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Editorial

This month in *Pathways* we're introducing more new material; Adventureaweek.com has put some outof-this-world content in my inbox and I'm excited to be sharing it with our readers. In addition to filling your pockets with additional haunts and divine channeling ideas, and giving you more encounters for your players, we're going to be adding some more critters and their toys. The staff at Adventureaweek.com is bursting to overflowing with great content and is excited to share some of it through the medium of *Pathways*.

Recently, Ron Lundeen of Run Amok Games gave us the first installment of "Scattered Sheaves;" this month we're giving you the second adventure in the series of three. It's a little on the racy side, but I haven't met many gamers who have a problem with this. If I were prone to word play, I'd say this adventure is a dream. Creighton Broadhurst gives us yet another baddie to throw at players, this time, however, he's given us a badder baddie than usual. Gahlgax Atarrith appears in Raging Swan's upcoming Scions of Evil and is definitely worth your consideration. I know that over the years I have read and admired plenty of monsters simply for inspiration. I hope this guy gets at least a cameo in something you're using, but, even if it's just for inspiration, he's worth your time. And, because bad guys need adversaries, it's handy that Thomas LeBlanc has provided us with the temple warrior. While any midlevel inquisitor will have no chance against Gahlgax Atarrith, that same devoted combatant would do just fine, if he (or she!) could keep his wits about him while wandering the pleasant distractions offered in the "Scattered Sheaves" adventure.

Over the past few months, other projects I've been working on for Rite Publishing have included just a ton of material from Paizo's Bestiaries 2 and 3. While our reviews are good, and the feedback I do receive is generally praise, I'm curious what people are doing with the material. For instance, in the newest release of the 101 Series, our product is dripping with onis, rakshasas, kamis and golems. What do you think about this? When I was first introduced to Dungeons & Dragons three decades ago, my love of monsters split me in two. On the one hand, I felt like I had some obligation to be a purist: anything in my first copy of the Monster Manual was somehow better than anything that came after. There was a sense I had that "new" rarely meant "better" and that almost everything after my first tome of critters was derivative. However, every once in a while, an article in Dragon or a critter developed by a neighborhood DM, or a monster gracing the pages of a TSR-licensed book would jump out at me and scream awesome.

As I got older and came to see that the entire game I loved was largely derivative of other things (at least, insofar as its monsters was concerned), I lightened up a bit and became more interested in other aspects of



monster crafting, monster use, plot development, character development (especially among NPCs) and refining my own game. I remember reading the preface of a Wizards of the Coast book, long before WotC took over D&D, that the author of that book had struggled with some of the existential, aesthetic, and personal questions of what it meant to be a gamer. He remarked about how validating it was for him when a friend remarked that what he was doing, as a gamemaster, as a world-builder, as a creator, seemed legitimately to be a work of art.

And, since then, I've felt somewhat unburdened by criticism. Whether it was a parent, friend or colleague who basically attempted to introduce shame or humiliation into my life by implying that playing games was something authentic adults gave up when they gave up childhood, or the nagging realism that, as a member of other professions, I really needed to keep my gaming life and my work life separate, since I read that piece, I've felt better about my own internal reactions to the external pressures imposed upon me by an uninterested or unimpressed world. Artists are often misunderstood; if I'm going to be misunderstood, doing so while in the company of fellow artists isn't so bad.

But, there's more to artistry than calling oneself an artist. Even in highly subjective fields, there's good and bad content. Like everyone else dancing around the periphery of Paizo's wonderful Pathfinder core, the staff at Rite Publishing, and the many contributors to *Pathways*, are always seeking to produce *good* art. Part of good art is the enjoyment of those who experience the art. I hope that you're getting as much satisfaction out of the *Pathways* content as I am.

David Paul Editor-in-chief



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Envious Creature Template

By Steven D. Russell; Illustrations by Juan Diego Dianderas

Envy is a sin, and the dark and fell fiends of damnation have ever rewarded sin. These dark powers transform some creatures who earn their attention though their jealousy and malicious intent into envious creatures. Those transformed always take great joy in another's suffering; they lose all sense of kindness they ever possessed. Envious creatures have either a wide-eyed insane look of joy, or a sorrowful and joyless mien; their bodies often take on a greenish hue in some way, shape or form; most often, their eyes take on this color, but not always. Other times they take on the aspect of a dog or a goat.

Creating an Envious Creature

"Envious" 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).

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

CR: +2

Alignment: Changes to any Evil.

Defenses/Qualities: DR 5/special (see driven by envy below, increase to 10 if the envious creature's CR is 10 or higher, increase to 15 if the envious creature's CR is 15 or higher); Resist 5 special (see below, increase to 10 if the envious creature's CR is 10 or higher, increase to 20 if the envious creature's CR is 15 or higher); Immune mind-affecting; **SR** 12 + CR (see driven by envy).

Special Abilities: An envious creature retains all the special abilities of the base creature, plus the special abilities as described below:

Change Shape (Su): Once an envious creature desires a particular object or creature, it can *shapechange* at will into the holder of the object or of a second creature that holds the first creature's affections. If anyone calls the envious creature by its true name or actual given name, it is automatically forced back into its natural form for 24 hours. An envious creature's eyes are always green when it assumes a form not its own.

Covetous Strike (Su): A creature injured by an envious creature or that fails its save against an effect created by an envious creature must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the envious creature's HD + its Cha modifier) or immediately steal the nearest object it is aware of-something that's worth at least 500 gp and does not belong to it. Once the subject takes the object, the effect ends. The creature may have to go through threatened or dangerous areas (passing by guards or moving through an area protected by a glyph of warding) to get at the object, or it may even have to break through a barrier or pick a lock. A barrier that requires more than 10 rounds to get through is considered impassable for the purposes of this effect. The effect ends immediately if the creature physically cannot reach the object-including a situation forcing the creature to pass through an area that would, without a doubt, kill it.

For example, a creature with only 30 hp that must swim through acid to reach the object is unaffected by the covetous strike. 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 covetous strike, nor remove it. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Cursed Relationships (Su): Once per day as an immediate action, an envious can curse a creature within 30 ft. (as *bestow curse*). That creature must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the envious creature's HD + its Cha modifier) or all NPC interactions are permanently shifted two steps toward the negative.

Curse of Envy (Su): Once per day as an immediate action, an envious creature can curse a creature within 30 ft. (as *bestow curse*). That creature must make a successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the envious creature's HD + its Cha modifier) or it suffers a circumstance penalty to its highest ability score equal to 1d6+1 per HD (maximum 1d6+20). The subject's ability score cannot drop below 1.

Driven by Envy (Ex): An envious creature has a special type of damage reduction and resistance that protects it from all types of damage unless that damage is dealt by the target of the creature's envy. For example, if the object desired is an ancestral sword, that weapon bypasses the envious creature's damage reduction, if the woman who it wishes to possess casts a *fireball* at it, the spell ignores that creature's resist and spell resistance defensive abilities.

Spiteful Strike (Su): Envious creatures often believe if they cannot possess something, then no one should. Once per day as a free action, if the envious creature attacks the target of his desire that attack automatically threatens a critical; if the attack does not require an attack roll, then the envious creature may add +4 to the DC of the effect or increase the amount of damage it would deal by 50% (it's choice).

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).

Skills: Envious creatures gain a +8 racial bonus on Bluff and Disguise checks; both of these skills are always considered class skills for envious creatures.



Mortal Envy CR 2

XP 135 Envious Sprite CN Diminutive fey **Init** +3; **Senses** *detect evil*, *detect good*, low-light vision; Perception +6

Defense

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 size) hp 5 (1d6+2) Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +2 DR 2/cold iron, 5/special (see driven by envy); Resist 5 special (see driven by envy); Immune mindaffecting; SR 14 (see driven by envy)

Offense

Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect) Melee shortsword +0 (1d2-4/19-20) Ranged shortbow +7 (1d2-4) Space 1 ft.; Reach 0 ft. Special Attacks covetous strike (Will DC 12), cursed relationships (Will DC 12), curse of envy (Will DC 12), spiteful strike Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +5) Constant—detect evil, detect good At will—dancing lights, daze (DC 12) 1/day—color spray (DC 13)

Jactics

Before Combat Mortal Envy often prefers to attack from stealth and using ranged sniper tactics. **During Combat** Mortal Envy prefers to attack creatures whose race has the longest natural lifespan first, taking advantage of her covetous strike's effect **Morale** When outmatched, Mortal Envy flees, flying out of sight and hiding again, to return later and use her spiteful strike.

Statistics

Str 3, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 14
Base Atk +0; CMB -1; CMD 5
Feats Alertness
Skills Bluff +14, Disguise +14 (+24 with change shape), Escape Artist +15, Fly +21, Perception +6, Sense Motive +2, Stealth +19
Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Sylvan
SQ change shape (*shapechange*), luminous

Ecology

Environment warm forests **Organization** solitary, pair, or flight (3–6) **Treasure** standard

Special Abilities

Driven by Envy (Ex): Mortal Envy has a special type of damage reduction and resistance that protects her from all types of damage unless that damage is dealt by the living humanoid creature whose race possess the shortest natural lifespan she is aware of (such as a half-orc PC). For example, a weapon wielded by that creature bypasses Mortal Envy's damage reduction; if that creature casts *burning hands* at Mortal Envy, the spell ignores her resist and spell resistance defensive abilities.

Luminous (Su): Mortal Envy naturally sheds light equal to that provided by a torch. She can control the color and intensity of the light as a swift action, reducing it to the dimness of a candle or even extinguishing its luminosity entirely if she wishes. (This light is always some shade of green when she is not in her true form.)





by Adam Daigle, Tim Connors, and Tim Hitchcock

ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Sharing the Spotlight: Feats for Support Characters

by Will McCardell Illustration by Arthur Rackham

While the supporting character concept is popular, the feat options available for such a character are scant at best. With each book comes dozens of new ways to poke your enemies with sharp sticks, choke them to death, or valiantly defend yourself. But curiously, even though the core of the game revolves around teamwork, these books offer few ways to help out allies. When creating such a character, one of the key questions the player must keep in mind is "Well, what do I do now?" After using their buffs to aid the party in the first round or two, they're faced with this question for the remainder of combat. These feats are here to lend those characters a hand.

Aiding Strike (Combat)

Your strikes aid your allies, no matter how well you struck.

Prerequisites: Combat Expertise, base attack bonus +1, Int 13.

Benefit: Whenever you make an attack action, you can choose to deal half damage on a successful hit to benefit an ally with aid another, subject to all the normal restrictions of aid another. If you miss with your attack action, but your attack result is sufficient to hit AC 10, you instead grant half of your aid another bonus to the ally.

Backline Instructor (Combat)

"No no, move to the *left*!"

Prerequisites: Perform (oratory) 3 ranks, Int 13. **Benefit:** As a standard action, you may use aid another for an ally within 30 feet, but only to help on attack rolls against his opponent or to help with AC against his opponent. Instead of making an attack roll, you make a Perform (oratory) check DC 10. This feat is language-dependent.

Combat Instruction (Combat)

"If you swing at a 72 degree angle, you set yourself up for an easier swing afterward..."

Prerequisites: Lasting Aid, base attack bonus +6, Int 13.

Benefit: When you successfully use the aid another action to help an ally, the ally gains the aid another bonus on all attack rolls against its opponent or to all the attacks against the ally by the opponent, as long as these come before the start of your next turn. Finally, the bonus you grant with this use of aid another increases by +1. You may use Combat Instruction a number of times per day equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier.

Normal: The bonus from aid another only applies to the next attack by the ally or against the ally.

Dirty Set Up (Combat)

Prerequisite: Improved Dirty Trick.



Benefit: Whenever you successfully use the dirty trick maneuver against an enemy, the next ally who makes an attack against the enemy before the start of your next turn gains a +2 circumstance bonus on the attack roll.

Jasting Aid (Combat)

You can help not only with the next attack, but also the one after.

Prerequisite: Int 13.

Benefit: When you successfully use the aid another action to help an ally, that ally gains the aid another bonus to either the next two attack rolls the ally makes or to the next two attacks against the ally, as long as these come before the start of your next turn. In addition, the bonus you grant with this use of aid another increases by +1.

Normal: The bonus from aid another only applies to the next attack by the ally or against the ally.

Spirit-Boosting Aid (Combat)

"Give it your all!"

Prerequisites: Heal 3 ranks, Int 13. **Benefit:** When you successfully use aid another on an adjacent ally in combat against an enemy, that ally gains a number of temporary hit points equal to your Intelligence modifier plus 1 for every 3 ranks you have in Heal.



GAMAGAX AJARRAJH (CR



23)

By Creighton Broadhurst of Raging Swan Press. Gahlgax Atarrith appears in Raging Swan's upcoming *Scions of Evil*. Illustration by Frank Walls,

A being almost as powerful as its master, Gahlgax is a nightmarish foe for even legendary heroes.

An elder being of almost unimaginable power and depravity, Gahlgax had lived for millennia uncounted. One of the most powerful Abyssal balor lords, Orcus himself blessed him with undeath a score of centuries ago.

Only the greatest hero has any chance of even reaching Gahlgax's lair, Calaunsur, a benighted place of shadow, fire and death set deep within the Abyss. Even if he should reach Calaunsur, the hero must then fight his way through legions of lesser undead, vampire guards and powerful skeletal spellcasters as well as countless guardian demons before finally reaching Gahlgax's inner sanctum. Here he sits upon The Moaning Throne, a huge edifice of fused skulls crafted from the remains of his greatest enemies and rivals. Using powerful and unique magics unknown to mortals, he has bound the souls of the slain to their skulls, dooming them to an eternity of suffering and madness. The moans of the imprisoned souls emanate from the throne, acting as a constant reminder to all those nearby of the folly of challenging Gahlgax.

A faithful servant of his lord and master (well as faithful as any demon can be) Gahlgax is served in turn by a triumvirate of graveknight mariliths that lead his armies and protect his person from the rare threat that manages to breach his terrible fortress of fused bone and flaming shadow.

Deeply steeped in the bloody lore of the Abyss, Gahlgax's knowledge on a number of blasphemous and otherworldly subjects rivals that of any mortal sage. Having acted in the mortal world for years almost without number, he is also surprisingly knowledgeable in the ways of men and their allies.

Feared even by other balor and the most powerful of liches, Gahlgax's word is law in his realm; no other dares rise to challenge the vampiric balor.

Background: Gahlgax's climb to become Orcus' most trusted servant has been slow, but inexorable. He has slain countless other demons in his quest for power and slain legions of mortals who have dared to penetrate the benighted realms of the Abyss. It was Gahlgax who was responsible for the disappearance of



Enkidu Shuruppak, the so-called Purple Archmage, after the foolish and colossally arrogant wizard sought to summon and control a balor. And it was also Gahlgax who single-handedly destroyed the Temple-Fortress of Barir-Kar after the priests and paladins of that place came dangerously close to discovering certain secrets relating to the *Wand of Orcus*. Countless other heroes have fallen before his blade or been destroyed by his deceptions or sorcerous magics. Such is his depraved infamy that he appears in the holy scripts of many good-aligned faiths with epithets such as the Light Banisher, Destroyer of Hope or simply The Corruptor.

Orcus personally gifted him with vampirism after Gahlgax slew a rival balor that sought (foolishly) to supplant the Prince of the Undead. In truth, the now long-forgotten balor did nothing of the sort, Gahlgax manipulated and miss-reported his rival's actions so that it appeared he sought to steal Orcus' famed wand. Slaying the balor, he then (humbly) presented his evidence to Orcus. Orcus, in rare good mood after torturing and dismembering a particularly obnoxious and strident paladin-hero, drank deeply of Gahlgax's blood to create the unholy abomination that now serves him.

Since that day, Gahlgax has seemingly worked tirelessly for his master.

Personality: Utterly without remorse, empathy, mercy or any other redeeming trait, Gahlgax is as close to an utterly evil being as a mortal can ever "hope" to meet. Although as devoted as any demon could be to its master, Gahlgax is slowly beginning to realise that his power may one day rival his master's. Steeped in the lore of the Abyss and rich in a demon's innate cunning, Gahlgas knows that this day is a long way off, but what matters the passage of millennia to an immortal being?

He has no compunction handing out the most brutal, depraved tortures imaginable to any that displease him.

In truth, Gahlgax greatly enjoys his new status as a vampire; he finds the variety of abilities useful and particularly enjoys dominating his foes (or torture playthings). He particularly enjoys humiliating those in clutches - particularly powerful good-aligned prisoners - making them carry out a vast range of depraved, humiliating tasks before driving them mad.

Distinguishing Features: Huge and wreathed in flame and shadow, Gahlgax is instantly recognisable as a being of immense power. However, those that look closely at him may recognise his undead nature - his fangs are unnaturally long for a demon's and although a creature of darkness himself, he casts no shadow.

TACTICS

Gahlgax is a cunning tactician and warrior. He prefers to fight from a distance, using his multitude of spelllike abilities to confound and terrorise his enemies. He particularly enjoys using his dominate ability to force his enemies to fight among themselves. When only one opponent remains, he strikes mercilessly, cutting him down with his terrible longsword.

If given warning of a serious assault upon his person, he briefly wields each Sword of Orcus' brilliant energy adamantine longsword giving it the vorpal ability for the upcoming battle.

HOOKS

Only the most powerful heroes can hope to survive meddling in Gahlgax's schemes. Many of the plots Gahlgax spins are at the behest of his undying master, but others are fashioned to increase his own powers.

The PCs may come to Gahlgax's attention if they destroy a balor or other powerful demon or undead servant of Orcus. Gahlgax is not one to let a potential threat grow unchecked and so he despatches increasingly large and powerful bands of demons and undead to deal with the upstart mortals.

Alternatively, he may require the souls of one or more powerful good-aligned clerics for some horrific ritual designed to increase his personal power. The PCs could get involved when they are asked to investigate the sudden and mysterious disappearance of several such individuals, or one of their own number could be targeted by Gahlgax's minions.

Finally, it is entirely possible that Gahlgax may use the PCs in some fiendishly complicated scheme; goodaligned mortals are notorious meddlers and he may use them to stymie the plots of one of his rivals (or even his master). He may even subtly guide them to eliminate one of the Swords of Orcus if he believes the marilith is planning to strike against him.

JORE

Characters can learn more about Gahlgax with a successful Knowledge (planes) check. A successful check reveals all information gained by a lesser result.

DC 38: This is Gahlgax Atarrith, balor lord and personal servant of the demon prince Orcus. Gahlgax is a power almost without equal in the multiverse; even demi-gods fear his wrath and brutal attention. He is often served and guarded by powerful mariliths.

DC 43: Gahlgax has been blessed by his patron with the powers of undeath and has all the standard undead immunities in addition to those enjoyed by normal demons.

DC 48: Gahlgax is a vampire and has their standard immunities, powers and vulnerabilities.

GAHIGAX AJARRIJH, ADOR JORD 23 (XP 819,200)

This large fiendish creature has thick, strong wings and wields a flaming longsword and whip.

Vampire balor fighter 1

CE Large undead (augmented)

Init +14; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, true seeing; Perception +42, Sense Motive +42

Speed 40 ft., base speed 40 ft., fly 90 ft. (good), gaseous form (fly 20 ft. [perfect]), spider climb; ACP o; Acrobatics +30 (+34 jumping), Fly +35, Stealth +37 Gaseous Form (Su) Gahlgax can assume gaseous

form (AC 24, CL 5th) at will and can remain gaseous indefinitely.

Spider Climb (Ex) Gahlgax climbs sheer surfaces as though affected by *spider climb*.

AC 48, touch 24, flat-footed 37; CMD 64; unholy aura (+4 deflection, +10 Dex, +1 dodge, +22 natural [amulet of natural armour +2], -1 size)

Unholy Aura (Su) If a good creature hits Gahlgax with a melee attack it takes 1d6 Strength damage (DC 33 Fortitude negates).

Immune electricity, fire, poison, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); Resist acid 10, cold 10; Weakness vampire weaknesses (garlic, mirrors, cannot enter private homes unless invited, direct sunlight, running water, wooden stakes)

Fort +33, **Ref** +22 (evasion), **Will** +27 (+31 vs. channelling); **SR** 31**hp** 436 (21 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** cold iron and good/15 or magic and silver 10; death throes, *gaseous form*

Death Throes (Su) When killed, Gahlgax explodes in a blinding flash of fire that deals 50 fire and 50 unholy damage to anything within 100 ft. (DC 38 Reflex halves).

Gaseous Form (Su) If reduced to o hit points, Gahlgax assumes *gaseous form* and flees. Gahlgax must reach his coffin within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once at rest, he is helpless for one hour until he regains 1 hit point. Gahlgax is then no longer helpless and fast healing heals his wounds normally.

Space 10 ft. (flaming body); **Base Atk** +21; **CMB** +39 **Flaming Body (Su)** Dancing flames cover Gahlgax's body. Anyone striking him with a natural weapon or unarmed strike takes 1d6 fire damage. A creature that grapples Gahlgax or is grappled takes 6d6 fire damage each round it is grappled.

Melee +1 vorpal unholy longsword (reach 10 ft.) +37/+32/+27/+22 (2d6+18/17-20)

Melee +1 vorpal flaming whip (reach 20 ft.) +36/+31/+26 (1d4+9 plus 1d6 fire and entangle) or

Melee 2 slams (reach 10 ft.) +32 (1d10+17 plus energy drain [2 levels])

Atk Options Blinding Critical (DC 31), Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Power Attack (-6/+12), blood drain, create spawn, energy drain, entangle

Blood Drain (Su) Gahlgax can suck blood from a grappled opponent. If he establishes or maintains a pin, he drains blood (1d4 Constitution damage). Gahlgax heals 5 hit points or gains 5 temporary hit points for 1 hour (up to a maximum number of temporary hit points equal to his full normal hit points) each round he drains blood.

Create Spawn (Su) Gahlgax can create a spawn when he slays a creature with blood drain or energy drain.

Energy Drain (Su) A creature hit by Gahlgax's slam attack gains 2 negative levels (DC 35 Fortitude restores). Gahlgax can use this ability once per round.

Entangle (Ex) If Gahlgax strikes a Medium or smaller foe with his whip, he can immediately attempt a grapple check without provoking attacks of opportunity. If he succeeds, he draws the foe into an adjacent square. The foe gains the grappled condition, but Gahlgax does not.

Special Actions change shape, children of the night, dominate

Change Shape (Su) Gahlgax can assume the form of a dire bat or wolf as if affected by *beast shape II*.

Children of the Night (Su) Once per day, Gahlgax can summon 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 bat swarms or 2d6 wolves. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for up to 1 hour.

Dominate (Su) Gahlgax can crush a humanoid's will (DC 35 Will resists) if within 30 ft. as *dominate person* (CL 12th).

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 21th; concentration +33)

Constant-true seeing, unholy aura (DC 33)

At will—deeper darkness, dominate monster (DC 34), greater dispel magic, greater invisibility, greater teleport (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), inflict critical wounds (DC 26), mage armour, mirror image, power word stun, protection from energy, resist energy, shield, telekinesis (DC 30)

3/day—forcecage, interposing hand, mind blank, quickened telekinesis (DC 30)

1/day-blasphemy (DC 32), fire storm (DC 33), implosion (DC 34), summon (level 9, any 1 CR 19 or lower demon 100%)

Abilities Str 45, Dex 31, Con –, Int 26, Wis 28, Cha 35 **SQ** master of magic, shadowless, vorpal strike, whip mastery

Vorpal Strike (Su) Any slashing weapon Gahlgax wields gains the *vorpal* quality. Weapons retain this quality for one hour after he releases the weapon.

Whip Mastery (Ex) Gahlgax treats a whip as a light weapon for the purposes of two-weapon fighting and inflicts lethal damage on a foe regardless of its armour. **Feats** Alertness^B, Blinding Critical, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Dodge^B, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Improved Critical (longsword)^B, Improved Initiative^B, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes^B, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*telekinesis*), Toughness^B, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Bluff +39, Diplomacy +31, Disguise +32, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (engineering) +16, Knowledge (history) +28, Knowledge (nobility) +28, Knowledge (planes) +31, Knowledge (religion) +28, Use Magic Device +31

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, telepathy 100 ft.

Gear as above *headband* of alluring charisma +6, *luckblade* (0 wishes), *ring of evasion*

SWORDS OF ORCUS

Three Swords of Orcus serve as Gahlgax's personal bodyguard, messengers and executioners. Each secretly dreams of supplanting Gahlgax in Orcus' council, but know that they are not yet powerful enough to openly face him.

A Sword of Orcus moves quickly into melee so that she might slice her enemies to pieces with her longswords. She focuses all her attacks on a single opponent, cutting one down before moving on to her next target. When facing enemies, the Sword of Orcus uses its *hat of disguise* to appear alive and not undead; in this way it hopes to avoid the attention of enemy clerics or paladins.

SWORD OF ORCUS CR 21 (XP 409,600)

This snake-bodied fiend has a six-armed woman's torso, pointed ears and glittering, otherworldly eyes. Graveknight marilith antipaladin 2 CE Large undead (augmented)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *true seeing*; Perception +34, Sense Motive +26

Speed 50 ft., base speed 40 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +30 (+34 jumping), Fly +20, Ride +30, Stealth +21

AC 52, touch 18, flat-footed 47; CMD 52 (54 vs. disarm, can't be tripped); unholy aura; Miss Chance 20%

(+11 armour [+5 mithral breastplate], +4 deflection, +5 Dex, +19 natural [amulet of natural armour +2], +2 shield [ring of force shield], -1 size)

Unholy Aura (Sp) If a good creature succeeds on a melee attack against the Sword of Orcs, the attacker suffers 1d6 Strength damage (DC 25 Fortitude negates) **Immune** cold, electricity, fire, poison, mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless); **Resist** acid 10

Fort +41, **Ref** +33, **Will** +32 (+36 vs. channelling); **SR** 32**hp** 437 (20 HD); **DR** cold iron and good/10 or magic/10

Space 10 ft. (sacrilegious aura [30 ft.], unholy aura); **Base Atk** +18; **CMB** +32 (+34 disarm, +36 grapple)

Sacrilegious Aura (Su) This aura functions as a *desecrate* spell and the Sword of Orcus' armour acts as an altar. Any creature that attempts to summon positive energy must make a concentration check DC 31. If the check fails the effect is expended but does not function.

Melee +1 brilliant energy adamantine longsword (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+10]; cold iron, chaotic, evil) +32/+27/+22/+17 (2d6+14/17-20 plus 4d6 fire),

5 +1 longswords (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+10]; cold iron, chaotic, evil) +32 (2d6+14/17-20 plus 4d6 fire) and

tail slap (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+5]) +27 (2d6+7 plus grab) or

Melee 6 slams +30 (1d6+11) and

tail slap (reach 10 ft.; Power Attack [-5/+5]) +25 (2d6+7 plus grab)

Atk Options Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical (DC 28), Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Improved Disarm, channel destruction, constrict (crushing coils), grab, infuse weapon, multiweapon mastery, smite good (+11 attack, +2 damage, +11 AC)

Constrict with Crushing Coils (Ex [standard]) The Sword of Orcus deals 2d6+18 bludgeoning damage with a successful grapple check. A creature suffering damage must make a DC 31 Fortitude save or lose consciousness for 1d8 rounds.

Grab (Ex [free]) If it hits a Medium or smaller target with its tail, the Sword of Orcus can try to grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Infuse Weapon (Ex [free]) Any weapon a Sword of Orcus wields gains a +1 enhancement bonus to attack and damage and strikes as if it were a chaotic and evil cold iron weapon (in addition to retaining the qualities if its actual composition).

Multiweapon Mastery (Ex [free]) A Sword of Orcus never takes penalties to her attack roll when fighting with multiple weapons.

Special Actions devastating blast, phantom steed, touch of corruption (12/day; 1d6) undead mastery

Devastating Blast (Su [standard; 3/day]) The Sword of Orcus unleashes a 30 ft. cone of fire; 10d6 fire; DC 31 Reflex halves.

Phantom Steed (Su [standard; 1/hour] A Sword of Orcus can summon a skeletal horse similar to a phantom steed, but with these modified statistics (AC 18, hp 23, speed 100 ft., fly 100 ft., Fly +16).

Undead Mastery (Su [standard; at will) The Sword of Orcus can bend any undead creatures within 50 ft. to its will. Each undead must make a DC 31 Will save or fall under the its control. This control is permanent for unintelligent undead, but an intelligent undead can make a new save each day to throw off the control. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by the same graveknight's undead mastery for 24 hours. A graveknight can control 90 HD of undead.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +29)

At will—*detect evil, greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *project image* (DC 27), *telekinesis* (DC 26)

3/day-blade barrier (DC 27), fly

1/day—*summon* (level 5; 1 marilith 20%, 1 nalfeshnee 33% or 1d4 hezrous 60%)

Abilities Str 33, Dex 23, Con –, Int 20, Wis 24, Cha 33

SQ evil aura (overwhelming), rejuvenation, ruinous revivification (fire), unholy resilience

Feats Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative^B, Mounted Combat^B, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack^B, Toughness^B, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills as above plus Bluff +30, Diplomacy +30, Disguise +28 (+38 with *hat of disguise*), Intimidate +38, Knowledge (engineering) +21, Use Magic Device +30

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

Gear hat of disguise, boots of striding and springing, minor cloak of displacement

Creighton Broadhurst is a keen gamer who passionately believes in the Open Gaming License and is dedicated to making his games as fun and easy to enjoy as possible for all participants. Reducing or removing entry barriers, simplifying pre-game prep and easing the GM's workload are the key underpinning principles of the products he releases through Raging Swan Press.

Creighton has worked with Expeditious Press, Paizo and Wizards of the Coast. He now releases his own products through Raging Swan Press. You can read his thoughts on game design at ragingswan.livejournal.com.

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

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Scattered Sheaves is a trio of urban mini-adventures regarding pages stolen from a manual of bodily health. These adventures are suitable for 7th or 8th level PCs. The three Scattered Sheaves adventures are The Underground Alchemist in Pathways #15, The Dream-Haunted Brothel in Pathways #16, and The Bedeviled Scribes in Pathways #17.

Background

The PCs become involved in the Scattered Sheaves story when they follow up on a rumor that a reputable merchant named Bydlo Victus is selling a manual of *bodily health* +1 at a discount. When the PCs discover Bydlo within a large city of your choosing, Bydlo's stall is in shambles and he is clutching the valuable book, pages torn and askew, to his chest. Bydlo explains that he was just attacked by an invisible flying creature. The creature tried to steal the book from Bydlo's grasp, but Bydlo held the book tight. Still, in the scuffle, the thief managed to steal several pages from the book and fly away. Without the missing pages, the book cannot be used. If the PCs recover the pages, Bydlo can repair the book and restore its magic. Bydlo will then sell the book at an even deeper discount to reward the PCs for their trouble. Bydlo even offers to use his *wand of locate object* to identify the building (or buildings) where the pages have gone.

As a GM, you can run any or all of the *Scattered Sheaves* mini-adventures. If you choose to use only one adventure, then all of the missing pages of the *manual of bodily health* are together in the same location. If you choose to use more than one adventure, the PCs must recover all of pages, split up in each location, in order to reconstruct the manual. If you run only one *Scattered Sheaves* adventure, Bydlo sells the reconstructed manual for only 20,000 gp (instead of the standard price of 27,500 gp). If you run two adventures, Bydlo charges only 14,000 gp. If you run all three adventures, Bydlo charges only 8,000 gp. In addition, PCs that participate in all three *Scattered Sheaves* adventures should accumulate enough XP to gain a level.

The thief, an imp named Arkthatek, hoped to steal Bydlo's valuable book to curry favor with one or more lurking evils within the city. When Arkthatek only gained a few pages, he gifted the pages to one or more powerful villains in the city (although each turned Arkthatek away after receiving the imp's trifling gift). To recover the missing pages, the PCs must confront and defeat these villains, each with their own motivations and unique urban lairs.

Bydlo directs the PCs to as many of the buildings as you choose, and the PCs can investigate the buildings in any order. To aid the PCs, Bydlo gives each of them a piece of torn page from the *manual of bodily health*. A PC carrying one of these page pieces gains a +1 to all Constitution checks to stabilize when at negative hit points. Bydlo ultimately needs these pieces returned in order to restore the book.

The Dream-Haunted Brothel: Introduction

In this mini-adventure, the merchant Bydlo directs the PCs to a brothel called the Golden Slipper. The



Golden Slipper is located in an ornate manor house and once attracted a very high class of clientele, but a recent string of accidents in the brothel and murderous madness among some of the prostitutes have caused a dramatic decline in the brothel's fortunes. Unknown to any of the prostitutes that live and work in the Golden Slipper, they are plagued by a night hag named Kokelia. Kokelia lairs in the recently abandoned sections of the Golden Slipper, drawing out the prostitutes' dreams and working them like ethereal clay.

The Golden Slipper is depicted in the map on this page and the previous page. This fine-looking manor is located in the city's wealthiest quarter. Although the manor and its grounds are opulent, several days' neglect has allowed weeds to spring up in the yard and grime to streak the once-fine features of the house. The Golden Slipper once boasted a staff of 11 prostitutes, a madam, three servants, and four guards. Two weeks ago, Madam Matilda went mad, fired the guards, and killed two of the prostitutes before killing herself. The servants and three of the surviving prostitutes (the only people with other realistic job prospects) left the Golden Slipper in the following days. The remaining six prostitutes keep up their business at the Golden Slipper while trying to clean and care for the manor.

The manor is two stories tall. All rooms on the lower floor are 15 feet high and, after dark, are lit by lanterns with pink-tinted glass. The upper floor is abandoned and unlit, except for the everburning torches in Area 6. Even in daytime, the upper floor's grimy windows only admit dim light. Doors in the manor are good wooden doors with average locks, although none of the doors in the manor are locked when the PCs arrive.

Area 1: Entry and Reception (CR 8)

The wide entry to the Golden Slipper leads to two sweeping staircases and a large reception area. The archways to the left (leading to the private rooms) and the right (leading to the kitchen and dining room) see regular traffic, but the stairs up to the ballroom are dusty and dark. The entry opens into a large reception area dominated by several overstuffed chairs arranged in small groupings for intimate conversations. Fires in two large fireplaces lend suffused light to the room, and statues of women in erotic poses abound. Tall windows look out into a nicely manicured yard now sprouting weeds.

When the PCs arrive, four young women (two humans, a half-elf, and a halfling) wearing skimpy lingerie with sheer and flowing robes await customers in the entry. The prostitutes quickly press drinks into the hands of the PCs and lead them into the reception area, eagerly assuming that the PCs are their first customers of the day. A DC 15 Sense Motive check reveals that these prostitutes look worn and frightened—they are each fatigued and have suffered Wisdom drain from Kokelia's animated dreams.

Before the PCs can interact at length with the prostitutes, an older woman in heavy makeup and an outré feathered gown suddenly appears in the hallway between the front doors and the doors to the reception area. The matronly woman carries a bloody cleaver and has a jagged gash across her neck. "No time to work, girls, more time to sleep!" she gurgles. The prostitutes shriek in terror, and one cries "But...Madam Matilda...you're dead!"

This is no ghost, but rather a terrifying dreamcreation molded by Kokelia from the prostitutes' recent nightmares. The animate dream targets the PCs, intending to eliminate the interlopers.

"Madam Matilda," Animate Dream

CR8

XP 4,800 NE Medium outsider (extraplanar, incorporeal) Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

Defense

AC 20, touch 20, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge) hp 90 (12d10+24) Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +12 Defensive Abilities incorporeal; SR 19

Offense

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect) **Melee** incorporeal touch +16 (6d8 negative energy plus nightmare curse)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +17) 3/day—deep slumber (DC 18), dimension door, nightmare (DC 20)

1/day—confusion (DC 19), fear (DC 19), phantasmal killer (DC 19)

Jactics

During Combat The animate dream fights with the ghostly cleaver as its incorporeal touch attack, using *phantasmal killer* on any spellcaster that poses a threat.

Morale The animate dream fights until destroyed.

Statistics

Str –, **Dex** 18, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 21 **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 32

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Mobility

Skills Bluff +20, Fly +12, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (planes) +15, Perception +17, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +19

Languages telepathy 100 ft.

Special Abilities

Nightmare Curse (Ex) An animate dream's touch puts horrifying visions in the target's mind. Curse incorporeal touch; *save* Fortitude DC 21; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Wisdom drain and target is fatigued; *cure* 3 consecutive saves or *dispel evil, dream*, or *remove curse.*

After "Madam Matilda" is destroyed, the PCs learn the following from the prostitutes. These points each allow a Diplomacy check to obtain further information:

• Two weeks ago, Madam Matilda started acting strangely. She fired the Golden Slipper's four guards and insisted that the prostitutes take shorter shifts. A DC 20 Diplomacy check convinces a prostitute to explain that Madam



- Matilda once strangely told her that the girls must work less so that they could sleep more, and that they must sleep more so that they could dream more.
- Ten days ago, Madam Matilda declared the upper floors to be off-limits to anyone but herself and her clients. None of the prostitutes have been upstairs since. A DC 20 Diplomacy check convinces the prostitutes to reveal that Madam Matilda didn't actually take any clients upstairs, but they could sometimes hear Madam Matilda talking to someone in the upstairs ballroom.
- Nine days ago, the Golden Slipper was hosting a private dance for its best clients in the reception area, as the upstairs ballroom was off-limits. Madam Matilda suddenly burst into a rage, shrieking and scaring the clients away. Once the clients had gone (for good, as it turns out, as none of them have dared return to the Golden Slipper),

two of the prostitutes tried to go upstairs to find out why Madam Matilda was acting so strangely. Madam Matilda chased after them with a cleaver, murdering them at the top of the stairs; she then turned the cleaver upon herself. With a DC 25 Diplomacy check, the prostitutes reveal that they sometimes hear the dance music from that night echoing down from the upstairs ballroom.

- In the following days, those girls with better opportunities left the Golden Slipper, as did all of the servants. The remaining girls have nowhere else to go, so are continuing to operate the Golden Slipper as best they can. With a DC 10 Diplomacy check, the prostitutes admit that, since Madam Matilda's death, they have all been experiencing terrifying dreams. They feel tired all the time, but don't remember the nightmares with any clarity.
- None of the prostitutes knows anything about missing papers or stolen books; the only literature in the Golden Slipper is racy novels. With a DC 15 Diplomacy check, the prostitutes reveal that Madam Matilda kept accounting records and similar papers in her office upstairs.

Area 2: Private Rooms

These small rooms are barely large enough for a bed and chest of drawers containing lingerie and various simple sex toys. These rooms had been the prostitute's sleeping quarters and only rarely used for entertaining clients, but after the upstairs was forbidden, the prostitutes both sleep and service clients in these small rooms. Two prostitutes (both human) are sleeping in these rooms when the PCs arrive, trying unsuccessfully to overcome their recent fatigue.

Area 3: Dining Wing

This wing contains a fairly large kitchen, a onceopulent dining room, and a few storage rooms. These rooms are hardly used now, as the prostitutes have little energy to prepare complicated meals and generally subsist on simple meals of bread and soups. The dining room shows a great deal of neglect, as the girls have not entertained clients at a dinner party since before Madam Matilda's madness.

Area 4: Ballroom (CR 8)

This large ballroom shows much more neglect than its two weeks of abandonment would otherwise indicate: ornate wallpaper sags in strips, gilt fixtures are blackened, and the potted plants are dead. Large windows look out over a private garden in the back of the manor and onto a viewing balcony in the front of the manor, but these windows are coated with grime and let in only dim light even on sunny days.

This room's deterioration is due to the spirits trapped here. The souls of the two prostitutes Madam Matilda murdered during the dance haunt this room.



Spectral Jarantella CR8 XP 4,800

CE haunt (20-ft. square at the south end of the ballroom)

Caster Level 8th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear distant upbeat music)

hp 36, **Weakness** tricked by *hide from undead*; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

EFFECT

Two elaborately coiffed prostitutes, each bearing horrific cleaver wounds, begin to dance once this haunt is activated. Each round, one target in the ballroom is affected by *irresistible dance* (Will DC 22). Each round a target is dancing, he or she must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or gain 1 temporary negative level. Lost levels are automatically regained after 8 hours.

DESTRUCTION

If Kokelia is driven from the Golden Slipper, the dancing spirits find peace.

Area 5: Master Bedrooms

This entire wing contains two enormous bedrooms, each with a bed large enough for four or five people. Dressers and armoires contain a fantastic array of soft towels embroidered with stylized genitalia, provocative costumes, bejeweled collars, braided whips, and similar devices. Each bedroom contains 800 gp worth of such equipment, although the PCs will undoubtedly raise eyebrows when selling these items. These rooms were reserved for the brothel's most elaborate orgies, but have been unused for weeks.

Area 6: Artistic Displays (CR9)

This room contains three panels of glass, each four feet wide and seven feet tall, mounted in sturdy wooden frames. The panels each contain a stained glass image of naked women in provocative poses. An everburning torch placed behind each colorful image enhances its appearance. This unique art exhibit was once a mere art display intended to delight the brothel's patrons. Kokelia has turned these images to a darker purpose, animating two of the three panels as stained glass golems. The two golems hide in plain sight within their frames. A DC 19 Perception check is required to notice that the titillating images are creatures rather than mere glass panels. The golems attack if discovered or once a PC reaches the door to Area 7.

Stained Glass Golems (2) CR7

XP 3,200 each

Young stained glass golem N Medium construct **Init** -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

Defense

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +11 natural) hp 86 each (12d10+20) Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +4 Defensive Abilities reflect spells; DR 5/adamantine; Immune magic, construct traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft. Melee 2 slams +15 (1d10+3 plus bleed) Special Attacks bleed (1d8), dazzling brightness

Tactics

During Combat The stained glass golems spread their attacks out among as many opponents as possible, in order to maximize bleed damage. Each uses its reflect spells ability as often as possible. **Morale** The stained glass golems fight until destroyed.

Statistics

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** –, **Int** –, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1 **Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26 **Skills** Stealth +9

Special Abilities

Dazzling Brightness (Ex) A glass golem in an area of bright light dazzles any creature within 30 feet that sees it (Fortitude DC 16 negates). Once a creature

makes its save against this ability, it is immune to that golem's brightness for 24 hours. The DC is Constitution-based.

Immune to Magic (Ex) A glass golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against a glass golem, as noted below.

• A *shatter* spell damages a glass golem as if it were a crystalline creature.

• A *keen edge* spell affects all of a glass golem's slam attacks as if they were slashing weapons.

• A magical attack that deals cold damage slows a glass golem (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds (no saving throw).

• A magical attack that deals fire damage ends any slow effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. A glass golem gets no saving throw against fire effects.

Reflect Spells (Ex) As a free action once every 1d4 rounds, a glass golem can align its internal structure to enhance its resistance to magic for 1 round. During this time, the golem reflects spells (even spells that function differently against the golem as described in its immune to magic ability) as if under the effect of a *spell turning* spell.

The shattered remnants of a destroyed stained glass golem can be used as *dust of appearance*.

Area 7: Game Room (CR 8)

This room contains two felt-covered card tables and comfortable stools, around which clients could relax and play card or dice games with each other, or to play libidinous games with the prostitutes. When the PCs arrive, four men crowd around the far table, arms across each other's shoulders, engrossed in a game where they gamble for miniature dolls that resemble the Golden Slipper's prostitutes. The men wear frayed finery, and each has the face of a red-eyed swine. A DC 15 Perception check indicates that these men are all one creature, not four separate men. In truth, they are another animate dream drawn from the prostitutes' nightmares. If touched or interrupted, the pig-faced men turn on the PCs with a snort of rage.

"The Gamesmen," Animate Dream CR 8

See Area 1

Tactics

During Combat The animate dream relies on its *confusion* and *fear* abilities to disrupt attackers, resorting to incorporeal touch attacks with hoof-like fists only if necessary.

Morale The animate dream fights until destroyed.

Area 8: The Office (CR9)

Kokelia's magical heartstone was destroyed months ago, and she needed a secure location to craft another. The night hag took over Madam Matilda's office and private room when she arrived at the Golden Slipper two weeks ago, driving Madam Matilda to madness in order to insure her privacy. Kokelia is using the dreams from the Golden Slipper's prostitutes to create a new heartstone, in addition to crafting animate dreams to guard her newfound lair. The pages that the imp Arkthatek brought have proven somewhat useful in Kokelia's crafting, but she has no intention of rewarding the imp.

Kokelia, Night Hag CR9

XP 6,400

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar) Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

Defense

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+4 Dex, +11 natural) hp 92 (8d10+48) Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +9 DR 10/cold iron and magic; Immune charm, cold, fear, fire, sleep; SR 24

Offense

Speed 30 ft. **Melee** 2 claws +13 (1d4+5), bite +13 (2d6+5 plus

disease) (24, 13) (24, 13) (24, 13)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th)

Constant—detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law, detect magic

At will—deep slumber (DC 16), invisibility, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (DC 14)

Jactics

Before Combat Kokelia begins combat invisible. **During Combat** Kokelia uses *ray of enfeeblement* to weaken powerful foes, then wades into combat with her claws and bite.

Morale Kokelia defends her lair until reduced to 20 hit points or less, at which point she turns invisible and attempts to flee.

Statistics

Str 21, **Dex** 19, **Con** 22, **Int** 18, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17 **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 27

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Mounted Combat

Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +16, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (planes) +15, Perception +16, Ride +15, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +15

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal **SQ** change shape (any humanoid, *alter self*)

Special Abilities

Disease (Su) *Demon Fever*: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 20; *onset* immediate; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d6 Con damage (target must save a 2nd time or 1 point of the damage is drain instead); *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

When the PCs have defeated Kokelia, they can find the missing pages from Bydlo's *manual of bodily health* lying on her worktable, along with notes indicating that Kokelia was crafting a replacement heartstone with the prostitutes' nightmares. The worktable also contains 2,500 gp in gems and other arcane reagents and an *apple of eternal sleep*. The prostitutes are grateful for Kokelia's defeat and reward the PCs however you see fit.

Scaling this Adventure

5th level: Replace the animate dreams with wraiths. In Area 5, reduce the haunt's save DCs by 4, and the haunt inflicts 1 point of Strength damage on a failed save instead of a negative level. Remove one stained glass golem from Area 6. Apply the young simple template to Kokelia.

9th level: Add the advanced simple template to the animate dreams. In Area 4, increase the haunt's secondary effect to 1d4 negative levels each round instead of 1 negative level. In Area 6, add a third stained glass golem. Either add four levels of witch to Kokelia, or replace Kokelia with a jorogumo.



Rite Publishing Presents Coliseum Morpheuon: Anthology of Preams

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Mek'Madius (Tich of the Sun Shard)

ADVENTUREAWEEK.COM, LLP Mek'Madius concept by Jonathan Nelson Mek'Madius story and statistics by Nathan Land Cartography by Todd Gamble Character illustration by Tim Tyler

Mek'Madius once resided in the kingdom of Timaeus, and was a member of the council of wizards known as the Obelisk Order. In preparation for the arrival of the Shard of the Sun, Mek'Madius preached the benefits of using the shard to obtain unlimited power, power which would assist the Order and all of Timaeus in dominating any foes that would stand against them. The Obelisk Order vehemently opposed Mek'Madius's stance and voted unanimously to revoke his place on the council. Mek'Madius was thrown out onto the street with the commoners, where he began to plot his revenge.

As the Shard of the Sun grew closer to impacting the planet, and planetary annihilation was imminent, the Order began to march north in preparation for an attempt at interception and possible destruction of the Shard of the Sun. Keeping to the shadows and using a powerful artifact to remain undetected, Mek'Madius followed behind with nine of his former and most trusted apprentices. He planned to gain as much power as he could from the Shard of the Sun and stop the Order's plans. Mek'Madius was aware that with his power alone, he would not be able to stop the Obelisk Order, but a mass sacrifice using souls to fuel his magic would give him a definite advantage over his former comrades.

The Obelisk Order arrived at the projected impact location of the Shard of the Sun, faced one another and began the most powerful spell ever cast by mortals. Just as the Shard of the Sun appeared overhead, Mek'Madius sacrificed his nine apprentices and began a powerful spell of his own. The Obelisk Order was unable to stop him as their ritualistic arcane protection spell required they stay focused only on the Shard of the Sun. Mek'Madius focused the soul energy into a powerful absorption spell, attempting to siphon off a portion of the magical and radiant energy from the Shard. But Mek'Madius's evil and selfish acts came with a price; as a fragment of the Shard of the Sun broke off and tumbled toward the earth, Mek'Madius's very soul was drawn into the fragment. Mek'Madius's selfishness and reckless abuse of power had transformed him into an undead creature, permanently bound to the fragment, destined to experience his living death in utter isolation.

Fragment of the Sun Phylactery

Mek'Madius's phylactery is not one he made by choice. Mek'Madius was reckless and utilized souls to engage his absorption spell, which in turn channeled energy through his own soul. At the same time as he completed his energy absorption, the Obelisk Order repelled the Sun Shard from impacting the planet, causing fragments to break off.



One of the largest fragments reflected the energy absorption back into Mek'Madius, pulling his soul out of his body. His soul was sucked into the sky and slammed into the fragment as it plummeted toward the earth. Mek'Madius had been transformed into a lich, and the fragment of the Shard of the Sun his phylactery. The entire event was a complete mistake, but he soon would come to see this curse as a blessing in disguise.

The fragment stands at a height of seven feet and weighs 500 pounds. A strange dark red glow emanates from deep within the fragment and the ethereal voices of Mek'Madius's nine apprentices can still be heard chanting the words to the arcane ritual in an endless, droning loop.

Powers Granted by the Fragment of the Shard

Defensive Abilities: Immune fire, cold, Sun domain. These defensive abilities replace the normal lich immunities.

Special Abilities

Scorch Soul (Su): By making a ranged touch attack, Mek'Madius sends out a ray of pure negative energy dealing 1d8 +1 point of damage per 2 HD. This attack is



also treated as negative energy for the purpose of healing. The range of this is 5 feet for every 2 HD. When used, all living creatures with less than 1 HD, in a 10foot radius around Mek'Madius, turn to ash, which in turn heals him 1d8 hp for each creature slain.

Burning Aura (Su): Mek'Madius is surrounded by a constant aura of heat. This heat is so intense that small flammable objects will burst into flame. Creatures with less than 5 HD in a 60-foot radius immediately burst into flames taking 2d6 points of damage and must succeed on a Fortitude save or become exhausted. Creatures with at least 5 HD also take the 2d6 damage and must make the Fortitude save DC 20 or be fatigued for a number of rounds equal to the lich's HD. A successful save negates the effects, but not the damage. This ability can only be used during the daytime, and replaces the fear aura of a lich.

Destroying the Phylactery

The phylactery may be destroyed by bathing the fragment of the shard in the deepest shadows of a full solar eclipse of the sun for two minutes during the period of totality at a specially hallowed site.

Mek'Madius CR17

Male human (lich) wizard 15 LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human) Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25 Aura burning aura (60 ft., DC 20)

Defense

AC 27, touch 17, flat-footed 26 (+5 armor, +4 deflection, +1 Dex, +5 natural, +2 luck) hp 106 (15d6+45)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4; **DR** 15/bludgeoning and magic; **Immune** cold, fire, Sun domain, mind-affecting, polymorph; undead traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee staff of power +9/+4 (1d6+2/x2)

Ranged scorch soul 1d8+7 (range 35 ft.)

Special Attacks negative energy touch attack 1d8+7 (DC 20)

Wizard Spells Known (CL 15, 7 melee touch, 8 ranged touch)

8th—orb of the void (DC 24)

7th–delayed blast fireball (DC 23), finger of death (DC 23)

6th—*dispel magic, greater, elemental body III, create undead* (2)

5th—elemental body II (2), cloudkill (2) (DC 21), interposing hand

4th—stoneskin (DC 20), wall of fire (2), firefall (DC 20), obsidian flow (DC 20)

3rd-hold person (DC 19), ray of exhaustion (2) (DC 19), fireball (2) (DC 19)

2nd—blindness/deafness (DC 18), boiling blood (DC 18), fiery shuriken, fire breath (2) (DC 18), mad hallucination (DC 18)

1st—protection from good (DC 17), burning hands (DC 17), obscuring mist, magic missile, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement (DC 17)

o–(at will) ghost sound (DC 16), detect magic, mage hand, bleed (DC 16)

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** -, **Int** 23, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 16 **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 24

Feats Burning Spell, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes (2AoO/round), Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Elemental Spell: Fire, Empower Spell, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Bluff, Spell Penetration, Staff-Like Wand

Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Fly +9, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (engineering) +19, Knowledge (geography) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (local) +19, Knowledge (planes) +24, Knowledge (religion) +24, Linguistics +10, Perception +25, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +24 Stealth +9

Languages Abyssal, Common, Daemonic, Draconic, Elven, Ignan, Infernal, Klavekian

SQ bonded object: staff of power (1/day) (Sp), burning aura (DC 20), hand of the apprentice (9/day) (Su), metamagic mastery (4/day) (Su), rejuvenation (Su)

Combat Gear staff of power; **Other Gear** ring of protection +4, robe of the archmagi (black), elemental gem (fire), elixir of fire breath

Special Abilities

Bonded Object (Sp) *staff of power* (1/day) DC 20 + spell level to cast spells without the bonded object. Once per day, Mek'Madius can cast any spell in his spellbook for free.

Burning Aura (Su) Creatures with fewer than 5 HD in a 60-foot radius immediately burst into flames taking 2d6 points of damage and must succeed on a Fortitude save or become exhausted. Creatures with at least 5 HD also take the 2d6 damage and must make the Fortitude save DC 20 or be fatigued for 15 rounds. A successful save negates the effects, but not the damage. This ability can only be used during the daytime.

Scorch Soul (Su) By making a ranged touch attack, Mek'Madius sends out a ray of pure negative energy, to a range of 35 feet, dealing 1d8 +7 points of damage. This attack is also treated as negative energy for the purpose of healing. When used, all living creatures with less than 1 HD, in a 10-foot radius around Mek'Madius, turn to ash, which in turn heals him 1d8 hp for each creature slain.



Twenty Questions with Mark Gedak

By Steven D. Russell

1. Could you tell us a little about yourself?

I'm a 36 year old Canadian teacher, gamer and independent publisher. I have been tangentially involved with the gaming industry through playtesting and minor hobbylancing with a handful of companies from early in the 3.0 days. Since 2008, I have run the Grand OGL Wiki and in August of 2010, I officially launched Purple Duck Games as an independent company.

2. What is your home game like?

In my home game we are currently switching off between a Kingmaker campaign that I GM and a Skull and Shackles campaign that Perry Fehr has just started. Both Perry and I are old school GMs, though I tend to me a little more kitchen-sinky than he is at the table. Top age at our table is 43 and the low end is 22. We have a few players that have been with us for years and years and other players that are new to us and Pathfinder.

3. What is your favorite Paizo product?

My favorite Paizo product has to be *Goblins of Golarion*. Paizo did an incredible job redeeming goblins from staple cannon fodder to the realm of psychotic, arsonist muppets. We had an awesome time with their Free RPG Day release "We Be Goblins" last year and Paizo has really made goblins a fun race to run as a GM or as a player. Overall, I have really enjoyed all the Player's Companion volumes that have focused on the various races of Golarion.

4. You run Purple Duck Games, how did that start and how would you characterize your company today?

Purple Duck Games was created as an offshoot of my work with Stefen Styrsky on the Forgotten Foes with Tricky Owlbear Publishing. When Stefen and I finished up our writing for Forgotten Foes, I proposed an informal partnership with Stefen to continue to develop material together under the Purple Duck Games banner. Over the first two years, Stefen and I worked to establish our product lines and develop material to support our campaigns. Times have changed and Stefen has had to back away from Purple Duck Games due to other commitments, but I continue to expand the work of Purple Duck Games with new writers and artists.

5. What is the Purple Mountain and could you tell us a little about it?

Purple Mountain is a series of twenty adventures written for the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* with each adventure keyed to a single character level.



The Purple Mountain series is designed to be a classic mega-dungeon. You know the kind...

It doesn't have a grand plot or even a consistent theme level to level. Instead, it has pathways to the subterranean realms, prisons for elementals, ancient ruins, lost civilizations, legendary weapons, mysterious magic, mines, slave pits, elemental nodes, water-filled passages, mazes, trick doors, traps, haunted levels, classic monsters (ropers, trappers, mimics, otyughs [especially otyughs], owlbears), dragons, monsters too big to have ever fit down those hallways, and artifacts!

A classic mega-dungeon with everything wrong and right about it!

We have two issues of Purple Mountain already released, a subscription available through gumroad, two more that are through editing and another three actively in development. I'm pretty excited to be helming this major adventure location and look forward to all the challenges it presents us. It has also been great working with Kristian Richards of Crooked Staff Publishing who has handled all our map needs.

6. What has been your best moment developing this product so far?

We have had a ton of fun playtesting and tweaking the modules to provide for a very challenging adventure for our table and hopefully others.

7. What do you feel is going to be the most ingenious part of that product?

I like the portability of Purple Mountain, each of the modules has goals and objectives for players to accomplish if they are not trying to solve the megadungeon as a whole. Each level works well as a stand-alone dungeon, as well as part of a megadungeon. We are trying to build twenty solid adventures that are fun to play independently or strung together without having to worry about too much plot. There are lots of adventure paths and many good ones; in fact, we are playing two such paths right now.

8. What do you expect will be the most challenging aspect of working on it?

The most challenging thing for this product is letting go. When I started Purple Mountain, I intended it to be my personal project, but based upon the demands on my time for other projects, layout and management of the company, it meant I needed to share the Mountain with others. As we move forward, I'm sure the next major challenge will be tacking down a final release date for the final part of the Mountain.

9. What have you learned while working on its development so far?

Project management is a big part of my work on Purple Mountain. When I started Purple Duck Games, I would write a product or Stefen would write a product and when it was done we would find the art we would need, then take it through editing, layout and it was a conveyer belt system that worked for a small operation with a small product line base. As Purple Duck Games has grown larger and I work with multiple freelancers, I have to coordinate between multiple writers, my editors and artists, so that when I have a book come in to me it can move to publication in a reasonable fashion and not get stuck in limbo or rushed into production. Learning to manage projects is the most important thing that I have had to learn, so that everything gets that care and concern it deserves so that we can release great products.

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

Sadly, as Purple Duck Games has gotten busier and busier, I've had far less time to read the work of other publishers. That said, one product and line that is a mainstay at our table is the Psionics Unleashed and Psionics Expanded series by Dreamscarred Press. Psionics have always been a mainstay of my *Dungeons & Dragons* games and I am very pleased with updates and new material that the Dreamscarred Press has created for the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*.

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

As a customer, I am looking for something that is crunchy or that introduces new concepts into the system. For my campaigns, I am using the adventure paths by Paizo, so I mostly look for bits that I can use to add to my game as monsters, treasures and player options. As a publisher, I look for interesting new mechanics and options that I can use to expand the scope of my Porphyra setting.



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

I have not been reading a lot of third party writers lately as I've been too busy. If I had to pick from Paizo's writers I would have to say I really like the sourcebook work of Amber E. Scott.

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

My advice to would-be freelancers would be to make sure you understand the specifics of the assignment, respond promptly to questions or email, do not exceed your word count, deliver a creative, clean product and deliver the product on time. If a freelancer can do all of those things, Purple Duck Games will continue to find work for them.

14. Who is your favorite illustrator?

Purple Duck Games has worked with a number of illustrators in the two years that we have been in operation. Gary Dupuis and Tamas Baranya are both great illustrators we have used time and again. Both are very professional to work with, both are very good at meeting deadlines and both do excellent work. Gary is currently locked away working on the art for the Monsters Unleashed project (which is a spiritual successor to Forgotten Foes) and Tamas has done art for almost all of the Legendary Treasures line. You can see their work on my Pinterest boards.

http://pinterest.com/PurpleDuckGames/garydupuis/ http://pinterest.com/PurpleDuckGames/tamasbaranya/

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

Two of my favorite fan responses were first when one of my fans used Purple Mountain – Level One as the starting module for his Tunnels and Trolls campaign (http://protectivepentagram.blogspot.ca/2011/12/aft er-reading-review-of-first-level-of.html). In the mind, I'm a strong crunch-writer and an average fluff-writer so I found it flattering that someone would take the story as I'd written it and then jettison the crunchy bits to rewrite it for his preferred system.

The second one was a googlechat message that popped up one day on my computer as I was teaching that simply said.

Customer: Two months later the Thursday group still keeps bringing up the Worm that Walks from Purple Mountain. :)

16. Could you give us an exclusive hint or teaser about Gods of Porphyra?

Many publishers have released very good books with great pantheons which I have enjoyed as a gamer. As a publisher, I was always less enthused because invariably the gods, their histories and motivations were designated as closed content meaning that I could not use their gods in my products. For a while, Purple Duck Games just went with a generic plan as so many companies do and refer to other gods obliquely such as the God of the Hunt and Community or the Goddess of Valor even though we all secretly know those titles are being used to refer to someone else's work.

In April of this year, I launched a search for writers to contribute to an open Pantheon. Gods of Porphyra is the result of the hard work of over a dozen writers who stepped up to help us create a twenty-seven god pantheon that can be used as open game content in our products and the products of any other publisher that wishes to use them. I'm doing initial layout on Gods of Porphyra now and expect it to be out in early June.

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

I have two goals that I never seem to make any headway on as they often get sidelined by other demands. First, I need learn to be more present on the boards. I am generally introverted and not good at promoting myself at all. Being the public face of Purple Duck Games is not something that comes naturally to me and it is something that I need to work on. I feel that most industry people with whom I have worked find me honest, helpful and trustworthy, but those are one-on-one relationships and I tend to freeze up as I approach forums. I also need to update my blog more regularly.

Second, I have a few products in my back catalog that are hideous things that I released way back before I had even the remotest sense of layout. Now that I have a clear, established style, I need go back and update a handful of old products to the current Purple Duck style.

18. Can you talk a bit about your Legendary Series?

We have a couple of Legendary series under the Purple Duck Games banner. The first and most successful of the series is the legendary magic items series. There are six volumes in this series, three dedicated to weapons, one to wondrous items, one to shields and one to armor. Each of the volumes highlights a number of magic items, provides them with a history and link to the world of Porphyra as well as the requirements for the item to be attuned to the character. Once attuned to a character, the item naturally increases in power alongside the character so that the magic item can be with them their entire adventuring career, instead of merely until a +2 weapon appears in the monster's treasure hoard.

We also have a Legendary Races series that has three volumes for examining options to play mythic races such as cyclops, medusa and rakshasa as player characters. The smallest series is our single-issue Legendary Classes where we are looking to expand on the available character classes for players. So far we have the Rook by Thomas Baumbach, but David Nicholas Ross is working on another project that should fit into this line as well.

19. Do you only publish *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible products?

In addition to our *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* compatible products we also have an ever growing range of stock art available from among the art we have procured for our products and we have recently relaunched the Heroic Moments line of superheroic supplements for the 4C system that were originally published by Highmoon Games. We have a few OSR-type products in development but they are currently in the hands of freelancers so until I have the products for editing I'm reluctant to mention them.

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

We are always looking for writers. Freelancers looking to write for Purple Duck Games should contact me at gedakm@gmail.com. Scions of Evil

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

This pdf is 201 pages, 1 page front cover, page 1 advertisement, 3 pages of editorial/author bios, 2 pages of ToC/foreword, 3 pages of statblocks by CR, 1 page SRD, 1 page back cover, leaving 189 pages of content, so what exactly do we get here?

Raging Swan Press has released a whole bunch of great adversary-pdfs and this pdf collects them for a total of 135 statblocks, for the first time in print. Let that sink in. Better yet, almost all of them get the "Raging Swan NPC"-treatment, i.e. they come with hooks, mannerisms, distinguishing features etc.

The pdf kicks off with the general minions collected from the pdfs, including gargoyle

scouts and ghast hordelings and even unique creatures like an invisible stalker rogue, a quasit rogue or a master spy.

The very first villain presented makes already one thing clear to astute readers - this pdf not only collects the individual pdfs - it also includes new content, for the first foe is called "A Memory of Allwinter" and is essentially a demi-lich remnant of a prehistoric age with the ice-age wiping out this ancient people and its gods, the souls bereft of an afterlife coalesced into this new form. Now if that is not a cool and original take on the demi-lich, I don't know what is. And he's not the only one: There's for example a vampire balor fighter with a cadre of graveknight antipaladin mariliths... The quality of the new NPCs herein is beyond reproach.

So, what about the components pdfs? I'll give you the run-down of the individual reviews I've done for them:

Villains I: 4 stars

Villains II: 5 stars + Seal of Approval

Villains III: 4.5 stars

Thanegar's Horde: 4.5 stars (A disillusioned goblinoid horde)

Kai's Scoundrels: 4 stars (A team of smugglers with internal struggles)

Fellowship of the Blackened Oak: 4.5 stars (Evil/neutral nature-themed adventurers serving a dragon)



Brethren of the Crimson Altar: 5 stars + Seal of Approval (A cabal of vampires)

Bandits of the Rampant Horror: 5 stars + Seal of Approval (Twist on the Camelot myth - Spriggan knights, baby!) Antipaladins: 5 stars

It should be noted that webenhancements like smuggling tactics for Kai's Scoundrels as well as gear and the like have been included in this collection

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are topnotch - I noticed no glitches that jumped to my immediate attention - quite a feat at this length. Layout adheres to a 2column b/w-standard and some

new pieces of b/w-artworks are mixed with the ones you may already know from the individual pdfs. The compilation comes with extensive, nested bookmarks and a screen version as well as one optimized for being printed. Take a look at those ratings.

Then let me assure you that the new pieces of content, were they collected in a single pdf, would probably score 5 stars and perhaps even the seal of approval. Then, take a good look at the price. 14 bucks. For almost 200 pages of expertly done villains and characters, for 135 statblocks. That's probably a bangto-buck ratio that will be hard to beat indeed. While no collated statblock-pdf for the Raging Swan statblock library is provided, at this ratio, I'm not going to complain about it. If you've been on the fence about the pdfs, get this. If you want dead tree, get this, And if you just want to see the new creatures, I'd also recommend this. If you already own all component pdfs, though, you have to weigh whether the 20 new villains and the new minions herein as well as having them all collected in one massive book/pdf will be worth it. On its own merit, this compilation can be considered a dark gem that will have many a GM out there cackle with glee. Since the new villains often deliver rather complex statblocks and cool ideas, I'll settle for a final verdict of 5 stars + Endzeitgeist seal of approval. If you haven't checked out what Raging Swan as to offer, get this selection of vileness!

Endzeitgeist out.

Way of the Samurai

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

This pdf is 52 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page ToC, 1 page SRD, 1 page advertisement, 1 page back cover, leaving a total of 46 pages of content for this faction guide, so let's check it out!

The samurai-class by Paizo has not gotten any love by 3pps so far - this pdf tries to remedy that. Kaidan, the Japanese-horror-setting by Rite Publishing serves as a backdrop, but the crunch in here and its fluff is generic enough to make the pdf usable for just about any Asian-themed setting. In the tradition of the books by RiP, the pdf kicks off with an aptly-written in-character prose that details the samurai and REALLY helps Western minds wrap their head around the concepts of Bushido and a Samurai's codex and mindset - a section Ultimate Combat had heretofore painfully neglected. If you want to play a samurai, this section can essentially be considered a must-read. Clichés on when Seppuku is appropriate, the virtues etc. are addressed, explained and made clear - commendable!

And then there's honor - quintessential for a Samurai, this pdf provides an easily inserted into a running game, simple mechanic for tracking the honor of individual characters - in upcoming releases e.g. legendary weapons will be influenced by this and general social repercussions for honor-scores and the interaction with people are covered.

After that, we delve into the crunch of the book - 9 new, balanced samurai traits are provided and then there are introduced to the new archetypes: The Tanegashima is a musket-using gunslinger that gains two new deeds and can deliver devastating volleys at higher levels, but is regarded with suspicion in the conservative culture. Paladins may now opt to become Yamabushi - divine, ascetic foes of the undead that can bond with Yomi or Kami to either improve his weapon or call an outsider ally to his help. The swift Yojinbo (Ranger archetype) becomes a quite hardy foe that replaces hunter's bond with the ability to bond with a weapon or mount and selects enemy clans instead of favored enemy, the solitary warriors make for a neat, complex archetype that also features a new combat style. The next archetypes are all for the samurai-class - the Kuge can be considered an aristocratic samurai that excels not only in the field of battle, but also at court and gains improved leadership capabilities. The Nitōjutsu Sensei is no doubt influenced by the legendary Miyamoto Musashi and lets a samurai fight with two swords, but be frowned upon by society and thus lose his/her order for the art of the blade. The Tajiya are devoted to ridding the world of the supernatural blights that plague it, while the Yabusame can issue far challenges



and make it possible to play an archery-focused samurai-class.

That's not where the pdf stops, though: We also get new samurai orders: The order of the Shogun gains challenges that help allies, a steady mind and even negate one critical hit per day. The order of the Tajiya, much like the archetype, focuses on purging the unclean from the land while the Order of the undying emperor features dark masters of courtly intrigue. It should be noted that the orders all come with their edicts.

The most complex of the archetypes can almost considered to be an alternate class of its own - The Onmyoji wizard uses origmais that go up in flames when the spells on them are cast and also get shikigami familiars that come with full coverage - they essentially are oni-like goblins. I really liked the evocative and iconic flair of this archetype in particular, though I would have loved to see an alternate version with rules-synergy with Sutra Magic from the HotJO-setting.

There are also two PrCs: The Bugyo (10 levels, d10, 4+Int skills, full BAB, medium will-save) is a samurai

with significant official authority, massive social graces and competence with tactical finesse, making this a valid choice to depict a sophisticated authority figure. The Mosa (10 levels, d10, 2+Int skills per level, full BAB, medium fort-save)on the other hand is essentially a martial tank with stalwart defense and gaining progressively better DR who also gets limited access to challenges and samurai-style abilities without being necessarily of the class.

6 new feats are also part of the deal, including improved riding skills while armored, advantages gained by honor and one that grants you a +2 bonus on iterative attacks, making the lower level attacks of fighting classes slightly less useless.

The next section is a godsend for DMs - essentially a toolkit on how to design your own samurai-clan - crests (sample images provided), naming conventions, stats (similar to how community statblocks work), a solid selection of qualities for the clans and daimyos as well as several sample clans are provided.

The village of Kawashi (with a gorgeous full-color map) is given as an example town to house the sample Taketsune-clan and comes not only with sample statblocks and a gazetteer-like section for the community, but also for the clan, 6 sample NPCs and hooks to spawn adventures and intrigue from the getgo. This section also contains 2 sample magical items - a katana and a kabuto helmet with a rather sinister twist.

The pdf closes with stats for the Shikigami as a creature and as a familiar and a glossary of terms.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good, though I noticed some very minor glitches here and there minor changes in font-size and the like - nothing impeding my enjoyment of the pdf. Layout adheres to the bamboo-covered two-column standard and comes with fitting full-color illustrations in the traditional Japanese style. The cartography of the sample village is awesome, though I would have loved a key-less, player-friendly version. The pdf comes with no printer-friendly b/w-version, but printing it in greyscale does not take a big toll on ink/toner. The pdf comes with extensive bookmarks.After "Way of the Yakuza", a good, though not absolutely stellar book, I was rather skeptical on this one. Was my skepticism well founded? I'll come out and say it: Jonathan McAnulty, Will Cardell and Michael K. Tumey have created THE definite sourcebook for the samurai, not only in the Kaidan-setting, but for EVERY Asianthemed setting for PFRPG. This book takes an up to now neglected class and gives it the polish, love and options it needs - mechanically sound, well-written, concise and flavorful in design and suitable for both low- and high fantasy, this pdf is a must-buy for anyone even remotely intrigued by samurais especially due to the excellent bang-for-buck-ratio: 46



pages for 5 bucks make this not only a great pdf, but a steal as well. Final verdict? 5 stars, Endzeitgeist seal of approval. Check this out!

Endzeitgeist out.

Power Word Spells: Jore of the First Janguage

By Super Genius Games Review by Joshua "KTFish7" Gullion 5 out of 5 Stars!

With a weight of 15 pages (cover and OGL eating two of those) this PDF starts us out with an absolutely gorgeous cover piece of art from Lin Bo. The iconography of this cover piece definitely convey the sense of ancient secrets of power. Internally, the artwork is B&W, with pieces ranging from good to OK. This PDF continues a new look from the SGG camp for layout, going with a full page cover and dual column with embedded artwork formatting approach. Editing and spelling both appeared to be excellent, nothing really jumped out and caught my attention.

Building an entirely new game mechanic, and form of magic, from three spells essentially would be daunting to say the least. It's not like there was truly a lot there to establish a ground work to build on, nothing established and accepted anyway. And yet, that's exactly what has been done here, and done in a logical, clear and understandable manner. The flow of thought behind the choices make sense, utilizing what could easily have been a game unbalancing element with an impressive precision, a more scalpel approach as opposed to the sword. What we end up with is essentially the first spoken language holding within the sound of the words the power of perfection, in that these are the terms that originally defined the universe, and all within it, before the many races and beings diluted the language down into their own tongues. An entire language that reverberated with power through those who spoke it. As time marched on this language lost a great deal of its inner power due to it no longer being the pinnacle of definition for reality, but it still operates perfectly as a form of channeling mystic powers into a clear and precise singular thought.

Introducing 7 new feats all tied to the concept of learning and exploring more of the First Language, we are given:

First Language Syntax - increasing the hp categories of your power words by a percentage, and a Greater variety of same feat.

Heighten Power Word - increase the effective level of your Power Word spells, thereby increasing the hp maximums.

Lore of the First Language – read magic at will as well as communicate in any language.

Master of the First Language – Swap prepared spells for power word spellslingers

Speaker of the First Language – power word spell as a spell like ability

Split Word – two targets with one power word spell, splitting the effect between them.

What book on a new avenue of magic to explore would be complete without new spells, Owen was kind enough to give us 20 within this collection, and I



personally am hoping to see a Bullet Point at least giving us a few more. Bards, the Magus, Sorcerers, Wizards, and Witches all see new spells added to their lists with this set, with a great deal of overlap (obviously). Not wanting to go through the entire list and ruin the book for you, we'll pick out a few choice samples, such as Power Word Mute, Frighten, Combust, Inspire and Bleed. The mechanics for each operate as the original three, targeting a specific range determined by the targets current hp total at the casting of the spell. And yes, we now have Power Word options all the way down to level 1 spells, with Dazzle, Fascinate and Hesitate. Spells are presented in standard class listings followed by full definitions. Contained within the spell descriptions is a 3/4 page discussion on the issue of balance, and what had to be considered and weighed with the design of these spells, as the issue of balancing a body of spells with no saves is a concern, and done wrong, could destroy a game. I'll tell you this much, the argument put forth within this discussion makes some very good points that put the power word spells in a different light by comparing them to the spells they share levels with, and the circumstances under which they must be used or simply not have the desired effects.

Finishing out with a new treat for clerical types, the Logos Domain draws upon the primal power of the First Language, with a domain spell list taken from the collection of twenty new spells. Along with the spell list, Logos followers receive three domain powers (based upon level) such as bonus languages from Wisdom as well as Intelligence, with no limit on languages to choose from. Voice of Power allows for a swift action casting of a power word spell, and Power Word Command – acting as a the command spell. It should be noted that only through this domain do clerical types have any access to these additional power word spells.

Final thoughts, this is the type of book I love to see design wise. Taking something small, but iconic, from the accepted collective that we all know and have fond memories of utilizing and being victimized by throughout the years, and expanding it to allow for so much more. The idea of specialists comes to mind instantly, and I can only hope the Geniuses are contemplating along those very same lines (if not someone else...hint..hint). Is there potential for mass abuse and game breaking mechanics? Sure. There was in Ultimate Combat and the APG also. Any playgroup can tear down the system if you let them, which is why it is up to a GM to control the flow of new material, and take the initiative to introduce ideas properly. This is one of those ideas that is worth that introduction, as there are some truly cool ideas contained within the simplicity of the power words. And besides, who doesn't want to field a spell chucker with an arsenal of power that requires not but one word to unleash?

Final rating can be no less than a 5 for this, as my only complaint is that I want more. An archetype, more spells, perhaps even a bloodline...there is so much here to work with.







Faces of the Tarnished Souk: Po'Kesteros, the Lostling

by Rite Publishing Review by Joshua "KTFish7" Gullion 5 out of 5 Stars!

Po'Kesteros, the latest offering in the Faces of the Tarnished Souk line shows just what can truly be done with the excellent Luckbringer class, in a very well executed manner. Following the standard Rite format of the dual column with embedded artwork (all B&W with two of the pieces being close up details taken from the excellent cover piece from Kimagu, and one being the cover piece from the second book in the Luckbringer series – 10 Luckbringer Feats. Editing/Spelling all looked good, and I found no stumbling blocks to interrupt the flow of reading or understanding, which is always a good thing. After OGL, credits and the rest, we are left with a solid 11 pages of material covering Po'Kesteros and a sampling of templates (along with a few example creatures). The Pdf also comes fully bookmarked, which always pleases me.

So who is Po'Kesteros? Well, he's Peter Pan, all grown up...with a blood lust. Stolen by dark fey as a babe, this half elven fey grew up in a world unlike the one he was intended to, developing a specific set of talents designed to not only allow him to survive such an upbringing, but to make him a very, very dangerous man to be near. He chooses to focus on what is in front of him, living in the here and now, rather than placing any value or faith in what the future may bring, knowing full well how quickly all one knows can be taken, and how uncertain tomorrow truly is.

Presented with three separate CR ratings, giving you a range of variables to utilize as to which Po'Kesteros you wish to unleash upon your playgroup, we are given write-ups for a CR 7, 15 & a 20. With the CR7 we are also given the reason behind the name, as he starts his journey as Poor Kesteros, the Boy the Fairies took, shortening it later in life to Po'Kesteros. Amongst his abilities are the Formula Book for his sole level alchemist level, and the Enhanced NPC ability (which if you are unfamiliar with, grants him a 25 point buy, PC level wealth, 2 traits, and increases his CR by +1. From there we get into the wonderful world of the Luckbringer as far as the rest of his amazingly useful abilities, which is one of those moments where this PDF could have hit a snag, but I gladly get to report that the designers were thinking ahead, and presented here the crunch one would need to utilize all of Po'Kesteros' Luckbringer Class abilities. I still recommend if you have not picked up the Luckbringer class book, to do so, as reading the crunch for a few class abilities will not fully give you the feel and vibe of a class, and the book is flat out worth it regardless.

Now, on top of the solid design that has gone into this



character, both in personality and crunch, we are presented with templates (and variant crunch for Po'Kesteros if you wish to use the templates on him) such as the Fey Creature, Adaptable Creature, Preternatural and Trickster Creatures. And yes, there's still more.

How about three new Feats, two for the Luckbringer class (Improved Narrow Escape: negates need to spend a moment of chance to use Narraw Escape, and Motion of the Moirai: as long as you have a moment of chance in your pool, fateful footing's speed rate benefit is continuous, and the negative effects are permanent.) And, for those other classes out there, how about Shadow Strike, allowing for precision damage against targets with concealment. For Traits we have Dream-Scarred: having suffered an extreme trauma, you now cling to the faintest of memory of lost Hope, and are never without Dreams. Or, if that isn't up your alley for trait choices, how's Suspicious? At a tender age you came to learn that someone you trusted has played you for a fool and lied or mislead you, causing you to trust no one and question everything.

The Ta Mo Dagger (a pair of nested daggers forming a small baton) and Elven Long Knife would be the two pieces of standard equipment introduced, both of them small, light bladed weapons. A new weapon enhancement, Dream Shattering: does exactly what you might think....it destroys the Goals, Aspirations and Dreams of those it successfully hits with a critical. Very wicked weapon enhancement for the Coliseum Morpheum setting to say the least. The remaining new goodies would be a handful of new magic items, such as the Beast Chaplet: allowing one to transform their head into a feral form, gaining a bite attack. Gauntlets of Blood: are vicious spiked gauntlets with a thirst of their own, causing not only crit multiplied damage on confirmed criticals, but additional bleed damage as well. Swift End: OK, this one actually stopped me when I got to the end of its description....starts out looking like a good blade, got a bonus, a few nice enhancements (keen, speed) but then you get to what it does on a confirmed critical against a favored enemy....I will never let my Ranger PC at my table near this thing, lol. He rolls way to many criticals...lol. The weapon unleashes a harm (as per the spell) effect upon succeeding on a crit roll, adding serious injury to the damage you just did. And Viper's Kisses: ta mo daggers formed of the fangs of an immense serpent, these blades subject a victim to a poison (as per the spell) effect if they both hit a victim within the same round.

So, final thoughts on the latest Tarnished Face....he's creepy, and that's a good thing, to say the least. He truly did have me thinking, looking at his art, and reading his background, what if Pan had been taken by a darker fey, how very different that particular Lost Boy would have been. My players are no where near ready level wise to be going anywhere near the Coliseum, and I fear for their sakes that means Po'Kesteros will have to come to them, as this is one NPC that demands time at a game table. I love the story that defines him, the artwork that captures him, and the solid usage of the Luckbringer class to truly build a solid challenge for a playgroup that will not only endanger them, but frustrate them immensely.

A solid 5 star, with a bonus star stuck up there right beside, making this one a 6!







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