

## DRAGONLANCE® CAMPAIGN SETTING

### Wizards of the Black Robes

Black Robe wizards embrace the cause of evil. They do not, however, hurl random fireballs at peasant's cottages (at least, not usually), since such activities would abuse and jeopardize their primary loyalty, which is to magic itself. Black Robe wizards may be cruel, but they are also selfish and cunning, and avoid open acts of violence if a more subtle way can be found.

— *DRAGONLANCE® Campaign Setting*, p.71

## WORLD OF GREYHAWK® CAMPAIGN SETTING

An entity known only as the Serpent speaks directly to Vecna. Others—daring to call themselves wizards, magicians, and sorcerers—manipulate the tiniest aspects of the Serpent and call it magic. But Vecna speaks to the Serpent, and the Serpent speaks back...

— *Vecna Reborn*, p.4

### The Path of History

The root cause of the animosity between the Suel Imperium and the Baklunish Empire is lost in time, but the end result of their final war haunts even the modern day. After decades of conflict, the Suloise Mages of Power called down the *Invoked Devastation* upon the Baklunish, resulting in an apocalypse so complete that its true form remains unknown. Entire cities and countless people were purged from Oerth, leaving few signs of the great civilization that thrived from the Sulhaut Mountains to the Dramidj Ocean.

In retaliation, a cadre of Baklunish wizard-clerics, gathered in the great protective stone circles known as Tovag Baragu, brought the *Rain of Colorless Fire* upon their hated enemies. The skies above the Suel Imperium opened, and all beings and things beneath this shining rift in the heavens were burned into ash. So terribly did these attacks plague the world that they have come to be called the Twin Cataclysms, a term understood by nearly every resident of the Flanaess. The Dry Steppes and Sea of Dust are geographical reminders of this unbridled magical power, now lost to all people—perhaps for the better.

Thousands survived the early years of the Suel-Baklunish conflict by fleeing east over the Crystalmists. The Oeridians, a confederation of barbaric tribes in close proximity to the warring empires, took the wars (and attendant raids from orc and goblin mercenaries in the employ of both sides) as a sign to migrate eastward in search of their ultimate destiny. They were the first large group to enter the lands of the Flan, which they termed the Flanaess.

Suloise refugees soon followed, sometimes working with the Oeridians to pacify the land, but more often warring with them over which race would dominate it. For over two centuries, Suel and Oeridian fought for control of the region from the Crystalmists to the Solnor Coast. Many Suloise were debased and wicked, and they lost most of these

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battles and were pushed to the periphery of the Flanaess.

Though some Baklunish folk migrated eastward, many more fled north toward the Yatil Mountains, or to the shores of the Dramidj Ocean, where their ancient cultures flourish to this day. The very nonhuman mercenaries the Oeridians had sought to avoid found themselves swept up by these migrations. Many of the foul creatures that now plague the Flanaess arrived following the Oeridians and Suel. These renegade mercenaries trailed after human migrants in search of plunder, food, and slaves.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.13

### The Suloise People

The Suel have the lightest coloration of any known human race of the Flanaess. Their skin is fair, with an atypical proportion of albinos. Eye color is pale blue or violet, sometimes deep blue or gray. Suel hair is wiry, often curly or kinky, with fair colors such as yellow, light red, blond, and platinum blond. The Suel tend to be lean, with narrow facial features.

The Suel Imperium was located in what is now the Sea of Dust. Wicked and decadent, this empire was destroyed during a war with the Baklunish when the latter brought down the *Rain of Colorless Fire*. Suloise survivors fled in all directions, many crossing the Hellfurnaces into the Flanaess, where they met other Suel who had fled the long war much earlier. Some evil Suel were forced into the extreme corners of the Flanaess by invading Oeridians. The barbarians of the Thillonrian peninsula are pure Suel, as are the elite of the Scarlet Brotherhood. The people of the Duchy of Urnst and places in the Lordship of the Isles are nearly so.

The Suel Imperium was governed by contesting noble houses, and the fleeing bands that entered the Flanaess were often led by nobles with their families and many retainers. The modern Suel retain this affinity for family, although they often use a very narrow definition of the word to include only siblings, parents, and children. A few Suel can trace their lineage all the way back to the days of their empire.

The ancient Suel Imperium was exceedingly cruel; this trait surfaces in the modern day, for more than one Suel organization openly plots against other people of the Flanaess. Fortunately, most Suel have avoided this dark legacy, having inherited the relatively minor flaws of being opinionated, selfish, and blunt. Many also tend to be prideful and unwilling to admit flaws or personal hardships. They have a passion for study, especially in regard to magic, and many Suel wizards became incredibly powerful.

Traditional Suel dress includes wide-legged pantaloons and loose blouses (vests in the south), both in solid colors. Most individuals use one color only, with nobles using two or more as appropriate to their House. The style of clothing is adapted to the climate; Suel in the far north wear furs or thick wool, with capes, mittens, and furred boots. The Suel like large pins, brooches, emblems, and other adornments, a few of which are ancient heirlooms.

Heirs of a highly magical society, the Suel still have an aptitude for most types of spellcasting. Suel wizards often become masters of spells that involve transmutation. They also perfected a number of binding spells and created many items used for controlling and dominating other beings. For instance, it is thought that a long-dead Suel emperor made

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the ancient and terrible *Orbs of Dragonkind*.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.8*

**Ancient Suloise Language**

This ancient and widespread language became all but extinct after the *Rain of Colorless Fire* destroyed the Suel Imperium. Today it is rarely spoken, even by the few scholars who know the tongue. The infamous Scarlet Brotherhood are one of few that continue its use. It exists in its written state for those who would delve into the surviving arcane tomes of the Suel people. Transliteration into modern tongues or alphabets is difficult, and dangerous when used in spellcasting, for the significance of certain inflections has been lost over the centuries.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.12*

English	Ancient Suloise	English	Ancient Suloise
are	ik	miner	mazar
assassin	retna	money	tansho
black	noth	monk	ka
bonds	yal	more	ila
brass	talo	mother	murma
brave	ker	name	bil
bright	zin	noble	tok
bronze	tem	not	mav
brother	gaqo	obedience	yevel
brother	sahey	ocean	os
child, sanctioned	shakoi	office	hesma
citizen	sharav	orc	roka
cold	jazia	order	yev
copper	tanro	our	se
cousin	eltesh	outer	lovok
dagger	car	pious	kro
dagger, ornamental	sacari	police investigator, highest rank	shokal
destiny	tura	police investigators	shodeen
diamond	bylakal	port	ulos
diplomacy	rena	pure (Suel)	shar
do	jo	red	xia
excellent	shar	ruby skull	karuth
eye	deen		

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faith	krova	rulership	hesmali
far	loy	search	denjo
father	sahar	“senior,” suffix indicating	-kal
female, prefix indicating	a- or al-	shining	zo
fire	es	ship	sevvos
first	zar	silver	tanmi
fist	shay	slave race	komazar
flame	pyr	slave race	kurga
foreigner (respected)	issim	slave-person	bosok
forever	okalasna	small	thurg
fortress	kura	smoke	gov
foster uncle	rhoidey	soiled	bosok
goblin	chebi	sorceror	kel
gold	tanva	south	tilva
“greater,” suffix indicating	-kal	speak	volan
hand	sho	spy	renaru
harsh	kendeen	steel	tot
head	kav	stern	kendeen
heaven	krovashar	steward	kesh
hill	not	steward, senior	keshkal
hobgoblin	hochebi	strong	kurg
holy	kro	subcitizen	sharafon
home	il	sword	dancar
inner	shu	thief	larena
insect	thuranzi	thousand	ilasna
island	lof	three	thri
jade	bal	togetherness	hesiyev
jewel/gem	byle	tooth	volanzi
“junior,” suffix meaning	-fon	truth	yalet
kingdom	hes	uncle	rhoidin
lemur slave race	rullhow	war	che
“lesser,” suffix meaning	-fon	weapon	caran
lie	iru	will	neya
little	thurg	woman	ako
man	ko	word	vo



— *The Scarlet Brotherhood*, p.96

• SUEL DEITIES •

**Beltar**

*The Dark Mother*

**Lesser Goddess**

**Symbol:** A set of monstrous fangs, closing to bite

**Worshippers:** Cave dwellers, humanoids, miners

**Home Plane:** Tarterian Depths of Carceri

**Cleric Alignments:** CE, CN, NE

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil (Chaotic Neutral)

**Domains:** Chaos, Earth, Evil, War

**Portfolio:** Caves, malice, pits

**Favored Weapon:** *Claws of Beltar* (spiked gauntlet)

The haglike goddess Beltar (BEL-tar) one of the stranger Suel deities, known to appear as a beholder, red dragon, or marilith demon (the likely cause of Suloise snake-cult rumors). She was once a goddess of mines and earth, but was supplanted by others in her pantheon and finally relegated to worship by nonhuman slaves. She hates most everything, even other gods. She takes many mates in her various forms, but she is known to eat them afterward, as well as her own young.

*Mine and explore caves in pursuit of foes and riches. Fear is not acceptable in the face of adversity, and only hatred is allowed for those who stand in your way.* Primarily worshiped by evil nonhumans and savage humans, Beltar pushes her followers to band together into armies and ally with more powerful creatures, such as red dragons, beholders, demons, or greater undead. They must wage war on hated foes

Clerics of Beltar are expected to take positions of leadership in their tribes; those who cannot do so are cast out to find heathen tribes to convert or new enemies for to fight. They inspire hatred in others and make examples of traitors or the weak-willed. Worship services involve sacrifices and are conducted in caves or points or low ground. Devoted clerics rise from the grave as undead within a year of their deaths, usually returning to aid their original tribe and show proof of the goddess' power.

— *DRAGON Magazine* #89 September 1984, p.21

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.166

— *Complete Divine*, p.121

**Bralm**

*The Flying Queen, the Hive Goddess, the Toiling Lady*

**Lesser Goddess**

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**Symbol:** A giant wasp in front of an insect swarm  
**Home Plane:** Material Plane (Oerth)  
**Alignment:** Neutral (Lawful Neutral)  
**Portfolio:** Industriousness, insects

**Worshippers:** Common laborers, farmers, slave masters, slaves  
**Cleric Alignments:** CN, LN, N, NE, NG  
**Domains:** Animal, Community<sup>SC</sup>, Law, Pact<sup>SC</sup>, Strength  
**Favored Weapon:** Quarterstaff

Bralm (BRAHLM) is depicted as a middle-aged woman with dark blonde hair, sometimes with insect wings. She is friendly with rest of the Suel pantheon but has no close allies there because she judges others on ability, not age or status. Thrithereon has earned her enmity because of his individualism, and fiery deities like Pyremius and Joramy are avoided because of her dislike of that element.

*Everyone has a place in a society, and you must master your role even if you don't understand how it is important. Those who know more or are in superior positions must be obeyed; you can learn much by observing those around you. Work hard and be satisfied with your work. Hive insects follow this path, with some members sacrificing themselves for the betterment of the entire hive.* Some splinter churches elevate insects as creatures to be worshiped and keep giant insects as guards or pets.

Bralm's clerics act as overseers for complex tasks involving large numbers of people: military captains, farm overseers, mine controllers, slave drivers, and so on. They intercede to prevent destruction of crops by insects and are not above getting their hands dirty to get something done. They enjoy leading groups for the sake of imposing order on a group of independent-minded people. Their prayer times are twilight and dawn.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.91

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.168

— *Complete Divine*, p.121

— *Spell Compendium*, p.271, p.278

## Dalt

*The Opener of Ways*

### Lesser God

**Symbol:** A locked door with a skeleton key under it  
**Home Plane:** Concordant Domain of the Outlands  
**Alignment:** Chaotic Good  
**Portfolio:** Doors, enclosures, keys, locks, portals

**Worshippers:** Explorers, guards  
**Cleric Alignments:** CG, CN, NG  
**Domains:** Chaos, Good, Protection, Travel, Trickery  
**Favored Weapon:** Dagger

Dalt (DAHLT) was forgotten for many years while he sought to free his brother Vatun; he is once again recognized as a god, although still primarily venerated by the Suloise people in the southeast. He talks with other gods of the Flanaess (except Telchur) in order to solicit help in his quest. Dalt is shown as an old man with wild white hair and piercing eyes

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or as a red-haired young thief.

*Confront obstacles from different angles until a solution presents itself.* Dalt is constantly trying to build a better mousetrap while being the better mouse. His name is used to bless fortresses, prisons, and chests of valuables, as well as the construction of new homes. His churches tend to be a mix of clerics who lock things and those who open them, each side seeing the need for the other.

Clerics of Dalt are much like their god, tinkering in workshops, building locks and traps, then turning around and trying to figure a way to undo their own work. They teach their building skills to carpenters, masons, and locksmiths, while training aspiring thieves and spies in the locksmith arts, although they only choose those who would use their talents for the greater good. They firmly believe in guarding valuables from those who would use them for selfish ends, and liberating goods from those who don't deserve to own them. They like to wander about cities and dungeons, looking for situations that would challenge their skills.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.92

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.169

## Fortubo

*The Bountiful Seam, the Master Smith, the Pure One, the Stern, the Stone Dweller, the Unyielding Rock*

### Lesser God

**Symbol:** A glowing-headed hammer

**Worshippers:** Dwarves, gnomes, miners, smiths

**Home Plane:** Seven Mounting Heavens of Celestia

**Cleric Alignments:** LG, LN, NG

**Alignment:** Lawful Good (Lawful Neutral)

**Domains:** Community<sup>SC</sup>, Earth, Good, Law, Mysticism<sup>SC</sup>, Protection

**Portfolio:** Guardianship, metals, mountains, stone

**Favored Weapon:** *Golbi* (warhammer)

Fortubo (for-TOO-boh) was once a Suel god but abandoned that race in favor of dwarves when he found that the Suel were responsible for the creation of the evil derro. He is friendly with the gods of the dwarven pantheon but avoids all other gods except his brother Jascar. His personal weapon is a great hammer named *Golbi* that returns to his hand when thrown and is said to be a gift from the dwarf god Moradin. He is shown as a small bearded Suel man who resembles a dwarf.

*Focus on your tasks. Do not allow yourself to lie distracted by other careers or concerns outside of protecting the community. Feel the your kinship with the stone and do not cut it more than what your community needs. Commit no theft, murder, or evil, for they will shackle the dwarven people more strongly than any chains.* Fortubo protects dwarven communities and welcomes clerics of either sex, especially married couples.

Fortubo's clerics plan defenses to the smallest detail and are more than willing to shoulder more than their share of the responsibility if they feel anyone else involved is incapable of pulling their weight. They search for orcs and goblins,

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which they feel harm the earth with their pointless tunneling. Any hammer will serve as a holy symbol. Married pairs of clerics are said to be especially blessed by Fortubo and their children are born with exceptional insight and endurance.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.92

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.171

— *Spell Compendium*, p.271, p.277

### Jascar

*The Dweller Upon the Heights, the Lord of the Dells, the Mist Upon the Hills, the Voice of the Hills*

#### **Lesser God**

**Symbol:** A snow-capped mountain peak

**Home Plane:** Twin Paradises of Bytopia

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Portfolio:** Hills, mountains

**Worshippers:** Dwarves, gnomes, hill and mountain dwellers, miners

**Cleric Alignments:** LG, LN, NG

**Domains:** Earth, Good, Law, Protection

**Favored Weapon:** Warhammer

Jascar (JAS-kar) is the brother of Fortubo and dedicated foe of Beltar; his holy symbol is a snow-capped mountain peak. With his dark beard and shining silver breastplate, Jascar doesn't resemble the Suel people that worship him, but his visage strikes fear into orcs and goblins. He is sometimes shown as a great horse or pegasus—two forms he once took when fighting Beltar. He is often aided by Phaulkon in his efforts to advance the cause of good, and Jascar's hammer is the bane of all undead. Other than Phaulkon and Fortubo, Jascar talks little with other gods and is often perceived as driven and aloof.

*Hold no quarter for evil nonhumans like orcs and goblinoids, and equally hate those who would make the beautiful hills and mountains ugly. Protect the hills and mountains from plundering by evil forces and you will be rewarded with the treasures Jascar places under the earth for good folk to find.* The church teaches common tactics used by evil nonhumans.

Jascar's clerics often lead cross-country and underground crusades against evil nonhumans. They survey for precious metals, and advice miners on how to dig their tunnels safely and cause a minimal amount of damage to the surrounding environment. Their single-mindedness often alienates them from others, but their dependable nature means that an entire temple can be called upon in times of crisis; the network of the multi-racial Jascarian faith is strong as stone.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.93

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.173

**Kord**

*The Brawler*

**Intermediate God**

**Symbol:** A star of spears and maces

**Home Plane:** Heroic Domain of Ysgard

**Alignment:** Chaotic Good

**Portfolio:** Athletics, brawling, courage, sports, strength

**Worshippers:** Athletes, barbarians, fighters, rogues

**Cleric Alignments:** CG, CN, NG

**Domains:** Chaos, Competition<sup>SC</sup>, Good, Luck, Strength

**Favored Weapon:** *Kelmar* (greatsword)

Kord (KOHRD) is an incredibly powerful Suel god, second only to his grandfather, Lendor. Son of Phaulkon and Syrul, he is shown as a hugely muscular man with long red hair and beard, wearing dragonhide gauntlets (white), boots (blue), and fighting girdle (red); these items form his holy symbol, although a star composed of spears and maces is popular. He fights with his intelligent dragon-slaying greatsword *Kelmar*, and when wounded he often enters a blood rage so intense only Lendor can control him when he succumbs; because of this, a cleric of Kord will always defer to a ranking cleric of Lendor. He is reputed to have dallied with beautiful humans, elves, or even giants, and tales are told of the great heroes who are born of such liaisons.

*The strong and fit should lead the weaker. Bravery is the greatest quality in any ruler. Scorn cowardice.* Kord loves physical challenges and contests, and it is this love that inspires many barbarian tribes to use nonlethal sports as a method for resolving disputes.

Kord's clerics are expected to be leaders. They train people to become stronger, organize athletic tournaments, and participate in challenging physical activities. Doubting their fitness is a grave insult, and they go to great lengths to prove their physical abilities (although they realize the difference between difficult and suicidal challenges). Wearing of dragon-hide by a cleric is a blasphemy, unless the wearer is a descendant of Kord. Clerics believe magic should be used to enhance allies rather than strike directly at foes.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.174

— *Deities and Demigods*, p.77

— *Complete Divine*, p.109

— *Spell Compendium*, p.272

**Lendor**

*Master of Tedium, Prince of Time*

**Intermediate God**

**Symbol:** A crescent moon in front of a new moon surrounded by 14 stars

**Home Plane:** Clockwork Nirvana of Mechanus

**Worshippers:** Astronomers, chronomancers, sages, timekeepers, wizards

**Cleric Alignments:** LE, LG, LN

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**Alignment:** Lawful Neutral

**Domains:** Destiny<sup>RoD</sup>, Knowledge, Law, Mind<sup>SC</sup>, Oracle<sup>SC</sup>, Protection, Rune<sup>SC</sup>

**Portfolio:** Patience, study, tedium, time

**Favored Weapon:** *Afterglow* (greatsword)

Lendor (LEN-dor), the leader and progenitor of the Suel pantheon, is depicted as a white-haired and bearded husky older man. Largely withdrawn from the affairs of the world to care for larger issues, Lendor considers himself superior other gods and especially to his children, as he has the ability to banish any of his children or undo their magic. A blow from his flaming sword *Afterglow* is said to be the force that started the flow of time at the dawn of the universe.

*Time stretches to infinity, and issues that seem pressing are merely a smaller part of a larger whole. In order to make sense of the universe, one must look at the entire mosaic instead of just a part of it. Age brings experience, wisdom, and the impetus to take things slow.*

Lendor's clergy are mostly older, particularly sages, village elders, and record keepers. They tend to have little interaction with the outside world, remaining cloistered in their libraries and temples for years at a time. Occasionally a younger person will be drawn to this faith, taking the role of wandering adviser, preaching the need to keep the present in perspective; these preachers often become advisers to conservative leaders or mount expeditions to recover ancient tomes and artifacts lost for generations.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.93

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.19

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.174

— *Races of Destiny*, p.163

— *Spell Compendium*, p.276, p.277, p.279

## Llery

*Animal Fang, Great Bear, God of Force, Strongest Serpent*

**Lesser God**

**Symbol:** A bear, snake or alligator

**Worshippers:** Barbarians, common warriors

**Home Plane:** Wilderness of the Beastlands

**Cleric Alignments:** CE, CG, CN

**Alignment:** Chaotic Neutral

**Domains:** Animal, Chaos, Competition<sup>SC</sup>, Strength

**Portfolio:** Beasts, strength

**Favored Weapon:** Battleaxe

The most uncivilized god in the Suel pantheon, Llery (LERG) ignores most other gods, seeing them as too civilized, but has a friendly rivalry with Kord and a hatred for Telchur. He is shown as a strong, shaggy man wearing furs and a fighting girdle or as a great bear, snake or alligator; these animals are sacred to him. He fights with a battleaxe or in one of his animal forms and may be the ancestor of the original dire bears, dire alligators, and giant snakes. He is popular among the jungle savages, who call him Hlery.

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*Be strong so that others respect you. Be fierce like the creatures of the animal world. Humans have lost contact with their inner animal nature—watch and learn how the predator lives, and you will again be as you should be.* Llerg supports barbarians defending their lands against encroaching civilization.

Llerg's clerics choose one of his scared animals as their totem animal. They act as intermediaries when tribes meet, and range far in search of prey when times are lean for their tribe. They bless weapons, warriors, and sites of battle to ensure victory, and in more peaceful times they train young warriors in armed and unarmed combat. Some clerics see visions and travel to find the meaning of what they have seen.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.93

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.175

— *Complete Divine*, p.121

— *Spell Compendium*, p.272

## Lydia

*The Mother of Truth, the Pure Song*

### **Lesser Goddess**

**Symbol:** A spray of colors from an open hand

**Home Plane:** Blessed Fields of Elysium

**Alignment:** Neutral Good

**Portfolio:** Daylight, knowledge, music

**Worshippers:** Bards, musicians, sages, scholars (many females)

**Cleric Alignments:** CG, LG, NG

**Domains:** Good, Knowledge, Sun, Travel

**Favored Weapon:** *Shaft of Light* (spear)

Lydia (LIH-dee-ah) is a wise Suel goddess, shown as a dynamic older woman with white hair and clear blue eyes. She interacts with many other gods, exchanging information and songs. In some ways she is the converse of Pholtus, pressing for individual liberty so that others may see the light of truth without being blinded by it; this pleases Trithereon, who also strives for the freedom of the individual.

*People must gain knowledge to better themselves. Music is a key to learning, and the light of day lets one see their own ignorance.* Lydia's church has an open policy on all records, for the goddess hates secrets and those who would hoard information to the detriment of others. Her teachings are presented in song form so that they may be easily remembered, and her church often converts current and historical texts into ballads. Her church uses education to uplift women from lesser stations in life; this tends to make her unpopular with patriarchies.

Most of her clerics are women. They discover and spread information wherever they travel, and are often found in the company of clerics of Fharlanghn. They are required to help women in need of education, and they spend much of their time in villages teaching women and children how to read and acting as midwives. They travel to discover lost caches of information and song, preferring historical accounts of actual deeds rather than fictionalizations and hearsay tales.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.93  
 — *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20  
 — *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.175

## Nazarn

*The Gladiator*

### Hero God

**Symbol:** A chain wrapped around a short sword

**Home Plane:** Heroic Domain of Ysgard

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Portfolio:** Formal and public combat

**Worshippers:** Athletes, fighters, half-orcs, slaves

**Cleric Alignments:** CN, LN, N, NE, NG

**Domains:** Luck, War

**Favored Weapon:** *Crowdpleaser* (short sword)

Nazarn (NAZZ-arn) is a half-orc god of ritualistic and public combat, such as honorable duels and gladiator matches. Once a popular gladiator slave owned by a member of the Scarlet Brotherhood, Nazarn escaped from his racist captors to find a better place for himself in the world. He was fortunate to encounter and impress a half-giant descendant of Kord, and eventually convinced the Brawler to elevate him to godhood after defeating all opponents (including a young green dragon) in a Hepmonaland arena run by yuan-ti. Nazarn is honorable but cares little for moral debates, seeking only the freedom to do what he wants and have a fair fight in the arena. He appears as an older half-orc with a strongly orcish appearance and hair that is rapidly graying to white. He is usually shown with his short sword *Crowdpleaser*.

*Answer a challenge with honor and bravery. Never fight at anything but your best. Known when you should please the crowd and when you should focus on your foe, for a flamboyant warrior often ends up dead if he underestimates his adversary. Avoid dirty fighting unless it is purely for sport. Offer mercy to a defeated foe if you can, but finish them if they have fought without honor or broken the combat's accepted rules of conduct. Be inspiring to those who fight on your side and those who would emulate you in the future, for your legacy will survive you.*

Nazarn's clerics work as professional duelists or gladiators, act as officiators and seconds in formal duels, and minister to gladiators and similar combatants. They adventure to seek out new heroes of the arena in distant cities, to test their mettle against unusual foes, and to collect trophies and scars that add to their reputations.

— “*Blood of Heroes*,” *LIVING GREYHAWK® Journal* #3, p.14

## Norebo

*Dice of Fortune, Father of Chance, God of Gambles, Lord of Chance*

### Lesser God

**Symbol:** A pair of eight-sided dice

**Home Plane:** Windswept Depths of Pandemonium

**Alignment:** Chaotic Neutral

**Worshippers:** Assassins, bards, gamblers, spies, thieves

**Cleric Alignments:** CE, CG, CN

**Domains:** Chaos, Luck, Trickery

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**Portfolio:** Gambling, luck, risks

**Favored Weapon:** Dagger

Norebo (noh-REE-boh) is one of the more popular Suel gods, known for his willingness to make a bet on anything and his fondness for dice games. He has been paired with most of the female members of his pantheon, but has been linked to Wee Jas for the past one thousand years despite their alignment differences. He particularly despises Ralishaz for giving gambling and risks a bad name. Norebo is shown as a man of average height, weight, and features, but can assume animal forms, especially when he wishes to be hidden.

*Life is full of risks and gambling with fate is the only thing that makes life worth living. Owning property and life itself are fleeting things, and best be enjoyed while you have them.* His worship is popular in the barbarian lands and large cities, and donations to his temples (called Churches of the Big Gamble) are usually in the form of lost bets (as gambling operations are run on-site). Some patrons donate to his temple in the hopes of warding off thieves and assassins.

Clerics of the Norebo are willing to make wagers on anything and are usually employed at least part of the time in a gambling house. Others wander the world to bring chance and elements of risk into people's lives; they especially love bothering clerics and followers of rigid gods such as Allitur, Pholtus, and St. Cuthbert.

— *DRAGON Magazine* #86 June 1984, p.32

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.177

## Osprem

*Lady of the Waves, the Sea Princess*

**Lesser Goddess**

**Symbol:** A barracuda or a sperm whale

**Home Plane:** Elemental Plane of Water

**Alignment:** Lawful Neutral

**Portfolio:** Sailors, sea voyages, ships

**Worshippers:** Fishers, sailors, shipwrights

**Cleric Alignments:** LE, LG, LN

**Domains:** Law, Protection, Travel, Water

**Favored Weapon:** Trident

Osprem (AH-spreem) is a generally benign goddess, revered by the Suel people as the protector of those who travel on the water. She is more compassionate than her occasional companion Xerbo, yet she is not averse to punishing those who offend her or disobey her laws. She is shown as a beautiful gowned woman, a dolphin, a barracuda, or a sperm whale. She wears no armor but is protected by a ring carved from a whale's tooth, given to her by the grandfather of all whales.

*The seas provide a bounty of food and a means of travel; protect the sea as you would your own home, or face Osprem's wrath. She protects those who sail and their vessels as long as they respect her and abide by her laws. She guides vessels through dangerous waters and is the patron goddess of naval explorers.* Those who defy her laws are

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punished by storms of ice, and it is said entire towns were wiped out because of serious transgressions against her.

Her clerics are skilled navigators and often become the spiritual leaders of communities that rely on the sea for survival. Many gain political power for themselves based on the need for their abilities. Clerics not tied to one place might travel a great deal by ship; though they feel awkward away from the ocean, they are comfortable enough near lakes or rivers to venture inland.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.94

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.178

— *Complete Divine*, p.121

### Phaulkon

*The Far Reacher, the Feathered One, Master of Birds, the Wind Archer*

#### Lesser God

**Symbol:** A winged human silhouette

**Home Plane:** Olympian Glades of Arborea

**Alignment:** Chaotic Good

**Portfolio:** Air, archery, birds, clouds, wind

**Worshippers:** Archers, leaders

**Cleric Alignments:** CG, CN, NG

**Domains:** Air, Animal, Chaos, Good, Sky<sup>RotW</sup>, War

**Favored Weapon:** Longbow

Phaulkon (FAHL-kahn) is an active deity, promoting the cause of good and chasing down evil. He concerns himself with all things that happen under the open sky, and is a scholar of artifacts (and how to negate their powers). Father of Kord and second only to him in fighting ability, he is friendly with Aerdrie Faenya (the elven goddess of air and weather), Jascar, and the other gods with portfolios similar to his own. He is depicted as a powerful, clean-shaved, bare-chested wingless man.

*Victory in battle depends on archery. The sky is the dome over creation, and creatures of the sky are blessed for freeing themselves from the soil. Take the fight to the enemy; do not wait for the encroach of evil. The ancient devices of war are best left alone, as their use involves great danger.*

Phaulkon's clerics study the sky and clouds for portents, and work to protect the nesting places of flying animals. They teach archery and hunting to common people so they may feed and protect themselves, teach farmers the difference between birds that eat seeds and those that kill seed-eaters, and trail soldiers in the more difficult aspects of ranged combat. When rumors of ancient evil magic surface, they seek out the source to make sure the item gets destroyed or at least stays buried. His clerics tend to be wanderers, enjoying living under the open sky and fighting evil where they discover it.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.94

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.179

**Phyton***The Woodshaper***Lesser God****Symbol:** A scimitar in front of an oak tree**Home Plane:** Olympian Glades of Arborea**Alignment:** Chaotic Good**Portfolio:** Beauty, farming, nature**Worshippers:** Elves, farmers, rangers**Cleric Alignments:** CG, CN, NG**Domains:** Chaos, Good, Plant, Sun, Water**Favored Weapon:** Scimitar

Phyton (FIE-tahn) is a tall, slender, youthful looking Suel god who can take the form of any creature. Once like most nature deities, he now represents man's dominion over nature, and this puts him at odds with those who would protect a forest from the actions of mankind, just as his dominion over beauty angers Wee Jas. He clears forests to make room for crops, cuts tracks through mountains to make roads, and dams rivers to form fishing ponds. His symbol hearkens back to his old purpose.

*Nothing in nature is so beautiful as what man can make of it. A field of crops, a garden of herbs, and a swamp drained to form fertile soil are all marvels of nature as much as the forest and mountains. Natural animals that can be domesticated should be, but those that are dangerous to man or his works should be slain.*

Clerics of Phyton act as protectors for farming settlements and look for ways to make use of nearby land. Each normally chooses a region to watch over, typically a circle one day's walk in diameter. They might use their powers to redirect a river to suit a town's needs, or to cull a forest of its uglier plants to leave a more pleasant locale. Some clerics wander the unsettled parts of the world, looking for destructive creatures to kill, abandoned sites of old civilizations, or wild places that might be useful to mankind.

— *Warriors of Heaven*, p.94— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.179**Pyremius***The Blazing Killer, Demon of Venom, Hideous Assassin, the Murdering Flame***Lesser God****Symbol:** A demonic face with ears like a bat's wings**Home Plane:** Grey Waste of Hades**Alignment:** Neutral Evil**Portfolio:** Assassins, fire, murder, poison**Worshippers:** Arsonists, assassins, humanoids**Cleric Alignments:** CE, LE, NE**Domains:** Destruction, Evil, Fire**Favored Weapon:** *Red Light* (longsword)

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Pyremius (pie-REH-mee-us) was once a demigod of poison and murder, but he poisoned Ranet, the Suel goddess of fire, and assumed her portfolio. He is now the patron of assassins, and he carries a longsword called *Red Light* and a whip called *Viper*. He is friendly with fiends; jermaine worship him, as do many nonhuman tribes. He keeps other gods at arm's length, except for Syrul, a fellow patron of the Scarlet Brotherhood.

*The world will perish in fire. Anything that threatens you must be burned, and those who would keep you from doing this must be killed. The greatest enemy must sleep sometime. Those who fall to such tactics deserve their fate, and those who exploit these weaknesses are the most crafty of all.* This doctrine means ranking clerics tend to prey upon each other, and smarter ones sometimes leave a temple to found their own order of the church.

His clerics watch other people for weaknesses or openings in their defenses. They expose themselves to great heat to test their strength, plot against those who hold things they want, build superior forges, and explore exotic locations to find rare plants and other substances from which poisons can be made. Assassins can be hired at their temples; turnover among the clerics is high because of internal feuds.

— *DRAGON Magazine* #89 September 1984, p.20

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.181

— *Complete Divine*, p.121

## Syrul

*The Forked Tongue, Night Hag, Oathbreaker*

### Lesser Goddess

**Symbol:** A forked tongue

**Home Plane:** Gray Waste of Hades

**Alignment:** Neutral Evil

**Portfolio:** Deceit, false promises, lies, treachery

**Worshippers:** Intriguers, leaders, spies, thieves

**Cleric Alignments:** CE, LE, NE

**Domains:** Domination<sup>SC</sup>, Evil, Knowledge, Mind<sup>SC</sup>, Trickery

**Favored Weapon:** *Small Lie* (dagger)

Syrul (SIGH-rul) appears as a dirty, smelly old hag in tattered clothing (an illusion that covers her nondescript Appearance). She is never without *Small Lie* (a *dagger of venom* made from an evil unicorn's horn) and *Harsh Truth* (a *rod of withering* made from a gold dragon's crystallized soul), and rides a great nightmare called Flamedevil. She can see through any deception or illusion, and her unholy symbol is a forked tongue. Syrul avoids other deities except Pyremius, whom she partners with in many things.

*The best way to protect what you know is to shield it in a lie. Speech is deadlier than any weapon; the greatest and smallest fall with a well-spoken untruth. Give your word to advance your cause, and break it when it is no longer of use. Trust is for fools, and betraying a fool is the greatest gift and lesson you can give them. Honesty and straightforwardness are for the dull-witted.* Her churches get along well despite their communication obstacles.

Her clerics use their ability to lie effectively in situations where they can cause the most trouble; markets,

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courtrooms, embassies, and fortunetellers' booths. Many are skilled actors, performing in self-written plays that slander authority figures. They engage in debate, and are hired by leaders to confuse and misdirect spies and unwarranted foreign dignitaries. They travel to escape persecution, to find rumors to escalate, and to exploit the trust of greedy and foolish explorers.

— *DRAGON Magazine #88 August 1984, p.8*

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk, p.20*

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.183*

— *Spell Compendium, p.273, p.276*

### Vatun

*The Great God of the North, the North God*

#### **Lesser God**

**Symbol:** The sun setting on a snowy landscape

**Home Plane:** Demiplane of Imprisonment

**Alignment:** Chaotic Neutral

**Portfolio:** Arctic beasts, cold, northern barbarians,  
winter

**Worshippers:** Barbarians, druids, fighters, rangers

**Cleric Alignments:** CE, CG, CN

**Domains:** Air, Animal, Chaos, Strength, Winter<sup>Fb</sup>

**Favored Weapon:** *Winter's Bite* (battleaxe)

Vatun (VAY-tun) is largely forgotten outside the Thillonrian peninsula. Not worshiped by the Suel Imperium, Vatun is included in that pantheon because of his worship by the Suel-descended northern barbarians. Vatun was imprisoned by clerics of Telchur about the time of the Battle of a Fortnight's Length. He wields an ice battleaxe called *Winter's Bite*. When free, Vatun was a whirlwind of cold rage and energy, inspiring his followers to raid south as often as possible. Dalt and Llerg are his only allies. He is shown as a huge Suel man wearing polar bear skins and a beard of ice and snow, with frozen fog coming from his mouth.

*Winter is a time for culling the weak so that the strong may survive. Snow shall cover cowards and they shall be forgotten by all. The people of the north are the true survivors and will inherit the world when the Great Winter comes to cover the land.*

Vatun's clerics preach violence against Telchur's faith, help their tribes survive in winter, heal the injured, and aid their people in battle. Level-headed clerics are sent to search for the *Five Blades of Corusk*, which, if united, will free Vatun from his prison (or so say the legends). Recent lore indicates a diabolical connection to Vatun's prison, and so his clerics have become ardent foes of devils. Because of his imprisonment, Vatun's clerics must be within ten feet of a torch-sized (or larger) flame to prepare or cast spells.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.185*

— *Frostburn, p.42, p.43, p.85*

## SECRETS OF THE SUEL IMPERIUM

### Wee Jas

*The Dark-Eyed Lady, Death's Guardian, the Ruby Sorceress, Stern Lady, the Taker, the Witch Goddess*

#### Intermediate Goddess

**Symbol:** Red skull wreathed in flame

**Home Plane:** Infernal Battlefield of Acheron

**Alignment:** Lawful Neutral (Lawful Evil)

**Portfolio:** Death, law, magic, vanity (love)

**Worshippers:** Necromancers, wizards

**Cleric Alignments:** LE, LG, LN

**Domains:** Domination<sup>SC</sup>, Inquisition<sup>SC</sup>, Law, Magic, Mind<sup>SC</sup>,  
Repose<sup>PGIF</sup>

**Favored Weapon:** *Discretion* (dagger)

Wee Jas (WEE-jas) is portrayed as a stunning woman dressed in a beautiful gown, wearing some piece of jewelry with a skull motif. She promotes the utilization of spells and magic items (though many of her Suel followers insist she favors the *creation* of such things). She gained her death aspect when the survivors of the *Rain of Colorless Fire* looked to their goddess of magic for assurance that the dead were being escorted to the afterworld. Her allies are the lawful Suel gods while the chaotic ones are her enemies (except Norebo, who is her lover despite their philosophical differences). She respects Boccob, dislikes the beauty goddess Myhriss, and ignores most other deities.

*Magic is the key to all things. Understanding, personal power, security, order, and control over fate come with the study of magic. Respect those who came before you, left their knowledge, and died to make room for you; there will come a time when your life is over and those who come after will honor your learning and your memory.*

Clerics of Wee Jas arbitrate disputes, give advice on magic, investigate magical curiosities, create magic items, and administer funerals. The more powerful clerics use their magic to fortify their temple and city. Clerics of lower level are expected to defer to ones of higher level at all times. Her clerics must get her permission before restoring a weak or chaotic being to life.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.187

— *Deities and Demigods*, p.96

— *Complete Divine*, p.109

— *Spell Compendium*, p.273, p.275, p.276

— *Player's Guide to Faerûn*, p.90

### Xerbo

*Keeper of the Seas, the Master of Mains, the Sea Dragon, the Unwavering Rudder, the Vault of the Oceans*

#### Lesser God

**Symbol:** A dragon turtle

**Home Plane:** Elemental Plane of Water

**Alignment:** Neutral

**Portfolio:** Business, money, sailing, sea

**Worshippers:** Coastal folk, druids, fishers, merchants, sailors

**Cleric Alignments:** CN, LN, N, NE, NG

**Domains:** Animal, Knowledge, Water

**Favored Weapon:** *Murky Deep* (trident)

## SECRETS OF THE SUEL IMPERIUM

Xerbo (ZER-boh) is a stern and indifferent god. He is shown as a large man with matted kelp-like hair, wearing a dragon turtle armor and shield. His trident, *Murky Deep*, enchants and grants him dominion over all ocean life and can enchant his opponents. Xerbo is also a mercantile god, where his stern demeanor represents the drive for a hard bargain. Most revere him as a merchant's god and placate him as a sea god. He avoids other gods except his estranged wife Osprem, battles Procan regularly, and sulks whenever Zilchus encroaches on his followers.

*The law of the sea states that no sea creature should be favored over another. Land creatures, including intelligent ones, have no place in the water; it is a place to be feared and respected, not exploited. Land creatures in danger on the sea deserve no help unless they act to protect sea creatures or the sea itself. Do not let one's emotions get in the way of making trade; no person should be favored over another.* This last thought makes him popular with smaller merchants and disliked by unions and guilds.

Xerbo's clerics are expected to protect the sea and sea life. They watch over merchant vessels on trade routes or facilitate business meetings in port cities. The god does not tolerate extended forays on land, especially for foolish pursuits such as exploring ruins and dungeons.

— *DRAGON Magazine* #90 October 1984, p.26

— *Player's Guide to Greyhawk*, p.20

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.188

### • SUEL DEITIES •

#### Sea of Dust

A bleak desert of powdery gray ash fills this enormous basin that was formerly the Suel Imperium. A fertile landscape once extended for 1,000 miles west and south until it was inundated by the *Rain of Colorless Fire*, sent in retaliation by the survivors of the Baklunish Empire after it had been brought low by the *Invoked Devastation* cast by the Suloise a millennium ago.

What remains is an endless vista of ash and dust shaped into dunes. Howling desert winds often whip the surface into choking clouds that strip flesh from bone, making vision impossible and breathing a torment. This environment is made even worse by the addition of volcanic ash and cinders that rain down from the Hellfurnaces to cover the already ghastly landscape. Below the dusty surface, the ash is packed and nearly hard as rock; no plant will grow here.

Natives of the Sulhauts and explorers from distant lands sometimes enter the Sea of Dust and explore its few ruins in search of treasures of the ancient Suel Imperium, with the Passage of Slerotin lately used. Those ruins visible from the mountain heights are the most frequently visited, but very little is recovered from these fairly accessible locations anymore. It is believed that vast wealth and magic lie in the recesses of the ruins, or in the lost capital of the Suel Imperium, somewhere in the central expanse of the Sea of Dust. Now called the Forgotten City, this buried metropolis is said to remain nearly intact, with only its tallest spires protruding from the ash.

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Incredibly, life exists in the Sea of Dust. In addition to hideous monsters that ooze, scurry, or creep through vast tunnels carved beneath its surface by even greater monsters, intelligent firenewts dwell in the lower Hellfurnaces. The fringes of this vast basin also hold examples of humanity. A tall, slender folk of ebony hue dwells on the southwest edge of the desert, pursuing a nomadic life where the caustic dust gives way to fertile soil. Another human race lives under the shadow of the Hellfurnaces on the desert's eastern border. These short, stocky people cover their bodes with an odorous wax to protect against the caustic dust and burning sun.

It is speculated that both these peoples must have special knowledge of the ruins near their territories, which would be of great value to expeditions from foreign lands. However, it is unlikely they are willing to provide any assistance without powerful inducements, for they are notoriously difficult to threaten or intimidate. They also prey on explorers in a weakened condition.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.154*

### Dry Steppes

West of the Crystalmist Mountains and the Ulsprue is an endless prairie called the Dry Steppes. The area was once fertile and blessed with abundant water, a veritable garden for the ancient Baklunish padishahs and sultans. The *Invoked Devastation* ruined the beauty of this land at the end of the Suel-Baklunish War one thousand years ago, and destroyed the empire that existed here. The nature of the steppe changes toward the central region, becoming more pleasant and rich. Large hordes of nomads, herd animals, and centaurs roam the area, migrating north in summer and returning south with the rains of winter. Little rain falls here, and rivers and lakes are few.

Many nomadic Baklunish clans in the Dry Steppes are dervishes, devotees of mystical religious practices who defend their lands and beliefs by strength of arms. Their most powerful leader is called the Mahdi of the Steppes, a prophet and warrior. Dervishes in this region celebrate his divine insight, and others are well advised to do likewise if they wish to have the goodwill of these fanatics. Many nomads meet at the Stone Circles of Tovag Baragu.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.154*

### Lake Udrukankar

This salt lake near the Dry Steppes is nearly lifeless, except for a few birds and insects near the mouth of the Rumikadath. The extent of the waters was once much greater, especially to the north and east where large salt flats are now. Obviously, salt is the major export of this locale, though many goods can be found in the market city of Kanak on the lake's southern shore.

The timeless monument of Tovag Baragu rises from the flats north of the lake. It is considered holy to the human and centaur nomads of the Dry Steppes, and is watched over by zealous dervishes. Recently, Tovag Baragu was reported to have changed dramatically.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.150*

### Kingdom of Keoland

*The Chronicle of Secret Times* is a book banned by the Keoish crown, a strange set of affairs for a work that is said to never have existed. Nonetheless, numerous apocryphal copies are said to be in certain clandestine collections, including the Great Library of Greyhawk. The book's sometimes lyrical prose tells of the Suloise survivors of the *Rain of Colorless Fire*, beginning with how Slerotin, the Last Mage of Power, led twelve tribes out of ruin and into the valley of the Sheldomar. As the story continues, the Magus, nearly consumed and at death's door from his exertions, bids the most powerful noble houses to set aside their rivalries and unite to make a home in this valley and be at peace with its inhabitants. He prophesizes that they will one day combine with a noble people and together will lay the foundations of an exalted kingdom. Slerotin enjoins them to look for signs and portents, and to act upon them in the noblest tradition of their ancestors. The Last Mage of Power then quits the ken of mortals in a thunderclap that levels the surrounding trees and scatters them into the form of a glyph pointing toward the northeast, or so the tale goes.

History records that it was only a few years after their arrival in the Flanaess that the refugees fought each other and went their separate ways, disregarding the Last Mage's words. The powerful Zelrad family withdrew to the northeast, departing from the Sheldomar Valley entirely to settle in what became South Province of the Great Kingdom. The tales also recount how the vile House Malhel fled toward the Dreadwood and was consumed by its own evil after trying to summon up powers of the earth in a desire to resurrect the Suel Imperium. Similar groups suffered other maligin fates, while others fled across the Azure Sea, never to return...

— LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.63

### Silent Ones of Keoland

This ancient society is almost entirely closed to outsiders, but its mystique and influence extends throughout the valley of the Sheldomar. The Silent Ones are said to form the backbone of an eldritch order that seeks to protect the last vestiges of Ancient Suel magic that has remained in Suloise hands since the *Rain of Colorless Fire*. Whether the order is actually this old is uncertain, since they communicate little outside their own circles. What little is known of the Silent Ones comes from one of the few individuals who departed it alive. Uhas of Neheli chronicled some of their exploits in his apocryphal work, *The Chronicle of Secret Times*.

The group's name comes from an ancient Suel phrase literally translated as "those who must not speak." It is something of a misnomer as the Silent Ones are by no means mute, but they are extremely secretive and do little to dispel the aura of mystery that surrounds them. These ascetics live completely outside the authority of the ruling Keoish king, according to the first lines of the founding charter of the nation, penned nearly one thousand years ago. They do not form a magical guild in the traditional sense, as supplicants are not usually accepted to the order. Rather they are chosen during pilgrimages conducted by the Silent Ones annually during Needfest, when they scour the countryside for youths especially attuned to their ways. Those chosen are said to be gifted in some way, and most of them are of pure Suel bloodlines. Curiously, many of the chosen are also albinos and frequently are blind. Uhas of Neheli was both.

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While the Silent Ones typically wear drab gray garb, they have no traditional dress nor any visible devices or emblems. The primary cloister of the order is an infamous spire known as the Tower of Silence, located less than a day's ride south from Niole Dra. It is an architectural wonder, erupting from the ground without support to rise many hundreds of feet and completely dominate the featureless plain that surrounds it. No mage who casts eyes upon it will deny that it would be nearly impossible to build today, since great sorcery was no doubt required for its construction. The bluish-gray stone that composes it has no counterpart for 1,000 miles.

The inhabitants of the Lonely Tower are headed by a single undisputed leader call the Wyrd. Currently, this magus is Mohrgyr the Old (N male human wizard 20), a former Nehelan nobleman believed to be over two hundred years old. The tower is staffed by a few dozen adherents, whose numbers are thought to shrink with every passing year. Their most powerful supporters in the kingdom are the nobles of House Neheli, and a plurality of their membership is from this ancient and decaying house. The Silent Ones have smaller enclaves in a handful of Keoish cities to which they frequently travel.

In centuries past, sorcery was in the hands of a small few in Keoland, and the Silent Ones monitored this tradition with dispassion. That is no longer their role, though they are still viewed with fear and superstition. Silent Ones seem to be drawn to ancient places and items of strong magical power and import. On rare occasions they openly contend with individuals, both good and evil, who seek magical power beyond the ken of mortals. Recently they have expressed disquiet over the rise of the Scarlet Brotherhood and the uncovering of Slerotin's Passage from the Yeomanry to the Sea of Dust.

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.162*

### **Duchy of Urnst**

The main body of Suloise migrants passed through the gates of the Abbor-Alz mountains only one year after the Twin Cataclysms. There, three minor noble families split from their brethren. Tired of a years-long trek and willing to settle in largely uninhabited plains, these families banded together, forming a new Suloise House: the Maure.

Following clues of ancient dwarven settlements in the nearby hills, the Maure soon discovered the Delagos Caverns, a complex system of natural caves that seemed to promise a limitless supply of valuable gems. The Maure began construction of a grand castle not far from the mines, and the foundations of civilization took hold. The Maure called their new homeland "Urnst," after a founding Suel house of great import, both to hearken back to the old empire and to begin their lives anew...

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer, p.124*

### **Maure Castle**

A thousand years ago, the world of Oerth was a very different place. Hundreds of thousands of civilized westerners fled east from the horrors of the Twin Cataclysms. With these vast migrations the entire continent became a frontier. Pockets of civilization held their own against the natural dangers of an untamed land.

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The wickedest migrants were the Suel. They mourned the loss of their decadent empire, whose unthinkable potent Mages of Power had called down the *Invoked Devastation* upon hated enemies only to find themselves annihilated by the retributive *Rain of Colorless Fire*. Of the Mages of Power, only Slerotin survived the conflagration. Slerotin the Wily, The One Possessed, a wizard with no equal in the ways of arcane science, no peers in sheer imagination and prowess.

Slerotin died within weeks of his last great work, the magical creation of a miles-long tunnel that allowed eleven Suel tribes to flee their devastated homeland for safety in the east. A clutch of Suel warlocks, servitors, artists, intellectuals, petty nobles, and cultists split from their fellow migrants after reaching fertile ground in the shadows of the mineral-rich Abbor-Alz Mountains. Under the leadership of Slerotin's eight mighty apprentices, these misfits formed House Maure, a new "family" built upon the precepts of arcane exploration and immorality. They ruled their subjects from the imposing Maure Castle, a monolithic edifice carved of night-black granite.

As decades passed, the scions of House Maure grew more and more insular. Public appearances by the family's eldest members grew less and less frequent. Those who lived under the Maure's brutal rule whispered tales of dark winged figures alighting upon the structure's crumbling towers and a nocturnal grating cacophony emerging from below Maure Castle. Eventually, the Maure sealed themselves within their castle, abandoning the outside world to focus on their own concerns.

Given Maure Castle's proximity to the infamous City of Greyhawk, haven of explorers, adventurers, and thieves, it was only a matter of time before the greedy and the curious penetrated the structure's magical seals. Until the early part of the last century, the upper levels and first several dungeon floors of the complex served as a training ground for tomb robbers and thrillseekers. Survivors looted countless bags of treasure and priceless corpses of unusual creatures from the edifice, spreading word of Maure riches as far as the Great Kingdom and Blackmoor.

Then, several levels below the surface, explorers encountered a seal they could not penetrate. Within months, Maure Castle's accessible passages and chambers were barren of wealth. Only a few of the most dedicated explorers remained at the site, uniformly men of dark character whose desperation to unlock the castle's forbidden arcana drove them ever onward...

— *DUNGEON Magazine* #112 July 2004, p.12

*After proceeding eastward for about ten minutes along a downward-sloping passage, you come at last to a T intersection, with a short hallway continuing to the north and another leading south into darkness. A large eight-pointed star design has been chiseled into the stone floor at the intersection. The points of the star are entirely cleaned out, as if something is meant to be inset into the shallow depressions.*

**Eight-Pointed Star:** The star design is a planar transportation device created by the progenitors of the Maure line. Disciples of Slerotin, the last Mage of Power of the effete Suel Imperium, these apprentices held the secret keys to the mystery of Power Magic, a timelost arcane method that granted mortals unimaginable dominion over reality. The wicked-hearted apprentices yearned to master the secrets of Power Magic, but without Slerotin's guidance they lacked the knowledge to do so without risking destruction. Instead, they took the long view, hoping that their Maure

## SECRETS OF THE SUEL IMPERIUM

descendants would one day gain the requisite power and experience to make Power Magic their own.

After initiating a group of their apprentices as the masters of the House, the Suel warlocks carved the eight-pointed star design into the floor of this corridor. They infused the triangular metal tips of the star design with mystical pathways to eight distinct demiplanes and retreated from Oerth, each taking an eighth of Slerotin's writings on their mysterious journey. After their departure, the new scions of House Maure removed eight metal triangles from the design and spread them throughout the world. One day, they reasoned, the Maure would gather the power and experience to retrieve the metal triangles and follow their forebears to distant planes. With Slerotin's writings united once more, they would initiate a new dominion.

Instead, House Maure grew more and more decadent as the decades and centuries passed, and even those members of the family who still remain entombed in the dungeons of the ancestral castle have forgotten the significance of the eight-pointed star.

— *DUNGEON Magazine* #112 July 2004, p.19

**Octych (Crimson):** A triangular shard of crimson metal the size of a halfling's hand. The shard radiates strong conjuration (teleportation) magic, and acts as a portal key when placed in the correct recess of the eight-pointed star symbol upon the floor of area **1** of Maure Castle (*DUNGEON* #112). The resulting portal leads to a dangerous demiplane called *The Pinnacle Peaks*.

— *DUNGEON Magazine* #134 May 2006, p.85

**Octych (Deep Blue):** This triangular plane of deep blue metal, about the size of a garden spade's blade, emits a strong conjuration (teleportation) aura. While it provides no game rule benefit as yet, you know it and similar items are desired by powerful factions in the Flanaess, including Luz and the Scarlet Brotherhood. It will most definitely come into play in a future adventure.

— *Return to the Ghost Tower of Inverness*, p.26/p.33

*At the far end of this passage, a large fifteen-foot high stone portal built directly into the back wall features four golden dragon glyphs built into it. At the apex of the portal, several gems surround a golden half-sun crowned by a triangular shard of yellowish-gold metal the size of a halfling's hand. Surrounding the portal are two permanent circles of protection carved to either size, keeping intruders out. At the center, the portal opens into a starry sky with violet and black wisps of cloud here and there.*

**Octych (Yellowish-Gold):** The portal acts as a persistent *gate* spell that can be activated once per day if the proper command word is spoken and a successful caster level check DC 27 is made. The current command word is "Y".

The triangular yellowish-gold shard radiates strong conjuration (teleportation) magic, and acts as a portal key when placed in the correct recess of the eight-pointed star symbol upon the floor of area **1** in the Great Hall of Maure Castle. The resulting portal leads to a hidden demiplane called *The Solemn Vale*.

*You and your companions appear in a small stone chamber. In its center, a triangular wedge of orange metal no larger than a human's thumb floats in a pillar of white light. You recognize this wedge as an Octych. If it is not the key to your own world, perhaps it opens that of a friend.*

**Octych (Orange):** As soon as a PC touches the *Octych*, both the shaft of light and the fields of orange energy vanish. The hallway becomes an empty stone passage, and the visions the PCs received grow hazy, like distantly remembered dreams. Only the *Octych* remains—a solid link to the trials they have endured. This item does indeed serve as a key to another world, but the details are left to you to decide.

— Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk, p.172

### Castle Inverness

Throughout his long career, the Seer has gathered many artifacts steeped in ancient lore in an attempt to garner personal power. Since he was a nearly pure-blooded Suel with strong ties to the nobility of the Suloise Duchy of Urnst, the Seer soon became fixated with the mythical Power Magic wielded by the Suel wizards of old. Studying fragments of histories official and forbidden, the Seer discovered that the migrating Suel brought the secret of Power Magic with them on their great migration, even though they knew that power had the potential to annihilate empires.

The Seer eventually discovered that a cabal of apprentices of the Suloise Power Mage Slerotin held the key to Power Magic, and that they divided those secrets into eight parts, which in turn were hidden in demiplanes located off the reality axis of Maure Castle, one of the earliest settlements in what would become the Duchy of Urnst. Each demiplane could be reached by using an *Octych*, one of eight colored triangular metal wedges that could be placed in a star pattern on the floor of Maure Castle's dungeons, thus opening a trans-dimensional gate. After elevating himself to the position of Court Wizard to House Lorinar, the Seer managed to secret his way into Urnst's treasury, where the forgotten *Octych* sat amidst piles of treasure. He stole the *Octych*, of course.

The trouble was, he didn't know how to use it. He enlisted the help of a comrade, Eli Tomorast, a fellow Seeker of dubious character. Tomorast had stumbled across the *Tome of the Black Heart* in 565 CY in a curio shop in Greyhawk City and within its fell pages had discovered much lore regarding the *Octychs* and their uses. Other passages also contained additional information regarding Inverness and the *Soul Gem*. Sharing his knowledge with the Seer the two plotted to activate the *Octych* they possessed and open a gate to the demiplane beyond.

Combining his knowledge with that of the Seer, Eli had discovered and prepared the chamber featuring the star pattern, and all seemed in readiness. Then, disaster struck. Tomorast was killed by Mordenkainen and the Citadel of Eight, and Eli's lair was sacked and his servants slain. With such fearsome foes as Mordenkainen and Bigby exploring the castle, the Seer reluctantly turned his attention elsewhere, hoping that the interest of the Citadel would eventually fade.

During his research into Suel Power Magic, he learned that the Maure Suel had stopped at a ruined castle of Pre-

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Flan origin on the shores of Woolly Bay. Passages within the *Tome of the Black Heart* recounted how as the Suel explored the fortress, Ontovar, one of Slerotin's apprentices, was allegedly trapped inside a powerful magical artifact known as the *Soul Gem*. The Seer ventured to the Castle himself, intent to wrest Ontovar from the trap of the *Soul Gem*, hoping to gain more information about the mystery of the *Octychs*.

In 570 CY or so, the Seer came upon Forbitan during his exploration of Inverness. Forbitan was a Silent One of Keoland whose adventuring group had come to grief upon entering the chamber of the *Soul Gem*. The Silent One instantly distrusted the Seer, and the two engaged in a powerful magical struggle. During the battle, Forbitan learned that the Seer sought a soul known as Ontovar, who had been captured during the time of the Great Migrations. (Forbitan did not know of Ontovar's relationship to Power Magic or Slerotin—had he known, he would have attempted to destroy the *Soul Gem* on principle, sacrificing his friends to prevent the spread of Power Magic.) Forbitan defeated the Seer, who parleyed his *Octych* in return for his freedom. Forbitan didn't know what the item was, but he knew that it was extremely valuable to the untrustworthy archmage.

His plans in disarray, the Seer retreated to Leukish to assume a more central role in court life and to perhaps seek out a patron able to further his ambition. Appointed Chief Magical Councilor to the Duke he trained many minor nobles in the magical arts. Two of his most famed pupils however, Warnes Starcoat and Jallarzi Sallavarian, discovered their teacher's predilection for dark, forbidden rituals and removed themselves from Urnst so shocked were they by what they witnessed. Their dire warnings fell on deaf ears and so the Seer was left to whisper his dreams of power into the ears of the new duke...

— *Return to the Ghost Tower of Inverness*, p.4

**Ontovar's Soul Sphere:** This fist-sized sphere of white crystal allegedly contains the soul of Ontovar, which was carved from the *Soul Gem* of the Ghost Tower of Inverness by Fortiban, an ancient Silent One of Keoland. It's warm to the touch and radiates a strong necromantic aura when viewed by *detect magic*. Although it provides no game rule benefit, it will come into play in a future adventure.

— *Return to the Ghost Tower of Inverness*, p.26/p.33

## Epic Spells

You dream of power.

In shades of shrieking red, endless black, and brilliant yellow, the cosmic forces underlying the multiverse make themselves known to you. Inexplicable equations scribed in a thousand forgotten alphabets take up arcane orbit around your head... but you understand them. What's more, something you suspected all along is now revealed to you in full: Reality is a fragile thing, composed of a host of forces beyond the ken of most, awaiting only the hand that knows and eyes that see. Power beckons. Are you ready?

You've heard about spells that transcend the commonly understood arts, scribed in the margins of ancient tomes and whispered among the acolytes of mageguilds. In various times and places, epic spells have been personified as

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“the Serpent,” codified as True Dweomers, and encoded as part of an ancient lore called the Language Primeval. Whether epic spells really are straight from the Serpent's maddening whispers or are revealed to you over countless curious volumes of hidden lore, you are ready to grasp the ultimate level of mortal magic.

Casting epic spells is nothing less than the direct manipulation of reality itself. Even deities fear mortal casters of epic spells.

**Beyond 9th-level Spells:** Epic spellcasters begin to understand how magic really works. Through application of formidable intellect, vast wisdom, or sheer force of personality, a spellcaster can manipulate cosmic and personal energy directly. Such a spellcaster is released from the shackles imposed by level-dependent spell casting. The classification of power by level loses all meaning to the caster of epic spells.

The tradeoff for such transcendent power is time and resources. Developing and casting epic spells is a time-consuming and costly undertaking. Only spellcasters who have already mastered the ability to cast 9th-level spells can hope to tread the road of epic spellcasting.

**What Are Epic Spells?** Epic spells are spells developed from the ground up using a list of magical ingredients called seeds. Despite their power, epic spells still follow the basic rules for casting spells.

Epic casters can manipulate the seeds of true magic, but knowing the seeds and how to manipulate them does not instantly grant ultimate power. Each epic spell must be laboriously developed before it can be used.

**Epic Spellcasting:** Once an epic spell is developed, the caster knows the spell. A developed spell becomes an indelible part of the caster and may be prepared without a spellbook (if a wizard is the caster). Characters who cast spells spontaneously, such as sorcerers, can cast a developed epic spell by using any open epic spell slot. Druids, clerics, and similar spellcasters can likewise prepare epic spells using epic spell slots. A spellcaster can prepare or cast any epic spell she knows as many times per day as she has available epic spell slots.

A spellcaster who can cast epic spells has a number of open epic spell slots per day equal to one-tenth her ranks in the Knowledge skill appropriate to the spell and the caster's class. Knowledge (arcana) is appropriate for arcane casters, and Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (nature) is appropriate for divine casters. Thus, a spellcaster with 24 ranks in Knowledge (arcana) and 31 ranks in Knowledge (religion) could cast two arcane epic spells and three divine epic spells in any 24-hour period—think of it as two arcane epic spell slots and three divine epic spell slots. The rules for rest between casting a day's allotment of epic spells are the same as for rest required to prepare standard spells. If the caster doesn't use up a day's allotment of epic spell slots, the unused slots remain available whether or not the spellcaster receives appropriate rest.

Even if the epic spell has been developed and an epic spell slot is available, successfully casting an epic spell isn't assured. The caster's Spellcraft skill modifier is vital for casting an epic spell. To cast an epic spell, a spellcaster makes a Spellcraft check against the epic spell's Spellcraft DC. If the check succeeds, the spell is cast. If the caster

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fails the check, the epic spell fizzles and the epic spell slot is used for the day.

Because epic spells require Spellcraft checks, a spell is beyond the caster's ability if the final Spellcraft DC is greater than  $20 +$  the spellcaster's Spellcraft modifier. Epic spells with DCs higher than  $10 +$  the spellcaster's Spellcraft modifier are risky; a caster can take 10 when casting an epic spell, but she can't take 20. When routinely casting epic spells, most spellcasters take 10 on their Spellcraft checks.

**Epic Spell Levels:** Epic spells have no fixed level. However, for purposes of Concentration checks, spell resistance, and other possible situations where spell level is important, epic spells are all treated as if they were 10th-level spells.

**Metamagic, Items, and Epic Spells:** Metamagic feats and other epic feats that manipulate normal spells cannot be used with epic spells.

You can't craft a magic item that casts an epic spell, regardless of whether the item is activated with spell completion, a spell trigger, a command word, or simple use. Only major artifacts, which are beyond the means of even epic characters to create, can possibly contain magic of this power.

The saving throw against your epic spell has a DC of  $20 +$  your relevant ability score modifier. It's possible to develop epic spells that have even higher DCs, however, by applying the relevant factor

**Dispelling, Epic Spells, and Antimagic Field:** A lucky nonepic spellcaster casting *greater dispel magic* might be able to dispel an epic spell. The game mechanics do not change, and epic spells do not occupy any privileged position allowing them to resist being dispelled other than their presumably high caster level. Likewise, epic spells using the *dispel* seed can dispel nonepic spells. Such epic spells use the same game mechanic: The check to dispel is  $1d20 +$  a specified number (usually dispeller's level), and the DC is  $11 +$  the spellcaster's level.

*Antimagic field* does not automatically suppress epic spells as it does standard spells. Instead, each time an epic spell is subject to an *antimagic field*, make a dispel check as a 20th-level caster ( $1d20 + 20$ ). The epic spell has a DC of  $11 +$  the epic spell's spellcaster level. If the suppression check is successful, the epic spell is suppressed like any other spell. If the dispel check is unsuccessful, the epic spell functions normally.

**Developing Your Own Epic Spell:** An epic spell is developed from smaller pieces called seeds and connecting pieces called factors. Every epic seed has a base Spellcraft DC, and every factor has a Spellcraft DC adjustment. When a desired spell is developed, the spellcaster spends resources and time to assemble the pieces that make up the epic spell. The base Spellcraft DCs of each seed are added together; then the DC adjustment of the factors are added to that total. The sum equals the final Spellcraft DC for the epic spell.

The final Spellcraft DC is the most significant gauge of the epic spell's power. A spellcaster attempts to cast an epic spell by making a Spellcraft check against the epic spell's Spellcraft DC. Thus, a spellcaster knows immediately,

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based on her own Spellcraft bonus, what epic spells are within her capability to cast, which are risky, and which are beyond her. Epic casters don't commit time and money to develop epic spells until they are powerful enough to cast them.

An epic spell developed by an arcane spellcaster is arcane, and an epic spell developed by a divine spellcaster is divine. A character who can cast both divine and arcane epic spells chooses whether a particular spell he develops will be arcane or divine. If that same caster uses the heal or life seed in an epic spell, that spell is always considered divine.

**Development Is An Art:** Be creative when combining seeds and factors. Many times developing a completely new epic spell requires some guesswork and rule stretching. As with making and pricing magic items, a sort of balancing act is required. Often, you will need to stretch the description of a seed to meet your needs. Developing obscure, unusual epic spells is possible, even if you aren't sure how to put together the seeds and factors.

For example you may want to develop a spell that moves an enemy's soul into an inanimate object. No seed specifically describes this ability. It's time to be creative. You see that the *transport* seed might provide the basic effect you are after; you are moving something, even if it's not physical. You decide that the *transport* seed could be used to transport a soul instead of a body, without adjusting the DC. (The target will of course get a Will save, even if you succeed at touching the target.) Normally, you can't transport a physical object into another one, but because you're transporting an intangible "object" into a physical object, you impose an ad hoc factor of +4 DC. You also realize that to trap an insubstantial soul in a physical object, you'll have to use the *compel* seed as well, forcing the soul to remain within the object you send it to.

**Setting Epic Seed Spellcraft DCs:** Spellcraft DCs for epic seeds are generated from a base DC of 10. Why 10? Many basic effects in D&D have DCs that start at 10, so epic seeds have the same foundation as skill checks, saving throws, and other effects.

The actual DC for each seed is figured by looking at the lowest-level spell that's truly representative for a given seed among the spells in the *Player's Handbook*. Using that spell as a basis, the maximum ranks in Spellcraft that a sorcerer powerful enough to cast the spell would have determines the base Spellcraft DC of the seed. That number is added to the base DC of 10.

For example, the *animate dead* spell in the *Player's Handbook* is the lowest-level representative of the *animate dead* seed. A sorcerer would have to be 8th level to cast it. An 8th-level sorcerer has a maximum of 11 ranks in Spellcraft. So,  $11 + 10 = 21$ , and the Spellcraft DC of the *animate dead* seed is 21.

**Recorded Onto Stone Tablet:** Epic spells inscribed on stone tablets were usually developed by spellcasters deep in the mists of history, although a new epic spell could also be developed this way if the creator is willing to share the discovery. Epic spells may only be inscribed on stone tablets or substances of equal or greater hardness. Once a spell is so inscribed, another epic spellcaster can learn it without going through the process of development. Once an

inscribed epic spell is learned by another epic spellcaster in this fashion, the tablet upon which it is inscribed is destroyed and cannot be mended.

— *Epic Level Handbook*, p.71

### **Slerotin's Manifesto**

According to Suloise folklore, Slerotin was the Last Mage of Power of the Suel Imperium, and when the *Rain of Colorless Fire* destroyed the kingdom during the Age of Glory, it was Slerotin who led the Suloise people out of the Sea of Dust and into the lands of the Flan. The same account also states that, in order to facilitate the migration, Slerotin opened a magical tunnel through the Hellfurnaces, and once his charges were through, he sealed it with a spell that would last a millennium.

Although some historians question the validity of that particular tale—due mostly to their inability to believe that a single wizard could possess the magical might necessary to open a tunnel through the Hellfurnaces—there is one source that seems to confirm the story: *Slerotin's Manifesto*.

The existence of *Slerotin's Manifesto* was but a rumor until 326 CY, when it was discovered in the Hool Marshes by a band of warriors from the Yeomanry. (How the *Manifesto* found its way into the Hool Marshes remains a mystery.) Needless to say, the warriors didn't know what to make of it, and gave it to a Keoish merchant in exchange for trade goods.

The merchant, who recognized the *Manifesto* for what it was, immediately headed for Niole Dra where he expected to sell the tome to the local Wizards' Guild for a hefty profit. Unfortunately, he never completed the journey, for he was slain by bandits while skirting the edge of the Dreadwood, and the *Manifesto* was stolen.

For more than a century thereafter, the *Manifesto's* history became a jumble of confusion, for it seemed to zig-zag across the central Flanaess due to a series of thefts, trades, and monetary transactions. This randomness ended in 441 CY when the book came into the possession of Linia Hoistreth, the Lady Sage of Safeton. Already a specialist in Suloise history, Linia found the *Manifesto* to be an indispensable component to her work. In fact, much of what present-day scholars know of *Slerotin's Manifesto* is due to the Lady Sage's meticulous notes.

Linia owned the book until her death in 492 CY, whereupon her library (including the *Manifesto*) was donated to the local Sages' Guild. Due to an inventory error, however, the *Manifesto* was misplaced and ended up in a forgotten warehouse in Safeton's Wharf District.

*Slerotin's Manifesto* remained stored away until 524 CY, when the elven wizard/thief Sylvanon Sunshimmer finally caught up to it after tracking it for more than a century. Using magic to bolster his thief talents, Sylvanon easily penetrated the warehouse and made off with the tome. Unfortunately for Sylvanon, his victory did not last, for two months later, an unknown thief stole it from his quarters while the elf was out for his evening meal.

For several decades thereafter, rumors maintained that the book never left the Wild Coast region, though there is evidence that it was in Highport for a time. Despite all this, its next confirmed appearance was not in the Wild Coast at all, but in the city of Scant in Onnwal. Confirmation came in 577 CY via Archmage Bigby, a longtime resident of Scant.

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In a report to the Circle of Eight, Bigby stated: “*Slerotin's Manifesto does indeed exist and is held in the temple of Wee Jas here in Scant. I was given leave to confirm the tome's authenticity, but nothing more. If the situation changes, you will be informed.*”

This history of *Slerotin's Manifesto* ends there, but with the coming of the Greyhawk Wars and the subsequent fall of Onnwal, most scholars assume the book is now in the hands of the Scarlet Brotherhood. If this is the case, then the *Manifesto* has come full circle, having returned to the Suel people. If not, then there is no telling where and when it will turn up next.

**Appearance:** *Slerotin's Manifesto* is an odd-looking tome, being 2' long, 1' wide, and 3" thick. The covers and spine consist of the thick, mottled green hide of a common troll. The pages, also troll skin, are sewn together with troll hair and attached to the spine via troll sinew, and the words thereupon are written with troll blood. In fact, close examination reveals that the entire tome is made of troll parts; there is no lock, clasp, or edging.

Although the book's materials approach the macabre, their use was a stroke of genius on Slerotin's part. Due to many permanent enchantments, the troll parts have retained their regeneration ability (though it won't become an actual troll). Thus, unless subjected to fire or acid, the *Manifesto* always repairs itself when damaged, which has enabled it to endure the passage of time.

**Contents:** *Slerotin's Manifesto* is divided into three distinct sections, each devoted to a separate topic, though the entirety of the work is written in the Ancient Suloise language.

The first section functioned as a personal log, and gives a highly detailed chronicle of Slerotin's involvement in the Suloise migrations. Although the section provides much insight into the trials and tribulations the Suel tribes faced, the bulk of it is tedious reading to anyone save the most resolute historians.

The second portion of the tome involves various techniques for building stone constructs such as stone golems and caryatid columns (*Fiend Folio*, page 30), though most of the information takes the form of general observations regarding the subject. However, this section closes with a complete formula for the construction of a juggernaut (*Monster Manual II*, page 132).

The final section contains a large but fragmentary selection of spells, suggesting that the *Manifesto* was not Slerotin's primary source of spells, despite the inclusion of one spell of his own devising. They appear in the following order: 0—*detect magic, read magic*; 1st—*detect secret doors, magic missile*; 2nd—*darkvision, web*; 3rd—*bands of Sirellyn*<sup>SC</sup>, *daylight, deeper darkvision*<sup>SC</sup>, *dispel magic, explosive runes*; 4th—*stone shape*; 5th—*passwall, summon monster V, transmute mud to rock, transmute rock to mud*; 6th—*disintegrate, greater sign of sealing*<sup>SC</sup>, *move earth*; 7th—*arcane spellsurge*<sup>DrM</sup>, *greater teleport, prismatic spray*; 8th—*antipathy, prismatic wall, sympathy*; 9th—*foresight, meteor swarm, prismatic sphere, Slerotin's fortitude*.

— DRAGON Magazine #241 November 1997, p.79

## Coinage

*"I had no idea the Imperium was so different from our own modern culture. As I said in a previous letter, I had uncovered a currency chart in Slerotin's Manifesto: 1/5 mithral ember = 1 platinum ingot = 2 gold wheels = 20 silver rods = 100 amber chips = 200 perfume orbs. The chart made little sense to me; because I did not understand the context. Further reading has revealed currency descriptions for the Suel Imperium, at least in the latter years. The following coins were commonly referenced as embers, ingots, wheels, rods, chips and orbs.*

*'Mithral Embers' were flat irregular coins, consisting of mithral metal and the reddish mineral cinnabar. The resulting appearance gave the coin a 'hot coal' look, hence the name mithral 'embers'. The metals used to make these coins were mined by the Baklarran dwarves of what was then known as the Suel Halt mountains. The dwarves sold the Imperium the mithral primarily due to the natural cinnabar taint. Because of the cinnabar infusion, the metal was unusable in weapons or other magical items. However, there was no more beautiful coin than the mithral ember.*

*Markings on one side showed a griffon flying over the capital city Suendrako, the emperor's name, and the year of minting. The reverse of the coin had the flaming skull symbol of the goddess Wee Jas. This coin was usually preferred by aristocrats, mages, and dwarves.*

*'Platinum Ingots' were thick flat rectangular rounded edged blocks of pure platinum, roughly equal to the size of 5 platinum pieces today. On one side was imprinted the year of minting beneath the Temple of the Magi. The reverse was engraved with an inverted ziggurat that had a barely distinct mauve gleam to it. Platinum ingots were usually preferred by priests.*

*'Gold Wheels' were large round coins, the size of what would be 10 gold pieces worth of gold today (I believe one reason gold was so plentiful were the numerous wild aurumvorax—but this is pure speculation). On one side of the coin was the likeness of the current emperor, the year of stamping and the words 'EMPIRE FOR LIFE' in bold lettering. The reverse pictured a sun shining brightly on a fertile plain. Gold wheels were usually preferred by warriors.*

*'Silver Rods' were rectangular flat coins, having rounded corners and a square hole in the center much like modern coins of Jumre in the County of Ulek. The coins contain roughly what would equal 2 silver pieces today. This coin had the 'dragon turtle' symbol of the god Xerbo minted on both sides. Along the top edge was the year of minting.*

*The rods were placed on a rack for counting, the long coin shape fitting neatly into tiny grooves. This counting rack was called a yoruba, and was a common possession of both foreign traders and domestic merchants of the Suel Imperium. This was the coin of trade among city folk and seamen.*

*'Amber Chips' were beautifully polished thumbnail sized chunks of fossilized resin, moderately flat on one side. The currency used to look like chipped pieces before it was standardized, hence the moniker 'chips' become a misnomer. If the amber contained an insect or other trapped creature, the value of the coin could have as much as tripled (but in a few areas the reverse was true).*

*Chips were weighed and issued by the government, and the only marking was the date etched on the flat side. The amber itself was mined by some now extinct local clansgnomes who sold it to the Imperium. Humanoid mercenaries were usually paid in this commodity, and mercenary humanoids and farmers usually preferred the amber coins.*

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*'Perfume Orbs' were white spherical orbs of perfume crystals. Each was pressed into shape by a special tool, and usually hung on a thin string or chain by a hole through its center. The perfume crystals were extracted by derro slaves in the mines of Popo-Ri. The mine was effectively destroyed along with the Suel Basin, but I suspect the miners survived in their caves. Copper later came to replace the vacuum left by the lost perfume commodity. Like copper, this 'coin' was usually used by the poorer Suel folk.*

*As you can see by my ramblings, the Suel Imperium was wise in its use of local materials in the assembling of its currency. Soon we will bring back the glory that was rightfully ours."*

**— from a letter to Brother Bylew from Brother Delekk,  
City of Hesuel Ilshar, Sunsebb 9, 6099 sd**

Coin	Orb	Chip	Rod	Wheel	Ingot	Ember	Weight
Perfume Orb (po)	1	1/2	1/10	1/100	1/200	1/1,000	—
Amber Chip (ac)	2	1	1/5	1/50	1/100	1/500	1/500 lb.
Silver Rod (sr)	10	5	1	1/10	1/20	1/100	1/25 lb.
Gold Wheel (gw)	100	50	10	1	1/2	1/10	1/5 lb.
Platinum Ingot (pi)	200	100	20	2	1	1/5	1/10 lb.
Mithral Ember (me)	1,000	500	100	10	5	1	1/50 lb.

— Suel Imperium: Age of Glory, p.24

### The Orbs of Dragonkind

*"My dearest friend and ally, Johanna,*

*Your letter of the 5th arrived here in my residence on the same night, as no doubt you hoped it would, but I fear I was dining out alone that evening in a vain attempt to calm my anxieties over your safety; I did not enter my study until last night. I regret I was not here to read your words and share in your grief, as I do now. Please accept my apologies and know that I wept long when I read of your poor family's fate. I remember your two brothers as if they were my own. I curse the beasts who delivered them and all in Chathold to such unspeakable evil. There will be vengeance for this from me, I swear this night by Boccob's brow, a vengeance that will burn even the heart of a fiend.*

*I must also tell you that I was profoundly distressed to read of the rumors you have heard regarding a white orb said to have been seen in the claws of the Great Murderer of Almor, Duke Szeffrin. This was news of the worst sort, and your report regarding the powers that the orb is said to possess has only fed my nightmare that a true artifact has fallen into the possession of our hated enemies. That this orb is held by an undead wretch such as Szeffrin is ghastly news; between this and word of your brothers, I have been robbed of my appetite, and I have scarcely eaten for a day now. I have sent urgent word to Mordenkainen through Jallarzi to meet with him, since he has resources that I lack, but she returned and said he was "out," likely swapping tales with that vile goat of a spell-hurler from Faerûn—rot him for delaying Mord in this hour of need! But I have been tardy as well, and we must as a consequence handle this matter*

on our own.

*The “white sphere” that you described as “engraved with myriad serpents or dragons” is very likely one of our world’s Orbs of Dragonkind. You have heard of these, assuredly, but in the event that you have made no further study of these artifacts, I am attaching a copy of a short paper I wrote on this subject, which I read before the Eight only four years past on Midsummer’s Night, 581 cY. At the time, this information was little more than a part of a pet project to catalog the three or four dozen families of artifacts of this great continent of Oerik, but now the matter lies at the center of my worst dreads.*

*The information that I impart to you must be kept only to yourself for now. Thanks to my many private connections among the nobility of the central Flanaess, I have had access to records in archives and libraries where no outsider would normally be welcome, much less left alive once discovered. The general release of this information would, first, endanger my treasured connections and, second, threaten our whole, bloodied world, as it might motivate any number of individuals and forces, from greedridden half-heroes down to such Abyss-spawned nightmares as sit upon the thrones of Dorakaa and Rauxes to go in search of these orbs and the great powers they possess. You and I would be in the very snake pit of danger ourselves, since some of my research drew upon materials secured in ruins beneath the Sea of Dust, guarded by intolerant fiends who would not appreciate knowing I had been there among their treasures. Read, then, and understand my fears...”*

Magical creations are sometimes developed in parallel to a surprising degree of similarity. One of the most famous cases of such independent convergence of thought concerns the *Orbs of Dragonkind*, examples of which have been recorded on no less than six different worlds. While the specifics of each case vary considerably, with such orbs covering a wide range in size, composition, power, number, and purpose, all such items were created with the intent of bestowing upon the user a measure of mastery over dragons. Doubtless, some such devices have inspired the creation of others, but certain dragon-affecting orbs seem to have had no antecedent in their lands—the *Dragon Orbs* of Ansalon, for example, or the *Orb of Draconic Influence* of Faerûn.

Why this consistent combination of orbs and dragon control? What is confusing to the commoner is obvious to anyone who has long studied the matter. The orb represents an eye, and eye contact is crucial among all dragons in establishing communication, dominance, and intent. No other geometric shape has the power so quickly to arrest a dragon’s attention and make it prey to whatever powers the user would work on the creature’s mind and will.

Oerth, it is well known, has its own *Orbs of Dragonkind*, but their oral and written history is poorly known even to the learned. Sages have long suspected a connection between these orbs and the long-lost Suel Imperium (Suloise Empire, Empire of the Suel, whatever), dead just over ten centuries. I have recently finished my own investigation into this topic, and I now offer you the results, sparing you my bibliography and the harrowing tale of my research until later this evening, after the fine dinner that I have prepared for your digestive education. Attend my words:

In the ancient days of the maturing Suel Imperium, starting about 3116 SD (–2400 cY), a great series of wars was fought between the emperor’s forces and the various monsters that populated the southern Crystalmist Mountains, what

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we now call the Hellfurnaces. The emperor, Inzhilem II of the House of Neheli-Arztin, was a surpassing wizard, the fifth such among the Suloise to be known as a Mage of Power. Inzhilem wished to establish mines deep within the Crystalmists to harvest rare minerals and crystals for his personal research, though he also had a niggling interest in throwing back some of the humanoid and draconic monsters that periodically raided the eastern provinces of his empire and reduced their taxable resources.

Imperial armies, even supported by military wizardry, found themselves hard pressed by their opposition. The great families of red dragons throughout the southern Crystalmists had enslaved limitless numbers of brutish humanoids for use as sword-fodder, originally to attack one another's territories or bring in additional treasures. These armies of orcs and goblkind were now turned upon the empire's soldiers, hurling themselves into battle with great ferocity and in numbers that well made up for their lack of skill or foresight.

In addition, these dragons were exceedingly skilled at magic; baneful extraplanar powers supplied them with secret knowledge of spellcasting in return for great sacrifices of wealth. Worse yet, certain of those red dragons had undergone sorcerous rituals that infused their living bodies with shadowstuff from the Plane of Shadow, granting them new and devastating powers. These were the first of the accursed shadow dragons, and they and their servants built a vast network of caverns, halls, and tunnels beneath the Crystalmists that exists even to this day. Even the great Vault of the Drow is said by some sources once to have been the cavern-hall of an elder shadow dragon of this bygone age, some treasures of which may still lie hidden thereabouts. (The gods grant us that these treasures yet remain undiscovered by the drow!)

Facing such evil strength, the army commanders sent word to Inzhilem that the issue was in doubt, and they asked for his personal intervention. Angered at first that his armies could do no more than hold their own against mere dragons and orcs, Inzhilem quickly became intrigued by the difficult problem posed by the Fiery Kings, as the troublesome dragons were known in the eastern lands. He returned to the capital to remedy the situation.

Historical references to Inzhilem's studies are sparse and contradictory. He was not in the habit of recording his thoughts and deeds for posterity's sake. It is recorded in several places, however, that Inzhilem called upon and gained the direct assistance of the Suel deity Wee Jas herself, who in those early days was of greater aspect and power than she is now, and less concerned with matters of death than of pure sorcery. Legend has it that other gods favoring humanity were involved as well, though their names are lost; indeed, some of them may now be dead and forgotten. Myth and legend claim that all these gods were benevolent, but I have grave reservations about this. Whatever sources he used, Inzhilem gained sufficient knowledge to produce a solution.

The emperor elected to construct a limited number of identical artifacts that would give his forces the ability to confront and destroy the Fiery Kings. Knowing the great importance that dragons attach to direct eye contact, which among the most paranoid and wicked of them is regarded as a challenge resulting in an immediate fight to the death, Inzhilem set upon the orb as the ideal form for these surpassing devices. Each orb would be carried into battle by a war-trained wizard and used to subdue, assault, or defend against all dragons present, while a group of elite soldiers and battle-priests who accompanied the wizard would move swiftly to finish off the draconic foes; this group would

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accompany a regular army, which would carry the battle to the dragon's humanoid supporters. This use of an orb with combined forces is important, as a single orb was not meant to be carried out alone against a many-talented foe like a dragon, much less the countless underlings who would soon overwhelm a lone orb-bearer. This misconception of the powers and uses of these orbs has likely undone more than one champion who was fortunate enough to gain an orb yet unfortunate enough to use it unwisely and alone, perishing as a consequence.

Furthermore, Inzhilem planned that each orb would be useful against every sort of evil dragon known, not merely against the red and shadow varieties. To accomplish this, Inzhilem was forced to have his entire collection of caged and charmed dragons in the capital gardens slain by sorcerous means. A portion of the blood, bone, brain, and spirit of each dragon was captured and imprisoned in each orb, though the orbs themselves were not meant to contain true intelligence as such. So strong were the enchantments with which Inzhilem hoped to fill the orbs that rumors flew that every cruel dragon on Oerth would fall prey to them, and the evil races of dragonkind would be wholly exterminated and cast into myth.

It was calculated that eight orbs would be enough to deal with matters in the east. According to one record I examined, Inzhilem secretly directed the Imperial Congress about the year 3156 SD (–2360 CY) to produce such wizards as would be necessary to assist him in the mighty enchantments that would have to be cast. Again, history fails to reveal all that followed, but one major event in the following years has survived for the telling. A smoldering feud within the House of Neheli-Arztin flared into violence in 3162 SD (–2354 CY), and Inzhilem II was slain and destroyed beyond recovery before the struggle had ended. The partial house of Arztin ceased to exist as a result of retaliation, and the victorious partial house of Neheli kept the throne. Ubrond Thrideen (“Third-Eye”) became emperor.

A devoted but unremarkable ruler, Ubrond apparently continued the project to produce the orbs and saw it through to its finish, but considerable interference took place and the original plan for the project went inexplicably awry. Eight orbs were still made (the date of their completion has been lost, but it was after 3166 SD (–2350 CY)), but the orbs were now of differing sizes and powers, each oriented toward the control of dragons of differing ages. The reason for this alteration has never been made clear, as it certainly reduced the effectiveness of these orbs when used in battle against dragons of ages older than allowed for by any one orb.

This alteration was not the only one made, and certainly some of these alterations were performed without the knowledge or approval of the emperor or his staff. I conjecture that the Fiery Kings were able to insinuate agents among the wizards involved in the project, and without Inzhilem's ability to grasp the full scope of the work and oversee the critical details, errors and even curses were worked into many of the final products. It is clearly known, for instance, that each *Orb of Dragonkind* possesses a malign, innate intelligence that attempts to overwhelm and destroy any user. Furthermore, each orb was given the power to affect good and neutral dragons as well as evil ones—an obvious addition by the Fiery Kings.

Once finished, the eight orbs were given names corresponding to the age level of the dragons they were meant to fight. In order from the smallest orb up, they were the *Orb of the Hatchling*, the *Orb of the Wyrmkinn*, the *Orb of the Dragonette*, the *Orb of the Dragon*, the *Orb of the Great Serpent*, the *Orb of the Firedrake*, the *Orb of the Elder Wyrm*,

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and the *Orb of the Eternal Grand Dragon*. When not activated, each orb was a light, solid sphere of purest white jade, completely and elaborately carved with the entwined figures of dragons in battle with one another. None of these orbs could be damaged in the least by mundane forces, nor could any beast or animated construct bring them harm. If there were any means developed for their destruction, they have long been lost.

It may be presumed that these orbs were delivered to the Suloise armies and brought into combat with the Fiery Kings, but there is a break in the historical record here. A curious fragment exists that appears to be a message from a provincial lord to the emperor—whose name is not given—asking for the latter's intervention to “deliver us from those who hold the stolen Globe.” Considerable strife between army commanders is also noted in some dispatches from the eastern provinces, with several references to a renegade officer, apparently mad, who called himself the King of the Fire Kings. It is apparent that one or more of the orbs either fell into enemy hands, was seized as part of a coup, or possessed a power or curse that led its user into insanity or rebellion.

As best as can be told, only five of the orbs remained in the hands of the Suel until the time just before the *Rain of Colorless Fire*. I managed to secure several authoritative accounts—from a source I cannot discuss openly, so I must beg your forgiveness—that list these five as the *Orb of the Hatchling*, the *Orb of the Dragonette*, the *Orb of the Dragon*, the *Great Firedrake's Orb*, and the *Orb of the Elder Wyrms*. Some of you are surely aware of the contrary legends that five, not eight, orbs exist on our world, and I believe that this discrepancy resulted because three had been lost or fallen into the hands of the enemies of the Suel in the empire's last days. I think that the Baklunish held at least one orb, but I have as yet found no evidence of this; perhaps our resident Kettite, Rary, will investigate and enlighten us! Despite the slight renaming of some of the orbs in late-empire records, I believe the missing original orbs to have been the *Orb of the Wyrmskin*, the *Orb of the Great Serpent*, and the most powerful of them all, the *Orb of the Eternal Grand Dragon*.

After the *Rain of Colorless Fire*, the historical record is dotted with appearances of these orbs, but very rarely is the exact identity of each orb known for certain. Obviously, most or all of the orbs were transported out of the empire before it was burnt into ashes. One orb, a small one said to be the size of a man's fist, was held in Rauxes by the Overkings in the youthful days of Aerdy, until it was stolen after two centuries by unknown thieves. Another, a larger one, was discovered and lost in 311 CY by explorers in the Hellfurnaces, though this report is confusing in details. Everyone in the Flanaess must know the tale of the mad Zagig Yragerne, who is said to have taken a large white crystal ball with him when he left this city one spring day in 361 CY and returned the following week with a hoard of treasure such as only a succession of kings would know, using some of these riches of course to build Castle Greyhawk. He returned here without the white ball, however, and never spoke of it nor even acknowledged its existence before or afterward.

I have counted about two dozen other confirmed or probable appearances of the orbs between the fall of the Suel Imperium and the present day. The location of only one orb is known for certain to our cozy group of the Eight: The *Orb of the Hatchling* is unquestionably held in Rauxes, as Mordenkainen himself was able to demonstrate to our satisfaction last year. It is almost certainly the same orb held by Aerdy's early overkings, but we do not know yet where the orb was found, how it was recovered, the uses to which it is being put, or the identity of its true owner or master.

Unlike the sections of the fabled *Rod of Seven Parts*, the various *Orbs of Dragonkind* have never been reported to

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indicate the presence of any of their fellow orbs, for which I am sure we can all be thankful. No spell, not even a *wish*, and some say not even a god, will reveal the location of an orb; you simply have to be lucky enough to find one and know it for what it is. They seem to function independently of one another, though tales circulate the unexpected abilities become manifest when two orbs are brought into proximity of one another. I believe most of these stories are exaggerations and falsehoods, but I cannot discount the possibility. Time, perhaps, will tell.

What do the dragons think of the *Orbs of Dragonkind*? The dragons hate them, of course, as they would hate anything that would give mastery over them to some other race. There is only one tale of a dragon gaining an orb, but it is quite fanciful and its information is subject to grave doubt. The dragon in the tale slays a wicked knight who stole a magical white ball and attempted to control the beast. The dragon then took the ball into its lair and hid it away from humans forever. I cannot say what would happen if an orb was collected by a dragon, whether good or ill would result from this. Surely, I think, this has happened at least once in the past, but we do not know the truth.

You have all been most patient with me, and I now arrive at the core of my lecture. My research has also disclosed new information on the actual powers of these spheres. I will, as I mentioned earlier, cover my sources later. For now, here are those powers whose existence has been proven beyond doubt, as well as the most reliable information on other potential powers.

**Orb of the Hatchling:** This, the least of the eight orbs, is three inches across and easily fits into a pouch or pocket. As this orb was used in public by the early Aerdyn Overkings upon small captive dragons, its powers are clearly established for anyone who researches the matter.

This orb, like all of its kind, confers upon the one who holds it the ability to converse openly with any dragons within hearing, both understanding the dragons and being understood by them. Further, the orb upon command casts a charm that affects a single young dragon aged five years or less, of any type or scale color, the spell being so potent that the beast finds it difficult, if not impossible, to resist. Thus the dragon may be led into captivity or slain from surprise, if action is swift.

This orb has a mind of its own whose thoughts are devoted to wickedness and revenge. This is the weakest of all the orbs, and its mind is weak as well. Still, the user must have above-average intelligence and insight to maintain control over the globe, or else disaster results. This was sufficiently and tragically proven when Overking Erhart I allowed his eldest son to handle the *Orb of the Hatchling* in 98 CY; the orb proved too much for the youth, who evaded his father and threw himself over a parapet, dying of his injuries that evening. The orb was recovered in an undamaged state, of course, though it had fallen eighty feet to a stone-paved courtyard. After this, the orb was locked away beneath the castle until its theft only fifteen years later.

Beyond its ability to charm young dragons, this orb appears to confer a low degree of magical protection on the one using it. It also grants the user the ability to see heat sources in darkness out to forty yards, and it bestows the spell *clairvoyance/clairaudience* at least six times a day, at the user's will. It is thus useful, but hardly a grand artifact.

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**Orb of the Wyrmkín:** This remains one of the least known of the eight artifacts of its family. It likely confers the same communication powers of the next smaller orb but can charm dragons of slightly older ages. I would guess that it is four inches across. One of my sources refers to this orb as cursed but does not say in what way; the Suel hated to give away any secrets that an enemy might use against them, and they hated to admit to failure. We must pass this one by for now and move on.

**Orb of the Dragonette:** Interestingly, this orb is unmistakably mentioned several times in ancient Suloise literature. One wizard was said to have used the orb to fly over the countryside and scout for monsters and other enemies of the Suel Imperium, which the orb was capable of stunning. This five-inch orb vanished after the *Rain of Colorless Fire* and may still lie beneath the ash of the Sea of Dust.

**Orb of the Dragon:** This, like the previous orb, vanished without a trace after the fall of the Suel Imperium and probably still lies buried there. I discovered little about it, except that it was rarely used thanks to a flaw in its construction that killed one commander who used it. It is six inches in diameter.

**Orb of the Great Serpent:** Ah! This might have been the orb that Zagig himself used in that great battle in which he won his own dragon's hoard. Several legends and tales about the *Orbs of Dragonkind* refer to one the size of a man's head (this one would be seven inches, so it's about right) that could blast enemies with waves of cold and ice, or turn aside the largest red dragon's breath. A useful item to the Suloise long ago, no doubt! This orb is probably still at large somewhere in the Flanaess, but where, I cannot say.

**Orb of the Fire Drake:** All the comments I made about the previous orb apply to this one, too. This one would be eight inches across, but I have found no records to distinguish it from the other. I assume from the title that it is effective against red dragons, but who can say?

**Orb of the Elder Wyrm:** Nine inches across, this orb was the largest one in the Suel Imperium at the time of its fall, and it had a black reputation. Though it had great powers by all accounts, and could kill any beast with but a word from the user, tales have filtered down that the orb was alive in some way and demanded blood for its favors. This is very possible, as I have seen notes that convicted criminals were attached to the army unit to which this orb was assigned, but no provisions were sent along for the prisoners beyond food for a few days. Were they executed by the orb or its user? It is possible. Even the commanders were loathe to use this device in the face of attacks by dragons, so its evil nature must have been great.

**Orb of the Eternal Grand Dragon:** I would love to say that I know something about this orb, but oddly even the Suloise records are sparse about it, and the Suloise loved to brag when they had something worth bragging about.

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There is a note or two to the effect that this largest of all orbs, ten inches across, was kept securely locked away most of the time, but this is understandable if it was terribly powerful. It is curious, however, that there is no mention of its use during any battle.



This concludes my little look at the *Orbs of Dragonkind*, and not a moment too soon, as I believe our dinners should be ready at last. We will take this topic up again, but first—let us eat!

*“Johanna, I have little more to add to this missive; the hour is late, and I have much to do. I hope to join you in Almor by the morrow at dusk. Should you be discovered by unwholesome forces, you must destroy this letter at once and, dare I add, speak to no one of its contents. We must immediately seek out our common enemy, the murderous duke, and we must take from him that which he cannot be allowed to have. If the orb is indeed the size of the duke’s skull, as you have heard, then it is surely one of the most powerful of the orbs, and with it he could likely break the stalemate that has kept poor, crippled Nyronnd from total collapse and ruin. I will warn the rest of the Five of my intentions, but we cannot wait for them to act. Let us pray that Boccob has given us such insight and knowledge as we need to bring this crisis to a satisfactory close.*

*And if, as a consequence of our actions, grief should befall the Great Murderer of Almor, Szeffrin, then we may take home with us the cold certainty that your brothers—indeed, our whole ruined nation—have in some small way been avenged.*

*I remain ever faithfully yours, dear Johanna...”*

**— from a letter to Johanna from Otto,  
formerly of Almor, City of Greyhawk, Coldeven 8, 585 cy**

— DRAGON Magazine #230 June 1996, p.8

## Derro

*“My dear Mordenkainen,*

*Your inquiries into the origins of the derro following the recent discovery of them beneath our city streets will be satisfied in part by the account herein, taken from my personal investigations. The heroes who last month saw to the defeat of the serpentine Falcon and her derro followers saved us all from an unspeakable fate.*

*The creation of the derro, the only servant race of the Suloise whose generation was publicly known and debated, is an especially ugly page in our fragmentary history of the Suel Imperium. References to their creation and uses appear in several buried libraries in the eastern end of the Sea of Dust; I have made copies of some of these if you wish to examine them, though as usual I do not wish to reveal the exact location of my sources.*

*Approximately 1,800 years ago, after much debate, the Suloise Imperial Congress approved the creation of a new*

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*subject race of beings to serve as miners, delving into the earth in search of precious metals, gems, and magical compounds sought by the wealthy and politically powerful wizards of the empire. The race was bred from human and dwarven prisoners and slaves by means that do not bear description here. This new race was called the thurgamazar, Suloise for "little miners," but they became more popularly known as dwur-rohoi, "twisted dwarves," a term used by a Flan slave of the Suloise who saw the new race at work. Dwur-rohoi was corrupted over the centuries to dwurroh, then to derro.*

*The creation of this race produced a permanent rift in the Suloise pantheon. Fortubo, the industrious god of stone, metals, and mountains, was so outraged at the horrific mistreatment of the captive dwarves used by Suloise wizards to create the derro that he withdrew his favor from nearly all his human followers. Clerics of Fortubo were apparently later responsible for instigating numerous anti-imperial revolts among the empire's few dwarven slaves, free workers, and merchants. Fortubo's efforts to destroy the derro and punish the Suloise who created them were seen favorably by the dwarven gods Moradin and Berronar. They soon gave Fortubo his hammer-artifact Golbi and joined forces with him in the Flanaess to destroy enemies of the dwur-folk. Fortubo is the sworn enemy of the derro and their patron deity Diirinka, whose origin I do not know but which I suspect lies in the Suel Imperium's time.*

*The derro gained a great streak of possessiveness from their dwarven progenitors, but they craved magic and knowledge, not gold, perhaps as a result of their Suloise ancestry. The Suloise blood in them gifted the derro with extraordinary magical ability, and the dwarven resistance to magic was magnified further as well. But the derro temperament was most fully formed by their cruel mistreatment at the hands and spells of the surface-dwelling Suloise.*

*Their slavery came to an end 1,000 years ago, when the Baklunish Rain of Colorless Fire slew the Suloise above ground but failed to penetrate the deep mines dug out by the derro over their centuries of enforced servitude. Derro regard the Rain not as a disaster but as their deliverance and a blessing. There in the subterranean darkness they survived and prospered, looting the many ruins above them now buried deep under the ashen desert we call the Sea of Dust. In imitation of their former masters, the derro began taking slaves of every sort from neighboring races in the underworld, but especially from human adventures or survivors of the cataclysm. The derro continue this evil practice to this day.*

*Humans and dwarves of all worlds would be horrified to learn of the truth of derro ancestry, that our world Oerth is responsible for their creation. The dwarven priests of Fortubo know this today, and they rarely share it even with their followers though they act upon it to destroy their distant wicked kin. It is suggested here that this knowledge never leave our Circle, lest our world serve as a lightning rod for the wrath of those elsewhere whom the derro have tormented."*

**— from a letter to Mordenkainen from Otto,  
following the defeat of the Falcon,  
Reaping 22, 582 cy**

— DRAGON Magazine #241 November 1997, p.40

**Lerara**

*"Mordenkainen of the Circle, greetings.*

*It has been too long since I last heard from you. Your query is not unwelcome, but events of late leave me little time to reminisce about my childhood. Still, here is a brief sketch of my origins and people.*

*The folklore you quote is nearly accurate. The Suloise 'tribes' who entered the Flanaess after the Rain of Colorless Fire were actually a number of once-prosperous noble families and their retainers. Being on holiday, they escape the burning of Zinbyle, the ruined city in the Sea of Dust recently found by explorers from the Yeomanry. After the Rain died away, the survivors lived in barbarism, scavenging for food and stealing from the frocks of goat-herders in the foothills of the bordering Crystalmists. It was in such a condition a decade after the disaster that the greater wizard Slerotin found them, mistaking them at first for actual savages.*

*Slerotin heard the entreaties of the Suloise survivors, who could offer him nothing but gratitude in return for helping them cross the Crystalmists to the rich lands of the Flannae and demihumans. I believe he gave them his aid purely to sate his own ego, for he was never known for his charity before, but perhaps I wrong him. In any event, Slerotin summoned his power and opened a great tunnel directly through over 70 leagues of solid rock. In this way did the Suloise enter the Flanaess with Slerotin, meeting some of their own kind who had earlier crossed the Kendeen Pass (later destroyed by a volcano) and settled along the Javan River. The "tribes" in time became organized clans and noble Houses. They grew in strength, preyed upon Flan and olve and dwur alike, and ran afoul of the Oeridian hordes. You know what followed then.*

*Seventeen Suloise "tribes," including the local goat-herders, braved the Passage of Slerotin to reach what is now Yeomanry. An 18th group, the Lerara, entered late. Further delayed by a fight between several nobles, the Lerara were trapped with the passage when it was sealed. This little group of only 100-120 adults, with children and animals in tow, was forced to adapt to this dark land, thinking they were abandoned by the gods and cursed.*

*I was able to determine some years ago that I was actually born on 7 Needfest 333 cY. At the time of my birth, the Lerara had formed a stable of barbaric community of about 3,800 adults, with four smaller communities scattered along the central part of the Passage and in nearby tunnels. The Lerara had become exceedingly conservative, unwilling to take great risks in the dangerous environment they inhabited. A father's word was law in each family, and women and children were kept close to home-that being whatever dead-end tunnel the family held as its own-to tend fires, cook, make pots, and so forth. Hunters traveled in large groups, braving the darkness armed only with crude spears and javelins.*

*A new nobility of sorts formed among the family heads who oversaw the growing of mushroom crops and the training of hunters. The nobles were further supported by distilling poisons from certain fungi, then trading these to the treacherous drow in exchange for better weapons, food, tools, clothing, and training armorbacks (what you would call giant millipedes). The nobles would elect a governor among them, who served until voted out or dead. The Lerara might still live in such a manner, but I have never gone back to see the truth of it.*

*My childhood was not a happy one. My father, a minor noble, wanted a son and had me sent away when I was a*

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year old. You have heard from dear old Cobb Darg that I was sent to a “convent,” but he is gilding lead. I was sent to serve the Mother. Mordenkainen, you cannot in your worst nightmares conjure up a horror like the oozing, glowing Mother, who still haunts every moment of my sleep. I was an acolyte, if that is the right word, an assistant at the rituals in which the Mother's appetite for life energy was sated on sacrifices of the weakest of my people. I watched the old and the crippled and the diseased and the malformed be cast into the Mother's amoeboid embrace, and I saw them all die. I wake up every morning to the memory of their screams.

At the age of 16, I could take no more. I escaped the “convent” and fled through various caverns, running as far as I could get from the Mother and my people. I had expected to die, but instead I discovered an exit to the bright surface. Oh, that glorious, awful sun! It blinded my weak eyes, burned my white skin, and terrified me beyond words. But the upper world—such light, color, and beauty, such smells, such openness and grandeur and life! I fell to the ground and gave thanks to the gods, every one of them, for I was free, forever free.

I have rambled far too long. I have much to do these days to insure the safety of Irongate from the Scarlet Brotherhood and manage my own projects as well. If you are determined to learn more of the Lerara, you must send agents among them or go there yourself: The rediscovery of the Passage has attracted many explorers to the Yeomanry, and with the end of the Greyhawk Wars many soldiers are looking for work there, too. You could do not worse than to join the growing flood and send adventurers into the Passage to explore its depths and the imperial ruins in the Sea of Dust beyond. Be sure, however, that such groups are prepared for trickery, as the Lerara are sure to take them to meet the Mother personally, which will be your heroes' doom. If by chance these adventurers actually destroy the Mother, I would be amazed beyond words, though I fear the task will kill the heroes first.

If even this is not enough for you, be aware that when I fled from my people, I took with me one item from the treasures left by them in the Cavern of the Mother. That item was a notebook written by the hand of Slerotin himself, the Last Mage of Power of the Suel Imperium, left behind by him but recovered by the Lerara as they went through the Passage. In return for a favor—and a telling favor it will be, for my adopted city is in great peril in these evil days, thanks to the Scarlet Brotherhood—you may examine this notebook for a short time and delve its many secrets. I guarantee that it will be worth your while to do so.

*I trust I will hear from you shortly.”*

**— Yours sincerely,  
Elayne Mystica, Free City of Irongate,  
Growfest 3, 585 cy**

— DRAGON Magazine #241 November 1997, p.43

### Skulks

*“I was startled that you would ask me about troubles with skulks in Faerûn, as I've not heard about them of late. Are they troubling your City of Greyhawk? If so, they likely reached your world from our own. The skulks who lurk beneath Calimshan far to the south of Waterdeep have been there for millennia—I could not say exactly for how long—*

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*and it is likely they've migrated through long-lost gates to many worlds. We've determined that these skulks evolved ages ago from human captives of the drow under Calimshan, slaves who remained in the Underdark after being freed from their servitude by a giant lizard (claimed to be an avatar of Ibrandul by priests of that deity, as if their words could be trusted). I would write more on this, but we are preoccupied with certain political matters that you might find of interest, namely..."*

**— from a letter to Mordenkainen from Khelben "Blackstaff" Arunsun,  
City of Waterdeep, Ches 12, 1369 DR**

*"M., thank you for forwarding K.'s letter. His comments puzzle me greatly. O. and I, working with colleagues in Leukish, have strong evidence that skulks were deliberately created during the second millennium of the Suel Imperium, probably to serve their masters as House or Imperial assassins. You recall my investigation of the little-known Eight-House War of around 1100 SD, which could have sparked the inception of the skulks' use within the empire. It is wholly reasonable that they could have gotten out of the control of their creators and spread throughout the empire thereafter, despite the best efforts of all to command or exterminate them. Still, I fail to see how they are connected with the alleged reports of skulks in Faerûn. We are preparing our notes on this matter, but a final paper will not be ready for many weeks.*

*I should point out that two years ago, a hired adventurer brought some items to me he alleges were taken from the body of a skulk he had slain in the Grandwood. Among them was a dried, forked serpent's tongue, treated to avoid decay. Such things are used by priests of Syrul as holy symbols. Can skulks become true priests, or do they merely revere and seek to emulate this treacherous Power? Did Syrul and not Sulaise wizards create skulks, for her own deceitful purposes? I should like to explore this question further, but I have too many irons in the fire nowadays..."*

**— from a letter to Mordenkainen from the priestess Johanna,  
formerly of Almor, City of Greyhawk, Wealsun 20, 585 cy**

*— DRAGON Magazine #241 November 1997, p.47*

### **Su-Doppelganger**

*"I confess I was not particularly interested in the rumors about "albino doppelgangers" at first until the body of one was unceremoniously deposited at the gate of my estate. It was brought to me by adventurers hoping I would need it for "spare parts," probably in some necromantic research they must have imagined all wizards perform. I gave them each a gold piece to be rid of them, then was about to have the carcass incinerated when I was struck by the body's blue eyes. I knew perfectly well that albino creatures have pink eyes, and common doppelgangers have gray eyes. Yet, despite its ivory skin, this was certainly a common doppelganger's corpse-or so I thought until I noticed other peculiarities about it. I then bade my golems bring the body at once into my main study, where I set about making a most thorough examination, the results of which were astonishing..."*

*Doppelgangers presently inhabit many worlds, and they were known to many ancient societies. It is generally*

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*believed that they were artificially created to serve as spies and assassins in one or more very ancient wars fought among humankind; a wizard or demigod is usually thought to have been their creator. Following that war, the doppelgangers are assumed to have infiltrated humanity at large and spread out across the multiverse. Such spare bits can be gleaned by any researcher from libraries, divination spells, and so forth, but little hard information besides that...*

*The doppelganger family contains several subraces native to certain worlds, such as the greater doppelganger of Faerûn and the uran doppelganger. I wish to announce to the Academy today that the Flanaess has its own variation, which I shall henceforth call the su-doppelganger, or Suloise doppelganger. This su-doppelganger is at the root of the “albino doppelganger” rumors we have heard.*

*From my researches, I believe that the su-doppelganger is a near-perfect duplicate of the common, “true” doppelganger. However, it was developed entirely from Suloise humans—perhaps volunteers, perhaps not—shortly before the Rain of Colorless Fire. No written evidence exists of its creation by Suloise wizards or the Imperial government, but my divinations and analyses indicate that the su-doppelganger was most likely designed by wizard/priests in the service of Syrul, the deity of lies, treachery, and deceit. It is my supposition that su-doppelgangers were intended to infiltrate the Imperial government in its latter days, as the war with the Baklunish grew more fierce and chaos spread across the empire. As you are aware, noble houses in the Suel Imperium frequently struggled for control of the throne using every avenue possible to them, and artificial races are said to have been engineered before in the empire. It is possible that the su-doppelgangers were actually created by the last emperor as a weapon against the Baklunish, but the Suloise were as great an enemy to themselves as they were to any other race, and the truth of the matter is now lost to us.*

*I presume that a handful of su-doppelgangers spread out from the ruined empire after the Rain of Colorless Fire, though a few may have left earlier, either on missions against the Baklunish or sensing the disaster that would soon engulf their realm. They almost certainly traveled among groups of normal humans, their identities concealed. It is not unreasonable to conjecture that they have spread to the very corners of our world and likely beyond...”*

**— from a speech by an unnamed wizard,  
given in Rauxes about 220 cy**

— DRAGON Magazine #241 November 1997, p.51

### **Thus Spake Gary Gygax: Ye Secrets of Oerth Revealed**

Q: The *Rain of Colorless Fire*'s effects are detailed by you in the 1983 *World of Greyhawk* boxed set and earlier folio:

*“...in return for the terrible magical attack [the Invoked Devastation], the Suloise lands were inundated by a nearly invisible fiery rain which killed all creatures it struck, burned all living things, ignited the landscape with colorless flame, and burned the very hills themselves into ash.”*

The *Invoked Devastation*, on the other hand, is a little more vague — are its effects a massive, instantaneous

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disintegration? Or is it a rapid erosion, crumbling the Baklunish Empire in a sudden sweep of time — an unmaking of things? Are there ruins left behind? Dead bodies? What are the effects on the landscape?

A: Here we have it, a very sound guess, all of which are correct, as I envisioned the effect. A wave of *something* sweeps over the land. Buildings begin to crumble as if being powdered by an oerthquake, only the ground is not shaking. All living things within the area are sickened. Although some survive, most others are less fortunate. The wind is black and howling, and under its strange force the work of the hands of man decays as if time were running a thousand times faster for such non-living matter. Living things suffer increased aging, but not so severely. Trees grow suddenly, deplete their soil, and die. Animals age and die. Children become adults, but, lacking the nutrients for growth, die. A handful of the young adult folk escape as near- and middle-aged wrecks. The remains of the dead are visible for some period, but the habitations are naught but powder and dirt. It is a desolate place that only time will restore. In a score of years, though, the whole is covered by weeds and struggling plants, and slowly, as the bacteria and worms and insects make their way into the soil, the land becomes a wilderness that can support normal life again.

— *Oerth Journal #12, p.5*

### Room of Mercy

*“Who are you? Where are you? What are you? Why are you? Who am I? Where am I? What am I? Why am I?”*

The whispers repeat the same words endlessly, sometimes in the same archaic dialect, other times in Ancient Suloise. In the center of a room, levitating in mid-air, apparently untouched by dust, is a three-inch-square black cube, apparently made from malachite.

The cube is the prison for Zol Tanthul, a Power of Shadow (NE male shade fighter 1/sorcerer 6/eldritch knight 10/shadow adept 4). If *greater dispel magic* is successfully cast against the cube (DC 34), then the entity will be released. Zol was a shadow prince who also lived for a time as a noble of the Suel Imperium. He was trying to investigate a rumor about Xodast, a Suel Mage of Power who experimented with powers that most said were better left undisturbed. Xodast, it was said, had created the *Bringer of Doom*, an artifact that later played some part in the *Invoked Devastation* that destroyed the Baklunish Empire (which would not occur for two centuries after Zol's imprisonment). Xodast imprisoned Zol in “The Darkness That Holds All Shadows” (the cube), which was found shortly after the *Rain of Colorless Fire* by a group of adventurers exploring the ruins of the Suel city Suendrako.

— *Castle Greyhawk, p.97*

### The Lost Laboratory

This cairn, the convergence of the two great lines of force on which the other cairns were built, was used to research powerful and terrible new spells. The magical focus was so strong in this place that not only were all spells cast here hard to resist, but magic charged the very minds of wizards who stayed here, allowing them to cast more spells than they were normally able. There were no locks on any of the doors—the servants were all *charmed* slaves and the

wizards saw no need to set up any sort of security other than the capstone on the top level.

Two of the most powerful wizards involved in this project were researching ways to recreate the Twin Cataclysms that destroyed the Suel and Bakluni empires; their hope was to find a more controlled way of decimating a large number of opponents. One, a woman named Alatra Minah, explored the invocation of pure elemental matter, thinking to emulate the *Rain of Colorless Fire*. The other, a man known as The Longsword for his unusual ability to fight with that weapon, studied the means to open a gate to the lower planes and unleash a fiendish horde, inspired by a similar event which occurred during the *Invoked Devastation* due to the mysterious *Bringer of Doom*. A third wizard, a quiet man called Titianus Cremul, worked on spells to hide and move entire armies. During a critical point in their research, the first two wizards tested their findings simultaneously, creating an overlapping effect that interacted with the coincidental crash of the meteor in the Abbor-Alz; the cairn and all of its inhabitants were pulled into a juncture between the Astral, Ethereal, and Material planes. The demon-summoning spell partly succeeded, trapping a glabrezu demon (or tanar'ri) within the cairn. The other inhabitants of the cairn have either been killed or changed due to their exposure to the other planes. The magical lights continue to function here, providing illumination for all of its strange residents. As the cairn is no longer above the Oerthly ley-line, the magical enhancement that made this place so valuable is no longer in effect; the two lines have altered a bit over time and no longer complement each other, making the actual site on Oerth nothing special.

— *The Star Cairns*, p.38

### **The Bringer of Doom**

*So distant in the past is the Age of Doom that it cannot even be conceived of by mortals. This was a time of great lamenting, for the beings of that age had discovered magic and sciences too powerful to handle. Their passions overcame their sense and, in a wave of power, the race destroyed itself, leaving behind no remnant, save one.*

The *Bringer of Doom* is a small box with a strange, circular red gem set in its lid. If the gem is touched and depressed, the box itself explodes in a blinding flash. So great is the force of the blast that everything within 100' (including the user and the item itself) is destroyed utterly.

The explosion opens a temporary one-way rift to the Gray Waste of Hades from which 100d10 hordlings pour forth and destroy everything they encounter. Rarely (10% chance) some other, greater fiend comes through the rift as well. The *Bringer of Doom* always reforms, to be discovered some time later.

One account of the *Bringer* comes from a scrap of parchment found in the Desert of Yin, near the blasted tower of the evil mage Althabazzerid:

*"We have set up magical circles of protection, but we don't know how long we can keep them up. I hope that my observations may be of help to my fellow researchers of the Mages' Guild of MakBran. The assault against the black tower went well, the elven archers easily destroying Althabazzerid's undead army while we dealt with his dragon allies. We had closed in and were in the midst of magical combat when Althabazzerid himself appeared on the tower's battlements, protected by a multicolored sphere of light. He raised a small box in his left hand, and perhaps pressed*

*a button on it—hard to tell from our vantage point.”*

*“At once there was a deafening blast, and the wizard and his tower were destroyed. A huge hole in space opened, and we could see into the dismal spaces of the Gray Wastes. A great crowd of horrid beings—a more fantastic mix of humans, beasts, and fiends cannot be imagined—began moving into our world. Some walked, some hopped, some dragged their deformed bodies along. They gibbered and screamed. Some spat fire, or gas, or acid. Some were horned, others bore tentacles. More and more came, destroying the elves by sheer press of numbers. They attacked without plan or strategy, yet their horrid deformations allowed them many advantages.”*

*“Then a great fiend flew out from the darkened sky of the Gray Wastes. It has assaulted unceasingly since then. Soon our magics will fail, and we will die either at the hands of the fiend or the press of the horde of darkness...”*

— PLANESCAPE™ *Monstrous Compendium Appendix*, p.55

### **Hordling (Hordes of Hades)**

The hordlings who form the Hordes of Hades are of varied form, size, power, and appearance. They have in common hideousness and hatefulness. They roam the reaches of Hades preying upon all things, including one another. The strong slay and devour the weak. They will serve under strong leaders such as night hags, but they are untrustworthy, rebellious, and quarrelsome, so hordes are not long-lived (nor are hordlings). The disposition of hordlings is, in fact, chaotic. Similar creatures are also common on the Planes of Tarterus, and a few are found on the Abyssal Planes. The only known method of drawing more than one hordling to the Material Plane is the *Bringer of Doom*, a strange device created by arcane magic during the *Invoked Devastation* and now lost.

— *Monster Manual II (1st ed)*, p.75

Hordlings are the uncounted hordes of the Gray Wastes. They form the majority of the population of that plane. They vary widely in size and appearance. Some are large, some small; some humanoid, some animal-like, some amorphous; some have wings or tentacles. No two look exactly alike, and they have no standard means of communication.

**Habitat/Society:** There are an infinite number of hordlings on the infinite layers of the Abyss. They have no purpose or organization.

Hordlings are petty and vile. They roam the Gray Waste, attacking those weaker than themselves. They sometimes serve under strong leaders, but few leaders maintain hordlings for long, for they are unruly, untrustworthy, and chaotic.

Occasionally, evil mages summon hordlings to do their bidding. Normal summonings always produce a single hordling. The only known way to summon more than a single hordling into the Material Plane is the *Bringer of Doom*, a strange device created by arcane magic during the Age of Doom.

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**Ecology:** Hordling's devour whatever they destroy, usually other hordlings. That there is otherwise no readily available food supply on the Lower Planes makes the endless, relatively weak hordlings common prey for more powerful beings.

— *PLANESCAPE™ Monstrous Compendium Appendix, p.54*

The hordlings are fiends of varied form, power, and appearance. They have in common hideousness and hatefulness, and roam the reaches of the fiendish planes, preying upon all things, including one another. The strong slay and devour the weak. They sometimes serve under strong leaders like night hags or yugoloths, but are in general untrustworthy, rebellious, and quarrelsome. Three types of hordlings are known to exist—the sinister and morbid soldiers of the Gray Waste of Hades, the brutish and violent thugs of the Tarterian Depths of Carceri, and the insane and murderous lunatics of the Windswept Depths of Pandemonium. All three types can be encountered with some frequency on certain layers of the Abyss as well. To a non-hordling, the differences between these three types are indistinguishable, and they certainly have no tangible effect on their game statistics, yet hordlings immediately recognize hordlings from other planes, and it is for these fellow fiends that their deepest hatreds are reserved.

A few rare artifacts, such as *Arodnap's Box* and the ruinous *Bringer of Doom* are linked to the hordlings and can transport them in large numbers to other planes.

Hordlings speak Abyssal, and may know other languages as well.

**Combat:** Hordlings are combat brutes. They often have special attacks and defenses that augment their skills in a battle, but no hordling has innate spell-like abilities. This immediately sets them apart from most other fiends like demons and devils. A specific hordling's combat tactics must of course be dictated by the nature of its attacks, but in general, these creatures prefer to charge directly into melee and tear into their victims.

A hordling's natural weapons, as well as any weapons it wields, are treated as chaotic-aligned and evil-aligned for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

— *DUNGEON Magazine #124 July 2005, p.97*

### **Arodnap's Box**

*This large cave is empty, save for a single, unremarkable two-foot-square wooded box. The wind blowing through the cave is almost gale-force.*

The winds in this room are strong (see page 95 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*) and blow in a clockwise vortex around the chamber's perimeter.

The box is a magical artifact created by Wee Jas to contain a rift to the Windswept Depths of Pandemonium. As long as the box remains closed, it is safe. Those who open the box expose themselves to horrific peril. So potent was this rift that even a container forged by a goddess has begun to fail—the box looks rickety and fragile, and blasts of pandemoniac wind constantly spew from between its failing slats. Every once in a while, a hordling—or something

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worse—slips through as well. The box weighs only 10 pounds when closed, and can be transported with ease. Although the box is leaking, it is nearly impossible to destroy (as it is a major artifact). Likewise, it cannot accidentally “fall open”; its lid can only be lifted as an intentional standard action.

If the creature opening the box is an outsider with the chaotic subtype, it is immediately pulled into the box and cast into a random cavern in Pandemonium (no save). For all other creatures, the consequences for opening the box are more dire.

When opened, the winds in the room immediately die down. The person responsible for opening the box hears a soft, feminine whisper in his ear and catches a whiff of roses and faint putrescence—“If the Master of this ancient box is nearby, you'd best summon her now.” A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies this omen as a sending from Wee Jas.

Inside the box roils a single sphere of prismatic energy. Any creature who looks upon the sphere must make a DC 25 Will save to resist reaching in and touching it. Physical contact with the sphere immediately *plane shifts* the character to Pandemonium. At this point, the box can still be closed with a standard action. On the next round, things explode into chaos.

The room fills with discordant and blaring sounds, like thousands of noises made by inharmonious singers and musicians, and the box lights up from the inside, pouring forth a jarring combination of dazzling and overwhelming colors. Then there is silence for a split second and this scene repeats itself, but accompanying the noise and lights this time are ghostly figures that appear from the box and swirl around the room, mouths agape. The sounds appear to be issuing from them, but this cannot be certain. They circuit the room chaotically, spreading their noise, and then with a blast of noxious light and soul-blighting stench they flow inward and transform into a pandemonium beast.

As soon as the beast appears, the wind force in the cave increases to windstorm strength. Medium creatures must make a DC 18 Fortitude save each round or be knocked down, while Small or smaller creatures are blown away to be dashed against the walls of the room.

Once the box is open, a DC 30 Strength check is required to close it again—this is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. Arodrap can close the box with a single touch as a free action—she is not affected by the winds, and is never attacked by creatures called from the box unless she attacks them first.

**Creature:** The huge chaos beast unleashed by the act of opening the box is far larger than most of its kind, and possesses a unique ability to drive creatures insane with its cacophonous wailing. It focuses its attacks solely on the creature that opened the box, if it is still present, attacking other targets only when this creature is dead or gone. The beast pursues its prey relentlessly.

Each round the box remains open, there's a cumulative 5% chance that 1d4 hordlings clamber through. Once hordlings appear, the chance for more to appear drops back down to 5% the next round, building up at 5% per round until another group arrives, and another, and another. If left open, the box can undo entire worlds.

— DUNGEON Magazine #124 July 2005, p.89

## Incabulos

*The Black Rider*

### Greater Deity

**Symbol:** Magic icon for the Eye of Possession

**Home Plane:** Gray Waste of Hades

**Alignment:** Neutral Evil

**Portfolio:** Plagues, sickness, famine, nightmares, drought, disasters

**Worshippers:** Necromancers, blighters, rogues, murderers

**Cleric Alignments:** CE, LE, NE

**Domains:** Death, Destruction, Dream<sup>SC</sup>, Evil, Hunger<sup>SC</sup>, Madness<sup>SC</sup>, Pestilence<sup>SC</sup>

**Favored Weapon:** Quarterstaff

Incabulos (in-CAB-yoo-lohs) is a dread power feared by mortals, fiends, and (it is said) even some gods. The bringer of disease and blights is a terrifying figure—deformed body, skeletal hands, nightmarish visage, and garbed in a black robe lined with orange and green. He rides a nightmare and is accompanied by hags and hordlings. Hordlings willingly serve Incabulos. He causes a nightmare slumber in any who meet his eyes, and his great staff causes seeping wounds and withers flesh with a touch. Incabulos hates all other gods, although he is indifferent to Nerull, who completes the work Incabulos starts.

*The suffering of the world is meat and bread to Incabulos. Sickness, famine, and other curses bring him power. Some feel that the Black Rider can be warded off or appeased by prayers; but this only delays the inevitable. The world of dreams is his battleground, and he wages war against minds just as he rots bodies.*

Clerics of Incabulos are secretive and paranoid. Justifiably fearing persecution by good and evil folk, they rarely reveal themselves for what they are except in times of great despair when they can fan the emotions of the suffering. Greater clerics use threats and this state of fear to encourage junior members to maintain secrecy. They enjoy torturing others, inflicting disease, and spreading blight. They travel to find new locations or people to infect, escape those who would destroy them, or find strange lands where exotic diseases can be found.

— *DRAGON Magazine* #71 March 1983, p.53

— *LIVING GREYHAWK® Gazetteer*, p.172

— *Complete Divine*, p.121

— *Spell Compendium*, p.273, p.275, p.276, p.278

## PLANESCAPE™ CAMPAIGN SETTING

### Gray Waste of Hades

It is where evil springs eternal.

It is a plane of endless apathy and despair.

It is the great battlefield of the Blood War.

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Hades sits at the nadir of the lower planes, halfway between two races of fiends each bent on the other's annihilation. Thus, it often sees its gray plains darkened by vast armies of demons battling equally vast armies of devils who neither ask nor give quarter. If any place defines the nature of true evil, it is the Gray Waste.

In the Gray Waste of Hades, pure undiluted evil acts as a powerful spiritual force that drags all creatures down. Here, even the consuming rage of the Abyss and the devious plotting of the Nine Hells are subjugated to hopelessness. Apathy and despair seep into everything at the pole of evil. Hades slowly kills a visitor's dreams and desires, leaving the withered husk of what used to be a fiery spirit. Spend enough time in Hades, and visitors give up on things that used to matter, eventually giving in to total apathy.

Hades has three layers called "glooms." Uncaring malevolence that slowly crushes the spirit permeates each gloom.

Hades has the following traits.

- **Normal Gravity.**
- **Normal Time.**
- **Normal Magic.**
- **Infinite Size:** Hades may extend infinitely, but its realms are finitely bounded.
- **Divinely Morphic:** Entities of at least lesser deity status can alter Hades, though few deities deign to reign in Hades. The Gray Waste has the alterable morphic trait for less powerful creatures; Hades responds normally to spells and physical effort.
- **No Elemental or Energy Traits.**
- **Strongly Evil-Aligned:** Nonevil characters in Hades suffer a –2 penalty on all Charisma-, Wisdom-, and Intelligence-based checks.
- **Entrapping:** This is a special trait unique to Hades, although Elysium has a similar entrapping trait. A nonoutsider in Hades experiences increasing apathy and despair while there. Colors become grayer and less vivid, sounds duller, and even the demeanor of companions seems to be more hateful. At the conclusion of every week spent in Hades, any nonoutsider must make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + the number of consecutive weeks in Hades). Failure indicates that the individual has fallen entirely under the control of the plane, becoming a petitioner of Hades.

Travelers entrapped by the inherent evil of Hades cannot leave the plane of their own volition and have no desire to do so. Memories of any previous life fade into nothingness, and it takes a *wish* or *miracle* spell to return such characters to normal.

**Hades Links:** The River Styx flows through the uppermost layer of Hades, and a few of its small tributaries may lead deeper into the plane. As with everywhere else along the Styx, sinister ferrymen ply its length, granting passage to other planes.

Portals to other planes are fairly common, at least on the uppermost gloom, Oinos. Portals usually appear as

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great spinning coins of color. Golden coins lead to Carceri, silver ones lead to the Outlands, coppers go to Gehenna, and rare platinum ones connect to the Astral Plane. Because everything else in the Gray Waste is leached of color, the coin-portals glitter for miles.

**Hades Inhabitants:** Foul creatures of every sort can be found in the Gray Waste. Because this is the battleground of the lower planes, demons, devils, slaadi, formians, and even the occasional deva can be found here, spying for the war effort or deserting their unit. Of course, yugoloths also abound, despite the fact that most of the race has moved from this plane, their original home, to the neighboring plane of Gehenna.

Night hags are also thick in Hades. They constantly seek special petitioners called larvae, which they use as a special form of spiritual currency in their dark dealings with evil beings and deities.

Besides Blood War detritus, night hags, and petitioners, Hades hosts herds of fiery nightmares.

**Features of Hades:** The glooms of the Gray Waste are just that: dull gray lands. The earth is gray, the sky is gray, and the petitioners are gray. Color is foreign here, as if vision itself is subverted. When visitors step into the plane, everything goes from color to white, black, or gray. There is no sun, no moon, and no stars above—just a bleak gray radiance emanating from the sky.

This grayness affects more than vision; it is a spiritual grayness. It reaches into the hearts of all who spend time in Hades. Those who spend more time here than they should, such as all the petitioners, are devoid of feeling. They don't laugh, don't cry, and just don't care. All they do is despair, their hope gone and never to return.

Both the entrapping trait of Hades and the spiritual sickness called “the grays” are manifestations of the grayness of Hades.

**The Grays:** A spiritual poison affects any creature (including outsiders) in Hades that does not possess spell resistance of 10 or more. Creatures without spell resistance 10 must make a Will save (DC 13) every twenty-four hours they spend in Hades.

A failed save deals 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage to the victim. A victim can be drained to a minimum Wisdom of 1 in this fashion. Unlike most ability score damage, Wisdom damage dealt by “the grays” does not heal until the victim has left Hades behind. Each point of Wisdom damage dealt in this fashion represents growing apathy, hopelessness, and despair.

This effect is concurrent with the entrapping trait of Hades. Wisdom damage taken from the grays makes it harder to make the weekly saving throws to resist the loss of all hope that the entrapping trait represents.

**Gray Wasting:** In its normal form it is quite dangerous and visually unappealing, as the victim's skin wastes away into so much mucus and rotting flesh. It has the following characteristics:

**Infection:** Contact

**Fortitude Save DC:** 20

**Incubation:** 1 day

**Damage:** 1d4 points of permanent Charisma drain

**Oinos:** The first gloom of Hades is a land of stunted trees, roving fiends, and virulent disease. But more than anything else, it is a plane ravaged by war. This is the central battlefield of the Blood War. Fiends, warrior-slaves, trained beasts, and hired mercenaries gather here to wage horrific battles on an epic scale. These battles despoil the already bleak terrain. The sounds of rending claws, clashing weapons, and screams echo across the entire layer.

**Niflheim:** The second gloom of Hades is a layer of gray mists that constantly twist and swirl among sickly trees and ominous bluffs. The thin fog limits vision to 100 feet at best, muffles sound, and eventually saturates everything with dampness. Niflheim is not as war-ravaged as Oinos, probably because the mist hinders combat. Many predators prowl the lands, hidden amid the mist, including fiendish dire wolves and trolls.

Vision (including darkvision) is limited to 100 feet in Niflheim, and Listen checks suffer a –4 circumstance penalty due to the muffling nature of the fog.

**Pluton:** The third gloom of Hades is a layer of dying willows, shriveled olive trees, and night-black poplars. It is a realm where no one wants to be and no one can remember why they came. Of course, petitioners have no choice in the matter.

Usually, the Blood War does not reach this lowest gloom, though some raids have occurred when one side or the other wished to retrieve the spirit of a fallen mortal captain who possessed particularly sharp tactical skills.

— *Manual of the Planes*, p.108

## Plane of Shadow

It is the toxic plane of darkness and power.

It is the hidden place that hates the light.

It is the frontier of worlds unknown.

The Plane of Shadow is a darkly lighted dimension that is both coterminous to and coexistent with the Material Plane. It overlaps the Material Plane just as the Ethereal Plane does, so a planar traveler can use the Plane of Shadow to cover great distances quickly. The Plane of Shadow is also coterminous to other planes. With the right spell, you can use the Plane of Shadow to visit other realities.

The Plane of Shadow is a world of black and white; color itself has been bleached from the environment. It otherwise appears similar (but not exactly identical) to the Material Plane.

The sky above, for example, is always a black vault with neither sun or stars. Landmarks from the Material Plane are recognizable on the Plane of Shadow, but they are twisted, warped things—diminished reflections of what can be

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found on the Material Plane. Despite the lack of light sources, various plants, animals, and humanoids call the Plane of Shadow home.

The Plane of Shadow is highly morphic, and parts continually flow onto other planes. As a result, precise maps are next to useless, despite the presence of landmarks. If a traveler visits a mountain range during one use of a *shadow walk* spell, the mountain range may still be there the next time, but the individual mountains may have moved about. Precision is a lost cause in the Plane of Shadow.

The terrain of the Plane of Shadow is usually similar to the area where the traveler enters from the Material Plane. If a wizard travels onto the Plane of Shadow from a forest, she first sees an equivalent shadow forest. If she starts underwater, she appears within a shadowy sea that behaves like a Material Plane ocean, so her *water breathing* spell still works. However, as she moves away from her entry point, the terrain of the Plane of Shadow changes dramatically, although it usually bears some resemblance to the corresponding terrain on the Material Plane.

Spells often draw forth parts of the Plane of Shadow, in particular for illusions that have the shadow descriptor. The Plane of Shadow is a monochromatic world, but shadow material pulled from it can be of any color. The spellcaster usually colors, shapes, and shades the shadow-stuff to make it more convincing. A *shadow evocation* that produces a *fireball*, for example, appears like any other *fireball* to those fooled by the illusion.

The Plane of Shadow is in many ways the dark duplicate of the Material Plane. Much is similar, but there are significant differences. The Plane of Shadow has the following traits.

- **Normal Gravity.**
- **Normal Time.**
- **Infinite Size.**
- **Magically Morphic:** Spells such as *shadow conjuration* and *shadow evocation* modify the base material of the Plane of Shadow. The utility and power of these spells within the Plane of Shadow make them particularly useful for explorers and natives alike.
- **No Elemental or Energy Traits:** Some small regions on the Plane of Shadow (called Darklands; see below) have the minor negative-dominant trait, however.
- **Mildly Neutral-Aligned.**
- **Enhanced Magic:** Spells with the shadow descriptor are enhanced on the Plane of Shadow. Such spells are cast as though they were prepared with the Maximize Spell feat, though they don't require the higher spell slots.

Furthermore, specific spells become more powerful on the Plane of Shadow. *Shadow conjuration* and *shadow evocation* spells are 30% as powerful as the conjurations and evocations they mimic (as opposed to 20%). *Greater shadow conjuration* and *greater shadow evocation* are 70% as powerful (not 60%), and a *shade* spell conjures at 90% of the power of the original (not 80%). To calculate the effect of such spells, take advantage of Maximize Spell to garner maximum hit points or maximum damage, then apply the percentage above.
- **Impeded Magic:** Spells that use or generate light or fire may fizzle when cast on the Plane of Shadow. A spellcaster

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attempting a spell with the light or fire descriptor must succeed at a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + the level of the spell). Spells that produce light are less effective in general, because all light sources have their ranges halved on the Plane of Shadow.

Despite the dark nature of the Plane of Shadow, spells that produce, use, or manipulate darkness itself are unaffected by the plane.

**Shadow Links:** Travelers typically access the Plane of Shadow with spells or permanent portals.

The most common way to visit the Plane of Shadow is to use the *shadow walk* spell for fast travel from one point to another on the Material Plane. The spell moves its targets up to seven miles per 10 minutes on the Plane of Shadow, regardless of one's normal speed. Such travel happens entirely on the Plane of Shadow, so travelers don't see much of the intervening terrain on the Material Plane. Ending the spell returns the travelers to the Material Plane, again in a shadowy location if possible.

There are also vortices between the Plane of Shadow and the Material Plane that function randomly and have variable destinations. These intermittent portals to the Plane of Shadow are usually Medium-size and last for 1d6 days before fading. The frequency of these portals is unknown, for many may appear, last for a few days, then fade without anyone noticing, much less using, the portal. Like any vortex, spells and unattended objects (such as arrows) can pass from one plane to another. It is as if the Plane of Shadow itself is boiling, and the bubbles rise and burst on its borders with the Material Plane.

These random vortices only appear in areas of shade or darkness on the Material Plane. If they appear within a solid object, no transfer between the planes is possible. But vortices that reach open space on the Material Plane are useful for Plane of Shadow natives who want to infest the Material Plane.

The *shadow walk* spell is in many ways a creation of such natural vortices, one at the beginning of the journey and one near the end. Larger vortices exist, though they are rare. A particularly massive vortex could swallow an entire castle or city, transplanting it to the Plane of Shadow permanently.

Visitors on the Plane of Shadow who look back through a vortex onto the Material Plane see the world with black and white reversed (like a photographic negative). Because vortices open onto dark regions of the Material Plane, they are obvious on the Plane of Shadow because the darkness of the Material Plane looks bright in comparison to the Plane of Shadow.

The Plane of Shadow does not connect to the Ethereal Plane. Spells and spell-like abilities that use or access the Ethereal Plane do not function in the Plane of Shadow. The Plane of Shadow is coexistent with the Astral Plane, so various spells and portals make it possible to move between the two planes.

Depending on your cosmology, the Plane of Shadow might lead to alternate Material Planes and other planes of existence. This is a perilous way to travel, because the way to other planes plunges through parts of the Plane of Shadow that are not coexistent with any known plane and home to a variety of fell monsters.

**Shadow Inhabitants:** While the Plane of Shadow is not evil in and of itself, it is home to a wide variety of foul creatures that hate the light and the living. The best known denizen of the plane is the shadow, an undead creature that sucks the strength from adventurers on either the Material Plane or the Plane of Shadow.

The Plane of Shadow has native versions of many of the plants and animals found on the Material Plane, but the shadow versions are twisted, dark variants.

More dangerous monsters such as the shadow mastiff and the nightshade call the Plane of Shadow home as well. Chapter 9 details two new denizens of the plane, the ecalypse and the umbral banyan, and a third creature, the dusk beast, often found near vortices to the Plane of Shadow.

There are numerous stories of castles and entire cities that have been sucked up by the Plane of Shadow over the years. Some still survive, but they have been warped by the insidious, toxic nature of the Plane of Shadow. This toxicity, described in the Features of the Plane of Shadow section below, only manifests after decades on the Plane of Shadow. It grants strange abilities and inhuman attributes to those infected by shadow's touch.

**Features of the Plane of Shadow:** The Plane of Shadow is no more or less dangerous than the Material Plane. Certain regions are perilous, and the natives are hostile, but the plane is not inherently damaging to most who travel it. Unlike on the Astral Plane and the Ethereal Plane, there is sufficient food (though it's often dark in color and dripping black blood) and water (though it's ichorous and thick). The air on the plane is normal, and a native of the Material Plane can survive years here without ill effect—once he gets used to the darkness and the ever-present slight chill.

But over decades, the Plane of Shadow is toxic to non-natives. Creatures from elsewhere who spend most of their lives on the Plane of Shadow develop new abilities and vulnerabilities to match their adopted home. Which abilities change seems to be unpredictable from creature to creature and location to location on the Plane of Shadow. The shadow creature template in Chapter 9 describes some typical abilities and vulnerabilities that affect long-term residents of the Plane of Shadow.

Vision on the Plane of Shadow is like vision on a moonless night on the Material Plane. Most of the terrain is dark, interrupted only by the occasional pale beacon of a portal or a traveler's campfire. Darkvision is unaffected by the plane, but every torch, lantern, and light-emitting spell (such as *continual flame* and *daylight*) has its radius of illumination halved. A *daylight* spell provides normal light in a 30-foot radius, for example, while a bullseye lantern shines in a cone 30 feet long and 10 feet wide at the end.

Bright lights tend to attract other travelers and natives from the Plane of Shadow, so the likelihood of encounters is doubled for a group of travelers bearing a light source.

Travelers from the Material Plane find the Plane of Shadow to be cool, but not cold. The Plane of Shadow mutes the heat from normal fires slightly. Fire deals normal damage on the plane, but an ordinary campfire somehow seems to provide less warmth than on the Material Plane.

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**Dark Mirages:** One of the most distressing features of the Plane of Shadow is that it is a warped reflection of the Material Plane. A shadow traveler who enters the Plane of Shadow from her hometown may find herself in a dark, abandoned version of that town. The parallels are not exact, so her home may be on a different street, be built in a different style, or (most likely) lie in ruins.

Other mirages are equally troubling, such as a huge dark castle where none exists on the Material Plane, or an ancient battlefield where a dungeon should be. Most troubling of all are the shadowy echoes of people the traveler knows, shadow creatures with the twisted but still recognizable features of loved ones. These shadow duplicates have no special abilities, but the effect is disconcerting nonetheless.

Shadow travelers in a place particularly familiar or meaningful to them must make a Will saving throw (DC 15) to ignore such dark mirages. Those who fail are haunted and rattled by the similarities, suffering a –2 morale penalty on attacks and saving throws as long as they remain in a location familiar to them. Travelers who make their saves are unaffected by the dark mirages for the duration of their trip to the Plane of Shadow.

Dark mirages occur because the Plane of Shadow is so close to the Material Plane. The echo of an alternate Material Plane can also bleed through onto the Plane of Shadow, making the dark mirages more unsettling. Oracles and soothsayers sometimes journey onto the Plane of Shadow looking for enlightenment among the darkness, attempting to discover if such dark mirages are harbingers of the future.

**Darklands:** On the Plane of Shadow, patches of darkness exist that are even darker than the shadows themselves. Negative energy infuses these places. Whether the negative energy is bleeding over from the Negative Energy Plane or it's simply a byproduct of the high concentration of undead shadows and other life-draining undead is unknown.

Darklands regions have the minor negative-dominant trait. Living creatures that enter the darklands take 1d6 points of damage per round from negative energy and crumble into ash if they reach 0 hit points or less. Spells and magic items that protect against negative energy function normally within the darklands.

Travelers to the Plane of Shadow can identify darklands easily. They are more desolate and bleak than the surrounding areas (which are themselves pretty bleak on this plane). Plants are dead and desiccated from the long-term effects of the negative energy.

Natural vortices from other planes do not open into darklands regions, and spells or spell-like abilities opening a portal from the Material Plane warn the traveler (usually with a cold shiver down the spine) that a darklands region lies ahead. Darklands often correspond to haunted battlefields, unconsecrated graveyards, and lairs of powerful necromancers on the Material Plane, as well as any location dominated by undead.

**Astral Portals:** The Astral Plane is coterminous to the Plane of Shadow, so magic portals can create conduits through the Astral Plane to anywhere the Astral Plane touches. Such portals are found in the rougher regions far from the "normal" areas of the Plane of Shadow. A traveler who can't reach the Outer Planes directly can travel to the Plane of Shadow and find a portal that uses the Astral Plane to reach her destination.

**Shadow Quakes:** The Plane of Shadow is a morphic landscape, but in general it moves slowly. Over the course of a week the landscape may alter sufficiently to be unrecognizable, although someone continually observing the plane wouldn't see it actually moving. But the Plane of Shadow has its own version of earthquakes that can prove deadly to the shadow traveler.

Shadow quakes tend to be dramatic but localized, having the same effect as an *earthquake* spell within a 100-foot radius. Flying and incorporeal creatures are unaffected.

The shadow quake can also break the effect of a *shadow walk* spell. The spellcaster must make a Concentration check (DC 20) to maintain control of the spell. If the caster fails, the spell's targets are stranded on the plane as if lost or abandoned. It is still possible to return to the Material Plane by casting another *shadow walk* or locating a shadow vortex or other portal.

**The Shining Citadel:** This legendary fortress may or may not exist, but it's the talk of planar travelers everywhere. The legend contends that the Plane of Shadow is artificial, created by a long-forgotten creature with the power of a deity. Once a mere demiplane, the Plane of Shadow has at its heart a Shining Citadel of color and light. To power the citadel, members of an order venerating the plane's creature sucked the life, light, and color from the rest of reality. Thus was the Plane of Shadow born. None have found the Shining Citadel, but it is said that those who never return from a visit to the deepest regions of the Plane of Shadow have found it.

— *Manual of the Planes*, p.59

— *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, p.152

## Planar Anomalies

Across the many planes, the fabric of reality is under tremendous strain. Sometimes this cosmic strain twists and tweaks the rules under which the planes operate. Though small compared to a single infinite plane, these anomalies can change the local landscape dramatically.

**Outpocketing:** Sometimes planar borders bulge and stretch, forming an outpocket, a bulge onto another plane. Outpockets are discrete areas, visible as transparent walls or bubbles on the affected plane. In a way, an outpocket is like a portal, though it's often larger. A traveler inside an outpocket can see features beyond, but they are blurred and indistinct, as if viewed through running water. Some outpockets are stable, and others may slowly shrink or grow over time.

Characters can move through an outpocket wall; the wall's resistance is only as strong as a moderate wind. Once through the wall, the conditions on the new plane apply. Outpockets usually only occur between planes that are coterminous or coexistent, although some outpockets are bulges from parallel versions of the original plane. Such outpockets can reveal possible futures, distant pasts, or barely recognizable presents.

**Nested Pockets:** Sometimes outpockets form in groups, each pocket nested inside another and connected to a different plane. Thus, they are sometimes called nested planes or nested realities. The walls between nested pockets may look like standard outpockets, or may be invisible. Either way, passing through the boundary is as easy as walking into the wind. In this way, a simple copse of trees could hold nested pockets—whole worlds reachable through deeper and deeper outpockets.

**Minor Planar Bleed:** Sometimes the traits of one plane can affect a small region of another plane, even without a portal or vortex connecting the two planes. This is particularly likely between two coexistent planes, but is also possible between coterminous planes. Planar bleed usually affects no more than a single room, structure, or cavern, or at most a few square miles.

Minor planar bleeds superimpose one trait from a plane onto another. For instance, on a plane with normal gravity, an area with minor planar bleed might have no gravity because of a coexistent plane with that trait. Such planar bleeds can be dangerous, because the planar bleed isn't always obvious until characters are inside it.

Some minor planar bleeds are even more subtle; their only effect is on the dreams of those who sleep nearby. For instance, characters traveling along a dry sea bottom might camp in a gully for the night and have dreams of a wide, glittering ocean. The dreams are harmless, merely a result of minor planar bleed from a coexistent alternate Material Plane on which the sea never dried up.

**Major Planar Bleed:** Like minor planar bleed, major planar bleed involves seepage from one plane to another in the absence of a vortex or portal. Major planar bleed is usually confined to a region no larger than several square miles. It has all the effects of minor planar bleed, including the overlap of a planar trait. But actual creatures and objects seep through from one plane to another despite the absence of a portal or vortex. Even structures, small cities, and landscapes can seep from one plane to another.

**Planar Rips:** A planar rip stresses the fabric of coterminous and coexistent planes, and the hole starts to consume the plane's edges. In time, a planar rip can irrevocably swallow entire portions of a plane. Once a planar rip has momentum, it is difficult to reverse the fall of a coexistent plane, though only part of a coterminous plane will be affected.

On a coexistent plane being engulfed by a planar rip, storms of ever-increasing severity are common within fifty miles of the rip. Within a one-mile radius, a physical embodiment of the planar rip is visible: a whirlpool sucking up reality itself and swirling nearby matter into a night-dark aperture a few hundred feet in diameter.

Some planar rips form when a plane is subject to massive energies concentrated in a very small area. The planes are robust, and almost every instance of great energy or magic use leaves them none the worse for wear. But sometimes planes break, and the result is a planar rip. Other planar rips may be permanent connections to the Negative Energy Plane, and still others are remnant time lines negated by temporal paradox or mortals experimenting

with time travel. Planar rips can be tombstones marking extinguished planes, or they can lead to entire new cosmologies yet unborn.

— *Manual of the Planes*, p.220

### Planar Breaches

If you can't go to the planes, don't worry; sometimes they come to you. The divisions between different planes of existence are usually unassailable. But in a multiverse where magic, psionics, and divine decree daily wrench reality into unnatural configurations, that which separates one space from the next can wear thin. That's when the phenomenon known as planar breaching occurs.

Planar breaches can be minor, severe, or complete. Minor breaching is often overlooked because its effects are not immediately obvious, while at the other end of the spectrum, a complete breach opens a hole in reality where laws and planar natives mix in the middle.

Wily planar travelers sometimes use severe and complete planar breaches to get around, though unless they are responsible for causing the breach in the first place, it's hard to count on such phenomena.

### Mechanics of a Planar Breach

Dungeon Masters may use the following definitions to guide the creation and execution of a planar breach.

A planar breach has an onset, an area, a duration, and a severity.

**Onset:** Most planar breaches come into being over the course of 1d4 rounds. The occurrence of a planar breach is accompanied by discharges of visible light, an atmospheric disturbance that causes a wind, and a basso rumbling.

**Area:** A breach, regardless of its severity, affects an area 10d10 feet in radius.

**Duration:** Most planar breaches last 1d6 days minus a certain number of hours. A minor breach lasts 1d6 days minus 12 hours (with a minimum duration of 12 hours), a severe breach lasts 1d6 days minus 48 hours (with a minimum duration of 1 hour), and a complete breach lasts 1d6 days minus 72 hours (with a minimum duration of 10 minutes). When the duration expires, the planar breach recedes, taking the same amount of time and causing the same atmospheric disturbances and effects as during the breach's onset.

**Severity:** A breach can be minor, severe, or complete. For minor or severe breaches, one plane is called the breaching plane, and the other is called the destination plane. Usually, only one trait from the breaching plane leaks through to the destination plane. In a complete breach, all traits from both affected planes leak equally into each other.

*Minor Breach:* A minor breach occurs when one alignment, elemental/energy, or magic trait described in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* leaks from one plane to another. You can choose a trait or roll for one on Table: Random Planar Breaching.

Elemental and energy traits in a minor breach are nowhere near full strength. If an elemental or energy trait is determined to be present in a minor breach, the overtly noticeable effect is that it is hotter (fire), windier (air), damper

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(water), dirtier (earth), brighter (positive), or darker (negative). Additionally, creatures with a subtype corresponding to a leaking elemental trait gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks. Likewise, spells that have a descriptor corresponding to the leaking elemental trait receive a +1 bonus to their save DC, if applicable. All creatures inhabiting an area where positive energy leaks through heal at twice their normal rate. All creatures inhabiting an area where negative energy leaks through heal at half their normal rate. These weakened elemental and energy traits do not manifest in a severe or complete breach.

*Severe Breach:* A severe breach occurs when one alignment, elemental/energy, magic, or physical trait described in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* leaks between one plane and another. You can either choose a trait, or roll for one on Table: Random Planar Breaching.

The trait, whatever its effects, is applied across the entire area of the breach. This can be spectacular for a water-dominant or fire-dominant trait, and quite dangerous for creatures in the area. Natural structures and land forms in the breaching area can also be affected or damaged by the change in environment. For instance, an area that suddenly gains the fire-dominant elemental trait becomes a roaring area of flame that deals 3d10 points of fire damage every round to all creatures and objects within it.

A severe breach also represents such a thin boundary between planes that creatures and objects from one plane can slip or squeeze through to the other side. When a creature or object first enters an affected area on either the breaching or destination plane (or if the area comes into effect where a creature or untended object already exists), there is a 20% chance that the creature or object slips through to the other plane. A creature that wants to make this transition can increase this chance to 100% if he makes a DC 15 Knowledge (the planes) check.

Unlike with minor breaches, severe breaches require the DM to specifically determine the breaching plane in case travel occurs between the two places.

*Complete Breach:* When a complete breach occurs, a hole is ripped in reality. The hole is a 10-foot-radius sphere that inhabits the center of the 10d10-foot-radius area of the breach on both affected planes. This larger affected area exists on both affected planes and contains the traits of both affected planes. The hole at the center is an open portal between the planes. Creatures from either plane can move as they will through the hole.

If the planar material on one side is less dense than the material on the other, transport may occur. For instance, if the air pressure on one side is much higher than on the other, a roaring wind blows out one side of the hole, while a sucking vortex comes into being on the other (small differences in pressure create only a slight breeze). If water exists on one side and not the other, liquid jets out one side, but swirls away on the other.

Unlike with minor breaches, complete breaches require the DM to specifically determine the breaching plane in case travel occurs between the two places.

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Random Planar Breaching

d%	Trait <sup>1</sup>	Trait Type	Breaching Plane <sup>2</sup>
01-03	Air-dominant	Elemental/Energy	Elemental Plane of Air
04-06	Alterable morphic	Physical	Ethereal Plane
07-09	Chaos-aligned, mildly aligned	Alignment	Abyss
10-12	Chaos-aligned, strongly aligned	Alignment	Limbo
13-15	Dead magic	Magic	Dead magic demiplane <sup>5</sup>
16-18	Divinely morphic	Physical	Outlands
19-21	Earth-dominant	Elemental/Energy	Elemental Plane of Earth
22-24	Evil-aligned, mildly aligned	Alignment	Abyss
25-27	Evil-aligned, strongly aligned	Alignment	Hades
28-30	Fire-dominant	Elemental/Energy	Elemental Plane of Fire
31-33	Flowing time <sup>3</sup>	Physical	Slow-time demiplane <sup>5</sup>
34-36	Good-aligned, mildly aligned	Alignment	Celestia
37-39	Good-aligned, strongly aligned	Alignment	Elysium
40-42	Heavy gravity	Physical	Heavy-gravity demiplane <sup>5</sup>
43-45	Highly morphic	Physical	Limbo
46-48	Law-aligned, mildly aligned	Alignment	Nine Hells
49-51	Law-aligned, strongly aligned	Alignment	Mechanus
52-54	Light gravity	Physical	Light-gravity demiplane <sup>5</sup>
55-57	Magically morphic	Physical	Magic morphic demiplane <sup>5</sup>
58-60	Negative-dominant	Elemental/Energy	Abyss
61-63	Negative-dominant, major	Elemental/Energy	Negative Energy Plane
64-66	Neutral-aligned, mildly aligned	Alignment	Plane of Shadow
67-69	Neutral-aligned, strongly aligned	Alignment	Neutral demiplane <sup>5</sup>
70-72	No gravity	Physical	Ethereal Plane
73-75	Objective directional gravity	Physical	Pandemonium
76-78	Positive-dominant	Elemental/Energy	Ysgard
79-81	Positive-dominant, major	Elemental/Energy	Positive Energy Plane
82-84	Sentient <sup>4</sup>	Physical	Sentient demiplane <sup>4</sup>
85-87	Subjective directional gravity	Physical	Astral Plane
88-90	Timeless	Physical	Astral Plane
91-93	Water-dominant	Elemental/Energy	Elemental Plane of Water
94-100	Wild magic	Physical	Limbo

<sup>1</sup> See trait descriptions on pages 147-150 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*.

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<sup>2</sup> *The breaching plane serves only as an example; the DM may choose a different breaching plane, or make up a plane or demiplanes of his own choosing to serve as the breaching plane.*

<sup>3</sup> *1 round in breach area equals 1 year outside breach area.*

<sup>4</sup> *A sentient plane or demiplane that breaches affects the destination plane as if it is "haunted." Objects move of their own volition, creatures in the area get a sense of "being watched," and strange noises are heard. The DM is free to add additional effects.*

<sup>5</sup> *These demiplanes are only as large as the breach area in the destination plane and exist only as long as the breach itself exists. The DM may determine other demiplane traits or inhabitants as desired.*

### Breach Candidacy

Breaching usually occurs randomly. Material Plane locations are less likely to see a breach; in fact, they almost never experience one. A planar site is a good candidate for a breach if it meets any of the following criteria.

- The location is home to a regular energetic event, such as a volcanic vent, an oceanic whirlpool, an evil sacrifice, and so on. A one-time event of significant proportion can also make that location a breaching candidate, such as a spectacular volcanic eruption, a whirlpool of epic proportions, a mass evil sacrifice, and so on.
- The location was used to launch a planar trip via magical or psionic means, such as by using the spells *plane shift*, *ethereal jaunt*, *etherealness*, *astral projection*, and so on.
- The DM wants a breach to occur at the location. This criterion is particularly useful in campaigns set on the planes where the average character level is deemed too low for wide-ranging exploration or adventuring. A planar breach allows the DM to inject planar material into the game without unduly endangering the player characters. Instead of having the heroes risk a journey into the Abyss, for example, a bit of the Abyss can come to them.

In addition, certain spells (such as *precipitate breach*), items, and locations can cause a breach whether or not an area is a candidate for a natural breach.

— *Planar Handbook*, p.151

## FORGOTTEN REALMS® CAMPAIGN SETTING

### Traveling the Planes

As described in *Manual of the Planes*, the Plane of Shadow constitutes the primary link between Toril's planar cosmology and those of other worlds. The Plane of Shadow connects Toril's Material Plane with those of other worlds, including the default world for the D&D core books—the *WORLD OF GREYHAWK*®. Naturally, in a land as full of magical *portals* as Faerûn is, unusual portals that connect to other Material Planes via conduits through the Plane of Shadow almost certainly exist. Some sages point to such connections as the source of spells named after the great wizards of Greyhawk, such as *Otto's irresistible dance*, *Otiluke's freezing sphere*, *Tenser's transformation*, and the various *Bigby's hand* spells.

## Plane of Shadow

Coterminous to and coexistent with the Material Plane, Toril's Plane of Shadow is more than just a transitive plane. While it can be used for travel, it is also the home of two Faerûnian deities, and thus it has some of the characteristics of an Outer Plane. It also holds conduits similar to those found on the Astral Plane that link Toril with other Material Planes and other worlds.

**Shadow Links:** As a transitive plane, the Plane of Shadow is much like one infinite link. Travelers can enter it from the Material Plane by casting *shadow walk*, or draw its substance into the Material Plane by means of any illusion (shadow) spell. The Plane of Shadow does not connect to the Ethereal Plane, but it does lead to alternate Material Planes.

**Shadow Inhabitants:** The Plane of Shadow is home to a variety of foul creatures of darkness. Nightshades, undead shadows, and shadow mastiffs are among the native monsters of the plane. The ancient Netherese city of Shade sojourned in the Plane of Shadow long enough to spawn a new race, the shades (detailed in the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting*), and some of these creatures remained in the plane even after the city's return to Faerûn.

— *Player's Guide to Faerûn*, p. 162

## Shades

Over two thousand years ago, the ruler of a Netherese flying city transported his entire city onto the Plane of Shadow in order to explore that dim and perilous plane. For thousands of years, the City of Shade was lost to human knowledge, but in 1372 DR it abruptly returned to Faerûn above the Dire Wood. Today it soars above the deserts of Anauroch, land that was once a fertile part of the Empire of Netheril. Why the Netherese—now known as the Shadovars—returned, and what they are planning, are two mysteries that trouble the rulers of every nation in Faerûn. Most fear that solving these vital riddles will provide them with answers they will not care to hear. Until then, the Shadovars scheme in secret, their true goals a mystery to all but their ruler, the High Prince Telamont, and his twelve sons, the Princes of Shade.

Not all Shadovars are shades. The Princes of Shade decide who is to be given such a blessing, and they are stingy with their favors, careful to only empower those who are sure to be loyal to them and their causes. Prospective candidates are stringently tested for ability, loyalty, and resourcefulness.

Shades look just like normal humanoids, although their skin is gray to inky black, as are their eyes. They are thinner than most humans, and they prefer to dress in dark-hued clothes or armor. Human Shadovars are never made into shades until after they have reached the age of majority. There are no such things as young shades, and shades who marry produce normal offspring.

Shades have extraordinary long lifespans. By trading some portion of their souls for the stuff of shadow, they extend their lifespans tenfold. Shades created from humans use the following aging effect characteristics instead of the ones in Table: Aging Effects in the *Player's Handbook*:

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	Race	Middle Age <sup>1</sup>	Old <sup>2</sup>	Venerable <sup>3</sup>	Maximum Age
	Shade (human)	300 years	450 years	600 years	+6d% years

<sup>1</sup> At middle age, -1 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

<sup>2</sup> At old age, -2 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

<sup>3</sup> At venerable age, -3 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

**History:** While the City of Shade was trapped in the Plane of Shadow for the past two millennia, the High Prince, most powerful wizard in the city, struck upon a means of transforming himself and his most loyal followers into creatures of shadow. This granted them near-immortality and an incredible array of powers—as long as they were shrouded in some kind of darkness.

Since the return of the City of Shade to Faerûn, the High Prince has pursued a mysterious agenda that few outside the Prince of Shade understand. Some things are clear, however, like the fact that the High Prince intends to exterminate the phaerimm who still remain in Anauroch after all these years. This crusade even caused the High Prince to lend his city's power to aid the people of Evereska in defeating a recent phaerimm invasion, granting the elvish community a strange bedfellow indeed. With the routing of the phaerimm, of course, the alliance ended, and the Shadovars have returned to their standoffish ways.

**Outlook:** Shades live to serve the High Prince and their fellow Shadovars. Most have grown up in the City of Shade as loyal champions of the High Prince's regime. While individual shades may have personal agendas, few conflict with the purposes of Shade's rulers, since disobedient or disloyal Shadovars are not likely to have been transformed into shades in the first place.

Shades consider themselves superior to all nonshades around them. After all, that's what they've been raised to believe from birth. Only the most worthy Shadovars are chosen to become shades.

Most shades go adventuring only at the behest of their superiors. They are normally given specific orders about what they are to do on such missions. Shades rarely share their true reasons for adventuring with any non-Shadovar allies they may temporarily make. They do not trust those outside Shade, and any relationships they strike up with strangers are sure to be temporary.

**Shade Society:** Life in the City of Shade fits into a strictly controlled hierarchy. The High Prince sits at the top of the hierarchy's pyramid, with his sons—the Twelve Princes of Shade—right below him. Beneath them, the arcanists (Shadovar sorcerers and wizards) stand, with the military next down in importance. At the base of the pyramid, there are four levels of commoners. In descending order, these are the crafters (skilled laborers), the merchants (those who distribute necessary goods throughout the City of Shade and import and export needed materials), the servants (those who work as personal servants to people above them), and the slaves (who do the worst of the society's grunt work).

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At the age of ascension (13 years old), every citizen is tutored in basic spellcraft and subjected to a battery of tests to determine how his skills can best serve the City of Shade. Then, at the age of majority (18 years old) each person embarks upon the job for which he was trained. Unless the person suddenly displays a new aptitude, he works at his designated career until the day he dies.

Those citizens who prove to be especially important and loyal are transformed into shades. This is one of the greatest honors a Shadovar can receive. Only a small percentage of Shadovars are transformed, and commoners and low-ranking military officers are never chosen for transformation.

Outside the City of Shadow, most shades keep to themselves. They may travel singly or in small groups, but any alliances they make with non-Shadovars—which are rare—are sure to be alliances of convenience. Only a Prince of Shade or a Shadovar officer of captain's rank or higher can leave the City of Shade without an escort, and such a person had better have a defensible reason for doing so.

**Language and Literacy:** Netherese is the language of the City of Shade, and all Shadovar speak it. Those who deal with other Faerûnians or frequently travel outside the city often speak Common and whatever other languages they might find convenient.

All shades are literate, except for barbarians (not that any Shadovars could be considered barbarians).

**Shade Magic and Lore:** Most Shadovar spellcasters are arcanists (sorcerers and wizards). They normally specialize in the schools of evocation and necromancy, although they are free to choose any school or none at all.

One favorite tactic of shade spellcasters is to cast a *darkness* spell—or any other spell that causes darkness or shadows—on themselves. They then have access to their full range of shade powers.

Shadovar arcanists have at least two racial spells particular to their people: *handfang* and *shadow canopy*.

**Shade Deities:** All Shadovars worship Shar as their patron. No other deities have churches within the City of Shade. The people of Shade worshiped this ancient goddess even before they ventured into the Plane of Shadow. Since then, they have learned to rely upon her like no other. All other churches or chapels in the City of Shade have long since been converted over to the worship of Shar. Still, shade clerics are more loyal to the High Prince than to Shar herself. Their worship of her is a means to an end.

**Relations with Other Races:** Shadovars of all stripes do not have much contact with non-Shadovars, and so have little if any specific prejudices about them, whether good or bad. They think of other peoples as inferior, to someday be subjugated by the triumphant High Prince. However, all Shadovars have an especially cold and dark place in their hearts for their ancient foes the phaerimm. Shadovars are willing to go to great lengths to cause the phaerimm trouble and—preferably—death.

**Shade Equipment:** A shade's favored weapons are determined by his base race. To most Faerûnians, the weapons and equipment of most Shadovars look oddly dated. After all, until recently they were cut off from the rest of the world for over two thousand years. Shades often wear ornate breastplates and carry similarly designed ranseurs. They also like aerial cavalry and have domesticated dire bats as mounts.

Shadovars don't raise animals in the City of Shade; there's simply no room. They gather their food by either paying for it or taking it. There are few if any pets in their society—caring for such creatures is not considered an efficient use of the city's limited resources.

— *Races of Faerûn*, p.147

## Nether Scrolls

Two sets of *nether scrolls* exist, each consisting of fifty individual scrolls. One complete set lies in the depths of Windsong Tower in the ruins of Myth Drannor, where it takes the form of a golden beech tree known as the Quess Ar Teranthvar (Golden Grove of Hidden Knowledge). The other set has been broken up and mostly lost. At least until the Year of the Moonfall (1344 DR), three scrolls from this latter set lay in the Hall of Mists beneath the Grandfather Tree of the High Forest. Two others are in the Crypt of Hssthak, which now lies beneath the sands of western Anauroch. A few of the remaining scrolls have been destroyed, and the location and current state of those that remain are unknown.

Each scroll is an 8-inch-by-10-inch sheet of thin, rolled gold as flexible as paper. Silvery magical writing crawls across its surface, appearing almost alive. The scroll's small size belies the staggering amount of information it holds. As soon as one “page” of text has been read, the writing swims and moves about the sheet, reforming into the next page of text. All in all, it takes approximately one month of dedicated study to review a single *nether scroll*.

The *nether scrolls* form the foundation of modern magical theory on Faerûn. Virtually every mage who has mastered any portion of the Art since the rise of Netheril received her knowledge, albeit indirectly, from the *nether scrolls*. Consequently, much of the information contained in these scrolls is now considered common knowledge in Faerûn's magical community. Nevertheless, the *nether scrolls* still contain a wealth of information that is useful to any student of the Art.

Reading even one *nether scroll* offers considerable insight into the Art. Any character studying one immediately gains one level in an arcane spellcasting class of her choice. (That is, her experience point total is set to the midpoint for her new level.)

The *nether scrolls* are divided into five chapters, each covering a different aspect of the Art. A character who manages to read all ten scrolls that make up a chapter gains an additional benefit whose nature depends on the topic studied. The chapters of the *nether scrolls* and the benefits they provide are detailed below.

**Arcanus Fundare (Foundations of Magic):** +30 inherent bonus on Spellcraft checks; +1 to save DCs for all arcane spells.

**Magicus Creare (Spells of Creation):** Three bonus item creation feats; XP cost of any magic item created drops to 75% of normal.

**Maior Creare (Major Creations):** Craft Construct (see page 303 of the *Monster Manual*) as a bonus feat; any golem or other construct created has maximum hit points.

**Planus Mechanus (Studies of the Planes):** Use *plane shift* as the spell once per day; ignore any hostile or debilitating planar environmental effects.

**Ars Factum (Of the Creation of Artifacts):** Unknown. Reputedly, this chapter of the *nether scrolls* taught the reader how to create artifacts. However, an additional key of some kind is needed to unlock this set of scrolls, and the spellcasters of Windsong Tower never discovered it.

The benefit gained by studying a particular chapter applies only to the character's arcane spellcasting class. For example, if a 15th-level cleric/5th-level wizard studied the *Maior Creare* scrolls and attempted to create a golem with divine magic, the golem would not have maximum hit points.

Overwhelming transmutation; CL 40th; Weight 1 lb. (per scroll)

— *Lost Empires of Faerûn*, p. 156

## THE SHACKLED CITY ADVENTURE PATH

### The Dæmonskar

This terrible crater in the middle of the trackless jungle was once the site of a spell weaver city. When an attempt to build a structure to allow planar transport on a massive scale failed, the entire city vanished in a terrific explosion of abyssal energies. The place has since come to be known as the Dæmonskar, if only for the fact that it is infested with demons trapped here when that fateful explosion tore them out of the Abyss and stranded them on the Material Plane.

Several tribes of gnolls have recently appeared in the jungles near the Dæmonskar. Most were attracted to the region by legends spread by a wandering gnoll adept about “Triple Tail.” According to this legend, the son of Yeenoghu emerged from the Abyss in a great fire from the Dæmonskar, an event that marked the start of a thirteen-century war that would eventually make the gnolls the dominant race in the world. These gnolls are loosely organized brigands, but a few of them are religious fanatics inspired by Triple Tail. These gnolls, adepts and rangers of considerable ability, worship Triple Tail as the son of Yeenoghu.

“Triple Tail” does exist within the Dæmonskar. Although he cares little for such worshipers, he nevertheless accepts human sacrifices from them. He is, in fact, a glabrezu demon named Nabthatoron who once served Yeenoghu. After failing to secure the region against Surabar Spellmason, Nabthatoron was exiled to the Material Plane until such time as he could raze Redgorge to the ground. For the past several centuries, Nabthatoron has tried many times to organize the fiends of the Dæmonskar back into an army, but his resources and reputation have failed him so far on every attempt.

Nabthatoron's lair is located somewhere in the depths of the Dæmonskar, and is inhabited by the survivors of the demon's original fiendish retinue. Although most of the spell weaver structures in the vicinity were swept away by the explosion that produced the Dæmonskar, some remnants of their once proud city survive. Other ruins left by the spell

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weavers are likely to be subterranean places, buried deeply in lava, rubble, and ash.

— *The Shackled City Adventure Path*, p.28

### Fetor Abradius's Bedchamber

*The original purpose for this chamber is unclear, but someone has been using it recently as a campsite. A simple bed sits against the wall opposite a desk and chair. Large stacks of paper are piled on the desk.*

Although Fetor carries his material wealth and spellbooks on his person, the papers on his desk contain extensive and valuable notes on the nature of the ruins, the *Soul Pillars*, and the Cagewrights themselves. These notes are complex, disorganized, and hold the observations of a cruel and subtle mind. Little can be gleaned from the notes upon casual study, but a character who studies the notes and makes a successful DC 25 Decipher Script check can learn much.

If the notes are deciphered, they grant a +6 circumstance bonus on any Intelligence-based attempts made to retrieve knowledge from the *Soul Pillars*. Additionally, they contain much information about the Cagewrights, granting those who use them a +10 circumstance bonus on all Knowledge checks made to research this group.

— *The Shackled City Adventure Path*, p.219

### Thifirane Rhiavadi's Secret Study

*This room contains a large desk carved with fancy scrollwork and cluttered with papers and scrolls, a tall-backed chair, and six small cages resting atop small tables or hanging from the ceiling by steel chains.*

A character who collects the notes on Thifirane's desk finds them to be written in Draconic. Anyone who reads through them finds that they contain a wealth of knowledge about the Cagewrights. A character who utilizes these notes while researching questions about this organization gains a +6 circumstance bonus on any associated Knowledge check. In addition, a fair amount of these notes seem to pertain to the design of magic items and illusions. Characters might recognize many of the illusions that exist in this manor here, along with some of the manor's more unique features (like the tub in area **R16**). The notes also detail several of Thifirane's personal magic items, with particular attention paid to an object that must be a construct of sorts. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to correctly interpret the notes and sketches. These notes are for one of Thifirane's most devious inventions—the *simulacrum suit* worn by Vhalantru. It was the creation of this item that earned her a special place in the beholder's heart, for without this suit, Vhalantru's plans for taking over Cauldron would have been far more difficult. The notes make it clear that a person could use a *simulacrum suit* to disguise himself as someone else, and that the disguise is specifically engineered to defeat magical detection (such as by *true seeing*). The notes also make clear the fantastic cost of the item, and that Thifirane has only made one so far as a result. She indicates she has given the suit to someone she refers to only as "V" in return for ample favors and payments. Nowhere do the notes mention that Vhalantru is a beholder.

— *The Shackled City Adventure Path*, p.231

### Thifirane Rhiavadi's Library

*This relatively small library is still warm, comfortable, and well stocked with numerous large and interesting-looking books.*

Thifirane maintains a library of useful reference materials covering a broad range of topics. Characters using the library as a reference gain a +2 bonus on the following skill checks: Craft (alchemy), Craft (blacksmithing), Craft (locksmithing), Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (history), and Knowledge (nobility and royalty). The library has a significant number of texts relating to the planes, and these references grant a +4 bonus on Knowledge (the planes) checks. None of the books in the library are magical.

In addition to several laden bookshelves, the library contains a reading desk, a chair, and a lovingly drawn map of Cauldron and environs mounted to one wall in a heavy wooden frame.

— *The Shackled City Adventure Path*, p.232

### Researching the Villains

At some point during this campaign, the PCs learn that a group called the Cagewrights have dire plans for Cauldron. This discovery probably occurs in Chapter Six as the PCs speak with Kaurophon, a half-fiend who was once allied with the Cagewrights.

The Cagewrights have been quite good about maintaining their secrecy, and there's little the PC's can do to really learn more about them until they recover the journals and notes of one of their members, such as Feto Abradius or Thifirane (in Chapters Seven and Eight) or of one of their allies like Vhalantru (at the end of Chapter Eight). Once the PCs have these key bits of information, they'll be able to use them as guides in researching the organization further by making Knowledge (arcana, local, or religion) or bardic knowledge checks. Listed below are several sample bits of knowledge the PCs can learn about the Cagewrights. Note that some of the DCs required to learn the information via research are quite high; the PCs can mitigate these high DCs by using well-stocked libraries to aid their checks, and remember that the journals and notes they capture grant additional bonuses to the checks.

Finally, spells like *legend lore* and *vision* can impart this same information once the PCs have captured some intelligence, as you see fit.

**DC 25:** The Cagewrights are a mysterious cult associated with the prison plane of Carceri. They are said to worship demodands, and may even be led by these foul fiends.

**DC 30:** The Cagewrights were founded by demodands several centuries ago and charged with discovering a way to link the Material Plane with Carceri, providing the demodands with a near-endless source of prisoners and slaves for their needs.

**DC 33:** The Cagewrights maintain their secrecy by using lesser cults to do much of their work for them. The Ebon Triad is one such cult, and rumor holds that they often have ties with more established religious orders, especially those associated with magic or oppression.

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**DC 35:** The Cagewrights are searching for individuals called the “Shackleborn.” Descended from half-demodands, a Shackleborn's soul is believed to possess a unique link between the Material Plane and Carceri. This link is of particular interest to the Cagewrights, for some reason.

**DC 36:** The Cagewrights traditionally number at 26 members—13 leaders and 13 apprentices. In practice, the number of apprentices varies wildly, while the number of leaders remains constant. New leaders are selected from apprentices when necessary. Currently, there are 18 members of the cult.

**DC 39:** The Cagewrights believe that a ritual of planar junction, fueled by a source of primal energy meshed with the souls of the Shackleborn (whose link to Carceri provides a necessary “pathway” for the magic to travel between the two planes), can create a permanent portal between the Material Plane and Carceri.

In addition, a DC 40 check is good enough to uncover the identity of one of the 13 Cagewright leaders (and that Cagewright's apprentice, if any).

**Freija Doorgan:** Female human conjurer, primary magic item creator (apprentice: Thifirane).

— *The Shackled City Adventure Path*, p.10

## MISCELLANEOUS QUOTES

*“By level 20 though, you aren't capturing a wizard. A character lives to level 20 by being the most ruthless, lucky, capable, and paranoid bastard around. A wizard is throwing around a 30+ Int score and has, entirely in character, planned contingencies for his contingencies. He may well be running around with flat out total immunity to harm, he does not walk outside without an entire bevy of defensive magics around him and enough magic items to buy himself a nation.”*

— *Emperor Tippy, Giant in the Playground*

*“Contingency is like playing chess but you get to make several moves on your turn, several on your opponents turn and you're aloud to rearrange the board when he gets up to go to the bathroom.”*

— *(Un)Inspired, Giant in the Playground*

*“You here this now, whoever's responsible for this, you turned my partner, Troy, into jelly! I will have you destroyed for this! He was mine to toy with and destroy as I please in a humorous fashion; nobody outdoes Dr. Insano, do you here?! Nobody! I must plan my vengeance... but first it would be a shame to let all of that tasty jelly go to waste... oh, it looks like strawberry... Nurse! Fetch me the English muffins!”*

— *Dr. Insano, The Spooky Experiment*

*“They have squirt guns! Flee!”*

— *Noah Antwiler, Counter Monkey*