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Editorial

by Dave Paul

I have been re-reading a lot of very old history and philosophy lately. It's a hazard of more than one of my many jobs. Back in the day, I was running a campaign set in the planes for my many veteran players when it occurred to me that I could probably craft an entire campaign around the philosophical works of a great many of Europe's finest thinkers. Back then, I was really focused on some of the ancient thinkers and their works. Plato's Republic, for instance, gives us so many wonderful options. He writes of several forms of governments and many classes of people. What a marvelous thing for people to be divided into those with souls of gold, silver, bronze or iron. Players' characters already have plenty of problems with their worlds and governments, what with all the abysmal hierarchies, secular or religious. How wonderful to cast these issues in such a stark and confrontational way. With just the least addition, perhaps in such a place everyone is required to carry implements or wear emblems or tokens of their associated metal.

Lately though, I've been reading other works. Hobbes had a number of things to say about ideal governments and just what our roles are in relation to our governments. In Leviathan, he suggested utter obedience on the part of the subjects. Only by giving up some of their freedoms could the subjects gain the benefits of civilized society. When people are busy trying to exploit and take advantage of one another, they're prevented from working collaboratively to do all the amazing things a culture can provide. On the other hand, when people are busy working on massive projects (cathedrals, enormous sailing vessels, great castles, etc.), they're too busy to be bothered with taking advantage of one another.

That Plato and Hobbes (and all the other philosophers) were ultimately wrong about their conjectures regarding the best ways for humans to live is not the point. There is so much material in their pages from which gamers and GMs can draw for inspiration. What's not to love about Hobbes' idea of a society of people obliged to obey the leader? We've seen this before, we'll see it again. But, twist it a bit. Consider the frontispiece of Leviathan. It shows what looks like a giant, or perhaps a god, wearing a crown. This giant is arising out of the ground, perhaps walking into the foreground from somewhere far away. The being is immense and overbearing. It wields a sword in its right hand and a staff in the left. If you look closely, you see that the upper body and arms of this being are composed of hundreds of people, all of whom are facing toward the being (so that you see the backs of their heads). How is this not the coolest? Given a fantasy setting, this being might in fact be the government. Those people making up its chest and arms

might in fact be its subjects. Perhaps, if things are going horribly wrong, the being is an undead god and the people are trapped souls. The opportunities here are tremendous.

In addition I was considering the models of medicine and science from the ancient days until the pre-Renaissance period. What's not to love about a system of understanding human physical well being based on blood, bile and phlegm? In this issue of Pathways, you'll see in the interview some comments about The Genius Guide to Mosaic Mage and magic based on color. Someone could, I suppose, develop a model of curative magic, perhaps for use in a system that wanted divine spells to be something else, something not, well, divine. Imagine a fantasy setting wherein there are competing forms of magic, where healing and regeneration and restorative magic functions, but where there are no gods. The healers in this system rely more heavily upon alchemy perhaps, and the skills of healing, but also have access to magic based upon the four humors, upon the four elements, and upon the contrasts between hot/cold and wet/dry. It could be done. In such a system, of course, there could be comparative benefits to certain classes or personalities. After all, those same thinkers gave us the modern conceptions of the words "sanguine" and "melancholy" and they derived in large part from how they were used here. Someone with a cold and dry disposition might very well have the right virtues to serve as an icy cold defender; someone with a hot and wet personality might be full of charm and rousing cheer. Maybe fighters are more readily or more easily cured by magic that heals the body, and mages are more easily affected by curatives that affect the mind.

You know, I might be on to something here









By J.H. Gulliver

Just in time for Halloween!

If you need some scary and terrifying ideas to spice up your campaign, Rite Publishing has what you need.



Witchfire Creature Jemplate

By Steven D. Russell, Illustration by Mark Hyzer

The fell powers of undeath rejoice when an exceptionally vile female monstrosity dies (especially hags and witches), transforming these wicked crones into incorporeal undead known as witchfires. These ghostly creatures appear much as they did in life, although the grotesque undead energy that births them allows them to appear young and attractive if they wish and wreathes their insubstantial bodies in a powerful aura of sickly green flame, referred to as "witchflame" in local legends. Creating an Witchfire Creature

"Witchfire" is an acquired template that can be added to any living, intelligent, female creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature).

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

CR: +3

Alignment: Changes to any Evil.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead with the appropriate augmented subtype, plus the incorporeal subtype if the base creature did not already have it. Do not recalculate base attack bonuses, saves, or skill points. Size is unchanged.

Hit Dice: Change all racial Hit Dice to d8s, its hit points are modified by its Cha modifier rather than its Con modifier.

Armor Class: The base creature's armor, shield, and natural armor bonuses no longer apply, but the witchfire gains a deflection bonus to armor class equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher.

Speed: A witchfire loses all the base creature's speeds and gains a fly speed equal to double the base creature's highest speed, with perfect maneuverability.

Attack: The witchfire loses all the base creature's natural attacks, and its weapon and armor proficiencies. The witchfire gains a primary incorporeal touch attack and a witchflame bolt (see below). A witchfire uses its primary incorporeal touch attack when making an attack action. Because an incorporeal creature has no Strength score, its Dexterity modifier, rather than its Strength modifier applies to all its attack rolls. Both the witchfire's incorporeal touch attack and ranged bolt deal a number of d6 damage equal to the witchfire's challenge rating in fire damage (a CR 9 witchfire deals 9d6) plus its witchflame (see below). A bolt of witchflame has a range of 60 feet with no range increment. **Defenses/Qualities:** Channel resistance +4, incorporeal,

undead traits; Immune fire

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

Command Will o' Wisp (Su): A witchfire can automatically command all normal will o' wisps within 30 feet as a free action. This functions as a dominate monster (DC 10 +1/2 the witchfire's HD + its Cha modifier). Normal will o' wisps never attack a witchfire unless compelled.

Witchflame (Su): Any creature damaged by the incorporeal touch or ranged bolt attacks of a witchfire

must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 +1/2 the witchfire's HD + its Cha modifier) or become engulfed in sickly green flames. While these eerie flames deal no additional damage, the affected creature glows as per faerie fire and gains the sickened condition. While under the effects of the witchflame, the victim also gains vulnerability to fire weakness (taking half again as much damage (+50%) from fire attacks of any sort). This effect persists for 1 minute per HD of the witchfire. The supernatural flames can only be extinguished before this duration expires by a break enchantment, miracle, remove curse, or wish spellthe effective caster level of the witchflame is equal to the witchfire's HD. Any creature entering the same square as a witchfire or striking it with a melee attack must succeed on a Will save (same DC) or begin burning with witchflame, even if it would not otherwise harm the witchfire because of its incorporeal nature.

Spell-Like Abilities: A witchfire with an Int or Wis score of 8 or higher has a cumulative number of spell-like abilities set by its HD. Unless otherwise noted, an ability is usable at will. CL equals the creature's HD (or the CL of the base creature's spell-like abilities, whichever is higher).

HD	Spell-like Abilities
1-2	disguise self
3-4	dancing lights
5-6	ghost sound
7-8	ray of enfeeblement
9-10	pyrotechnics
11-12	invisibility
13-14	summon (level 4, 2 will-o'-wisps 50% 1/day)
15-16	non-detection (continuous)
17-18	screen
19-20	energy drain (3/day)

Abilities: Adjust from the base creature as follows:

Dex +8 (+4 to Ranged attack rolls; AC and touch AC, Initiative, and Ref saves. +4 to Acrobatics, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth checks, add +4 to any of the base creature's Dexterity-based DCs), Cha +10 (+5 to Bluff, diplomacy, Disguise, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Perform, and Use Magic Device; attempts to influence others, and Channel Energy DCs, +5 to any of the base creature's Charisma-based DCs). As an incorporeal creature, a witchfire lacks a Strength score, and as an undead creature, it has no Constitution score.



Mabyn, The Burning Silence XP 38,400

CR 14

CE Medium undead (augmented [monstrous humanoid], incorporeal, cold)

Init +9; Senses blindsight 60 ft., scent; Perception +21

Defense

AC 28, touch 28, flat-footed 28 (+9 Dex, +9 deflection) hp 203 (14d8+126)

Fort +8, Ref +18, Will +13

Defensive Abilities: channel resistance +4, incorporeal, witchflame (DC 26), undead traits; **DR** 10/cold iron and magic; **Immune** acid, charm, cold, fear, fire, gaze attacks, sleep; **SR** 22

Offense

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +23 (14d6 fire plus witchflame) **Ranged** witchflame bolt* +23 (14d6 fire plus witchflame) **Special Attacks:** *command will o' wisp* (DC 26), *shaping touch, witchflame* (DC 26)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +18)

Constant—detect good, detect magic, detect thoughts (DC 16)

At will—contagion (DC 17), cure light wounds, dancing lights, diminish plants, ghost sound (DC 19) inflict light wounds (DC 15), invisibility, minor creation, poison (DC 17), pyrotechnics, ray of enfeeblement (DC 20)

3/day—bestow curse (DC 17), blindness/deafness (DC 16), empowered cone of cold (DC 19), crushing despair (DC 17), silence (DC 16)

1/day—control weather, summon (level 4, 2 will-o'wisps 50% 1/day)

Jactics

Before Combat Mabyn is a patient opponent, using guerrilla tactics. She prefers to attack from stealth and use ranged sniper tactics in combination with her invisibility, silence, and her ability to travel through objects incorporeally. She often uses dancing lights and summoned will o' wisps to distract opponents.

During Combat Mabyn attacks from a distance, wearing her opponents down. If forced into combat, she always combines her assault with a touch attack spell-like ability and prefers to leave her opponents alive, disfigured, diseased, poisoned, sickened, and cursed.

Morale When outmatched, Mabyn flees via flight and invisibility often taking advantage of her ability to fly into objects.

Statistics

Str -, Dex 29, Con -, Int 20, Wis 19, Cha 28 Base Atk +14; CMB +14; CMD 33 Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Empower

Spell-Like Ability (cone of cold), Great Fortitude, Persuasive,

Toughness

Skills Bluff +19, Craft (leather) +16, Diplomacy +23, Heal+12, Intimidate +26, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge(history) +19, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nature) +11, Perception +21, Sense Motive +18, Sleight of Hand+16, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +23

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Giant, Goblin, Sylvan (cannot speak)

SQ blind and mute, change shape (any humanoid, alter self)

Ecology

Environment cold plains, forests, and marshes **Organization** solitary or coven (3 hags of any kind) **Treasure** standard

Special Abilities

Blind and Mute (Ex): Mute hags tear out their eyes and tongues, leaving them blind to life's joys and incapable of sharing their sorrow. A mute hag is immune to gaze attacks, and cannot use spell completion or command word trigger magic items.

Shaping Touch (Su): The touch of Mabyn twists flesh like clay. As a full-round action that draws an attack of opportunity, Mabyn may change the appearance of a helpless victim. The effect acts as a permanent alter self spell. Unwilling victims may resist the transformation with a DC 26 Fortitude save. If she is allowed to work for 10 minutes, Mabyn may also increase a victim's age category by one step; doing so does not grant mental ability score boosts but does inflict physical ability score penalties as normal. Creatures that are affected by this power or successfully save against it cannot be affected by Mabyn's shaping touch for one month. The DC is Charisma-based.

Witchfire Hag Covens

Witchfire Hags occasionally join or subjugate existing hag covens. A hag coven that includes a witchfire hag gains the following additional coven spell-like abilities: 3/day blight, create undead, fire storm (DC 21), nightmare(DC 18), waves of exhaustion (DC 20). All abilities function at CL 9, and save DCs are based on a Charisma score of 16. The use of these abilities functions identically to other coven abilities. Such covens must have at least one living hag, as covens of three witchfire hags gain no coven-related abilities. **Rite Publishing Presents**

Book Of Donster Gemplates

HEROES

By: Styen D. Russell

Questhaven



Black Shuck

By Will Myers and Jonathan Nelson

of Adventureaweek.com; Illustrator Rick Hershey

P or centuries, inhabitants of the Klavek Kingdom have told tales of a large black dog with malevolent flaming eyes. At times this creature (which Klavekians call Black Shuck) has been recorded as appearing headless, and at other times as floating on a carpet of mist. Eyewitness accounts on the size of this beast seem to vary, but survivors of attacks all agree: Black Shuck is the most terrifying creature they have ever encountered.

According to folklore, the specter haunts the coastlines, graveyards, side roads, and dark forests of the Klavek Kingdom. Some eyewitness accounts attest to the beast appearing in small countryside churches terrorizing gatherers in the middle of sermon.

Sage Yuri Statel of Rybalka, in his book "Traveling the Backroads in Eastern Klavek," describes the monster as follows:

Black Shuck takes the form of a massive black dog and prowls along dark lanes and lonesome graveyards. You will know him when you hear his howl, which bites like the chill wind of winter and makes your blood run cold. His footfalls make no sound and his eyes burn like the fires of Hell itself. It has been said that to meet him in your travels is an omen of your own death.

It was many centuries ago that Black Shuck came to our world, brought on the tides of the Ancestor People of the Vikmordere. The tales of his origins are as lost as the beast itself, which wanders the land of the living, bringing only fear and death to the countryside.

Black Shuck CR9 XP 6,400 NE Medium undead (incorporeal) Init +10; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

Defense

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+5 deflection, +6 Dex) hp 126 (10d8+80) Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +8

SQ Channel Resistance +4; **Immune** mind-affecting effects, undead traits; incorporeal; rejuvenation



Offense

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Special Attacks +16 corrupting touch (Fort DC 22), frightful moan (Will DC 20), gaze of the damned (Will/Fort DC 22)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +13 Constant—*air walk, aura of doom* (Will DC 24) At will—*fog cloud, invisibility, locate creature* 3/day—*dimensional anchor, discern location, haste,* slow (DC 16)

Statistics

Str -, Dex 22, Con -, Int 16, Wis 21, Cha 20

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +15 (cannot trip or grapple); **CMD** 20 (cannot be grappled or tripped)

Feats Ability Focus (corrupting touch), Ability Focus (gaze of the damned), Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +18 (+22 jump), Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (planes) +16, Perception +26, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +26, Survival +18: **Racial Bonus** + 8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages telepathy 100 ft. (can understand, does not speak)

SQ incorporeal

Special Abilities

Corrupting Touch (Su): Black Shuck has an incorporeal touch attack. By passing part of its incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, Shuck inflicts

9d6 damage. This damage is not negative energy—it manifests in the form of physical wounds and aches from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging are immune to this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A Fortitude save halves the damage inflicted. The DC is Charisma-based.

Frightful Moan (Su): Black Shuck can emit a frightful moan as a standard action. All living creatures within a 30-ft. spread must succeed on a Will save or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic mind-affecting fear effect. A creature that successfully saves against the moan cannot be affected by Black Shuck's moan for 24 hours. The DC is Charisma-based.

Gaze of the Damned (Su): Once per round, as a fullround action, Black Shuck may target an opponent within 30 ft. with its gaze attack. Black Shuck must be visible to use this attack. If the target fails a DC 22 Will save, the target is cursed with The Withering. Once per day, starting the next morning, the target must succeed on a DC 22 Fortitude save or take 1d4 Constitution damage. This saving throw must be made until either remove curse is cast on the target or the target succeeds on the saving throw. When the target succeeds on the Fortitude save, it is immune to this effect for 24 hours, but must succeed on the saving throw again the next day or take the Constitution damage. If the target reaches o Constitution, it dies. Black Shuck may not use this attack on a target already cursed by its gaze. If Black Shuck is attacked and sustains damage while using this ability, it must make a Concentration check (DC equal to the amount of damage taken) or lose that use of the ability.

Incorporeal (Ex): An incorporeal creature has no physical body. It can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, magic weapons or creatures that strike as magic weapons, and spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities. It is immune to all non-magical attack forms. Even when hit by spells or magic weapons, it takes only half damage from a corporeal source (except for channel energy). Although it is not a magical attack, holy water can affect incorporeal undead. Corporeal spells and effects that do not cause damage only have a 50% chance of affecting an incorporeal creature. Force spells and effects, such as from a magic missile, affect an incorporeal creature normally.

An incorporeal creature has no natural armor bonus but has a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma bonus (minimum +1, even if the creature's Charisma score does not normally provide a bonus).

An incorporeal creature can enter or pass through solid objects, but must remain adjacent to the object's exterior, and so cannot pass entirely through an object whose space is larger than its own. It can sense the presence of creatures or objects within a square adjacent to its current location, but enemies have total concealment (50% miss chance) from an incorporeal creature that is inside an object. In order to see beyond the object it is in and attack normally, the incorporeal creature must emerge. An incorporeal creature inside an object has total cover, but when it attacks a creature outside the object it only has cover, so a creature outside with a readied action could strike at it as it attacks. An incorporeal creature cannot pass through a force effect.

An incorporeal creature's attacks pass through (ignore) natural armor, armor, and shields, although deflection bonuses and force effects (such as mage armor) work normally against it. Incorporeal creatures pass through and operate in water as easily as they do in air. Incorporeal creatures cannot fall or take falling damage. Incorporeal creatures cannot make trip or grapple attacks, nor can they be tripped or grappled. In fact, they cannot take any physical action that would move or manipulate an opponent or its equipment, nor are they subject to such actions. Incorporeal creatures have no weight and do not set off traps that are triggered by weight.

An incorporeal creature moves silently and cannot be heard with Perception checks if it doesn't wish to be. It has no Strength score, so its Dexterity modifier applies to its melee attacks, ranged attacks, and CMB. Non-visual senses, such as scent and blindsight, are either ineffective or only partly effective with regard to incorporeal creatures. Incorporeal creatures have an innate sense of direction and can move at full speed even when they cannot see.

Rejuvenation (Su): There is no way only way to permanently destroy Black Shuck. If Black Shuck is "slain" through simple combat, Shuck restores itself in 2d4 days. Even the most powerful spells are usually only temporary solutions. If Black Shuck is decapitated by a vorpal ghost touch weapon, Shuck will restore itself in 1 month.



What Treasures Lie Within the Kobolds[,] Vaults, Guarded by Fearsome Dire Weasels?

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Sages By Creighton Broadhurst of Raging Swan Press Illustrators: John Waterhouse, Cari Buziak, Victor Vasnetsov

nowledge is power, but often a group of adventurers may lack the appropriate skills (or spells) to secure vital information relating to their quest or mission. Perhaps they need to know the specific weaknesses of a red dragon, the location of a legendary lost tomb or have found something – be it scroll in an ancient, forgotten language or a unique magic item – that they can't identify. In such situations, adventurers normally turn to the services of a sage to provide such information, but so often in campaigns the GM glosses over the exact details of the sage and simply provides the relevant information (after the PCs have paid with their hard-earned gold!).

This article presents four sages ready for a GM to drop into his home campaign. While the article does not present full stat blocks for these individuals – a GM really shouldn't need those – it does present detailed roleplaying information for each sage along with relevant skills and even adventure hooks.

Jaska Eerola

This thin man has dark bags under his eyes. His skin is pallid.

N male human expert (sage) 2/wizard 1

Skills Appraise +7, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (engineering) +9, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +5, Knowledge (planes) +4, Knowledge (religion) +7, Linguistics +7, Profession (sage) +9, Spellcraft +9

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarf, Elf, Halfling, Infernal

Jaska is a thin, nervous man with deep bags under his eyes. Obsessed with books, Jaska often forgets to see clients and as such is always in need of money. His clients, though, must be very patient as he is easily distracted.

Background: All but abandoned by his parents at an early age, Jaska spent his days alone except for his books. Betrayed by those who were supposed to love him more than anyone else, he retreated into himself. Realising that his knowledge would be with him always – that no one could take it away from him – he began to obsessively search for new books.

Personality: Jaska is obsessed with knowledge. Cursed with an active and curious mind he reads any and all books he can get his hands on. While this means he is very



knowledgeable on a variety of subjects, it has led him to develop stunted social skills. He doesn't like bright lights, isn't particularly comfortable outside and has a morbid fear of fire.

Mannerisms: Jaska's search for knowledge consumes him; he often stays up very late at night reading through fascinating (to him) old manuscripts and consequently does not get much sleep. He constantly yawns.

Distinguishing Features: Jaska's skin is very pale – a legacy of spending virtually no time outside. He squints in bright light.

Hooks: Jaska loves books. Characters bringing him a tome he has not yet read guarantee good service (particularly if they withhold the book until he has answered their questions!).

Dhoselean Natityrr

This slender man has black hair and startlingly green eyes. He wears worn leathers and a hawk perches on his left shoulder.

LN male half-elf druid 1/wizard 1

Skills Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Profession (sage) +6, Spellcraft +6

Languages Common, Druidic, Elven, Sylvan

Renowned for his knowledge of the natural world and his healing skills, Dhoselean is often sought out by the common folk who cannot afford the services of a cleric.

Background: The only child of an elf ranger and a human druid, Dhoselean has lived in the forest all his life. His human mother is now dead, but his father occasionally visits him and brings rare herbs and suchlike for his son.

Personality: Dhoselean is recovering from a failed romance with an elf maiden and consequently lapses into periods of intense depression. The two had been wildly in love for several decades, but eventually she tired of Dhoselean's rather basic lifestyle and left.

He has a deep and abiding love of woods and forests and would be miserable if ever forced to leave. He loves his hawk animal companion, Swiftwing, and often tends injured forest animals at his home.

Mannerisms: Dhoselean is not particularly fit; even the lightest physical activity sends him into coughs and laboured breathing. When he is happy, he whistles birdsongs.

Distinguishing Features: Intricate whirling patterns decorate Dhoselean's neck and right arm. The pattern is meant to represent the wind blowing through a tree's branches but is not particularly well done.

Hooks: Dhoselean lives alone several hours journey away from the nearest village in secluded woodland. His home is rather dilapidated; characters offering to perform certain home repairs can secure his services for free.

Saeth Isgar

This voluptuous, attractive woman's bright blue

curly hair stands out in contrast to her red gown. LG female human cleric 2/wizard 3

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Profession (sage) +7, Spellcraft +12 **Languages** Celestial, Common, Draconic Far from the typical image of a sage, Saeith is vivacious, outgoing and enjoys dancing. Characters encountering her socially often have trouble reconciling her with the quiet, studious sage dedicated to the god of knowledge.

Background: Fascinated by knowledge from an early age, Saeith could read from the age of three. Apprenticed to an elderly wizard with ties to the local temple of the god of knowledge, she quickly became interested in the religion and converted several years later.

Now, she dwells within the temple precincts and deals with her clients in the temple proper.

Personality: Kind, benevolent and utterly dedicated to the god of knowledge, becoming a sage was the logical (and only choice) for Saeith.

Attractive, she is often sought out by male adventurers who seek to woo her. Saeith is friendly, but endeavours to keep her work and personal life separate. She maintains polite interest in her customers, but does not socialise with them. However, she is attracted to intelligent men and may bend this rule for a young, learned wizard.

Saeith is particularly interested in religion and the other planes of existence. She has started large works on both, collecting all relevant information she comes across into a pair of gigantic encyclopaedias. She never allows clients into her personal chambers.



Mannerisms: Saeith laughs often and takes care of her appearance. She is very tactile and smells of rose water.

Distinguishing Features: Saeith loves to dye her curly hair and its colour often changes from week to week. She is naturally a brunette, but she hates "boring" colours. She particularly likes blue or red hair and often changes its colour to match her outfits. Consequently, she stands out in a crowd.

The fingers on her right hand are often stained with ink.

Hooks: Several adventuring clients of Saeith's have become obsessed with her. If the PCs are present when such an individual attempts to force his interest on her, she is grateful for any assistance the PCs offer.

Gloridin Duerral

This aged dwarf has a thick, greying beard and wears dour, worn clothes.

N male dwarf wizard (diviner) 6

Skills Appraise +7 (+9 vs. metal and gems), Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Knowledge (engineering) +13, Knowledge (geography) +11, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Knowledge (religion) +7, Profession (sage) +10, Spellcraft +13

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Terran, Undercommon

Cantankerous, half-blind and flatulent, Gloridin is not a popular choice for adventurers seeking a sage's services. However, his knowledge of the Ebon Realm and its denizens and major sites ensures a steady trickle of adventurers seek his services.

Background: Born into the Duerral clan, Gloridin was forced to flee his clanhold when it fell to marauding troglodytes of the Black Scale tribe almost three centuries ago. After the battle, the clan's survivors scattered and Gloridin ended up living among the short-lived humans. Unsuited to physical labour, Gloridin became a sage more or less by accident after successive bands of adventurers plied him with drink in return for answering questions about the nearby portions of the Ebon Realm. Realising he was selling his knowledge short he established himself as a sage.

Personality: Irritable, short-tempered and forceful in speech, Gloridin does not have many friends. He enjoys showing off his knowledge to his clients and his answers to even the simplest question can often take half an hour as he endeavours both to impress his client with this knowledge and give value for money. Gloridin is scrupulously honest.

He is particularly interested in speaking with adventurers returning from the Ebon Realm.

Mannerisms: Gloridin is wildly flatulent. Cursed with several (undiagnosed) food allergies, his private quarters are often odorous. Gloridin deals with his ailment by ignoring it.

Distinguishing Features: Gloridin speaks slowly in a dispassionate tone.

Hooks: Gloridin is lonely – particularly for the company of a fellow dwarf. Characters spending time with Gloridin find him pleasant if slightly boring. If the two forge a friendship, Gloridin shares his impressive (and highly detailed) maps of the Ebon Realm. Such maps could be a great help to adventurers planning an expedition into that benighted place.

If he hears that adventurers have fought or plan to attack the Black Scale tribe he offers them any assistance he can reasonably provide.

About The Designer

Creighton 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.

Over the last 11 years, 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 raging-swan. livejournal.com.

Creighton lives in Torquay, England where, apparently, the palm trees are plastic and the weather is warm. He shares a ramshackle old mansion with his two children ("Genghis" and "Khan") and his patient wife. Famed for his unending love affair with booze and pizza, he is an enduring GREYHAWK[™] fan.

Wings of Twilight

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Artwork by Rowena Aitken

HAMS CUMMINGS



You are still what they eat By Mike Welham; Illustrators Peri Coleman and Mark Hyzer

Lesser vorawurms eat matter that they seek out or create through their varied means. Many adventurers will only encounter specimens that eat wood, dead flesh or stone, for example. The palates of powerful vorawurms tend to be much more esoteric; the creature included in this article eats written (and spoken) words.

CR 9

Stonewurm

This large, gray worm bores up through solid rock, leaving a gaping hole in its wake. Its powerful teeth gnash on pieces of bedrock as it dives into the ground for more.

Stonewurm

XP 6,400 LE Small aberration (earth, elemental) Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19

Defense

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, +1 size) hp 119 (14d8+56) Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +11 Immune elemental traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.
Melee bite +18 (4d6+9/19–20 plus poison)
Special Attacks earthfoe, poison
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +17) 3/day-transmute mud to rock, transmute rock to mud

Statistics

Str 22, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 17
Base Atk +10; CMB +15 (+19 sunder); CMD 26 (30 vs. sunder)
Feats Great Fortitude, Greater Sunder, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Intimidate +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +18,

Perception +19, Stealth +22, Survival +19

Languages Common, Terran

Ecology

Environment any underground Organization solitary, pair, or burrow (3-6) Treasure incidental

Special Abilities

Earthfoe (Ex): A stonewurm ignores hardness less than 10 when attacking objects made of earth or stone. Additionally, it bypasses up to DR 10 when it attacks elemental (earth) creatures.

Poison (Ex): Bite—injury; save Fort DC 21; frequency 1/round for 10 rounds; initial effect turn to stone permanently; secondary effect 1d8 Str and slowed; cure 2 consecutive saves. A creature reduced to o Strength by this poison turns to stone. The save DC is Constitution-based.

A stonewurm is a bane to all earth elementals and owners of stone fortresses. Due to its ability to transform fleshy victims to stone, many creatures have a healthy wariness of a stonewurm. While a typical stonewurm measures three feet in length, it weighs close to one ton.

A stonewurm devours up to 500 pounds of earth and stone in a week's time, but it can eat its weight's worth if it finds a particularly appetizing meal. The creature is sophisticated enough to negotiate with potential meals, provided they lead it to a greater bounty. A stonewurm especially delights in the taste of intelligent earth elemental creatures, and it will attack those in preference to all other creatures. Denizens of the Elemental Plane of Earth routinely search for and destroy stonewurms and their eggs. Like all vorawurms, a stonewurm possesses an ability it employs to transform prey into its favored food; a stonewurm's poison acts to transform a victim to stone, either immediately upon injection or as the poison courses through its victim's body. Fortunately, this eating machine's metabolism renders it inactive for ninety percent of the year as it digests all it has consumed.

The creature lives for nearly a thousand years and every one hundred years it lays several eggs in a tunnel it carves underground. The eggs blend in with their surroundings, requiring a successful DC 30 Perception check to find, and are incredibly durable (hardness 30 and 50 hp). After a 1-year gestation, new stonewurms emerge from their eggs and feast on the surrounding stone.

Runewurm

A living ribbon of runes, symbols and words from multiple languages seeming forms out of thin air.

Runewurm XP 38,400 LN Medium aberration (incorporeal) Init +10; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +33

Defense

AC 27, touch 27, flat-footed 21 (+7 deflection, +6 Dex, +4 insight) hp 170 (20d8+80) Fort +10, Ref +14, Will +18 Defensive Abilities incorporeal; SR 25 Weaknesses erase vulnerability

Offense

Speed fly 60 ft. (perfect) Melee incorporeal touch +21 (2d6 plus forgetfulness curse and runescribing) Special Attacks forgetfulness curse, runescribing, word stealer

Statistics

Str -, Dex 22, Con 19, Int 25, Wis 18, Cha 25 Base Atk +15; CMB +21; CMD 42 Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Skill Focus (Stealth) Skills Appraise +27, Disable Device +26, Fly +27, Knowledge (arcana) +36, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Knowledge (engineering) +17, Knowledge (geography) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (nobility) +17, Knowledge (planes) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Linguistics +17, Perception +33, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +36, Stealth +25

Languages Any

Ecology

Environment any **Organization** solitary, pair, library (3–8) Treasure none

Special Abilities

Erase Vulnerability (Su) A character who successfully casts erase on a runewurm bypasses it spell resistance and deals 2d6 damage to the creature.

Forgetfulness Curse (Su) Incorporeal touch-contact; save Will DC 27, frequency 1 day, effect lose 2d4 ranks from Knowledge skill(s) or 1d4 Int drain. A runewurm's touch inflicts a horrific curse that steals the sum of its victim's experience, coalescing it into words. If the afflicted character has any ranks in Knowledge skills, he loses those first; once a character runs out of ranks in Knowledge skills, the curse attacks his raw intellect. The victim loses any skill ranks he spent on Knowledge skills, but a restoration spell (or more powerful magic) returns 2d4 ranks, up to the number of ranks the character possessed. The save DC for the curse is Charisma-based.

Runescribing (Su) A runewurm can inscribe a rune or symbol on any surface it touches, up to a limit of 60 levels worth per day. If the creature uses a full-round action, it can inscribe runes or symbols up to 8th level; it can only inscribe a maximum of 6th level with a standard action (including its incorporeal touch attack). On a typical surface, the inscribed rune acts in accordance with the spell it duplicates, but on a creature, the rune triggers during the runewurm's next turn. Any applicable saving throws are equal to 10 + the rune or symbol's spell level + the runewurm's Charisma modifier.

Word Stealer (Su) If a character casts a spell with a vocal component within 60 feet of a runewurm, he must succeed at a concentration check (DC 20 + spell level) or lose the spell. A spell lost in this way heals 1 hp per spell level to the runewurm. Likewise, a runewurm in the presence of a rune or symbol that succeeds at a Disable Device check erases it and heals the runewurm.

The most unusual of the common vorawurms, a runewurm feeds on spoken and written language. The creature typically appears as a thin ribbon of words about five feet in length, but it can stretch itself out to as long as ten feet. As a creature composed entirely of symbols and words, it weighs nothing and is incorporeal. A runewurm is not as ravenous as other vorawurms species, and it relishes a satisfying meal rather than a bunch of junk. In its case, the creature seeks out works of art or magical might in musty libraries and lost ruins. If it discovers a great work, it spends its time absorbing the material within and learning from it. While it derives no arcane might from its feeding, it gains a great deal of knowledge. Adventurers often make deals with a runewurm wherein they retrieve a lost work in return for a portion of the creature's incredible lore. Only under the direst of circumstances will a runewurm attack a sentient creature and inflict its curse of forgetfulness on it. A victim of this curse steadily leaks knowledge, manifesting in a cloud of jumbled words that hangs in the air; a runewurm then finds these clouds and feeds on them. A laired runewurm inscribes symbols throughout its home to ward off those who might eject it from its lair. If it must defend itself directly, it will inscribe runes and symbols on opponents it touches; its favorite is explosive runes.

A typical runeworm lives for over a century. An aging runewurm leaves a small portion of its word ribbon within a particularly cherished book. The creature then leaves to impart the sum total of its knowledge as it dies in an unsuspecting target; in a fit of whimsy, the wurm chooses someone whom others may regard as the "village idiot," who then spontaneously becomes a savant. Meanwhile, the runewurm "child" consumes the book where its parent left it and becomes a full-grown runewurm in a week's time.



PATHWAYS MAGAZINE



Black Magic

by Will Myers of Adventureaweek.com; Illustrators: John Waterhouse, Spettro84 and Unknown

"Black is the non-color, it is the void, the darkness, the nothingness. It is of mystery and solemnity; it is of the night. Black is the darkness and that which lurks within. There are some on this earth that have known no else. They are the solemn, the cursed, the soulless, and the wretched. They are neither here nor there, but when the light of the sun disappears behind the mountains, they are everywhere."

-Lurov Rasputin of the Black

These are a collection of black-themed spells created by wizards from the Klavek Kingdom, Vikmordere, Obor and Timaeus; and compiled within one volume by Lurov Rasputin of the Black.

Paint it Black

School: Transmutation; Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 0 Casting Time: 1 standard action Components: V, S, M (smear of black paint)

Range: Touch

Effect: One object up to 6 ft. high and 6 ft. wide changes color and increases hardness

Duration: 1 minute

Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No

An object that is dabbed with the black paint changes color to black and the hardness of the object increases by +1.

Black Water

School: Transmutation; Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 1 Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: V, S, M (a small piece of black algae) **Range:** Touch

Effect: Turns one waterskin of normal water into a bitter but nourishing beverage

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No

By placing the algae into a full waterskin and performing this spell, the caster creates a thick, bitter tasting beverage that allows a character to recover three hit points per character level with 8 hours of sleep. Characters under the effect of this spell also gain a +4 alchemical bonus to Will saves against fear for 24 hours. A character can only benefit from this spell once per 24 hours, even if performed by different spellcasters.

Back in Black

School: Conjuration (teleportation); Level: Sorcerer/ Wizard 2

Casting Time: 1 standard action Components: V, S, M (a black crystal hoop) Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels) Target: Self Effect: Transport caster to shadowy area Duration: Instantaneous



This spell immediately teleports the caster to the darkest area within the spell's range and gives the caster full concealment (50% miss chance) until the end of that round.

Black Dog

School: Conjuration (summoning); Level: Sorcerer/ Wizard 3

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: V, S, M (a piece of black dog fur and an animal heart)

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

Effect: Summons a shadowy dog-shaped force that attacks for you

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Reflex half fire damage; Spell Resistance: Yes

When the fur is rubbed across the heart, a shadowy canine form appears with a burning red heart in its chest. This dog will attack on the caster's next turn and use the

spellcaster's base attack as its own, with a +4 bonus due to Dexterity. The black dog has a single bite attack which deals 1d6 points of damage + 1d4 fire damage.

Black or White

School: Illusion (glamer); Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 4

Casting Time: 1 standard action **Components:** V, S, M (a small mirror in a black frame, which is held facing the enemy)

Range: 10 ft.

Effect: Caster appears as a friend to the enemy

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates; Spell Resistance: No

For the duration of this spell, any enemy that views the mirror and fails

the saving throw views you as a friend and will not attack you. If you attack any enemy during the duration, the illusion fails and those enemies that failed their saving throw get an immediate reroll with a +4 bonus.

Black Magic Woman

School: Transmutation; Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 5 **Casting** Time: 1 full-round action

Components: V, S, M (a piece of black fabric from a woman's dress)

Range: Self

Effect: Blindness, but increases other senses

Duration: 1 round/level

When this spell is cast, a spectral woman appears behind the caster and places her hands over his eyes. This effectively blinds the spellcaster (-2 to AC) but adds the spellcaster's level to Perception checks based on senses other than sight. The spellcaster also gains the Blind Fight feat for the duration of the spell.

That Old Black Magic

School: Transmutation; Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 6 **Casting** Time: 1 full-round action

Components: V, S, M (a small object known by the caster to be cursed)

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels) **Effect:** Possibility of adding a curse to damage

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: Will negates; Spell Resistance: Yes

Once this spell has been cast, the next spell that deals damage also affects the target as if it were targeted with bestow curse. The exact nature of the curse is determined when the caster prepares this spell. The saving throw for this spell is separate from the saving throw of the damagedealing spell.

Black Sabbath

School: Transmutation; Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 7 Casting Time: 1 full round Components: V, S, M (a pyramid-shaped piece of quartz)

Effect: Connects numerous people for communication **Duration:** Concentration

Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell allows the caster to attune a number of quartz crystals equal to 1/2 his caster level so that when this spell is cast again, those who possess one of these crystals have audio and visual communication with one another. The users must face one of the flat sides of the pyramid and the user can see and hear everyone who is involved in

the communication. The sound of the communication is audible up to 10 ft. away from the crystal's user.

Fade to Black

School: Abjuration; Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 8

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: S, M (a black cloth to be wrapped around the forearm)

Range: 1 willing creature

Effect: Creates a protective barrier

Duration: 1 round/level or until dispelled

This spell calls darkness from the Plane of Shadow that surrounds the target, giving the target full concealment (50% miss chance), a +4 to Armor Class, and opponents take a -4 to Perception checks to see the target. The target may move at 1/2 its normal movement rate and make one attack per round while still retaining these bonuses. Moving at full speed causes the field to collapse, dispelling the effect.

Man in Black

School: Conjuration (calling); Level: Sorcerer/Wizard 9 **Casting** Time: 1 full-round action

Components: V, S, M (a blackened skull and a black wooden axe handle)

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

Effect: Summons an axe-wielding figure that fights for you **Duration:** Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No

This spell calls a greataxe-wielding figure wrapped in black cloth. The figure wields the greataxe using the caster level of the spellcaster as its base attack bonus and the spellcasting ability modifier as its damage bonus. This may give the Man in Black multiple attacks. The Man in Black has the same statistics as a storm giant, except that the Man in Black is Neutral, does not have the storm giant's spelllike abilities or rock catching, and wields a magical greataxe (2d10+variable/18-20/x3).



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 10

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 mapic, mapic vestment, protection

Live Stat Blocks

from energy, searing light 2nd-calm emotions, cures moderate wounds, remove paralysis, restoration, lesser, shield other, spiritual weapon

restoration, lesser, shield other, spiritual weapon 1st-bless, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, cure light wounds, endure elements, obscuring mist, protection from esd

wounds, endure elements, obscuring mist, protection from evel 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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Metagame Artifacts

By: Will "Cheapy" McCardell; Illustrated by Leeal Verduin, and Jastrow







etagame artifacts have recently been introduced into the Pathfinder RPG. They stem from the idea some of the things that players and GMs gloss over could be incorporated into the game through a special kind of item. For example, how is it that the dim-witted fighter almost instinctively knows that he has to stake a vampire in the heart to kill it? Or, do we really have to abstract away magic item creation materials into a mere expenditure of gold pieces? If a GM would like to retain these things (dimwitted fighters knowing instinctively the weakness of a vampire, for instance), the metagame artifact serves as an in-game device to explain how it is that such things are explained. Note that this does, of course, transgress into the metagame issue, and so not all players and GMs will find them appropriate. Finally, many of these artifacts would be prohibitively expensive if they were created using the magic item creation guidelines. These artifacts are not meant to be artifacts that even the greatest scholars of a GM's world know of, and it's recommended that NPCs do not try to steal these from the PCs.

Artificer's Friend

Aura strong transmutation; CL 18th Slot none; Weight 2 lbs. Description

A smooth black box embossed with hammers sits at the end of this large-rimmed granite funnel. This object has the curious property of allowing gold pieces (or other such valuable items, like platinum pieces or gems) to be dropped down into the funnel and have all the materials necessary for the creation of an item that the holder desires dispensed beneath the black box. When there are valuable goods being funneled into the black box, the hammers animate, swinging up and down. These created materials are only suitable for crafting purposes.

Campaign Use

This artifact allows crafters in the party to literally turn gold into the crafting materials necessary for the item they wish to create and in many ways helps expedite adventuring with crafters, as they no longer need to lug around the items necessary to ply their craft.

Birthmark of Perfect Normality

Aura strong transmutation; CL 18th Slot none; Weight -Description

Those born with this birthmark are almost always of races that are highly uncommon (or even non-existent) in the lands and continents in which they'll spend pivotal moments of their lives. When in such lands, those around them can easily see what the bearer of the mark looks like, but they think that the appearance of the individual is nothing out of the ordinary, even if they would be completely terrified of others of the bearer's race. People treat the bearer much as they would humans, or the other dominant race in the area.

Campaign Use

This artifact can be used to hand-wave away the interactions between PCs of unusual races and NPCs. If a PC is playing a creature from a race of sentient oozes, for example, the creature can have this birthmark (or perhaps in this case, an odd discoloration of gunk) and while it would normally be viewed with disgust, it is treated as any other member of the group.

Shards of Displaced Monster Knowledge

Aura strong divination; CL 20th Slot none; Weight 0.5 lbs. Description

These small shards of crystal possess a toothed edge and their coloration reveals a constantly shifting gradient of green and black. Those in possession of the shards are filled with random tidbits of knowledge of how to overcome certain monsters, as if by learning the myths and legends of an entirely different magically-starved world. Those in possession of the shards might come to know things like "A vampire is killed by driving a stake through the heart," or "The Medusa, is renowned for her powers of petrification" (and in this second case, note that the tidbit of knowledge refers to "Medusa" as a unique being).

Campaign Use

These shards allow the players to use their real world knowledge of myths and legends to their characters' advantage. Trolls and orcs are evil, vampires are staked through the heart, werewolves fear silver, the hydra's heads regrow, etc. At the GM's discretion, these can even grant some knowledge of creatures from the history of a Pathfinder campaign world or other roleplaying games. Further, it should be noted that this information is not always complete. While possessors may learn that trolls are evil, they may not know of their weakness to fire or acid, and may instead learn that trolls can be defeated by bringing them into sunlight!

Spellfinder

Aura strong divination; CL 15th Slot none; Weight -Description

The center of this hand-held, compass-shaped object pulsates with a faint blue light and its casing is engraved with an ever-shifting assortment of runes. Any spellcaster who holds the device and stares into the light hears faint whispers speaking the language of magic, akin to the sounds of verbal components of many spells. By stating desires for certain kinds of arcane power, the spellfinder will whisper back the name of a spell that fits the description given by the spellcaster, and indicates the general means for acquiring it, whether that be from a scroll, from an ancient tablet, or how the spellcaster can unlock the power from within. This indication does not necessarily point to the closest such location. Occasionally the spellfinder ceases to whisper after a spellcaster describes a spell being sought after, indicating that such a spell does not exist.

Campaign Use

This item allows casters to learn about new spells. This gives an actual reason for the caster to know about a spell, instead of there being no explanation for how a character suddenly knows or is aware of a new spell.

Statuette of Paraphernalia Inquiry

Aura strong divination; CL 20th Slot none; Weight 3 lb.

Description

A small sculpture of a wise gnome reading over a ledger, this curious artifact allows the possessor to query about items, both mundane and magical, that would satisfy the possessor's wants and needs. Most often the gnome replies in a whimsical voice that only the person holding it can hear, but it sometimes refuses to respond or even responds cryptically. For example, the possessor could ask about swords that can extinguish flames, and the gnome would reply with any such item, or type of item, that can extinguish flames, such as a frost brand. The possessor could also ask about armor that helped with being stealthy and the gnome would respond with the shadow armor enhancement.

Campaign Use

This is essentially a version of the spellfinder, but for equipment and magical items, and with much the same uses.

Custom Metagame Artifacts in your game

Metagame artifacts provide a convenient in-game reason for many of the things we players and GMs take for granted. Some types of such artifacts are better than others for this treatment though. In general, they should only be done for things that the party already glosses over, like the above examples or how the druid got his lion into the center of the city. In addition, some types of items are better than others for this treatment. Birthmarks, scars, skin discolorations, hair patches, etc., are all excellent ways to have artifact-type abilities on the player without having to resort to an item that may or may not even make sense for what the artifact is attempting to do. Originally, the birthmark of perfect normality was designed to be a veil. But, this could clash quite strongly with the aesthetics of a player's choices, and so it was made into a birthmark. While a dinosaur-man with an odd coloration of scales wouldn't clash too strongly with the appearance a player wanted, a dinosaur-man with a veil most certainly would.

TRIBES ANTHOLOGY I

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A Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatible PLAYER'S RESOURCE by Creighton Broadhurst





Crossbows Reloaded

by Thomas LeBlanc; Illusrated by Tamás Baranya and Leonardo Da Vinci

Here you will find some new crossbow options. A few are based on historical models (chu ko nu - Chinese repeating crosswbow or bullet crossbow), while others are based on my imaging how they may have developed without 1) the invention of firearms and 2) improved craftmanship.

Bullet Crossbow

Gu Lu slowly entered the crypt after hearing a rustling from within. The astrologers had warned the alignment of the stars would cause the bones of unhappy ancestors to rise and seek the gifts that had been denied them. Gu Lu cursed his master's miserly ways. Was a handful of rice too much to offer to the honored ancestors that had brought fortune to the family? He hoped the bullet crossbow he held in his hand was not another of master's irregular, cut-price purchases. The stone bullet would make the chances of him seeing light all the more likely if grandfather's bones decided to take a stroll...

Bullet Crossbow, Heavy: A heavy stone crossbow fires sling bullets using a barrel with a slot for the string. This weapon functions identically to a heavy crossbow except for the critical, damage type, and range values .

Bullet Crossbow, Light: A light stone crossbow fires sling bullets using two strings connected to a leather cup. This weapon functions identically to a light crossbow except for the critical, damage type, and range values .

Repeating Heavy Bullet Crossbow: The heavy stone crossbow holds a hopper containing 20 sling bullets. Loading the hopper uses two hands and is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. This weapon functions identically to a repeating heavy crossbow except for the critical, damage type, and range values .

Chu Ko Nu

The ronin Fi Liao arrogantly approached the group of peasants demanding tribute. He saw that they held simplelooking crossbows made without any metal. His armor would stop any bolts they fired easily. If any did manage to hit him, they would not have the force to deal much damage. At 14 paces he could see the nervousness in their faces as they started firing, working the levers forward over top of the crossbows and back again quickly. At 6 paces he could see their nervous sweat as they ran out of arrows and he could only feel a few stings. Two more paces and Fi Liao collapsed dead at their feet, his wounds festering purple from the few drops of poison each sting left. The priest stepped forward and offered a benediction, "A tiny bee is



just an inconvenience, but a swarm will slay the mightiest of creatures."

Chu Ko Nu: This cheap and easy-to-fire repeating crossbow accomplishes drawing, loading, and shooting by moving a lever forward and back. A chu ko nu requires two hands to fire: one hand to hold the crossbow steady and the other hand to move the lever. You can fire a number of bolts equal to your Dexterity modifier (minimum 1) per round as a swift action. Rapid Reload reduces the reload time to a free action.

The chu ko nu holds 10 bolts in the case above the firing groove. Unlike a repeating crossbow, the case is part of the chu ko nu and takes 2 full-round actions to reload, using two hands and provoking attacks of opportunity. Rapid Reload does not reduce the time it takes to reload.

Chu Ko Nu Bolts: A chu ko nu bolt used as a melee weapon is treated as a one-handed improvised (-4 penalty on attack rolls) weapon and deals damage as a dagger two sizes smaller (critical multiplier x2). Chu Ko Nu bolts come in a case or quiver that holds 20 bolts.

Disc Crossbow

"How could such a tiny disc be thrown with enough force to decapitate someone?"

- Anonymous medical report

Disc: A disc used as a melee or thrown weapon is treated as a light improvised weapon (-4 penalty on attack rolls and range increment of 10 feet) that deals damage as a dagger of its size (slashing damage and critical multiplier x2). When using it, you must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save or cut yourself on the blade (half damage, no Strength modifier). You do not need to make the save if you are wearing heavy armor or gauntlets. Discs come in a small leather pouch that holds 10 discs.

Disc Crossbow: A disc crossbow fires a small metal disc, similar in design to a chakram. The disc travels along a trough, half of which is smooth and the other half roughened up, to provide spin on the disc. This weapon functions identically to a light crossbow except for the critical, damage type, and range values.

Great Crossbow

A great crossbow is often created by re-purposing a crossbow designed for a larger creature. A socket joint is made to fasten the crossbow into the harness to allow for aiming and a new trigger assembly is placed on the front. The harness allows the weight to be distributed evenly and prevent the kick from damaging the bearer.

Great Crossbow: You draw a great crossbow back using a small winch mounted under the front the crossbow.



The great crossbow uses larger bolts than normal. Two hands are required to shoot and load the great crossbow. Loading a great crossbow requires one full round and one move action, each of which provokes attacks of opportunity. Another creature may assist using a move action (which itself provokes attacks of opportunity) to reduce loading to one full-round action. Rapid Reload reduces the time to reload, by yourself, to one full-round action, if another creature uses a move action to assist you, your own action is reduced to a move action.

Great Crossbow Bolts: A great crossbow bolt used as a melee weapon is treated as a one-handed improvised (-4 penalty on attack rolls) weapon and deals damage as a shortspear of its size (critical multiplier x2). Bolts come in a quiver that holds 5 bolts. These bolts can only be used in a great crossbow.

Belted Repeating Heavy Crossbow

This one is pure speculation. Is it possible? Yes. Probable? Maybe not, especially if you are trying to run and happen to trip on the belt...

Repeating Heavy Crossbow Belt Case: The belt case contains a belt loaded with repeating crossbow bolts. The belt is made of a series of thin sleeves sewn together, each one holding a single bolt. Each belt holds 25 bolts.

Repeating Heavy Crossbow, Belt Fed: This heavy crossbow has been modified to remove the bolt case and instead loads bolts from a belt case attached to the side of the crossbow. This weapon functions identically to a repeating heavy crossbow except loading a new case. Loading a new belt case uses two hands and requires two full-round actions and provokes attacks of opportunity.

New Crossbow Quality

As you can plainly see your Highness, the new compound bows we have acquired are devastating against armored troops. The bolt is able to pierce through armor. The only downfall is that only the strongest of your subjects are able to draw it back. We have instituted a training program to increase our crossbowmen's provess and fully take advantage of this new technology.

Compound: All compound crossbows are made with a particular strength rating (that is, each requires a minimum Strength modifier to use with proficiency). If your Strength bonus is less than the strength rating of the compound crossbow, you can't reload it and you take a -2 penalty on attacks with it. The default compound crossbow requires a Strength modifier of +0 or higher to use with proficiency. A compound crossbow can be made with a high strength rating to take advantage of an above-average Strength score; this feature allows your bolt to pierce the target's armor within the first range increment by a number equal to the bonus (+1 bonus = -1 to target's armor bonus, +2 = -2 to target's armor bonus, etc), up to the maximum bonus indicated for the bow. Each point of Strength bonus granted by the bow adds 200 gp to its cost.

For purposes of Weapon Proficiency and similar feats, a compound crossbow is treated as if it were a crossbow of that type. The compound quality doesn't affect the damage or range of the crossbow. The chu ko nu and repeating crossbows can't have this quality.

Feats

Porcupine Prowess

Brother Quan studied the humble porcupine and learned its secret to warding off predators. He now travels the countryside showing peasants how to defend themselves from marauding bandits. "The secret is not in a single, wellaimed shot, but to spray, causing the bandits to seek less prickly prey elsewhere," he always says in a sly whisper.

You have learned to use the chu ko nu in a similar way to a porcupine launching its quills.

Prerequisite: Proficient with the chu ko nu, Rapid Reload, Rapid Shot

Benefit: When making a full-attack action with a chu ko nu, you can select to use the Porcupine Onslaught or Porcupine Spray attack option.

Porcupine Onslaught: You can make one attack against a single target using your full BAB and then fire a number of additional bolts up to your Dexterity modifier. For each additional bolt after the first, increase your attack modifier by +1. For every additional 2 bolts after the first, increase the damage by +1.

Porcupine Spray: You can fire at a number of different targets, up to your Dexterity modifier. All of your attack rolls are made using your full BAB with a -2 penalty.

Giant's Crossbow

Shogun, it was not our fault! Who knew the little ones could use our own weapons against us like that?

- Last plea from an armsman forced to perform the ritual of the long cut.

You are able to wield a great crossbow one size category larger than yourself.

Prerequisite: Proficient with great crossbow, Strength 13

Benefit: You may use a great crossbow that is one size category larger than you are with a -2 penalty to attacks.

Normal: You are unable to use ranged weapons created for a creature larger than yourself.

Exotic Ranged Weapons	Cost	DMG (S)	DMG (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Туре	Special
Chu Ko Nu	10 gp	1d2	1d3	x2	20 ft.	5 lbs.	Р	see text
Bolts, Chu Ko Nu (20)	1 gp	—	_	_	—	1 lb.	—	—
Crossbow, Disc	30 gp	1d6	1d8	X2	60 ft.	4 lbs.	S	—
Discs (10)	1 gp	—	_	—	—	1 lb.	—	—
Crossbow, Great	120 gp	1d10	1d12	19-20/x2	150 ft.	14 lbs.	Р	—
Bolts, Great Crossbow (5)	5 gp	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—
Crossbow, Heavy Bullet	50 gp	1d8	1d10	x3	100 ft.	8 lbs.	В	—
Crossbow, Light Bullet	35 gp	1d6	1d8	x3	70 ft.	4 lbs.	В	—
Repeating Heavy Bullet Crossbow	400 gp	1d8	1d10	x3	100 ft.	12 lbs.	В	
Repeating Heavy Crossbow, Belt Fed	800 gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	120 ft.	15 lbs.	Р	_
Repeating Heavy Crossbow Belt Case (25)	5 gp	_	_	-	_	5 lbs.	_	_

Rite Publishing Presents Coliseum Morpheuon: Anthology of Preams

Edited by David Paul With short stories by Matt Banach, Jess Carson, Ewan Cummins, T.H. Gulliver, L. Jagi Lessebte, Robeinning

Jonatha McAnry John C. Keek, Steven E. Schend, and Neil Spicer

Twenty Questions with Ryan Costello, Jr

By Steven D. Russell Photographs by Robyn Nixon

1. Could you tell us a little about yourself?

I grew up a misfit in a great family, born in 1980, the second of four boys. It was a very male house, with all of us playing a sport every season, mostly football and hockey, and at least one of every action figure line those years are known for. We were a close family, even if I felt I never had a place. Playing sports was just going with the flow, nothing I was ever passionate about. My dad was always willing to go to the park and play catch, but I was far more interested in writing my picture books and reading, from Judy Blume to Marvel comics.

I had an over-active imagination as a kid, and it alienated people. There was a point towards the end of elementary school I can remember realizing I had no friends. I wasn't bullied or actively disliked, or overlooked, I had just alienated people because I tended to make stuff up and pass it off as real because it seemed more interesting than reality. A friend of the family once spent a year scouring toy stores for a Ninja Turtle I invented. By high school I was doing better in the friend department, but still had a problem passing things I imagined off as real. Thankfully, I was introduced to a game in which that was an asset. While on a whale-watching trip with my grade, my friend Geoff told me about Dungeons & Dragons. The rest of the trip I hounded him with questions. "So I can do X?" Yep. "And I can do Y?" Yep. "What about-" Geoff offered to run a small game in the hotel for me and a few other guys. No books, no miniatures, not even a set of dice. Just cooperative storytelling in a fantasy setting. It was everything I was missing in my life.

With the discovery of roleplaying I found my first close friends, friends who I shared an interest and passion with, not just guys with different Transformers than me. When I played, I played fighters. But mostly, I DMed. I got to work every creative muscle, every storytelling instinct, and instead of alienating people I was entertaining them. I was an asset, not an outcast. As I got older, I realized how important the game was to me. It is one of the most consistent parts of my life, and will be for some time. I met my wife gaming, I have forged great friendships gaming, and I have created great experiences gaming.

Gaming has also been fulfilling on a professional level. Since those days in the third grade writing picture books, I have wanted to be a writer. I studied Creative Arts in college and Creative Writing in university. Along the way I wrote a novel and screenplays in my spare time. My leisure reading was books on the craft. I produced some plays and a short film called *Book of Wisdom*, to which I owe my IMDB credit. I wrote and published a series of children's books. It was satisfying hearing my words acted out and getting



positive feedback on my work, but what I wasn't enjoying was the production of my writing. I do not have a producer gene, I do not have producer instincts, and the only reason I produced and published my own material was because it was easier than finding a producer, or a publisher, or an agent. I basically paid to create every produced and published credit I have until I interviewed Robert Thomson, owner of 4 Winds Fantasy Gaming. Robert agreed to buy the book that would become Strategists & Tacticians. This is a book I'd been toiling away at in my free time over several years. Around the same time, Kobold Quarterly accepted my query for "Flying Gnomish Contraptions." Since then, through contacts I'd made with my podcast and a greater instinct for the gaming industry than the other writing industries I'd tried to break into, I have been published by Super Genius Games, Chronicles of the Void, and Paizo, with more credits and more regular writing work every month.

2. What is your home game like?

Up until the day after GenCon of this year, I was running a homebrew campaign build around Paizo's Plot Twist cards from their Game Mastery line. The campaign started with the group playing a party of 13th level heroes, who had to rescue a godling (using Super Genius Games' Genius Guide to the *Mystic Godling*) from a crumbling city about to be crushed by a skull-faced meteor. There were a bunch of questions raised in this one shot adventure, like why the seemingly idealistic city was built upon a dome encapsulating a ghost city. Why were undead relentlessly rising, growing more powerful the closer the Skullstone came to impact? And why was this godling's life apparently worth more than the lives of these great heroes, who died saving her? The players knew this was a meatgrinder, and that these characters were playing out a historic moment in the campaign's past. The longer the party lasted, the more they would influence the

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main campaign which would star another set of characters. By lasting as long as they did, they allowed for survivors to form factions by the time the campaign started twenty years later.

The campaign proper started with the party surviving an undead apocalypse on a quarantined continent by interacting with five factions: the Golden Oath (Neutral Evil), the Ultimatum (Lawful Neutral), Heaven's Order (Neutral Good), the Tenants (Lawful Good), and an unnamed fifth faction (Chaotic Neutral). With limited resources, the party would have to do favors for all five factions, in ways that did not compromise their own values. Or that was the plan. Because of a vehemently orderly inquisitor in the party, the faction intrigue portion of the campaign was pushed far further into the background of the campaign than it was intended to be. Instead, the party, with limited resources and of low level, had few options other than to explore the Deadlands, the undead infested bulk of the continent that the survivors managed to isolate themselves from. In these lands they met Ludicrous Stilz, a riddling quest giver who could manipulate reality like he was sifting grains of sand. Ludicrous Stilz, sole inhabitant of the First and Last Library, gave the party items that allowed them to see purple or green auras that represented the destiny of those whose lives greatly impacted history, as well as tools to enter these destinies, and potentially change history. In addition to earning a Plot Twist card, after every history book they extracted from these destined characters with a zen garden rake, the party saw the undead influence reduced, and the balance of power between the factions altered. This brought them to the attention of Lady Jeverxon, matron of a noble family with ties to the Ultimatum. As the campaign progressed, Lady Jeverxon slowly revealed powers over destiny comparable to Ludicrous Stilz, although she had greater power over those of green destiny while he had greater power over those of purple destiny. Eventually the party had affected history to the point that Lady Jeverxon took to the offensive, using Plot Twist cards of her own in a combat that lasted three four-hour game sessions. It was not the last combat of the campaign, but it certainly set the end of the campaign into motion.

After dispatching Lady Jeverxon, the party found connections between her and the Skullstone that marked the start of the undead uprising. Through investigation, they were able to find someone whose destiny was tied to the Skullstone's point of impact, where the party reenacted the first session's meat grinder, as well as five other points in history they found themselves jumping between every minute. They could choose to spend a Plot Twist card to control their destination, or leave it to chance. After some intense roleplaying and high stakes combat, they realized the godling their other characters saved was destined to become Lady Jeverxon, and found all the answers about the circumstances that brought the Skullstone, a calcified manifestation of all the souls from the ghost town encased below the city. I can honestly say by the conclusion of the last session, this was the most satisfying campaign I have ever run.

With my homebrew concluded, that group is now playing Carrion Crown, run by my 3.5 Private Sanctuary cohost Matt, while my other gaming group alternates between Kingmaker and Skull & Shackles. This is the first time in my gamer lifetime that I am not only not playing or running in a homebrew, but that I am in multiple groups and I am not running any of them. Luckily, I've been running a lot of Pathfinder Society lately, which keeps my GMing skills sharp and introduces me to dozens of different approaches to adventure design.

3. What is your favorite Paizo product and why?

The Advanced Player's Guide, for so many reasons. First of all, it was the breakout Pathfinder RPG product. For the game's first year, Pathfinder could not shake the "3.75" nickname. The Core Rulebook was basically the 3.5 Player's Handbook and Dungeon Master's Guide, but updated. The first Bestiary was basically the 3.5 Monster Manual, but updated. The Game Mastery Guide had the most original material of the Pathfinder RPG's original offerings, but it was advice, not game content. Up until the APG, the Pathfinder RPG was 3.5, polished and put back into print for the benefit of the campaign books. When the APG came out, Pathfinder was a whole new game. The six new base classes were crafted so meticulously, they put virtually every non-core 3.5 base class to shame. Archetypes blindsided everyone with how perfectly they updated the concept of alternate class features. The first new combat maneuvers since the 3.5 Player's Handbook were introduced, an area of the game that Jason Bulmahn already cleaned up brilliantly. The rest, the new feats, new spells, new prestige classes, new magic items were appreciated as well, which drives home how impressive the new classes, archetypes, and the new combat maneuvers were when that much content could be considered just appreciated.

4. Your are currently doing a good deal of work for Kobold Press/Open Design, how did that start and how would you characterize your relationship with the company today?

I mentioned that *Strategists & Tacticians* was the first RPG product I sold, but because of the turnaround time, "Flying Gnomish Contraptions" in *Kobold Quarterly #13* was my first published RPG credit. And everything about its journey to print was kind of wrong. I queried like you're supposed to, but I just wrote until I thought the article was done, I didn't mention a word count in my pitch and I didn't adhere to one in my writing. I also didn't pitch during a great time in the publishing cycle. That's why the article is about these evocative flying machines but there is no accompanying art. Wolfgang Baur didn't have time to commission art, and didn't have place to put it. It's funny that later KQ issues featured a kobold wearing what looks like the ratchet glider from the article. I've always assumed that meant Wolfgang tried to get art for the article but the art only arrived after the issue went to press.

Since then I've been published in multiple issues of *Kobold Quarterly*, and I've had queries rejected for many more. Typically articles that provide new content have been green lit, while articles on variant rules, like rules for a less lethal game, get past query but do not get published. I've learned from this trend and am focused on crunch-heavy articles now, like my variant druids and my savant base class.

More recently, I wrote a series of specialized bestiaries called *Monsters of Sin*. Each book in the seven part series focuses on one of the seven deadly sins in one of two ways: monsters that entice PCs to commit the sin, or monsters that embody the sin. Every CR between 1 and 23 is represented at least once in the series except, oddly, 7. This means people who bought the whole series have options at any point in a campaign to use the material, and GMs could design an entire campaign of sin around the *Monsters of Sin*. If any GMs reading this do run *Monsters of Sin* as a campaign, I would love to hear about it.

Monsters of Sin is a product I have had in mind basically as long as I have been designing professionally. I even pitched it to a few third party publishers, but it never came to fruition. I let the idea lie dormant for a while, but then I noticed I was going back to the idea a lot in my notebook, so I sent Wolfgang Baur my pitch. I gave him multiple options, such as running it as a series in Kobold Quarterly (a series, he pointed out, which would take close to two years to fully publish), a one-off product, or a series like Sigfried Trent's Advanced Feats. I knew Open Design didn't publish many one-off products or series, but I wanted to show I was flexible and approach it like a product, not a piece of art that could only exist one way. Wolfgang loved the idea of Monsters of Sin as a series of PDFs with a possible printed compilation if the series sold well enough. He even took the time to compliment me on my pitch, which I'll discuss in further detail later. We discussed turnaround time, I agreed to a new 3,000 word-manuscript every three weeks, including a write-up about the sin, three monsters plus one high-CR embodiment of sin, and a template. He requested a small write-up about the sin in Midgard, which I agreed to. I made all seven of my deadlines, some after a late night spent thanking the time zones being three hours in my favor. In retrospect, I wish I agreed to his offer of a more generous four week turnaround time, especially when I realized how tough it would be to write the later products in the series while reviewing edits of the early manuscripts. It would have also been nice to read the feedback of the first release before the last manuscript was turned over. The series was more uniform as a result, but applying some feedback would have improved the later issues, especially when reviewers pretty consistently wanted more from the templates.

Wolfgang told me he was fully behind this line, and he



showed that by committing to great art. Originally he asked for two art briefs per installment, but he found the way to budget for four pieces of original black and white interior art by Aaron J Riley, as well as gorgeous covers by Cory Trego-Erdner. I really appreciate having the same artists throughout the series, combined with Marc Radle's graphic design to create a consistent feel throughout the series.

My relationship with Kobold Press/Open Design is extremely healthy. They are the company I have worked for most consistently in the three years since Flying Gnomish Contraptions was published. I consider Wolfgang my mentor in a lot of informal ways. He has taken the time to give me feedback every step of the way, and went above and beyond in the development of the Savant base class. He's mentioned that I was the first podcaster to interview him and has heavily implied that left a mark on him. Or maybe I've imagined this whole situation, Wolfgang treats me no different from any other freelancer he has worked with, and the podcast thing is just a footnote.

5. Which Pathfinder Compatible product you worked on is your favorite and could you tell us a little about it?

I don't think of things in terms of favorites, especially my own work, but I'll say *The Genius Guide to Mosaic Mage* from Super Genius Games is a product I worked on that stands out for me. Mosaic mage is an alternate wizard class that replaces arcane school specialization with magical powers and spell selection based on color. For example, a red mage is associated with pain, life, and love, as well as the fire energy type, gaining access to the following

schools and subschools: Conjuration (Calling), Conjuration (Healing), Enchantment (other than enchantment spells with subschools), Evocation (other than evocation spells with energy types), Evocation (Fire), Illusion (Figment). Additionally, they can choose spectrum powers such as *boiling blood*, which deals fire damage to attacking creatures, or *irresistible*, which increases the caster level of charm spells. The other spectrums are black, blue, white, and yellow (the primary colors and two shades), with the option to combine two spectrums to create secondary spectrums: green (blue and yellow), gray (black and white), rose (red and white), orange (red and yellow), and purple (black and blue).

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

Speaking broadly, it was working with Super Genius Games for the first time, in particular my developer Owen K.C. Stephens. I'd only met Owen briefly at GenCon after a panel on writing for Super Genius Games, he'd never appeared on my podcasts, and I'd rarely heard or read his interviews, but I definitely knew his name and his recent credits. Owen was very reciprocal as a developer, he was frank but considerate, and his development style was extremely compatible with my design style. I enjoyed not only the opportunity to work with him, but the process.

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

I think the best ideas are the ones looking everyone right in the face but no one sees. Color-based magic is nothing new, red mages, black mages, white mages, grey mages have been thrown around different campaign settings and in fantasy fiction forever, but rarely is the meaning of the color significant. In some ways, that makes this idea completely unoriginal, because anyone could have come up with it. But I feel that is what makes it ingenious, that no one else did put ink to page to create a supplement dedicated to the color of magic.

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

The fact that I rarely play casters and have no background in color theory. Honestly, when I was preparing my pitch for *Mosaic Mage*, the only thing I was confident about was the idea. After that was a steep climb. I brainstormed anything I associated with a specific color, which I then had to narrow down so that every color had the same number of key words. After that, I broke down every school of magic into subschools. For some schools of magic, their entire catalogue of spells fits into one of their subschools, like conjuration. For other schools, there are subschools and then there are remainder spells that exist as part of the home school, like illusion. I broke it all down into a list of schools and subschools, making sure any school or subschool actually had a worthwhile chunk of spells in it.



I also separated the five energy types (including sonic) as though they were subschools of evocation. From there I matched the schools and subschools up with the key words I'd associated with each color. I wanted colors that were complimentary on the color wheel to share two schools or subschools, and I wanted every school and subschool to be attached to exactly two colors each, except for energy-based evocation schools which were each exclusive to a color.

Just thinking about all the work that went into matching magic with key words, I can't believe I got it all to fit. Some of the fits aren't great—transmutation spells other than transmutation spells with subschools are in yellow's magic spectrum pretty much just because—but of the six schools and subschools contained within each color spectrum, I can justify at least four for each color. I had some real *A Beautiful Mind* moments figuring out this portion of the mosaic mage, and I'm kind of shocked I actually pulled this off.

9. Did you learn anything while working on it?

You can't please everybody. The main reason I went to all the trouble of associating schools with colors is so that every spell in the game published before and after the release of *The Genius Guide to the Mosaic Mage* could be assigned a color. Rite Publishing's *1001 Spells*? Every single one of them has a color, unless they somehow don't have a school of magic or energy type. This was in response to a common complaint about how WotC supported noncore

spellcasting classes in 3.5: they had a static spell list that was ignored by all subsequent releases. There are only three ways to handle supplementary spellcasters, really: the way WotC did; the way Paizo handles them, including an entry for every spellcasting class in every subsequent release; and what I did. At the risk of sounding arrogant, I thought my solution was the best option, because it didn't require that every spell designed be filtered through each class, at the same time it did not forsake any spellcasters who happen to be left off core. But, there was a major flaw to how the mosaic mage spell list worked: spells are not categorized anywhere by subschool. If you are a black mage and you want to look over your spell list, the only way to find every illusion (shadow) spell is to flip through every spell in every book and note the illusion (shadow) spells. Suddenly having access to every Pathfinder RPG compatible spell ever is a major burden instead of the perk it was meant to be.

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

I've read a lot of Pathfinder RPG compatible products and have used many in my games both as a GM and a player, but I would never qualify something as the best. I will give a shout out to the two Pathfinder RPG compatible products I have used the most. The first is The Genius Guide to the Time Thief from Super Genius Games. Class is the most character-defining decision you make, so I had to weigh a lot of options before forgoing all first party classes including archetypes for my Kingmaker character. Ultimately, the theme, uniqueness, and mechanics of the time thief won me over, and the Baroness of Wynfree is a time thief named Jeralyt Ciampini. Mechanically, I was attracted to the time thief's skillmonkeyness, with the added bonus that its abilities are Charisma-based, making the class an especially capable diplomat. Or it would be if Diplomacy was a class skill for the time thief. Luckily, there are traits that helped with that.

The class features offer a lot of flexibility, allowing a player to create either a roguish character with some or a lot of supernatural prowess without actually having spells, if that isn't your bag. The cornerstone ability, mote of time, is extremely useful. The ability to add 1d4 (or up to 3d4 at higher levels) to a check after the die roll is huge, and perfectly fits the theme.

The other third party product I use the most is *Book of the River Nations - Complete Player's Reference for Kingdom Building* from Jon Brazer Enterprises. As someone who has played through the Kingmaker kingdom building rules twice, once using the rules as presented in Pathfinder Adventure Path #31: Stolen Land, once using BotRN – CPRfKB, the latter is the winner. There are other variables (a different GM, a different group, and familiarity with the rules), having this book sped up play and added more options.



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

I define a good Pathfinder RPG compatible product as one with sustainability. For a product to be sustainable, its content has to fit the feel of the game, but not be something that Paizo is likely to release their own version of. No matter how great a third party product is, a similar first party product trumps it. Heck, even a third party product with the same name as first party material, like Super Genius Games' Magus, is redundant. Just looking at my own work, *Strategists & Tacticians* from 4 Winds Fantasy Gaming will always be a significant product for me because it was my first published RPG work, but I have to admit a lot of the material is redundant now that Paizo has released the Advanced Player's Guide and Ultimate Combat.

The best example of a sustainable third party product is Dreamscarred Press' *Psionics Unleashed*. First of all, Paizo has repeatedly said they are not interested in producing psionic content, so Dreamscarred has the market cornered. Second of all, their update of the 3.5 D&D psionic rules was very similar to how Paizo updated 3.5 to Pathfinder, right down to an open playtest. Third, psionics has a long history in the game but with niche appeal. Fourth, the guys behind *Psionics Unleashed*, Jeremy Smith primarily, are passionate about their product with a great head for how it works. And finally, they have shown with *Psionics Expanded: Advanced Psionics Guide* that there is room to expand on this set of rules they specialize in. They are doing so much right with their line, it's no wonder Paizo points to *Psionics Unleashed* when fans ask for psionic content,
and third party publishers are releasing material that is compatible with *Psionics Unleashed*.

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

I have to say Owen K.C. Stephens. Workhorses aspire to his level of quality and productivity. He either designs or develops every product Super Genius Games releases, which is close to 200 products at this point, released weekly over the past 200 weeks. Plus he does freelance work for other companies, including regular work for Paizo. And he tweets original feats and spells and stuff for free. As if his work ethic weren't enough, he's also good. He regularly finds me angles to look at old ideas as well as new ideas to build from the ground up. Look at Houserule Handbooks: Spell Points. Spell points are not a new concept, but he chose not to walk the well-tread path, instead creating a new system that solves the problems of past spell point systems and retains the uniqueness of each spellcasting class. And this is someone who admits his company is supporting Pathfinder because it's where the market is. He's this good with a system that isn't even his favorite or only game system.

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

When freelancers talk about how little money there is in game design, there is more truth than humor in that. If you work regularly, you will probably make your annual gaming budget freelancing. You won't pay for your house. You won't even pay for your car. You'll probably pay for your bus pass. So we are talking weeks or months conceptualizing and pitching ideas to anyone that will listen that may be for naught. And even if you sell a pitch, no one might read it. There are over a hundred active third party publishers of Pathfinder. There is a lot of competition. But, being good usually pays off. Being persistent definitely pays off. Being a good person and a reliable worker pays off.

Do you go to GenCon or PaizoCon? If not, why not? If you are serious about breaking in as a freelancer in any capacity, you have to meet with the publishers face to face, you have to listen-not just attend but really listen-to their panels on freelancer rules and advice. If you don't attend at least one of these cons, or you attend but you don't go to the panels, why not? Whatever your answer is, that is your actual priority. Maybe it's family, maybe it's school, maybe it's work, maybe it's your team's home-opener. Whatever the reason, if you can't find the time or the money to get essentially a 1:1 interview with all the publishers you could ever hope to work for, then RPG design isn't your priority, and it's just too hard to get work if it isn't your priority.

14. Who is your favorite Illustrator?

If Wayne Reynolds counts, Wayne Reynolds. Other than how his women look like the victims of baleful polymorph effects in his action shots, there's no denying that he has an amazing brain for character design, with a great combination of classic elements, often overlooked logic, and personality. What illustration of a dwarf ranger is complete without a kettle? All of them before Wayne drew Harsk. And all of them other than Harsk. That is why that kettle is such an important part of Harsk's design. There's even a scene in the first issue of Dynamite's Pathfinder comic where the heroes are in overwatch and Harsk is drinking a hot beverage. There's a good chance that scene only exists because Wayne Reynolds thought to include a kettle in Harsk's design and it inspired Jim Zub.

If Wayne Reynolds doesn't count, I'll give the nod to Hugo Solis. He has a similar sensibility as Wayne Reynolds in that he can add a lot of detail and personality to a character without weighing the character down. Also, Hugo has a real talent for eyes. His eyes convey so much intelligence and emotion, in particular for whimsical and mischievous characters. It's been great seeing Hugo's art evolve over the years, and the opportunities that he has earned as a result.

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

I'm often questioned for a decision in the design of my sever limb combat maneuver in *Strategists & Tacticians*. Specifically, why it doesn't deal damage. There are a lot of balance reasons and in playtest I felt it was the best way to keep it a viable option without making it overpowered. Then I chatted with someone who lost a finger. He assured me it hurt like hell. My position on the matter turned 180°, and verisimilitude has become a higher priority in my design.

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

I am polishing off the Looking For Group Roleplaying Game boxed set. One of the characters in the comic, Pella, is a butt-kicking dwarf bard. Designing the war maestro bard archetype was a lot of fun. Pella doesn't use anything that resembles a Pathfinder bardic performance, but she does use music to inspire herself. So bardic performance is replaced with war performance. It grants benefits like increased speed, extra attacks, bonuses to hit and damage, etc. In the playtest, Pella was whipping around the battlefield like a cannonball squirrel, exactly like she is portrayed in the comic, without overshadowing the capabilities of the other characters.

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

Plenty. This is technically my first Rite Publishing writing credit. That won't do. I'd like to get published by Rite and Dreamscarred, I'd like to get articles in two consecutive issues of *Kobold Quarterly*, I'd like to have something due for Paizo every month. Another goal, one that is outside of my control, is to see a monster I design translated into a miniature. I have done two monsters for Paizo Adventure Path Bestiaries, and it would be a huge thrill to have the ship-in-a-bottle or the galvo made into a Pathfinder Battles



18. Can you talk a bit about the Looking For Group Roleplaying Game boxed set?

The Looking For Group Roleplaying Game boxed set is based on a popular fantasy webcomic (lfgcomic.com) and fully compatible with the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. It features six new archetypes–war maestro (bard), healer (cleric), soldier (fighter), weapon monk (monk), righteous ranger (ranger), and warlock (sorcerer)–based on the main cast of the first collected volume of the series. There are new feats, new spells, new monsters, a canned adventure that technically qualifies as the first Looking For Group expanded universe material, paper miniatures, pregenerated characters based on the cast, maps, everything someone new to the game would need to run it and learn the world while still all being useful to existing fans of both Pathfinder and Looking For Group.

19. How have your podcasts contributed to your freelance work?

Immensely, and on multiple levels. Over the years on 3.5 Private Sanctuary and Know Direction I have interviewed the owners of many third party publishers, which has both given them an opportunity to get their product out there and given me great insight into what's on the market, what has succeeded, what has failed. I've also talked to virtually the entire Paizo design staff about their design philosophy and what makes good design. I have asked the people that hire freelance writers what they look for in a freelance writer. I don't cut any of this out of the interviews so I'm not exclusively benefiting from this information, but having the opportunity to get this information first hand has greatly benefited me as a freelancer. It's also a great ice breaker at cons. Whereas someone meeting the Paizo staff for the first time has to cold sell themselves, I can start by mentioning the podcast, referencing past conversations we've had, and easily steer the conversation to "are you looking for someone to work on that?"

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

Only that every time I spell color without a 'u', I feel like I'm selling out as a Canadian. Besides that, I am the cohost of 3.5 Private Sanctuary, the podcast for 3.5 loyalists and Pathfinder enthusiasts, as well as co-host of Know Direction, Pathfinder RPG news, reviews, and interviews podcast. Both are twice monthly and can be found at 35privatesanctuary.com.



Pathways Magazine

Rite Publishing Presents

Coliseum Morpheuon

Clinton J. Boomer Jonathan McAnulty

Winkin

Reviews

Dungeon Dressing: Altars

by Raging Swan Press 5 out of 5 stars by "Thilo Endzeitgeist" Graf

The latest installment of Raging Swan's Dungeon Dressing-line is 13 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page advertisement, 2 pages of editorial, 1 page ToC/ foreword, 1 page SRD and 1 page back cover, leaving us with a total of 6 pages of content for the information on altars!

Following the format of the series, we first are introduced to basic characteristics and appearances of altars, providing 5 base materials ranging from stone to bone including base harness, hit points and break DCs, a list of common protective spells and things that can be found on altars as well as a summary of rules for e.g. higher ground when jumping on the altars before getting 47 different entries for basic appearances that include height, manacles and even the inclusion of symbol-spells.

 $D_{UNGEON}^{R_{ACING}SWANP_{RESS}} D_{UNGEON}D_{RESSING}$

ALTARS

After that, we're on to a list of 100 different forms of dressings and features, including luminescent fungus, candles, ground bones, pentagram carvings, acid scars, gongs and even a magically-induced cold/warm feeling.

Of course, no good altar would come without some kind of security/defense and thus, we are also introduced to 11 different and rather deadly spell traps alongside some more conventional ones (3 to be precise) - in the broadest sense: From a cool, multi-round crushing ceiling trap to a cursed idol and even a battery of skulls emitting fire and enfeebling death, the different traps are pure gold and make for a fitting final element for this pdf.

Conclusion

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice any glitches. Layout adheres to RSP'S b/w-2-column standard and the pdf comes in 2 versions, one for screen use and one optimized to be printed out. Both pdfs come fully bookmarked. Concisely presented with a lot of great content, imaginative traps and some cool coverings, this pdf can be considered not only a worthy addition to the excellent Dungeon Dressing line, it is also one of my favorites so far. Lacking any gripes and having enjoyed this that much, my final verdict will clock in at an unsurprising 5



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PATHWAYS MAGAZINE

stars endzeitgeist seal of approval.

Endzeitgeist out.

Adventure Quarterly #2

By Rite Publishing 4 out of 5 Stars by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graff

The second issue of Rite Publishing's quarterly adventure-magazine is 90 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page ToC, 1 page SRD, 1 page blank inside the back cover, 1 page back cover, leaving 84 pages of content, so let's check this out!

This being a review of an adventure-based magazine, the following contains SPOILERS. Potential players may wish to jump to the conclusion.

All right, still here? Excellent! The first module is a slight blast from the past for me - we get the complete first level of the Ruins Perilous by Jonathan McAnulty of Kaidan and Coliseum Morpheuon-fame. Once a project with an experimental funding system, the project has been dormant for some time, which as a pity: The Ruins Perilous are located next to Questhaven, Rite Publishing's upcoming magical renaissance city governed by adventurers and the Ruins are not only a mega-dungeon, but also a kind of proving ground: Cleared by the first adventurers of the Questor's Society, each level of the Ruins includes a Guild-Forge, where the emblematic rings that denote rank in the society can be upgraded, making exploration of the dungeon one of the ways to enhance your standing in the Questor's Society.

AQ #2 includes the complete first level, released for the very first time in its entirety. With adventurers exploring the place, it needs a care-taker to remain a challenge and there indeed is one: Carcera, a dungeon dragon, takes care that vanquished foes are replaced and also monitors and modifies this artificially maintained dungeon environment - but each replacement takes some time. And should the PCs die, their corpses will be hauled back by Ciicul, Stonewarden the cynical groundskeeper gargoyle for proper burial. The first level of the Ruins Perilous turns out to thus have a rather interesting feeling, being something different in tone from your standard dungeon, which becomes readily apparent when the first creatures they fight turn out to be shivs, carnivorous green lizard that are quickly followed on by encounters with the first traps, a lesser ghostly shadow, giant porcupines, a junk elemental and an interesting, mysterious set of fountains, the transcription of which should elude the PCs due to the high DC, at least for now. PCs also have a chance to be squashed by logs, combat a mirror assassin and meet a tribe of thievish pilfer monkeys seeking to take their shiny baubles, equipment etc. Among the more far-out beings, once encounter a can 2-headed dire shadow rat, skeletal guardians made of smoke and vermin like giant ticks etc. Rather disturbing, the PCs can also find

a rather nasty fungus that has created some fungal spider zombies.

In order to advance to level 2, though, they will first have to defeat ratfolk sentinels spying for their allies on level two, explore a garden of self-combusting flowers and a rather unpleasant amount of poisonous blue cave frogs before passing the guild forge and its guardian and venturing to level 2, which I hope to see in the next installment of AQ!

The module also features 3 new magic items, 6 new monsters, the full stats of Ciicul and 4 different pregens, all of which utilize some of the neat racial supplements by Rite Publishing.

The second module is T. H. Gulliver's "Into the Land of Tombs", a tantalizing locale first featured in the stellar "#30 Traps for Tombs", which to this day remains the best trap-book available for PFRPG. The once verdant land was beset by a dread cataclysm that ensured the gradual transformation of the land's culture - now a wasteland of tombs, people still shiver at the potential return of the Necromancer-Pharao Nukramajin - a detailed background along DCs etc. is provided for the PCs to unearth. When the nephew of Ayser Ayman died, the funeral procession set off towards the family crypt, guarded from the roaming undead by a magical crypt key - only to be attacked and almost wiped out by attackers, who took Hafa Ayman hostage. It is here the PCs come in: They have to journey to the land of tombs, without a crypt key, and return Ayser's sister to him. After a short interrogation of the surviving guard, the PCs will be off towards the place of the ambush where the bodies have recently been gnawed on and thus, the PCs can immediately make themselves a picture on how cowardly the guardsman truly is - as soon as a pack of sand ghasts breaks loose from the desert to add the PCs to the festering pile of bodies.

Now, after that, the awesomeness begins with a undead gunslinger Askari harassing the PCs and making for a truly unsettling encounter -whether diplomatic or combat-themed. After that, the PCs will sooner or later stumble upon the now undead funeral procession of Ayser's deceased nephew and have a chance to rescue Hafa Ayman, who has been locked up in the sarcophagus of her son. The mastermind, though has gone ahead to the family's crypt. Bringing the remains there, they can encounter the wizard Sekani Omari, who was after the crypt key to gain access to the family tomb - to find the legendary tomb of Nukramajin. He only got a cryptic prophecy, though, which might make for an awesome future module. Better yet, if you need an added complications in the show-down, you may add a new creature, the so-called Red Jester, which can be considered a truly deadly undead jester that was amused by the irony of the undead procession.

The high level module of this installment is Steven D. Russell's "Dungeon of No Return", which could e considered a nod towards the "Tomb Of Horrors". If the name was not ample clue: PCs will DIE here. In order to resurrect a legendary hero of old, the PCs need to reclaim a gem of power called the Quietus Starlight and are hired to enter the dungeon of no return, to once again stop the now reincarnated fey deity of autumn. The gem is a soulprison, yes, but an insidious one - the hero of old doesn't want to leave it, for it is a true paradise and thus has created an order of powerful beings to ensure he is never disturbed - it is into this death-trap of a complex, against this hero's allies the PCs will have to march to rip the legend of old from his self-chosen complacency. Much like "Down the Rabbit Hole", this is a five-room dungeon, with each room containing some kind of deadly challenge the will not only require good rolls and builds, but also wits on part of the players to weather. And boy, does this module not pull any punches: After teleporting to the first room (via a carpet, probably), the PCs can imemdiately fall prey to a powerful illusion of "Dawning of the Wildstar", legendary blade of Rualsnis the Wyrd-smith and not only have fun with a deadly destruction spell, but also with a...balor. In room 1. Yeah. Ouch. However, if the PCs "get" a respective room and solve it without triggering its prohibition etc., they'll be rewarded quite generously in each of the rooms.

Speaking of Ouch

A rainbow wall looks bad. A path into a side-room that turns out to be the path into the massive maw of a petrified gigantean hero-killer remorhaz Raze-Ruse(CR 25), though? PAIN. Worse, the insides of the petrified beast are dimensionally locked, making for easily very dead PCs. Speaking of dead - room 3 houses a crucifixion spirit as well as exemplar mudmen. How better, though to pass teh time before the dragon's lair than with a nice game of wheel of fortune? Guarded by an adamantine cannon golem that can practically not be defeated unless very specific conditions are met and an ironborn luckbringer, the PCs get a chance to play at the wheel-equivalent of a deck of many things, with a whopping 100 different results. Though, after an initial success, the luckbringer uses his powers to foul the PC's agenda and ensure the powerful curses befall them. (Btw.: all rules to properly play the luckbringer are depicted) In the final room, hidden by an illusion, waits the perhaps deadliest beast of all - a rival adventurer group of highest level, commanded by the hobgoblin brute Kraulog. His allies include a goblin rogue, a drow cleric and a fighter/ evoker that come, as most builds herein, with multiple feats, magical item qualities, arcane discoveries or uncommon spells.

SPOILERS END

The pdf also features a massive 100-entries table of generic dungeon dressing features by Raging Swan mastermind Creighton Broadhurst as well as a short 2-page article I really enjoyed by Robert N. Emerson, as I use similar house-rules in my own game: If you care to, as a DM you'll get the guidelines for creating easy-to-use morale-rules for NPCs, re-introducing psychological warfare etc. in your game. Nice way to end this issue. Among the supplemental material, we find an extensive mixture of .png and .jpegversions of the maps - both with and without labels, making them suitable to potentially be printed out and handed to players while they explore - nice!

Conclusion

Editing and formatting are ok, though not perfect: I encountered multiple little typos like a missing "s" in "She" and the like, though nothing too grievous. Layout adheres to RiP's 2-column standard and the artworks are mostly stock. The pdf comes with extensive nested bookmarks as well as two separate zip-files, providing label-less versions of the maps in .png-format as well as versions with labels and keys in jpeg-format. Cartography is detailed and done with dundjinni.

The second installment of Adventure Quarterly once again provides us with a low, a mid- and a high-level adventure, so how do they fare? I'm a fan of the whole fresh "artificial, deadly proving ground"-idea of the Ruins Perilous, so that one is right up my alley and I'm rather glad we finally get to explore the complex's whole first level! I look forward to seeing the lower ones. My favorite, though, would be T.H. Gulliver's relatively short wilderness trek into the land of tombs, though: The module breathes iconic, dark Sword & Sorcery spirit and brims with some disturbing ideas - If only there was more space devoted to it.

While the fluff is clearly beyond reproach and cements my impression of T. H. Gulliver's vast capacity for writing a great adventure, the basic structure of the module is rather simple and would have benefited greatly from some additional hazards and haunts to complicate the quest of the PCs. I'd honestly would love to see a ~100+-page sourcebook/sandbox adventure on the land of tombs. The final module is a meat-grinder in the best sense of the word - consciously deadly, entering the "Dungeon of No Return" is not exactly a good way to plan for old age. This 5-roomdungeon lives up to its name, though I have one thing to complain about that one: The background story is awesome, but no epilogue or even stats are provided - I'd love to see an incursion into the legendary prison that is the quest's goal or even some other form of resolution - as provided, that's the one flaw of an otherwise stellar high-level module.

When all's said and done, we get 2 good dungeons and a wilderness trek that oozes style. Due to my minor complaints mentioned earlier, I'll settle on a final verdict of a solid 4 stars for the second issue of Adventure Quarterly.

Endzeitgeist out.

Cerulean Seas: Waves of Thought

by Alluria Publishing 5 out of 5 Stars! by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf

This pdf is 98 pages long, 1 page front cover, 2 pages editorial, 1 page ToC, 1 page SRD, 1 page list of thanks for the Alluria kickstarter, 2 pages of Index, 1 page inside the back cover and 1 page back cover, leaving us with a total of 88 pages of content, so let's check this out!

This is a pdf I honestly thought I'd never see - Alluria Publishing has created THE definite book for underwater adventuring with their massive, stellar quality Cerulean Seas Campaign Setting. Unfortunately, after that, the company got put on hold and now, like a phoenix from the ashes, has risen to once again grace us with their material - but can the psionic supplement, fully compatible with Dreamscarred Press' Psionics Unleashed material and made in association with these masters of the mind stand up to the incredibly high standard Alluria has set for themselves with the Cerulean Seas Campaign Setting?

Only one way to find out! This book kicks off with a flavorful introduction about the cycles of divine might, arcane power and psionic potential and then goes on about how this product was made and a set of basic terms one should understand when reading this book. Without any significant further ado, we are then introduced to new aquatic psionic races that might be added to a regular heavily aquatic campaign or used with the Cerulean Seas Campaign Setting. First in the array of new races would be the Amphian, a subtype of clownfish-likelooking merfolk that is renowned to be a race of gifted entertainers and they scoundrels get either the wild talent psionc feat (if non-psionic class) or the psionic talent feat (if they choose a psionic class) at first level as well as fast swim speed, 2 to Cha and Dex and -2 to Str as well as the favored class option



to get 1

power point when taking a level in the wilder class and a resistance to venoms. The Thalassic Asrai, a new type of medium feykith, get either the wild talent psionc feat (if non-psionic class) or the psionic talent feat (if they choose a psionic class), are boneless and thus get 2 to acrobatics and escape artist checks as well as 1 to CMD & CMB, 2 Dex and Wis, -2 Con, can get a power point instead of hp or skills when classing in a psionic class, deal cold damage with their natural attacks and swiftly die when brought out of the water. They also gte 2 to checks to overcome psionic resistance instead of feykith magic.

The Melusine are an interesting race that sprang from the nommo and can be considered a psionically changed race that is heavily influenced by its rigid caste system and the fact that beings from diverse castes produce offspring belonging to certain caste combinations, enforcing a complex structure that is interesting to explore in game. Rules-wise, these beings get 2 Con and 2 Int, -2 Cha, are of the merfolk subtype, get 40 ft swim speed, darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, suffocate out of the water, get a 2 to Perception due to compound eyes, get either the wild talent psionc feat (if non-psionic class) or the psionic talent feat (if they choose a psionic class), can get a power point as a favored class option when leveling in a psionic class. They are also acclimated to extreme depths, meaning they suffer at low depths of 300 ft. from being pressure sensitive and can negate damage they receive as an immediate action by burning power points, ignoring 2 points of damage for each power point spent.

Interesting Races

Speaking of interesting races: The Merkoth, is a weird merfolk indeed, ending in multiple, octopus-like tentacles. They get 2 Dex and Int, but -2 Cha, have a normal swim speed, get either the wild talent psionc feat (if non-psionic class) or the psionic talent feat (if they choose a psionic class), can cast detect psionics and concealing amphora 1/day as a psi-like ability - well, and they have tentacles, enabling them to hold up to 4 items ready (but not use them) to be retrieved as a swift action and also granting them 4 to CMB when trying to grapple. Oh, and they have a unique peculiar behavior as well: They hate their own race, trying their very best to avoid each other as often as possible, even having their young brought up by foster parents and actually get sickened without a save when within 30 ft of another being of their race. Now if that is not story-telling gold!

The reptilian-headed Benthic Naga are next on the list. They get 2 to Dex and Wis, -2 to Cha, belong to the anthromorph subtype, get 1 natural armor to AC, get either the wild talent psionc feat (if non-psionic class) or the psionic talent feat (if they choose a psionic class), are immune to mind-reading and get 2 to saves vs. enchantment and poison as well as a mildly poisonous bite. The DC of latter scales with the character's level, ensuring prolonged usefulness. The final new race is actually one you might recall from another Alluria publication, namely the Remarkable Races Compendium. The Zef, originally parasites that have taken over the collectives of a form of snail-like humanoids and guided them benevolently, granting them sentience. The small snail-people are presented here in a psionc variant that gets 2 Int, 2 Wis, -2 Str, 20 ft swim speed, can choose a knowledge skill as a class skill at first level due to their inborn knowledge and also feature a protective shell in which they can retreat. If you remember the campaign setting, you might recall the eclectic options to play halfbreeds of a wide variety of races and here we also get seafolk/ amphian, seafolk/melusine and seafolk/benthic naga crossbreeds. It should also be mentioned that the chapter includes tables that comprehensively list all racial modifiers of the new races, tables to determine random height and length, age-tables for starting age and age effects as well as information on racial buoyancy and depth tolerance, both in the respective racial entries and in the table - great service and concise presentation there!

Psionic Classes

After that we are introduced to Alluria Publishing's take on the psionic classes released so far in the context of underwater adventuring, providing easy to implement conversion advice ranging from cosmetic remodeling to some minor crunchy modifications before we delve into the new base-class, the Aquanaut. The Aquanaut gets d10 HD, 4+Int skills per level, proficiency with simple and martial weapons, light and medium armor, shields and all natural weapons they have, but more on that one later. The Aquanauts also gets full BAB, good fort and will-saves, up to a total of 74 power points and can learn powers of up to 4th level. Sounds like a martial class? Yes and no, for the Aquanaut is so much more than that! The Aquanaut starts off with something called Phylum and gains an additional

level and every 4 levels thereafter, gaining an empathy with creatures associated with her phylum examples would Cnidarians, be Crustaceans, Mammals etc. Now, the Aquanaut foregoes membership of her original race, becoming essentially a

phylum at fifth



race of her own she shares with other members of the class (Aquanaut). She also becomes an inherently magical being that increases her natural AC, makes her resistant to pressure and means that she counts as magical for means of attacks. Can you see where this is going? The Aquanaut is actually evolving her own body, learning to change her body with her very own brand of mutations, to which quite some space is devoted: Starting by explaining the basic [armor], [extra arm] and[shell]-descriptors of the introduced mutations, we are then presented with phyla and their associated mutations: 6 phylums are detailed, each coming with a plethora of these new mutations - from root-like tendrils, to anchor yourself, coral-style to surfaces to extruding poisonous slime or growing a coral head, from poisonous and shootable spines to fins to crab legs, chitin skin, additional tentacles, lobster claws to an otter's keen sense of smell, a sonar, up to the option to change colors and thus speak the cephalite language and gain a stealth bonus, extrude octopus ink or being able to grow, puffer-fish style or grow a turtle or nautilus shell: Not only are the respective options sheer genius in their iconicity, they also are so rock-. solid and balanced in their rules-implementation that I can do naught but utter the utmost praise for this class: Even in the reign of excellent PFRPG-classes, the Aquanaut stands out and surpasses all regular Cerulean Seas-classes, being on par with my favorite pathfinder-classes ever. The best new base class I've read so far in 2012! Take heed, designers - this is how it's done!

Underwater PRCs

Next up are the regular psionic PrCs and how they can be changed to fit in an undersea environment and goes on to provide us with two new PrCs - the 10 level Current Adept (d6, 2+Int skills, 1/2 BAB, 1/2 will-save, 8 levels of power progression) are beings that can manipulate water to work telekinetic style and gain vast speed enhancements

as well as the option to create impassable water and change water temperature - interesting casting battlefield control/ mobility class. The second class, is the 5-level shark incarnate, a feral melee PrC for psychic warriors that gets d10, 4+Int skills per level, full BAB, good fort and ref-saves, only gains an additional 9 power points and 3 levels of power progression, but gets special enhancements options to make truly devastating bites and can be considered a fearsome foe indeed: The shark incarnate can add double the str-mod to attacks when blood is in the water or an enemy is almost dead and can get additional attacks to follow up on critical hits, may reroll class levels saves and add his strength modifier on the rerolls. Worse, once the shark has destroyed a foe, he gets temporal life-force from cannibalizing. The capstone is also cool, offering the option to treat power points as hit points on a one-for-one-basis if the shark incarnate would otherwise be dropped below o Hp. Both PrCs are absolutely neat, though, unsurprisingly, they are "only" excellent, not a class of its own like the Aquanaut base-class.

The pdf also provides us with 23 new feats, including e.g. the option to craft mystic starfish (!!!) to gaining ectoplasmic ink to the option to gain a hypnotic angler-fish style gaze or even turn to water to 1/day automatically escape a grapple or change your naga venom to one that deals wisdamage that makes susceptible to your psionic attacks. You could also form psionic quills of ectoplasm while focused, granting you access to armor spikes in any armor or even unarmored. Beyond that, we are also introduced to a variety of psionic powers and the careful consideration towards environmental factors we've seen in Cerulean Seas - e.g. the fact that cold energy effects may result in ice-crystals, but only up to a certain depths. It's small bits and pieces that make the difference between a good setting and a stellar one - attention to detail and internally consistent logic. We also get a complete powers-list for the new Aquanautclass, including highlighted and altered aquanaut powers. This care is extended towards the psion and wilder as well as the psychic warrior class, before we delve right into the selection of new powers.

Oh BOY! Aqueous Coalescence thickens the water around you, halving enemy movement and hampering attacks and damage as well as preventing ranged attacks. Better yet the power also effects buoyancy and can be dissipated by currents. You'll see powers like this more often in the chapter than not - i.e. powers that not only offer interesting tactical options, but also exhibit a true mastery of psionic rules (the Dreamscarred press connection is evident) as well as taking the stellar rules from the Cerulean Seas Campaign Setting into account, merging both in an accomplishment of great design. Whta I mean with this rather cryptic wording is that these powers take three-dimensional fighting, buoyancy, floating ice, etc. into account, create devastating vortexes, use atomic agitation to create superheated blasts of water, etc. into account.

Not even here does the pdf stop, though, and instead it provides us with 2 new item classes, the mystic starfish and the ioun bubble, as well as 6 new psionic items and a new psionic material. If you've read the Cerulean Seas Campaign Setting, you'll distinctly remember the racial perspectives on the setting's history and the grand panoply their combined perspective offers - just like the setting, this pdf provides a chapter of fluff in this vein, containing famous members, adventure hooks and myths galore, enough to fill a wide variety of adventures and campaigns. It should be noted that the perspectives on non-player races have not been ignored - we also get to know at least a bit about the psionic jellyfish called medusians and similar NPC-races.

The final large chapter provides us with a bestiary in true Alluria Publishing-style - i.e. with easily identifiable creature-glyphs and gorgeous full-color artworks for every creature. We are introduced to the golden-scaled Apsara merfolk, the enigmatic Arichteuthian shapers, to calcified skeletons and brain corals that kill their victims and make them their calcified skeleton slaves, to tiny, yet deadly brain crabs, the demonic and powerful Jormungandi, to a new almost cthulhoid-looking species of song dragon, to nightmare-inducing eels, frogs on whose backs brill grows to the non-player castes of the Melusine to disturbing mindshrimp swarms, to translucent, glowing deep sea octopi and psionic slurgs, host creatures for the Zef and their racial blood foes, the Zoh, - the bestiray is of a stunning quality and many of the artworks herein would even stand out in Alluria's excellent oevre.

In order to make navigation easier, we get an appendix with aquatic psionic monsters released so far by CR, a pronunciation guide, an index of tables, an index for art and 2 pages of cardstock minis.

Conclusion

Editing and formatting, I am happy to report, are up to the stellar quality Alluria left off with - I did not notice any glitches, top-notch! Layout is GORGEOUS and up to the highest standards conceivable, using the same aweinspiring full-color blue-tinged look as the campaign setting. Alluria Publishing's artwork was always stellar, but some pieces herein, be it the monsters, the chapter-introducing artworks or the Aquanaut blast the lids off of what to expect from a 3pp artwork-wise. Only rarely does one see so many awesome full-color artworks in one pdf. Impressive indeed! The pdf also comes fully bookmarked, with nested bookmarks, making navigation easy. The only formal point I could nag about is the lack of a printer-friendly version. Then again, if you do print this out, you'll want it in full color or even print from the get-go: The pdf is that pretty. And best of all: The content is up to the visuals! Whether it is crunch or fluff, this pdf leaves nothing to be desired – much like the spell-adaption in Cerulean Seas, this pdf not only goes the extra mile, it goes an extra marathon and then some. Advertised as a psionic underseas sourcebook I at first considered the publisher's blurb speaking of "mastery of Psionic Unleashed and the Cerulean Seas Setting" sounding like hubris. It's not. It's the plain truth. I did not find one piece of content I'd consider off, not one single piece. Better yet, the pieces herein are not contend with working - they strive to be iconic.

They ooze heart's blood and passion. They provide innovative synergies and take the peculiarities of undersea adventuring into account. This pdf, much like the original Cerulean Seas Campaign Setting, is not content with being good, or very good - it strives to excel. And that shows. In every page and every idea. Let me spell it out: My expectations were insanely high. They were met and surpassed. My expectations, when this high, are almost universally disappointed. Instead, e.g. the Aquanaut should be considered a compulsory addition to ANY campaign featuring psionics and could, with some minor tweaking, work in regular settings as well. I only have one thing to ask for: Do we get Waves of Thought 2 with more support for the Aquanaut and additional support for Psionics Expanded: Advanced Psionics Guide? Please?

I forgot my verdict. It should come as no surprise: This book is a must for fans of psionics, of the Cerulean Seas setting and all those who felt even remotely intrigued by what I described here. This pdf is worth every cent of its asking price and I hope there'll be a print option. Final verdict: 5 stars endzeitgeist seal of approval. Congratulations for the triumphant return -it comes with a bang!

Endzeitgeist out.

101 Special Materials and Power Components

by Rite Publishing 5 out of 5 Stars! by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf

This pdf is 31 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD and 1 page advertisement, leaving us with 37 pages of content, so let's check these out!

Mithril. Iridium. Orichalcum (even though irl, that one is rather debunked). Adamantine. Alchemical Silver. Green Steel. Read these and immediately, a variety of different associations is opened in the reader's mind - because we, on a subconscious level, know that while the assumption of magic is easily imaginable, special materials and alloys

feel a bit more grounded in the reality of a setting - they are iconic, characters crave them and we can easily think of one of multiple why reasons weird alloys would exist on worlds different from our own.

So what are these things herein? Well, special materials



come with massive descriptions on how they look and came to be as well as information on HP/inch and hardness as well as information on how much it costs to make ammunition of the material or craft weapons, armors and shields from it. The respective materials also have some inherent effects they add to their base-items, e.g. the option to cause bleeding wounds (weapons) or deal damage to attacks (armors shields)in the case of aberrant alloy.

What are Power Components, then? These things can be added to the casting of a given spell as material components, enhancing its power in various ways. The component, of course, is consumed by the casting. Power components also can be applied to the effects of magic items, but are consumed much the same way. They also come with information on hardness, hp/inch and costs, though they provide different costs: We get usually an entry for the value of one cast, for a power component enhanced wand and one for a power component enhanced continuous magic item. Before you're starting to fret, though, a concisely-written box explains on how to handle introducing these rare materials into your campaign while keeping the balance. Need an example? Take absolute ice, created from the very coldest possible ice where negative energy plane and elemental plane of ice meet: Adding a vial of absolute ice to one cast forces enemies subjected to the spell to make a fort-save to prevent being staggered temporarily in addition to the spell's regular effects. For all those ice-themed mages out there: It also add the [cold]-descriptor to spells, works better when used with such spells in the first place and makes your breath billow forth as cold mist when speaking the incantations.

Now that you should have an overview of what the two types of item-classes do, let's take a look at some of the more interesting examples: Akashic crystals should remind aficionados of arcana evolved of something: These

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crystals taking from the d20-variant that is imho closer to PFRPG than D&D 3.5 enable people to store memories and information in them - great tools to deliver plot hooks, my DM-friends! You could also add Amrita to your potions, eliminating the debilitating effects of old age for one year at the massive expense of 200 000GP: If you can't see a way on how to craft an adventure around the massive costs of this immortality-addiction, I don't know. Anamnesis alloy is also rather interesting: Items made from it are first coldforged into one form and then forged again into another, being then able to change between both. Legendary Azoth will be a boon for alchemists, while banesteel weapons carry a dread curse - a sample curse is also part of the deal and ouch, it hurts! Want flying stone stairs? Cavorite is what you want! Always wanted a rothenium-polymere suit for your assassin/rogue in a fantasy setting? Check out the chameleon suit. Necromancers might wish to purchase some fossilized undead ooze to enhance their spells, while fans of "A Song of Fire and Ice" can now have dragonglass weapons, should they so choose.

We also get crystals to have minor wisps of energy cling to those damaged by your energy-based attacks, wood that is destructive against constructs, an essence that lets you steal permanently a creature's ability to sleep, sacred jarnvidr wood, the ink of kraken, an alloy of mithril and cold iron to a material that is as strong as the oath of its bearer, the variety is nice indeed.

Classics like dragon scales, afore-mentioned Orichalcum , steel of star-children, primal iron and air go hand in hand with items like the anti-hero-point Quintessence of Failure (i.e. -20 on the next atk on a failed save) and iconic materials like bottled voices.

Conclusion

Editing and formatting are very good - although I noticed e.g. a superfluous asterisk and similar minor glitches, they are few and far in-between and did not deter from my enjoyment of the file. Layout adheres to RiP's 2-column standard and artwork is stock, but perfectly fitting. The pdf is also fully bookmarked for your convenience.

Once in a while, Steven D. Russell's 101-series goes beyond the rather high standard it has set for itself by providing something different, something bold and awesome. Take "101 New Skill Uses", "101 Hazards & Disasters" or "101 Not so Random Urban Encounters". This pdf, while not reaching the absolute apex of the series, is another offering I'd wholeheartedly recommend to any DM out there. How often have your PCs asked what happens when they add material xyz to a cast? How often have they asked, how a given material influences the final product in crafting? In my home-game, I've essentially been houseruling a vast arrays materials to do things that this pdf now puts into concise, balanced rules: Add noble salamander scales to fire-spells? More boom! Etc. This pdf brings magic in Pathfinder with its materials and power components much closer in line to our favorite representations of magic from fiction: Adding strange ingredients and getting improved results for your supernatural practices results not only in a vast array of adventure hooks, stories and cool ideas like "gold-rush"-style scenarios à la OD's classic "Halls of the Mountain King", but also improves massively the immersion of your players in the setting as they slowly get to know all the weird materials and quest for supplies and hoard their enhancing resources. This pdf is narrative gold and marries this with great crunch - hence my final verdict will clock in at a highly recommended 5 stars endzeitgeist seal of approval.

Endzeitgeist out.

C1: Alagoran's Gem

by Adventureaweek.com, LLP 5 out of 5 stars! by Thilo "Endzeitgeist" Graf

This module is 48 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page ToC (& recommended reading for those not familiar with oldschool style gaming) and 1 page SRD, leaving us with a total of 44 pages of content, so let's take a look at the first of AdventureaWeek.com's C-series of classic modules in the spirit of old-school gaming!



This being an adventure review, the following contains SPOILERS. Potential players may wish to jump to the conclusion. All right, still here? Let's take a look! Intended for levels 3-5, the premise of the module is rather simple: A wealthy merchant once named Alagoran sought a way to keep his belongings safe after a burglary and thus invested his fortune in a magnificent gem. Edged further on by his paranoia, he had a deadly complex crafted to keep both him and his prized possession safe. Alagoran has vanished. He stopped showing up for rations and, while some time has passed, none have yet returned or claimed the prize of the magnificent gem. Enter the PCs, who should then feel like a certain famous barbarian who was known to have pulled off some deadly heists in his youth. Props if you got that reference.

So yeah, via 4 different, albeit simple sample hooks the



PCs are recruited to test their mettle against the dungeon paranoid Alagoran has crafted - but can they prevail? From the very start, a sense of puzzles and antiquity sweeps the PCs, as they get a chance to avoid a fight with a powerful undead guardian by mentioning a correct name and mundane, yet still sickening mildew, green slime and magic mouths that taunt them. Oh, have I mentioned the traps and the twisted ways in which they can actually be bypassed? Pit traps and acid arrows are the least of the PC's worries if they don't take care - especially if they activate a certain magical door and get hit by a wave of energy that may not only pummel them into a pit, it may also eliminate ALL 1-use magic items and activate those that can be activated! Rod of fireball? BOOM. Potions and scrolls? Ruined! OUCH! PCs hit by this one will complain, but honestly - it can be avoided, it's iconic and it FEELS just right...so kudos for including this rather nasty effect! Speaking of nasty: Even before they have went to the inner rooms of the dungeon, the PCs can find a mushroom forest including ogres, unhealthy puffball spores and be infected with dysentery (Yes, not filth fever or slimy doom. Seriously. I like it when not every damn dirty place features the same two standard diseases everyone seems to use ...) even before they have to pass a gauntlet-style corridor full of magic-imbued arrow traps. Also nice: a trolley-based refuse-system leading to an otyugh's nice home

Where the module starts to become interesting is with a circular room, which can be considered a many-phased, complex trap that has no easy way to solve and cannot be simply deactivated by a successful disable device roll instead, the PCs will have to brave the danger with brawns and use their brains to pass the trap - have I mentioned that the trap features rancid boar's blood, acid, the chance to drown and a pack of starving ghouls? Speaking of acid: Hanging, tilting platforms over a sea of acid can also be found herein - guarding a nice bluff of a fake treasure room that has the iconic three chests, of which, of course, all are the wrong ones. The dungeon also features yet another false gem guarded by an Indy trap as well as an alternate entrance, an owlbear, an option to parlay with a tribe of orcs, a carrion crawler and undead ignited by a gas leak that may blow the PCs to smithereens. There is also a river of lava including... *drums* a dead magic zone! Yes! We have not nearly enough of those in most current modules and I'm not ironic there - magic should never be too predictable and challenges like this, where magical prowess alone does not suffice, add to this sentiment. Before the end of the dungeon, though, we have yet more lava, animated ropes (trip, trip, trip the adventurers into the river of lava...), superheated, unhealthy, sulfurous air and then, the final room, in which the PCs have one more chance to use their wits - if they fail, they will have to contend with a rather lethal array of traps and might even be petrified (though that is reversible by concluding the module). If they by now have a good grasp of Alagoran's personality, they might be able to avoid these traps and even find the true, fabled gem - provided they can defeat its final guardian.

The module closes with stats in both 3.5 and PFRPG, which include 4 ready-to go replacement PC-stats should any perish in the module as well as a player-friendly key AND trap/secret-door less version of the map -Bravo!

Conclusion

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice any glitches. Layout adheres to a printer-friendly white background and is otherwise the standard 2-column standard we've come to expect from AaW, including colorcoded boxes for rules, read-aloud text etc. The pdf comes fully bookmarked with nested bookmarks and is scheduled to get herolab files, but at the writing of this review, these have not yet been added. The cartography of the dungeon in full color is beautiful as I've come to expect from AaWpublications and the player-friendly map sans traps and helps, secret doors and keys is awesome to have and should be industry standard.

I honestly didn't expect much from this module, seeing how often "old-school" is used as a synonym for "nothing new/creative" here - that's not the case here. Yes, the story is simplistic, there is not a grand mini-game or some other twist - but know what? The design-philosophy, much like in the excellent modules by Frog God Games oozes this sense of antiquity, of looming danger and death, of unpredictability and the NEED, not the option, to use your brain in order to survive. This is not dungeoneering for people who cry when their character dies. This a module that oozes oldschool flair, that evokes a sense of accomplishment when completed and, while it is a harsh mistress, remains a fair sojourn - this is no meat-grinder, it is a hard, challenging module. Not Rappan Athuk-level hard, mind you, but hard. And boy do I like it for that - the use of hazards, traps (that are not disabled via 1 roll) and enemies make this not only a blast from the past that evokes nostalgia via its themes and design, it also makes this module a stellar first offering for the C-series. I'm completely and fully recommending this very cheap module and look forward to seeing how the rest of the C-line will hold up to my scrutiny. If what I've written here even remotely intrigues you and if you're looking for a well-written dungeon-exploration - here you go. My final verdict? 5 stars, endzeitgeist seal of approval.

Endzeitgeist out

#30 Cursed Treasures

by Rite Publishing 4 out of 5 stars by Joshua "Ktfish7" Guillion

#30 Cursed Treasures, the latest in the #30 series from Rite weighs in at 23 pages, with 19 of those being the pages containing new game material. Written by John Bennett and featuring more of the amazing artwork Steven Russell has a knack for finding (this time out treating us to pieces from Arthur Rackham), this installment to the series continues the dual column format, with the occasional embedded piece of artwork, as well as the classic Rite publishing page frame.

Cursed Items are always an interesting thing to incorporate into a game setting, as the idea of adding true curses, those powerful afflictions that defy magical means to rid oneself of, well...something has to bring a chuckle to a GM from time to time...and nothing seems to work quite like watching a playgroup scramble to rid themselves of a cursed item that just won't go away...

Each item is given a price (as per its material value and its collectable value), a physical description, a detailed explanation of the trigger that sets off the curse, what the effects of said curse are, the history of the item (great for mining for immense amounts of story ideas, adventure hooks, side quests...and of course the terms for removal of the curse upon the bearer.

As there are thirty of these items, I am going to limit myself to a few choice items, beginning with Rexzor the Red's Dragon Tapestry. Rexzor was your atypical Red, big, nasty, greedy and on a shortlist for hero's to try and kill. And when his day finally came, from his scales a tapestry was made by one of the victors of Raxzor's final battle. So, we've got a back-story, we've got a cool item, I mean a tapestry made of woven dragonscale?? That's pretty cool...so what's the curse right? Simple, fire. The minute a new owner hangs this unique wall art within his home, the clock is ticking for the place to burn to the ground. A fairly specific method for removal of the curse guarantees this item becoming an adventure for a playgroup if they end up with it, as there is only one way to be rid of the tapestry...and the minute you touch it you want to take it home and hang it up...lol.

Glutton's Gold sent me to Google to verify a word, and its meaning (lol), and before anyone out there not knowing this word, or its meaning, I beg of you to learn it before contacting Steven to yell at him, lol. Now, that out of the way, what we have here is a hoard of shiny gold coins just waiting to be found...only problem is they leave anyone who possesses any of them with an appetite for actual gold, strong enough that they will suffer if they do not eat enough, daily. The Burnt Crown of the Wood Elf King is one of the most bizarre items as far as its history goes that I think I have ever come across. The crown of the elven king Eltee'ae, the crown holds within it his extreme hatred of all animals...yeah, you read that right, an elven king...hatred of all animals. The hatred sprang from his being taken aback by human druids using animals to attack his kingdom...so, an elven king sees animals of his forest being used as weapons against him and

his, and blames the weapon, not the people steering them? Sorry, this one doesn't work for me. Copper Pennies of Apathion is the classic ancient people sold their souls to Charon, and used these coins to denote other souls they were sending in their place type of thing...hence the whole placing



a coin on each eye of the dead.

Cube of Zaz is an interesting concept for an item, as the ramifications of introducing one to a divine caster who relies upon prayer in your campaign could be long standing. The cube "replaces" the character's God/patron...whomever it is that grants them spells for their prayers. The cube does not provide as many spells, nor any domain spells or abilities... but unless the character can find a way around the cube to contact their deity they would have no reason not to believe they had simply upset their God and that was the reasoning behind the lesser granted perks for prayers.

OK, so final thoughts here...there are some pretty cool items presented here, far more cool items than not. The format of how they are presented is extremely cool as well, giving a piece of history to each as well as the methods of removal being far more than "cast this spell" standard fare. However, the PDF is riddled with small editing issues, mainly in grammar. Nothing to the point that you can't understand what you are reading, but certainly enough that you notice it. Cursed items are a great way to add some serious levels of danger to your game, but only if you as a GM are willing to put in the effort to make them cool. There are several here that could become part of some great memories for your players, and for that I am going to give this PDF a 4 star rating.

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The Curse of the Golden Spear Adventure Trilogy set in Kaidan



A three part campaign arc, **The Gift**, **Dim Spirit**, and **Dark Path** is an adventure trilogy set in the cursed land of Kaidan and is suitable for a group of 5th level characters. Drawing inspiration from Japanese folklore, and fully compatible with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, Kaidan is a land of horror and mystery. In Kaidan, demons stalk the land in human form, the dead seldom rest easy, and life is cheap. This adventure serves to introduce players and game masters alike to the cursed realm of Kaidan.

Rave reviews make this adventure trilogy an instant classic!







