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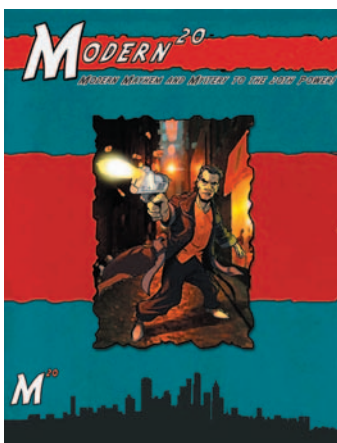
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WHISPERS IN THE DARK²⁰

BY CHARLES RICE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to “Whispers in the Dark”, the first campaign supplement for *Supers*²⁰! In this street-level campaign model, the PCs are gifted with magical abilities, recruited and trained by a mysterious sorcerer to combat the cult of an elder god that is spreading its worship throughout the world like a cancer.

While the people of their home city go about their daily lives, a war for the very safety of their dimension is being waged in secret, from the glittering skyscrapers high above to the dank sewers beneath their feet.

The wars between the servants of light and the servants of the elder gods have been waged for millennia and are the source of countless “war in heaven” myths, including those found in Babylonian, Christian, Greek and Norse religions.

THE ELDER GODS

There are numerous cults that serve as the primary enemies of the Whispers in the Dark campaign. Most of these worship ancient fiends that possess the power to enslave or even destroy the Earth were they able to walk free. Since they cannot, they must work through mortal minions who seek to advance their power and ultimately, free them from their mystical prisons.



Each cult is led by a speaker, who (it is believed) can communicate directly with the elder god worshipped by the cult and acts as the voice of that cult in the mortal realm.

Listed below are a few of the elder gods, their goals and the location of the cults who worship them. Through time, the elder gods have been known by many names and a few of these are listed below. This list is by no means exhaustive. The elder gods are difficult for mortals to understand. Perhaps the wide array of names used to describe them is a result of this confusion or perhaps different cults are actually worshipping different aspects of the same gods. The sacrifices and traditions of the god as told by different cults can vary wildly. In short, everything listed below might or might not apply to an individual cult encountered by the players.

BAAL/BAALAH

This elder god is sometimes seen as male and sometimes as female and has been worshipped under hundreds of names through time. A few of the names this god has been worshipped as include: Cronus, Dagon, El, Moloch and Saturn. This elder god is also known as Baal Zebub or Beelzebub, the Lord of Flies. Baal demands the sacrifice of children, either by fire or burial in the earth.

KHTHON, QUEEN OF SUBTERRANEA

This elder goddess has been called by the names Tiamat and Hecate, among many others. Her worship is either carried out underground or under the full moon.

JOTUN, LORD OF THE GIANTS

This elder god is always pictured as an enormous creature, sometimes with a single eye (such as a Cyclops) but other times as a giant or troll-like creature. His worshippers see him as the leader of an older, superior race of being and hope to see the return of his kind to dominance over the world. This creature is known to lust for human females and his worshippers believe his offspring are the giants found in legends from around the world, from Europe to the Norse giants to those found in biblical texts.

MEPHISTOPHELES, LORD OF WAR AND DESTRUCTION

This elder god is most often depicted as a winged man. Sometimes this man is extremely beautiful and angelic and other times he is seen as a demonic figure, with red skin and cloven hooves. Other times his worshippers see him as hideously disfigured, as if burned by the fires of hell. He is closely associated with Lucifer from Christian theology and his most powerful servants are often depicted as the Four Horsemen.

This cult is also believed by many to have been worshipped in Ancient Greece and Rome, where this figure was known as Ares and Mars respectively.

The followers of this elder god seek to start wars or participate in wars that are already taking place, the bigger the war the better. In cases where a war is already taking place, the worshippers of this deity will attempt to make that war more savage and will try to undermine any attempts at a peaceful resolution. They see the end of the world as one where man turns on man in an orgy of violence that they believe will usher their lord into this world, where he will take his place as the ultimate general, leading his followers to a victory of bloody conquest over the rest of the world.

WHISPERS IN THE DARK

Starting Level: 5

Maximum Power Level: 5

Required Disadvantages: Enemy: the cult (DSR 2+)

Required Power Limitations: All powers must have the following limitations: Difficult- using the Magic skill rather than the Power Control skill (PL 2+), Fatiguing. Powers receive no PL bonus for these minimum limitations, only additional limitations increase the power level.

Note that for purposes of the Magic power, the DC modifier (+5 for the first use, +10 for the second, +15 for the third) adds to the base DC granted by this limitation, not the base DC listed under that power.

All powers in the Whispers campaign are magical in nature and magic is draining and doesn't always work. This requirement also applies to NPC cultists, but not to monsters.

Disallowed powers: PCs cannot purchase any superhuman ability score powers. The Gadgetry power is also off limits to PCs in this campaign. Any power with a permanent duration is also reduced to a duration of 1 round times your power level. For example, Mind Shield or Armor could be taken but would require a skill check and would last 1 round time your power level.

In short, powers in the Whispers campaign should be as "spell like" as possible.

NEW BACKGROUNDS

CULTIST

You were raised in the cult of an elder god.

Skills (three of the following): Academics, Influence, Magic, Medicine, Perception and Streetwise

Base Wealth: 4

MONASTIC

You were raised in a remote monastery and had little contact with the outside world.

Skills (three of the following): Athletics, Magic, Outdoorsman, Perception, Unarmed and Weapons

Base Wealth: 4

NEW OCCUPATIONS

SORCERER

You are a practitioner of magic.

Professional Skills: Academics, Magic and Perception

Improved Feats: *Great Fortitude:* +4 Fortitude saves for resisting fatigue from casting spells, *Mind over Body:* your Wisdom modifier if considered +2 higher for purposes of this feat, *Psychic Strike:* your Wisdom modifier if considered +2 higher for purposes of this feat, *Self-Help:* +2 Wisdom

SWORDSMAN

You fight monsters the old-fashioned way.

Professional Skills: Athletics, Leadership and Weapons

Improved Feats: *Armed Defense:* your Weapons skill is considered +4 higher for purposes of this skill, *Attack Focus (sword):* +2 to attack rolls, *Cleave:* +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls on free attacks granted this feat, *Quick Draw:* +2 Initiative when armed with a sword

NEW POWERS

SUMMON

You can call allies out of thin air.

Duration: 1 round times your power level

Range: 20 ft. times your power level

Effect: You gain RP for followers only equal to twice your power level for the duration of this power. These followers appear out of thin air at a location of your choosing within the range of this power.

Stunts

The Leader: You gain a bonus to Leadership skill checks equal to one-half your power level when dealing with creatures you summoned.

Power-specific limitations

Swarm (PL +2): You can only summon groups of weaker monsters as opposed to a single, big creature. You can spend no more than 6 RP on a follower's level. Any additional RP must be spent to increase the number of followers.

Special

Followers summoned from this power can have powers (most followers must be normals) but there are some limitations on how these characters are designed:

Followers summoned with this power always use the Elite Array (15, 14, 13, 12, 10 and 8) for their ability scores, regardless of the method used for generating PCs in the campaign.

Followers summoned with this power pick a set number of skills, rather than spending skill points. The skills chosen have ranks equal to the follower's level +3. The number of skills is 4 for the Powerhouses, Speedfreaks and Tanks, 6 for the Empaths and Stars and 8 for Brainiacs.

A follower's maximum power level is equal to one-half its character level or the maximum power level of the campaign whichever is lower.

CULTISTS AND SERVITOR FIENDS

These creatures are the pawns and servants of the elder gods in their attempts to free themselves from the prisons that have bound them for millennia, since the Titan War.

Black Apprentice (Empath 1): HD 1d8+1; HP 9; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 11, flatfooted 10 (+1 Dex, +0 Class); BAB +0; Atk +1 melee (1d4+0, knife), or +1 ranged (1d4+0, taser), or +1 ranged (4d4+0 NL, psychic blast); SQ Resolute; AL Elder god Cult; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +4, Rec +5; Rep +0; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Background: Cultist

Occupation: Sorcerer: Perks 2 (Professional Salary, Urban Stealth)

Hobby: Weapons

Skills: Academics (mythology) 4 (+4), Influence 4 (+6), Magic 4 (+6), Medicine 4 (+6), Perception 4 (+6), Power Control 4 (+5), Streetwise 4 (+6), Unarmed 4 (+3), Vehicles 4 (+5), Weapons 4 (+3)

Feats: Mind Over Body, Power Level x2, Psychic Blast "Sleep spell" (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed; PL +2 non-lethal only)

Access/Contacts/Followers: None

Wealth: 12

Possessions: Knife, Taser

Character Disadvantages: Obsession: serve elder god (DSR 5)

Black Sorcerer (Empath 5): HD 5d8+10; HP 35; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14, flatfooted 13 (+1 Dex, +3 Class); BAB +3; Atk +4 melee (1d4+0, knife), or +4 ranged (1d4+0, taser), or +7 ranged (5d4+0 NL, psychic blast); SQ Resolute; AL Elder god Cult; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +6, Rec +7; Rep +2; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Background: Cultist

Occupation: Sorcerer: Perks 2 (Professional Salary, Urban Stealth)

Hobby: Weapons

Skills: Academics (mythology) 4 (+4), Influence 4 (+6), Magic 8 (+15), Medicine 8 (+10), Perception 8 (+10), Power Control 8 (+10), Streetwise 8 (+10), Unarmed 4 (+3), Vehicles 8 (+9), Weapons 4 (+3)

Feats: Guru (Magic), Magic (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 29 Magic skill check for the first use, 34 for the second use, 39 for the third use; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed), Mind Over Body, Power Level x3, Psychic Blast “Sleep spell” (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed; PL +2 non-lethal only), Psychic Strike

Access/Contacts/Followers: Follower (1 Black Apprentice)

Wealth: 16

Possessions: Knife, Taser

Character Disadvantages: Obsession: serve elder god (DSR 5)

Black Magician (Empath 8): HD 8d8+16; HP 56; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 20, flatfooted 16 (+1 Dex, +3 Wis, +6 Class); BAB +6; Atk +7 melee (1d4+0, knife), or +7 ranged (1d4+0, taser), or +11 ranged (6d4+0 NL, psychic blast); SQ Resolute; AL Elder god Cult; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +9, Rec +9; Rep +4; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Background: Cultist

Occupation: Sorcerer: Perks 2 (Professional Salary, Urban Stealth)

Hobby: Weapons

Skills: Academics (mythology) 4 (+4), Influence 4 (+6), Magic 11 (+21), Medicine 11 (+14), Perception 11 (+14), Power Control 11 (+13), Streetwise 11 (+14), Unarmed 4 (+3), Vehicles 11 (+12), Weapons 4 (+3)

Feats: Guru (Magic), Magic (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 29 Magic skill check for the first use, 34 for the second use, 39 for the third use; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed), Mind Over Body, Poise, Power Level x4, Psychic Blast “Sleep spell” (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save

is failed; PL +2 non-lethal only), Psychic Strike, Summon (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed; PL +2 Swarm)

Access/Contacts/Followers: Follower (2 Black Apprentices)

Wealth: 17

Possessions: Knife, Taser

Character Disadvantages: Obsession: serve elder god (DSR 5)

Voice of Mephistopheles (Empath 12): HD

12d8+24; HP 84; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 24, flatfooted 19 (+1 Dex, +4 Wis, +9 Class); BAB +9; Atk +10 melee (1d4+0, knife), or +10 ranged (1d4+0, taser), or +13 ranged (6d4+0 NL, psychic blast); SQ Resolute; AL Elder god Cult; SV Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +12, Rec +12; Rep +11; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Background: Cultist

Occupation: Sorcerer: Perks 2 (Professional Reputation, Professional Salary, Urban Stealth)

Hobby: Weapons

Skills: Academics (mythology) 4 (+4), Influence 4 (+6), Magic 15 (+31), Medicine 15 (+19), Perception 15 (+19), Power Control 15 (+17), Streetwise 15 (+19), Unarmed 4 (+3), Vehicles 15 (+16), Weapons 4 (+3)

Feats: Career Advancement, Guru (Magic), Magic (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 29 Magic skill check for the first use, 34 for the second use, 39 for the third use; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed), Mind Over Body, Mind Shield (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed; PL +2 non-lethal only), Poise, Power Level x4, Psychic Blast “Sleep spell” (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude

save is failed; PL +2 non-lethal only), Psychic Strike, Self-Help: +2 Wis, Summon (PL +0 Difficult- requires DC 24 Magic skill check; PL +0 causes fatigue if DC 20 Fortitude save is failed; PL +2 Swarm)

Access/Contacts/Followers: Restricted Access, Follower (1 Black Sorcerer), also typically summons 4 hellhounds (see below) when attacked

Wealth: 21

Possessions: Knife, Taser

Character Disadvantages: Obsession: serve elder god (DSR 5)

Hellhound (Powerhouse 3): HD 3d10+6; HP 24; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, flatfooted 12 (+1 Dex, +2 Class); BAB +3; Atk +7 melee (1d6+6, claws); SQ Melee Master; AL Master; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2, Rec +4; Rep +1; Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Background: None

Occupation: None

Hobby: None

Skills: Athletics 6 (+10), Outdoorsman 6 (+8), Unarmed 6 (+10)

Feats: Claws, Power Level x3, Superhuman Strength

Access/Contacts/Followers: None (typically summoned)

Wealth: None

Possessions: None

Character Disadvantages: Disability: Cannot speak or use items (DSR 5)

Description: These creatures are no longer native to our dimension but are often summoned by cultists of the elder gods as servants and killers. The cult of Baal is especially fond of summoning these creatures and will often instruct them to snatch children for their grisly rituals.

Ogre (Powerhouse 5): HD 5d10+10; HP 40; Init -1; Spd 35 ft; Defense 12, flatfooted 12 (-1 Dex, +3 Class); BAB +5; Atk +11 melee (1d6+9, club), or +4 ranged (1d8+5, spear); SQ Melee Master, 1 DR physical; AL Master; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +2, Rec +5; Rep +2; Str 20, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Background: None

Occupation: None

Hobby: None

Skills: Athletics 8 (+13), Outdoorsman 8 (+9), Unarmed 8 (+13), Weapons 8 (+13)

Feats: Attack Focus (club), Attack Specialization (club), Growth, Permanent (Growth), Power Level x4

Access/Contacts/Followers: None (typically summoned)

Wealth: None

Possessions: club, 2 spears

Character Disadvantages: None

Description: These enormous creatures were once frighteningly common in our dimension and are distantly related to the giant-kind. The cult of Jotun is particularly fond of summoning these creatures to enact brutal vengeance on their opponents and rivals.

ELDER GODS

Should the elder gods actually free themselves, its time to bring out the big guns for some epic super-powered combat. Of course, the heroes of such an adventure could be legendary gods and heroes themselves, returned from the ages to defeat the titans one last time, such as Aeneas, Hercules, Jason and Odysseus.

Presented below is a generic elder god, done in the same fashion as the generic NPCs in the *Supers*²⁰ core rules, with some feats and skills unspent. This allows the game master to modify the elder god to represent the specific elder god being faced by his players.

Elder God (Powerhouse 15/Star 15): HD 15d10+180 plus 15d8+180; HP 555; Init +0; Spd 40 ft; Defense 32, flatfooted 32 (+0 Dex, +22 Class); BAB +26; Atk +38 melee (2d8+32, claws), or +26 ranged (by weapon or power); SQ Melee Master, 20 DR physical, 20 DR energy, 40 DR psychic; AL none; SV Fort +26, Ref +12, Will +15, Rec +24; Rep +26; Str 34, Dex 10, Con 34, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 36.

Background: Religion

Occupation: Mastermind: Perks 2+4 power stunts (Professional Reputation, Power Punch;

Hobby: Magic

Skills: Athletics 18 (+30), Influence 22 (+35), Leadership 23 (+36), Magic 22 (+35), Perception 22 (+23), Power Control 23 (+35), Unarmed 18 (+30), Weapons 18 (+30), 23 unspent

Feats: Absorption, Armor, Claws, Followers, Magic, Mind Shield, Superhuman Charisma, Superhuman Constitution, Superhuman Strength, Power Level x20, 4 unspent

Access/Contacts/Followers: Complete Access, 21 unspent (plus 20 more for followers only)

Wealth: 20

Possessions: Varies

Character Disadvantages: Varies

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