melee and ranged attacks. This does not stack with *haste* or the *speed* special weapon ability
- At the beginning of a blood magic creature's turn, it may spend 1 blood point to gain the benefit of a feat it does not have. It must meet the prerequisites of the feat. It gains the benefit until the beginning of his next turn.

Spellcasters who prepare their spells in advance can spend 1 blood point to recall any spell just cast.

Caustic Blood (Ex): If an blood magic creature is damaged by a slashing or piercing melee weapon, the wielder must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 10 +1/2 the blood magic creature's HD +it's Con modifier) or suffer 2d6 points of acid damage, a successful save results in half damage.

As an additional effect a blood magic creature can expend one blood point to make the blood toxic as well as acidic. It may select any one poison it is aware of, the DC of the poison is always 10 +1/2 its HD + its Con Modifier. A common choice is listed below

Black Lotus Extract *Type* poison (contact); *Save* Fortitude DC 20 *Onset* 1 minute; *Frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds *Effect* 1d6 Con damage; *Cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Spell-Like Abilities: A Blood Magic creature with an Int or Wis score of 8 or higher has a cumulative number of spell-like abilities set by its HD. Activating a spell-like ability is still a standard action bu it requires it to expend a number of blood points equal to the spell level. CL equals the creature's HD (or the CL of the base creature's spell-like abilities, whichever is higher).

HD	Spell
1-2	protection from good
3-4	boiling blood*
5-6	blood biography**
7-8	blood crow strike* (natural attacks)
9-10	blood to sap ^x
11-12	Call of the bloodstone ^x
13-14	blood to gold ^x
15-16	blood mist*
17-18	transmute blood to acid*
19+	blood protectors ^x

*Ultimate Magic; ** Advanced Player's Guide; X See Below (1001 Spells)

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Con +4 (+2 hp per HD, +2 to Fortitude saves, and any of the base creature's Constitution-based DCs), Int +4 (add 2 bonus languages, add 2 skill points per HD, +2 to Appraise, Craft, Knowledge, Linguistics, and Spellcraft checks +2 to any of the base creature's Intelligence-based DCs), +4 Cha (+2 to Bluff, diplomacy, Disguise, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Perform, and Use Magic Device; attempts to influence others, and Channel Energy DCs, +2 to any of the base creature's Charisma-based DCs).

Bloodfury



XP 9,600

Blood Magic Erinyes Devil LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful) **Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, *true seeing*; Perception +16

Defense

AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 16 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural) hp 112 (9d10+63) Regeneration 90 (Costs 6 blood points; bludgeoning and acid)

Fort +13, Ref +12, Will +7

DR 5/good; Immune fire, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 19

Offense

Speed 30 ft., fly 50 ft. (good) **Melee** +1 longsword +15/+10 (1d8+8/19–20) **Ranged** +1 flaming composite longbow +14/+14/+9 (1d8+6/×3 plus 1d6 fire) or rope +15 touch (entangle) **Special Attacks** blood points (26), caustic blood (DC 21)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

Constant-true seeing

At will—*fear* (single target, DC 21), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *minor image* (DC 19), *unholy blight* (DC 21)

Blood points-blood biography (DC 20), blood crow strike, blood to sap (22), boiling blood (DC 19), protection from good,

1/day-summon (level 3, 2 bearded devils, 50%)

Tactics

Before Combat it casts *summon monster III* and greater *scapegoat* and *invisibility* on its summoned monster.

During Combat It prefers to attack from on high from a distance lording over the battlefield and will dispel creature who use flying magics.

Morale When outmatched, it flees using its *ethereal jaunt* or *planeshift* ability.

Statistics

Str 20, Dex 23, Con 25, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 25 Base Atk +9; CMB +14; CMD 31

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge^B, Mobility^B, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run **Skills** Acrobatics +18, Bluff +19, Diplomacy +16, Escape Artist +12, Fly +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +16, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +15

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

Ecology

Environment any (Hell) **Organization** solitary or trio **Treasure** triple (+1 longsword, +1 flaming composite longbow [+5 Str bonus], rope)

Special Abilities

Entangle (Su): Each erinyes carries a 50-foot-long rope that entangles opponents of any size as an *animate rope* spell (CL 16th, DC 20). An erinyes can hurl its rope 30 feet with no range penalty. An erinyes's rope functions only for the erinyes who made it and no other. The save DC is Dexterity-based.

Spells

Blood Protectors

School: Conjuration (Creation); Level: Clr 9 Casting Time: 1 standard action Components: V, S, M/DF (your fresh blood) Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels) Effect: One or more summoned creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No

You channel divine energy into your own shed blood, transforming and expanding the drops of blood into a group of warriors. You can create one creature for every four levels (so, a 20th level cleric could spawn five of these creatures). Each blood protector created costs one hit point's worth of shed blood.

Blood protectors appear humanoid but have no distinct features; their bodies are clearly composed of fresh blood, somehow held together in largely solid form. The warriors appear to have armor molded to them, and each one wields a shield and either a spear or short sword (your choice) with a +5 enhancement bonus. These warriors count as constructs. They do not have names, personalities, or any sense of self, but can follow simple orders. After the spell fades, or if they are destroyed, they revert to drops of blood.

Blood Protectors

Blood Protector

N Medium construct (water) **Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

Defense

AC 26, touch 14, flat-footed 22 (+4 Dex, +10 armor +2 shield) hp 69 (9d10+20) Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +4 Immune construct traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft. **Melee** +5 shortsword or +5 shortspear +19/+14 (2d6+10)

Statistics

Str 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** –, **Int** –, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1 **Base Atk** +9; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 18



Blood to Sap

School: Transmutation; Level: Drd 5, Sor/Wiz 6 Casting Time: 1 standard action Components: V, S, M (a piece of amber) **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)Target: One creature Duration: 1 round/level Saving Throw: Fortitude partial; see text; Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell causes one target creature's blood to thicken and slow in its veins. An affected creature suffers excruciating pain, taking an immediate 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 15d6). In addition, it moves at half its normal speed and it takes a -4 circumstance penalty on Dexterity as its limbs stiffen. At the same time, the creature's skin hardens and becomes more resilient, improving its natural armor bonus by +2. (A creature without natural armor has an effective natural armor bonus of +0.) As well, the creature is no longer subject to critical hits and sneak attacks (or other effects that depend on having a discernible anatomy), since its vital organs are affectively shielded by the thickening blood. A successful Fortitude saving throw halves the damage and prevents all other effects (even those that could be beneficial). Blood to sap can target only living creatures with a discernible anatomy and a bloodstream. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead (except those with the blood drain ability) are immune to the effects of this spell.

Blood to Gold

School: Transmutation; Level: Sor/Wiz 7 **Casting Time:** 1 standard action Components: V, S, M (10 gold pieces) **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels) Target: One living creature; see text **Duration:** 1 round/level Saving Throw: Fortitude partial; Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell transforms the blood of a living creature (one that has blood) to molten gold (10 gp worth). The target creature suffers 2 points of Constitution damage and 4d6 fire damage per round. A *heal* spell cast during this time saves the creature's life, healing the damage and negating the spell. Creatures successful in their saving throws suffer only 4d6 points of fire damage and the spell ends.

Call of the Bloodstone

School: Enchantment (Compulsion); Level: Brd 6, Sor/

Wiz 6

Casting Time: 1 round **Components:** V, S, M (a bloodstone worth 500 gp) Range: Unlimited

Target: One creature

Duration: See text Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: Yes

A specific creature you name (a creature without a name is immune) must immediately attack the nearest creature it is aware of. After the subject attacks once, the spell ends (regardless of success). The subject may have to pass through dangerous areas (moving through a region covered by enemy archers) to get at the creature, or it may even have to break through a barrier. A barrier that requires more than 5 rounds to get through is considered impassable for the purposes of this spell. The spell ends immediately if the subject physically cannot reach the creature-including a situation forcing the subject to pass through an area that would, without a doubt, kill it. For example, a subject that breathes only in water but must cross land to reach its target is unaffected by the spell. While under the effects of protection from evil or a similar spell, the subject can ignore the compulsion, but such a ward does not prevent establishing call of the bloodstone, nor dispel it.



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Of Knives and Plagues: More Archetypes for The Secrets of Tactical Archetypes II

by Will McCardell & Benjamin Rombeaut Illustrations by Storn A. Cook and Arthur Rackham

In this article, we introduce two new archetypes: the knife thrower rogue and the plaguebringer alchemist. The knife thrower is a rogue archetype that merges aspects of the peltast and the vicious opportunist, both from *The Secrets of Tactical Archetypes II*, and combines them with the knife master.

The peltast fighter archetype was one of the harder archetypes to design, due to the inherent problems with throwing weapons. If you want to play a character specializing in thrown weapons, you need to spend at least 8,000 gp per attack to get a +1returning weapon, which is prohibitively expensive. Throughout the design process, we had many solutions to this issue. The first solution was supernatural abilities to enchant items that they threw. While this worked well, it was a bit odd and "video-gamey" at the same time. In addition, no other fighter ability from any archetype is a supernatural ability. In the end, we decided that this was the case for good reason, and explored different ways to solve this issue. Our second attempt was a magic item that enchanted any item being thrown. However, the drawbacks to this are pretty easy to see: making a class rely on an item to be half-way effective is not good design. After a few more attempts, we decided upon Find the Breach, which does not enchant the items to be thrown, but rather allows the peltast to ignore some amount of DR, circumventing one of the biggest issues that magic items solve.

The vicious opportunist's goal was quite simple: replace sneak attack with something that works better. At the core of the archetype is the Opportunities Aplenty ability. This ability allows the rogue, or any user of sneak attack, to get rid of sneak attack with an ability that grants additional damage when the target is suffering from a detrimental condition. This extra damage is almost 50% less than the average damage of sneak attack, however, it makes up for it with frequency of granting the bonus damage. The rogue no longer needs to rely on the buddy system of his friend the fighter moving into a flanking position. The rogue can create the opportunities for his extra damage all by himself. In addition, this ability works at range far more smoothly than the normal sneak attack does. Rather than having to be invisible or unnoticed, the ranged rogue still gets the same bonus to damage he would in melee. This by itself makes ranged rogues far easier to pull off. In addition, Opportunities Aplenty builds wonderfully off of the conditions that your teammates can inflict. While playtesting this ability, we found



by Will McCardell and Benjamin Rombeaut

that it created more interesting combats, rather than the dull "I full attack" repeated ad nauseum.

This rogue archetype is a different stab at making the ranged weapons trope work, with a different, but still highly thematic, class. With Opportunities Aplenty, instead of letting them ignore damage reduction, the rogue or ninja can instead power through the damage reduction, even at range.

The plaguebringer, on the other hand, is a response to feedback we've received about the spellchymist archetype. It is meant to work with the spellchymist to provide an alchemist that can be a primary "caster."

Whereas the peltast was more difficult to design, the spellchymist archetype was fairly easy, but went through far more revisions. The basic concept was clear: an alchemist that could use his extracts at range. The first "iteration" of the archetype was a class that created its own little tool that shot eldritch energy out at allies. This tool would've doubled as a weapon or a shield. The energy it shot would be from the extracts that the alchemist used in the device, allowing for much the same effect that the spellchymist's spellvials have currently. In addition, there would've been simple buffs that the alchemist could have given to allies, things of the same level as cantrips. You can hear echoes of this original idea in the spellchymist's "cantrips." In the end, this idea was scrapped due to it being complicated, and very "scifi"-y. Later iterations of this concept included a "gunchemist," which was fairly close to the first design, but for a ranged weapon. There's something a bit silly about shooting people with bullets to cause them to double in size, however. In the end, we went for simplicity. It would appear, though, that we succeeded at that goal a little too well. And for that reason, we bring you the plaguebringer. While it is not very teamwork oriented, it does compliment the spellchymist very well and allows them some more offensive capabilities other than just bombs.

Knife Thrower (Rogue/Ninja) While most believe that a good tool can solve any

While most believe that a good tool can solve any situation, the knife thrower knows that many tools in rapid succession have a much higher chance of solving problems.

Opportunities Aplenty (Ex): As the vicious opportunist ability, except where modified by Opportunist's Stab (see below).

Hidden Blade: A knife thrower adds 1/2 her level on Sleight of Hand checks made to conceal a light blade. This ability replaces trapfinding.

Opportunist's Stab (Ex): A knife thrower is naturally attracted to the mastery of light blades through the path of knife masters, and to the brutal precision offered by vicious opportunism. A knife thrower deals +3 damage instead of +2 with daggers, kerambits, kukris, punching daggers, starknifes, or swordbreaker daggers whenever she gains a bonus to damage from her opportunities aplenty class feature. Any other weapon deals +1 damage instead of +2. This ability modifies opportunity aplenty, and is treated as the opportunity aplenty class feature.

Flying Blades (Ex): At 2nd level, a knife thrower gains the Quick Draw feat, and halves all range increment penalties when making ranged attacks with a dart, dagger, shuriken or starknife. This ability replaces the 2nd-level rogue talent or ninja trick.

New Rogue Jalents

Crippling Missile (Ex): The rogue gains the crippling missile class feature, as per the fighter's peltast archetype. The rogue must be at least 4th level and possess the Precise Shot feat before she may take this rogue talent.



Wasp's Sting (Ex): Whenever making an attack with a piercing weapon, the rogue may ignore an amount of any type of damage reduction equal to her Intelligence modifier. The rogue must be at least 6th level and possess the Coldhearted Precision talent before she may take this rogue talent.

Plaguebringer (Alchemist)

Plaguebringers are alchemists studying the eldritch magic of curses, sicknesses and transmutation effects, in addition to the classical fields of alchemy. They manipulate extracts able to weaken, distort, impede, or inflict great pain upon the body or very mind of their victims. This horrific field of expertise tends to especially get the attention of evil humanoids that seek a lethal discretion over the volatile nature of explosive substances, though alchemists using them for personal profit or the greater good aren't unheard of.

Twisted Alchemy (Ex): A plaguebringer gains additional spells into his formulae list as he gains

levels, adding the secrets to brew tremendous acids and powders which emulate wicked spells warping flesh and spirit alike. The plaguebringer gains one additional slot of each spell level that he can only use to prepare a corrupted extract. Corrupted extracts can be dumped, sprayed or blown onto creatures as a standard action; preparing the corrupted extract to be spread (usually by shaking, emptying the vial or opening the plug) is part of the standard action, and always provokes an attack of opportunity. The range of the substance depends on the original range of the emulated spell. A spell with a range of touch is a melee touch attack that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, a spell with short range is a ranged touch attack with a maximum range of 10 feet, a spell with medium range is a ranged touch attack with a maximum range of 30 feet.

A plaguebringer spellchymist can use corrupted extracts as spell vials instead, using his own attack range and bonuses for these spell vials.

At 1st level, and every odd level later (3rd, 5th, 7th... up to 19th level), the plaguebringer adds one of the following spells that he is able to prepare during the day to his formulae list. A plaguebringer is the only one able to use these formulae as extracts. Corrupted extracts are cast with an effective spellcaster level equal to the alchemist's level, and use his Intelligence modifier as his spellcasting ability.

1st level extracts: daze, delusional pride, frostbite, inflict light wounds, interrogation, ray of enfeeblement, ray of sickening, unprepared combatant

2nd level extracts: blindness/deafness, boiling blood, disfiguring touch, feast of ashes, inflict moderate wounds, fester, mad hallucination, pernicious poison, pox pustules, touch of idiocy

3rd level extracts: bestow curse, cup of dust, dispel magic, eruptive pustules, excruciating deformation, howling agony, pain strike, ray of exhaustion, sands of time

4th level extracts: contagion, debilitating portent, enervation, fleshworm infestation, inflict serious wounds, poison, touch of slime

5th level extracts: baleful polymorph, blight, greater contagion, feeblemind, inflict critical wounds, major curse, plague carrier, suffocation

6th level extracts: epidemic, eyebite, flesh to stone, slay living, vengeful outrage, unwilling shield

This ability replaces the alchemist's bomb and throw anything class features.

New Discovery

Mixed Alchemy

Prerequisites: Alchemist 4, Infusion, Twisted Alchemy or Spell Vials class feature **Benefits:** The alchemist may associate the effects of a single potion with a base price no higher than 50 gp,



poison, or alchemical item to any extract he brews, effectively creating a mixed alchemy extract. He may also add a component to a pure extract as a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Whenever a creature imbibes, or is hit by a mixed alchemy extract, it is affected by the effects of the extract and the component as if it was directly hit by the substance, saving separately against each effect if necessary.



OID HERMIT (EL 6; XP



2,400)

By Creighton Broadhurst of Raging Swan Press Illustrations by Arthur Rackham

In this encounter, the PCs travel through a region of forested hills claimed by an elderly hill giant hermit. Well known among the populace of the surrounding hills, Old Brax is not a true threat to travellers anymore. While he may threaten violence and death, really he just wants respect, free food and drink and an easy life. In fact, Brax keeps the depredations of several local goblin tribes in check, which increases the safety of several nearby villages; PCs slaying him earn the ire of the local populace.

FORESHADOWING

This encounter works best if you foreshadow Brax's presence. Perhaps the PCs first hear of the "old hermit of the hills" while resting in a tavern taproom and learn a little of his fierce reputation. (If possible, keep Brax's race secret from the PCs – doing so enhances the role-playing aspect of this encounter.)

Alternatively, the PCs could come across one or more of Brax's territory markers – smashed and pulped goblin corpses nailed to a tree – or the remains of a goblin raiding party destroyed by Brax.

ENCOUNTERING BRAX

The encounter starts when the PCs are 2d8 x 10 ft. away from Brax. Brax is hiding (Stealth -10, but modify for distance) behind a large tree and jumps out when either the PCs spot him or they get within 30 ft. Read:

Suddenly a huge 10-foot tall, gray-haired humanoid jumps out from behind a large tree. Clad in leathers and filthy, the giant man holds a large club and shouts something at you in a harsh language.

Brax is speaking Giant and demands food and drink. Although he shakes his club menacingly and seems angry, a DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals he is doing nothing more than going through the motions. (Brax has grown accustomed to travellers freely giving him food and drink and doesn't really expect trouble.) He starts the encounter indifferent toward the PCs.

Hostile (DC 25): Brax gives up trying to get free food and drink and throws one of three rocks he has stockpiled behind the tree, but deliberately misses. After shouting at the party again, he flees into the forest. He only fights properly if cornered.



Unfriendly (DC 20): Brax waves his club menacingly at the PCs and repeats his demand for food. To punctuate his point, he whacks a nearby small (but rotten) tree with his club; it falls over.

Indifferent (starting attitude; DC 15): Brax loudly demands food and drink. He acts menacing and glowers at them.

Friendly (DC 10): Providing food and drink automatically renders Brax friendly. He waves jovially, makes a few jokes and then motions for the party to leave.

Helpful (DC o): Brax grins at the party and climbs down to chat. He is in a good mood and shares some of the party's wine with them. He warns them of the roving goblins and with a big grin on his face pronounces the PCs his friends.

BRAX

Over 120 years old, Brax is no typical hill giant; not only has he survived longer than almost any of his contemporaries, but he has also given up (mostly) his race's proclivity for raiding and pillaging.

Background: Born over a century ago, Brax was a typical member of his simple tribe; he stalked the hills looking for travellers to brutally slay and fought with his brethren over the choicest of the spoils. As he grew older, though, he began to fall behind the pack and to get little or no loot. He grew angry and one day attacked a tribal champion. Brax barely escaped with his life and fled into the hills, there to lose himself deep in the wild, dark places of the hills.

Isolation and advancing old age have brought a measure of peace to Brax's soul. The solitude of the deep woods has soothed his wilder urges and while he can still be a threat to travellers he rarely kills anyone anymore.

Personality: Cleverer than the average giant, Brax JACJICS has grown to love the deep woods. He is very protective of "his" realm and patrols it ceaselessly. He has learnt that humans and their ilk will pay a toll to pass through the area and happily claims such. He hasn't killed a traveller or local in a decade (he actually doesn't really want any trouble), but merrily exterminates any goblins he encounters.

In his old age, Brax is beginning to get lonely and secretly craves company.

Mannerisms: Brax delights in scaring people and often shouts loudly to achieve this effect. He also likes to AREA FEATUREScaress the bleached goblin skulls on his necklace in an almost sensual, and very off-putting, manner.

Distinguishing Features: Clumps of gray hair sprout from Brax's head. The left side of his chest is a mass of scar tissue - a legacy of the battle that forced him to flee his tribe.

BRAX CR6

(XP 2,400)

This hunched and brutish giant is clad in filthy furs and carries a huge wooden club. He wears a necklace of skulls and clumps of gray hair sprout from his head.

Male old hill giant

CE Large humanoid (giant)

- Init -3; Senses low-light vision; Perception +7, Sense Motive +1
- Speed 30 ft., base speed 40 ft.; ACP -3; Climb +9, Stealth -10
- AC 19, touch 5, flat-footed 19; CMD 21; rock catching (+4 armour [hide], -3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)
- Rock Catching (Ex; free) Once per round, if Brax would be hit with a thrown rock that he is aware of, he can make a Reflex save (15 for a Small rock, 20 for a Medium rock and 25 for a Large rock) to catch it.
- Fort +10, Ref +0, Will +4

hp 75 (10 HD)

Space 10 ft.; Base Atk +7; CMB +14

- Melee greatclub (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-2/+6]) +13/+8 (2d8+9) or
- Melee 2 slams (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-2/+4]) +12 (1d8+6)

Ranged rock (range 120 ft.; rock throwing) +4 (1d8+9) Atk Options Cleave, rock throwing

Abilities Str 22, Dex 5, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 10

Feats Cleave, Intimidating Prowess, Martial Weapon Proficiency (greatclub), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Skills as above plus Intimidate +13

Languages Giant

Gear as above plus large sack

Brax doesn't want to fight. He is old and tired and simply wants his due in free food and drink.

If forced into battle, Brax screams and yells at his enemies, unleashing the wild battle lust of his savage heritage. He uses Power Attack in conjunction with his greatclub until it becomes clear to him that his foe is difficult to hit.

He flees if reduced to less than half hit points.

The area has several features of note:

Background Noise: The background noise of the forest makes hearing-based Perception checks difficult, increasing the DC of the checks by 2 per 10 ft.

Trail: A narrow, muddy trail wends its way through the woodland.

Movement on the trail is uninhibited.

Sloping Floor (Steep): Part of the forest floor slopes steeply downwards toward the trail.

Characters moving up a steep slope must spend 2 squares of movement to enter a steep slope square. Characters running or charging downhill must make a DC 10 Acrobatics check. A character failing this check stumbles and ends its movement 1d2 squares later. A character failing this check by 5 or more falls prone in the square in which it finishes its movement. A steep slope increases the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2.

Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree (AC 4, hardness 5, hp 150, DC 15 Climb check) gains partial cover (+2 to AC, +1 on Reflex saves).

Massive Trees: Huge trees (AC 3, hardness 5, hp 600; DC 15 Climb check) fill an entire square. They provide cover (+4 to AC, +2 on Reflex saves).

Territory Marker: The smashed and pulped decomposing corpse of a goblin has been nailed to the trunk of this tree.

A DC 15 Heal check reveals the goblin was slain by a single, massive blow to the head.

Light Undergrowth: A square filled with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (20% miss chance). Light undergrowth also increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks by 2.

Heavy Undergrowth: A heavy undergrowth square costs 4 squares of movement to enter, but provides concealment (30% miss chance). It increases the DC of Acrobatics and Stealth checks (to move quietly) by 2, but bestows a +5 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks made to hide. Running and charging in such squares is impossible.

Tree (Fallen): A fallen tree trunk provides cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves). Characters can clamber over it with a DC 5 Climb check or leap atop it with a DC 12 Acrobatics check. Characters on a fallen tree gain the benefits of higher ground (+1 on melee attacks) but are considered balancing. Treat the fallen tree's canopy as heavy undergrowth.

DEVELOPMENT

If the PCs do not simply slay Brax out of hand, they may eventually make friends with the elderly giant. If they do, Brax confides in them how lonely he is and how he wants to live in a community again. If the PCs manage to convince the populace of a nearby village to take in the giant, they make a friend for life.

Of course, in this situation, the PCs have introduced a large and violent chaotic evil individual into the village. This makes for an interesting on-going roleplaying situation as the giant and the villagers try to get along. While the villagers find having such a creature living among them difficult and dangerous, Brax makes the village substantially safer against outside attack and thus they make allowances for his eccentric behaviour. For his part, Brax enjoys living in the village and doesn't kill or main anyone (unless severely provoked).

SCATING THE ENCOUNTER

Because of his old age, Brax is much less of a threat in melee than a normal hill giant. He thus receives a -1 modifier to his CR. To modify this encounter further, apply the following changes:

EL 5 (XP 1,600): Apply the young creature template to Brax to simulate a terrible hangover (+2 on all Dex-based rolls, -2 on all other rolls; hp 65).

EL 7 **(XP 3,200)**: Apply the advanced creature template to Brax (+2 on all rolls [including damage rolls] and special ability DCs; AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 23; CMD 25; hp 95).





10.1 Barbarian Items

By Thomas LeBlanc Illustration by Sade

Barbarians are always in need of new equipment. They break weapons in anger, their armor is destroyed by enemies seeking to stop them, or items are discarded after they prove too complex to use. At the end of the day, the barbarian uses whatever she can in battle. Below are 10.1 ideas that may suit a barbarian, others seek to bring out their inner beast, or stop a barbarian in her tracks.

Armor and Shield Special Qualities

Bloody: When the wearer of this armor takes damage in combat he flies into a blood rage as the universal monster rule. This property can only be added to leather and hide armors.

Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *rage*; Price +1 bonus.

Howling: As a standard action, you focus your rage into the shield and a gust of tornado speed wind projects outward in a 30 foot line. The gust can be used to make a bull rush attempt against one target up to two sizes larger than the shield, using your CMB plus the enhancement bonus of the shield. This property can only be added to light and heavy shields.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *gust of wind*; Price +1 bonus.

Weapon Special Qualities

Maneuvering: When a weapon with this enhancement is used as part of a combat maneuver, you gain a +2 on the Combat Maneuver Check.

Faint divination; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *know the enemy*; Price +4,000 gp.

Wondrous Items

Bestial Flagstaff

Aura faint transmutation; CL 5th Slot none; Price 30,000 gp; Weight 10 lbs. Description

This staff is covered with carvings of monstrous creatures ripping each other to shreds, and the flag mounted on the end has a claw motif. The bearer can select up to three creatures within 30 feet and those creatures gain two claw attacks. These attacks are considered primary attacks and are made using each creature's full base attack bonus. The claws deal slashing damage of a creature one size category larger,



using the natural attacks by size table in the universal monster rules (1d6 if Medium and 1d4 if Small), plus their Strength modifier. If a creature goes further than 30 feet from the flagstaff, the claw attacks are lost.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *beast shape*; **Cost** 15,000 gp

Lord's Banner of Peace

Aura moderate abjuration and enchantment; CL 13th Slot none; Price 140,000 gp; Weight 3 lbs. Description

A *lord's banner of peace* often depicts the symbol of a deity or paladin order. All creatures within 30 feet of the banner gain a +5 sacred bonus to AC and on saving throws, as well as DR 5/-. If you make a direct

or indirect attack or show any hostility toward any creature, the bonus and DR immediately end. This spell automatically suppresses (but does not dispel) any morale bonuses, negates a bard's ability to inspire courage, a barbarian's rage ability, and any fear effects. A creature within the area of effect must make a DC 18 Will save to attack or perform a hostile act. Failing the saving throw stuns the creature (even creatures normally immune to stunning).

The *lord's banner of peace* follows the normal rules of a *lord's banner (Advanced Player's Guide*, Wondrous Items).

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *calm emotions, oath of peace*; **Cost** 70,000 gp

Weapons Jable

Exotic Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Туре	Special
Two-Handed Melee Weapon								
Giant's Needle	5 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	19-20/x2 or x3			P or B	double, disarm
Ranged Weapons								
Chestnut	4 gp	1d2	1d3	19-20/x2	10 ft.	5 lbs.	Р	see text
Hedgehog	11 gp	1d6	1d8	X2	5 ft.	20 lbs.	Р	see text

Chestnut: This small metal ball is covered with barbed spikes. The chestnut will stick in the flesh of any creature hit by it, increasing the target's armor class penalty 1. Removing the chestnut deals an additional 1d3 damage (1d2 if Small) unless a DC 20 Heal check is made. Failing the check deals damage as normal.

Giant's Needle: The giant's needle is a tool of large humanoids used as weapons by their smaller enemies. The giant's needle has a better chance to critically wound an enemy with its sharp end (19-20/x2) and deals more damage on a critical with the blunt end (x3). The eye of the needle can be used for disarming.

Hedgehog: This large spiked ball is made of caltrops held together by baked clay or hardened pitch. Properly used as a ranged weapon, the hedgehog may be used as a melee weapon to land one hit. A failure to hit a target's armor class may still hit as a touch attack, deals no damage, and bursts apart. The hedgehog bursts apart when used and spreads caltrops in the target's square and all adjacent squares. If an enemy takes up more than one square, one square is selected as the burst point. A hedgehog requires 13 Strength to use.

Item

Item	Cost	Weight
Drowsy Powder	30 gp	3 lbs.
Infuriating Powder	10 gp	3 lbs.

Drowsy Powder: You can throw this bag of powder as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 20

feet. Any creature hit by the bag suffers a -2 penalty on all saving throws against sleep spells and effects. A raging creature must make a DC 13 Will save or end her rage. The effects of the powder last three rounds and a creature is not able to begin raging while under the effects of the powder.

Infuriating Powder: You can throw this bag of powder as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 20 feet. Any creature hit by the bag suffers a -2 penalty on Charisma skill checks. A creature with any rage ability flies into a rage if it fails a DC 15 Fort save.

LASTLY

Last and certainly the least, I present the 0.1, which is not worthy of a whole number...

Flayed Shield Effigy: Displayed on the front of a shield, this effigy can frighten an enemy and draw his animosity. This effigy is created by skinning and tanning the face of a creature (Survival DC 25). Against creatures of that race, Intimidate checks have a +2 circumstance bonus, their starting attitude is hostile, and Diplomacy checks suffer a -5 penalty as long as the effigy is visible or known to be in the shield wielder's possession.

Twenty Questions with Steven D. Russell

By David Paul

1. Could you tell us a little about yourself?

My name is Steven D. Russell; I am a full-time professional tabletop roleplaying game designer, developer, and publisher. I am currently the owner and operator of Rite Publishing, a micropress PDF publishing company that has produced over 200 products for Monte Cook's Arcana Evolved, Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, FATE, and Erick Wujcik's Diceless Roleplaying. We also produce a number of tabletop supplements and tools like Jonathan Robert's Fantastic Maps and Lone Tree Game's Fold-n-Go papercraft models. My company operates under a print/distribution partnership with Cubicle Seven, publishers of J. R. R. Tolkien's The One Ring RPG and the Doctor Who RPG. I have worked as a freelance designer for Paizo Publishing. Expeditious Retreat Press, EN Publishing and many others. I spend what little free time I have lately listening to audio books, running my home game, and playing Minecraft.

2. What is your home game like?

I GM, and rarely ever play, and we just finished a 5 year Monte Cook's Arcana Evolved campaign set in the Lands of the Diamond Throne and the Coliseum Morpheuon, that used Babylon 5 as a rough outline. Recently I started up a Kingmaker Adventure Path set in my own world of Questhaven. I have been gaming mostly with the same group of people for the past 15 years allowing me an understanding of what my players are likely to do, or want to have in their game. They have very diverse play styles except for one new player (the daughter of one of my regular players); they are all a bunch of power gaming min/maxing rules monkeys, which works out really well for my play-tests. My games tend to be very character driven using modules and plots as outlines, but allowing my players to go wherever they want. I try to operate under the idea that I do not control their actions, but I do control the outcomes of their actions. As far as my play style, I like jigsaw puzzle piece plots and mythic story arcs, and you can usually expect a twist at some point along the way.

3. What is your favorite Paizo product that you have not worked on and why?

It is still the *Advanced Player's Guide*; the new base classes and the idea of archetypes absolutely captured me. I am constantly finding inspiration in this book, more so than I have from any other supplement in a long time. I have created two whole books based on what I have found in here, and I expect I will go on developing more; plus I have a summoner and an oracle in my current game so I get the joy of seeing things in actual play as well.



4. You are currently the head of Rite Publishing, how did that start and how would you characterize the company today?

I got mad. I was working as a freelancer for a very talented developer, when one day the publishing company told the developer they were no longer supporting that product. Therefore, I got mad, and decided to do it myself. I had worked a long time in various fan communities. I had everything I needed but a cartographer and hooking up with Jonathan Roberts solved that, the rest is a crazy rollercoaster ride. The company itself is growing faster than I ever expected, with it now serving as my full time job for the past year. I am spending more and more time administrating and less and less time as the lead designer on projects. It is very satisfying.

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

My favorite is 1001 Spells. It's maybe a bit of a cheat since it's a compilation product of all the 101 o-level spells through 101 9th level spells books, but really it's a year of my life. It had tremendous editorial support from David Paul, and we spent a great deal of time focusing on the balance of these spells, and trying to find new and interesting spells that were not just filler. While there is some filler, that is because we found holes that needed to be filled. When I am looking for inspiration on how to do something, I can usually reference this book-with 1001 creations I can usually find a kernel of an idea and run with it. The reviews have been fantastic; I think we are up to nearly ten 5 star reviews, and we were able to add in all the spell casting base classes from the Advanced Player's Guide and Ultimate Magic. In addition, Cubicle Seven made this my very first hardcover, so there is a personal level of joy there.

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

Having the product sell out at both the Paizo store and Amazon.com. I was pointing people to Paizo first and then they sold out and it would be a bit before they got new stock in, and so I started pointing people to Amazon.com and then they sold out. It's either that or getting the physical book into my hand, or people sending me pictures of it on shelves in local game stores. There were a lot of high points. ©

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

Besides the sheer volume? It is a lot of spells. I think ultimately it's the various curse spells we came up with and how to use them in new and interesting ways. I have never been a big fan of killing PCs off, they just roll up a new character and move on, but a character that has been hindered in some way becomes far more interesting to me. We also dealt with the idea that as curses get more powerful it takes more powerful spells to remove them. I also added in a number of lower level curses that also had spells of the same level that could remove them. I have had quite a number of suggestions from customers asking me to do a book of curses, including one from my editor.

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

When we would get down to the last 10 or 15 spells for a given level, it became a struggle to find inspiration that was not filler. I would brainstorm with my gaming group, our own freelancers, open gaming content, customers, anyone who would let me bend their ear until I found an idea I was happy with. This became easier as we started to explore different themes of magic. Yet, there was always one or two spells I really had to struggle for, the 7th level spells were exceptionally challenging.

9. Did you learn anything while working on it?

I learned a lot about spell design and how specific spell themes apply to different spell lists; everything from What can you really do with a o-level spell? to What can't you do with a 9th level spell? I also learned a great deal about afflictions beyond curses and spent a good deal of time looking at what you can do with various types of magically induced insanity and other forms of compulsion. Spell design, at its base, is a very organic process being half mathematics and half art. If I had to do it over again I might have added more flavor text to my designs but I think that might have added another 6 months to it.

10. Other than your own work and Rite Publishing's products, what is the best *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible product out there?

That is hard for me as I spend so much time working on Rite Publishing products I do not get my head out of the trenches to look around and see what other people are working on. Ultimately, I am going to choose *The Genius Guide to the Time Thief* by Super



Genius Games. Some folks don't like the live model artwork but what I love are the game mechanics. Owen K.C. Stephens did an amazing job; it's something I tell everyone to look at, especially those people who are fans of Prince of Persia games or The Matrix. Owen has created a framework here that depends on a limited resource that allows for a unique style of supernatural magical effects that has deeply influenced my own work.

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

Great Flavor mixed with Great Crunch. I am a fan of products that do not read like instruction manuals but instead are as fun to read as the game I want to play in. You also need an audience; it does not even have to be a large audience, but you need to develop one or have one for your product. I spend a good deal of time talking about what I am doing so that people who like how I do things become my customers, whether this is a patronage project or one of our weekly releases. You can see this in all of the successful companies; Open Design has its blog, newsletter, Kobold Quarterly and patronage projects. Super Genius Games has one of the most interactive social networks you could ask for, and my good friend Louis Porter Jr., besides having some of the best layouts in the industry, just never shuts up.

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

If it's rules design, then it's Owen K. C. Stephens. Besides the aforementioned Time Thief, there a host of other classes that include some of my favorites from the Godling, the Dragon Rider, the Witch Hunter the list goes on and on. If it's adventure design, it's Wolfgang Baur. I live by a lot of what I have learned from his writings on the subject as well as what I have learned as a patron on his patronage projects, (not to mention the *Kobold Guide to Game Design*). Yet there are many people who do amazing work that I try to pay attention to (remember, most of the time my head is in the trenches): Trevor Gulliver, Matt Banach, Ben McFarland, Jonathan McAnulty, Tim Hitchcock, Rone Barton, Lou Argesta, Christina Stiles, Ryan Costello, Mike Welham, and etc.

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

Submit, get rejected, submit again. Wash, Rinse, Repeat. Do this until you get accepted. Submit to Pathfinder Society, to Kobold Quarterly. Try out for RPG Superstar. Find anyone who will let you do open submissions. You also need to start selling yourself, start a blog and get your social media going. Post regularly and show what you can do. You could even build this to an extent that you can go your own way and start releasing your own products or a set up your own Kickstarter.

14. Who is your favorite Illustrator?

Jason Rainville, when it comes to full color. Jason's skill continues to grow and grow; every time I think I have seen his masterwork, his next piece ends up being better. I have this dream project where Jason just draws whatever the hell he wants and I get to write about it. Hugo Solis is my favorite black and white artist; the level of detail and depth that Hugo can put in an image is unmatched. I await the day he leaves us all behind to be a comic book artist.

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

I was at the Origins game fair working the Cubicle Seven booth, and a fan brought up *The Book of Monster Templates* to me, and said, "This is my favorite monster book, would you sign it." Now, I was there to sign books. I was there to promote my books. But that book was not even for sale at the Cubicle Seven booth, nor was it on sale in the convention. This fan brought the book with him, hunted me down in the Cubicle Seven booth, just so he could have a signed copy.

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

Adventure Quarterly. I am writing a high level adventure for our issue #2 or #3. It will depend on where the editor, Robert N. Emerson decides to put it; but this adventure is called the "Dungeon of No Return" and it means it. It's designed for a specific type of play style that embraces the idea of beating a challenge. Its basic premise is that inside the dungeon is a portal to the realm of a powerful champion of good, who, after defeating an ancient evil, left for





paradise. Now this nigh-undefeatable evil has returned and the PCs must travel to the realm of good. Unfortunately, the bad guys will be trying to keep you -out while the servants of the champion are following



their instructions to make sure said champion remains undisturbed.

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

Well I have been nominated for an ENnie twice but have yet to win one, so that would be nice, and I still have a video game design floating around in my head that I want to get out within the next year. The big thing for me right now is to clear my plate of the wonderful projects in front of me, the omega print version of *Heroes of the Jade Oath*, *The Demolished Ones* (FATE), *Questhaven*, and *The Lords of Gossamer and Shadow* (Diceless)

18. Can you talk a bit about Questhaven, and what makes it a different from other PFRPG campaign settings?

Questhaven takes a different approach to world building, focusing on the mechanics of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and how they would affect the flavor of a setting. The biggest impact this had is that the main city of Questhaven and its surrounding protectorate is ruled by the adventurer's guild. Player Characters who are members of the guild are treated like another setting's nobility. Their fame and prestige can let them skirt the law or eventually lead them to rule the city. This has the effect of immediately immersing the players in the cultural, economic, political and military concerns of the world, along with creating a world that properly reflects the role of a magical medieval society while still remaining modular enough for GMs to loot what they like for their own homebrew worlds or to stick in another company's world.

19. Do you see Kickstarter continuing to have an impact on independent development?

Yes. I think as long as companies are transparent about their work, this will create the trust that you need to convince customers to support your products. Right now, you only need a dream and an audience to put up a Kickstarter; but, to make it work, it takes a bit more work. Backers have come to expect promotional videos, art previews, and specific kinds of rewards to be offered, and they like a proven record of accomplishment. I think every person should comb through Kickstarter until they find the product they have been dreaming of and then support that idea. If you do not find the product of your dreams, well, then you have an idea for your own Kickstarter.

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

That I have way more ideas than I will ever have time for. Regardless, no matter how busy I get, I love to just sit around and talk about games. I love gaming; I love to see pictures of folks with my books; and I die for stories of people using what I have worked on. You can always find me on our Facebook page, Google + page, Twitter, or the Paizo compatibility forums.







WAY OF THE SAMULRAI

WAY OF THE SAMURAI

Now the enemy is arrayed against us. Now the day is at hand when we shall risk everything for our lord and master! For this we have prepared all the days of our miserable lives. Now you shall learn what it means to be samurai! Fate is in the hands of the gods, our armor is on our breast, success is in our legs! Let us go forward without fear and may our swords find a bloody sheath before we die.

Taira Motomori to his troops at the Battle of the Six Bridges

The Way of the Samurai

by Jonathan McAnulty

A Faction of Kaidan designed for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game

Jonathan McAnulty COMING SOON





Mor Aldenn: The Ruins By Headless Hydra Games

Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf 5 out of 5 Stars!

This free web-enhancement to the city of mages is 11 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page advertisement, 1 page SRD and 1/2 page editorial, leaving 7 1/2 pages of content, so let's check this one out!

This being an adventure-review, the following contains SPOILERS. Potential players, please jump to the conclusion.

Still here? This latest little supplement from Headless Hydra Games features essentially a mini-dungeon, the ominous ruins. Legends of a breed of elven giants and a legendary centaur-civilization in the primal woods of Ossindrillion abound and these little ruins actually represent the true ruins that may prove or disprove the validity of the thesis. The part of the ruins that is detailed herein is above ground, 3 levels long, provides 15 rooms/locations and turns out to be challenging - rust monsters, invisible stalkers, army ant swarms and worse have made the place their home. The best part about the ruin-exploration, though, at least in my opinion, is how languages and deciphering ancient scripts is made a rather intriguing, complex task that can actually bring excitement to the game. While here, it is via skill checks, I look forward to seeing Headless Hydra Games come up with more complex rules, as announced on their blog.

The potential to actually decipher the ancient script in the ruins (potentially even IRL would be a great idea for a longer adventure, perhaps even with glyphs or a full cipher...) enhances the excitement of finding ancient scripts can add a sense of wonder to an exploration, that, while certainly not bad, would otherwise not be half as intriguing. Once the PCs have found their prize, perhaps a map of ancient magical gates, the short sojourn ends, leaving us wanting more and opening some neat options and hooks for the DM to develop.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice any glitches. Layout adheres to a full color, beautiful version of the HHG-layout and the two pieces of b/wartworks and 2 pages of b/w-maps are of a higher quality than one would expect from any free pdf. The pdf does not come with bookmarks, but at this length, that's ok. The content and writing of this miniadventure/location are very good and concise, though not as enticing as in Gallery of Dreams. Nevertheless,



The Ruins is well worth the space on your HD and giving this away for free makes getting this pdf essentially a no-brainer: A neat little location, some fun with linguistics and coherent enemies make this a 5 star-pdf.

Endzeitgeist out.

Publisher's Note:

Pathways only publishes reviews of other company's products that are 5 out of 5 stars. This is to avoid an appearance of impropriety on the part of Rite Publishing. All reviews are independent and have not been altered in anyway.

> Steven D. Russell Rite Publishing

The Breaking of Forstor Magar A Pathfinder adventure for 4 8th levels PCs



Daffyd

Male human NG cleric 8 of Lada Init +3; Senses Perception +10

DEFENSES AC 19 touch 9 flat-footed 19 hp 59 (currently 47) Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +14

OFFENSE

Speed 30

Melee +1 cold iron mace +8/+3 (1d8+2)

- Spells (CL 8, +14 concentration) 4th—cure critical wounds, death ward, holy smite, imbue with spell ability
- 3rd-cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic vestment, protection from energy, searing light

Live Stat Blocks

- 2nd-calm emotions, cures moderate wounds, remove paralysis, restoration, lesser, shield other, spiritual weapon
- 1st-bless, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, cure light wounds, endure elements, obscuring mist, protection from evil
- 0-create water, guidance, light, mending

Domains: community, protection

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13 Base Atk +6; CMB +16; CMD 7

PRD hyperlinks, player/GM views, online play, player handouts and much, much more



http://ritepublishing.com



The Secrets of The Inquisiotr

By Rite Publishing Review of Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf 5 out of 5 Stars!

This pdf is 23 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page advertisement and 1 page SRD, leaving 19 pages of content for the Inquisitor, so let's check out whether this treatment of the Inquisitor surpasses the one of the oracle!

The pdf kicks off by providing us with new archetypes for the inquisitor, all of which not only provide crunchy rules, but also in-character prose to draw one into the mindset of the respective inquisitors, which is plain awesome and enhances one's desire to play the respective archetypes and often include potential adventure and organization hooks. The first archetype, the Heron of the Fountain, is an uncommon archetype to say the least and can be considered a stroke of genius: Running with the theme of fanaticism, being well-founded or misplaced, the first archetype is all about temperance abstinence from alcohol and drugs and the ideals of the prohibition, including e.g. women's rights and the ability to stand up to abusive addicts. The two sample branches provided neatly fit different foci and ruleswise, underworld-savvy, trapfinding, afflictiondetecting and organization-targeting inquisitors add a whole new facet to the class - and I haven't yet spoken about the hooks galore that the mere existence of this archetype presents and the social conundrums it represents.

The Thief-taker, on the other hand, is more straightforward and classic archetype: Essentially a detective with access to urban tracking as well as rogue talents and the ability to trace unerringly those seeking to evade him, the archetype is less far-out in its in-game impact, but no less intriguing and well-crafted.

The Monster Hunter on the other hand does not wholly live up to the awesomeness he could have been - while the archetype enables an inquisitor to measure a monster's power, the ability to cast find quarry and grants the ability to better kill off foes and resist their attacks, especially when directly compared to the other archetypes, this one falls somewhat flat and left me with a distinct feeling of having seen similar ideas before. An ok archetype, I guess, but nothing too innovative or exciting.

The Questioner of Trail and Tide on the other hand will have players of the Skull & Shackles AP excited, as it is essentially a hunter of pirates, marauders and the like who gets essentially the abilities you'd expect with a focus on agility and the option to measure foes, but also comes with a pool of points that enable them to temporarily stagger foes via ill omens. It is this ability that makes the archetype truly stand out and feel original, so kudos for it. <section-header><section-header><image><image><image>

The Truth Seeker is a rather complex and exciting archetype: Gaining full BAB and a barbarian's rage and rage powers instead of teamwork feats, this archetype also replaces solo tactics and offer the players of the class the powers to discern truth from falsehood and rage against the lying scum that dare defy the holy order they represent.

The penultimate inquisitor is a god (or rather devil's-)send for DMs and players of Chelaxian PCs and those playing Fire Mountain Games excellent Way of the Wicked AP - the Purifiers of the burning pentagram are inquisitors devoted to Asmodeus who can torment and kill foes with hellfire, sheathe their weapons in unholy flames and even add hellfire bursts to their weapons. It should be noted that for the purpose of this class, Hellfire damage is considered half fire and half unholy damage. Now add SGG's great hellfire magic-supplement and we're in for awesomeness indeed.

The Channeling Martinet is another interesting archetype in that it replaces several abilities of the inquisitor with the option to channel energy. If you own the "Secrets of Divine Channeling" by RiP, you're in for some cool massive synergy effects - purely optional, though. If you don't own the book, the archetype still works but to fully utilize it, you'll need the book. The artifice and war domains and their channeling effects are also part of the deal.

Inquisitors are more than archetypes, though, and thus we get 5 new inquisitions, ranging from Asmodeus' hellfire-fueled wrath to the option to force members of a faction to submit to your will as well as the option to provide bonuses to your allies if they adhere to your vision of temperance. The Supernatural Inquisition is suitable for monster hunters and in the end, I didn't consider any of them bad.

Then, though, we get to the true meat of the book with 36 new feats for solo-tactics- but don't expect regular teamwork feats here! While the Inquisitor has traditionally been more associated with Western culture, there actually is a wealth of characters from Eastern mythology and literature that could be considered inquisitors. Thus, these feats are often named after lines from Sun Tzu and Zhuge Lian and offer options to play DIRTY. There is no code of conduct for the inquisitor - honor is for cavaliers, paladins and similar fools - you fight to win. And thus, these feats can provoke foes to attack allies, provide a rules-framework with "Besiege Wei to rescue Zhao" to hold enemies captive at knife-point to an all-around feint and even the option of adding a bunch of spells to you lists. Some feats grant you access to powerful spells, which are usable once per day, but not used up when the recipient succeeds his/her/its save, ensuring its usefulness. And then there are the truly smart ones, like the ability to adequately deceive hostile spellcasters by feigning affliction by e.g. charm-spells. Other examples include a feat that enables you to capitalize on your allies inflicting negative conditions on your foes, attacking the opponents and making it seem as if it hadn't been you. And not even magic might track you: Care to give you and your allies a constant misdirection-spell?

There's a feat for this! generally, the feats are rather specific in the circumstances in which they are useful and provide complex, intriguing stratagems for your inquisitor to use, enhancing greatly the usability of the class and making this whole section not only a good example of clever design, but also a must-have for inquisitor-players out there. Plus: Come on, what is cooler than saying "I save my ally via Slough Off the Cicada's Golden Shell!" (By the way: Once per day, save a dying ally by negating damage and placing an illusion of his death in place - neato!) However, while the feats come with some massive restrictions and some hefty prerequisites, you should be aware that they are advanced, anything but simple and, in the right circumstance, have the potential to turn the tide of battle. Smart fighting is a must when using these and while they might seem strong at first, closer lecture always shows how/why they are balanced the way they are. Seeing how Solo Tactics has been mostly neglected by other pdfs on the inquisitor, this particular chapter is just awesome. It should also be noted that SGG's War Master can utilize these feats by changing out Solo Tactics for Individual Tactics.



Illustration by Tobey Gregory

The final page of the pdf provides us with 11 new judgments ranging from dimensionally anchoring foes hit, gaining DR against non-lethal attacks and even the ability to keep his allies up to his status via warning signs. Again, cool judgments, nice ideas, nothing to complain about.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting of V.3.0 are very good, I didn't notice any significant glitches that impeded my enjoyment of the pdf. Layout adheres to RiP's twocolumn standard and the pdf comes fully bookmarked. Artworks are mostly fitting stock and b/w. All right, I'll come out and say it: If you like the inquisitor and want to amplify the amount of available options for your favorite fanatic, there's simply no way around this pdf. It is vastly superior to the rather bad "Secrets of the Oracle" and in fact replaces Open Design's Divine Favor-pdf on the inquisitor as my favorite supplement for the class. The archetypes are mostly smart and extremely iconic, the inquisitions and judgments are nice and the solo-tactic-feats are STELLAR and exciting. The pdf redefines the up until now rather narrow confines of the class and expands its scope and options in a way that is only rarely seen in any class-supplement. While not all archetypes hit my sweet spot and some of their abilities have been done before, most have something innovative going for them and while some of the feats may seem powerful, their restrictions make this additional power justified. All in all, this is a very good sourcebook that once again provides a great example on Steven D. Russell's ability to write excellent and iconic crunch (and fluff). My final verdict will be 5 stars.

Endzeitgeist out



www.RitePublishing.com

Superior Synergy: Fantasy PFRPG Edition

By Misfit Studios Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff 5 out of 5 Stars!

This pdf is 73 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page ToC, 1 page SRD and 1 page advertisement, leaving 69 pages of content, so let's check this out!

If you're anything like me, you breathed a sigh of relief when PFRPG got rid of skill snyergies. They were clunky, overtly complicated and often forgotten. In summary, I don't know a single player or DM who actually liked how they worked. Now that I've established that, let me assure you that the skill synergies herein work nothing like those in the 3.Xdays of old, instead providing us with a wholly original system: Essentially, you can opt to modify skill checks with your primary skill by complementing them with a secondary skill, for example making feinting via Bluff easier if you succeed at an acrobatics skill check. These secondary skill checks, however, are anything but a sure bet: Each of the secondary skill uses has 9 potential outcomes that range from utterly failing (Dc missed by 15+) the second skill check to utterly rocking it (DC surpassed by 20+), making the additional skill use a gambit. Furthermore, the original skill DC is modified depending on the action you try: Using acrobatics to enhance your climbing, for example is against the DC of the climb check -5. Note that these secondary skill checks do not supplant the original skill checks, but add options to handling skills. The possibility to gamble and modify your primary skill checks definitely opens up some interesting new options, if you are willing to run with the additional dice-rolling they require. Advice on how to handle skill synergies and e.g. using them depending on classes are included in the deal as well.

This is by far not where synergy stops, though: The next section provides us with feat synergy-rules. To give you an example on what that actually means, I'll take the very first of the synergy effects, adamantine lungs. To qualify for this synergy, you have to have the feats athletic, great fortitude and endurance. If you have these 3, you get the benefits of adamantine lungs, making it possible to hold your breath for 50% longer than normal. This is one of the simpler synergies, though, several other needing a selection of up to 6 feats that e.g. open up the option to use whirlwind attack to force enemies surrounding you to step back from you.

What this does cannot be understated: First of all, it provides tangible benefits for characters who take feats that may not be wholly optimized, but fit in line with an organic character development. Secondly, the



synergy effects could easily be considered special fighting styles and tactics that could easily be utilized as non-monetary rewards by a DM. In fact, you could also make these synergy effects regular feats if you don't like the general idea. While reading these effects I did not notice one I'd consider broken or uninteresting and in fact, am enjoying the whole section and the way in which the material presented can easily be modified to suit your and just about any individual game.

Chapter 4 details class synergy, which is one big loveletter to multiclassing: Essentially, the synergy-effects once again are based on having access to different prerequisites, but instead of feats, we now are talking about class abilities like sneak attack, mutagens etc. Need an example? If you're an alchemist/barbarian, you can benefit from the Liquid Rage-effect and brew a special mutagen that restores a limited amount of rage rounds or even extend your current rage! Even more so than the stellar feat-synergy-section, this chapter opens whole new possibilities and incentives for multiclassing and customizing your characters and, once again, could also be used as story-rewards, organization-benefits etc. - in fact, you could probably craft a whole setting of cool organizations from these synergies.

Chapter 5 goes further by providing magic synergy effects, something that I bet has come up in your game: Ever had your players e.g. try to brittle structures, weapons etc. via fire and cold damage? With the rules provided in this chapter, you have now the option to make elemental physics matter in your game without being unbalancing - concise rules for all the synergy effects are provided and ensure that using magical tactics in the fights of your group finally matter. Add to that the options these synergy effects provide when interacting with terrain and you're in for a couple of pages of sheer awesomeness. It should be noted that weird combinations like a paladin/barbarian-cross-over are included, but the author has explained that this strange combination, prohibited by alignments, will make more sense with an upcoming release.

Less obviously awesome, but nevertheless brilliant is the final chapter, which is wholly devoted to craft synergies. If you're playing in a low magic campaign, this chapter is essentially a must-have and reason enough to justify the asking price in and of itself. Essentially, the chapter provides additional crafting rules to add mini-templates to your equipment. As with the skills, failing the second craft-skill has potentially negative consequences on the item's usability, making adding these special qualities a gamble. The added modified properties range beyond armor-ruining weapons (which can be found here, though!) and include special vials that deal their splash damage in a larger area and even weapons that have been specifically tailored and weighted to your individual character. In order to use these synergies, though, the crafting character has to once again, fulfill certain criteria, ensuring that not everyone can craft these modifications.

The pdf ends with several pages of reference sheets to facilitate usage of the new rules herein.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are good, though not perfect - I noticed several misplaced blank spaces and other minor glitches. While not impeding my understanding of the rules or generally being a hindrance, another pass at editing would have been nice. Layout adheres to a full-color 2-column standard and the artworks are a bit cartoony for my tastes. if you own "The Spellweaver", you know what to expect. The pdf comes with a printer-friendly version as well as a separate reference sheet pdf. What can I say? Whether you like the new skill synergy rules will depend mostly on whether you consider the additional dice-rolling a

pro or a con, but enough rules and variants are covered to tailor the content to your game by restricting the usage of the synergy skills. While I'm still a bit undecided on the section on skill synergy, the other synergies covered are gold and nobrainers - whether you include feat-synergy as storyrewards, feats or flat-out synergies, the chapter is a definite winner. the same holds true for class synergies and finally, magic and craft synergies, which provide options galore as well. Even better, while all of these synergies could be added to your campaign, the rules are open and versatile and enable you to introduce them in just about any way you like to your campaign, cherry-picking and customizing the content.

Supremely ambitious in scope, Misfit Studios' second pdf is a challenging design that retains top-notch customizability while providing easy to insert, fun and smart rules to your game, making this humble pdf a true winner and very hard, if not impossible, to dislike. In fact, my only gripes with the massive and extremely versatile content lie in the minor editing glitches and a personal dislike of the art-style. Usually, I'd go 4.5 stars and round down to 4 due to aforementioned glitches, but that would, guite frankly do injustice to the stellar design and content herein, where in fact one chapter alone would make for an excellent supplement, let alone that many brilliant ideas. I really enjoy this book and would love to see a POD, as I consider this pdf worthy of being printed and while I'm not 100% sold on the skill-section, I do still consider this pdf an excellent example of stellar crunch-design. Thus my final verdict will be 5 stars, with the seal of approval missed by only a margin and remain with а definite recommendation. Congratulations to Steven B. Trustrum!

Endzeitgeist out.

Rite Publishing Presents

Faces of the Tarnished Souk: Noti, the Asurper





by Rite Publishing *Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff* 5 out of 5 Stars!

This installment of the Faces of the Tarnished Soukline is 13 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD and 1 page advertisement, leaving us with 9 pages of content for the 3 incarnations of Xoti, so let's check them out!

In order to understand the character featured herein, we have to first acknowledge his race - Xoti is a mahrog, a subrace of humans that is the chosen people of a goddess who consciously rejects progress for a more primal lifestyle - hence, the mahrog have other racial traits, which are included in this pdf. The other aspect about Xoti you have to understand is that he is a mighty godling, as per SGG's by now legendary class-supplement. That means he is a direct descendant of the goddess who, in his opinion, stifles and stunts the potential of his people. In order to truly bring progress and enlightenment, he seeks all the pleasures and sensations the Tarnished Souk has to offer in a never-ending Dionysian revelry. A consummate playboy, Xoti may be an ally to the pcs, but bear in mind the words of Goethe - "You can't carry the torch of enlightenment through a crowd without singing some beards." - Xoti is an exile to his own race, but one who very well may one day transcend into divinity.

His low-level version starts out relatively tame as a CR 5 mahrog mighty godling. His mid-level (CR 12) incarnation adds another 6 levels as well as the cunning template and finally, his CR 19-incarnation adds another 6 levels as well as the fascinating creature template. Xoti utilizes a variety of different items, one of which, the Angel Plate, features two new magical item properties. He is also seldom seen without an extremely potent elixir of healing, his gauntlet of smiting and his morningstar of retribution, while his robe of actions ensures that he is not caught completely off-guard. The godling also uses a feat and 4 dream-related traits are included in the package.

Which brings me to the fluff - as has been the tradition with the FoTS-series, the first page offers information on dreamburning rules for the character as well as advice for the DM on how to use Xoti. And he should be used - reading through his selection of abilities again, I can only gawk at the vast amount of options available to this godling and a mean grin forms on my face. While not as hard to touch as Khufursis, access to bloodline arcana abilities and revelations as well as other godling abilities ensure that Xoti is a tough nut players probably don't want to try to crack. And if they do, you have a variety of

options available - each of the 3 incarnations also has 3 variants in addition to the main version of his stats: The (also included) simple templates Resilient (CR +2), War (CR +2) and, more complex, fortune-blessed (CR +1) templates are included along the fascinating (CR +1) and Cunning (CR +1) templates to provide for variants of Xoti and the new preservation domain is just the icing of the cake.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good - apart from a very minor tab-glitch, I didn't notice any problems. Layout adheres o the classic rune-border b/w-twocolumn standard and the artworks are stock. The pdf comes with bookmarks. Xoti is an excellent character and an instance of cooperation/usage of content by other publishers that is a joy to behold. While you don't need SGG's Guide to the Godling to use this pdf, I strongly encourage you to buy it - the pdf is worth every cent. That being out of the way, Xoti is perhaps one of the most versatile characters in the whole series in terms on how he can be used - the line between ally and foe are blurred and he might make a good example of either. Moreover, the character is complex in a question his very existence poses - is it wise for him to bring civilization to his people or is he perpetuating what could become their undoing in the grand scheme of things. Can a form of racial ignorance, enforced by a divine edict, be bliss? And if his people associate this ignorance with divinity, how can he hope to succeed his divine mother and convey how divinity is not necessarily a lack of progress? In the hands of a capable DM, a prolonged interaction with Xoti might yield some hefty philosophical questions. Or, well, you could play him as a kind of playboy who is all about Dionysian revelry and nouveaux frissants, perhaps to counter a kind of existential boredom.

In the end, it's up to you and that makes this NPC great. I do have some minor gripes, though: The last page of the pdf is mostly empty - space that could have been used for more content. Which also brings me to a recommendation for the whole series: Rueswise, there's nothing to complain about (and while I would have loved for this one to feature a legacy-item like Khufursis, I get why there's not one in every FoTS), but one page for the fluff and background sometimes feels a bit short. Especially due to the expertly-written in-character prose we sometimes see in other RiP-publications. Adding short PoVnarratives, perhaps by him or one of his fellow revelers, would have been the icing on the cake. Note that this is complaining on the highest level, though. I hope to see more FoTS-entries with "Renegade"classes. My final verdict will be 5 stars.

Endzeitgeist out.


Book Of Monster Gemplates

HEROES

By: S. ven D. Russell

Questhaven





By Super Genius Games Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff 5 out of 5 stars!

This pdf is 21 pages long, 2/3 of a page front cover, 1 page SRD & editorial, leaving 19 1/3 pages of content, so let's check this out!

Multiclassing is a topic that is problematic at best while on the one side it enables players to make characters that are more complex, on the other hand level-dipping can and has unbalanced more than one character out there. It is this problem recent Paizopublications have addressed via Eldritch Heritage and Amateur Gunslinger (the former from UM, the latter from UC) sought to address. It is here that SGG's feats of multiclassing start at (including a reprint of the feats, so all are compiled in one source): Essentially, this pdf provides you with feats that enable you to play e.g. fighters with a knack for some spells, arcanists with martial training etc. After an alphabetic list of the feats and extensive advice on how to use them and an optional rule on favored multiclassing, we're introduced to the feats.

Mechanically, these feats provide a slew of challenges for the designers: In order to keep the game-balance and keep them useful, many of the feats herein have the prerequisite of having no levels in a particular class. Once a character with such a feat takes a level in the prohibited class, the feat is changed towards a rogue talent, a certain feat or a similar benefit, making these feats valid long-time investments for PCs.

More than that, the guide also includes a slew of feat chains that expand e.g. upon the eldritch heritages of your character or your minor gunslinging talents. It should also be mentioned that not only "dipping"feats are included in the deal - the Ajouga-feat (wizard/witch-summoner), for example lets you give up your familiar in favor of making your eidolon your familiar. There is a wide-variety of different options to scavenge signature abilities from other classes than your primary one and while I do enjoy the variety and balance of the feats, I can't help but feel that it will take some time of playtesting on the part of my group to find out whether/how especially the specialist path multiclass feats are balanced. While I don't have any concerns with regards to the dipping-feats or those that grant access to some of the unique abilities, those that grant access to higher level abilities still leave me with a slightly queasy feeling. Take the aberrant bloodline, for example...

That is not where the pdf stops, though: 5 feats for SGG-classes are part of the deal and provide great practical examples and advice for you to create your very own multiclassing feats.



Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good and apart from one formatting error, I did not notice anything distracting. Layout adheres to SGG's 3-column standard and the pdf has no bookmarks, which is a pity, for it would make navigating the feats easier .The cover-artwork (probably depicting a character with the journeyman gunslinger feat) is awesome. Designing these feats must have been HARD. Seriously, balancing them, doing the math etc. is a daunting task and it did work out, as far as I'm concerned. While not all of the feats leave me with a comfortable feeling, that also stems from my own predisposition to keep classes and especially their signature abilities apart. Seeing that not all signature abilities can be taken via these feats and those that can be usually don't go into higher echelon territory somewhat alleviates my fear of them unhinging the game, though. As far as I can tell from my extensive lecture of this pdf, the feats herein provide an excellent and smart way of providing multiclassoptions without going into the abhorred level-dipping territory, thus enabling the creation of more complex character backgrounds with rules-relevant consequences. One thing seeped into my mind while writing this - what happens when you combine the narrativedriven (and thankfully, relevant) traits from RiP's "101 Pirate & Privateer Traits" and combine them with feats like that? I really hope for more trait books with this new approach and potentially renegade feats of multiclassing to expand upon the concept, making finally an end of generic characters once and for all. That being said, it should come to no surprise that my final verdict will clock in high: At 4.5 stars due to the lack of bookmarks, rounded up to 5 for the purpose of this platform.

Wings of Twilight

Available Now for Kindle and other e-readers at Amazon.com and Smashwords.com



Artwork by Rowena Aitken

Hans Cummings

Fold-N-Go: Sewer Kit *1 by Rite Publishing/Lone Tree Games Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff 5 out of 5 Stars!

The fourth release of Rite Publishing's Lone Tree paper-model imprint comes with 2 pdfs and 1 zip-file containing files for robocutters, so what exactly do we get?

The instruction-pdf contains instructions you might already know if you've purchased other fold-n-go kits, as the components are always assembled the same way, which adds a nice feeling of cohesiveness to the creation process and makes it even easier to assemble the different (mostly) glueless paper models. Over 13 pages, this one contains information on how to assemble walls, doors, stairs and ladders. New to the deal are e.g. the instructions for bridges, all with photos guiding you through the easy step-by-step process.

The Sewer Kit per se is 11 pages long, 1 page front cover. 4 pages of wall-sections of different sizes an length are provided in greenish-grimy glory, along 2 pages of doors (including doors with and without barred windows to spy through), 2 pages of stairs and 1 page containing the bridges and ladders are provided along the other bits and the final page is taken up by tiles that can, via an easy click, be turned to vile, green sludge.

Conclusion:

The content, as I've come to expect from the Fold-ngo-line, is top-notch and the grimy, sludgy feeling of the sewer is rather dominant, but that is not where Brian Bartlow and Devin Night's collaboration shines - it is in the customization: This pdf comes with a vast array of layers: If you don't want headers, robocutteradvice, glue spots etc. marked on your model, you can just turn the off via the simple click of a button in the adobe reader. Better yet, the customization options are vast for the pages - turn on or off the moss, include outlet pipes and grates or grates and if you don't want a wall in the background of your grates, you can also turn off the background wall! The variety of different ways to customize your grimy delve into the seedy underbelly of the city is commendable and I have but one nitpick - I would have loved the option to turn the moss yellow, brown or switch colors like that. This being my only gripe with this extremely userfriendly set of expertly-done paper-models, my final verdict will clock in at 4.5 stars, rounded up to 5 for the purpose of this platform.







Jords of Gossamer and Shadow

Patronage Project Powered by Erick Wujcik's Diceless Roleplaying

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

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

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

> Lead Designer: Jason Durall (Amber Diceless Role-Playing, Shadow Knight, A Game of Thrones RPG, Supernatural RPG)



Illustrator: Jason Rainville





Slumbering Tsar: The Hidden Citadel, Part 5 - The Mind of Chaos

by Fog God Games Review by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf 5 out of 5 stars!

This pdf is 60 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 2 pages SRD and 1 page advertisement, leaving 55 pages of content, so let's check this out!

This being an adventure-review, the following contains SPOILERS. Thus, I encourage potential players to skip to the conclusion of the review.

Still here? All right! This time, we're going up to the topmost levels of Orcus legendary sanctuary - in ths installment, the PCs will have to brave not only the upmost levels of Orcus' citadel, but also their inhabitants and oh boy, they are HARDCORE. Even the regular guardians consist of modified creatures and e.g. Gray Render-zombies. The creature "Soulless" would for example be a glabrezu juj-zombie - but that's not all - home to the most corrupting rites and chambers of the elite of Orcus' host. Gibbering mouther fast zombies, mirror fiends, the most depraved of fey and a slew of high-level vampires await the PCs, seeking to end the incursion of these meddling mortals.

Have I mentioned that Soul Reapers prowl these halls? Crucifixion spirits and fallen angels stand ready to end your groups and end them they might - the senshal, major domo (btw.: cleric/disciple of orcus/fighter mummy) and other major players in the hierarchy await to truly challenge the mettle of the group. Corrupted planetars and legendary champions of good remain, now tarnished by Orcus' pall in these halls and a sense of extreme, deepest bowels of the abyss-level evil and despair pervades these halls and offers the PCs a glimpse into the vast corrupting power of Orcus n'gathau, legendary demons, balors, broken spirits rarely, if ever, has a module featured such an array of extremely deadly foes, such a who's who of complex rogue-gallery-style legends and, if foreshadowed correctly (something DMs of the campaigns should definitely do), meeting these legends and what they've become should prove to be a jarring, potentially extremely disturbing experience indeed.

The true climax of this part of the module, though, lies not in fighting the foes herein, but in finally reaching the Crown of Orcus, where the knowledge of the PCs will be tested in a contest of riddles (YES!) that are based on whether the PCs have found out about the background story and can correctly interpret what has happened here. Rewarding thusly clever rpging and investment in the epic, this section is truly my favorite part of the dungeon so far, as the story of Tsar and piecing together what has happened here finally reaps

rewards. And pieced together it has to be - the saga does not offer the details on a silver platter, but perseverance is rewarded - if the PCs manage to defeat the now corrupted legendary hero Lord Bishu, one of the CR 21 bosses of this module.



The appendices contain the stats for the dretch megaswarm-monster, 1 page containing a new magic item and a property, the disciple of Orcus PrC, two handouts (one being the Grand Cornu's testament) and 10 pages of maps, leaving only the very last part of Tsar for the PCs to explore - after these challenges, though, they will probably dread the things to come - and hopefully rightly so!

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good, I didn't notice any significant glitches. The pdf adheres to FGG's b/w-twocolumn standard and the pdf comes fully bookmarked. The handouts and maps are of the quality we've come to expect from the series and I look forward to the playerfriendly versions of the maps in the final, epic tome. The foes in this installment finally do it: They're smart. They're dastardly evil. They can be considered true bosses. They're deadly with a capital "D" and they pull no punches. This installment finally feels like the PCs have entered one of the deadliest, vilest places to blight the planet and perhaps the multiverse and in order to triumph, they will be challenged in all regards. This is epic. This is brilliant. This unfortunately does not work half as well if you haven't read the whole saga. But who cares - this is, indeed, a fitting climax and several of the foes herein would make for valid campaign end-bosses. But they're not. The true masterminds are still waiting in the wings. The climax is coming. After reading this, I expect a challenge of epic proportions, a finale of truly epic and dreadful revelations and challenges. I loved this installment - 5 stars + Endzeitgeist seal of approval.

Rite Publishing Presents

101 Magus Feats



By Steven D. Russell

101 Barbarian Feats

By Rite Publishing *Review of Thilo "Endzeitgiest" Graf* 5 out of 5 Stars!

This pdf is 27 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD and 1 page advertisement, leaving 23 pages of content for the new feats! EDIT: This revised review is based on V.2.0 of the pdf.

Of all the core-classes, none has been as neglected as the barbarian - Wizards enjoy new (sub-)schools, sorcerors a lot of bloodlines, all the divine classes get a vast amount of new spells and what did the barbarians get? Nothing! Rite Publishing finally sets out to remedy this gross oversight and provide us with a vast selection of new feats geared specifically towards being useful for barbarians. After a comprehensive list of all the feats and what they do, we are introduced to them and boy, they are of the high quality I've come to expect of Rite Publishing.

Mechanically, this pdf contains a lot of feats and many of them also have the (combat)-subtype, that is fighters and gunslingers get something out of this file as well! That being said, emphasis definitely rests on barbarians and the flavor they feature oozes primal rage. As with the last 101-feat book, these feats all come with a short line of fluff. Many of the feats herein could also be selected as a rage power and use a new rage-point mechanic - similar to e.g. the Gunslinger, rounds of rage can be treated as points: Many a feat can be used by spending a couple of rage points to do some extraordinary displays of strength, resiliency and savagery and devastating attacks. Great innovation!

Several of the feats can also be considered background feats - there are feats for ex-slaves, who channel their pain into their strikes, man-hating amazons, notorious and shamed exiles etc. There are other feats in here, too: A whole slew of the feats enables you to channel your rage towards more benign purposes and guard designated family members, women etc. These feats of morality offer severe present a kind of codex for barbarians and harming a designated target might elicit sever repercussions - never harm a barbarian's child, unless you're prepared to suffer a blast of rage...

Among my favorite of the feats herein is a mini feat-tree that is essentially a whole family of feats packed into 3: The demonic rage tree - essentially, the rage of these barbarians stems from demons that have been harmlessly bound. When entering a rage, the barbarian displays some of his demon's powers and quite a bunch of them are covered. From a balor's senses to a succubus' wiles - the options are iconic and cool.

Speaking of the latter: Have you ever been bugged by the fact that Conan got all the girls, but his Charisma was probably not that high? Well, herein are also feats that enable a barbarian to se his hardiness and strength to look appealing, enabling the concept of a barbarian leader.

And then there are the "Stark, raving mad"-feats - dirty

and insane fighting techniques that should turn the stomachs of cavaliers - from insane, killing spree-like rages, the ability to blind foes with spittle and omit up acidic juices, the options to create slavering madmen is included, should you be so inclined.

It should also be noted that classics like the ability to spread one's rage to others, deliver minor curses etc. are covered as well. And then there are feats like "Rage against the Machine", which I know one of my players would immediately take without even reading the text. (Guess what - good against constructs!) Better yet, if you ever wanted to use your throwing axes/daggers for cover-fire, there's a feat in here for that as well.

Another thing you might associate with barbarians (I know I do), is resiliency and finally, there's a feat that lets you step into the footsteps of the great heroes of the Sword & Sorcery-genre - the invulnerability-feats. The mightiest of them, Greater Invulnerability, lets you expend 3 rage rounds once per day to ignore one melee or ranged attack and its effects. Thulsa Doom's deathgrip? Pfff! That dragon about to chomp you to itty bitty pieces and swallow you whole? You're standing in his mouth, holding his jaws ajar! By far the most powerful feat (at least in my opinion) in the whole book, I at first considered this overpowered, but the once-perday restriction along its steep round-cost makes this a truly cinematic choice. In fact, several feats herein might actually make the barbarian a valid choice for being the party tank!

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting in teh revised edition is up to RiP's excellent quality standards. Layout adheres to RiP's 2-column standard, the artwork is stock and the pdf comes fully bookmarked. "What can I do, what can I say - choose your weapon, time to pay!" could be the tagline for this book - barbarians, often neglected, finally get their very own toolbox of deadly powers, several of which might actually be the focus of whole campaigns and could come with specific in-game reasons for adventuring. In fact, just reading these feats gave me a vast amount of ideas on how/where to use them, for which kind of character and even made a murdermystery plot form itself in my mind - there's a hulk-style (sans green) feat that lets you grow and who would suspect that halfling sitting at the bar of being this huge brute that thrashed the townsguard two nights ago? Idea-wise, this pdf is golden - it expands rage-powers via feats, offers great customization-options and provides A LOT of fodder for everyone with even the slightest hint of a savage streak out there. In fact, if you're playing Skull & Shackles, you'll be happy to know that raiding barbarians and corresponding feats are covered in these pages as well! Now that the editing glitches are out of the way, I can only settle for a final verdict of 5 stars and a definite recommendation for everyone who wants to see their enemies driven before them - after all, "What is best in life?"

Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands

By Raging Swan Press Review of Thilo "Endzeitgiest" Graf 5 out of 5 Stars!

This adventure is 95 pages long, 1 page front cover, 2 pages advertisements, 1 page SRD, 1 page back cover, 2 pages editorial, 1 page ToC, 1 page statblocks by CR (and a cool rhyme for your bard!), leaving 86 pages of content, so let's check out Raging Swan's latest adventure!

This being an adventure review, I urge potential players to jump to the conclusion in order to avoid SPOILERS.

Still

here?

Shadowed Keep of the Borderlands is essentially a sandbox adventure in the truest form - intentionally reminiscent of the classic moathouse of ToEE, the now ruined keep was originally constructed by adventurers who have subsequently been routed and destroyed in a night of carnage by their goblinoid foes.

Now, the woods surrounding the keep have become rather unsafe - animals, vermin, bandits and worse prowl the woods and some sages speculate that a map to a famous lost dwarven hold might still lie within the keep - hopefully enough prompting to get the PCs to try to tackle the keep! The surface section of the keep essentially has two different areas - the bandit queen's tower and the donjon of ruin. In the former, the bandits (who may be tricked, negotiated with and even be joined by your PCs and get the RSP NPC-treatment with mannerisms etc!) make for a potentially lethal coordinated defense and if your PCs think they'll be in for an easy ride, they'll learn a harsh lesson here - the foes in the keep react organically to threats. Which is a VERY important thing to consider about this adventure: The amount of detail provided for the keep is stunning many rooms feature d20 tables to find valuables not found by other looters, bones of small animals, harmless mold etc. Essentially each room has SOMETHING going for them and NPCs and critters use the terrain to their advantage. Bandits use tables for cover, red hot pokers scare the hell out of goblins who used them on foes and know all too well the effect the things have, giant spider hang on the walls and throw nets on PCs, who in turn may hide behind tapestries - there is some environmental peculiarity in every room.

Wait, goblins? Yeah, but let's talk about the donjon first - essentially the middle ground between the two factions of the fortress, the donjon is in a state of dilapidation and disrepair, overrun by vermin and haunted by the ghost of the former lord's child who wants to have his remains buried with his parents - only that's not as easy as one would hope. It is at the latest here that PCs will realize something - traps are not randomly strewn about, but instead can be anticipated and found via clever roleplaying, interrogation etc. The same holds true for the as of yet undiscovered and magically



trapped vault of the adventurers, cleverly hidden within the donjon.

Beyond the donjon, in its cellar and dungeon, the blood moon goblin tribe has found a refuge and lurks, waging war on the bandits under the leadership of the despicable...ogre. Yeah. I was not impressed by that. How many adventure modules have you read for 1st level where the PCs eventually fight a damn ogre? My cynicism should be proven wrong in this particular instance, though, for said ogre-brute is a horned, EXTREMELY deadly fiendish monstrosity (with a corresponding artwork), guarded by 3 medium, dual poison-sickle wielding concubines! It should also be noted that PCs may actually use tribal politics to gain an ally in a megalomaniacal goblin adept as well as rescue prisoners and even attack the green threat with the bandits - all options that should be considered, for the PCs are up against a goblin tribe that may actually launch a coordinated defense against their intrusion and makes good work of their bugbear mercenaries and environmental surroundings.

Beyond the caves of the Blood Moon (which may be entered via multiple ways, btw.!), there lies the undercrypt, a once hallowed hall (essentially a couple of extra rooms) now teeming with undead - a strange, necrotic corruption is spreading from a fissure of dark, ice-cold water and hallowing the ground/finding out what the source of the corruption is, might make for a nice follow-up to the things happening in this particular part of the dungeon. Once the goblins have been crushed, the bandits defeated, the ghost laid to rest and the undead disposed off, the PCs might actually lay claim to the fortress, which would make for an interesting product in the future - here's to hoping that RSP releases one!

The adventure comes with 9 pregens (including witch, oracle and magus, but no summoner or alchemist), 3 pages of handouts (an overview of the keep and two beautiful maps leading to the lost dwarven hold and depicting its layout, which served to immediately spark my imagination for further adventures) and 9 pages of illustrations that you can show to the players - this whopping amount of player-friendly additions is simply amazing.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting, as I've come to expect from Raging Swan Press, is top-notch - I didn't notice any glitches. The layout adheres to RSP's classic and printerfriendly, easy to read 2-column layout and the artworks are plentiful, classic b/w and amazing - with the exception of one piece (a certain treasure guardian, who looks cgi-ish and doesn't fit with the rest of the artworks), the artworks are top-notch in quality and evoke not only a sense of nostalgia, but also help illustrating the mood of the locations. Even better, their additional reproduction as player handouts make it easy on the DM to just hand them off instead of having to cut up the printed-out pages. Neat! The pdf comes fully bookmarked and comes with an optimized version for use with e-readers.

I'm a huge fan of the maps of the dwarven hold (and want to see the adventure set there!), but I would have loved it even more if the PCs had some way to find a similar (perhaps faulty) map of the dungeon below the donjon. Oh well, you can't have everything. Which brings me to the foes encountered.

I know, this is by design, but I'll come out and say it. Bandits, ogres and shadows. I don't want to see them in a first level adventure. They have been done to effin' death. Seeing that this adventure is a homage to the classics and deliberately tries to evoke a feeling of classical modules, I'm willing to let that particular gripe slip, though - especially due to doing at least SOME things

Much like many classic modules, the shadowed keep is not necessarily a good read and when first going through it, I didn't feel too impressed. In fact, I probably would have put this down, were it not for my experience as a DM - Creighton provided me with an advance copy and thus I had the option of running my players through the whole module prior to writing this review and... they had a blast, as did I. Which is not a given. I'll come out and say it - I don't like the "Temple of Elemental Evil". There. I did it. Pull out the rotten tomatoes, but I never liked the module and always considered it extremely overrated. Thus, deriving any sort of enjoyment, let alone this amount from a module that is a declared and designated homage is rather astonishing.

While the story/location is not too exciting, it is all about the details in this particular adventure - the whole adventure makes for such an immensely detailed place, the foes and their tactics are so detailed that actually RUNNING the adventure is a blast, especially with all the things to show your players. Even better, the module provides quite a challenge - if you play your odds smart as a DM, the players will be up to a Frog God Gameslevel challenge - during our run, my experienced players had 3 fatalities and none felt unfair or unjustified. Brains is just as important as brawns when challenging the Blood Moon on their home turf, especially their chief and his concubines! Even better, a timeline of events to spring upon your players - wandering animals, weather phenomena, goblin attacks - you name them, is provided to make the adventure feel even more organic and alive than by virtue of its excessive details. Using this timeline and shifting events around enables a DM to further customize the individual playing experience and provides for an excellent tool to put up and ease off pressure from the PCs while they are exploring the keep, thus ensuring no boredom can ever settle while exploring the different areas.

All in all, we had a surprisingly awesome time while clearing out the keep and thus, in spite of my initial cantankerous nitpicking, I'll settle for a final verdict of 5 stars for this very old-school module.

The Sinking: Politics Unusual

by oone Games reviewed by Endzeitgeist 5/5 stars!

This installment of "The Sinking" is 17 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD, 1 page advertisement and 1 page back cover, leaving 12 pages of content, so let's check it out!

This being an adventure-review, the following contains SPOILERS, so potential players might want to jump to the conclusion.

Still here? Righty, then let's get it on!

Politics Unusual is an interesting scenario to say the least - the PCs are hired by the right-hand man of an upstart Azindralean politician who plans a rally and a political speech in an amphitheater - unfortunately, trouble is to be expected and the PCs are supposed to make sure the rally goes through without violence erupting. The PCs get 2 plants in the crowd to help them deal with complications and each action of the PCs might earn them victory points, thus deciding the ultimate success or failure of the speech and perhaps even be the deciding factor of the rise of a new star in local politics.

The complications are AWESOME, and I don't say that lightly - from self-immolating wannabe martyrs, summoned fire beetles, insurgent clerics throwing rotten vegetables, bards etc. - the PCs will be hardpressed indeed to keep the whole affair unbloody and resolved as subtle as possible. To add to the whole imaginative set-up, each section of the speech is actually depicted in extracts, adding to the awesome atmosphere. Add to that a stellar finale with a deadly villain that may see the PCs make a true difference after becoming legends via the politician's speech and even reform a foe into a cohort, and we're in for one of the best possible scenarios at this length.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good, while I did notice some minor glitches, they did not impede my enjoyment of the file. Layout adheres to the 2-column standard and features beautiful b/w-artworks. The pdf also comes with extensive bookmarks. Author Rob Manning delivers the as of yet, by far most uncommon and excellent adventure in the whole series - socially-driven, featuring plentiful ways to solve the individual problems and offering a chance for the PCs to make a difference, this pdf is an excellent example of concise adventure



design, leaving me with nothing to be desired from this installment of The Sinking. If you get one of the adventures from this series, get this one. my final verdict is 5 stars and the Endzeitgeist seal of approval, for the low price you have no reason not to check this out.

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Faces of the Tarnished Souk: Gobseck Vaultwright, Meister of the Golden Anvil



By Matt Banach and Justin Sluder