

# PATTICE #26 • May 2012



**Rite Publishing Presents** 

# Heroes of the Jade Oath





<b>Despiser Template</b> "I imagine one or				Pathways #26	
people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain." James Baldwin <i>By Steven D. Russell</i>		7		<b>Publisher</b> Steven R. Russell	
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### Editorial

By Dave Paul



Role playing games of the sort Pathways readers know and love have a great many attractive features. For me, the endless varieties has always been a draw. Whether it's a tome of magic items, a bestiary of monsters, 1001 Spells, dozens of connected adventures, or a catalog of characters, the variety has often been the draw. I remember being confronted by adults when, as a teenager in the 70s and 80s, they found out I was playing this new and provocative game. Many of them asked me what the game was about and why I liked it. One of my early answers was that it was a game that was more like real life than other games like checkers or Monopoly, but that it was only like real life in the same sense that movies or mythology was like real life. I remember telling them that the game was rather like playing a novel rather than reading a novel. And, for me, within all of that, it was the endless variety that I loved.

Many of them shook their heads and wandered off, unable to fathom why I'd spend so many hours on such a strange diversion. Some of them were interested. A few of them were encouraging. There was enough encouragement (and no obstacles from the important adults—my parents and my friends' parents) that I continued with the game. And, once some of us began really working on entire campaigns, it became clear that a significant component of the game would be the nearly endless generation of NPCs. Sometimes we'd spend a weekend just working on NPCs. Sometimes we'd role play them for a while, get a feel for them, completely out of context of a game, and just try them on for size.

This month's issue of *Pathways* offers a nice variety

of characters for you to consider. The template creature for the month, while not exactly a run-of-the-mill NPC, certainly can serve the purpose. At least, as it were, she's an elf (yeah, she's a drow, and she's a ghost, but, whatever, she's still an elf). And, in Creighton Broadhurst's piece, we get two folks whom you'll find plenty of room for in your own adventures. These guys can turn out to be great fun if you run them well. One of them could even spend a whole series of adventures, even an entire campaign, without ever revealing any of the more interesting features of who he is.

Coming soon, the 101 series continues with Steven D. Russell's next masterpiece: 101 Variant Monsters. It is just what its name promises: 101 variant monsters. Need a new kind of ghoul, brownie or darkmantle to throw at your players? How about an imp that operates along different (but still manipulative) lines than normal? And, who doesn't enjoy dropping an ooze on some unsuspecting adventurers? And it's so much better when the players are as surprised as the characters are about what to do about the ooze. So that no GM is left out, the product will contain variant critters from CR 1 on up to CR 20 and beyond. Sure, the existing Pathfinder rules make it easy to give an orc a spear instead of an axe, or to allow a troll to be a human-hunting ranger. But, there's more room for variation than even that, so, keep an eye out for this great collection of new options. (And, in keeping with the theme, there's more here than just lots of bad guys for characters to dispatch, there are plenty of interesting options for allies within as well.)

A medium is willingly possessed by a raging ghost to lure it into a magical trap. An occultist bribes a satyr lord into granting him mastery over stormy skies and hardened hearts. A queen makes bloody sacrifices to fiendish masters for perpetual life. All use covenant magic.

Legendary Classes: Covenant Magic from David Nicholas Ross introduces covenants, secretive bargains allowing characters of any class to draw on the supernatural gifts of spirits such as fey, outsiders, and undead. This book also introduces mediums, true masters of covenant magic who can contact spirits, call on a spirit guide for supernatural attacks, empower allies and hinder foes with spell-like abilities, and enter a trance that unlocks covenants without a price and enhances their toughness and magical might.

#### This book contains:

- The medium base class, specializing in one of 11 influences such as Angelic Choirs, Restless Souls, or the Unseelie Court.
- Favored class options for mediums of nearly any race.
- A new spell, expel spirits, for mediums and witches.
- Covenant magic rules, including five new feats for characters of any class.
- 60 covenants.
- Optional rules for alternative covenant offerings, such as years of life.



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Reviewed by: Endzeitgeist.com

# LEGENDARY CLASSES COVENANT MAGIC



David Nicholas Ross



# Despiser Creature Semplate

By Steven D. Russell, Illustrated by Dallas Williams

There are eldritch abominations in non-Euclidian and subtle realms beyond our reality that hold ours in contempt. They wish to do nothing but destroy all that is good and healthy in this world. They often turn creatures from the mortal world, which accidentally travel into their fractured dimension, into their agents. These despiser creatures seek to destroy all sense of hope. They do not just want to ruin things; they love ruining people, driving them to suicide.

# Creating a Despiser Creature

**"Despiser"** is an acquired template that can be added to any creature with an Intelligence of 4 or higher (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A despiser creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**CR:** +2

Alignment: Changes to Chaotic Evil.

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

**Armor** Class: The despiser creature loses any armor or natural armor bonuses and gains a deflection bonus to Armor Class equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher. If the base creature already has a deflection bonus, use the higher value.

**Defensive** Abilities: incorporeal, rejuvenation **Weakness** vulnerability to gaze attacks

**Speed:** A despiser creature gains a fly speed equal to double the base creature's highest speed, with perfect maneuverability. If the base creature already has a fly speed, it increases to double the base creature's highest speed, and its maneuverability class becomes perfect.

**Attacks:** A despiser gains an incorporeal touch attack and loses all non-ghost touch melee & ranged attacks.

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

Aura of Despondency (Su): Any creature with 60 ft. of the despiser creature must make a successful Will save (10 + 1/2 the base creature's HD + its Cha modifier) or instantly suffer the despondency madness affliction (no on set time, see below).

#### Despondency

**Type** insanity; Save Will DC 20 Onset 3d6 days Effect takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, ability checks, skill checks, and weapon damage rolls.

**Fractured Dimension (Sp):** As a swift action, a despiser creature can use greater teleport and plane shift at will (caster level equal to the base creature's HD). It can also, as a standard action, make an incorporeal

touch attack against one creature or object, unless that creature makes a successful Will save(10 + 1/2 the base creature's HD + its Cha modifier) it instantaneously teleports into a solid surface or object that the despiser creature can see within 60 ft. If this attack succeeds, the subject suffers 2d6 points of Constitution damage + 1 point of Constitution damage per round and is helpless until freed (usually by breaking the object or using another teleportation effect). The creature or object becomes half embedded in the surface or object.

**Gaze of Suicidal Despair (Su):** Suicidal despair, 30 ft., Will DC (10 + 1/2 the base creature's HD + its Cha modifier) negates. The save DC is Charisma-based. A creature that fails its save attempts a coup de grace action (a full round action starting on its turn) on itself using its best melee attack (this includes sneak attack damage, critical effects, etc). If it successfully performs the action and is still alive, it is immune to that despiser creature's gaze of suicidal despair; otherwise it continues to attempt to perform the action for 2d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

**Rejuvenation (Su):** In most cases, it's difficult to destroy a despiser creature through simple combat: the "destroyed" despiser restores itself in 2d4 days. Even the most powerful spells are usually only temporary solutions. The only way to permanently destroy a despiser creature is to reflect its gaze attack back at it; if it fails its saving throw, it is rendered helpless for 1d4 rounds and loses it rejuvenation ability for 24 hours. If it is destroyed during this time, it will not rejuvenate.

**Vulnerability to Gaze Attacks (Ex):** A despiser creature suffers a -4 penalty against all gaze attacks and loses any resistance or immunity it has to the effects of a gaze attack.

**Abilities:** Increase from the base creature as follows: Dex +6 (+3 to ranged attack rolls; AC and touch AC, Initiative, and Ref saves, +3 to Acrobatics, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth checks, add +3 to any of the base creature's Dexteritybased DCs), Con +6 (+3 hp per HD, +3 to Fortitude saves, and any of the base creature's Constitution-based DCs), Wis -4 (-2 to Will saves, -2 to Heal, Perception, Profession, Sense Motive and Survival checks, add -2 to any of the base creature's Wisdom-based DCs), +6 Cha (+3 to Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Handle Animal, Intimidate, Perform, and Use Magic Device; attempts to influence others, and Channel Energy DCs, +3 to any of the base creature's Charisma-based DCs).



#### The Queen of Tears

CR 11

XP 12,800

despiser female drow magus [kensai] 10 CE Medium aberration (augmented, extraplanar, incorporeal) Init +12; Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +12 Aura aura of despondency (60 ft. Will 21)

#### Defense

AC 33, touch 33, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, +6 Deflection, +8 Dex, +4 Int [canny defense] +4 shield) hp 85 (10d8+30) Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +7; +2 vs. enchantment Defensive Abilities: incorporeal, rejuvenation Immune sleep; SR 21 Weaknesses light blindness, vulnerability to gaze attacks

#### Offense

Speed Fly 60 ft.
Melee +1 ghost touch keen longsword +18/+13 (1d8+5/17-20)
Special Attacks arcane pool (9), fractured dimension (Will DC 21), gaze of suicidal despair (30 ft. Will DC 21) spell combat,
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th concentration +14) Constant—detect magic At will—dancing lights, deeper darkness, faerie fire, feather fall, levitate 1/day—divine favor, dispel magic, suggestion (DC 19)
Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +20) 4th—forceful strike 3rd—haste, force punch, vampiric touch, and—blur, eat's argee\_intensified shocking argen ray

2nd—blur, cat's grace, intensified shocking grasp x2 1st—floating disc, mage armor (already cast), shield (already cast), unerring weapon, unseen servant

o (at will)—detect magic, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic

Magus Arcana Empowered Magic, Spell Blending (mage armor)

#### Statistics

**Str** -, **Dex** 26, **Con** 16, **Int** 18, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 22 **Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18 **Feats** Combat Casting, Critical Focus, Eschew materials, Intensify SpellB, Weapon FocusB (longsword) Weapon Finesse, Weapon Specialization (longsword) **Skills** Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Knowledge (planes) +17, Perception +12, Spellcraft +17; Racial +2 Perception **Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Elven, Undercommon **Combat Gear** +1 ghost touch keen longsword w/ioun

#### Special Abilities

**Diminished Spellcasting (Ex)** The queen may cast one fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number to 0, she may cast spells of that level only if her Intelligence allows bonus spells of that level.

**Canny Defense (Ex)**At 1st level, when the queen is wielding her chosen weapon, she gains the canny defense ability. This is identical to the duelist prestige class ability of the same name, save that her chosen weapon may be of any type.

**Perfect Strike (Ex)** At 4th level, when the queen hits with her chosen weapon, she can spend 1 point from her arcane pool in order to maximize her weapon damage. Don't roll for damage—the weapon deals maximum damage. This affects only the weapon's base damage dice, not additional damage from sneak attack, magical weapon properties, spellstrike, or critical hits. If the queen confirms a critical hit, she can instead spend 2 points from her arcane pool to increase her weapon's critical multiplier by 1. This ability replaces spell recall.

**Fighter Training (Ex)** Starting at 7th level, the queen counts her magus level –3 as her fighter level for the purpose of qualifying for feats (if she has levels in fighter, these levels stack), but forfeits the benefit of such feats with weapons other than her favored weapon. This ability replaces knowledge pool.

**Iaijutsu (Ex)** At 7th level, the queen applies her Intelligence modifier as well as her Dexterity modifier on initiative rolls (minimum o). The queen may make attacks of opportunity when flatfooted, and may draw her favored weapon as a free action as part of taking an attack of opportunity. This ability replaces the medium armor ability.

**Critical Perfection (Ex)** At 9th level, the queen adds her Intelligence bonus (minimum 0) on critical hit confirmation rolls with her favored weapon. In addition, the queen may use her magus levels in place of her base attack bonuses to qualify for Critical Focus and any feat for which it is a prerequisite; these feats apply only with the queen's favored weapon. This ability replaces the magus arcana normally gained at 9th level.

\*Ioun: The ioun stone embedded in the queen's longsword allows it to be treated as a finesse weapon.

















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# Random Travellers

Publisher at Raging Swan Press



This article presents two interesting NPCs a GM can drop into his campaign at a moment's notice. Both have strong reasons for travelling and so they can be encountered almost anywhere. It is unlikely the PCs will immediately come into conflict with either character – neither is evil or (initially) wishes the PCs ill – but each could easily become a re-occurring fixture in the campaign. Of course, by simply

changing their personality and/or alignment a GM can utilise them as an evil villain's lackeys, troublesome travellers out for their own ends or even an interesting foil who takes a dislike to one or more of the party.

#### Enmul Kishi

(EL6: XP 2,400) Spy without peer, Enmul is constantly on the move.

Cursed with an insatiable lust for secrets, Enmul has made a successful career out of spying for whomever will pay his exorbitant fees. When he arrives in a new area he seeks out the rich and powerful and learns – either through his own skills or by paying close attention to rumourmongers and other savoury folk – what they desire to learn. He then gains that information and presents himself to his unknowing future-patron. Few resist his demands when they realise what they have long lusted after is finally within reach.

**Background**: While yet young, Enmul infiltrated and quickly dominated a small kobold tribe. The kobolds – the Scarlet Blade tribe – were engaged in a vicious war with nearby gnomes and shortly thereafter suffered several catastrophic defeats at the hands of their vengeful enemies. Suddenly alone among the carnage wrought upon his unknowing minions, Enmul fled, vowing he would never be taken unawares again.

Fleeing the wilderness he entered the nearest human town and shortly thereafter assumed the guises of several powerful folk. However, he acted too precipitously – not taking time to truly learn his targets before assuming their identities. Again forced to flee, he changed his methods and became a broker of information rather than a person of note. Since this change, life has been good for Enmul (although memories of his past disasters keep him on the road).

Personality: Enmul is completely untroubled by what

most people would term "good" or "evil." Instead, he cares only for knowledge, wealth and his own wellbeing. Wildly paranoid, for he knows he possesses many secrets their owners would kill to protect, Enmul is constantly on the move. He is brave to a fault, but not foolhardy; he certainly never places his life in true danger for a client. Such devotion to duty is alien to him.

**Mannerisms**: Enmul has a colossal superiority complex. When speaking with anyone he considers his inferior (which is pretty much everyone) he often closes his eyes (as they are not worth his attention).

**Distinguishing Features**: As a shapechanger without peer, Enmul can take on any feature or features he desires. When assuming a form, he always takes great care to include some obvious oddity or feature to distract the attention of witnesses.

In his true form, in which he is very rarely seen, he appears as a greyish humanoid with a narrow neck, gaunt limbs and a sinister, nose-less face.

**Hooks**: Enmul could be spying on the PCs for their nemesis (or an untrusting patron). The PCs could also encounter him when they are not his target. In this situation, he may be using them as cover to enter a guarded area, as a distraction or in some convoluted scheme to flush out his true target. Alternatively, he could present himself to the PCs with crucial information regarding their quest or adventure and demand a wildly inflated price.

#### ENMUL KUSHI

#### CR6 (XP 2,400)

Tall and muscular, this handsome man moves with fluid grace.

#### Male doppelganger rogue (spy) 3

#### N Medium monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15 (+19 listening to conversation or searching for concealed or secret objects), Sense Motive +9

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +11, Climb +8, Stealth +16, Swim +7

AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 15; CMD 27; Mobility

(+6 Dex, +1 deflection [*ring of protection* +1], +1 dodge [Dodge], +4 natural)

Immune charm, sleep



Fort +6, Ref +13 (evasion), Will +7

hp 49 (7 HD)

Space 5 ft.; Base Atk +6; CMB +9

Melee +1 dagger +9 (1d4+8/19-20) or

Melee 2 claws +9 (1d8+8)

Atk Options poison use, sneak attack (+2d6)

- **Special Actions** change shape (*alter self*; perfect copy), mimicry
- **Perfect Copy (Su)** When Enmul uses change shape, he can assume the appearance of specific individuals.
- **Mimicry (Ex)** Enmul is proficient with all weapons, armour and shields. In addition, he can use any spell trigger or spell completion item as if the spells were on his spell list.

#### Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th)

At Will-detect thoughts (DC 14)

**Combat Gear** *elixir of truth, potion of cure moderate wounds, wand of detect magic* (30 chgs.)

Abilities Str 26, Dex 22, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 14, Cha 15

**SQ** rogue talent (canny observer)

- Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Skill Focus (Perception)
- **Skills** as above plus Appraise +13, Bluff +10 (+14 while using change shape ability; skilled liar), Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +18, Disguise +10 (+20 while using change shape ability), Profession (actor) +12, Sleight of Hand +16
- **Skill Lair (Ex)** Enmul gains a +1 bonus on any Bluff check made to deceive someone.

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

**Gear** as above plus masterwork thieves' tools, 20 gp, 20 sp, 50 cp

#### Nuythel Huaira (EI 4; XP 1,200)

Otherworldly, and almost supernaturally handsome, Nuythel is never short of female company.

A wanderer, not by choice but through necessity, Nuythel is obsessed with meeting new people.

**Background**: Nuythel has absolutely no memory whatsoever of his life previous to a year ago. He simply

woke up one morning with a crushing hangover in an isolated traveller's inn. Alone, with only his equipment and a bulging coin purse, he stayed at the inn for several months before the depletion of his finances forced him to move on. Now he wanders incessantly hoping that someone, somewhere will recognise his face.

**Personality**: Nuythel is on a quest for knowledge. Instead, though, of searching for ancient secrets or powerful magic, he simply seeks to uncover the truth of his own identity and origin. Nuythel is a lover of attention and can often be found putting on impromptu performances at street corners, in crowded taverns and other locations at which he might be recognised. Although he remembers nothing of his own past, he is steeped in the lore of ancient plays and stories and is skilled at acting them out (often with the aid of local actors and other travelling bards).

He loves wine – particularly elven vintages – and enjoys the attentions of the opposite sex. Lacking in willpower and more than a little capricious, Nuythel often has to leave a town or city in a hurry moments ahead of a woman's angry father or brother.

He hates to be alone – feeling worthless and empty inside if he is not the centre of attention.

**Mannerisms**: Nuythel loves to laugh and jest. When he finds something funny – which he often does – he throws back his head and loudly guffaws.

**Distinguishing Features**: Nuythel is incredibly handsome – the perfect human male. His eyes are lively and full of intelligence.

**Hooks:** The PCs witness several men attacking Nuythel. The bard does not try to fight off his attackers and seems genuinely baffled. During the battle, he shouts questions at his enemies regarding his identity and why they hate him. If the PCs intervene, they can learn that Nuythel allegedly passed this way several years ago and got several local women pregnant. The men attacking him are the women's friends and brothers, although one is the husband of one of the women in question.

Alternatively, he may approach the PCs because he thinks he recognises one or more of them. Whether they know him, of course, is a different matter.

NUYSHEL, HUAIRA CR 4  $(\mathbf{XP} 1, 200)$ 

This incredibly handsome man has flowing blond hair and piercina blue eyes.

Male aasimar bard 5

NG Medium outsider (native)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11, Sense Motive +9

Speed 30 ft.; ACP 0; Stealth +11

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14; CMD 14

12

(+4 armour [+1 studded leather], +1 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

Resist acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5; +4 vs. bardic performance, sonic and language-dependent effects

#### hp 31 (5 HD)

Space 5 ft.; Base Atk +3; CMB +2

Melee mwk rapier +3 (1d6/18-20)

- Ranged mwk light crossbow (range 80 ft.) +5 (1d8/19-20)
- **Special Actions** bardic performance (22 rounds; countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 16], inspire courage [+2], inspire competence [+2])

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +9)

1/day-daylight

Bard Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +9)

- 2nd (3/day)—blindness/deafness (DC 16), blur, invisibility
- 1st (5/day)—alarm, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, expeditious retreat
- 0-dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound (DC 15), lullaby (DC 15), prestidigitation, read magic
- **Combat Gear** bolts (10), potion of cure moderate wounds, wand of sound burst (10 chgs.), scroll of mirror image

Abilities Str 8, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 18

SQ bardic knowledge (+2), lore master (1/day), versatile

performance, well-versed

Feats Extra Performance, Dodge, Improved Initiative

Skills as above plus Bluff +12, Diplomacy +14, Disguise +12, Knowledge (arcana) +8 (lore master), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Knowledge (engineering) +4, Knowledge (geography) +8 (lore master), Knowledge (history) +9 (lore master), Knowledge (local) +8 (lore master), Knowledge (nature) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +8 (lore master), Knowledge (planes) +7 (lore master), Knowledge (religion) +4, Perform (act) +12, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Common, Celestial, Dwarven, Elven

**Gear** as above plus traveller's outfit, spell component pouch, 12 gp, other travelling equipment as determined by the GM.

#### About The Designer

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.

An Ennie Award winning designer (Madness At Gardmore Abbey) Creighton has worked with Expeditious Retreat Press, Paizo and Wizards of the Coast. He 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 now releases through Raging Swan Press. You can read his thoughts on game design at raging-swan.livejournal.com.





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# Demon Clown

by Steven D. Russell; illustrations in the public domain

#### Demon, Clown



#### CR 20

This appears to be a normal humanoid dressed up like a clown, harlequin, orjester with а chalk-white face in which the eyes almost disappear, while the mouth is enlarged to a *qhoulish bigness*. All seem normal if disturbing until it wraps its elastic, sinuous arms around a victim several times like a python and chokes the life out of him.

XP307,200CE medium outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)Init+11;Sensesdarkvision60ft.,low-lightvision;Perception+30Aura frightful presence (30 ft., laugh, DC 28);

#### Defense

AC 37, touch 21, flat-footed 30 (+4 deflection, +7 Dex, +16 natural)

**hp** 370 (20d10+260) regeneration 13 (cold iron and good)

Fort +29, Ref +17, Will +25

**DR** 15/cold iron and good; **Immune** disease, electricity, fire, mind affecting, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 31

#### Offense

**Speed** 30 ft. Fly 60 ft. (see size alteration) **Melee** 1 slap +32 (1d8+12 plus grab +1d6) 1 kick +27 (1d8+12 plus trip) and 1 bite +27 (1d6 +12) **Ranged** pie throw +27 (see pie throw)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 20 ft.

**Special Attacks** constrict (2d8 +18 plus Improved Constrict), elastic body, flower squirt, grab (huge), pie throw, shocking grip, trip **Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 20th)

At will – *blink, confusion* (DC 22), *hideous laughter* (DC 20);

3/day – greater dispel magic, irresistible dance (DC 27), quickened blink; 1/day – maze

#### Statistics

**Str** 34, **Dex** 24, **Con** 37, **Int** 25, **Wis** 25, **Cha** 26 **Base Atk** +20; **CMB** +32 (+40 grapple, +36 trip); **CMD** 53

**Feats** Ability Focus (frightful presence), Choke Slam<sup>\*</sup>, Combat Reflexes, Dreaded Presence<sup>\*</sup>, Improved Constrict<sup>\*</sup> (DC 32), Improved Initiative, Inescapable Grip<sup>\*</sup> (+20), Iron Will, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*blink*), 5 feats. 1 **Skills** Acrobatics +27, Bluff +31, Diplomacy +31, Escape Artist +13, Fly +32, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (planes) +30, Perception +30, Perform (comedy) +28,

Perform (dance) +28, Perform (juggle) +28, Sense Motive +30, Stealth +26, Use Magic Device+31; **Racial Modifiers** +6 Escape Artist and Grapple **Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common; telepathy 100

ft.

 ${\bf SQ}$  size alteration

#### Special Abilities

**Elastic Body (Ex)** A clown demon's body is made from stretchy, rubbery material. He can attack with a slap, kick, or with a bite as a reach weapon with a range of 15 ft. more than normal for his size, by extending his arm, leg, or neck. He can also squeeze through gaps of up to six inches across, taking a move action to do so. This flexibility gives a clown demon a +6 racial bonus on all Escape Artist checks and grapple checks.

**Flower Squirt (Su)** Clown demons grow large, flower-like organs on their chests. These are glands that secrete a powerful acid. As a swift action, a clown demon can squirt this acid at a creature within 30 feet. The acid squirt requires a ranged touch attack to hit and deals 3d6 points of acid damage and 1d6 points of Charisma damage. A successful Fortitude save (DC 33) negates the Charisma damage. The save is Constitution-based;

**Indestructible (Su)** It is practically impossible to permanently destroy a clown demon. Even it is killed, it spontaneously reforms after 1d4 days at a spot within 100 feet of the eggshell where its makeup design kit is kept. The only way to permanently destroy a clown demon is find his eggshell and destroy it.

**Pie Throw (Su)** Once every 1d4 rounds as a swift action, a clown demon can manifest a pulpy mass of creamy goo in one hand and throw it. This is a ranged attack with a range increment of 10 ft. feet and maximum range of 100 feet. A creature struck has the goo plastered to his face rendering the subject blind and unable to speak. The subject also begins to suffocate, as the goo clings to his mouth and nose. Unless the subject was prepared for this it is unable to hold its unable to hold its breath and must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round. Each round, the DC increases by 1. When the subject finally fails her Constitution check, she begins to suffocate. In the first round, she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she dies.

Ripping off the clinging goo requires a successful Strength check (DC 28) or dealing 10% of a subjects normal hit point total to the creatures face which also causes 4 points of Charisma damage. Once removed, it becomes inert. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Shocking Grip (Su)** Three times per day, clown demon can as a swift action make a touch attack against a target and deliver a violent jolt of electricity. He gains a +3 bonus to the attack roll if the target wears metal armor, is made from metal or carries large amounts of metal. The shocking grip deals 18d6 points of electrical damage. The recipient must also make a Fortitude save (DC 28) or be paralysed for one round, which allows the demon to make a second shocking grip attack the next round against the same target. A successful use of this attack against the same opponent as in the previous round does not count as a separate use of the ability for the day. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Size Alteration (Su)** A clown demon may increase or decrease his size at will like a humanoid balloon. He may take a full-round action to increase or decrease his size, adjusting his Armor Class, attack modifiers and other related statistics accordingly. He may not become smaller than Tiny or larger than Huge. He may only remain at an altered size for one hour per day, after which he reverts to his natural size and cannot use the ability again for 1d4 hours. When in his huge size he gains a 60 ft. fly speed.

**Trip (Ex)** The long, floppy shoes that a clown demon wears are ideal for tripping opponents. He receives a +4 racial bonus to any trip combat maneuver check.

#### Ecology

**Environment** any (Abyss) **Organization** solitary or troupe (1 clown demon and 2–5 succubi or incubus) **Treasure** standard (masterwork disguise kit and clown egg)

Clown demons loves nothing more than the tender flesh of humanoids and do not long make a secret of their horrible appetites. They are demons through and through and revel in demonstrating this. They cannot stop themselves from intimidating people and making side references to how he wants to "gobble them all up." They will however repress this nature when he is performing

Clown demons live to create terror and fear, taking full advantage of most humanoids irrational fear of clowns; They play upon the idea that they are frightening and unknowable beings while they manipulate their body type and face with their make-up kit (which is kept in the egg register on the plane of Damnation). They are known to send at leat one clown demon every four years to visit the lands of Questhaven during The Most Blessed Festival of High Bardic Deeds as part of some long forgotten bargain with Cynmark the Dread Lich

#### Monstrous Feats

#### Choke Slam [Monster]

"Taking the foul thief by the neck and slamming him to the ground, I brought about his death."

Prerequisites: Grab, 10 ft. (or greater) reach

**Benefit:** When you successfully grapple your opponent with your grab special ability you deal 1d6 points of additional damage and can choose to knock the opponent prone. If you have the constrict special ability this bonus applies to the damage inflicted with that ability each round.

#### **Dreaded Presence [Monster]**

"I let out a great roar and all save their holy warrior fled from me."

**Prerequisites:** Frightful presence, Ability Focus (frightful presence), Intimidate 7 ranks, Cha 13

**Benefit:** If a subject fails its save against your frightful presence it is frightened regardless of its Hit Dice. Creatures that make their saves are shaken for 1 round.

#### Improved Constrict [Monster]

"I squeezed him like an empty gourd; all the air rushed out of him."

Prerequisites: Constrict, Str 13

**Benefit:** After you have dealt damage with your constrict ability, your grappled opponent must make a successful Fortitude Save (DC 10 + 1/2 your Hit Dice + your Strength modifier) or begin to suffocate. On the opponent's next turn, if still constricted, he falls unconscious and is reduced to 0 hit points. One round later, the constricted opponent drops to -1 hit points and is dying. One round

after that, the constricted opponent dies. Each round, the opponent can delay that round's effects (but not the constrict damage) from occurring by making a successful Fortitude save, but the current effect(s) continue, and each time the opponent fails his Fortitude save, he moves one step further along the track to suffocation. This feat only affects living creatures that must breathe. It is impossible to defeat the effects of this feat by simply holding one's breath—if the victim fails the initial saving throw, the air in his lungs is expelled.

#### Inescapable Grip [Monster]

"She ran relying on her slippery nature to elude others' grasps. She did not elude my steely grip." **Prerequisites:** Grab, any other supernatural or spell-like ability **Benefit:** When you attempt to use your grab ability to grapple an opponent, your magical nature attempts to dispel (as described in *greater dispel magic*, CL equal to your Hit Dice) any *freedom of movement* spell or magic item that grants immunity or bonuses to Combat Maneuver Defense or Escape Artist checks (this includes enhancement bonuses to Strength and Dexterity scores). If the dispel check succeeds, the spell is dispelled before you make your grapple check (magic items are suppressed for 1d4+1 rounds). You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Charisma bonus (minimum 1/day).



# **DUENTURE** QUARTERLY

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DUENTURE



# 101 Variant Monsters Preview!

Illustrated by Ryan Sumo

Coming later in May, Rite Publishing will be releasing a collection of 101 Variant Monsters, "re-skins" if you will, that allow you to replace existing abilities, descriptions, and monster ecology to give you a new and interesting ways to keep monsters on your toes. What follows is a preview of that product.

#### Bearlith (Bebilith)

**Description** This elephant-sized bear is covered in blue metallic plates, strange purple plumes, and black spike-like quills. Bearlith's do not hunt demons, rather, they hunt mortals who have wandered on the demonic planes. This rare creature will often lair near planar portals to the mortal world or have found its way there so it can feed without concern.

**Melee** Bite +19 (2d6+9 plus dreaded) and 2 claws +19 (2d4+9 plus grab/19–20); this replaces a bebilith's normal melee attacks and web special attack.

**CMB** +23 (+27 vs. grapple); **CMD** 34 (38 vs. trip); this replaces a bebilith's normal CMB and CMD.

**Dreaded (Su)** A character damaged by a bearlith's bite attack must make a successful Will save DC 25 or be inflicted with the cowering condition for 5 rounds. A successful saving throw results in the target being shaken for one round.

This ability replaces a bebilith's rot special attack.

**Peel Armor (Ex)** If a creature with this special attack begins its turn with an opponent grappled in its claws (see Grab), it can attempt a new grapple check as though attempting to pin the opponent; it uses its peel armor special attack as if it had successfully hit that opponent with both its claws. (The Dex penalty of the grappled condition applies to the opponent's Reflex saving throw.)

This ability replaces a bebilith's penetrating strike special attack.

**Spell Grounding (Su)** A bearlith's plates, plumes and strange spikes have a special effect, that attracts touch attacks, rays and chain-type spells, such as *scorching ray* and *chain lightning*. Any time the bearlith is within range of touch attack, ray, or chain-type spell or effect, it automatically arcs to the bearlith and is negated and the bearlith gains 5 temporary hp that last 1 hour for each spell level of the effect.

This ability replaces a bebilith's *plane shift* spell-like ability

#### Jodestone Golem (Iron Golem)

**Description** This strange automaton stands twice as tall as a normal human, and appears to be made from some brownish-black stone with a metallic luster. Its heavy footfalls shake the ground with bone-jarring force.

**Magnetic (Su)** Any steel or iron brought within 80 ft. of the lodestone golem is drawn toward it. Creatures carrying 15 or more pounds of ferrous metal are pulled toward the golem as if by the pull special ability (80 ft). Creatures wearing metallic armor suffer a penalty to their CMD to resist the pull (-2 for medium armor, -4 for heavy armor). Affected creatures are pulled up to 80 ft. and slammed against the golem for 1d6 points of damage per 10 ft. pulled and gain the grappled condition. Creatures not carrying large amounts of metal but holding metal items in their hands are affected by a disarm maneuver as the items are ripped free. Freeing a stuck item requires a successful grapple check against the wall's CMD.

This replaces an iron golem's breath weapon special attack.

**Immunity to Magic (Ex)** An iron golem is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance. Certain spells and effects function differently against it, as noted below.

• A *shatter* spell deals damage to lodestone golem as if it were a crystalline creature.

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

• A lodestone golem is affected normally by the *disintegrate* spell.

• This replaces an iron golem's normal immunity to magic defensive ability.

#### Nimuein (Dryad)

**Description** This variant of the dryad is most often found bonded with conifer trees and her skin is made from this dark bark. Nimuein are disgusted by humanoids, especially spellcasters, and even more so when dealing with those with some kind of monstrous heritage (like a sorcerous bloodline). Nimuein always place them within her nature's prison when she is done manipulating them.

**Alignment** CE; this replaces the dryad's CG.

**Nature's Prison (Su)** A nimuein can create a cocoon-like prison out of the surrounding environment, hidden among the natural setting, which affects one or more living creatures within a 10-ft.-radius burst. This ability has a range of 150 ft. This effect holds a subject in a permanent stasis; while so imprisoned, the subject is helpless, grows no older and its body functions virtually cease. For up to one hour per day, the nimuein can mentally communicate with it, although it is in no way compelled to answer any questions or even respond unless the nimuein uses her *charm person* ability.

Only *locate creature* or similar divinations can find an imprisoned target. A Knowledge (nature) check DC 14 will reveal that a *break enchantment, greater*  *restoration, lesser restoration,* or *restoration* effect can free a subject.

This ability replaces a dryad's *deep slumber* and *suggestion* spell-like abilities. It can also be dismissed by a nimuein, but her death does not end the effect.

**Environment** arctic and temperate forests; this replaces a dryad's temperate forests.

**Designer's Note** In Arthurian myth Merlin is often imprisoned within an evergreen tree (or a tomb) by a woman (or dryad) he desired who despised him for that desire after he taught her all the secrets of her magic.

#### Riddling Hieracosphinx (Hieracosphinx) In order to attract gynosphinxes, these creatures have

In order to attract gynosphinxes, these creatures have memorized a singular riddle to a point that it has taken on a supernatural life of its own. They often spout this singular riddle while they are fighting.

**Riddled Wounding (Su)** The damage a riddling sphinx deals does not heal naturally (including regeneration and fast healing) and resists healing spells and effects. A creature attempting to cast a conjuration (healing) spell or other restorative spell or effect on a creature damaged by a riddling sphinx must speak a specific riddle the sphinx has chosen (and the riddle must be answered correctly) or the spell or effect fails to work on the injured creature. Any spell or effect that will remove a *bestow curse* (DC 16) also removes this effect. If the check fails, however, the same caster cannot try again until she gains an additional caster level. This is a necromantic curse effect; the removal DC is Wisdombased.

This ability replaces the hieracosphinx's shriek special attack.

# 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!

Jonathan McAnulty
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# Twenty Questions with Matthew J. Hanson

By Steven D. Russell

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

By day I am public school teacher who is currently subbing while looking for a permanent position. By night I design RPG material.

I got one of my first jobs writing the *Olindor* trilogy of adventures for Expeditious Retreat Press. Since then I've written for Green Ronin, EN World Publishing, *Dragon Magazine* (back in the print days), and *Kobold Quarterly*.

I've long thought about starting my own company and finally took the plunge in 2010. Since then we've been steadily growing.

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

#### Which one?

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The game that I'm GMing right now is a playtest for *Broken Earth*, an upcoming post-apocalyptic adventure compatible with the Pathfinder rules. I also play in a D&D 4e game and a Gamma World game, and a group of friends periodically gets together to play a range of different systems with rotating GMs.

#### 3. What is your favorite Paizo product?

That's a tough one. I think I'll say the Adventure Path, even though it's not a single product. They've been incredibly handy for those times in my life when I've wanted to run a long-form campaign, but haven't had time to do all the prep work. Even the paths that I don't get to play (which is most of them), I still enjoy reading.

#### 4. You are currently the owner/operator of Sneak Attack Press, how did that start and how would you characterize the company today?

After a long time thinking and researching what goes into start my own company, I was finally prompted to take the plunge because I had an adventure that I didn't know what else to do with. I wrote it for another publisher but then for reasons beyond anybody's control they weren't able to publish it. I enjoyed the adventure and wanted to do something with it, so I published it as "Blessed by Poison," the first adventure from Sneak Attack Press.

My first priority with the company was to not lose money. When I started, I did all the writing myself, used



all public domain art, and published electronic books only. As we got more money I slowly started buying a little bit of art and cartography.

Then Kickstarter happened. That pretty much changed how I do business in a good way. Now I can provide great books with top quality art and know that I can do so without going in the hole. Kickstarter's already sped up our growth, and with each successful campaign it looks to grow even further.

#### 5. There's been some discussion lately about whether Kickstarter is a fad or here to stay. I take it you agree with the second view?

Yeah, I think Kickstarter and other sources of crowd funding will continue to be a major part of the RPG business model. It's just too attractive to a publisher to get all the funding up front, and it lets the backers get in on the product first, gives them an inside look, and helps them become part of the creative process.

At Sneak Attack Press, we might release some PDFonly products without Kickstarter, but our major projects will all be crowd funded in the future.

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OOD LITTLE CHILD EVER GROW UP



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

One of my favorites is still one of the earlier adventures I wrote for Sneak Attack Press. It's a horror-themed adventure called *Good Little Children Never Give Up.* In it, the PCs have to go

into a haunted orphanage to rescue some children who have been trapped inside.

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

One of the things it clarified for me is that my role as an adventure writer is really to help the PCs be awesome. There's one moment in particular in *Good Little Children* where that stands out for me. I don't want to give away too much, but let's just say that a PC is likely to find a new weapon in an unlikely place.

#### 11. Other than your own work and Sneak Attack Press products, what is the best Pathfinder Roleplaying Game compatible product out there?

I'm a big fan of the work done by Kobold Press (also known as Open Design), *Kobold Quarterly* is a publication that I'll miss, but they've got a lot of other great products. The Midgard Campaign Setting stands

#### "Getting rejections is just part of being a freelancer. Don't let it get you down."

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

Since I'm a player first, my favorite moments tend to come in the playtesting phase. Not only is it a blast to see what the players do with what I've written, it also gives me great insight about how I might improve the adventure.

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

For *Good Little Children* I wrote a ton of hand outs. One problem with horror RPGs in that the players know too much, so it's hard to keep them in suspense. To help create some mystery I tell GMs running *Good Little Children* to assign each PC a role. The different roles get different handouts as they see and hear different things in the haunted orphanage. Since the players don't all experience the same things, they cannot quite be sure what's real and who they can trust.

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

I enjoy game design so much it's hard to think of it as a challenge. I guess I'd say on most of my books, it's the revision stage, where I go back and try to clarify things, incorporate changes from the playtest, and weed out typos. It's not that I dislike it, but I don't always have the same rush of exuberance that I get when first putting my ideas to paper or the social interaction and unexpected twists that come up from playtesting. out as one of the most interesting campaign books I've read in a long time. At first it seems like a lot of other fantasy campaign books, but as you delve deeper, there are a lot of unique twists that really make it interesting.

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

Remembering to focus on the story. RPGs are not games that you win, they're games about getting together with a group of friends and creating a shared story. Maybe that story is just about going into some dark caves, killing some monsters, and taking their stuff, but it's still a story.

Even books that have a high amount of rules content need to designed to keep in mind that the rules do not exist for their own sake. The rules are there to help the players and GM create the story they want to tell.

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

There's a ton of great designers out there that I admire. Instead of going with some of the big names that everybody knows, I'll go with the up and coming Ben McFarland. His work in Streets of Zobeck really stands out. I also got a chance to meet him last GenCon and he's a good guy.

#### 14. What advice would you give to would-befreelancers?

First I'd say be persistent. Getting rejections is just part of being a freelancer. Don't let it get you down. If one company doesn't like your idea, another might. If one idea is a dud, move on to the next.

I'd also advise people to start by trying to work with third party publishers. It's possible that you might be the next RPG Superstar and start freelancing for Paizo right away, and I think people should take advantage of that contest, but that shouldn't be your *only* attempt for the year. Find third party publishers that you think are doing good work, check to see if they have submission guidelines, and if so send them some pitches (and make sure to follow those guidelines!).

# 15. Who is your favorite tabletop RPG Illustrator?

I really like the work of Malcolm McClinton, who (not coincidentally) did the cover for *Alternate Objectives*, and the upcoming *Broken Earth* books. He's also done a lot of work for Kobold Press including several *Kobold Quarterly* covers, and most recently the Kobold Guide to World Building.

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

I often have trouble picking just one of something, and this would be a good example. I love hearing from the fans. Every time we do a Kickstarter project we get a lot of great responses. I also enjoy hearing from people impatient for a product to see the light of day. I don't take it as nagging, just that they like what I've done and want to see more. I had the happen quite a bit with the *Heroes of Drakonheim* trilogy. It's a trio of adventures intended to be used with the D&D Next playtest packets. They are more like fan adventures than full-scale publications, but you can download them for free from the Sneak Attack Press website.

I cannot talk about fans though without mentioning conventions. These are great because I get to meet the fans personally and game with them face to face. I just ran a bunch of games at my local con, Con of the North, and several fans who initially signed up for just one session enjoyed it so much that they came back again for more.

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

The big project that I'm working on right now is called *Broken Earth*. It's a sandbox adventure set in postapocalyptic Earth. The PCs explore the ruins of the upper Midwest and help rebuild civilization using a modified version of the kingdom building rules. (You could think of it as Fallout meets Kingmaker.)

We just wrapped up a very successful Kickstarter campaign to fund it, and I hope to have it on store shelves by the end of the year.

18. Do you have any goals for Sneak Attack Press that you have yet to obtain or overcome?

One of my major goals is to publish my own system. I love Pathfinder and the great work the people at Paizo have done, and I don't think we'll stop putting out



Pathfinder material, but I think that to really grow the company and run it as a full time business I need to put out my own system. Paizo is a pretty good example of this, as they are way better off with Pathfinder than they would have been supporting D&D 4e.

I've actually been developing a system since last summer, and I'm now (again following Paizo's example) doing an open beta test The system is called *Abstract Dungeon*, and it's designed to be super fast and rules light. It's the sort of thing that you might pull out and run on the fly if somebody critical doesn't show up for your weekly game. You can find the beta test documents at <u>www.</u> <u>sneakattackpress.com/abstractdungeon/</u>.

# **19.** Can you talk a bit about Terrain Toolbox, and why you believe it is so popular?

*Terrain Toolbox* is a book about the creative use of terrain in your game. Like what might a battle on a semisolid cloud be like? It was nominated for an ENnie in 2012 and was our first product to transition from PDF to print.

I think the reason people like it so much is that it fills a niche that not many other books have. There's a ton of monster books out there, but not much on terrain, even though it's part of every battle. Too often it's just regular or difficult terrain, with maybe some trees thrown if you're fighting outdoors. Terrain Toolbox encourages people to stretch those ideas to create more dynamic battles.

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

Just that I really appreciate everybody who has supported Sneak Attack Press so far. Thanks!

Pathways Magazine



# Reviews

#### Amazing Races: Wayangs!

**Publisher:** Abandoned Arts by Thilo G. rating: Five out of Five Stars!

#### An Endzeitgeist.com review



This pdf is 4 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page SRD, leaving us with two pages of content, so let's take a look!

The pdf kicks off with 4 new feats for Wayang:

-Dissolution's Chosen: Resistance 5 to negative energy, use the dissolution's child racial trait 10 rounds per day.

-Dissolution's Aspirant: +10 ft base rate and full benefits of the light and dark

racial trait while using dissolution's child.

-Dissolution's Ascendant: Constantly gain the benefits of the light and dark racial trait - suppressable as an immediate action. There's a glitch here, the text calls teh racial ability "light and shadow" instead of "light and dark".

-Shadowy Sprint: +10 ft movement when starting a movement in an area of dim light.

Wayangs may now also chose from one of three new traits, Dissolution's Disciple allows you to flicker for 2x character level days after being slain, always reincarnating into a wayang when raised via reincarnation while you flicker. You may also ignore size-penalties to intimidate or get +2 when checking versus cha-based skills.

There also are tow new alternate racial traits, one allowing you to blend with shadows better for a 30% miss chance and the other allowing you to see 5 ft. even in magical darkness.

The race's archetype is for the monk class, the socalled marionette: Evoking a creepy and rather evocative style, marionettes are a creepy kind of monks that uses a style reminiscent of the eponymous dolls - getting e.g. a 5-foot step at the end of movements of at least 20 ft., slow falling even without adjacent walls, limited access to whirlwind attacks and a high level ability that dominates a creature's body as if dancing to the marionette's strings. I really, really love this iconic archetype!

#### Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good, I didn't notice an

undue amount of glitches. Layout adheres to Abandoned Art's 2-column no-frills standard and the pdf has no bookmarks, but needs none at this length.

This pdf is what the series should be about in my opinion - feats and traits that develop racial abilities and add to the uniqueness of the uncommon base-race - and the monk-archetype is simply awesome - weird, uncommon and oozing flair. While the glitch I encountered could have been avoided, I thoroughly enjoyed this pdf's blending of crunch seeping style and interesting racial options - and even sans the Wayang, the monk archetype alone makes this pdf worth the low asking price. My final verdict will hence clock in at 4.5 stars due to the glitch, but still rounded up to 5 and studded with the seal of approval due to the archetype that is DIFFERENT, go check this out!

Endzeitgeist out.

Faces of the Tarnished Souk: Ur-Shogga, the All-Consuming Thought (PFRPG) Publisher: Rite Publishing by Thilo G. Rating: Five out of Five Stars!

#### An Endzeitgeist.com review

This installment of the FoTS-series is a whopping 29 pages long, 1 page front cover (with a stunning artwork by master of the macabre Mark Hyzer), 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD and 1 page advertisement, leaving us with a whopping 25 pages of content - quite a bunch, so let's check this one out!



Following my format

for FoTS-reviews, let's first take a look at the supplemental crunchy material provided herein: We get the alterable and Greater Alterable weapon qualities that allow the transformation of weapons into others and a special slotless ring (that can be worn with two others!) that nets the wielder access to the Toppling Spell [Metamagic]-. feat. Template-wise, we get 6 different templates, ranging from CR +2 (Apex Predator template) over the Accelerated Creature template (CR +1), Advanced Creature template(CR +1) to the Young Creature (CR -1)

and Locomotion-handicapped Creature template, which clocks in at CR -2. On the spell-section, we get a forcebased subduing ray that deals non-lethal damage and a spell to grow more arms. 2 Traits (one related to the dremaburning mechanics of Coliseum Morpheuon),as are 8 feats, three of which are devoted to the Kirin Style and its derivatives, whereas the others allow for firearm creation and knowledge-themed abilities. One wildblooded sorceror-bloodlines also features herein, the Sage (derived from the Arcane bloodline) and additionally, we get the Rakshasa bloodline.

We also get two archetypes, first of which would be the smuggler (based on the rogue) and the second being the crossblooded sorceror, who gets less spells, but the abilities of two bloodlines - intriguing and rather cool!

The 3 incarnations of Ur-Shogga come as CR 7, 14 and 21, with especially the latter build being AWESOME here, the creature is an advanced cunning locomotionhandicapped intellect devourer crossblooded wildblooded sorceror 16. Now, usually I'd go all "Beware of SPOILERS" now, but honestly - the cover already shows what Ur-Shogga is about - character-wise, this creature is not dream-scarred as you would expect and rather has dreams - terrible, disturbing dreams, for the creature has infiltrated the souk after escaping from the Khan, being the dread result of the Coliseum's master's experiments. As the hyper-intelligent (Int 44!!!!) quintessential schemer, Ur-Shogga is a dreadful grey eminence and an impressive build, but what sets this pdf truly apart would be the sheer amount of additional material.

What additional material? Well, we get 4 CR 13 hostbodies, characters in their own right, 4 CR 9 Host-bodies (2 of which are actually different creatures than the CR 13 ones!) and 3 CR 4 host bodies - Ur-Shogga's favorite hostbody featuring in all three versions, while ALL the other host bodies are different. That is 11 additional statblocks, 9 characters - in addition. Wow.

#### Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice any glitches. Layout adheres to RiP's 2-column b/w runecovered old standard and the artwork of Ur-Shogga is awesome, the other artworks also being nice for the very fair price-point. The pdf is extensively bookmarked for your convenience.

WOW. Ever since Nameless Nil, my gold standard for ANY NPC-build, I didn't expect this series to again reach this level of complexity and sheer material. While character-wise, I still prefer Nil, Ur-Shogga offers A LOT bang for your bucks - far more than it needed to and oh boy is it better off for it. Disturbing, genius-level schemers are hard to pull off and this build with all its supplemental material makes at once for a truly terrifying and yet beatable adversary/manipulator. Ur-Shogga ranks as one of the finest installments in the series that has set the gold standard for NPC-builds and time and again upped the ante, not resting on its laurels. This is a superb offering indeed and thus scores easy 5 stars + seal of approval for its very fairly-priced, superb content.

Endzeitgeist out.

#### Heroes of the Jade Oath (PFRPG)

by Thilo G. Rating: four out of five stars! An Endzeitgeist.com review

This massive book is 175 pages long, 1 page frontcover, 1 page editorial, 3 pages ToC, 1 page SRD and 1 page back cover, leaving us with 168 pages of content, so let's take a look!

First of all, let me tell you about the genesis of the project – HotJO has been in the making for what seemed like forever and was originally the first BIG



project of Rite Publishing, intended to be released as a supplement to Monte Cook's Arcana Evolved. When the Beta-version of the book was released, the content was fresh and interesting in style and flavor. Now, with the advent and influx in popularity of PFRPG, people on the RiP-boards, yours truly included, started to ask about a conversion and the pdfs released so far in the line were used to get more artwork and even better production values for the Omega-version and the book this review is all about, the very first iteration of Heroes of the Jade Oath for PFRPG. Why is this important? well, because it explains some of the design-decisions made as well as all the races introduced – AE doesn't feature the standard races as prominently and thus, this book has a LOT of ground to cover in a scarce few pages, even at its length.

Now that doesn't mean that this book is all crunch and indeed, it begins by introducing us to the very concepts that define social structure in the setting of the Jade Oath: Favors, Family and Face. The importance of (extended) family structures, clans and the value of face are all concisely and easily understandable to western audiences as relayed herein. Thankfully, the done-to-death cliché of Seppuku is also addressed and put into a valid cultural perspective that shows that author Frank Carr has a firm grasp on social strata and cultural concepts. If you're looking for an almost historical level of detail regarding customs like in the release of the German old-school setting Midgard's (NOT the one by KP) KanThaiPan, though, you won't find that level of detail here, with e.g. the making of appropriate presents, food and medicine



The respective regions not only include massive amounts of write-ups for covenants, societies and clans (all with their respective symbols and tokens), but also contains areas like the undead-hampering "Fallen Pillar of Heaven", the gorgeously-illustrated city of Xinmar in the Heaven's Reach Mountains, the floating garden or the crawling dragon mountain, which is in fact the world's oldest dragon, slowly winding its ways through mountainous ranges. Now if the extensive gazetteersection with all its pieces of information on culture, produce, locations etc. has not sparked some sort of great idea for an adventure, I'm not sure your imagination can be helped. The Lands of the Jade Oath feel very distinct and there is no way they could be mistaken for any other and sense motive and craft as well as the giant subtype, in spite of their medium size. The race also gets its paragonclass, spanning 20 levels and having them grow to up to colossal size (the additional sizes also being covered in the height & weighttable, btw.!) - the class is essentially a revised variant of the Jotun Paragon-class featured in RiP's "In



mountainous ranges. Now if the extensive gazetteersection with all its pieces of information on culture, produce, locations etc. has not sparked some sort of great idea for an adventure, I'm not sure your imagination can be helped. The Lands of the Jade Oath feel very distinct and there is no way they could be mistaken for any other **"Now that doesn't mean that this book is all crunch and indeed**"

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Asian-themed setting. That out of the way, let's take a look at the chapter on races and their mechanics, shall we?

Now first we get pronunciation-guidelines for races and an entry on the breeds of human (the discovery of the eight will usher in a great doom, by the way!) before delving into the Bakemono. A metal-eating, goblinoid race, their males are small, horned almost goblinoid looking beings that get +2 to Con and Int as well as -2 to Cha, slow landspeed, darkvision 60 ft., light blindness, a bite that is devastating vs. objects and undead, +2 to saves vs. poison and +2 to craft-check relating to metal. They also have slow speed and count as evil goblinoids and get full spell-progression. Their females instead get +2 to Wis and Cha and -2 to Str. They also can take levels in the Bakemono-Paragon-class, which spans 6 levels and gets d8, 4+Int skills per level, 3/4 BAB-progression and good ref-saves. The class also improves bites by granting improved sunder to the bite and allowing bakemono to eat magical items as well as continuously detecting magic. The class also allows them to gain the shapeshifter-subtype as well as turning into large size, the form corresponding to their chosen totem or even into a swarm. And also minor attribute enhancements depending on the gender of the bakemono as well as attribute bonuses over the levels, something that almost each of the paragon-classes grants.

The towering, ponderous Dahren can either gain +2 to Str or +2 to Con and Wis, low-light vision, +2 to intimidate talents. Now, it would have been easy to just cut-copypaste the class, but there actually are new talents in here and since the original class is elemental in its theme and HotJO uses the eastern system of elements, the respective abilities have been modified, which is nice to see.

Next up are the agile Faen, who get +2 to Dex and one mental attribute of your choice, are small, gain their own fey-related subtype, slow speed, low-light vision, +2 to perception, stealth and proficiency with bows and faenweapons as well as a reroll 1/day. They may replace latter luck with minor spell-like abilities or the run-feat and +1 to initiative. Their paragon-class gets d8 HP per level, spans 6 levels, 4+Int skills per level, 34 BAB-progression, good ref-saves, 3 levels of spell-progression and an interesting idea: Depending on the racial trait chosen, the paragon-class expands the options, gaining either more spell-like abilities, more luck-based options or more quickness-based options. Cool! The most important thing, though, is already known to people familiar with Arcana Evolved: Faen may undergo a metamorphoses at 3rd level of the paragon-class, going into chrysalis and emerging as a full-blown fey, a so-called sprite. These sprites threaten regular 5-foot squares, gain +2 to Dex and -2 to Str and also wings, which allow them to fly at 30 ft. It's also nice to see that the conversion adds fly to the list of class skills upon the transformation.

The Garuda should make for an interesting class you almost assuredly haven't seen before: Partially scaled and feathered, this race resembles a badass-version of

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a humanoid archeopteryx with a stronger lean towards colored feathers. Story-wise, they are the hunters of the tainted, created by the dragons to stem the tide of the infernal dragon's taint. They gain +2 to Dex and Wis, -2 to Cha, +1 natural armor, low-light vision, may glide up to 100 ft. with their wings, gain +2 to perception and may cast detect evil 1/day as a spell-like ability. Their racial class grants d8, 2+Int skills, 3/4 BAB-progression, good fort-saves, up to +3 dodge-bonus to AC and also increasing flight capabilities as well as bites, claws, spellalso heal a limited amount of damage via spending time in the sunlight and resting at night as well as communicate basic emotions via spores. They also get 5 alternate racial traits that feature magic abilities, desert and water-dwelling mandragorans, mandragorans with a mild poison and those with thorns. Their racial paragonclass gets 3/4 BAB-progression, d8 HP, 2+Int modifier skills per level, more spell-like abilities, woodland stride, the option to regrow from being torn to shreds and plantlike immunities. The racial paragons may also change

like abilities and finally even pounce.

Now if you're more a fan of canines, the goushen-race has you covered. The race is descended from the foo dogs of legend and get +2 Con and Wis, -2 to Int, low-light vision, +2 to survival, scent and their 6-level paragon-class gets d8, 2+Int skills per level, 3/4 BABprogression, good fort and refsaves and up to +2 natural armor. Their paragon-class provides

them with bite attacks, grab with their bites and also massively improving grapple-capabilities.

For more feline-affine people, the Hushen-race would be what you're looking for – essentially a tiger-faced class of proud feline humanoids, they gain +2 to Str and Cha, -2 Int, low-light vision, +2 to intimidate, stealth and perception and suffer from blood frenzy, requiring a save to break from combat once blood has been spilled. Their 6-level paragon-class comes with 3/4-BAB-progression, d8 HP, 2+Int skills per level, good ref and fort-saves, +2 natural AC, scent, bite, claw and even rake and pounce as well as the option to run while using stealth, making them rather lethal with their natural attacks.

Now, the Kirin Shen-race is interesting in that it essentially is an acquired template that can be taken by taking a single-level as a Kirin Shen racial paragon. Kirin Shen are the chosen of the Kirin, gain +1 to BAB, ref and will, 6+Int skills and d10. The template they gain requires them to be of at least 6th level and is provided for the DM's convenience with all the tools necessary to add it to respective creatures (it's Cr +1 if you don't take levels in the racial class, btw.) and allows it to use a healing touch that improves with HD as well as overland flight, ethereal jaunt and finally immortality at the highest HD.

Perhaps the most far-out and interesting race of the setting, at least for me, would be the Mandragorans: Mandragorans are essentially humanoid plants with alluring bodies that feature long vines instead of hair. They may manipulate objects and taste via these vines and they gain +2 to Wis and Cha, -2 to Str, low-light vision, +4 to stealth in forested and marshland areas, 1/ day roll a will-save twice and take the better result, full spell-progression, + HD on saves vs. poison and their spores grant them +1 to diplomacy, handle animal and bluff, but also make hiding harder. Mandragorans may



gender in a week-long ceremony, which emphasizes their alluring strangeness as well as providing for interesting roleplaying options.

The reptilian Nagaraja, genderless asexually-reproducing humanoids are the stewards vs. the infernal taint introduced by the dragons, but many think they are shirking their racial duties. They gain +2 to Int and Dex, -2 to Con, 60 ft. darkvision, +1 natural armor, gain a limited array of

spellcasting abilities, +2 to acrobatics and swim as well as linguistics and may opt to chose from two alternate racial traits, one granting a hood and a charming gaze attack, while the other replaces legs with a tail they may use as a natural weapon vs. foes. Their 6-level racial paragonclass offers them 3/ BAB-progression, good will-saves, 5 levels of spell-progression, d8 HP, 2+Int skills per level, blind fight an improved detect magic per will and up to +2 natural armor as well as increased casting prowess.

The Qahngol, a variant half-orc-race, once conquered the empire, only to ally with their subjugated race to vanquish an undead dragon. They gain +2 to one ability score of their choosing, count as orcs, gain low-light vision, +2 to ride and handle animal and an interesting racial curse: The Qahngol get a name mask upon their coming of age and upon removing/losing it, they run the risk of being targeted by their ancestral curse, which turns them into infernal cannibals - the simple template is provided as well as rules for the creation of name-masks and the simple-template. Their 6-level racial paragon-class gets d8, 2+Int skills per level, 3/4 BAB-progression, good fort and will-saves, 2 levels of spellcasting progression, rather massive attribute bonuses, a limited synergy with the fighter and barbarian classes when determining bonuses for feats, rounds of rage etc. as well as keen scent and wild empathy.

Ruishishen are essentially the HotJO setting's Litorians, i.e. Lion-like humanoids, this time descendant from the celestial lions and massively decimated by traitorous groups. They gain +2 to Dex and Int, -2 to Wis, low-light vision, +2 to perception, intimidate and survival, count as one size larger for effects based on size and their 6-level racial paragon-class gets d8, 2+Int skills per level, 3/4 BAB-progression, good fort- and ref-saves, up to +2

# EVIL HAS MANY FACES. THIS IS ONE OF THEM



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natural AC-bonus, bite and claw attacks (the latter counting later on as ghost touch weapons!), scent, faster movement, a fearinducing roar and may as a capstone temporarily turn incorporeal.

The variant dwarven race, the Sanesaram, get +2 to Con and Wis, -2 to Cha, slow speed (and no encumbrance speed modifiers), +4 dodge bonus to AC vs. gainst, +2 to appraise, +2 to saves vs. spells and spell-like

abilities, + 1 to atk vs. goblinoids, +4 to CMD vs. bull rush and trip as well as clan-dependant bonuses, 8 of which are provided. Their racial paragon-class spans 6 levels, grants d8, 2+Int skills per level, 3/4 BAB-progression, good fort and will-saves, 3 levels of spellcasting progression , stonecunning, may add their class-level to craft-checks, further increase their resiliency to detrimental effects and class suffers from non-standard save-progression for all 3 saves: They cap at +3 at 6th level instead of +2.

The penultimate new race we get would be the Verrik, another familiar face from Arcana Evolved, who gets +2 to Str and Wis, -2 to Cha, blindsense, the option to shut down senses (making them temporarily immune to gaze attacks, language-dependant effects etc.), minor spell-like abilities and may opt to be born with a magic-discerning third eye. Their 6 level paragon-class nets them 3/4 BABprogression, good ref-and will-saves, d8 HP, 2+Int skills per level, 5 levels of spellcasting progression, improved sell-like abilities and as a capstone even get blindsight. All in all...I honestly consider the Verrik overpowered. Blindsense alone is powerful Combined with all the sense-turning of-options, the race becomes a bit too strong for my tastes.

The final new race would be the Yueyangren and Yueyinren, the moonfolk, which are essentially variant elves. Regular elves, moonlight elves are the Yueyangren and get +2 to Dex and Int, -2 to Con, low-light vision, +2 to perception, elven immunities and bursts of speed for 3 rounds. The dark-skinned moonshadow elves, are closer to high elves in mentality than to drow, in spite of

# "Ruishishen are essentially the HotJO setting's Litorians, i.e. Lion-like humanoids..."

improve their distinctiveness by gaining more abilities depending on the clan they belong to. At highest levels, they also get minor bonuses to atk and damage whenever someone hurts them – a Sanesaram's grudge is a force indeed.

The Shenxue are the descendants of spirits and mortals, being thus native outsiders that can be influenced more with their truenames. Since the term shenxue thus applies to a vast variety of combinations of races and spirits, they come with information on racial traits for all the core and HotJO-races as well as a rather large array of different aspects that offer access to snow, panda or mountain spirits, to name just a few. Each aspect has its own penalties as well as different penalties to balance their benefits. Since they are born from such a cosmic union, the shenxue are required to adhere to a certain obeisance chosen at character creation, prohibiting them from for example sealing them from private dwellings, crossing rivers and cool, unique ones: Wandering Eyes for example, makes it only possible for the shenxue to see through the eyes of a chosen host. The shenxue paragonclass develops these further by modifying the class-skilllist according to aspects and providing highly versatile spell-like abilities and unique options depending on the aspect you've chosen. Like most paragon-classes, they span 6 levels and also gain d8 HP, 2+Int skills per level, 5 levels of spellcasting progression, 3/4 BAB-progression and also an ability that lets them see the presence or absence of all the spirits inhabiting everything, making for an interesting story-telling device. The racial paragon their appearance. They get +2 to Dex, Int and Cha, but -2 to Str and Con, count as elves, gain darkvision 60 ft., elven immunities, +2 to perception, +4 to CMD vs. trip and bull rush, light blindness and both types of moonfolk may take the Yueren paragon-class, which gets d8, 2+Int skills per level, 3/4 BAB-progression, good ref-saves, 5 levels of spell-progression, improved spell-like abilities, may walk on walls and ceilings 1/2 character level rounds cha-modifier times per day (cool!), gain superior vision with different effects depending on sub-breed, and gain movement-bonus-feats as well as the option to charge through difficult terrain.

Now that we've covered all those new races and their respective classes, let's take a look at the new base-classes in the pdf, starting with the Demon Hunter. But before I get on to that, let's quick classify that "Demon" does not mean only chaotic evil outsiders in the context of the lands of the Jade Oath - it means undead, goblinoids, fey and aberrations just as much as demons and similar outsiders - they essentially hunt the supernatural. The class gets d10, 2+Int skills per level, full BAB, good fortsaves, spellcasting of up to 4th level. They gain the ability to detect infernals via their powers, gain ranger-like specialization versus foes and may at higher levels even delay taking damage (including attribute damage) for 1 round cha-mod times per day. They may later also craft iron flasks and gain a cool capstone that allows them to change creatures into their servants, elevating them from their tainted being to celestial heights. There are also 6 different suites of abilities available to the Demon Hunter-



class, including one that grants infernal companions that improve over the levels, improved ofudas and boons for wooden swords, the signature weapons of the immaculate exorcism-tradition.

The enlightened scholar gains 3/4 BAB-progression, good will-saves, up to +4 AC bonus, up to 2d6 unarmed damage (better damage when ch'i-focused), d6 HP, 6+Int skills per level and may also chose from a variety of talents from varying paths, that set them upon track for becoming immortal, allow them to create strange contraptions etc. The Folk Magic-table (which allows minor spellcasting) is now also included, as is the immortal knowledge-table (though that mentions "monk" when "scholar" is meant). The class per se is truly unique with its wide array of options and the complexity of rules for contraptioncreation etc.

Similarly, the Kusa-class predates the Ninja-class from UC, getting unarmed strikes and sneak attacks as well as 3/4 BAB-progression, d8 HP, 6+Int skills per level, up to +7 insight bonus to AC, good ref-saves. The Kusa also gets a Ki-pool as well as multiple talents, grouped in three general level-classes, providing access to new talents at higher levels. Again, the class feels like it should have been converted to options for the Ninja-class, especially since the Kusa is not half as complex as the abilities of the enlightened scholar.

Speaking of archetypes: The other classes also get a variety of options – Barbarians may now for example take totem rage powers that correspond to specific animals like centipedes and mantises. There are multiple powers assigned to each totem and for barbarians wholly



focus in either, much like gaining psionic focus, is a fullround action that provokes AoOs. Arcane Focus requires an arcane pool to be used (problematic, since the magus' arcane pool and this one's is different -I'll get to that in a

"Speaking of archetypes: The other classes also get a variety of options – Barbarians may now for example take totem rage powers that correspond to specific animals like centipedes and mantises."

committed, there's an archetype to gain a totem-related animal companion. cavaliers may now chose from 2 new Xia-orders, which are also available to samurai, btw., one devoted to the ancestors and one to protecting the chosen organization's land and people. We also get an array of different monk-archetypes, which range from the kensai with their living weapons to the grapple-focused Thaskalos, the armored sohei to the spellcasting, lawful good yamabushi. Witches get perhaps one of the coolest option in the book – 4 new patron-spell-lists and a bunch of hexes. What's cool about these hexes is the factor that the hexes come with descriptors that mark them as particularly appropriate for the respective patron. At least in my opinion, as long as the choice of other hexes is not penalized, this is a great idea to enhance flavor.

The next chapter introduces us to the new Feng Shuiskill, which allows you to improve the regenerative boons of resting by properly aligning the area and even the time required to rest. It should be noted that a bunch of the mechanics to come make use of the arcane focus and kifocus (interchangeable as term with Ch'i, btw.). Gaining second), while ki-focus needs at least 1 point of ki in your reservoir. You may expend either focus to take 15 on a concentration check.

Among the different feats included in the chapter, we are introduced to a variety of feats with the new (Arcane)descriptor. In order to make use of them, you have to take a feat that grants two points of arcane points, which do NOT stack with the magus' arcana pool. Substituting "Arcane" with "Eldritch" or a similar word would have GREATLY helped to avoid confusion here. A botch, in my opinion, since while the non-stacking is mentioned, I consider two pools with the same name problematic. (Arcane)-feats usually grant you additional points of arcane pool and allow you to do uncommon things by expending your focus: Arcane Dodge, for example, grants you a stacking dodge-bonus of +1 to AC and allows you to expend focus as an immediate action for an increase to +4 to AC versus one attack as an immediate action.

Ki-focus works much the same way and feats from other sources now retroactively get the ki-descriptor. It

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gets more complex, though: There is a subset of Ch'ifeats (or Ki-feats, whichever spelling you prefer) called chakra-feats. These feats require the character to be kifocused to work. Characters may invest ki-points into chakras when ki-focused and there's a limit depending on level on how many points can be invested into a given chakra. Much like other points, these allocated points on the chakra allow the character to do uncommon things while focused and grant additional options via expending them. Moreover, each chakra has 3 different sets of potential ways to invest ki: Ki can be invested in Balanced Ki, Yang Ki or Yin Ki, granting different benefits for being focused or expending the aligned ki. A total of 7 chakra are provided – and that's before the additional options via chakra-feats come in!

Speaking of complex options: Want a lesser version of the gestalt idea that is not as unbalancing and allows you to play essentially two characters in one body? The Ancestral Possession-feat allows you to do just that, giving you a second set of mental ability scores and actually a second class – problem is: The change of personality in command is disorienting and happens EVERY time you roll a 1 on a d20. Yes, that can lead to some VERY awkward roleplaying situations and while it may save you, it may also doom you. Especially for a group low on players unable to cover all fields a great feat.

Regarding enhanced options – several of the feats deal with yet another concept integral and iconic in lore: Sutras. While some brackets still point towards the single-pdf-release, rest assured that Sutra Magic is also within the pages of this book, allowing e.g. divine casters, demon hunters etc. to gain access to the iconic ofudas and providing guidelines on creating new sutras as well as a bunch of them for your immediate perusal.

Beyond the vast array of feats that use these new and complex mechanics, we also get short suggestions for cinematic houserules à la damage-based knockback, improvised weapons for everyone, the option to throw foes in grapple, a new use for hero points and (Chinese) Zodiac Signs: These work essentially as traits, but come as a double-edged sword: While being stronger than your average trait, they also come with drawbacks, which might make for truly intriguing roleplaying opportunities. I really like the approach to traits, though you should be aware that they make HEAVY use of hero points, thus, if you don't play with them, you will get less of this chapter. (But when playing a WuXia-style setting, why not use hero points? Oo)

It should also be noted that we get an array of new exotic weapons (that are not that exotic in the HotJOsetting), most of which actually come with neat artworks, as well as new alchemical gear. Thankfully, the rather complex ch'i-mechanics come with a cheat-sheet in the section on magic that also details aforementioned sutra magic and closes the book.

Conclusion:



Editing and formatting. Well. If you take a look at the credits, you'll see that beyond being a patron, I also helped proof this book. But just a couple of pages. Without wanting to harp on my fellow proofers (after all, it was a non-paying gig) - some glitches slipped past us. Some that shouldn't have. The Enlightened Scholar is still violating PFRPGF-design with its +9 ref-save progression and lacks its capstone ability. The Kusa should have been upgraded with regards to the

Ninja-class. There are still multiple references to Arcana Evolved classes like the Magister (full-blown arcane caster) and the Mage Blade (Gish-class) and similar classes in here: Not in any rules-context, mind you, but they still are there.

While MOST (about 90%) of the conversions are successful and awesome, the rest could have been caught with more proofing and more care. I noticed multiple instances of non-italicized spells, a lack of uniform italicization regarding the terms "ki" and "ch'i" etc. And we also get some pages that clearly show that different people have been at work here – while many pages are free of glaring glitches, there also are some pages in this pdf that feature several.

Layout...is GORGEOUS. Paizo-level and beyond beautiful. Two-column standard, green highlights, golden kanji-borders, Wayne Reynolds-cover and interior artwork that more often than not is on the level of the cover. That is: Up to the very most beautiful you'll ever see in any publication. The pdf also comes with extensive, nested bookmarks. As per the writing of this review, no printer-friendly version is included.

This is a crunch-monster and perhaps the one pdf that took me longest to review so far. So much math to do. More, in fact, than in just about any product I've reviewed so far. The races with their racial paragon-classes should definitely prove to be a boon for fans of the Diamond Throne-setting that have since the Arcana Evolved-days switched to PFRPG and concept-wise, the Mandragoran is perhaps one of the coolest plant race I've seen in ages.

I really like the Arcane Pool-idea – but why not rename it? Why make it ambiguous and easy to confuse with the pool of the Magus?

Mechanically, Sutra Magic, Chakras etc. are bold, exciting and cool and speak of a solid grasp on rules by author Frank Carr (for AE) and Timothy Wallace (for the PFRPG-conversion) as well as something only seldom seen: Boldness in design. these options marry cultural

fluff with solid rules and uncommon design-choices, making them a joy to behold, at least for me.

The cultural fluff of the book of the book speaks not only of a knowledge, but of an understanding of cultures and myth and offers fresh and exciting vistas on eastern roleplaying that could work together with established setting like Rokugan or Kaidan, but still brings its extremely distinct flavor to the table and can easily stand on its own. Distinctiveness and modularity are well-mixed in the options provided herein. The writing per se ranges from extremely evocative...to. Well. Not so evocative. When proofing my chapters, I continuously stumbled upon instances when multiple sentences started the same way in a quick succession. There were paragraphs containing what I call "no conjunctiondisease" - something that ruins the reading experience of any given text by providing essentially a quick succession of basic subject-verb-object-sentences sans prepositions, conjunctions and subordinate clauses. I tried to correct that, but overall, when the book is concerned, I have to say that generally, HotJO cannot be considered a universally great reading experience. When the writing works, it works well, but these sometimes cropping up accumulations of bland, boring sentences, while conveying information, still tug at what would otherwise be a universal sense of wonder and awe at these intriguing lands.

As much as I'm loathe to say it, since I really, really like the book. It feels like it has been pushed out slightly too fast.

Yeah. I know. Get the pitchforks and torches ready.

The book's been in the making for very long, postponed etc. - but after such a long wait, I think that a flawless quality should have been of tantamount importance. Perhaps giving each of the chapters to two proofers minimum would have been the prudent thing to do. I don't know. What I do know is that with just one or two more months of proofing and editing, this pdf could have been a new benchmark for crunchy-setting books, a hallmark, a legend.

Now, with all the glitches still here and there in the pdf, some of which actually impede the rules, this pdf feels like it falls flat of its own potential. Not all of it, mind you, and the glitches are nothing that can't be potentially fixed/errata'd.

This book could have been my number 1 of 2012 or 2013-it had all the potential, all the right ideas. And, again, generally, they do work. But those that don't combined with an amount of editing glitches/conversion relics make it impossible for me to unanimously recommend. I can't rate this 5 stars, though I so want to - for the sutras, the demon hunter, the ideas herein, for the imaginative pieces of crunch and fluff. For the well-done conversions of spellcasting, which is hard to do indeed. But the quality of the writing fluctuates hard and there are quite a few relics here. This conversion had the chance to set right all the small (and large) glitches from the HotJO-pdfs and let the chance slip. The thing is: I really, really liked this project. I put \$60 down for the patronage, tried to help with the conversions as much as my schedule allowed. I proofed as much as I got, chapter-wise, and as much as my time allowed. I'm dedicated to this project and it could have been one of the best Pathfinder-releases ever. It could have.

But as a reviewer, I have never let the likes of such problems slip and won't start now, no matter how I'd want to. As much as it pains me, in spite of the glorious ideas, in spite of all crunch that teems and bristles with ideas, I can't rate this higher than 4 stars - with seal of approval, though.

Endzeitgeist out.

#### Legendary Classes: Covenant Magic

Publisher: Purple Duck Games by Thilo G. Rating: Five out of Five Stars!

#### An Endzeitgeist.com review

This pdf is 47 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial/ToC, 3 pages of SRD, leaving us with 42 pages of content, so let's take a look!

Without any introduction or wasted space, we are introduced to the new Medium base-class that gets d8, 4+Int skills, 3/4 BAB-progression, good will-saves, proficiency with light armor and simple weapons, as well as spell-like abilities of up to 6th level - and you'd be outrageously gasping by now since they cannot be counterspelled - but: A rather interesting balancing method is being used - a medium can only maintain one spell-like abilities at once, with a new ability immediately ending the first. These abilities also get aligned later and count as spell for item activation purposes starting level 2. The spell-like abilities can be each used 3/day and their governing spellcasting attribute is charisma. At first level, the medium also chooses an influence - but more on that later.

Mediums gain spirit guides that may use guidance on their behalf whenever s/he enters a trance and detect spirits, which include undead, fey, invisible, outsiders and also use this ability to notice and analyze haunts and even keep them from attacking - which is great since they are mostly untapped regarding class abilities. Starting at 3rd level, the medium also gets perhaps one of the most complex and well-executed abilities I've seen in quite a while - Séance. Mediums may call spirits and souls of creatures into their bodies to tap their knowledge and bargain with them planar ally style - including a max HDtable per level.

Now Influences, as I've mentioned before, are important: Mediums may choose from 11 influences that include diabolical forces, angelic hosts, restless souls, elemental forces or seelie and unseelie courts. Each Influence nets the medium a bonus language, a selection



of trance covenants and spell likeabilities and a different capstone ability (yes, one for every influence) and also recommended, but not prescribed spirit boons.

I need to address Trances. Mediums may enter a trance that lasts 4+Chamod rounds +2 per medium level after the first. While in trance, mediums

get +4 to Con and Cha as well as access to the covenants and spell-like abilities associated with her/his influence and may use his/her spell-like abilities associated with influences once per trance without counting against the daily maximum. Essentially, the trance can be considered a caster's equivalent of a barbarian's rage (and no, they are not compatible) and trances do have some restrictions to maintain balance.

Now regarding favored class options... WOW. Blues. Half-Rakshasa.Duergar. Fehr's Ethnology-races. Psionics Unleashed-races. Remarkable Races from Alluria Publishing. And even ARG-races ALL COVERED. Wow. Just wow. 2 pages CHOCK-FULL of favored class options. This goes above and beyond. Nice!

Now have I mentioned spirit boons? At 1 st level, 3rd level and every 4 levels after that, the medium may choose a spoken invocation to gain the benefits of one of (unless I miscounted) 44 (!!!) spirit boons, which include things you'd expect like reading minds and telekinesis and implanting geas, absorb wounds of others via stigmata, add essentially add what amounts to metamagic-like, yet thoroughly unique effects to your spell-like abilities, which include ignoring the miss chances of incorporeal adversaries, prolong them etc. Have I mentioned the option to put psychic shackles on spirits and chain them in your mind, turn incorporeal, possess foes (also only limbs - quite cool!), heal ability damage and raise the dead? Yes - the options are varied and damn cool.

A new spell lets you expel spirits and then, we're off to the topic of covenants - Depending on the strength of the spirit called, a covenant requires the expenditure of money, with access being also predicated on a tree of 5 progressively more expensive feats - though advice for alternate progressions are given as well if you're not sold on the approach. Finding covenants is not only an opportunity for spending character resources, but also for roleplaying and entering covenant examples are provided alongside comprehensive lists of covenants by strength. Covenants are depicted somewhat akin to feats - the power-level of the covenant being included in brackets behind the name, followed by a short fluff description and then the benefits as well as a comprehensive list of patrons that can grant the respective covenant. Dark Arcanas, Archon Wards, the option to temporarily rip someone from death's grip, turn into elemental body II, gaining living illusions as companions, tap into your patron's abilities, manifest blades from the very heavens, immunity to ageing, mitigating dazing and stunning down to being staggered, gain a gaze attack that detects thoughts and may stun those that meet your gaze, cast foes down to the very hells - all these are just the tip of the ice-berg.

The pdf also features advice on creating new covenants as well as guidelines for non-monetary tasks for entering covenants.

#### Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice any significant glitches. Layout adheres to PDG's printerfriendly 2-column standard and the interior artwork is far beyond what the humble cover would make you believe we neat full-page full-color artworks, multiple of them, and I have seen none of them in other publications before. The pdf is fully bookmarked with nested bookmarks for your convenience, making navigation easy.

Damn. I'm stupefied. Seriously, honestly stupefied. This class and its material rank for me as one of the most complex examples I've seen so far and it takes a bit of effort to properly get this material and appreciate it. And then, slowly, the potential, the vast friggin' potential of this class and its covenants sink in. Harry Dresden-style deals with fey? Check. Haunted by visions of hell? Check. Scions of the Heavens? Check. Champions of the elemental forces? Ditto. We essentially get a feat-style-ability-suite-styleclass COMBINED with unique spellcasting COMBINED with talent-based abilities COMBINED with domain/ bloodline-like abilities COMBINED with modes à la rage. And all elements interconnect. Yes, you could just extract the covenants for any class. But oh boy would you miss out.

This may be no class for beginners, but it is G-L-O-R-I-O-U-S. Complex, mechanically innovative, customizable. Oh boy. It's been AGES since I've been this excited about a class and it marries author David Nicholas Ross' mastery of crunch with great production values and we get perhaps one of the best classes, perhaps even the best I've read so far for PFRPG. Yes. That good. Do me a favor, do yourself a favor - get this. The class and covenant magic is so modular, it practically screams to have its already impressive array of abilities further expanded. Even if you're only remotely interested in good crunch, get this. If you want a class with complex customization options that marries these with massive roleplaying potential, get this.

This is worth every cent thrice. At least. This is the new gold-standard for class-design against which all other classes will be judged. My final verdict would be 6 stars, if I only could - hence, 5 stars + seal of approval and a high chance that this will feature on my Top Ten of 2013-list.

Endzeitgeist out.

#### 100% Crunch: Orcs

Publisher: Raging Swan Press by Thilo G. **Rating:** Five out of Five Stars! An Endzeitgeist.com review



This installment of the 100%-Crunch-line is 23 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page advertisement, 2 pages editorial, 1 page ToC/ foreword, 1 page advice for reading statblocks for novice DMs, 1 page SRD and 1 page back cover, leaving us with 15 pages of content, so let's take a look!

The pdf kicks off with a nice table that allows you to get an impression of the statblcoks at one glance before we get a short run-down of the orc race (and the racial modifiers) before we get into the statblocks, kicking off with non-combatants like orc young, females etc., starting at CR 1/4 before providing basic combatants. Archers, berserkers (superstitious barbarians), blood priests, warriors, hurler barbarians etc.

Following RSP's tradition, we also get adepts and experts (torture-specialists) as well as progressions of the hurlers as well as polearm specialists, battle oracles and thankfully, also statblocks that utilize multiclassing: At CR 2, we for example get the barbarian (breaker)/ fighter (two-handed fighter) or thug rogue-builds. We even get a fighter (tactician) and battle scout/snipers as well as an orc wizard with the advanced template focused on blowing the opposition to smithereens.

At the highest CR in this book, we get 2 CR 7 orcs, one being a rogue (thug)/fighter/assassin and the other being the polearm master/thug.

#### Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are top-notch, I didn't notice any glitches. Layout adheres to RSP's 2-column b/wstandard and the pdf provides two versions - one optimized for screen-use and one optimized to be printed out. The pdfs come fully bookmarked for your

#### convenience.

This installment of the 100%-Crunch-line is a solid, very "orcish" installment of the series, with many barbarianbuilds (including rage-stats) and multiple archetypes that make for cool builds as well as an antipaladin. However, I consider some of the builds to be slightly less interesting than they could have been - the absence of a witch and sorceror are slightly baffling to me, when a wizard is included. Honestly, I would have expected one of them, as they feel more in line with what is "orcish" than the bookish wizard-class, but perhaps that's me. I should probably also mention that there's no druid-build in these pages, but due to the presence of the battle-oracle and the adept, I'm willing to let that one slip.

So is this worth the low asking price? Yes, ultimately it is - it is not a perfect collection of statblocks, missing imho two classes that would make for a very orcish feel, but the builds per se are interesting. While I would have enjoyed slightly less direct progressions, at this fair price point, I can still recommend this pdf - especially if you combine it with the stellar "Orcs of the Eternal Zenith"-TRIBES-supplement. My final verdict will hence be 4.5 stars, rounded up to 5 for the purpose of this platform.

Endzeitgeist out.

#### Puppetmaster

Publisher: Dreadfox Games by Thilo G. Rating: Five out of Five stars! An Endzeitgeist.com review

This pdf is 26 pages long, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD, ~11/2 a page blank, leaving us with 21 1/2 pages of content for this new base-class, so let's take a look!

Mechanically, Puppetmasters get d8, 6+Int skills per level, proficiency with blowgun, bolas, daggers, handaxes, nets, whips, light and heavy crossbows and light armor, not incurring any spell failure chance while wearing it. They get 1/2 BAB-progression, ggod ref and will-saves as well as access to arcane spells of up to 6th level, cast spontaneously via Cha. Puppetmaster gain a VERY interesting roleplaying ability - doublespeak allows them to speak class-level minutes per day and have different creatures hear different things, choosing between the two layers his language carries for each creature, allowing him e.g. to parlay with foes while discussing preventive-strike strategies with his allies. He also starts game with a workshop that greatly increases his prowess when creating dolls and puppets when he's in it. Puppetmasters are also excellent manipulators, gaining bonuses that improve on Bluff, Perform (Puppetry) and other puppet-related skills. The defining characteristic of the Puppetmaster, though, would be his Font of Wonder, a pool that starts off at 6 and goes up to a whopping 215 at 20th level.

These points can be used to specialize in one of three different broad areas of expertise: Animisn, Marionettes, Rod Puppets as well as into miscellaneous areas. Puppetmasters gain access to one of these basic traditions at first level and may later pay 10 wonder point to gain the base access to one of the other areas, with further abilities/specializations costing additional wonder points. Each level, they may reassign one of their powers, though



unwise choices may have unpleasant consequences, prerequisites no longer met resulting in a permanent negative level, making careful planning of these points of tantamount importance.

Let's start with Animism: Upon choosing this path, the Puppetmaster gains int-mod wonder points to be spent exclusively in this category, but more beings. Now unlike the often rather creepy summoner eidolons, puppet-customizations often are restricted to themes, making it e.g. impossible for a puppet to get both pincers and tentacles at the same type and requiring a base-form of the puppet that reflects creatures that conceivably could make use of the ability - a imho great way of blending fluff with crunch to ensure balance. By paying Puppetmaster level times 4 points, they may also bring an abandoned (due to refunding of powers etc.) doll back to life, which is a nice idea indeed, as is that the dolls remain active for a short while after the Puppetmaster has died, making room for dramatic roleplaying opportunities and interesting hooks.

The second discipline is completely different and grants dex-modifier wonder points - masters of marionettes. Holding a marionette requires one hand, manipulating it two hands - but what can they do? Essentially, they can force a creature of the type depicted by the marionette to make a will-save or be subject to his machinations: he can force the creature to do make an attack on his behalf, with d20 + Puppetmaster class level + dex-mod being rolled instead of the creature's own. While conscious actions like power attack, arcanas or vital strike cannot be applied to the attack, passive bonuses like from weapon specialization still apply. Being underwater and its penalties to manipulation are covered, but NOT whether the subjects can be manipulated into attacking themselves. That's a flaw in my book. Generally, though,

"The second discipline is completely different and grants dex-modifier wonder points ...."

importantly, they gain a doll-companion - Pinoccio gone bad if you will. And yes, that means they could create dolls that could serve as a mount. If such an animated doll is destroyed, it can 1/day be restored to half hit points via the Craft (Puppet)-skill at 5 x level HP per day, with each HP requiring 1 round of repairs. Furthermore, unlike traditional companions, they require investment of more wonder points to level up, but if you invest up to 118 wonder points at 20th level, you get attributes of 30, 18,14,10, 10 to assign as well as 30 skill points. Animated dolls have up to +5 saves and 3/4 BAB-progression. Beyond these basic ways to advance the prowess of the doll, the dolls are also different depending on the base material they're crafted from, with textiles being e.g. faster to repair, but resulting in a starting Int of 8 (and one skill point less), while Ivory puppets get more skills per HD, but actually cost 50 sp per point of repair. Bone, clay, horn, plant husks, porcelain, way and wood are also possible materials, all with benefits and flaws - kudos! A total of 45 (!!!) customization options to invest your wonder-points are provided, costing between 1 and 14 points and ranging from minor natural armor and the varying armor proficiencies to pincer, tentacle, talon etc. attacks and even sneak attack, pounce and complete magic immunity, the puppets counting as supernatural these abilities can be put in two categories: Abilities that allow the beneficent manipulation of allies to grant them rerolls, usurp mind-control (or make sleeping characters act as if awake) or offensive, with iterative attacks of controlled creatures, forcing movement (for better or for worse), manipulate allies into casting spells and even make them stronger/grant them the ability to fly or breathe water via his mystic puppets. Overall, a VERY interesting take on an uncommon buff/debuff-focus.

Finally, puppet masters get the option to employ rod puppets to tell stories, some of which require two rod puppets or rod puppets of a specific type. One hand is required per puppet. When taking up this profession, the Puppetmaster gains cha-mod wonder points and the effects of the story target all creatures within 30 ft that can see or hear him. In order for them to work, the puppet master has to succeed at respective story-checks, i.e. d10 + class level + cha-mod. The high teh ten-digit of the check, the greater the respective benefits. Ranging from 4 to 15 points in required wonder points, the myths and stories are perhaps closest to bardic buffs, though e.g. the interesting 1-in-20-chance to not expend spells, spell-like abilities and X/day-abilities that even takes shadow jump and similar abilities into account and some

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of the others are distinct enough to make these stand out sufficiently.

Finally, there are miscellaneous ways of spending wonder points not aligned with the 3 disciplines, granting enhancements to dolls, more spells known, a backpack to stow and retrieve puppets faster, gain a synergy AoO with his puppets and carry a tiny workshop around that shrinks them - and yes, rules for falling out/being inside while the replica is shaken are covered!

The pdf also covers the Puppetmaster's spell-list as well as options for having to still learn the craft, stats for non-animated puppets, craft DCs and required materials as well as the option to create puppets that are beyond masterworks, remarkable puppets.

#### Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good - though I stumbled across a wording during my lecture of this pdf, the class is mostly concisely phrased and thankfully unambiguous in its rules, though careful reading is admittedly required due to the complex nature of the class. Layout adheres to Dreadfox Games' parchmentstyle background in beige with its b/w-thorn-borders and the full color artwork depicted on the cover is neat. We also get 2 b/w-pencil drawings that are original as well. The pdf comes with full bookmarks and e.g. the spells are bookmarked in a nice unobtrusive way to d2opfsrd.com.

Now granted, this class is not for everyone. The Puppetmaster can easily be considered wonky if in the wrong hand - but he could also be creepy as hell, beneficent, tragic - the concepts are wide in scope and the execution rather professional. Make no mistake, this is an advanced class if I've ever seen one, making the summoner pale in comparison, not in power, but in options. While the wonder pool could have used a slightly more concise explanation on how it works, after you got the hang of it, it indeed is a cool resource that offers a wide flexibility between pets, manipulation and buffing, making the Puppetmaster a class that will result in widely varying playing experiences. The mechanics and the concepts used by this class are complex, but also rewarding in the benefits they grant as well as in the style of the respective abilities - if you've ever played Metal Gear Solid 4 and considered Screaming Mantis creepy well, here's the chance to play something akin to that!

Mechanically and balance-wise, this definitely is one of the most interesting classes I've seen come out of PFRPG and one that strays quite a bit from established class designs - and is better off for it. The one thing I'd criticize is the lack of true capstone abilities for the respective sub-crafts, but in the end, that is a minor flaw. So, apart from minor complaints about more concise wording all's great? Yes. Yes, indeed. The Dreadfox leaddesigner Reid Stewart has learned to take environmental factors into account (though I would have loved to see these influencing puppets based on material) and as a pdf that introduces the base-class, this works very well. So much so, in fact, that I'm not even missing archetypes or supplemental feats. The class is varied enough to work for now without them and provide a plethora of different gaming experiences. The price point, when compared to e.g. the Ritualist, is also more in line, offering about twice as many options as that one. While still not cheap at 5 bucks, the class is one that should be considered worth the investment if the idea remotely intrigues you. I'll even go so far as to ignore the minor hick-up that fails to specify whether manipulated creatures may attack themselves and use the default "reroll save at +4-solution" established by enchantments. My final verdict - due to the minor hick-ups here and there and the price-point 4.5 stars, but still gladly rounded up to 5 this time.

Endzeitgeist out.

#### 10 Oracle Magic Items (PFRPG)

**Publisher:** Rite Publishing by Megan R. **Rating:** \*\*\*\*\*

Lucky oracles! For here, presented in delightfully atmospheric and in-character terms, are a collection of magic items specifically designed - by

one Suilaliun of Our Sovereigns in Heaven to suit their particular character and style. All delightfully illustrated in the pre-raphaelite style too, a feast for the eye as well as for the gamer.

A suit of armour that bites back - or at least, casts a curse spell at anyone who has the temerity to damage the wearer - starts the



collection. with a fantastical cape whose mere appearance alone is wonderful even before it starts reducing the cost of using metamagic feats, a pair of sandals that aid the oracle's dodging ability and several other wonders following. All are soundly rooted in the peculiarities of the oracle class and appropriate to their qualities, yet they are also customisable to suit a given oracle's tutelary deity... at least, they would be if he has them made. Of course, you somewhat take what you find when rooting through treasure hoards! If you have any oracle characters in your game, get this... and if you don't, a few hints about the goodies herein will have at least one player rolling an oracle up forthwith - yes, they are that good, that fun to play with.

#### 101 Mystical Site Qualities (PFRPG)

**Publisher:** Rite Publishing by Megan R. **Rating:** \*\*\*\*\*

OK, so what is a 'mystical site' anyway? To put it simply, it is any location that's got something special about it, a place where magic may act a little differently from normal perhaps due to something that once happened there or as part of the natural ebb and flow of magical forces across the land.

To aid you in making your campaign world suitably and subtly different from the everyday one you inhabit when not revelling in your shared alternate reality, herein is presented a whole bunch of 'qualities' that you can apply to appropriate locations within it. Each comes with descriptive text that may explain how the site has developed or what it feels like, or something else which lets you know the flavour, the feel of that location. Then the rule mechanics of how that location's otherness has an in-game effect, and finally a brief example to demonstrate that quality in action.

They can be quite powerful, quite disturbing or startling; and should be used sparingly. Placed to best effect, carefully chosen, they can be a potent reminder to your players that they are not wandering round Kansas or Cheshire, but are truly elsewhere, in that shared alternate reality that you are creating and inhabiting around your game table. They ought to be rare. You won't find a mystical site on every street corner or every hill top, but they should reflect the grand sweep of magic through your land, influenced by events and in turn influencing future events.

Just reading through them may spawn ideas for events, encounters or even whole adventures. Or you may realise that a location already in your campaign world is eminently suitable for this treatment. Maybe even something your characters have done in the past may lay the seeds for a mystical site... and their discovery of the changes that have taken place the next time they visit that spot will be memorable indeed.

Some are beneficial to creatures entering the area, some malignant... and some act differently depending on who you are and what you are trying to do. This is a resource to study thoroughly and to think about, before picking which qualities you want to use and where you are going to put them. Done with care they will enhance your world and the adventures you have there.



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