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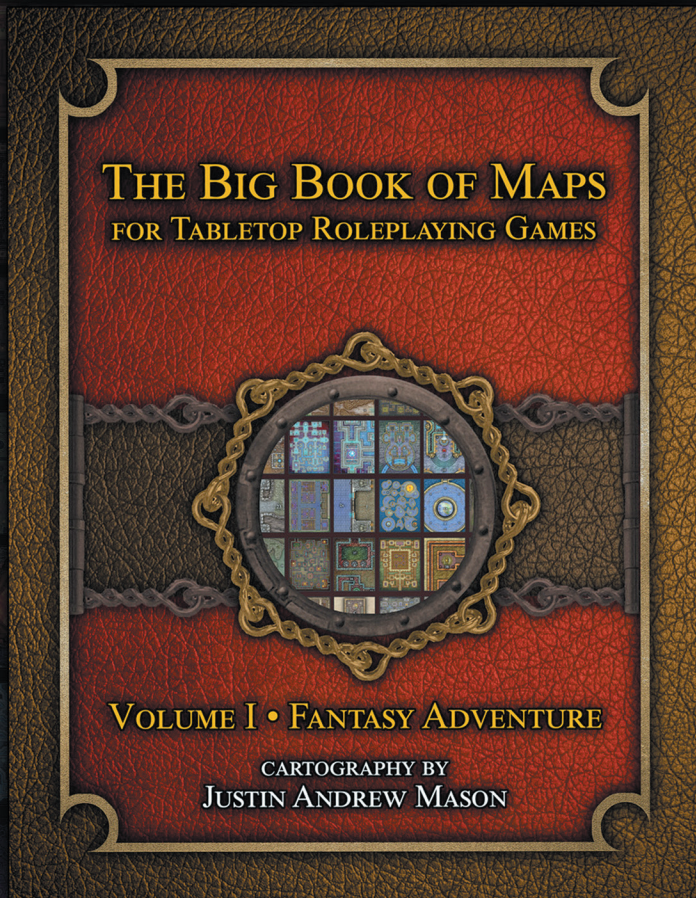
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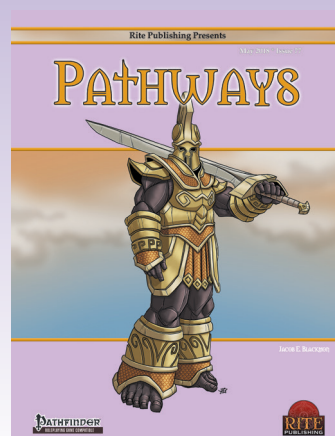
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Editorial

by Dave Paul; Illustration by ASafeLiaison

By “peace” someone might mean “not being disturbed” (by others, by one’s own thoughts or feelings) or “being secure” (perhaps by feeling safe or provided for), or “being in harmony” (perhaps with other people, perhaps within oneself), or perhaps “not at war” or “not engaged in hostility” or even a few other things. When I proposed the theme to the writers and others of this authors, more so than our other themes, people asked something akin to “What do you mean by ‘peace’?” Frankly, that’s fun and ironic. It’s weird to me that the theme of peace would be so disconcerting to people. But maybe it’s just me who finds it weird and this is just an everyday case of the ambiguity of communication through words. In any case, here we are, presenting an issue on the theme of peace.

I was delighted when Margherita Tramontano told me she intended to write a piece similar to the kind of piece Jonathan McAnulty wrote in some of the early issues of *Pathways*, treating peace as a subdomain and offering replacement powers and domain spells. The Peace subdomain will appear soon as part of the book *In The Company of Phoenix*. This is a wonderful offering to the readers and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. Margherita’s creativity inspires me and I look forward to presenting more of her content in *Pathways*.

In addition, regular contributor Mike Welham offers us interpretations of “peace” through the monstrous minds and perspectives of good, neutral and evil alignments. I was having a chat the other day with a gamer about how I thought the earliest editions of these role-playing games treated neutral alignments and how this intersected with the ethos of druids. Mike’s article, weirdly, bumps into the content of the conversation I was having in at least these two ways: first, there’s something about fey and druids that seems to nicely overlap; and second, spiders. I enjoy everything Mike creates and I just adored the horror of the tranquilirachnid (and not just because the name rolls off the tongue far more easily than it looks like it’s going to). Don’t get me wrong, I have no interest in using these things to kill off any of my players’ characters (though it wouldn’t be such a bad way to go, I suppose), but this particular kind of death will work nicely as a background bit of terror to set a theme. Odd, I suppose, that this ends up in an issue devoted to peace, but you’ll see what I mean when you take a look.

Happy gaming.



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Peacemaker Creature Template

by Stephen Rowe, Illustration by Jacob E. Blackmon

In most wars, innocents suffer while the powerful prosper. Ignorant people can be pushed with propaganda into fight equally indoctrinated enemies. Many die, and most become forever changed by the experiences. However, the leaders who make declarations and give orders remain largely insulated from war's grisly costs. This is accepted only because it is common, but it is not just.

A peacemaker creature does not seek to end all hostilities, often viewing such as an unrealistic goal. Some conflicts are inevitable, and once fighting begins, it is easy for deep hatred to develop on both sides. Likewise, the peacemaker does not oppose

righteous causes, where willing warriors battle against destructive or objectively evil foes. Instead the peacemaker concentrates on unnecessary wars, where misunderstandings or deliberate lies cause pointless tragedy. Their favored weapon is truth. Myopic leaders are shown the suffering their decisions cause, and soldiers are forced to accept their enemies as people, little different from themselves save for a quirk of fate.

Peacemaker creatures generally swear magical oaths to lawful gods or forces for peace, truth, and order. They might also be imbued with a mission and abilities as penance for some great sin, or after achieving an enlightened perspective.

Creating a Peacemaker Creature

"Peacemaker" is an acquired template that can be added to any living creature, referred to hereafter as the base creature. Most peacemakers are humanoids or outsiders with the lawful or good subtype.

Challenge Rating: Base creature's CR +2.

Alignment: Peacemaker creatures must have a lawful alignment and cannot have an evil alignment. If a peacemaker creature possesses either the chaotic or evil alignment subtype, they lose either or both subtypes, and instead gain the lawful subtype.

Armor Class: A peacemaker creature gains a +2 deflection bonus to AC.

Special Qualities and Defensive Abilities: A peacemaker creature retains all defensive abilities of the base creature. It gains a number of bonus hit points equal to twice its Hit Dice and a +2 resistance bonus to saving throws. Increase any spell resistance of the base creature by +2.

Empathy (Su): The peacemaker forces enemies to feel the suffering they cause it. As an immediate action after being damaged by a creature with an attack or spell, the peacemaker can deal nonlethal damage to the opponent equal to half the damage dealt by the attack or spell. The opponent can make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ the peacemaker creature's Hit Dice + peacemaker creature's Charisma modifier) to negate this effect. If the opponent fails the save by 5 or more, they are also affected by the peacemaker's curse of sympathy special attack (see below). Whether or not the

save is successful, an affected creature is immune to further uses of empathy for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting pain effect.

Special Attacks: A peacemaker creature gains the following special attacks.

Curse of Sympathy (Su): A peacemaker creature's power can sometimes cause an unintentional enlightened awareness in affected creatures, opening their minds to the pain they inflict. A peacemaker cannot purposefully inflict this curse, and it only affects creatures failing a Will save against its empathy, perspective, or revelation abilities by 5 or more. Whenever the cursed creature inflicts damage on a living creature with an attack or spell, they take nonlethal damage equal to half the damage dealt (no save). This curse can be removed by *remove curse* and similar effects (the curse's caster level equals the peacemaker creature's Hit Dice). It can also be removed by an *atonement* spell cast by a creature with an alignment matching the peacemaker creature. This is a mind-affecting pain and curse effect.

Perspective (Su): As a touch attack, a peacemaker can expand a creature's consciousness, allowing them to understand and pity their worst enemies. On a successful hit, the target must make on a Will save (DC 10 + ½ the peacemaker creature's Hit Dice + peacemaker creature's Charisma modifier). On a failed save, the target cannot cast any damaging spell or attack (including attacks of opportunity and attacks as immediate actions) for 1 minute. This effect ends if the target is damaged by any



creature. If the target fails the save by 5 or more, they are also affected by the peacemaker's curse of sympathy special attack. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to further uses of this ability for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Revelation (Su): As a standard action, a peacemaker creature can imbue a creature it can see within 30 feet with visions of the suffering they have caused from the perspective of all those hurt by their actions. The target must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + ½ the peacemaker creature's Hit Dice + peacemaker creature's Charisma modifier) or be affected by the equivalent of a *vision* spell. The *vision* allows the creature to instantly become deeply aware of all the pain their actions and decisions have caused others. The target is fatigued after the *vision* ends. If the target fails the save by 5 or more, they are also affected by the peacemaker's curse of sympathy special attack. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Spell-Like Abilities: A peacemaker creature with a Wis or Cha score of 8 or higher has a cumulative number of spell-like abilities based on its Hit Dice. Unless otherwise noted, an ability is usable once per day. Caster level equals the creature's HD (or the caster level of the base creature's spell-like abilities, whichever is higher).

HD	Abilities
1–4	<i>atonement</i> , <i>mindlink</i> ^{OA} (at will), <i>sanctuary</i> 3/day
5–6	<i>share memory</i> ^{UM} , <i>zone of truth</i>
7–8	<i>seek thoughts</i> 3/day, <i>tongues</i> (constant)
9–10	<i>communal tongues</i> , <i>discern lies</i> (at will)
11–12	<i>dream</i> , <i>mind probe</i> ^{OA}
13–14	<i>serenity</i> ^{UM} 3/day
15–16	<i>geas/quest</i>
17–18	<i>vision</i>
19–20	<i>euphoric tranquility</i> ^{APG} 3/day

Ability Scores: Wis +4, Cha +4.

Skills: A peacemaker creature gains a +4 racial bonus on Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks.

Inevitable Diplomat

Peacemaker Kolyarut

CR 14

XP 38,400

LN

Medium outsider (extraplanar, inevitable, lawful)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 24 (+2 deflection, +4 Dex, +12 natural)

hp 182 (12d10+116); regeneration 5 (chaotic)

Fort +16, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities constructed, empathy (DC 21); **DR** 10/chaotic; **SR** 25

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +18 (2d6+6)

Special Attacks curse of experience, perspective (DC 21), revelation (DC 21)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +17)

At will—*discern lies* (DC 19), *disguise self*, *enervation*, *fear* (DC 19), *hold person* (DC 18), *invisibility* (self only), *locate creature*, *mindlink*, *suggestion* (DC 18), *vampiric touch*

3/day—*hold monster* (DC 20), *mark of justice*, *sanctuary* (DC 16), *seek thoughts* (DC 18), quickened *suggestion* (DC 18)

1/day—*atonement*, *communal tongues*, *dream*, *mind probe* (DC 20), *share memory* (DC 17), *zone of truth* (DC 17)

1/week—*geas/quest*

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 19, **Con** 23, **Int** 10, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 34

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*suggestion*)

Skills Diplomacy +28, Disguise +24, Knowledge (planes) +15, Perception +24, Sense Motive +28, Survival +20; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Diplomacy, +4 Disguise, +4 Sense Motive

Languages truespeech

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Volume 1

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10 Things to Find in a Curio Shop

By Creighton Broadhurst

When the PCs return to the city after their latest adventure they often have only one thing on their mind—shopping!

With their loot sold and their purchases plotted the party set out into the city. Sometimes, they find exactly what they seek, but other times they find more than they bargain. For lost amid the clutter of the dusty shelves of the curio shop lie forgotten treasures and baubles of interesting aspect.

Use the table below to generate the details of minor objects of interest the party come across on their shopping trip. For many of these items, the shopkeeper will take whatever he can get; others have prices. The GM can use these items as nothing more than objects of interest, but they can also serve as adventure—or side quest—hooks.


1. This small dusty bottle is half full with fine grey dust. Buried in the dust are three finger bones—probably from an individual roughly the size of an adult human male.
2. A worn leather backpack lies at the back of a shelf. The pack seems heavier than it should do. A careful investigation reveals a hidden compartment containing a small notebook. Much of the notebook contains doodles, random sketches and so on. At the back of the book a loose piece of ripped, aged parchment has a lavishly illustrated map that seems to depict the location of a buried treasure. Sadly, the map is incomplete.
3. A wide range of wine bottles completely fills a shelf. Many have no label. One seems different to the others—its design hints of elven provenance and the wine it contains is truly exquisite. The wine is priced like the other bottles—1 gp (but is worth 30 gp).
4. A small stuffed lizard lies on its back amid other odds and ends. The lizard is missing one eye, but its scales are of a faded blue hue, hinting at (perhaps) some strange ancestry.
5. A black oversized leather quiver—of sorts—hangs from a hook on the wall. The “quiver” holds 100 ft. of black, knotted silk rope. The whole is priced at 25 gp, but the quiver’s design allows the rope to be deployed quicker than normal.

6. Four battered pewter cups along with a decanter are arrayed on a silver tray. Each is stamped with the heraldic device of a fallen noble house. The whole can be purchased for 100 gp.
7. A silver hairpin (worth 150 gp) designed in the shape of a lunging dragon. Tiny emeralds form the dragon’s eyes. The hairpin is in need of a good polish. Unbeknownst to the shopkeeper, the hairpin is the sigil of a minor dragon-worshipping cult. If a PC wearing the hairpin encounters cultists they initially believe her to be one of their own.
8. An old tapestry map of the area surrounding the town hangs from one wall. The map is dusty and worn and somewhat out of date. However, eagle-eyed browsers spot a tower standing deep in the hills or other inaccessible location. The tower does not appear on more recent maps.
9. A worn diary relates the “adventures” of Ignar the Wizard. He spends much of the diary complaining about his master’s conduct and obsession with certain experiments the details of which Ignar dared not commit to paper. The diary stops abruptly.
10. A large hooded lantern sits on a table in one corner. It is wildly oversized—the owner claims it was taken from a giant years ago. Whatever the truth of the matter, the lantern’s oil reservoir is double normal size and it illuminates an area twice as large as a standard lantern. The lantern is on sale for 20 gp and weighs 6 lbs. empty.

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The background of the entire page is a dark, atmospheric illustration of a tomb or dungeon. In the center, two characters are depicted. On the left, a character with red hair, wearing a green hat and tunic, is running forward while holding a spear. On the right, a character with blue hair, wearing a brown and blue tunic, is also running. They are positioned in front of a large, cracked, circular stone archway. The surrounding environment is filled with skeletal remains, including a large skeleton on the left and various bones scattered on the floor. The overall tone is mysterious and adventurous.

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Spells Showcase: Peace

By Dave Paul

All the following spells can be found in Rite Publishing's recently-released [101 Desert Spells](#).

Sometimes the way to establish or maintain peace is through force. With *benevolent commands* a divine caster gains the ability to control others but only if the intention isn't to cause harm. The spell allows for interesting opportunities that might not otherwise arise, proving helpful, though it might cause some interesting ethical dilemmas. The spell is both lawful and good though it could be interpreted to violate the autonomy of the targets. On the other hand, isn't forcing someone to behave better than killing them?

Benevolent Commands

School: Transmutation [good, lawful; see text];

Level: Cleric/Oracle 4, Inquisitor 4, Paladin 4

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: V, S, M (a lammasu's eyelash)

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Concentration up to 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: See text; **Spell Resistance:** See text

You gain a +4 sacred bonus to Diplomacy, Perception and Sense Motive checks. You gain the ability to use *command* as an at will spell-like ability, with the DC being the same as the DC of this spell; this feature of the spell is a language-dependent, mind-affecting affect. Whenever you command a creature with this ability, the creature automatically saves if your intention (short- or long-term) is to cause the target harm or to violate or deceive the target in any way. You may, on your turn as a standard action, employ either *cure moderate wounds* or *lesser restoration* on any one target that has obeyed your approach or halt command; doing so ends the spell.

If you cast the spell in temperate desert terrain, you have an aura equivalent to a *magic circle against evil* but which extends only to 5 feet around you. Any creature obeying any of your commands which enters or is within this aura is affected as if it were the recipient of a *bless* spell (which persists for 1 minute once it begins).

~~

Sometimes there's no peace when others are talking. Depending on how you feel about getting things accomplished, sometimes the way to get people to stop talking is to curse them. This spell offers a nice twist in that bards can use it, but if they do, the spell takes on the evil descriptor (after all, anyone whose livelihood is devoted to telling tales of others should find forcing people not to talk to be quite punitive).

Empty Words

School: Enchantment (compulsion) [curse, mind-affecting; see text]; **Level:** Bard 4, Sorcerer/Wizard 4, Witch 4

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: V, S, M (a tongue)

Range: Touch

Effect: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates; **Spell Resistance:** Yes

The creature you touch no longer feels like talking, writing, singing or otherwise using words. The creature is not forced to refrain from communicating but will always attempt to do so without the use of words, if possible. If the creature is a spellcaster, it will seek means to cast spells that don't require the use of verbal components.

If no other means of effecting a desire can be managed without words, the creature touched may choose to communicate, but doing so comes with a cost. Each round of speaking, writing, or otherwise using words (any spell requiring verbal components and with a casting time of 1 round or less counts as a round of speaking) causes the creature 1d4 Charisma damage (to a minimum of 1) and increases the desire to refrain from speaking.

When a bard casts *empty words* it gains the evil descriptor.

Empty words cannot be dispelled, but it can be removed by a successful casting of *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse*, or *wish*.

~~

For something a lot simpler, sometimes peace is weathering a storm. With *protection from sand and wind* a caster grants that. And, the ability to stand strong against a raging windstorm evokes a notion of serenity. The spell has limited application to be sure, but in areas of a world where sandstorms are common and magic is available, this kind of spell would certainly arise.

Protection from Sand and Wind

School: Abjuration; **Level:** Alchemist 1, Bloodrager 1, Cleric/Oracle 1, Druid 1, Inquisitor 1, Paladin 1, Ranger 1, Shaman 1, Sorcerer/Wizard 1

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Components: V, S, M (a grain of sand)

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 1 hour/level

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless); **Spell Resistance:** Yes (harmless)

The subject gains immunity to nonlethal damage caused by sandstorms or their equivalent. In addition, whenever the target is subjected to strong winds, treat the wind affecting the target as if its speed were one half its actual amount (which in some cases will not reduce the wind force category, see the Wind Effects table in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*).

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*Base game plays 4 players with optional rules for a 5th player as the GM. Expansion *Sanity Check* expands play to 5-6 players with a 7th as the GM. Game does not need GM to play and the game can be played solo.

K

ENDS 7-9-18

Monsters of Peace

By Mike Welham

Presenting a trio of monsters with very different views on the notion of peace.

My initial studies on creatures devoted to peace turned up a fair number of celestials, but I wanted to find something a little closer to home...so to speak. I turned up an odd fey specimen turned out from its own home for being far too gifted in the ways of peace, as well as a curious spider that only feasts on serene victims. My field agent, Qatri Indra, was invaluable in rounding out the report that follows with the self-styled pax tyrannus. Of course, her latest missive indicated she had run afoul of the nation in thrall to one such individual. I certainly hope she escapes...

—Melnor, Sage (second class) of Questhaven

Mediator Sprite

This beatific, androgynous biped floats just above the ground. Its angelic wings are gossamer—betraying its faerie nature—and soften light passing through it.

Mediator Sprite CR 10

XP 9,600

NG Medium fey

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, strifesense; Perception +25

Aura no harm (60 feet)

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 20, flat-footed 19 (+5 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 127 (15d6+75)

Fort +12, **Ref** +13, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities mutual assurance; **DR** 15/ nonlethal; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +5/+0 (1d3–2 nonlethal)

Special Attacks gift of peace

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; concentration +20)

Constant—*air walk*, *sanctuary* (DC 16)

At will—*calm emotions* (DC 17), *cure critical wounds* 3/day—*break enchantment*, *geas/quest*, quickened *calm emotions* (DC 17)

1/day—*greater peacebond*^{UI} (DC 20), *serenity*^{UM} (DC 20)

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 25

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Quicken Spell-

Like Ability (calm emotions), Skill Focus (Diplomacy)
Skills Bluff +23, Diplomacy +29, Fly +10, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (local) +20, Perception +25, Sense Motive +25, Sleight of Hand +19, Spellcraft +17
Languages Common, Sylvan; telepathy 180 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any land

Organization solitary, pair, or corps (3–12)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of No Harm (Su) Creatures automatically stabilize within a mediator sprite's aura.

Gift of Peace (Su) If a mediator sprite dies, it inflicts a death curse upon those who wounded it in the past minute. *Gift of Peace*: save Will DC 22; effect the creature becomes sickened for 1 minute when it inflicts lethal damage and nauseated for 1 hour when it kills another creature. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mutual Assurance (Su) A mediator sprite enjoys the continuous benefit of the *sanctuary* spell. It also benefits from a retributive protection which causes a creature striking the sprite or inflicting damage with a targeted spell (or by including the sprite in a damage-dealing spell's area of effect) to take the same amount of damage it inflicted (prior to applying the sprite's damage reduction in the case of a melee or ranged attack). If a spell does not overcome the sprite's spell resistance, the caster takes no damage. A successful DC 22 Will save halves the damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Once per day, the sprite can grant this protection to two creatures within 30 feet of each other and no further than 100 feet from the sprite, but the recipients of this ability must oppose each other. Either target can negate this effect for both targets by succeeding at a DC 22 Will save. The affected creatures gain this ability's benefit for 1 hour and retain it even if they come to an agreement within the hour duration.

Strifesense (Su) A mediator sprite can detect conflict, even one as minor as haggling for goods, up to 1 mile away.

Mediator sprites evolved from their diminutive forebears and developed a disdain for infighting among the fey as they grew in stature and ability. Their overwhelming desire for ending conflict forced them to become effective peacekeepers, and they brokered many deals among and between the fey courts. They were so good at arbitrating

disagreements, they nearly ended all internecine conflict in the courts. This had the unfortunate effect of stagnating the fey, and fey nobles found themselves compelled to exile all mediator sprites.

Turned out from their primal homes, the sprites spent little time mourning their banishment before they found other beneficiaries of their preternatural talents. Since humanoids are more pliable than fey, the sprites have ended many conflicts, from mundane marital arguments to stopping a disastrous war between two equally powerful nations. However, the sprites have found humanoids to be far more incendiary, so they often must revisit the same disagreements.

Mediator sprites are adept at recognizing magical coercion and use *break enchantment* to ensure negotiations take place in good faith. They offer to use their abilities to end curses and mental domination, but they often extract an agreement (enforced by *geas/quest*) to refrain from violence for an appropriate period afterward.

A typical mediator sprite stands 6 1/2 feet tall and weighs 200 pounds, though its ability to walk on air makes it seem weightless.

Tranquilirachnid

This eight-legged creature is colored in soft pastels. Its multi-faceted eyes display an uncanny warmth, and it exudes an aura of harmlessness.

Tranquilirachnid CR 7

XP 3,200

N Large magical beast

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 85 (9d10+36)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; +4 vs. mind-affecting spells and effects

Defensive Abilities harmless mien

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +13 (2d8+7 nonlethal plus poison)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks persistent sleep, web (+9 ranged, DC 18, 9 hp)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)

3/day — *rainbow pattern* (DC 18)

1/day — *cloak of dreams*^{APG} (DC 19)

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15 (+19 disarm); **CMD** 26 (28 vs. disarm, 34 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Greater Disarm, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Climb +18, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +15, Sense Motive +20; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Sense Motive

ECOLOGY

Environment any land

Organization solitary, pair, or serenity (3–8)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bite (Ex) A tranquilirachnid does not take a penalty when attacking to inflict nonlethal damage. It can inflict lethal damage with its bite, but it takes a -4 penalty when it does so.

Harmless Mien (Su) Creatures who can see the tranquilirachnid must succeed on a DC 18 Will save when attacking or using a full-attack against the tranquilirachnid. On a failed save, the victim suffers a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls against the tranquilirachnid. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Persistent Sleep (Su) If a tranquilirachnid causes a victim to fall asleep, the victim does not automatically wake up when slapped or wounded. Instead, it gains an additional Will save with a circumstance bonus equal to 1/2 the damage dealt (minimum 0). If the damage is nonlethal, the circumstance bonus is equal to 1/10 the damage dealt (minimum 0).

Tranquilirachnid Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Cha; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. A creature that has taken Charisma damage equal to half its Charisma (minimum 4) incurs a -4 penalty on attack and damage rolls against the tranquilirachnid.

Web (Ex) Creatures caught in a tranquilirachnid's web must succeed at a DC 18 Will save or fall asleep for 1 minute. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Where most monstrous abominations enjoy their prey to feel terror before they devour the prey, tranquilirachnids find flesh contaminated by fear to be unpalatable. When these spiders deposit their eggs in a victim that experienced dread before its demise, the young uniformly fail to thrive. Thus, tranquilirachnids developed magical talents to pacify their prey and induce pleasant dreams in their still-living food while they politely devour it.

Tranquilirachnids hate other arachnids, and reserve especial enmity for intelligent and evil specimens and related creatures such as ettercaps. They take advantage of this by promising to eliminate terrifying creatures plaguing settlements in return for a regular

sacrifice, with assurances the sacrifice will feel no pain or horror at their tender ministrations.

A typical tranquilirachnid is 12 feet in diameter, stands 5 feet from the ground, and weighs 400 pounds. Tranquilirachnids live for roughly 50 years.

Pax Tyrannus

This humanoid is of indeterminate gender and has an amalgam of features which somehow combine into a charming gestalt. It wears clothes appropriately styled for the region and carries a silvered quarterstaff.

Pax Tyrannus CR 12

XP 19,200

LE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 23 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +14 natural, -1 size)

hp 168 (16d10+80)

Fort +12, **Ref** +13, **Will** +14

DR 10/good and nonlethal; **Immune** fire, mind-affecting effects, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 *merciful quarterstaff* +23/+18/+13/+8 (1d8+10 nonlethal/19–20 plus 1d6 nonlethal)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th; concentration +21)
1/day—*greater planar ally*

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 16, **Con** 21, **Int** 14, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +16; **CMB** +23; **CMD** 37

Feats Deceitful, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (quarterstaff), Improved Vital Strike, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)

Skills Bluff+28, Disguise+25, Intimidate+24, Knowledge (local) +21, Perception +23, Sense Motive +20

Languages Common, Infernal; telepathy 120 ft.

SQ against the other, an example must be made, captivating speech, change shape (Medium or Large humanoid, *polymorph*)

ECOLOGY

Environment any land

Organization solitary or thralldom (1 pax tyrannus and 4–400 humanoids)

Treasure double (+1 *merciful quarterstaff*, other treasure composed of gems and jewels)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Against the Other (Ex) Once per day as a move action, a pax tyrannus can designate “others” for

which it gains favored enemy as a 16th-level ranger (+6 bonus on Bluff, Knowledge, Perception, Sense Motive, and Survival checks, and a +6 bonus on weapon attack and damage rolls, against the chosen creatures). The favored enemy can be a specific subtype of a humanoid, or simply humanoids not belonging to the tribe, nation, or other entity to which the pax tyrannus has attached itself. Additionally, all allies who can see and hear the pax tyrannus gain a lesser bonus (+2) against the favored enemy. This ability’s benefits last for 24 hours.

An Example Must Be Made (Su) If a pax tyrannus kills an opponent, all allies who witness the death gain a +2 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls and on saving throws against mind-affecting effects for 1 minute. Additionally, the pax tyrannus can make a free Intimidate check to demoralize all allies of the slain opponent within 30 feet who saw the death.

Captivating Speech (Su) Once per day, a pax tyrannus can make a rousing speech which fascinates all creatures who hear it (Will save DC 23 negates). Additionally, targets affected by the speech’s fascination effect take a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls against the pax tyrannus until they successfully strike it. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Damage Reduction If a pax tyrannus deals lethal damage, its damage reduction no longer applies to weapons dealing lethal damage until the end of its next turn.

A pax tyrannus is a bizarre offshoot of the doppelganger. It loses the perfect mimicry of the parent creature, but it becomes adaptable in other ways, typically by making itself an influential paragon of the species it intends to infiltrate. Its ostensible goal is peace for it and its “people.” It achieves this peace by turning attention to outsiders, which it convinces its followers are responsible for any woes they are suffering. The pax tyrannus promises vast improvements for its supporters, if the supporters turn out the outsiders and take the fight to them as reparation for the wrongs they have inflicted. If the pax tyrannus is successful in annihilating its fabricated enemies, it turns its attention to another group.

Its constant deceptions make it paranoid, and it often reaches a point where it sabotages its own position and must go into seclusion. In cases where the populace grows wise to the pax tyrannus’s manipulations early on, the pax tyrannus changes its appearance and moves on to influence a separate set of people. When it does so, it focuses its new followers on the group that most recently ran it out.

A pax tyrannus is rarely encountered in its true form. It stands 12 feet tall and weighs 450 pounds. It can live as long as 800 years, sometimes long enough for its wanderings to bring it back to a group it manipulated centuries previously.

Nyrene Bessieres

This raven-haired woman is dressed in dark studded leather armor and a cloak dyed such a deep red that it looks almost black.

NYRENE BESSIERES, HUMAN CLERIC CR 3

800 XP

Initiative +1

Hit Points 25

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)

Senses Perception +7

DEFENSE

Armor Class 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14

Fortitude Save +5, **Reflex Save** +2, **Will Save** +7

OFFENSE

Melee mwk silver dagger +5 (1d4-2/19-20)

Special Attacks channel energy 6/day (DC 17, 2d6), hand of the acolyte (6/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +7) 6/day—touch of evil (2 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7)
2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (DC 15), *magic mouth*^D (DC 15)

1st—*bane* (DC 14), *bless*, *cure light wounds*, *protection from good*^D, *shield of faith*

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *read magic*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Evil, Magic

STATISTICS

STR -1, **DEX** +1, **CON** +1, **INT** +0, **WIS** +3, **CHA** +3

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Alertness, Improved Channel, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics -2 (-6 to jump), Bluff +7, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (history) +5, Knowledge (planes) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +7, Sense Motive +10

Languages Common, Abyssal

ITEMS

Equipment *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of darkness*, *scroll of lesser restoration*, *scroll of summon monster II*, +1 studded leather, mwk silver dagger, 53 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Channel Energy Six times per day, Nyrene can present her unholy symbol and channel negative energy to deal 2d6 points of damage to all living creatures within 30 feet (DC 17 Will save for half damage) or heal undead by the same amount.

Hand of the Acolyte (6/day) (Su) As a standard action,

up to six times per day, Nyrene can use a melee weapon to attack a foe within 30 feet. She uses her WIS to calculate her attack bonus instead of STR.

Touch of Evil Six times per day, Nyrene can make a melee touch attack, causing the target to become sickened for two rounds. During this time, the target is also treated as good-aligned for the purpose of spells with the [Evil] descriptor.

Nyrene is a fanatical cleric of the demon lord Kaeresh. She believes that the oracle can help her find a relic to strengthen her connection with Kaeresh and make her more powerful. Her companions either support her twisted goals or think they can profit from her success. Nyrene is cruel and focused only on achieving her objective and will sacrifice her followers if it suits her.



With the Olive or Under the Whip: Priests of Peace, Compassion, and Submission

By Margherita Tramontano
(dedicated in awe to Jonathan McAnulty)

It might seem that priests of Peace would have little space in this game. Yet in the real world, Middle Age pacifist friars were a concrete reality: charismatic beggar-priests with great healing and conversion powers, who cured enemies and infidels alike, as well as their coreligionists in wars, and who played a great role in history. So, if you give importance to roleplaying and flavor, Peace priests could be a great addition even to an aggressive and combat-oriented campaign, where they would get in the way of both PCs' and NPCs' violent ambitions. Peace is not the same as acquiescence; nonviolent leaders and preachers need courage and determination. Peace is not necessarily a good thing, either. For evil oppressors, peace means that their subjects won't dream to rebel.

Resuming the amazing series of articles by Jonathan McAnulty, we present here new options for players wishing to try a peaceful character, as well as divine channeling rules and the new Peace spell descriptor.

Sacred Tomes of Peace

GMs can use the following texts as religious books in their campaigns. Each of the following sacred writings is associated with the new subdomains presented here.

As Many Nuances As A Pearl

Through the narration of a young man's descent into total submission to a dominant lover, this long novel exalts obedience and subservience as the most pure and laudable forms of love. Abuse and possession, it teaches, are to be seen as demonstrations of affection. It is used by oppressive churches to preach the virtues of passivity. Characters using this book in connection with an Intimidate check to coerce an opponent or influence an opponent's attitude gain a +2 bonus to their skill check.

Psalms of Forgiveness

This compilation of sacred songs emphasizes the virtue of a nonviolent approach to the wrongs suffered.



Many tell stories of criminals who convert after being forgiven by their victims; one is a ballad about a cavalier chasing her enemy to the end of the world only to drop her sword in front of him, saying "I don't want your death." Other hymns exalt the power of forgiveness to bring peace to the forgiver's mind. Compassion is seen here as an active force and a demonstration of inner strength, rather than meekness. Once per day, an individual who thoroughly meditated and sang the psalms as part of her spell regaining ritual can reduce the casting time of an *absolution* or *atonement* spell to an immediate action.

The Flowers of Olive

This is a doctrinal diplomacy treaty compiled by a venerable church doctor, illustrating the diverse techniques to persuade fighting parts to negotiate a truce or armistice. Several sermons and speeches by influential holy persons are included as examples and for the reader's edification, together with the story of how each of them prevented or ended a conflict of various importance. The author emphasizes the need for prudence, good sense and sincerity in peace oratory, inviting to practical wisdom rather than mere idealism. An individual who quotes or recalls this book in a persuasive speech gains a +2 circumstance bonus to any relevant Diplomacy checks.

New Player's Options

Oracle Curse: Compassionate

You are a merciful being, and it requires effort on your part to harm someone. You cannot benefit from spells or effects that cause rage (like a skald's raging song) and are always sickened during the first round of combat. No kind of immunity to the sickened condition applies to this effect. You also add *calm emotions* and *charm person* to your spell list as 1st-level spells known.

At 5th level, add *daze monster* and *mantle of calm* to your spell list as 2nd-level spells known.

At 10th level, add *suggestion* to your spell list as a 3rd-level spell known and *charm monster* to your spell list as a 4th-level spell known.

At 15th level, you gain the constant benefits (but not the penalties) of *mantle of calm* during combat.

New Subdomains

These new subdomains deal with peace in its various aspects. The Peace subdomain will appear soon as part of the book *In The Company of Phoenix*.

Peace

Associated Domain: Community

Replacement Power: The following granted power replaces the calming touch power of the Community domain.

Soothe (Su): Your voice dispels fear and rage.

This works as *calm emotions*, but on one target only. The power only calms a creature affected by spells or effects causing confusion, fear, and rage. The effect lasts 1 round per cleric level you possess. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

Replacement Domain Spells: 1st—*calm emotions*, 2nd—*aura of peace*, 3rd—*mantle of calm*, 5th—*oath of peace*, 7th—*hymn of peace*.

Compassion

Associated Domain: Good

Replacement Power: The following granted power replaces the touch of good power of the Good domain.

Noble Negotiator (Sp): You speak with authority, forcing everyone to consider carefully your proposals. You gain a bonus on all Diplomacy checks equal to 1/2 your cleric level (minimum +1). In addition, whenever you cast *enhanced diplomacy*, you obtain an additional +4 bonus instead of +2.

Replacement Domain Spells: 2nd—*compassionate ally*, 4th—*forced repentance*, 8th—*crown of glory*.

Submission

Associated Domain: Evil

Replacement Power: The following granted power replaces the touch of evil power of the Evil domain.

Pronouncement of Surrender (Su): You can declare or intimate surrender as a swift action, deeply discouraging a creature for a number of rounds equal to 1/2 your cleric level. The creature suffers a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, damage rolls, AC and saving throws. You can use this power a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier. This is a mind-affecting, language-dependent ability.

Replacement Domain Spells: 2nd—*miserable pity*, 3rd—*crushing despair*, 4th—*terrible remorse*.

Peace Descriptor Spells:

ablative barrier, *admonishing ray*, *aura of peace*, *calm animals*, *calm emotions*, *calm spirit*, *charitable impulse*, *command*, *compel hostility*, *daze*, *daze, mass*,

daze monster, enhanced diplomacy, enthrall, euphoric tranquility, forbid action, greater forbid action, hymn of mercy, hymn of peace, hypnotism, hypnotism, greater, joyful rapture, mantle of calm, marks of forbiddance, miserable pity, oath of peace, pacifist's curse, peace bond, peacebond, peacebond, greater, peacemaker's parley, sanctuary, serenity, soothe construct, stay the hand, touch of mercy.

New Feats & Trait

The following feats and trait are appropriate for divine casters possessing the new subdomains presented here. A priest of peace can also find the appropriate Charming Diplomat and Diplomatic Theologian feats from *Pathways* #5; the second one adds access to the Peace or Compassion subdomains to its prerequisites. The Channel Calm feat will appear in the book *In The Company of Phoenix*.

Channel Calm

Your inner peace soothes souls around you as well.

Prerequisites: Channel energy, worshiper of a deity granting the Peace subdomain.

Benefit: As a standard action, you can expend one use of your channel energy ability to affect a single creature within 30 feet as if you had cast *calm emotions* (caster level equal to your effective cleric level). Upon obtaining channel energy 2d6, you can affect a number of creatures within 30 feet equal to your Charisma bonus (minimum 2 creatures) with this feat instead.

Peacemaker

Your words of peace ring true and are much more difficult for others to resist.

Prerequisites: Charisma 13, good alignment.

Benefit: The DC to resist spells you cast with the Peace descriptor increases by +2.

Mediator (Social Trait)

You have a way with calming tempers, using cool logic to sooth heated disagreements, and you were always the one to settle arguments among your friends, family, and community. You receive a +1 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks. In addition, you receive a +1 trait bonus to the DC of any spell with the Peace descriptor.

Channeling Effects for the Subdomains of Peace, Compassion, and Submission

The following effects use and supplement rules from *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*. If you do

not have that book, sensorial imagery describes noticeable effects which accompany the use of channel energy.

Minor channeling effects are available to characters through either GM fiat, or the possession of the appropriate trait or class. Combat Channeling effects and Major Channeling effects are made available to a character through the acquisition of the appropriate feats. The DC of any saving throw is 10 +1/2 character level + Charisma modifier. Effects granting bonuses are either sacred or profane bonuses. None of the effects stack with themselves, though they may stack with other, similar effects. For more information, consult *The Secrets of Divine Channeling*.

Peace

Sensorial Imagery: A brilliant white, gold-tinged energy, and a slightly caressing touch.

Minor Channeling Effect: The Enemy is Me: You can, as a swift action, employ one use of channel energy to create an empathic bond between you and one creature, thus improving your ability to understand and be understood by that creature. The creature cannot be outside of the range of your channeling ability, though it can be hostile. When you use your channeling ability in this way, you may add a sacred (or profane) bonus to a single Diplomacy or Sense Motive skill check equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling energy (1d6 would equal a +1 bonus, 2d6 would equal a +2 bonus, etc). This use of channeling must be declared before any dice are rolled.

Combat Channeling Effect: Weapons of Peace: You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to infuse all weapons within the range of your channeling with peaceful energies. When these weapons strike, they deal nonlethal damage instead of lethal, without any penalty. This lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice that would be rolled when channeling energy. Those wishing to negate this ability may do so with a successful Will save.

Major Channeling Effect: Eloquent Delegacy: You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to bolster the living's force of personality with divine energies. When you use your channeling ability in this way, all living creatures within the range of your channeling gain a bonus to their Wisdom and Charisma scores. The amount of the bonus is equal to 1/2 of the total number of dice you would normally roll when

channeling, rounded up (2d6 equals +1 bonus, 3d6 equals +2, 5d6 equals +3 etc.). This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling (2d6 equals 2 rounds, 3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).

Major Channeling Effect: Negotiations' Canopy:

As a standard action, you may employ one use of channel energy to enable all creatures within range of your channeling to understand each other as if affected by the *tongues* spell. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling energy (3d6 equals 3 rounds, etc.).

Compassion

Sensorial Imagery: A soft white, rose-tinged energy, and a feeling of warmth.

Minor Channeling Effect: Hearts Touch: You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to create an empathic channel between you and one creature, allowing each to understand the other's feelings. The creature cannot be outside of the range of your channeling ability, though it can be hostile, and need not share a language with you. You and the chosen creature can communicate telepathically for a number of minutes equal to 10x the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling energy (1d6 equals 10 minutes, 2d6 equals 20 minutes, etc.).

Combat Channeling Effect: Protect My Friends:

You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to protect all those within the range as with a *sanctuary* spell. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling (2d6 equals 2 rounds, etc.).

Major Channeling Effect: Holding Hands: You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to fortify the heart of those within range of your channeling. Those affected receive a sacred bonus to their saving throws against negative emotion spells and effects (like fear or rage) equal to the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling and lasting an equal number of rounds (3d6 equals +3 for three rounds, 4d6 equals +4 for 4 rounds, etc.).

Major Channeling Effect: Nirvana: You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to completely cure a single humanoid or monstrous humanoid within the range of your channeling from every negative psychical condition (panicked, confused, frightened etc.). The creature cannot

possess more HD than an amount equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling (3d6 would cure up to a 3 HD creature, 4d6 would cure up to a 4 HD creature, etc.).

Submission

Sensorial Imagery: A pale, reddish-white energy and a rusty taste in the mouth.

Minor Channeling Effect: Father Figure: You can, as a swift action, employ one use of channel energy to strengthen your personality, appearing as an authoritative and imposing figure. When you use your channeling ability in this way, you may add a profane bonus to a single Intimidate skill check or to the DC of a single enchantment spell you cast equal to the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling energy (1d6 would equal a +1 bonus, 2d6 would equal a +2 bonus, etc.). This use of channeling must be declared before any dice are rolled.

Combat Channeling Effect: Under the Whip:

You can, as a standard action, employ one use of channel energy to create desperation and resignation. When you use your channeling ability in this way, all living creatures within the range of your channeling are affected by a *calm emotions* effect that dampens only positive emotions (joy, hope, etc.). Creatures may attempt a Will save against this effect. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of dice that would be rolled when channeling energy.

Major Channeling Effect: Don't Raise Your Head:

You can, as a full-round action, employ one use of channel energy to completely dominate the will of a single creature within the range of your channeling. Even self-destructive orders will be obeyed. The subject may attempt a Will save to negate the effect. This creature cannot possess more HD than an amount equal to the number of dice you would normally roll when channeling (3d6 would affect up to a 3 HD creature, 4d6 would affect up to a 4 HD creature, etc.). The domination lasts a number of rounds equal to the number of dice rolled.

Major Channeling Effect: You Lowly Bug:

As a standard action, you can employ one use of channel energy to force an opponent into a diminutive, harmless form of itself. The subject may make a Fortitude save to negate the effect. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to twice the number of dice that would normally be rolled when channeling (3d6 equals to 6 rounds, 4d6 equals to 8 rounds, etc.).

PEACETIME

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Peacebonding: By local law, any weapon larger than a dagger and all wands and rods must either be peacebound or stored at the local sheriff's office or jail (at the settlement's option) for the duration of the visit. Peacebonding a weapon involves winding a colored cord tightly around the weapon and its scabbard, and then impressing the local seal in wax. Removing the peacebond requires a full round action before the item can be drawn. (Disable Device DC 12 to untangle the bond as a move equivalent action; bond hp 5, no hardness). **Law +1, Crime -1.**

Design Diary: In the Company of Unicorns (5e)

By Brandes Stoddard; Illustration by Momothecat and PalFarnese

When I was first asked to create [rules for unicorns as PCs](#) in D&D 5e, part of my reaction was realizing that I wasn't the target demographic for this product. I've never been a brony. Peter S. Beagle's *The Last Unicorn* is a classic and a masterpiece, but my reaction to it was not, "I want to play the unicorn as my PC." I love *Legend* (flaws and all), but my reaction to it was again not "I want to play one of the unicorns as my PC." Gaudior, in *Swiftly Tilting Planet*... okay, I'd play Gaudior as a PC. It took some time for me to find that interest in my own imagination. I suspect there are a lot of people whose first reaction to seeing ITC Unicorns on DTRPG isn't, "At long last I can play that unicorn concept I've had for years!" What I want to say, then, is that I *got* excited about the idea.

My goal was to find the Venn diagram overlap of *people who love unicorns just so much* and *people who want an unusual D&D experience*. I don't think you have to be a die-hard fan of unicorns to find a character you want to play in this product. Maybe this can be a product that draws your friend – or kid, probably but not necessarily a daughter – who is a serious unicorn fanatic into D&D fandom. No judgment! I want everyone to have that thing they like in a way that can be fun for the whole table.

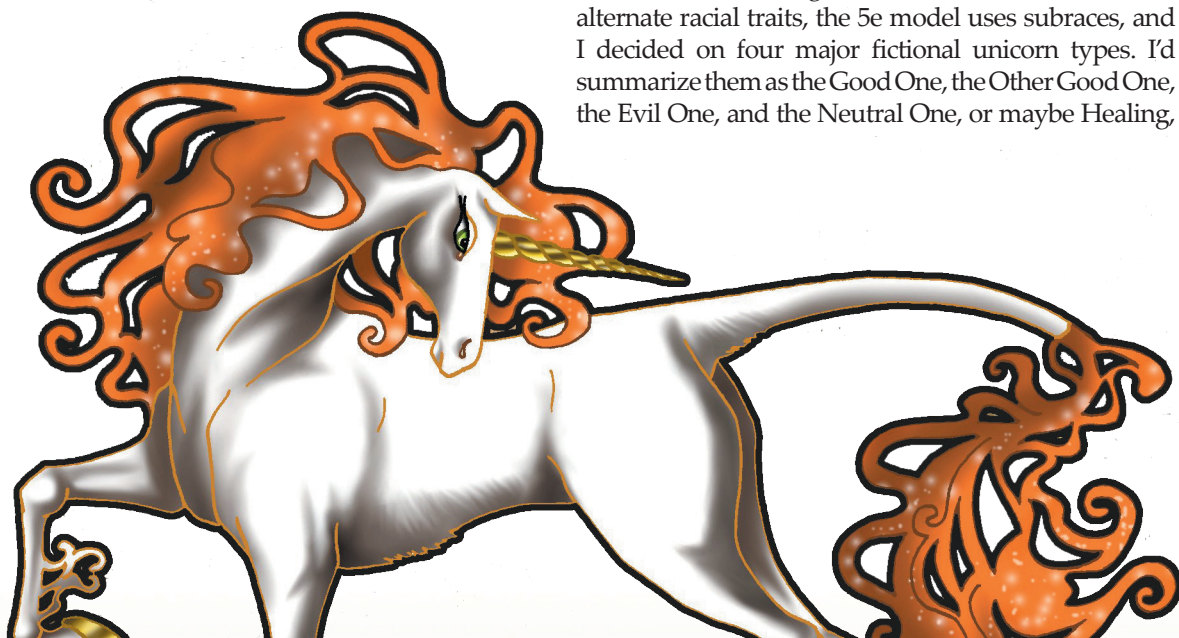
BJ Hensley's excellent work for [the Pathfinder version](#) didn't translate directly into 5e. At base, Pathfinder design favors large collections of *a la*

carte choices, so that every character of that class is a sort of roll-your-own list of features. From what we've seen so far, PF 2 will continue this trend, so I feel comfortable saying that it's part of the PF design *identity*. 5e manifestly does not do that. The Totem Warrior barbarian, the Battle Master fighter, and the Four Elements monk have some *a la carte* choices, but those are **subclasses**, they're rare in their structural choice, and they're still quite limited in the number of internal choices you're making. All of this is to say that the silvermane exemplar class design has *almost* nothing in common between 5e and PF, save for one problem that I solved in the same way she had.

Racial Traits

Obviously enough, if you're playing a quadruped, there need to be some rules around what you can and can't do. 5e doesn't much go in for explicit drawbacks in racial traits, Sunlight Sensitivity notwithstanding. On the other hand, you just can't support the fiction of being an equine-shaped creature without rules for what that can't do in the situations that the presumed-humanoid rest of the party draws you into. In exchange for a lot of items (including magic items) that you'll never be able to use, you've got substantial natural weapons that behave as magical weapons, and you've got a few baseline magical abilities that fit into various imaginings of an alicorn's powers.

Where the PF original offers an extensive list of alternate racial traits, the 5e model uses subraces, and I decided on four major fictional unicorn types. I'd summarize them as the Good One, the Other Good One, the Evil One, and the Neutral One, or maybe Healing,



Luck, Damage, and Trickery. Fiendish unicorns don't have to be evil, any more than tieflings have to be evil, but it's the common form. I'm also seeing a good number of fantasy authors, such as Catherynne Valente and Tanith Lee, subvert the sweetness-and-light conception of unicorns, embracing a darker or scarier take. I wanted to offer some support in that direction, even if I couldn't fully incorporate their vision.

Even though nightmares aren't traditionally corrupted unicorns *per se*, I felt no reluctance to draw on them for inspiration. I think that playing a fiendish silvermane exemplar and going with the Knave subclass is a great way to handle a nightmare as a PC, if that's something you want to play; that could be a ton of fun with a warlock or Oathbreaker paladin as your bonded rider.

New Subclasses

The PF original has some alternate class features for each class, which is just how things are done in PF. Not so for 5e, but we do have the Battlerager barbarian and the Bladesinger wizard as examples of subclasses that are, in theory if not in practice, restricted to one race. The quadrupedal limitations mean that some classes that are *thematically* great fits for unicorns fall apart in actual use, or don't fully realize the story potential. To that end, I created a new paladin oath, a new sorcerous origin, and a new warlock pact.

Taking the last one first, note that that's a pact only – I don't feel like there's a clear warlock *patron* that they should most favor. The Pact of the Sundered Horn leans way into *Legend*, while also creating space for melee unicorn warlocks that is vacated by the poor fit of Pact of the Blade. There's also handling for non-unicorns to choose this Pact, though it's not primarily for them and it would take considerable work to get as much benefit out of this as other Pacts offer.

Pact of the Sundered Horn: *Severing a re'em's horn is the most horrific violation that most re'em can imagine, and it is recognized as such even among those who think the re'em little more than a myth. Yet for those who would make a pact with sinister powers, it is a potent bond and sure to reap great rewards from those dread entities. To adopt this pact, a warlock must sever the horn of a re'em. Re'em warlocks can achieve this by sacrificing their own horns to their patrons, or the horns of other re'em.*

A re'em warlock who chooses this pact and sacrifices their own horn loses their Horn racial feature, and the alicorn feature of their subrace. In return, their teeth elongate and sharpen, dealing 1d6 piercing damage on a hit, or 2d6 if the target's current hit points are less than

its maximum hit points. This bite attack can replace the use of a horn in the re'em Charge racial feature.

All warlocks of this pact deal an additional 1d6 necrotic damage on attacks that hit creatures in total darkness, or creatures who are blinded.

The Elder Unicorn Bloodline origin draws primarily on *Swiftly Tilting Planet* and *The Black Unicorn*, as I go super cosmic with the unicorn story. I'd argue that *more* sorcerous bloodlines should dabble in cosmic themes, but then I was a great fan of 4e's Cosmic sorcerer (awesome theme, never saw it played to judge the implementation). We've seen sorcerers that get to steal from the cleric list; here's one that does the same with druid. At least to me, Keeper of the Eldest Law is probably the most *interesting* feature, as it proposes to invest the player with a kind of authority you don't often see. Its name and theme reference Aslan's quote in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*: "Do not cite the Deep Magic to me, Witch. I was there when it was written."

Keeper of Eldest Law: *Beginning at 14th level, you learn the geas spell. This does not count against your total number of spells known.*

You can call to mind the ancient laws that bind the cosmos, to forgive curses, oaths, and ill-made bargains. As an action, expend a spell slot of any level. If the spell slot is higher level than the spell slot expended to place the curse, geas, oath, or binding agreement, the effect ends. If it is of the same level, lower level, or the spell level is unclear, roll d20. On a roll of 10 or higher, the curse, geas, oath, or binding agreement ends for the target. The person or entity who placed the effect is aware of what you have done and learns your name. You can use this feature once and regain use of it when you finish a long rest.

The Oath of the Greenwood is another case of holding onto class theme while solving for class utility. Unicorns and the purity of paladins fit together precisely, to me, but weapons, armor, and Fighting Style all present problems. Once I had come that far, well, why not finish it out? Of the two new Channel Divinity options, Exaltation of Healing makes me particularly happy, because I like ways for characters who aren't personally casting the spell to contribute something and make it more awesome. It combines just fine with paladin spellcasting, of course, but teamwork mechanics are so much fun.

Exaltation of Healing: *Exaltation of Healing. As a bonus action, you imbue your horn with the power to magnify and spread healing magic. Until the beginning of your next turn, any creature of your choice within 30 feet that casts cure wounds, healing word, lesser restoration, greater restoration, or heal can choose a second target within 30 feet of you to receive the same effect as the original target.*

Silvermane Exemplar

A key part of every *In the Company of* book is the 20-level racial class, to tell that race's core story as strongly as possible. In *most* cases, you're helping a different race "grow into" the conceptual parent race, but I feel like the **unicorn** stat block in the *Monster Manual* can easily represent an average or mature unicorn, so it's less necessary to differentiate them from a PC playing a unicorn that hasn't yet come into the fullness of its strength – but in time comes to surpass it. I should say, that's another thing that is more acceptable in the conceits of 5e than PF.

The center of this class design is the **Purity and Sorrow** feature. Overwhelming emotions are a common element of unicorn presentation; here I can look to *The Last Unicorn* as a source text. I also see it as part of the soul-from-the-dawning-age concept. The dice scaling shows my hand on how this is a riff on Bardic Inspiration and Combat Superiority, but I've dumped the per-short-rest currency format and created a prerequisite action. I see this as a risky move, because 5e combats are short and to the point. Having to spend rounds *not* using your best powers because you haven't done the qualifying thing yet is time you're not fully shining. I *really* wanted to push a playstyle where using one side of your skillset made you even better with the other side.

Purity and Sorrow: Starting at 2nd level, you draw great strength from the spiritual states of sorrow and purification. When you hit a creature with an attack roll, the violence of your strike grants you Sorrow.

When you restore hit points to a friendly creature, cause a friendly creature to gain temporary hit points, or end a condition on a friendly creature, you gain Purity from your easing of pain in the world. You cannot gain Purity if you already have Purity, and you cannot gain Sorrow if you already have Sorrow.

When you restore hit points to a creature or grant it temporary hit points and you have Sorrow, you can choose to lose Sorrow to add 1d6 to the hit points restored or granted. Other features grant additional ways to use Sorrow.

When you roll damage for an attack, you can choose to lose Purity to add 1d6 radiant damage to the damage dealt. Other features grant additional ways to use Purity.

If you do not end them early, Purity and Sorrow fade after 1 minute.

Your Purity and Sorrow die changes when you reach certain levels in this class. The die becomes a d8 at 5th level, a d10 at 10th level, and a d12 at 15th level.



You've *also* got a currency pool to manage, in the form of Inner Light. It didn't feel quite right to me to handle the alicorn's power (in a class that is very much about the alicorn) with spell slots. Something more like ki or sorcery points felt more appropriate, even where you do convert inner light into spellcasting. Also, *because* it's a racial paragon class, I felt it appropriate that this feature magnifies the alicorn features of each subrace into potentially covering whole party roles.

Inner Light: As a silvermane exemplar, you strengthen the inner light that powers alicorns, allowing you to exceed the normal limits of your alicorn's power. This power is represented by inner light points, which allow you to create a variety of magical effects. Regain all expended inner light when you finish a long rest.

As an action, spend 1 inner light point to touch a willing creature with your horn. That creature gains temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.

If you have an alicorn feature that grants spells, you can cast those spells with inner light. A 1st-level spell costs 1 inner light point, and a 2nd-level spell costs 2 inner light points.



As an action, spend any amount of inner light to touch a willing creature with your horn. That creature regains hit points equal to 5 x the amount of inner light spent. This healing has no effect on constructs or undead.

Humanoid Form is another reference to *The Last Unicorn*, especially with its potential for permanent transformation. It's not that I think anyPC will actually undergo permanent transformation as a result of this feature, but I wanted it to be part of the character's outlook and something that could be a story element during play.

Humanoid Form: Starting at 9th level, you can transform yourself into a humanoid of any race. You gain the speed and perception modes of the race you choose, but no other racial features. Your form in each race is unique to you, and you can't replicate another creature's appearance. You retain your own ability scores and personality. You gain proficiency in simple weapons. You lose your re'em racial features, but you can still use all silvermane exemplar features. The Multiattack feature instead becomes Extra Attack, allowing you to make two attacks instead of one when you use the Attack action.

Gear you wear at the time of transformation melts into your new form. Your humanoid form is created with traveler's clothes typical to a culture of your choice. When you return to your re'em form, gear you wear or carry falls to the ground at your feet.

This transformation lasts for 1 hour. At the end of that duration, you can choose to take 1 level of exhaustion to extend the duration to one day. At the end of each further day, you can repeat that choice, extending the duration by another 24 hours. You can't remove levels of exhaustion through rest while you remain in humanoid form. When you reach 6 levels of exhaustion, you do not die. Instead, the transformation becomes permanent, and can only be reversed with divine intervention, a greater restoration spell cast with a 9th-level spell slot, a wish, or a true polymorph.

Swift as Light is a combat-range teleport. I'm not gonna lie, this one is a reference to the 1986 *My Little Pony: The Musical*, starring the immortal Danny DeVito, Rhea Perlman, and Madeline Kahn. I haven't seen it, but Kainenchen describing a unicorn using chain-teleportation to stay out of reach of a creature it was essentially tanking stuck with me.

Swift as Light: Beginning at 13th level, when you move or Dash on your turn, you can spend 1 inner light point to teleport a distance equal to your speed instead. This causes a flare of bright light and can't be used in a stealthy manner.

Glorious Wings, at 17th level, is for Gaudior and every winged unicorn, pegacorn, or whatever your fandom of choice calls a unicorn with wings on. My editor, the mighty Dan Dillon, gave me some good-natured grief about seeing a World of Warcraft reference in flying mounts losing their wings when you get into combat (gain Sorrow). It's an amusing parallel, but I had actually just thought it appropriate that Sorrow would bind a unicorn to earth.

Glorious Wings: Beginning at 17th level, you can spend 4 inner light points to sprout mighty, feathered wings from your back. You gain a flight speed of 40 feet. These wings last for 8 hours or until you gain Sorrow. You can carry up to two Small or Medium riders in flight, but you cannot fly while heavily encumbered. You can manifest these wings while wearing barding or a saddle.

(I'm not covering every feature, because there's not even a micro-anecdote behind every feature.)

Noble Orders (Silvermane Exemplar Subclasses)

Every part of the Noble Orders is, of course, new in the 5e version, since PF doesn't have a direct parallel. As with any subclass design, I was looking

for four different directions to push their playstyle, without working *against* their core functions.

Royals pick up ranged effectiveness and improved support-role spellcasting. Sun-Crowned, at 18th level, is your big showstopper, blinding your targets and those who attack you.

Sun-Crowned: Starting at 18th level, you can conjure a crown as radiant as the sun itself as an action. The radiant crown lasts for 1 minute or until you dismiss it as a bonus action. While it remains:

- You shed bright light in a 120-foot radius.
- You gain resistance to cold, fire, radiant, and necrotic damage.
- Creatures you hit with your horn or a fire bolt roll a Charisma saving throw (DC 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus). On a failed save, they are blinded for 1 minute. At the end of each of their turns, they can make a new saving throw, ending the blinded condition on a success.
- As a reaction when you are hit with an attack by a creature within 10 feet of you, you can force them to roll a Charisma saving throw, becoming blinded until the beginning of their next turn on a failed save.

Courtiers are subtle and capable of treachery, representing the more *fey* side of unicorns in myth. Noble, pure, radiant... yes, silvermane exemplars can be those things. They can also use their overwhelming majesty to undermine their foes at every turn. Once you're making unicorns into protagonists rather than MacGuffins or supporting cast, they're *people*, not myth-made-flesh; they have motives, agency, and inventiveness.

Treacherous Attack: Starting at 11th level, when you end a sanctuary spell by making an attack, you deal an additional 3d6 damage if the attack hits. You also deal this damage on attacks you make while you are invisible, up to once per turn. If you have Purity, you can end it to add your Purity and Sorrow die to this damage.

Knights draw on some of what I was doing with the Oath of the Greenwood – two different ways to be a **warrior** unicorn probably should share some elements. This should be quite capable as a party's defender, thanks to Stalwart Guardian. It also gets some warlord-like movement-granting options.

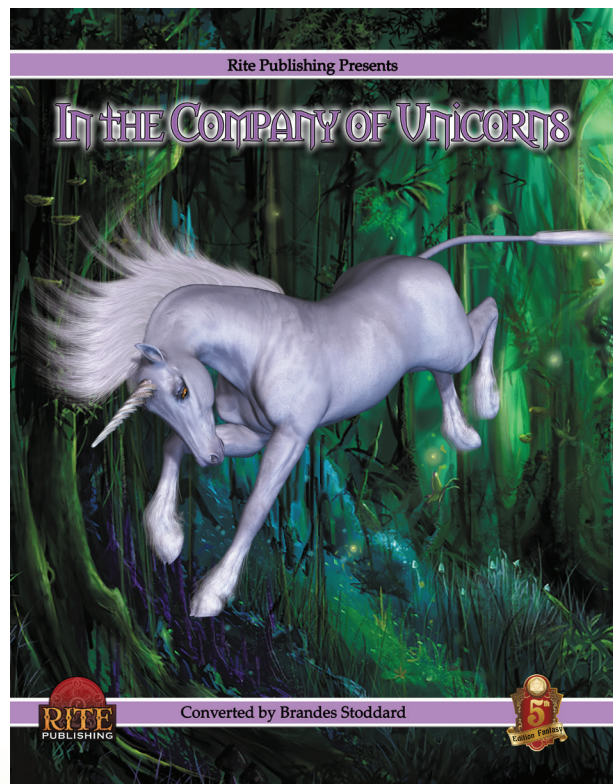
Stalwart Guardian: Starting at 3rd level, you can end Purity as a reaction to apply your Purity and Sorrow die as a penalty to an attack roll that an enemy makes against a creature other than you within 5 feet of you. Declare this before the attack roll. If the attack still hits, you can choose to halve the damage to the target creature; if you do, you also suffer damage equal to half the damage dealt.

Finally, the Knaves: the true team players of the unicorn world. Knave's Horn is yet another *The Last Unicorn* reference. The rest of the subclass features are just about the fiction around the pure of heart riding unicorns into battle. Paladins can summon and dismiss their steeds? Well, Bond of the True Heart sort of shows that from the mount's point of view.

Knave's Horn: At 1st level when you choose this Noble Order, you can look like a normal (if high-quality) horse by causing anyone who does not know you by name to simply fail to see your horn, as a magical illusion effect. You can choose to reveal your horn at any time. You automatically reveal your horn if you attack with it, gain Purity or Sorrow, or spend inner light points. Once revealed, you can conceal your horn again after 1 minute. You gain advantage on Charisma (Deception) checks that involve your horn, and you can make such checks without speaking.

If this is the first time you've heard of *In the Company of Unicorns*, I hope you'll check it out. If you've been holding off on buying because you're not sure you're interested in playing a unicorn, I can only hope to change your mind a little. I want you to see that I'm offering the clear, engaging gameplay that you love in 5e, supported by strong thematic ties.

You can buy my recent work, [In the Company of Unicorns](#), online today.





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Reviews



In the Company of Fiends (revised edition)

Publisher: Rite Publishing

Reviewer: Endzeitgeist

Stars: 4.5 of 5

The revised edition of “In the Company of Fiends” clocks in at 45 pages, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1 page SRD, 1 page back cover, leaving us

with 41 pages of content, so let’s take a look!

This review was moved up in my reviewing queue as a prioritized review at the request of my patrons.

Now, as always in the series, we begin this supplement with an introduction to the race at hand, written from an in-character perspective. This time around, the race would be the nephilim, and the arguments fielded in favor are twisted, delightful and compelling, worthy of the logical leaps of e.g. Paradise Lost, as the narrator manages to sell, rather compellingly, that “Hell loves you unconditionally”, that “Do what thou wilt” as the whole of the law might well make for a rather compelling maxim to live by. The prose here is rather fantastic, as it is steeped in the unreliable prejudices of the hellish narrator – suffice to say, he has no good things to say about daemons, demons and the like. Fun here: Sidebars throughout the pdf provide somewhat alternate perspectives.

Now, rules-wise, the nephilim race gets +2 Constitution and Charisma, -2 Wisdom, is Medium and gets a base speed of 30 ft. Nephilim are humanoids with the evil subtype as well as a selected humanoid subtype, but are affected by effects that specifically target evil outsiders. As a minor complaint: What if an effect for example targets a nephilim with the elf subtype, granting a buff to the elf, but a debuff to evil outsiders? Which takes precedence? That should be clarified. Nephilim may be raised and returned from the dead as normal, suffering none of the usual outsider restrictions. Nephilim get darkvision 60 ft. and these beings, granted a mortal vessel, are chosen ones of the lower planes of sorts: 1/day, they may target an evil outsider of their subtype with less or equal HD and use *command* on them, suing character level as CL. If the target has less or equal to half the nephilim’s HD, the effect is *charm monster* with character level rounds duration instead. If the subtype matches the nephilim’s fiendish ancestry, the SP ignores SR and has a 1-hour duration. Save DC is Charisma-based.

What’s fiendish ancestry? It’s a racial trait wherein you choose one of 8 different fiendish subtypes, ranging from asura to qliploth, granting an alignment-based subtype as well as passive bonuses to saves versus specific hindrances like poison, disease, etc. as well as minor skill boosts. Bonus types are correctly codified here. The fiendish ancestry also determines the fiendish resistance, generally to two energy types, with some of the ancestries allowing for limited choice of one of them: Devils get resistance 5 fire and may choose from either acid or cold as the second energy type, for example. Each nephilim has a dark master – an at least Balor-level potent being that has a *lesser geas* with an open-ended request on the nephilim. 8th HD frees from this obligation’s negative effects, btw. Nephilims are inhuman, and people conversing with them get a Sense Motive check to determine that something is afoul. Nephilim treat both material plane and that corresponding with their ancestry as the home plane, and may thus not be banished. Now, alternate racial trait-wise, we have the option to be Small, SUs and skills to haggle with souls (including the presence of soul gems, etc.), replacing fiendish ancestry with sadism, which here translates to +1 to CL and saves vs. fear and pain effects, as well as +1 morale bonus to attacks versus those affected by them. Improved lying instead of fiendish resistance, being a better oracle, being bloodthirsty – some sinister options here. Cool, btw.: The latter comes with synergy with the dread power class feature – more on that later. Limited poaching of humanoid traits in steps is also a complex rules-operation done right here. Particularly cool: The pdf provides concise rules for becoming a nephilim. The section also provides favored class options for arcanist, barbarian, bloodrager, brawler, cavalier, cleric, fighter, dread (DSP’s psionic class), inquisitor, magus, mesmerist, occultist, paladin, rogue, sorcerer, summoner, warpriest, witch and wizard.

Now, the pdf contains a total of 12 racial feats for the Nephilim: Beyond the “Extra class feature” type, we have a feat that gets rid of the Inhuman drawback, courtesy of having broken the humanoid soul trapped within. There’s a multiclass-enabler feat; a high level Style feat that makes unarmed/natural attacks adamantite or improves them further, even taking special DRs into account. There is a feat to enhance your body with grafts, though, being a feat, it provides numerical bonuses – personally, I prefer the subject to be represented with an array of actual grafts. There is a metamagic feat, Hellfire Spell, which labors under the misconception of there being such a thing as unholy damage – which there is not. *SIGH* AoE-demoralize as a full-round action, with a hex-caveat to prevent abuse, having a

Symbiosis with the mortal soul within...some nice ones here. We also have a feat for bonuses versus an outsider type and a hellish one that allows you to twist language-dependent effects with your Linguistics. Really liked that one! High level *wish-twisting* and seeing a target's sin is nice. Speaking of which: The pdf provides some really cool food for thought regarding that concept, quoting e.g. Gandhi. This little sidebar on sin inspired me more than many whole books on fiends.

Now, the heart and soul (haha!) of this pdf would be the fiendish exemplar paragon class, who must have an alignment corresponding to the fiendish ancestry, gets d10 HD, 6 + Int skills per level, proficiency in simple weapons, and +1 martial/exotic weapon if she does not gain a natural weapon. You see, 1st level nets either a natural weapon, or a proficiency or Improved Unarmed Strike. Natural weapons are correctly codified and weapons chosen can either inflict normal damage or consult a scaling table, which includes entries for Small and Large exemplars. The class gets full BAB-progression as well as good Fort- and Ref-saves and ½ AC-progression. If this chassis seems too powerful for your preferred playstyle, fret not, for the book actually provides a second chassis, which only nets d8 HD, 4 + Int skills per level, ¾ BAB-progression and comes with a drawback that prevents returning to life. Kudos for going the extra mile to account for table variance here!

Now, the fiendish ancestry chosen as part of the racial traits also determines further bonuses regarding the paragon class – the fiendish ancestry class feature builds on this, with 4th level and every 6 levels thereafter expanding the benefits of resistances, saving throw bonuses and, as soon as it's granted, determining the DR. Fiendish ancestry also comes into play at 10th level, where it determines the unique aura granted.

Fiendish exemplars also begin play with a so-called dread pool, which contains class level + Charisma modifier points. The pool replenishes once per day after a 1-hour supplication period. Points can be expended as a swift action to grant bonuses to social skills, conceal alignment, duplicate *detect desires* (nor properly italicized, but comes with a hex-caveat to prevent spamming). Minor complaint here: The pool interacts with the talents of the class, the so-called dread powers, but the latter reference to “1 point of dread power”, a term not established in the pool's class feature-text. Dread pool should contain “dread points” or “dread power points”, dread powers should probably be called dread talents or the like to set them apart. While this terminology snafu is minor and does

not compromise the integrity of the rules per se, it can be somewhat confusing at first and is uncommon to see for both Rite Publishing and the author.

Anyways, the fiendish exemplar begins play with one dread power and gains an additional one at 3rd level and every 2 levels thereafter. Some of these require specific ancestries and others don't – as a whole, these represent the active abilities of the class, though a few passive ones can be found as well – even these, however, do allow for some way of spending dread power points. Saves, if relevant, are governed by Charisma. This massive list contains summoning tricks, telepathy, immediate action dispels, charging weapons with negative energy, adding negative levels to strikes, ruin bodies of water, maddening touches, blasts of hellfire (again, incorrect damage types), Empower Spell-Like Ability evil SPs...the section, as a whole, is pretty neat, with some unique effects added: E.g. on a natural 20 on a CL-check with aforementioned *dispel*, the target must save or be unable to cast divine spells for a round! Cool, right?

Anyways, at 2nd level, and then again at 4th and every two levels thereafter, the class receives a ruinous gift – basically, the massive talent array of passive abilities that the class offers. Some of these turn the exemplar progressively more inhuman and make concealing them harder...and the class feature also notes the skill check to determine the nature of the nephilim. Depending on your fiendish ancestry, you may select some of them sooner: Demodands can become adhesive at 6th level, for example, while others must wait for 10th level. Now, it should be noted that, while I called these “passive”, that is not entirely true – there are a tone of ruinous gifts that allow for additional effects to be added via the expenditure of dread power (points). Faster sprinting, Wisdom damage, resistance boosts, inflicting starvation on targets hit, getting a monstrous girth, spores, exuding shrapnel...there are a ton of customization options here. The capstone provides at-will *commune* and archfiend apotheosis, which only allows the target to be slain in one specific plane.

The pdf also contains a variety of different archetypes: The antumbra is a paladin shatters the preconceptions of evil nephilim, representing redeemed being, who subsequently replaces mercies with progressively better ways to attempt to redeem others. The corruptor mesmerist gains fiendish ancestry at the cost of one less spell per day, and touch treatment is replaced with scaling effects via touch, usable 3 + Cha-mod times per day, interacting with implanted tricks, if any. These effects include, as the archetype name implies, *suggestions*, etc. The

painfeaster bloodrager receives a variant bloodrage, the so-called sadistic frenzy, which is governed by Charisma. While in this frenzy, the character can execute painful strikes, which behave as a variant sneak that causes non-lethal damage and which may target creatures subject to a fear-based condition or those sickened/nauseated. These specialized strikes only scale when the better bloodrages would be gained, though there is an interesting choice, as the character can enhance their potency by choosing to take some limited lethal damage himself. These painful strikes, however, do grant stacking temporary hitpoints and the ability, impressively, gets the interaction of the complex rules-chassis correct. The painfeaster may choose ruinous gifts instead of bloodline powers and is locked into a fitting bloodline. Higher levels allow for low level spells added upon entering frenzy and adding sickened/nauseated on successful critical hits.

The rules-wise most impressive achievement of this chapter, though, would be the Left Path archetype, which can be applied pretty much universally. The archetype nets a dread pool and allows for the selection of dread powers and ruinous gifts – but comes at a price: Either the character is willing or unwilling – in either way, the archetype pays for the gained power with ever more decreasing autonomy and deeper shackles to the masters of the lower planes. I really enjoyed the storytelling potential here. This is pretty much my favorite rules-component herein.

The final chapter is devoted to magic items, 9 + 1, to be precise. *Trophy of the Damned* requires a potent sacrifice, but grants access to a dread power once you have quenched its thirst. *Fallen reliquaries* can store dread power points for passive benefits, but they also act as a battery of sorts, which is interesting. *Hellfire brand*, bingo, labors under the misconception of unholy damage existing. *Mother's milk* temporarily nets eidolon evolutions, but at a hefty ability score drain cost once its duration elapses. There is a piercing that must be worn prominently, but which can make pain instead translate to benefits and redistribute these effects via piercing/slashing weapons. There is a magic whip. A ring to twist language, a vest of *misdirection* made from saint's bones, and *soul's essence*, an intoxicant for evil outsiders. The final item would be the legacy item *lance of the end times*, which sports 8 progression levels and requires that you defeat progressively more potent good outsiders to unlock its superb powers. Beyond the more common special weapon abilities added, the lance also allows for 60 ft.-line-attacks at higher levels, coup de grace at range and call forth progressively more potent fiends.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are pretty good, but not as pitch-perfect as usual for Rite Publishing – there are a couple more typo-level glitches here and a few minor terminology snafus. Layout adheres to the crisp, new full-color two-column standard and the pdf sports quite a few really nice full-color artworks. The pdf comes fully bookmarked for your convenience, though e.g. archetypes don't get their individual bookmark.

Okay, I'll be frank: Theme-wise, this resonates with me on several levels. For one, *Paradise Lost's* sentiment "better to reign in hell" always resounded with me; I do not have a shred of faith in me and I'm very, very weary of the Judeo-Christian good/evil-dichotomy that suffuses our cultures and roleplaying games. All my games gravitate towards a more shades of grey mentality. As such, alignment tends to be more fluid in my games, and strange though it may sound, the suggestion of the diversification of the sin-concept is thoroughly compelling to me. Similarly, I found myself gleefully pouring through the logical leaps that the in-character prose provided. The alternate view-points and snippets provided in the sidebars similarly inspired me: Hearing a qlippoth-possessed nephilim claim that he can control the entity before being set ablaze, warning of its freedom being MUCH worse, for example, set the wheels in my mind in motion. Flavor-wise, this ranks as one of the best entries in the whole series.

The concept of the nephilim is inspiring and the execution is similarly performed on a really high and precise level. The scaled version as an alternative was really appreciated as well, allowing even grittier games to take part in the experience presented within. And yet, I found myself slightly less excited than I should have by the mechanics. It took me a while to put my finger on it, but it's not the few and rather minor hiccups – they universally can be considered to be minor and can be neglected. It's the scope. The very notion of the nephilim and what we associated with the various outsiders covers a TON of ground. Oddly and paradoxically, more so than even the aberrations, because the nephilim, as presented, are strongly charged with ideologies. As such, there are so many things that we expect from them, so many areas and tricks, that ultimately, this felt somewhat like the original, non-expanded "In the Company of Dragons" – it does a formidable job at depicting the notion of a playable fiend, but it cannot, by sheer scope, cover all the bases. This may be the one shortcoming of the pdf, for the concept presented by the race is

genius in the hands of a good roleplayer. The notion of possession, of the diverse means of codifying the relationship between possessor and possessee, are interesting and narrative gold; so is the universal left hand archetype. On the other hand, mesmerist, items, the redeemer-pala...while well-executed, they feel slightly less mind-blowing than usual for the series.

Now, it is important to note that I am complaining at a very high level here – this **is** a very good book that contains a lot of really cool options. This is definitely worth owning and it can inspire whole campaigns. It may not be perfect, but my final verdict will still clock in at 4.5 stars, rounded up due to in dubio pro reo.

You can get this extremely flavorful book [here on OBS!](#)

Endzeitgeist out.

Everyman Minis: Family Options



Everyman Minis: Family Options

Publisher: Everyman Games

Reviewer: Endzeitgeist

Stars: 5 of 5

This installment of the Everyman Minis-series clocks in at 6 pages, 1 page front cover, 1 page editorial, 1.5 pages of SRD, leaving us

with 2.5 pages of content, so let's take a look!

This pdf focuses on an underutilized component of character development – families should matter. All too often, there are no tangible benefits apart from kidnapping or tragic deaths for a character to have an extensive family. This is a huge component of untapped potential. There is no AP that lets the players play a family-chronicle/enterprise, and we have very few options that interact with familial ties, apart from hereditary curses. This pdf seeks to somewhat change that. On the first page, we get a new spell that takes ACG and OA-classes into account, and this single spell is a game changer. It is a level 3/4 spell that is called *blood bond*, which may only be cast upon blood relatives and lets you target such a relative with personal spells. This makes e.g. brothers, where one is a spellcaster, the other a rogue or fighter, suddenly much more potent. It is a limited resource, but I love it to bits.

The pdf also provides two new feats: Bound by Blood builds on Psychic Sensitivity or the ability to cast psychic spells. You can choose up to your highest mental ability score allies, using the psychic magic universal monster rule, to cast *message*, *mindlink*, *sending* and *status*, with PE-values noted. You have 5 + character level PE. If an ally has the teamwork feat, you

reduce PE costs to cast the spell for that ally, and on a new level, you can swap a character. This is narrative gold and provides easy access to basic psychic tricks. Love it. Synchronized Assault is a combat teamwork feat, which nets you a circumstance bonus equal to the number of allies within 30 ft. that also possesses the feat when you readied an attack that is triggered. If the allies with the feat also have readied an attack, they may immediately trigger the readied actions after your attack is resolved. Now, I think that the bonus should have a level-based cap instead of just number of allies, but yeah, other than that, I like it.

The pdf also features 4 precisely codified traits, and these deserve special mention, as they are meaningful regarding their benefits, and also have a teamwork component: We get a bonus to saves versus magical effects that works better if an ally also activates it. We get better aid another, a special, jumbled childhood language that is impossible to magically decipher (AMAZING!) and the option to fortify allies affected by mind-affecting effects via your faith. Excellent traits.

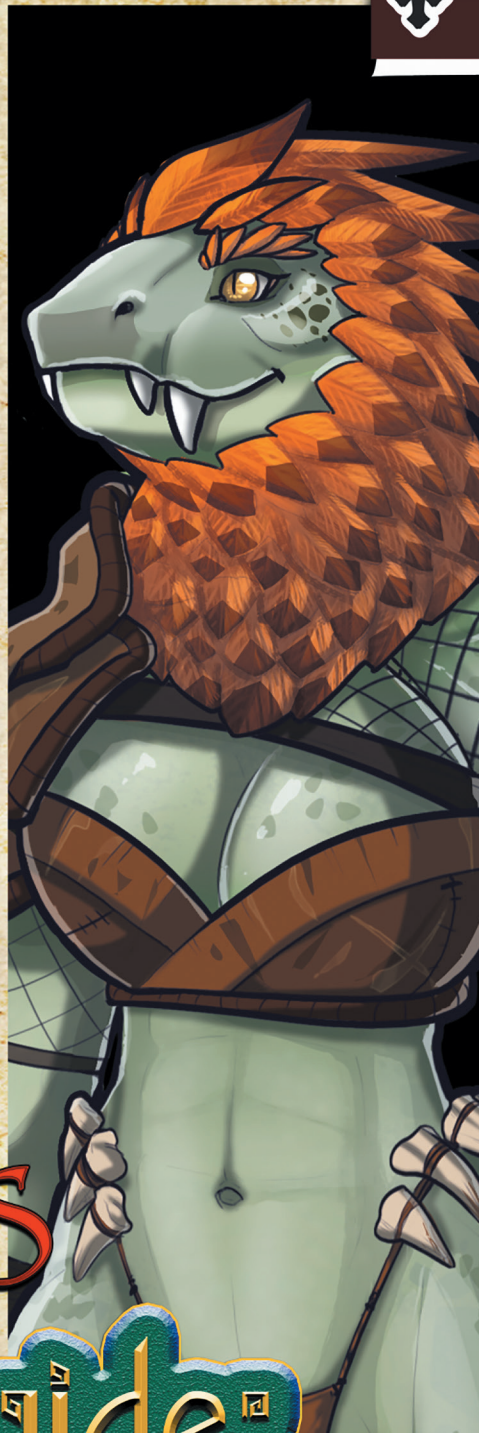
The pdf also contains two magic items: The *clock of whereabouts* is a helicopter parent's (or mastermind's) wish come true: 12 hands can be attached, and when an individual puts the name on a hand, the clock will spin to show the preset occupation (like "At work", "late", "lost", etc.) of the character. The second item is the *adoption ring*: Parents and child to be adopted prick their fingers, having a drop of blood congeal into a gemstone. The adopted kid may then use the change shape universal monster ability to assume the shape of the parents' race. The benefits of this Disguise are properly codified, though there is a spell-reference not italicized. Interesting: Incompatible parents of different races and shapechanging parents are noted as well. I love this item and all the storytelling potential it has.

Conclusion:

Editing and formatting are very good on a formal and rules-language level, with only a missed italicization as a complaint here. Layout adheres to the 2-column b/w-standard and the artwork is nice. The pdf has no bookmarks, but needs none at this length.

Matt Morris' family options are genuinely amazing. The new spell is amazing and both feats are interesting and complex. The traits matter beyond numerical bonuses and offer player-agenda, and the magic items are interesting. This is a great pdf, and my only regret here is that it could have been longer. The topic, as mentioned, is one that hasn't been addressed extensively. Anyways, this is a great little pdf, easily worth 5 stars + seal of approval.

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ON A ROLL

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BEHOLD! THE MIGHTY D100!!!!



ooooooooooooooooooooHHHH...

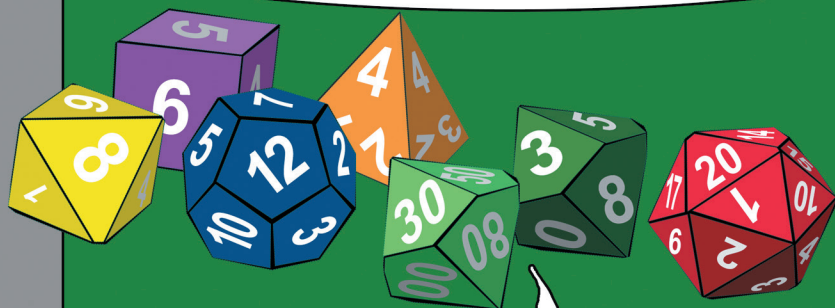
WOW! I GUESS YOU TWO AREN'T GOING TO GET MUCH WORK NOW, HUH?

WE'RE NOT WORRIED.

REALLY? DON'T YOU THINK YOUR PLAYER WILL PREFER ONE DIE FOR ALL PERCENTILE ROLLS?



IIII CAAAAN'T STOOOOP!!!



NOPE

**Prepared by Gamers for Adventurers
of Discerning Tastes**

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