

Uncertain Faith



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A Shadow of the Demon Lord Supplement

Uncertain Faith

A Guide to Religion in a Land of Shadow™

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Malum Discordiae





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Introduction

Against a backdrop of history defined by war, dark magic, plagues, and countless other calamities, it should come as no surprise that faith occupies an important place in the hearts and minds of people living in and around the Empire. For some, religion offers hope, meaning, and a purpose greater than simply serving one's own interests. It can promise a future that transcends the suffering and misery endured by so many, and can guide people toward leading better lives.

Religion can also be dangerous, for it attracts people who are at their most vulnerable. Many religions—but especially those dedicated to dark forces such as the Devil or the Demon Lord—promise power, wealth, gratification, and purpose, and then lead only to destruction. Even cults dedicated to good and noble purposes can be corrupted from within and twisted toward unspeakable ends.

Good or bad, helpful or destructive, religion has always been a significant force in the lands of Rûl. One can find monuments of faith in all lands, from the blasted expanse of the Desolation to the towering monoliths of the Frozen Wastes beyond Blötland. Grand cathedrals tower above the streets of Caecras, Lij, and other cities, while humble temples offer refuge and community in the smaller settlements of the provinces and beyond.

Urth and Religion

The world of Urth is a complex and often frightening place—a reality in which anything is possible. Myths help people explain why the world is the way it is, and why certain things happen. Ultimately, they provide an understanding of why people exist in the first place. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west because fiery steeds drag it across the dome of the world. The ground sometimes shakes because Father Death and the Lady of Sorrows quarrel. The seasons change when greedy Old Man Winter creeps out of his cave to conquer the Summer Lands while their queen travels in the north, only to find himself beaten back when she returns to claim her kingdom. These myths helped the earliest mortals understand their world and allowed them to find common ground and cultural identities. The societies that formed around these stories would help establish the major religions found in the world today.

Religions take shape when people find consensus about their myths and codify their beliefs in them. In doing so, they create a truth about the world and what it means to live in it. Myths and the people who believe them typically stand at the center of these budding faiths, providing an explanation of the world and inviting others to share in that explanation. As

social structures, religions also dictate proper forms of behavior and codes of conduct to which the faithful must subscribe. As well, most offer rewards for membership, such as access to a paradise found in death or the chance to live again.

As important and as powerful as they are, religions come and go all the time. Corruption in the ranks of the priesthood might cause congregations to become disaffected and abandon the faith altogether. People might convert to other religions that demand less of them, have an ethos more in line with their thinking, or offer greater rewards. Religions can thus experience incredible growth only to wither and die. Those religions that enjoy the greatest longevity allow the ideas underpinning their faith to evolve, adapting to the changes in their congregations and in the world around them.

Religion in Rûl

Among all the peoples living on Urth, mortals place the most importance on religion. Faced with the finitude of existence, mortals shape their faith as a powerful tool for combatting the crisis of mortality. Religion can promise escape from the horrors and hardships of the world, offering hope to people struggling to feed themselves or fend off attacks from beastmen and worse. Similarly, religions that speak of how this life is but one of many can help people come to terms with their misery, giving them hope that the next time around will be better.

Few mortals question the existence of the gods, and many believe that deities take an active hand in the world's affairs. For proof, one need only look to the priests who perform miracles and receive aid from the gods through their prayers. Witnessing these miracles strengthens belief and can bring people who have begun to drift from a faith back into the fold. True believers attend temple services, tithe to their temple, and adhere to a religion's strictures and tenets.

However, despite the strong role religion plays in the lives of many people, growing numbers have started to question the existence of the gods. Some suggest that even if deities exist, they have long withdrawn from the world. Some have even gone so far as to reject the concept of deities altogether, holding that the gods are nothing more than manifestations of mortal belief in the field of magic that envelopes and suffuses reality. The so-called miracles that priests perform are simply the casting of spells. Such views tend to be unpopular, though, and in areas intolerant of nonbelievers, voicing such opinions can result in persecution, exile, or even death.

Few members of the immortal races—including faeries, devils, and even the elementals—have religious inclinations. Unless victimized by violence, such creatures live forever, and the inevitable end that mortals face is at most a distant threat. Furthermore, many

immortals have dwelled long enough in the world to have seen the beginnings of many religious myths, and recognize them for the fantasy they are. Most find the notion of gods, paradise, and salvation to be ludicrous—nothing more than little lies that mortals tell themselves to escape the existential crisis defining their existence. Some faeries, however, devote themselves to a fey lord or lady, acting as servants who fulfill many of the same functions as mortal priests sworn to gods.

Immortals understand that belief, force of will, and imagination affect the field of magic that envelops the world. The focus of many minds on a single concept can produce godlike beings from this field—or, in the case of the Old Gods, can bestow godlike powers on already powerful beings. So from the perspective of immortals, the New God might simply be a name for a power that has existed all along. Perhaps this being represents a revolution in mortal imagination, suggesting that mortals have moved beyond myth and now seek something more.



Holy Ground

The major religions each include a sidebar that details the effects of being on ground deemed holy by that religion or its gods. Holy ground covers the inside of a structure (such as a temple or shrine), as well as the area within 5 yards of it. For an object such as a monolith, holy ground covers the area within 5 yards of it. In addition to the general effects of holy ground, creatures of the faith can attempt to curry divine favor while on holy ground. See Appendix I, “Magic of the Gods,” for more information.



Servants of the Gods

With few exceptions, religions depend on large numbers of people to survive. These servants preserve the faith, safeguard its relics, and represent its interests in the world. Most work out of temples, leading worship and ministering to their congregations. Some take an active role in their communities, helping people in need or advising civic leaders (if they don’t become civic leaders themselves). Some can serve also as street preachers, delivering fiery sermons to anyone who will listen, or by taking up arms to fight in the name of their faith, whether that faith’s enemies are monsters, demons, or rival religions. Some members of a faith can command magical power through a combination of belief and prayer, but most are simply ordinary folk who felt the call to serve.

Affiliation with a religion does not guarantee that an individual keeps to all the strictures and tenets of the faith. Large, powerful religions attract ambitious and corrupt people who would profit from a congregation eager to part with their wealth. Some join a religion to

mask their own dark pursuits, and stories abound of evil cults hidden within the followers of the New God and the Old Faith. Most people who join a religion make the decision out of genuine belief in its creeds and ideals. They are dedicated servants who set aside other opportunities to pursue a life of pious devotion to powers greater than themselves. It is through their efforts that all religions prosper and grow.

Holy Sites

Sites deemed holy and sacred to the gods stand all across the continent of Rûl. Some are temples functioning as centers of worship, where priests perform ceremonies, conduct rituals, deliver sermons, and carry out any other tasks required by their faith. Others are small shrines dedicated to holy figures, heroes, ancestors, and gods who have passed from mortal knowledge. Then there are the countless stone circles, monoliths, obelisks, great statues, sacred groves, lodges, and other monuments raised to honor the gods, and to remind mortals of the gods’ power and presence in the world.

Holy sites vary by religion. The Cult of the New God favors grand temples, churches, and cathedrals, while devotees of the Old Faith prefer natural settings in which to offer prayers. Some places were built to honor the gods, and thus were created holy. Others have been made sacred by the spilling of a martyr’s blood, the performance of a great miracle, or even a manifestation of one of the gods.

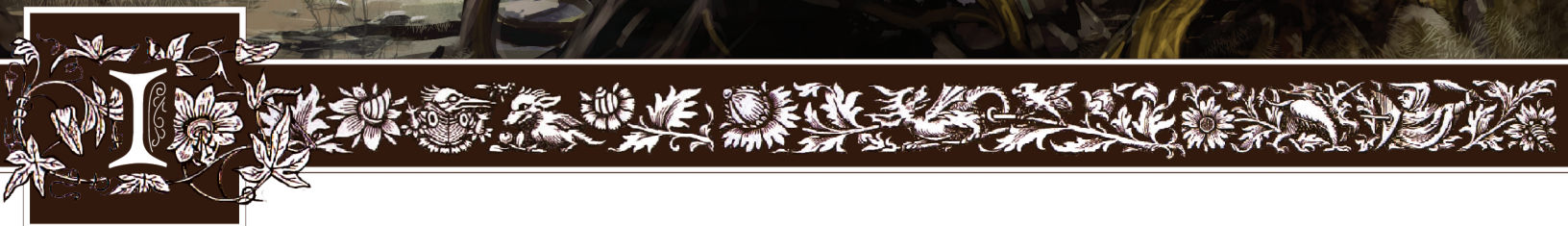
Using This Book

Uncertain Faith builds on the information presented in the *Shadow of the Demon Lord* rulebook by collecting the narrative threads woven into paths, spells, traditions, creatures, and information on the world, then presenting it here. As with most setting information for the game, you’ll find the details broadly presented. This book contains more than enough material to help realize these religions in play, and to spark the imaginations of Game Masters and players alike.

To make the most of this book, you’ll need a copy of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. *Uncertain Faith* also references story, traditions, and spells from other supplements, including *Tombs of the Desolation*, *Terrible Beauty*, the *Demon Lord’s Companion*, and *Exquisite Agony*. Though none of these supplements is necessary to use the content in these pages, having them will make this material even more valuable.

Paths, traditions, and other game elements marked with a † are found in the *Demon Lord’s Companion*.

ΕΣΕΝ ΤΗΣ ΦΕΑΡ ΟΥ ΔΕΛΤΗ ΙΣ
ΔΙΠΡΕΣ ΜΑΡΙΚ ΔΕΛΤΗ ΤΟ ΤΗ
ΛΟΛ ΤΗ ΛΑΜΒΣ. ΔΕΛΤΗ
ΛΑΥ ΤΗΣ ΜΟΤ ΔΕΣΕΡΥ
ΖΑΥΕΣ ΤΗΣ ΝΙΚΕΣΔ. ΔΕΛΤΗ



The Old Faith

The oldest religion still practiced in Rûl, the Old Faith traces its origins back to the First People, those early humans who originally settled the continent. The roots of animism have never left the Old Faith, and its devotees still find their gods in the sky, forests, hills, and rivers. The presence of these gods instills a deep and abiding reverence for the land in the Old Faith's devotees, and that reverence stands at the center of their religion.

A great many gods, spirits, and heroes make up the pantheon associated with the Old Faith. Its most important members are described in their own sections in the following pages. While various sects place greater importance on certain gods over others, nearly all accept the World Mother's leadership over the rest, for it is from her that all life springs.

A Rural Following

The Old Faith has its strongest following in rural communities, having accepted that the crowded, stinking cities are the domain of the priests of the New God. Followers of the Old Faith take comfort in wild

places, and minister to the peoples living in such places or along their borders. They help farmers with their crops, care for animals, and guide the lost out of danger. Their congregations include farmers and explorers, hunters and woodcutters, guides, hermits, and anyone who lives in nature. The Old Faith has long been a human religion, but many halflings, fauns, and even some orcs keep the faith.

The most ardent followers of the Old Faith adorn their homes or persons with nature symbols, including the face of the Green Man, the World Tree, sheaves of wheat, acorns, or oak leaves. They never keep iron on their persons and avoid using that metal in their homes, lest they drive off the helpful spirits with the bad.

Groves, Lodges, and Standing Stones

The Old Faith's focus on nature requires that most of its ceremonies and festivals take place out of doors. Its followers thus have little use for temples in their religious practices. During holy days, they congregate near important landmarks, such as around the bole of an ancient tree, on the shores of still waters, or at the mouth of a sacred cave. Fields and pastures are also common places for such gatherings, especially in towns where the Old Faith remains the dominant religion.



In the absence of a suitable landmark, those devoted to the Old Faith raise monoliths carved with runes, whorls, and glyphs depicting the various gods of import to their communities. Multiple stones are raised sometimes to form circles, which are believed to help

druids and other servants of nature channel magical power. Such places sometimes mark the graves of heroes and legendary priests, their bodies interred under the stones.

The few full structures built to honor the Old Gods stand in the far south, where they are sheltered from winter storms, or in the Empire's central provinces. In the south, the faithful build lodges from wood and stone, carving idols of their gods and arranging them in a circle around the center of the lodge. Shrines at the base of each idol allow visitors to make offerings and pray. The few temples in Caecras, Low Country, and the Grand Duchy of the West all have a similar form, though instead of wooden icons and symbols, they use idols carved from stone, often in strange and monstrous forms.



Holy Ground of the Old Faith

The power of the Old Gods protects nature on their holy ground. Any creature attacking an animal or plant in an area of holy ground makes the attack roll with 1 bane, and animals and plants make challenge rolls to resist attacks with 1 boon.



Many Gods, One Faith

The Old Faith is a collective creed that incorporates hundreds of smaller religions with countless gods and spirits of power. While most cults affiliated with the Old Faith cleave to its tenets and strictures, many variations on the faith exist, excluding some gods or worshipping others exclusively. The factions of the Old Faith favor cooperation over exclusion, and can usually find common ground in their commitment to protecting the land from harm. Despite their best efforts, though, conflict does arise. And when it does, the blame is typically set at the feet of the gods whom the sects are pledged to serve, rather than the priests who lead those sects.

Priests of Old Man Winter despise those in service to the Queen of Summer, and the feeling is mutual. The

World Mother and the Horned King have a tempestuous relationship, finding peace only at the turning of each year when they come together to renew life. The Seer, an interloper deity borrowed from the Dark Gods, stands outside the pantheon, and his drug-addled priests have prayers for him and him alone. Yet even when disputes happen among the sects of the Old Faith, they only rarely result in violence. Wisdom prevails even in the tensest conflicts.

Sects and Factions

A great diversity of belief is both the Old Faith's greatest strength and its starkest weakness. On the one hand, that diversity makes the followers of the Old Faith more tolerant of other religions. On the other, strange and sometimes dangerous beliefs often arise within those followers' ranks.

The Serene Way: The followers of the Serene Way believe that all life is sacred, and that they must protect that life from harm even if it means laying down their own lives. The followers of the Serene Way isolate themselves from the world, seeking refuge in the most remote places. They establish hermitages or small colonies, and use magic to conceal their homes and to steer interlopers away from the places they protect.

The Children of the Earth: Technological progress poses a grave threat to the world, and it must be curbed at any cost—or so believe the Children of the Earth. The faithful of this radical, violent sect focus on recruiting new members in order to build forces large enough to raid settlements. The Children of the Earth destroy bridges, burn towns, drive off woodcutters, and collapse mines. Most consider members of the sect to be little better than brigands, and authorities move quickly to contain them whenever they become active.

The Brothers of Rot: Death is a normal part of the life cycle, and while most followers of the Old Faith focus on living things, the Brothers of Rot concern themselves with the dead and things that feed on the dead. A nihilistic and bizarre cult, the Brothers of Rot embrace civilization. They often live in cities, and will follow armies to pick over the bodies of the dead and dying. Members of this sect swap out access to the Life tradition for the Death tradition†.

The Changing of the Seasons

The Old Faith's most important holy days are the equinoxes and solstices, marking the transition of one season to the next. Each kicks off a weeklong festival, during which priests make offerings of grain and meats to invoke the gods' blessings. They oversee great feasts, honor great ancestors, perform weddings, infuse the land with magic to bolster the next season's crops, and ordain initiates as new priests. The solstices belong to the Queen of Summer and Old Man Winter, while the equinoxes belong to the Horned King, the World Mother, and Revel.

In the Shadow of the New God

Priests of the Old Faith respect, honor, and accept the tenets of other religions. At various times, the Old Faith has claimed gods from other faiths, absorbing them into the pantheon. When the Cult of the New God initially began to spread through the Empire, the followers of the Old Faith gave ground, believing they would absorb this radical sect as they had all others. Unfortunately, the new cult regarded the Old Faith as a primitive doctrine obsessed with dark and savage spirits. Some even went so far as to paint followers of the Old Gods as devil worshipers. In the time since, relations between the Old Faith and the Cult of the New God have swung between neutrality and open violence—often at the whim of the Matriarch who leads the cult.

Priests of the Old Faith

Anyone who reveres nature and seeks to protect it from despoilers can find a place among the priests of the Old Faith. Most priests come to the religion from rural or wilderness professions, with farmers, herders, and hunters being the most common. The Old Faith welcomes peoples from any ancestry, though most initiates are human, halfling, or faun.

Priests and some druids take initiates in hand, teaching them the mysteries of the faith. These include rites and rituals, how to preserve peace with the fey folk, how to tend and care for animals, and methods for growing healthy and bountiful crops. Only when students demonstrate mastery of these disciplines can they undertake the rite of passage for the priesthood. Druids oversee these rites during one of the faith's four holy festivals, questioning the initiates and testing their magical knowledge. Upon providing a satisfactory demonstration, initiates are anointed with sacred oils and welcomed into the faith.

New priests are expected to help their local communities by working the fields, helping herders with their flocks, healing the sick, and tending to the injured. They help senior priests during festivals and lead the defense of rural communities against the myriad threats arrayed against them. Though the work is difficult, the rewards of these priestly labors show themselves in abundant crops, healthy animals, and secure communities.

Priests of the Old Faith prefer simple homespun robes. Since they spend much of their time working with the land and its animals, they often appear dirty and unkempt, with grass stains and dirt streaking their bare feet, and their robes spotted with bird droppings, mud, and spiky seedpods. Priests might use bronze sickles, staffs, or medallions made from wood, seeds, and leaves as implements.

Dedicated priests often go on to become rangers, scouts, or wardens[†]. The most skilled priests might study the

deeper mysteries of their religion and join the ranks of the druids, who protect large territories rather than small communities, and who can bring the considerable power of the Old Gods to bear in defense of their charges.

Tenets and Strictures

Priests of the Old Faith must abide by certain strictures to remain in good standing with their gods. A priest must never kill an animal, except for food or in self-defense. Wearing or carrying objects fashioned from iron is likewise forbidden. All priests vow to protect places sacred to the Old Gods and to preserve all lands and protect them from despoilers. Finally, priests of the old faith honor the Old Gods during the equinoxes and solstices, performing the rites as they were taught.



Level 1 Priest of the Old Faith

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add nature and one of the following other academic professions to your list of professions: astrology, folklore, geography, medicine, or religion.

Animal Friendship In social situations, you make attack rolls to influence animals with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Life, Nature, or Primal tradition.

Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Blessing of Nature You can use an action to cause new growth to spread across the ground from a point you can reach, out to a number of yards equal to 1 + your Power score. The growth remains for 1 round, and the area is difficult terrain until the effect ends. At the end of the round, you and any creature you choose in the area heal damage, with each affected creature healing damage equal to half its healing rate. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the Old Faith

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Life, Nature, or Primal.
- You discover the Life, Nature, or Primal tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the Old Faith

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Protective Prayer When you use Prayer, you impose 1 bane on attack rolls made against the triggering creature until the end of the round.

Level 8 Master Priest of the Old Faith

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Quickening Prayer Once per round when you use Prayer, you regain the ability to use a triggered action, and you move up to half your Speed.

Greater Blessing You can use Blessing of Nature twice.

Gods of the Old Faith

Most followers of the Old Faith honor all the many gods making up its pantheon, recognizing that each has a part to play in the world and that all oversee different aspects of life. People pray to the Seer for guidance and to the World Mother for an easy birth and healthy child. They pray to Old Man Winter to stay his cruel hand, and to Father Death for an end without suffering. Though priests represent all the gods, some find themselves drawn to one god and serve that deity directly. Unless mentioned otherwise, all of the following sects follow the customs and strictures of the Old Faith.

Father Death

Named Father Death by mortals, the deity called Thanatos has ruled the Underworld for as long as any creature can remember and is worshiped as the god of endings, mortality, dreams, and fear. The grim deity appears as a skeletal figure draped in hooded black robes. He carries a blue-metal scythe and rides a pale horse. Among the gods, Father Death sides with Old Man Winter (said by some myths to be his brother), and he is married to the lesser-known Lady of Sorrows, whose ever-falling tears wash away memories from souls.

Menacing Temples: Unlike with most other sects of the Old Faith, the followers of Father Death maintain many temples in the world. Most stand near or within the grounds of graveyards, where priests protect the dead through prayer and vigilance. A temple's size depends on the burial ground it protects, and most are nothing more than shrines. Larger cemeteries boast full temples with gathering places for mourners, vaults for preparing the dead, and barracks for priests and initiates. The sect's largest temple is the Cathedral of Death, a ghastly structure built to look as if it were carved from bones. This stands outside Caecras, at the center of a graveyard that stretches for miles in all directions.

Visitors of other faiths find Father Death's temples cold and unwelcoming, as if radiating menace. The construction of these temples is meant to capture the essence of the Underworld, with no windows, gloomy interiors lit by black candles, and an atmosphere thick with incense. The primary chamber of a temple is a place for mourners to gather and pray for the safe passage of souls into the lands of the dead. Hidden doors lead to descending staircases that end in the sacred vaults where priests prepare the dead for burning, burial, or interment.



Holy Ground of Father Death

Father Death loathes Necromancy, and his holy ground protects corpses from being exploited by that dark magic. When a creature attempts to cast a Necromancy spell on a corpse interred on ground holy to Father death, the creature must make a Will challenge roll. The creature casts the spell normally on a success or wastes the casting with no effect on a failure.



Deathly Symbols: Father Death's most common symbol is a screaming skull sheathed in blue flames, though scythes, ravens, and white horses are popular images among the god's followers. These signs appear on tombstones and the doors of burial vaults. Older cemeteries usually have a large idol of the god at center, either riding his horse or looming over graves as a winged skeleton with arms outstretched.

Funerals and Reaping Night: Ceremonies invoking Father Death deal with funeral services. Priests shepherd souls to the Underworld by calling upon Father Death to claim them before they become spirits in the world.

Chanting, the singing of dirges, and the burning of rare incense are all believed to help guide souls through the Underworld's gates.

Each year at the end of the harvest season, people celebrate the Day of Lost Souls. This is a time for feasting, drinking, and remembering the dead by pouring wine onto the ground and burning the choicest meats on pyres. At night, priests lead processions through their local communities, singing doleful hymns believed to guide the spirits trapped in the world to the Underworld where they belong.

Another sacred event is Reaping Night, which occurs in late winter. Priests believe that on this night, Father Death mounts his pale horse and rides across the land to claim the souls of those who refuse to die. In olden times, priests would sacrifice a young man or woman, then paint the victim's blood on doors to mark the homes of those who had recently lost a family member, hoping that Father Death would pass them by.



Sisters of Sorrow

The Lady of Sorrows has few mortal followers, though at least a few people include her in their prayers to Father Death. One order, however, sets her higher than Thanatos—a sisterhood of priests who have pledged their lives to helping souls find their way into the Underworld. The Sisters of Sorrow, in their black habits and weeping skull masks, follow armies and enter plague towns, moving among the fallen to whisper prayers while using sharp knives to put an end to their suffering. The sisters operate out of four monasteries, with the largest in Balgrendia. They find no welcome during their travels, for they follow sorrow, suffering, and death, seemingly interested only in people on death's door.



Priests of Father Death

Father Death's clergy is called the Solemn Brethren, and is known for the difficulty it has recruiting initiates. In days of old, priests would claim a newborn infant once every five years, perform a funeral service for the child, and raise the baby in their cloisters to prepare him for a life of service to Thanatos. While this practice sometimes still occurs in rural communities, it has been outlawed almost everywhere in the Empire thanks to objections raised by the New God's cultists. Instead, Father Death's priests now run orphanages and select initiates from among the most promising children.

Training priests of Father Death proves difficult, however. Initiates spend most of their time in the gloomy bowels of their temples, learning how to prepare bodies, identify causes of death, and perform the proper rites that ensure souls reach the Underworld. The most significant rite of passage that initiates must undergo to become priests involves being buried alive for a day and a night.

Priests collect dead bodies and prepare them for burial. They perform funeral services and counsel grieving relatives. They also protect burial sites from ghouls and robbers, and some go so far as to hunt down and

destroy spirits, undead, and practitioners of Necromancy. Devoted priests might go on to become clerics or paladins.

Priests of Father Death wear hooded black robes and use specially prepared skulls as implements. These are first stripped of all flesh and bleached, and then they are covered with prayers to Thanatos etched into the bone and inked with black bile.



Level 1 Priest of Father Death

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add mortician to your list of professions.

Death's Chosen You do not gain Corruption from discovering the Death tradition¹, nor are you at risk of gaining Corruption from learning Death spells. As well, whenever you make an attack roll as a result of casting a Shadow attack spell, you can make the attack roll using your Intellect or your Will.

Magic You discover the Death, Protection, or Shadow tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Death Knell You can use an action to force one creature you can see within short range to make a Strength challenge roll. On a failure, the creature takes damage equal to its healing rate, and you heal damage equal to your healing rate. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of Father Death

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Death, Protection, or Shadow.
- You discover the Death, Protection, or Shadow tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of Father Death

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of Father Death

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Greater Death Knell You can use Death Knell twice.



The Horned King

A primal, savage deity with a legacy steeped in blood, the Horned King was once a figure who evoked terror in all who knew his cult. His bloodthirsty priests would raid other tribes and drag prisoners back to sacrifice on the horns of their bone altars. A violent god, the Horned King has always inspired anger and fury in the mortals who worshiped him, granting them a lust for battle that bordered on madness. However, as the Old Faith has evolved to leave behind its primitive roots, so too has the Horned King been tamed, becoming a protector of wild places and lord of the beasts.

The Horned King resembles a giant, green-skinned man, with a crown of antlers on his head and the lower body of a stag. Also named the Beast Lord and the Stag Prince, he spends much of his time sequestered on the Isle of Forever (see *Terrible Beauty*), where he tends to his prized animals and holds court for the faeries attending him. Even so, he pines for the mortal world—a realm he once ruled as lord and master—and frequently slips away from his hidden kingdom to roam the deep forests or range across the hills, surveying the lands he left behind.

Living apart from the other gods, the Horned King avoids becoming embroiled in their squabbles. He does, however, have a mystical bond with the World Mother, and in many tales, it's said that the pair are husband and wife. Whether this is true or not, they live apart for most of the year, only coming together in the spring to renew their romance and bring new life into the world. Priests of both gods lead fertility rites, selecting one man to host the essence of the Horned King and one to host the World Mother. The chosen pair come together, and from these unions, great heroes are born.

Hostility to Mankind: Of all the gods in the Old Faith, the Beast Lord comes closest to being hostile to humanity. A stern and unforgiving figure, the Horned King visits swift and terrible punishment on mortals who offend him. He is blamed for the skinchanger curse that causes people to shed their human forms for those of wild beasts. Some even suggest he created the beastmen, turning them into animals after some grave offense. The Horned King never looks back, though, and never regrets his actions. He does what he feels he must do, without sparing a thought for the consequences.

A Crown of Horns: Followers of the Horned King use a pair of green antlers to symbolize their god. Priests sometimes wear antlers as part of their headgear, or incorporate them into weapons or armor. Some tattoo that symbol onto the palms of their hands, believing that the god's sign guides their weapons to strike true. All priests greet each other by extending the index and pinky fingers on their right hands.

Signs of Warning: Priests of the Horned King clearly mark the borders of lands protected in his name. They drive posts into the earth and mount animal bones, wooden masks, or the corpses of trespassers on them to

warn away intruders. Ignoring or defacing such markers is a good way to end up dead, for the priests and their attendant warriors consider anyone who violates their territory to be fair game.



Holy Ground of the Horned King

Animals become ferocious on ground sacred to the Stag Prince, attacking with little provocation. Animals in these areas make attack rolls with 1 boon, and their attacks deal 1d6 extra damage.



Priests of the Horned King

The Horned King's cult has no place in the civilized world. A wild religion, it is a cult steeped in blood rituals and mysticism, and a throwback to a more savage time. Human or faun barbarians, savage warriors, and hunters are the people most likely to embrace the cult. Although many strive to join the Horned Ones, as they are known, only those who have glimpsed the fantastical beast known as the Green Stag are invited to become initiates. The stag reveals itself to any suitable candidate, luring that supplicant deeper and deeper into the wilderness. When the supplicant becomes hopelessly lost, a priest appears, inviting him or her to join the faith.

The priests of the Horned King abide by the strictures of the Old Faith, but when they kill an animal, they must waste nothing. Using every part of the animal shows respect for its sacrifice, and it speeds the animal's spirit to the Underworld to be born again. Normally, Horned Ones patrol the lands they pledge to protect, much in the manner of other Old Faith priests. Their focus, however, remains on protecting the beasts that share their lands.

Priests of the Horned King wear armor made from the bones and hides of animals they have slain. They wear animal masks to call forth the beast spirit within them, and paint their skin with mud. As hunters, the Horned Ones use their weapons as implements, channeling the power of their god through their spears and bows. Devoted priests might go on to become scouts, rangers, or wardens[†], finding new ways to serve their god.



LET SEE WELL
FZORSED TATA
HAEOT ISA GATHA
VK' EAD3 TO
ΔΕΛΤΗ. ΙΑ GLOVRY
ΓΜΕΣΤ ΑΓΤΡ
ΣΑΤΗΜ ΝΟΤΙΜΑ
ΛΗΥΕΥΡΥ

Level 1 Priest of the Horned King

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Perception +1, Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions Add hunter or tracker to your list of professions.

Magic You discover the Primal, Spiritualism[†], or Transformation tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Savage Recovery You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate and make an attack with a weapon. You make the attack roll with 1 bane. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the Horned King

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Primal, Spiritualism[†], or Transformation.
- You discover the Primal, Spiritualism[†], or Transformation tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the Horned King

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of the Horned King

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Greater Savagery You can use Savage Recovery twice.

The Maiden in the Moon

A mysterious and elusive deity, the Maiden in the Moon rarely casts her gaze upon the world. Her attention instead remains fixed on what lies beyond, and she frequently leaves her place on the dome of the world to dance among the celestial bodies. She is the goddess of mysteries, hidden paths, time, and above all, magic. She revealed the secrets of magic to mortals and remains an important figure to users of magic—even to those who do not worship the Old Gods. The Maiden is shown as a young fey woman with silver hair and is often seen dancing on the horn of a crescent moon.

A Scattered Cult: Among the followers of the Old Faith, the Maiden in the Moon has always been a key figure. Through her, mortals can call upon the power of the gods and perform miracles in the world. Despite her importance, her cult is small and scattered. People who worship her do so to expand their knowledge, offering service and devotion in exchange for flashes of insight that reveal the deeper mysteries of magic. Outside her cults, the likeness of the maiden decorates many institutions of magical learning, where she is considered the symbol and the patron deity of magic. Even among the witches, her name is often invoked, and some see her as an aspect of the Lady—one of the founders of the witches' faith.

Though the Maiden in the Moon's followers have never been significant in number, the rise of the Cult of the New God has all but driven them from the Empire. Part of this stems from secrecy, with cultists of the maiden guarding their lore to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands. In addition, past efforts to enlist the aid of the maiden's servants to deal with threats often failed, and many members of the New God's cult came to see them as being in league with dark forces. The cult, pressuring the Emperors, closed many of the maiden's temples, and many of her servants disappeared.

Two major temples still stand to the Maiden in the Moon. The Spire of Mystery in Lij, the City of Wonders, is the oldest. Inside its walls are volumes on magic, magical theory, the histories of the world, and countless other subjects. Though many come to the spire seeking knowledge, its silent priests inevitably turn them away. The priests tending the shrine tore their own tongues from their mouths to prevent themselves from revealing the most guarded secrets contained in their vaults, and only an act of divine will can move them to share the site's accumulated lore.

A more inviting location is the Temple of the Moon, which is found in Low Country. The temple is less a building than it is a plaza surrounded by statues of dancing women, where priests gather to worship the maiden and invoke her power when the moon rises. Nearly all of the maiden's priests spent time at the Temple of the Moon as initiates, learning the maiden's mysteries and being indoctrinated into her faith.



Holy Ground of the Maiden in the Moon

The Maiden in the Moon blesses her holy ground with a surge of magical power. While within the area, creatures gain a +1 bonus to Power.



The Phases of the Moon: Tarterus, the moon, is the home of the Maiden in the Moon, and thus has a prominent place in the rituals her priests perform. Two nights each month, the priests known as the Daughters of the Moon gather. On the night of the full moon, the daughters inhale smoke from the rare herbs they burn to attune their consciousness to their goddess. Often-terrifying hallucinations attack their minds, leaving most of them shaken—and sometimes driving unfortunate priests utterly mad.

The night of the new moon is also sacred, for the goddess retreats from the sky this night to dance among the stars. Her followers gather outdoors in open spaces, where they build up great fires to shine the way for the maiden's return. For many, the new moon is a night for setting aside inhibitions, and the revels of the daughters can grow quite raucous.

Priests of the Maiden

For some two thousand years, it was customary for families to offer their firstborn daughters to the cult of the Maiden in the Moon. Though the cult did not always accept this offer—usually because their numbers were large enough, or the offered child had no talent for magic—being selected was considered a great honor. However, those old customs died out with the rise of other religions, so the cult now refreshes its numbers by gathering female orphans and bringing them up in the mysteries of their faith. Those who pass initiation join the Daughters of the Moon.

The goddess expects her servants to seek out and keep safe the secrets of magical power, to advance their own understanding of those secrets, and to fight against any who delve into the depths of dark magic. Her priests also study the heavens, searching for signs of things to come. The goddess forbids her followers from learning or using dark magic, and those who do are maimed and exiled.

Though most priests of the maiden cloister in temples to study, some venture out into the world beyond to

seek new magic and discover new knowledge—especially knowledge that relates to magic. The Daughters of the Moon also keep a careful watch for young women who display inner power, encouraging them to further their studies under the maiden's guidance.

During religious ceremonies, Daughters of the Moon wear diaphanous gowns in blue and gray silk. They paint their faces with stars and moons, wearing silver jewelry for the favor shown that metal by the goddess. Most priests tattoo crescent moons on their foreheads or cheeks. Tattooed stars are also common along the arms and legs. Priests can use any objects as implements, though most favor wands. The most devoted followers of the maiden go on to become sorcerers, wizards, or sages†.

Level 1 Priest of the Maiden

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add magic and one of the following other academic professions to your list of professions: astrology, history, occult, or religion.

Studied in Magic You make challenge rolls to identify magical effects and objects with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Arcana, Celestial, or Time tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Spell Recovery You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate and regain one expended casting. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the Maiden

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Arcana, Celestial, or Time.
- You discover the Arcana, Celestial, or Time tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the Maiden

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Eldritch Prayer When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll made as the result of casting a spell, you grant 1 additional boon.

Level 8 Master Priest of the Maiden

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Improved Spell Recovery When you use Spell Recovery, you regain two castings instead of one.





Old Man Winter

It takes a peculiar individual to pledge service to Father Death's much-maligned sibling. Old Man Winter, whose original name was Anemoi,

has few devotees in the Empire. Cruel, callous, uncaring, and brutal,

he emerges from his icy realms each year to drown the world in bitter cold, ice, and snow. Acknowledging him as a force of nature, mortals pray to Old Man Winter and offer up sacrifices in the hopes of softening his wrath, sparing them the worst of his seasonal attentions. As such, to willingly place oneself in service to Old Man Winter is to be a willing accomplice in the suffering and hardship the god creates.

The Old Faith presents this god as a necessary force. His cold, lethal presence clears away the old to make way for the new. Old Man Winter is as necessary to the world as Father Death is necessary to mortals. Anemoi represents the desperation the cold brings and the lengths mortals will go to in order to survive. His dominions include battle and creatures that prowl the winter nights, such as wolves, bears, and lynxes.

Old Man Winter is usually depicted as a fierce blue-skinned man with wild white hair and a matching beard. He has piercing blue eyes and bears a spear made from ice. His likeness adorns the temples and shrines raised in his name on mountainsides and other high places. There, cold winds can catch the prayers of the devout and speed them to the god's Citadel of Ice, believed to stand somewhere in the Frozen Wastes south of Blötland. These sites are crude, austere, and inhospitable, as they are always cold and offer no shelter from the elements. In fact, the temples of Old Man Winter are typically colder than the surrounding lands.



Holy Ground of Old Man Winter

Terrible cold grips sites deemed holy to Old Man Winter. Creatures in the area of such holy ground take double damage from cold or ice.



Winter is the holiest time of year for Anemoi's followers. In that cold season, priests gather to wage war against their enemies or to help people in their care

prepare for the darkness to come. During the night of the winter solstice, priests of Old Man Winter conduct a terrible rite that culminates with binding a sacrifice in chains and then hurling that doomed person into a pool of freezing water.

Priests of Old Man Winter

Old Man Winter has a small number of followers within the Empire, but most dwell beyond its borders to the south, where they live as freaks, renegades, and killers. Devotees of Anemoi gather in small bands, roaming across the lands they inhabit. They scourge themselves to deaden their flesh against the cold, and most show the signs of having suffered frostbite—missing fingers, ears, and lips. Before gaining full membership in the cult, initiates must survive stripping down and spending three nights outdoors in the dead of winter.

Priests of Old Man Winter live simply, forgoing the comforts of civilization and ridding themselves of anything more than the barest means of subsistence. Eschewing armor, they go into battle wearing nothing more than breechclouts. Moreover, priests can warm themselves at others' fires, but they are forbidden from starting them.

Priests regularly test their combat prowess against others in their order, fighting until one combatant is unconscious. They might also seek tougher foes, hunting weird monsters and leading raids against any folk deemed to be the enemies of their faith.

Before heading into battle, Anemoi's priests daub their bodies with thick blue paint crafted from a rare fungus that grows under the snow. They believe the special substance gives them magical protection. Whether it does or not, the paints are also hallucinogenic, so that priests see and hear things they interpret as signs and omens. Anemoi's priests use spears as implements, reflecting the weapon their god wields. The most devoted followers of Old Man Winter might go on to become berserkers or elementalists†.

Level 1 Priest of Old Man Winter

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add barbarian, exile, or vagabond to your list of professions

Cold Acclimated You make challenge rolls to resist the effects of exposure to cold temperatures with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Battle, Storm, or Water tradition.

Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Wrath of Winter You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. Then each creature you can reach must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or take 1d6 damage from a wave of cold that rushes from your body. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of Old Man Winter

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Battle, Storm, or Water.
- You discover the Battle, Storm, or Water tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of Old Man Winter

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of Old Man Winter

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Greater Wrath You can use Wrath of Winter twice.

Revel

The two-faced deity sometimes known as Puck, the Trickster, and the Laughing God, Revel embodies celebration, excess, and pleasure. He inspires joy in mortals, urging them to embrace the absurdity of existence and to find delight in all things. However, he also urges them to excess, pushing people toward reckless, irresponsible, and dangerous behavior. Revel is the lord of feasts and celebrations, and his name is invoked to bless those events. He is also the god of madness, violence, and drunkenness, and he is blamed for the tragedy that results from excess. As much as he is widely loved, Revel is also feared, for his gifts come with a terrible price.

Revel is shown as a comely young man, naked, and with a mop of unruly hair on his head. He has slightly pointed ears and a lopsided smile. The world uses many symbols for the Laughing God, such as a spinning gold coin, a bunch of grapes, a laughing satyr, and the thyrsus. A wand of giant fennel capped with a pinecone, this phallic device symbolizes fertility and good fortune.

The temples of the Laughing God have more in common with taverns and brothels than they do with houses of worship. Every excess is entertained within their doors, as demonstrated by free-flowing wine and ale, tables laden with food, and people coupling with whomever asks—as



well as opportunities to satiate even darker lusts. The temples are open day and night, though they become dangerous after dark. Mobs of drunken revelers forming after a brawl are common enough that many cities have closed the doors of Revel's temples, driving his priests out to restore some semblance of order.



Holy Ground of Revel

Revel's influence breaks down inhibitions and fosters madness. Creatures in the area of ground holy to Revel make Will challenge rolls with 1 bane.



Priests of Revel

Revel's cultists come from every corner of the world and all walks of life. His followers might be farmers, prostitutes, drunkards, addicts, criminals—or anyone nurturing the desire to indulge in hedonistic pursuits. Humans, halflings, fauns, orcs, and even goblins might find a place in the Laughing God's cult. Pledging service to Revel comes at a price, though, for the god is madness incarnate. Those who serve him become erratic and undisciplined, if not downright crazy.

The Laughing God places few demands on his servants. Above all, he urges them to savor life in all its aspects, and to indulge to the point of excess. Priests are also encouraged to follow their hearts, even if it means breaking local laws or customs. Other common strictures include never refusing a drink, honoring the faeries, and being generous in all things.

During festivals, Revel's priests wear comical masks that appear faintly sinister. If they bother to wear clothing, it's loose and unrestrictive, so as to be easily removed for lovemaking. All priests of Revel use thyrsus-shaped wands as their implements. The most devoted priests might go on to become oracles, berserkers, or mountebanks†.

Level 1 Priest of Revel

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add carouser or rake to your list of professions

Touched by Revel The minimum value of your Insanity total equals your Power score.

Mad God's Laughter You do not become frightened when you gain Insanity. Instead, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for as long as you would have been frightened.

Magic You discover the Enchantment, Fey (see *Terrible Beauty*), or Illusion tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

You discover the other two traditions.

You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell. You learn two spells.

Revel's Blessing You use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. You can also choose to gain 1 Insanity. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of Revel

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Enchantment, Fey, or Illusion.
- You discover the Enchantment, Fey, or Illusion tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of Revel

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of Revel

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Greater Blessing You can use Revel's Blessing twice.



The Queen of Summer

One of the more prominent members of the Old Gods, the Queen of Summer is the goddess of the sun, passion, creativity, love, and desire. Sister to the Maiden in the Moon, she is shown as a striking woman with long red hair, whose nakedness is just barely covered by garlands of flowers.

It is widely believed that the Queen of Summer is the Faerie Queen, and in some parts of the world, those names are used interchangeably. However, the Faerie Queen has servants apart from those who worship the Queen of Summer (see the Avowed expert path in *Terrible Beauty*) and they rarely mingle with members of the mortal cult.

Followers of the Queen of Summer symbolize her as a woman's face surrounded by flames or golden sunrays. Her followers make the sign of the goddess by touching two fingers to the breast and then gesturing with those fingers at another.

Priests of the Queen of Summer make their temples in great open places with clear views of the sky. The gardens of those temples are filled with the perfume of sweet-smelling flowers, crisscrossed by narrow paths leading to mysterious hidden spaces, and accented by statues of nymphs, satyrs, and other faerie folk. At the center of each temple stands a statue of the goddess, usually carved from a single block of white marble and draped with flowers that never wilt.



Holy Ground of the Queen of Summer

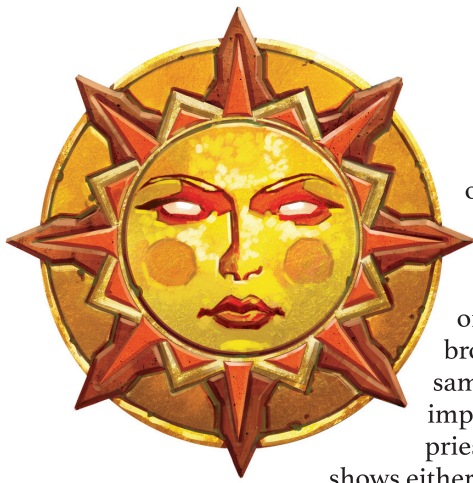
The Queen of Summer inspires passion and creativity in people visiting her holy sites. Creatures in such places make challenge rolls with 1 boon.



Priests of Summer

The priests of the Queen of Summer welcome anyone into their congregations, but they are selective about who gets to join them. They look for passion, intelligence, and creativity first and foremost, knowing that they can foster stronger devotion as a candidate is initiated into their ranks.

The Queen of Summer expects her servants to beautify the world. Priests counsel young couples before marriage and then lead the rites for those who are deemed suitable for each other. They seek out and encourage artists, celebrating their works. They settle disputes, promote peace, and foster joy in all folk they meet. Followers of the goddess are expected to be honest, to never discourage others in their endeavors and to always work toward good ends. All priests of the goddess prize beautiful things, but they also look beyond the forms of beauty to see what lies within, always seeking to understand the virtues of the people they meet.



Priests of the Queen of Summer wear thin red robes that they accent with religious symbols. A medallion of polished brass or bronze on a chain of the same material is the only implement used by her priests. The medallion's face shows either the sun or the goddess's face. Dedicated servants of the Queen of Summer might go on to become druids, sorcerers, or mountebanks†.

Level 1 Priest of Summer

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add one of the following to your list of professions: artisan, artist, entertainer, or musician.

Charming In social situations, you make attack rolls to influence people ordinarily attracted to your gender and members of your ancestry with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Enchantment, Fey (see *Terrible Beauty*), or Fire tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Blessing of Summer You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. Light shines from you, and each creature within short range that is not a member of your group must get a success on a Perception challenge roll or become impaired for 1 round. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of Summer

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Enchantment, Fey, or Fire.
- You discover the Enchantment, Fey, or Fire tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of Summer

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of Summer

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Greater Blessing You can use Blessing of Summer twice.

The Seer

The god of oracles, wisdoms, prognosticators, and prophets, the Seer authors the fates of all living things. He stands apart from the other Old Gods, a mysterious figure who joined the pantheon late. In fact, many believe him to be identical to Grinnir One-Eye, the dark god of the jotun who occupies a similar role, albeit at the head of his pantheon.

The Seer is usually depicted as a faceless man, tall and imposing, wearing a furred cloak and a wide-brimmed hat. He uses the one-eyed owl as his symbol in the world. Sometimes the owl is shown to be missing an eye, with the empty socket utterly black. Other times, the owl has but a single eye over its beak. Owls are sacred animals to the cult of the Seer.

The Seer's role in civilization has evolved over time. Seen as a god of justice, law, and order, he sometimes reveals the dooms awaiting mortals to the sibyls who serve as his priests. Though he is not worshipped as widely as he once was within the Empire, people sometimes pray and make offerings to him for guidance and insight into their futures. His symbols can be found in older courthouses and festooning government buildings constructed before the Cult of the New God came to power. Despite the Seer's somewhat diminished stature, he does find worshipers on the Empire's borders, and his priests are most often found in such lands.

Temples dedicated to the Seer exist to shelter the sibyls who serve the god. Typically small structures, they are built in remote places such as atop mountains, in deep forests, or on cliffs overlooking the ocean. Each temple has one sibyl and a small body of attendants who see to his or her needs. One can usually find idols of the Seer in Old Faith lodges, and in rare shrines found in the south, close to the lands of the jotun.



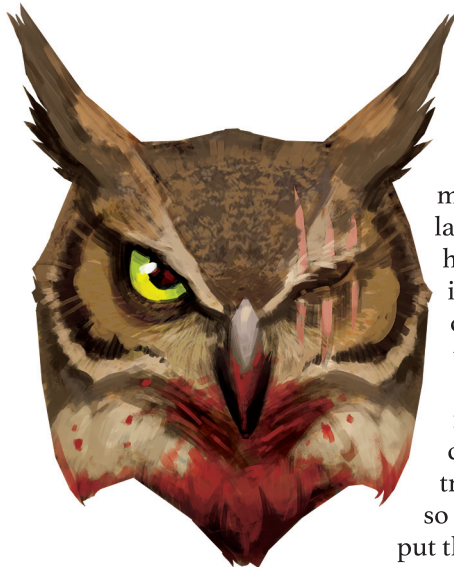
Holy Ground of the Seer

The Seer's holy ground is infused with magic that causes the senses to sharpen. Creatures make Perception rolls with 1 boon while on ground sacred to the Seer.



Priests of the Seer

Unlike the other Old Faith gods, the Seer has no extensive network of priests and no religious hierarchy. Instead, the god chooses certain mortals through which he might speak. The Seer's priests are called sibyls, and in their capacity as servants of the god, they foretell the future and answer questions put to them after gaining wisdom from their patron. Most sibyls ensconce themselves in the small temples of the Seer found across the Empire, where they rely on their attendants



for protection, food, and companionship. A rare few move freely throughout the land, most often because they have not yet found a temple in which they might dwell, or because their former temples were destroyed.

Priests of the Seer must never lie. They feel compelled to speak the truth, even when doing so would cause trouble or put them in danger. However, the sibyls are also wise enough to omit certain details of their foretelling if doing so would not distort the truth in any way.

Most priests of the Seer wear loose, comfortable robes of white cloth. They use the symbols of their god as implements, and bind their eyes with a strip of cloth on which the Seer's eye has been painted. Even when covered this way, though, a sibyl can still see as normal. Dedicated priests of the seer might become oracles, witches, or psychics†.

Level 1 Priest of the Seer

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add one language to the list of languages you can speak.

Speaker of Dooms You do not gain Corruption from discovering the Curse tradition, nor are you at risk of gaining Corruption from learning Curse spells.

Eye of the Seer You know when someone is lying to you.

Magic You discover the Curse, Divination, or Telepathy† tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Restoring Vision You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. For 1 round, you impose 1 bane on attack rolls made against you. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the Seer

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Curse, Divination, or Telepathy.
- You discover the Curse, Divination, or Telepathy tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the Seer

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

The Seer's Warning When you use Prayer, you impose 1 bane on attack rolls made against the triggering creature until the end of the round.

Level 8 Master Priest of the Seer

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Greater Vision You can use Restoring Vision twice.

The World Mother

The World Mother is the goddess of creation and the Urth made divine. She is the central figure in the pantheon of Old Gods, and the followers of the Old Faith offer most of their prayers to her. Some believe the World Mother to be the first god worshiped by mortals, persisting since the earliest days of mankind. She has evolved from her initial primitive incarnations, having come to be seen as the whole of the world and all things in it. She is depicted as a woman, late in pregnancy, often with a dozen breasts or more.

Common symbols for the World Mother include the pentacle, a circled cross, or the face of a smiling, wrinkled woman. A common greeting between her followers is to display three raised fingers, each representing a different stage of womanhood—the maiden, the mother, and the crone. These are the forms the goddess takes as the world moves through the seasons.



Holy Ground of the World Mother

The World Mother nurtures life and speeds healing. Creatures that heal damage on ground sacred to her heal 1d6 extra damage.



Priests of the World Mother

Priests of the World Mother are nearly all women, with men drawn to her husband, the Horned King. Individuals who choose this life feel a special connection to the goddess, having glimpsed her in their dreams, or perhaps stumbling upon her while she bathes in the still waters of a forest pool. Her priests are healers, protectors, and wisdoms, and their presence in a community is considered a great boon.

Priests of the World Mother must generally abide by the same strictures as do priests of the Old Faith.

However, they never eat the flesh of animals, adhering to a strict vegetarian diet. If a priest breaks this tenet,





her Power score drops to 0 until she completes a rest. The World Mother also urges her priests to marry and have many children.

Priests of the World Mother favor soft robes in natural colors, with green and brown being the most common. In times of difficulty, they might don leathers and strap shields to their arms. All priests use small idols of the goddess as their implements, usually carving them from stone smoothed by a river's waters, then stringing them on cords about their necks. Dedicated priests go on to become druids, rangers, or wardens[†].

Level 1 Priest of the World Mother

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add one of the following to your list of professions: farmer, gatherer, healer, nomad, or pioneer. Also, add the nature academic profession to your list of professions.

Voice of the Goddess In social situations, you make attack rolls to befriend or persuade other creatures, or to defuse tense situations, with 1 boon.

Natural Healer You make challenge rolls to stabilize incapacitated creatures and to resist the effects of the diseased affliction with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Earth, Life, or Nature tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Shared Recovery You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. Then one creature you choose within short range heals damage equal to its healing rate. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the World Mother

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Earth, Life, or Nature.
- You discover the Earth, Life, or Nature tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the World Mother

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Protective Prayer When you use Prayer, you impose 1 bane on attack rolls made against the triggering creature until the end of the round.

Level 8 Master Priest of the World Mother

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Improved Shared Recovery You can use Shared Recovery twice.



The Honored Dead

The dwarfs stand apart from the other mortal peoples in that they honor no gods. Instead, they live under the watchful gaze of ancestors whose spirits walk among them unseen, always judging and assessing the worth of their descendants. Dwarfs conduct themselves honorably, upholding the customs of their people and setting themselves to protecting, strengthening, and enriching their clans. To do otherwise would bring disgrace to the dwarfs, and awaken the wrath of their forebears.

It wasn't always this way, however. The dwarfs' most ancient histories recall a time when they worshiped a pantheon of dark and angry deities remembered as the Gods of Blood and Iron—the same gods still venerated by the jotun. Grimnir, the dour and joyless king of the gods, fashioned the dwarfen ancestors from steel and planted the seed of fire in their hearts. He made his children strong, tall, and powerful, then blessed them with beauty and intelligence in equal measure.

But as gifted as they were, Grimnir's favored children also gained his arrogance. They saw themselves as perfect, and they could not fathom why they should prostrate themselves before their maker. Rather than make sacrifices or live in fear of the gods, they sought to become gods. Setting out to construct a great tower

atop the highest mountain, they built ever upward in the belief that they could reach the gates of Valhalla and shatter them.

Grimnir, enraged by his children's hubris, toppled their tower. Many were killed in the destruction, and on the survivors, a heavy curse was laid. Grimnir stripped from them their beauty and stature, reducing them to short, squat, ugly creatures. He awoke in them a desire for the earthly riches of gold and gems, thus turning them away from the glories of heaven. Much diminished and more humbled, the dwarfs, as they became known, delved into the mountains they had once built upon, turning their backs from the gods and all things divine.

The curse that Grimnir set upon his children extends beyond the lives they are given. As with other mortals, the souls of the dwarfs cycle through many lives—but unlike other mortals, dwarf souls always return to the world in the bodies of dwarfs. There is no escape from the curse, for Grimnir is a vengeful god, and the doom he bestowed will follow the dwarfs until the end of time.

Clan and Kin

Being shamed and cursed by their gods transformed the dwarfs' views of divinity, reinforcing that the gods were unworthy of worship. Proud and undaunted, the dwarfs banded together to form tight-knit communities. Knowing that Valhalla was denied to them, they built their own paradise within the world, digging out

fantastical kingdoms and using the vast wealth of those kingdoms to enrich their lives. Devotion to each other and to the heroes of previous generations gradually evolved into a worship of sorts. The dwarfs recalled the great deeds of their ancestors, praying to them for guidance, courage, and strength.

A Dwarfen Religion

Ancestor worship is not exclusive to dwarfs, and many other peoples of the world engage in similar practices. The worthiness of the dwarfen ancestors and their spiritual presence among the living permeates every aspect of dwarfen culture, to the point where all dwarfs shape their behavior to the notion that some dead ancestor watches them at all times. The religion of the Honored Dead belongs to the dwarfs, and no other people share their particular beliefs.

Beards and Tankards

The worship of ancestor spirits is in many ways the veneration of what it means to be a dwarf. For this reason, dwarfs use a dwarfen visage as the symbol of their religion, wearing that symbol with pride and displaying it in their holy places. The visage varies from clan to clan, and is usually fashioned to honor an ancestor of particular note. Generally, though, it shows a dwarf with craggy features almost obscured by a long beard, which begins just under the eyes. Variations include the presence of a helmet, braid patterns in the beard, the absence of an eye, or the presence of a rune.

Dwarfs also honor their ancestors by donning the colors and signs of their clans. Hammers, axes, anvils, gold coins, glittering jewels, picks, and foaming tankards are just some of the icons associated with the many dwarf clans. The display of such icons not only identifies a dwarf's familial identity, but also devotion to the clan. Such displays broadcast the lineage of the dwarfs, and the honorable manner in which they conduct themselves.

Halls of the Ancestors

No matter how big or small the space, the most important location in every dwarfen fortress is the Hall of the Ancestors. Here, dwarfen priests inter their dead and commune with the spirits for guidance. The hall always stands near a stronghold's center and can be accessed by one of four entrances that stand on the cardinal points. These doors each bear the face of a notable dwarfen ancestor, wrought in iron and preserved against rusting by potent spells.

Each hall contains row upon row of stone pillars called honored towers, reaching up to the ceiling. Cavities honeycomb these pillars, creating spaces into which priests place the dead, then seal them behind a stone plug whose face is carved to resemble the likeness of the dwarf whose remains it protects. Each clan living in a stronghold has at least one

honored tower, though the eldest clans in the largest strongholds might have scores or even hundreds of pillars in their names.

At the hall's center, surrounded by the honored towers, a dais holds a mystic blue flame said to be the essence of the dwarfen ancestors awaiting their return to the cycle of life. Whenever a dwarf dies, the flame flickers to mark the passage of a soul to the Underworld. When a dwarf hero perishes, the flame blooms with a terrible light, and a moaning sometimes sounds from it as if countless dwarfen ancestors had cried out in grief over the world's loss.

Only dwarfen priests are allowed to freely enter and exit a Hall of the Ancestors. Others can access a hall only when a member of their clan is to be interred or with special permission from the priests.



Holy Ground of the Honored Dead

Any dwarf with 0 Corruption makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 2 boons while on ground sacred to the Honored Dead.



Ancestors in the Empire

With their religion largely unknown outside the dwarfen holds, the faithful of the Honored Dead have little interaction with the gods of other religions. Dwarfs do not worship gods, and outsiders have no reason to pray to the ancestor spirits. Other religious groups often express skepticism of the dwarfs' faith, or consider it primitive. For their part, the dwarfs don't care, dismissing all worship of deities as foolish.

Many dwarfen strongholds have fallen over the centuries, with the survivors from those places spreading into human lands. As such, many dwarfs have no Hall of the Ancestors in which they might worship. For this reason, dwarfs carry stones from the fallen fortresses of their clans, giving them a connection to their long-lost homes. Some dwarfs carve these rocks into small idols, which they name after the greatest heroes in their family lines.

Days of Remembrance

As religion and history are entangled for the dwarfs, temporal events are just as important as spiritual ones. As such, each dwarfen stronghold observes its own holy days, commemorating events significant to the community. Such days honor the passing of clan founders, the long-ago completion of some section of a stronghold, victories over goblins, trolls, and elves, or any other event worth remembering.

On holy days, dwarfs assemble in their Halls of the

Ancestors to hear tales recorded in the *Annals of the Dead*, a great codex containing the recorded deeds done by the dwarfs and the wrongs done to them. After the telling—which can last a few hours or a few days, depending on the tale—the whole community feasts, drinks, boasts, and brawls.

Dwarfs living in the Empire keep the holy days of their homeland if they know them, spending time in prayer or recounting the tales of their kin to trusted friends. Many become increasingly melancholy as they pine for home, though, drowning the sorrow of their separation from kin and clan in rivers of ale and mountains of food.

Priests of the Honored Dead

The priests of the Honored Dead wield almost as much power in their communities as the thanes and guild masters of the dwarfs. As such, membership in the priesthood is reserved for exceptional individuals who have proven their worthiness. Acolytes spend decades studying the *Annals of the Dead*, from which they learn the histories of their clans, as well as the rites and rituals they are required to perform. Only a few ever successfully meet the high demands of this process, but there's no shame in not being chosen. Dwarfs who have made unsuccessful attempts at entering the priesthood can always find other ways to serve their communities.

Priests are the heart and soul of dwarfen culture, the moral authority in dwarfen communities, and the example by which all other dwarfs conduct themselves. They lead exemplary lives, acting with honor and putting the needs of their clans and community above their own. In battle, priests stand in the front ranks, their songs and chants raising spirits and bolstering courage. They gather the fallen, anoint their bodies with tears, and inter them in the honored towers. They preserve the *Annals of the Dead*, recording the wrongs done to their people and the great deeds done by dwarf heroes.

Only on holy days or when preparing the dead do the priests of the Honored Dead don the vestments of their faith. These are robes made from steel coins and steel masks wrought to resemble the faces of their most famous kin. Lesser priests carry censers from which the sweet smell of burning incense wafts, while high priests carry the great tomes that hold the lore of their clans.

Dwarfs favor hammers and axes in combat, and dwarfen priests are no exception. Nearly all use weapons as implements, decorating them with sacred runes and sigils. Those dwarf priests who seek to further their studies and service to the Honored Dead might become clerics, oracles, or shamans[†].

Level 1 Priest of the Honored Dead

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add minister and the history academic profession to your list of professions.

Annals of the Dead You can recall the history of your homeland with perfect clarity, and you make challenge rolls to recall historical trivia about dwarfs outside your homeland with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Battle, Life, or Rune tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Shared Recovery You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. Then one creature you choose within short range heals damage equal to its healing rate. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the Honored Dead

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Battle, Life, or Rune.
- You discover the Battle, Life, or Rune tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the Honored Dead

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

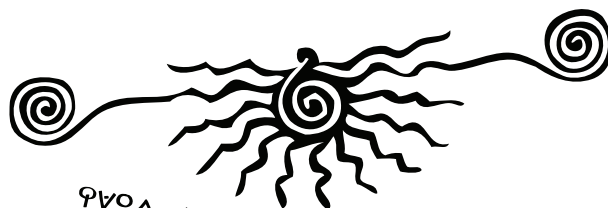
Level 8 Master Priest of the Honored Dead

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Improved Shared Recovery You can use Shared Recovery twice.



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Witchcraft

Not all religions have large followings. Some faiths belong to a devoted few, with worshipers keeping their beliefs close to the heart and knowing that the secret truths to which they cleave belong to them alone. Such is the case with witchcraft—a religion based on ancient knowledge of herbs and magic, healing and enchantment, as revealed long ago by the Lord and Lady who founded the faith.

Not long after the Old Faith took shape, a group of priests quietly broke from that religion. Strongly devoted to the Horned King and the World Mother, they rejected the differences in dogma and the proliferation of gods that saw the early faith splinter and fracture. These priests understood that the increasingly violent disputes between factions of the Old Faith obfuscated the purpose for which the religion had been founded: to honor, respect, and protect the land. So they withdrew from the faith, intent on studying the gifts granted to them by their gods and to preserve the gods' lore for those who would follow them.

Though the Lord and Lady were once rooted in the worship of the Horned King and the World Mother, they have long since evolved to become independent

minor deities. Under their guidance, witchcraft has become a religion focused on the making of magic and the preservation of ancient lore. Most followers of witchcraft devote their lives to helping others. They are healers and protectors, wisdoms and advisors, who adopt communities so as to look after the people living in them. They perform magic not to expand their power or make converts of nonbelievers, but to improve the lives of those around them.

Witchcraft finds devotees among humans, halflings, goblins, orcs, and some jotun. Witches can be male or female, for the Lord and Lady welcome servants of any ancestry and of any gender.

Pentacles

The dagger, the crescent moon, black cats, and patterns of stars are just some of the symbols associated with witchcraft. The five-pointed star known as the pentacle is the symbol by which all witches identify each other. The pentacle is thought to help focus magical energy, aid in divination, command natural forces, and exert power over supernatural beings. When a pentacle is inverted to become a pentagram, it serves as a symbol for witches who have come under the influence of dark powers.

Good Works

Since the founding of their religion, practitioners of witchcraft have focused their efforts on doing good in the world, hoping to leave it a better place than they found it. Though all witches seek to preserve the knowledge they gain over their lifetimes, using that knowledge to improve the lives of their neighbors is the highest honor they can show to their gods. For this reason, most witches devote themselves to helping others, becoming gifted healers, using magic to create bountiful crops, or working to keep the faeries at bay.

As much as witches work to help people, they also go to great lengths to preserve the wisdom learned from their teachers and their experiences. Each witch records his or her lore in a special tome sometimes called a *Book of Shadows*. Powerful witches guard these books with nasty curses to ensure their knowledge doesn't fall into the wrong hands.

Witches are known for their knowledge, wisdom, and cunning, but they are subject to the same temptations and mishaps that can lure ordinary people into moral peril. Many witches face isolation due to the nature of their faith and the secrecy with which they keep it, and so when faced with darkness, they must confront it alone. Devils and other malicious faeries might single out a lonely witch with offers of companionship or power. Witches who accept these gifts run the risk of sliding into corruption to become black witches. Outcasts among their own kind, black witches usually retreat from the world, fleeing into the deep wilderness and using their magic for selfish, wicked ends.

Covens

Most witches adopt a community and look after the people living there. One witch can normally manage the needs of a typical village, tending to the elderly, helping with childbirth, and offering wisdom to those who seek it. Larger towns and cities might have multiple witches, each one taking responsibility for some portion of the population and coming together to deal with larger challenges when needed.

When witches work together, they form a coven—a group whose members number three, five, seven, or thirteen. These numbers are important, for they help the coven channel its magic. If a coven of witches loses one of its members, the others disband until they are able to find a replacement. Witches become close as members of a coven, much like the members of a family. Though they might squabble and compete with one another, they always come to their fellows' defense when needed.

Cottages

With no need for places where people might gather for worship, witches have no need to build temples. Instead, they conduct their ceremonies outdoors, under the cover of night and in the light of torches and bonfires.

The closest things witches have to places of power are their cottages. A witch's cottage is a haven for any follower of witchcraft, and other witches instinctively know when they come upon such a place. Most cottages have powerful spells of protection to guard against unwelcome intruders, including mischievous faeries and curious children.

Shadow of Suspicion

Witchcraft has always been a secretive religion. Witches offer no explanations into their craft, nor do they share their lore with others without need, and this guarded nature leads many outsiders to wonder what they hide. Resentful townsfolk, fearful drunkards, or victims of witch justice might attempt to stir up a community against the local witch. This typically sparks a confrontation, or might even inspire the departure of the witch if the community's ill will cannot be undone.

The suspicion witches face from individuals extends to people of other religions, especially those who have moved beyond the old ways. Witches have long enjoyed peaceful relations with the druids and priests of the Old Faith. Even those faithful might whisper about the activities of witches, though, offering opinions about what secrets they keep and how much power they truly wield.

The Cult of the New God has become increasingly hostile to witches over the years as the cult's importance and power has grown. Inquisitors and witch hunters who happen upon witches and question their workings receive blank stares and silence. After all, witches owe nothing to these followers of a made-up god. Their silence, however, is taken as a sign of some malfeasance, witches in lands where the New God holds sway endure terrible persecution. Though the cult prohibits violence against witches without proof of some wrongdoing, overzealous inquisitors have been known to use torture to extract confessions.

Left to themselves, witches don't much care what other people think of them, so long as incorrect beliefs don't lead to harm. If permitted to, witches will aid followers of the New God as readily as they help those who keep the old ways, and will even aid those who subscribe to no religion at all. If crossed, however, witches come together for mutual defense, using the fullness of their power to deal with their enemies.

Priests of Witchcraft

One can usually spot a witch right away, as they favor a peculiar form of dress. All witches, regardless of gender, favor dark clothing of homespun, long cloaks, sturdy boots, and tall, pointed hats. Though the individual cut and style might vary from witch to witch, the hat never does. This unique headgear identifies witches to others, and ensures that only fools cross them. Witches use wands, pentacles made from wood, paper, or bronze, or blades such as daggers and swords as implements.

Witches add to their numbers only with great care and caution. Their primary charge is the protection of the ancient lore of their kind, and so offering instruction to someone not known to them is unthinkable. All witches understand they must pass on their learning eventually, and so they begin the search for apprentices early in their careers.

The qualities a witch looks for in an apprentice include a knack for magic, intelligence, honesty, humility, patience—and above all, common sense. Sometimes these traits are found in people within a witch's community. Sometimes a would-be apprentice will search for a witch to train under. A witch can never be bullied into revealing her secrets, though, and many who seek out an apprenticeship are turned away, their eagerness betraying some flaw or dark intent.

The first lesson an apprentice learns is humility, for an apprentice might labor for years before discovering his or her first tradition. Apprentices cook, clean, mend clothes, help with the birthing of children, and learn the names and lives of all the people in their community. During this time, the witch instructor watches for flaws in the student, needing to ensure that he or she can be trusted with the lore of witchcraft. Many apprentices never learn magic, finding themselves unequal to the expectations placed on them. The few who are found worthy are ushered into the deeper mysteries of the faith.

After a student has learned the basics, he or she is initiated into the faith, typically during the next new moon. The initiation ceremony varies from witch to witch, but it often involves degrees of testing, anointment with oils, the casting of spells, and the offering of prayers to the Lord and Lady. Only after undergoing initiation is an apprentice witch recognized as a member of the faith. Even then, apprentices must work to earn the right to call themselves witches, a title they gain only when their peers accept them.

Genets and Strictures

Much of the lore that witches keep safe involves helping others, so it follows that witches devote their lives to service—and often for little or no thanks. Witches must always use their talents in the aid of others, seeking to uplift, to guide, and to improve. They must avoid forcing their views onto non-witches, in favor of guiding when asked and leading by example. Witches are forbidden from using magic to increase their wealth, to compel others to do their bidding (except in the defense of those they have chosen to protect), and to always avoid dark magic. Failure to live by these tenets leads to corruption.

Level 1 Priest of Witchcraft

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add nature and one of the following other academic professions to your list of professions: astrology, folklore, geography, medicine, or religion.

Varied Traditions Choose three traditions from the following: Alchemy, Curse, Enchantment, Fey (see *Terrible Beauty*), Life, Nature, or Protection. The traditions you choose become the traditions associated with your religion.

Magic You discover one tradition associated with your religion. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions associated with your religion.
- You discover one of the other traditions associated with your religion and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Selfless Recovery Choose up to two creatures within short range of you. Each target heals damage equal to its healing rate. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of Witchcraft

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions associated with your religion.
- You discover one tradition associated with your religion and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of Witchcraft

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of Witchcraft

Characteristics Health +4

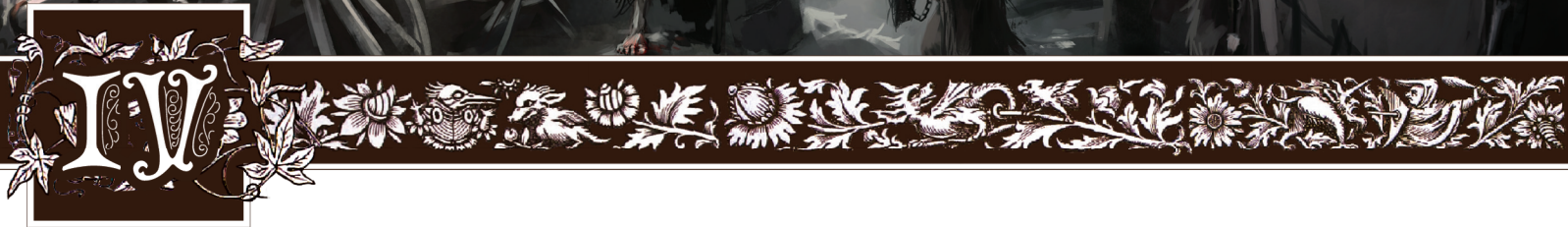
Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Improved Selfless Recovery You can use Selfless Recovery twice.

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The New God

The Cult of the New God rose at a time when the Empire was still finding its feet, just two centuries after the legions of the Kalasans toppled the Witch-King and scattered the hated men of Gog to the edges of the continent. Cities were still being rebuilt, the full rule of law had yet to be restored, and horrific monsters that survived the wars of conquest still preyed on the Empire's people. Wickedness and violence ran unchallenged in wild places, while decadence spread like a fast-growing cancer through lands nominally under the Emperor's dominion.

Against this backdrop of the new-made Empire teetering on the brink of collapse, dark cults spreading poisonous messages, and corrupted faiths arising to replace the old, an unexceptional woman came forward to reveal a better way.

Astrid was a priestess of the Order of Light, a religion carried to Rûl by the Kalasan conquerors. She had become sickened by the corruption in her order, by which grasping priests seized power by any means and

hid their unspeakable desires behind masks of peace and placidity. The rapacious cult exploited the common people, squeezing them of every last bit with false promises of a life in paradise, and of salvation from a dark and dangerous world. The local religions were no better in Astrid's eyes, for the gods of the Old Faith had stayed silent as the Witch-King's warlocks perpetrated endless horrors across the Kingdom of Gog, despoiling great swaths of territory to fuel their foul spells.

Astrid came to realize that the promises of all existing religions were based on falsehoods—lies told to keep people obedient and dependent on the leaders of those false faiths. According to the holy writings of the Cult of the New God, a figure appeared to Astrid in her dreams, presenting a power unlike any other and revealing to her the Four Truths. These truths became the foundation for the cult founded on Astrid's teachings in the aftermath of her death. Whether a supernatural being visited Astrid or not is a matter of some debate. Nevertheless, her words tore apart the Order of Light before spreading like wildfire through the Empire, passed from mouth to ear by the common folk who embraced the prophet's teachings.

Not everyone embraced Astrid's teachings, and she gathered as many enemies as she did followers. Chiefly the powerful and influential members of the myriad cults flourishing in the Empire's capital, these enemies pressed political leaders to silence the prophet. Fearing for her life, Astrid fled north to find refuge in the Kingdom of Tarra, where she found a friend in King Roland.

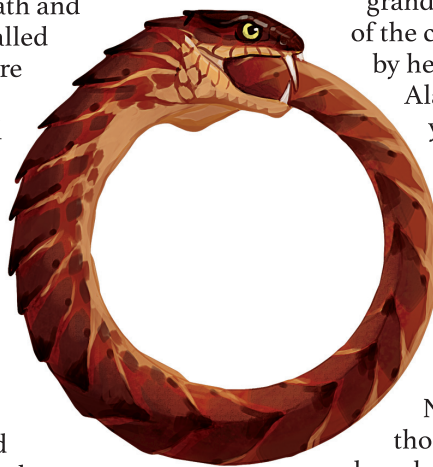
Roland used the full power of his office to protect Astrid, who lived in Tarra for several years. When her enemies in Caecras demanded her capture, pressuring the Emperor to send his legions into Tarra to drag her back in chains, Astrid knew that her presence would plunge the kingdom into war. Against the protests of her protector, she left Tarra to return to Caecras, intent on confronting her enemies in the Emperor's court.

She never made it.

Some believe the mysterious god who had spoken to Astrid plucked her from the world to live in Paradise at his side. Others believe that Astrid had been the New God all along, and that she left the world after establishing the foundations of her faith. Some whisper that her enemies ambushed her, executing her before allowing her mangled carcass to be ripped apart by dogs. This legend persists thanks to relic sellers who peddle the bones of dogs purported to have been those who fed on the prophet's remains.

If Astrid's enemies were behind her disappearance, their efforts to silence her failed spectacularly. Her message took the Empire by storm, as groups of believers came together to record and preserve her teachings. Although her followers faced severe persecution at the hands of the Order of Light and other cults, their numbers grew. Even so, the fledgling cult might have died out had it not been for King Roland in Tarra. Mourning the prophet's death and convinced of her divine nature, he called for religious leaders across the Empire to come together for an assembly called the First Accord, which would establish the tenets and strictures of the Cult of the New God.

It took six months for the First Accord to complete its work, assembling Astrid's writings into a book known as the *Codex of Truth*. The seven orders into which the cult is organized today were formalized and united during this momentous meeting and established in Tarra City, which would eventually be renamed Seven Spires in their honor. Organized, possessed of a doctrine, and backed by a powerful leader, the Cult of the New God spread out from the renamed Holy Kingdom, overpowering smaller cults, driving the Old Faith to the backwaters, and establishing itself as the official religion of the greatest nation to have ever governed the lands of Rûl. And so it has remained for nearly six hundred years.



The Serpent of Truth

The New God is central to the cult that venerates him, but members of that faith never depict the deity. Though images of the New God are not strictly forbidden, Astrid never revealed the form he took when he visited her. As such, any image would impose a layer of conception on the god, shaping his being according to mortal hopes and expectations. Instead, the symbols of the church capture the story of Astrid's ascension, sometimes showing her being lifted up into the sky or with swords and knives piercing her body.

Followers of the New God frequently use the symbol of the ouroboros—a serpent or dragon eating its own tail. The symbol represents the endless cycle of life that is the eternal journey undertaken by all souls. Sometimes flames wreath the symbol, while at other times, it shines like the sun.

The Soul of an Empire

After the First Accord, the Cult of the New God gained ever-greater power in the former Kingdom of Tarra. Now, the Holy Kingdom is the heart and soul of the New God's faith. Believers from across the Empire make pilgrimages to Seven Spires in the hopes of catching a glimpse of the Matriarch who leads the faith and rules the kingdom in all but name.

The Cult of the New God has spread across much of the Empire, extending from the March Lands in the south to the Northern Reach, where funds from the cult's coffers maintain the Crusader States that hold the undead hordes of the Desolation at bay. The cult's most important conquest is, of course, the old imperial capital of Caecras. Since the First Accord, the cult's grand pontiff—the highest-ranking member of the cult below the Matriarch, and appointed by her—has crowned each Emperor to sit the Alabaster Throne. However, no move has yet been made by the Cult of the New God to recognize the usurper Drudge the Orc King as Emperor, and no one has seen the grand pontiff since the last Emperor's death.

Outside the Empire, the cult's reach remains limited despite the efforts of missionaries eager to bring Astrid's teachings to new lands. The Nine Cities tolerate the New God's priests, though some (including Lij, Edes, and Kem) have laws preventing people who profess faith in the New God from holding political office. The freeholders of Nar turn away missionaries of the New God from their holdfasts, and priests venturing into the Woad lands are rarely seen again.

The Cult of the New God is a human religion, and it has made few converts among other peoples. Exceptions include small numbers of halflings, clockworks, and orcs who have not yet shrugged off the chains of their slavery.

The Four Truths

The Four Truths underpin the entirety of the Cult of the New God. Astrid revealed each truth as the subject of four sermons she delivered in Caecras. No matter the differences between the cult's various orders and sects, the Four Truths are sacred and stand at the center of belief for all the faithful.

The Eternal Soul

Each mortal is born with a soul—the essential essence of self that transcends the limits of the mortal form and survives the body's death to pass into the Underworld. All souls must descend into that dark realm to prepare for the next life. Only after a soul has had the life it once led sloughed away does it return to the world to inhabit a new body. Souls migrate from body to body, so that any individual soul undergoes many different lives.

Crucial to the process of rebirth is the forgetting of what came before. A soul must cast aside experiences and memories so that it can receive new ones in its new body. The Underworld is not a place to be feared. Rather, it is a welcoming place of reflection and peace, where souls rid themselves of the suffering, grief, and pain they knew in life.

Since mortals live many lives, the Cult of the New God teaches that one should feel no attachment to the present life. Mortals must endure the agonies of existence, but they can take comfort in knowing that pain is only a momentary experience, to be forgotten when one is born again.

Guard Against Corruption

Forces conspire to burden the soul and delay its return to the mortal world, and such delays interfere with the natural order of things. Mortals must then strive to hasten the journey through the realm of death so they can return to the world. Mortals who give in to dark impulses blacken their souls with temptations of hatred, lust, and wickedness. Those dark stains weigh a soul down, so that it passes through the Underworld and into Hell. The devils there take their time cleansing that stained soul as they feed on its darkness, which means fewer mortals in the world. To keep the wheel of life turning, mortals should always strive to live in the light of the New God, to act with good intentions, and to keep the devils of temptation at bay.

No Other Gods but Those Mortals Create

Mortals created the gods to explain the world around them. The seasons change because of the power struggles between Old Man Winter and the Queen of Summer. Tarterus goes through phases because the Maiden in the Moon dances across the dome of the world. These myths give the gods substance, shaping eternal and immortal divinity into crude forms of mortal conception. These beings are as chains on the One True God. They distort the divine's true nature, imposing the

limitations of mortal imagination on something beyond mortal conception. As such, one must rid the mind of false constructs to liberate the New God to attain the natural state of infinitude.

The Wheel of Life Must Turn

The soul's movement along the endless wheel of life is an essential part of the cosmic order. Souls inhabit physical bodies to serve the divine. Then, when their time is up, they pass through death's door to await their next chance to ride the wheel. Anything that interferes with this process is an abomination—a violation against nature and reality itself.

To serve the New God is to preserve the cosmic order. To do so, followers of the faith must never suffer an undead to live, must strive to drive spirits to the Underworld, and must oppose those faeries who would mislead and corrupt. All these duties, however, come second to confronting the greatest threat to reality. All who know the light of the New God must remain vigilant against the Destroyer of Worlds, the Shadow in the Void, and must destroy anyone and anything that would advance its interests in the world.



Heresies

Though the Cult of the New God strives to speak with one voice and preserve the tenets set out in the First Accord, heresies sometimes take root within its followers. Inquisitors scour the ranks of the faithful, working to crush these deviations in proper belief. Yet somehow these strains of heresy survive, and the confusion they create quietly weakens the cult's unity and mission.

Incarnates: The oldest heresy of the cult—and one of the reasons the First Accord was called—began as a growing belief that Astrid was, in fact, the New God in physical form. Even King Roland secretly believed this to be true. However, cult leaders saw this belief as being counter to the Third Truth, in that it imposed limitations on the divine, forcing the New God to conform to mortal belief rather than transcend it. Many members of the cult continue to hold this belief, and small cells gather to worship Astrid as the New God.

Legion of God: Members of the secret order known as the Legion of God hold that the Third Truth forbids the existence of all other religions—and that as such, it is the duty of the faithful to convert all peoples in the world in order to purify the divine. Although decried by the Matriarch, the legion has supporters throughout the cult.

Infernals: Heretical cultists whose existence is little more than rumor, members of the Infernals believe that the New God is merely a mask worn by their master, the Devil, who plots to steer mortals from the Old Faith and make them his subjects.

Bleak Ones: Obsessed with the Second Truth, the Bleak Ones argue that the mortal form was a prison created by the Devil, and that the proper state of the soul is freedom from the flesh. Members of this unpopular group torture themselves with scourges and starvation, and many commit suicide to achieve the perfect state—if only for a time.



The Matriarch and the Gathering

The complex hierarchy making up the Cult of the New God maintains order within the faith and preserves the Four Truths against heresy and apostasy. The cult's bureaucracy is known as the Gathering—a political organism that looks after the health of the cult and has spent the six centuries since the First Accord shaping its identity. The Gathering arguably holds as much power as either the wizards of the Tower Arcane or the Emperor, and it has held on to its influence through even the most troubling times.

The Matriarch leads the Gathering. Elected by the cardinals who represent the seven orders of the cult, she normally holds her position for life. However, the Matriarch leads with the consent of her supporters, and can be removed if she acts without their approval. This happened in the year 247, when the thirty-third Matriarch was found dead in her chambers after expressing support for the heretical group known as the Incarnates.

The seven orders of the Gathering are each led by a cardinal elected by the body of bishops who oversee their order's interests in the Empire and beyond. The seven orders stand atop the congregation, which comprises all priests, ministers, and the worshippers they lead. Members of the congregation might have different titles based on their region and social standing, but those titles rarely matter outside the communities in which they serve.

The Seven Orders

The seven orders of the Cult of the New God grew from seven cults that had formed during Astrid's life or in the early years after her death. The First Accord united the cults under one common religion. Maintaining these orders preserved their identities and objectives, while ensuring their ongoing support of the Matriarch. Each order operates out of one of the towers commanding the hill overlooking the capital city of the Holy Kingdom.

Keepers of Lore: An order of religious scholars and archeologists, members of the Keepers of Lore preserve the sacred writings and relics of the faith. They sometimes mount or fund expeditions to track objects and information of import to the cult, though their interest also extends to religious artifacts beyond those associated with the New God. The order has founded several monasteries throughout the Empire, and the monks that dwell there spend their days copying the religion's holiest books.

Bearer of the Faith: One of the first of Astrid's cults, the Bearers of the Faith focused its followers on spreading the prophet's teachings to every corner of the Empire and beyond. Members of the order have been

instrumental in establishing temples in the Northern Reach and Balgrendia, and now work to expand the cult's presence into the Patchwork Lands. They tie strips of white cloth around their left arms to signal their peaceful intentions.

Swords of Astrid: The dreaded Inquisition of the New God was founded to uphold the Fourth Truth, rooting out enemies of the natural order and exposing them to the light of justice. The founders of the Inquisition focused their initial efforts on purging the Empire of demonic cults. In recent years, they have turned their attention to the Gathering, searching for heretics hidden within. The Swords of Astrid wear black robes with the symbol of the New God emblazoned in white over their hearts. They don bone-white masks that resemble skulls to keep their identities secret when working on behalf of their order.

Knights of the Temple: This militant order was founded by those who resisted persecution in the earliest days of the cult. The most fervent of its members volunteered to protect other gatherings of the faithful, standing guard day and night to ensure that none came to harm. Members of the Knights of the Temple are known as templars, and work to safeguard sites the cult deems holy. Templars display the holy symbol of the New God in white on a black field.

Hammers of Justice: The Hammers of Justice arose from Astrid's first eight disciples—companions who traveled with and protected her. The descendants of those disciples believed that the survival of the cult would require strength of arms and steadfast resolve against other rival faiths. Members of the order have sworn vows to never use edged weapons, in memory of Astrid rebuking one of her disciples for severing the hand from a priest of the Order of Light who had assaulted the prophet.

Poor Brethren: Cleaving to the Second Truth, the members of the Poor Brethren reject the comforts of the civilized world to live as beggars. They gather in small bands, wearing coarse robes and owning no more than they can carry on their backs. Although members of the Poor Brethren claim to be peaceful servants of the New God and will minister to any who listen, the hardships they endure take a toll on their minds. As such, many are a bit unhinged.

Peaceful Sisters: An order founded on the principle of charity, the Peaceful Sisters originated as a small group of wealthy nobles who donated their riches to improve the lives of others. Those nobles used their order to extend their charitable reach, building and running orphanages, feeding the poor, and improving living conditions in the cities. When the Shuddering Pox raced through the Empire, the Peaceful Sisters were instrumental in creating the institutional healers' order known as the House of Healing.



Temples and Shrines

The Cult of the New God has temples in most imperial communities, either new-built sites or older temples taken over by the cult. Temples in Caecras, Tear, the Grand Duchy, and the Holy Kingdom are typically grand affairs, built of stone and boasting large bell towers that chime the hours and call the faithful to worship. All temples and cathedrals provide open areas where congregants can gather to listen to sermons, sing, and participate in ceremonies. The greatest temples are the cathedrals, each a monument to a community's wealth and devotion to the New God. The largest cathedrals can be found in the cities of the Holy Kingdom and in Caecras.

Shrines stand at places important to the faith, usually marking sites where people have been martyred or where great miracles were performed. The most notable shrines commemorate the life of Astrid, standing at places where she taught or performed her greatest miracles. (A dozen such sites all claim to be the place from which the prophet ascended.) Shrines are built in the form of tiny temples, and include altars, an icon, and the symbol of the New God. The cult assigns priests to watch over these sites, maintain them, and minister to pilgrims who come to pray.



Holy Ground of the New God

Demons, faeries, spirits, and undead make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane while on ground sacred to the New God.



Enemies Everywhere

An aggressive agenda of spreading the faith to all corners of the Empire and beyond has given the Cult of the New God a dark reputation in many lands. Outsiders are typically suspicious of the cult, and even more so of its most fanatical members. Chief among those are the members of the Poor Brethren who rove about the countryside as vagabonds, flaying themselves with scourges and depending on the charity of others for sustenance. Many folk also remember how in times past, the cult took a more militant stance toward other faiths, driving out nonbelievers and taking over their temples.

The priests of the Old Faith avoid the New God's servants, though they ally with them when confronted by a common enemy. The priests of the Honored Dead consider the New God's followers dangerous fanatics, while the faithful followers of witchcraft tolerate them at best. Other religions might support the cult or suffer

their attentions, depending on the beliefs they hold.

Though the Cult of the New God remains an authoritarian presence, it generally serves a purpose that benefits all. In particular, members of the cult are sworn to destroy demonic cults wherever they are found, and to combat any peoples under the Demon Lord's influence. As such, holy warriors of the cult lead bands to attack herds of beastmen, while witch hunters travel from one side of the Empire to the other to chase down rumors of demonic worship and activity.

Holy Days

The imperial calendar is filled with festivals and holy days important to the Cult of the New God. Some are regional affairs that mark the deaths of famous martyrs. Others are holidays once important to the Old Faith and the mystery cults in power during the Cult of the New God's formative years, and which have been preserved and recast to fit within the religion's framework. Beyond these, two celebrations warrant special mention.

The first is the weeklong festival known as the Accordance, which begins on the fifteenth day of the seventh month to mark the anniversary of the religion's official founding. Faithful from all over the Empire make the journey to Seven Spires to hear a sermon delivered by the Matriarch. Parades, passion plays, and more turn the city into a festival for seven full days. The journey is expensive, though, and has grown only more so as profiteers seek to exploit the pilgrims who undertake it. As such, many people have begun to celebrate the Accordance in their home communities.

The holiest day of the Cult of the New God is Ascension, the day commemorating Astrid's departure from Urth. Falling by tradition on the winter equinox, Ascension is preceded by three days of fasting. On the day, the faithful don hair shirts and form a procession of wailing and weeping to mourn the loss of the cult's founder. At the day's end, a great feast begins, symbolizing the rewards of the prophet's sacrifice and the knowledge she left to the world.

Priests of the New God

The Cult of the New God welcomes anyone into its ranks. People of all lands and of almost any ancestry can find a place in the cult—if not as a minister or priest, then as a member of the congregation. Those seeking a place in the priesthood begin their training as acolytes. They learn to read, become versed in the finer points of theology, and eventually learn how to perform miracles through the act of prayer.

Cult leaders don special vestments when they lead ceremonies, minister to their followers, or perform rites. The colors of those vestments vary depending on position in the hierarchy, with white for priests, blue for bishops, red for cardinals, and gold for the Matriarch.

Certain orders break from this tradition, including the Swords of Astrid, who wear black, and priests of the Poor Brethren, who don robes of plain brown.

All priests of the New God use the ouroboros symbol as their implement. Priests can continue their growth in the cult by becoming clerics, paladins, or sages[†].

Live by the Four Truths: Priests are expected to uphold the Four Truths of the New God and live by them. In doing so, they must act as forces for good in the world, combating users of dark magic, slaves to the Demon Lord, and anyone else who would violate the natural order. Priests must give one-tenth of their earnings to the cult. In return, they receive haven and basic supplies from any of its temples.

Level 1 Priest of the New God

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Languages and Professions You add acolyte of the New God to your list of professions. In addition, you can either read a language you already know how to speak or add a language to the list of languages you can speak.

Magic You discover the Celestial, Life, or Theurgy tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Shared Recovery You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. Then one creature you choose within short range heals damage equal to its healing rate. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Level 2 Priest of the New God

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Celestial, Life, or Theurgy.
- You discover the Celestial, Life, or Theurgy tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the New God

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of the New God

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Improved Shared Recovery You can use Shared Recovery twice.



The Dark Gods

One of the darker chapters of the history of the Empire concerns the birth of the orc race. Shaped by the power of dark wizards, the orcs were created from jotun taken as prisoners after imperial forces crushed their power in the Frozen Wastes. The conquering heroes dragged those jotun back in chains to face the Emperor's justice. Yet even as they were warped by dark magic and transformed into the first orcs, the defeated clung to their faith in a grim and menacing pantheon of deities—the Dark Gods whom the orcs serve still.

Sometimes known as the Gods of Blood and Iron, the Dark Gods are famously cruel and violent. Unlike the New God or even the most primal gods of the Old Faith, they delight in the suffering of their mortal servants. The jotun and orcs who worship the Dark Gods do so not out of reverence, love, or the hope of salvation, but from fear. To anger the gods is to face their wrath and be cast out from the halls of Valhalla, languishing weak, forgotten, and powerless in the darkness of the Underworld.

The pantheon of the Dark Gods includes a whole host of deities, only a few of which are commonly known. Grimnir the All-Father is the god who rules over the pantheon as Lord of the Heavens and Master of All. As wise as he is ferocious, Grimnir is a warrior without peer who possesses a mind as vast as the world. He is shown

as a bearded man with one black eye filled with stars, often with a raven perched on each shoulder and sitting astride an eight-legged steed.

The lesser gods attending the All-Father include Baldr the beautiful, Bragi the poet, Eir the healer, Forseti the wise, Freyja of love, Frigg the matron, Hel of the Underworld, Loki the trickster, Od the berserk, Tor of the raging tempest, Tyr the one-handed, and many more. Some of these gods claim descent from Grimnir, but others were once mortal, having earned their place in the pantheon through bold deeds and favor from the All-Father.

Wyrd

According to the jotun, all people have a destiny. Each individual's fate, known as its *wyrd*, was written even before the All-Father created the world from the skull of the cosmic cow. No matter what decisions a person makes, there is no escape from the *wyrd*, for it is already decided. This sense of fatalism inspires followers of the Dark Gods to conduct themselves with incredible courage. They believe death might come for them at any time, and know that the gods look poorly upon those who flinch away from their fates. For those seeking a place in Valhalla, each battle must be fought as if it were the last chance to prove one's worth before being called to the realm of the gods.

Symbols and Forms

Followers of the Dark Gods use the triquetra, a triangular knot figure, as the symbol of their faith. That symbol is sometimes used as a luck charm or as a marker designating places sacred to the gods. Ravens are considered sacred animals to the faith, for they are the form taken by the Valkyrie when they come to the mortal world to ferry the souls of the fallen to Valhalla.

Worshippers and Followers

In Blötland, the jotun have always worshiped the Dark Gods. These dour deities stand at the center of jotun culture and society, and their priests wield formidable power and influence over tribal chieftains. The jotun's faith has even spread into neighboring lands, where bands of humans honor Grimmir and the other Gods of Blood and Iron over the Old Gods. Within the Empire, orcs make up the majority of worshippers of the Dark Gods. Having clung to their beliefs even after the transformation that created their monstrous forms, the orcs have resisted all efforts to convert them to softer religions. As in Blötland, priests wield great power among the orcs, and many believe those priests responsible for the uprising that landed King Drudge on the Alabaster Throne.

Monoliths and Stone Circles

Followers of the Dark Gods do not build temples or shrines to their patron deities. Instead, they denote places of divine significance with stone markers, ranging in size from large slabs to towering monoliths, placed singly or in circles. On the stones, priests carve the names of the gods and details of whatever event occurred to make the site important to the faith.

To some, the use of stone markers suggests an ancestor faith common to both the Old Faith and the Dark Gods. Though if there is one, it has been lost over long years of bloodshed and carnage.



Holy Ground of the Dark Gods

The Dark Gods delight in violence. All creatures on ground holy to the Dark Gods make attack rolls with 1 boon.



Uneasy Peace

There is no love lost between the Empire and the faithful of the Dark Gods. Jotun priests led some of the most devastating raids into imperial lands, goading their warriors to find glory and doom in the slaughter and plunder of humans. When the Empire finally defeated the jotun and claimed their survivors as prisoners

and slaves, they made specific examples of the priests, burning them alive on great pyres. What the imperials didn't recognize at the time was that death meant nothing to the jotun. If anything, the actions of the Emperor's agents only made the jotun—and the orcs they would become—hate the humans even more.

In the end, the Empire permitted the orcs their beliefs, though they discouraged priests among their ranks. Individual orcs with strong religious proclivities typically found early retirement, one way or another.

Priests of the Dark Gods

Priests of the Dark Gods come almost exclusively from the ranks of their jotun and orc followers. Physical strength, courage, and ferocity are the highest ideals among both these peoples, so most study the ways of war. Those who join the ranks of the priests often do so after receiving an omen: a three-eyed raven, a Valkyrie on the battlefield, or a one-eyed stranger joining the fire at night.

Initiates undergo rites of passage more dangerous and taxing than the rites given to their people's warriors. They must venture alone into the wilderness with only what gear they can carry, then spend their time in isolation, chanting and ingesting psychedelic herbs. As they carve runes and whorls into their flesh using knives dipped in black ink, they experience visions of the future. Any acolyte who survives seven days and nights in the wild in this way returns to his or her tribe as a priest.

Vestments and Implements: Instead of robes or finery, priests of the Dark Gods display the symbols carved into their skin. They unclothe their bodies to reveal the stories etched there whenever they perform the sacred rites of the faith. All priests use the triquetra as their implement, usually wearing it as a medallion on a cord tied around the neck.

Tenets, Strictures, and Customs: The Dark Gods' priests hold themselves to an even higher standard than the jotun when it comes to courage and ferocity on the battlefield. A priest must show courage in the face of all adversity, never shying away from facing the wyrd, and leading others by fearless and ferocious example.

Priests strive for greatness, even if they are not fated to find it. They lead expeditions into the Frozen Wastes to hunt the dreaded cold worms or lay waste to the hordes of the cold ones—terrifying creatures made from snow to be mockeries of mankind. They raid human lands to hunt lost relics, plunder valuable treasures, and exact vengeance for slights against their gods and people.

Battle, Destruction, and Rune are the traditions most commonly associated with the Dark Gods. However, characters worshiping specific gods can swap out two traditions for ones appropriate to the deity they serve. For example, a character serving Tor might have Air and Storm in place of Destruction and Rune, while a character serving Eir could replace Battle and Spiritualism with Life and Nature.

Level 1 Priest of the Dark Gods

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Grim Aspect In social situations, you make attack rolls to intimidate other creatures with 1 boon.

Magic You discover the Battle, Destruction, or Rune tradition. Then choose one of the following options:

- You discover the other two traditions.
- You discover one of the other traditions and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Battle Resurgence You can use an action to heal damage equal to your healing rate. Then you grant each creature within short range of you 1 boon on attack rolls until the end of the round.

Level 2 Priest of the Dark Gods

Characteristics Health +4

Magic Choose one of the following options:

- You discover two traditions from Battle, Destruction, or Rune.
- You discover the Battle, Destruction, or Rune tradition and learn one spell.
- You learn two spells.

Prayer When you or a creature within short range of you makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to grant 1 boon on the triggering roll.

Level 5 Expert Priest of the Dark Gods

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Divine Strike When you use Prayer to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the triggering attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Level 8 Master Priest of the Dark Gods

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Inspiring Prayer When you use Prayer on a creature other than yourself, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 round.

Improved Battle Resurgence You can use Battle Resurgence twice.

Gothi

Expert Path

The gothi are the exalted servants of the Dark Gods. Fierce, violent, and savage, they lead the fight against weaker peoples, plundering distant lands for riches, slaves, and whatever else they can carry. Though all followers of the Dark Gods believe in the wyrd, the gothi are unique for having seen their doom and knowing the day of their deaths. Rather than shrink in fear from the end, they move toward it with confidence, eager to wet their blades with the blood of their enemies. Of course, the gods sometimes lie, but when death comes before the expected time, the gothi greet their doom with laughter.

Gothi enjoy high standing among their people, valued for their mystic connections to the gods of Blood and Iron, and feared for their almost insane bravado.

Gothi Story Development

d6	Story Development
1	A three-eyed crow visited you and revealed your wyrd. You pledged service to the Dark Gods and set out to find your death.
2	Grimnir visited you in your dreams and called you to fight in his name. You carved the triquetra on your chest with a knife and haven't looked back.
3	You grew up hearing stories about the decadence of the Empire and the horrors it inflicted on your people. You swore bitter oaths to the Gods of Blood and Iron that you would avenge your kind. The gods listened and bound you to them.
4	You saw a Valkyrie claim the souls of the dead on the battlefield, and knew the stories to be true. You pledged your blade to the Dark Gods and have been their servant ever since.
5	You crave a place in the halls of Valhalla and believe that fighting in the name of the Dark Gods will get you there.
6	You were raised by a gothi and long ago decided to become one yourself.

Level 3 Gothi

Attributes Increase two by 1

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You discover a tradition associated with your religion or you learn one spell.

Cowards Wear Armor If you wear armor, you take a penalty to Power equal to your Power score, and you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane.

Spill the Blood While you are injured, you make Strength attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon.

Warrior When you get a success on an attack roll, you grant 1 boon on the next attack roll made by a creature of your choice within short range.

Level 6 Gothi

Characteristics Health +4

Magic You learn one spell.

Awaken Savagery When a creature within short range deals damage with a weapon attack, you can use a triggered action to expend a casting of a spell. The triggering creature gains 1 Insanity and its attack deals 1d6 extra damage per rank of the spell expended (minimum 1d6 extra damage). Once you use this talent you cannot use it again for 1 minute.

Level 9 Master Gothi

Characteristics Health +4, Power +1

Magic You learn one spell.

Hatred of the Dark Gods You can use an action or a triggered action on your turn to expend a casting of a spell. You heal damage equal to your healing rate and gain an amount of Insanity equal to the rank of the spell whose casting you expended. You do not become frightened from gaining Insanity in this way. Instead, you make attack rolls with 1 boon and your weapon attacks deal 1d6 extra damage for a number of rounds equal to your Insanity total. Once you use this talent, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.



Other Faiths

Religions come and go. The major faiths described in the preceding chapters represent those that have somehow survived the history of theological upheaval that has shadowed the Empire, but they represent only a few of the religions to be found on the continent. From the countless faiths crowding the streets of Set, the City of the Gods, to the strange beliefs of the Pirate Isles, to the hidden cults devoted to the Demon Lord, it sometimes seems that there are enough gods for every person in the Empire to have their own unique religion.

This chapter presents a survey of some of the other faiths found on the continent. Each entry consists of a broad overview of a faith, with enough information to inspire you to add any necessary details, along with commonly associated traditions for priests of that faith. Some religions receive additional development in other supplements, as noted.

The Dark Lady

One of the last footholds of ancient Gog, the Kingdom of Skulls remains a bleak, tortured landscape under the rule of the Dark Lady. Once the Witch-King's most

favorable bride, her exalted status and the incredible magical power she possessed helped her and her sons escape the crumbling tyranny of Gog for lands beyond the reach of the triumphant Kalasans. For over eight hundred years, the Dark Lady has maintained an iron grip on her holdings, leading many to believe that she has transcended mortality to become something else—something her most fervent followers believe approaches the divine.

In the Kingdom of Skulls, the Dark Lady's subjects worship her as a god. They honor her with profane festivals and unholy rites, transforming themselves into hideous ghouls and raising the dead as mindless thralls to swell her legions. Rumors spill across the kingdom's borders of her followers committing even darker acts, while other rumors suggest that the Dark Lady has an extensive bureaucracy of priests who command the dark arts, and who pull the strings of agents embedded within the Empire.

Associated Traditions: Death, Necromancy, and Shadow

One-Eyed Pete

A god worshiped exclusively on the Pirate Isles, One-Eyed Pete is more of a symbol than a deity, representing the collective greed, violence, and excess that has come to define life on the isles. The pirate god's priests come from the ranks of retired ship captains, who use their status to command a larger share of the spoils and keep themselves supplied with alcohol and prostitutes. There are virtually no strictures or tenets for the religion, other than it being every pirate's duty to keep One-Eyed Pete good and drunk by pouring the first drink from a bottle into the ocean. Failing to do so risks having the mad god crawl up from the depths to take a long-overdue share of his followers' spoils.

Though most people on the continent dismiss the stories of One-Eyed Pete as nothing more than invention by scoundrels, some have put forward the idea that the god the pirates worship is actually some alien power sealed in a sunken city at the bottom of the Auroral Ocean. The strange artifacts that occasionally wash up on the shores of the Pirate Isles hint at some truth to this notion, and suggest that an ancient society and its lost gods drowned beneath the waves long ago.

Associated Traditions: Air, Storm, and Water

Fey Lords and Ladies

Such is the power of the fey lords and ladies that many see them as gods. This has led to speculation that the deities of the Old Faith might have arisen from the first human encounters with the immortals. Lords and ladies such as the Faerie Queen, the Queen of Air and Darkness, Oberon, Puck, and others do not seek out mortal subjects, and some go so far as to avoid all contact with mortals. Still, mortals serving the lords and ladies are sometimes gifted with power akin to that granted by the gods.

Unlike other religions, the lords and ladies have both mortal and immortal servants. For more information on serving the Faerie Queen and other lords and ladies of the hidden kingdoms, see *Terrible Beauty*.

Associated Traditions: Enchantment, Fey, and Illusion

The Devil

Diabolus, the Lord of Hell, actively recruits mortals to his service, either directly or through the lesser fiends under his command. The Devil seduces his followers with promises of power, knowledge, wealth, and pleasure, offering tantalizing tastes of whatever they desire most. Serving the Devil is not for the faint of

heart, though, for the Lord of Hell is a cruel master who harvests the souls of the damned with glee.

Inquisitors and witch hunters also scour the continent for devil worshipers, consigning them to the purifying flames of the pyre wherever they are found. For this

reason, most of the Devil's servants keep their beliefs secret, hiding their true nature behind unassuming, innocent masks.

As menacing a figure as Diabolus presents, he still maintains large numbers of followers and subjects in the mortal world. Most of those believe that their service to him gives them the right to do as they wish, and to insulate themselves from the worst of the punishments they face in the afterlife. Devotees of the Dark Lord of Hell do not advertise their affiliation with his cult, instead conducting their ceremonies and foul rites in the cellars of temples raised to the New God, in abandoned caves, ruins untouched by the light of the Sun or Tarterus, and other secret places.

Devil worshippers typically wear hooded black robes during their rites. They decorate their sacred places with pentagrams, black candles, silver knives and chalices, and altars on which they make sacrifices to their dark god.

For more information about the Devil and the dark power he offers his followers, see *Exquisite Agony*.

Associated Traditions: Enchantment, Fire, and Shadow

Oceanus

An old deity whose followers are believed to have died out long ago, Oceanus was once the god of the oceans. He is remembered as a violent and vengeful figure, demanding that his followers ritualistically drown people as sacrifices to him. The cult of Oceanus thrived in the days before the men of Gog conquered the continent. As with all cults, his followers suffered terribly under the Witch-King's rule. Cult leaders were crucified or torn apart in front of bloodthirsty crowds, reminding their followers that all gods were powerless next to the Witch-King's tyranny. As a result, the cult of Oceanus disappeared, its members hiding their beliefs and beseeching their god to vindicate their faith. When he didn't, the last survivors dispersed, shattering their idols and hurling their relics into the sea.

But despite the collapse of the Oceanus cult in civilized lands, it survives in isolated places, including tiny communities that somehow escaped the tumult of the last eight centuries. In many places, isolation has warped the cult. Distorted from its original form, the faith of Oceanus has become something monstrous, with cultists exalting dark things from the depths—and sometimes breeding with them. Only in Set, the City of Gods, has the cult survived to reflect its original form—an authoritarian religion whose followers make offerings to the sea, for fear that the King Under the Waves will rise up and destroy them again as he did so long ago.

Associated Traditions: Destruction, Storm, and Water

Spirits of the Woad

The thirteen tribes of the Woad claim descent from the First People. Although they are much changed from

their ancestors, having mingled their blood with people of the Edene, the Kalasans, and more, they cling to the old ways and keep their old customs. The folk of the Woad believe in a spirit world that overlaps the world in which they live. In this spirit realm exist entities neither living nor dead—beings as old as the world itself. These spirits can enter the mortal world, but they adopt the form of a beast when they do. Each tribe venerates a particular animal spirit—Badger, Bear, Boar, Deer, Eagle, Fox, Hare, Horse, Otter, Owl, Raven, Snake, or Wolf—and a tribe's members attempt to emulate that animal spirit's characteristics.

The nature of these spirits is a matter of considerable debate among the theological authorities. Outside the tribes of the Woad, there is no evidence that any such spirit world exists, leading many to suggest that the spirits come from one or more hidden kingdoms. In that case, these spirits might be faeries long ago transformed by the beliefs of the Woad peoples. Some claim that the spirit world is in fact the Underworld, while others recognize that belief interacts with magic strangely, suggesting that the spirit world might exist, but for the Woad only.

Associated Traditions: Nature, Primal, and Spiritualism

Genies

By virtue of their connection to the elements, the gnomes and salamanders believe that the genies fashioned Urth from the raw stuff of chaos, giving it form and substance by the names they gave things and beings. A number of heretical scholars of other races hold to this belief, hypothesizing that the language the genies used to complete their great work drove them mad, reducing them to near-mindless spirits that haunt the world and can be bound into substance by those who master elemental magic.

The madness afflicting the genies robs them of any desire to interact with their creation or the things that creep, crawl, or fly upon it. Their madness, however, relents from time to time. Moments of lucidity sometimes return, allowing a genie to regain its senses and communicate with those around it. And when a bodiless, invisible entity speaks, people have a tendency to listen.

For the most part, cults dedicated to genies are rare, and usually exist only within societies of elemental creatures. However, the centaurs of the Endless Steppe worship the spirits of the wind, the Woad engage with unseen spirits that offer wisdom, and isolated groups of the faithful worship voices heard murmuring underground, sighing in the wind, or speaking in the crash of waves against the shore.

Associated Traditions: One of Air, Earth, Fire, Storm, or Water

Demon Lord

The Demon Lord craves release so it can feast upon Urth and all of creation. Against the promise of annihilation, it seems unthinkable that anyone could contemplate pledging service to this horrifying monstrosity. Yet demonic cults have always threatened the world from the shadows, working in secret to hasten the end of all things. The cults of the Demon Lord vary widely, taking different forms based on how people perceive the Shadow in the Void. Some see the Demon Lord as a glorious god sealed in the darkness, eager to return and set things right. Others see him as the Destroyer of Worlds and believe that the only hope they have of escaping the coming apocalypse is to serve.

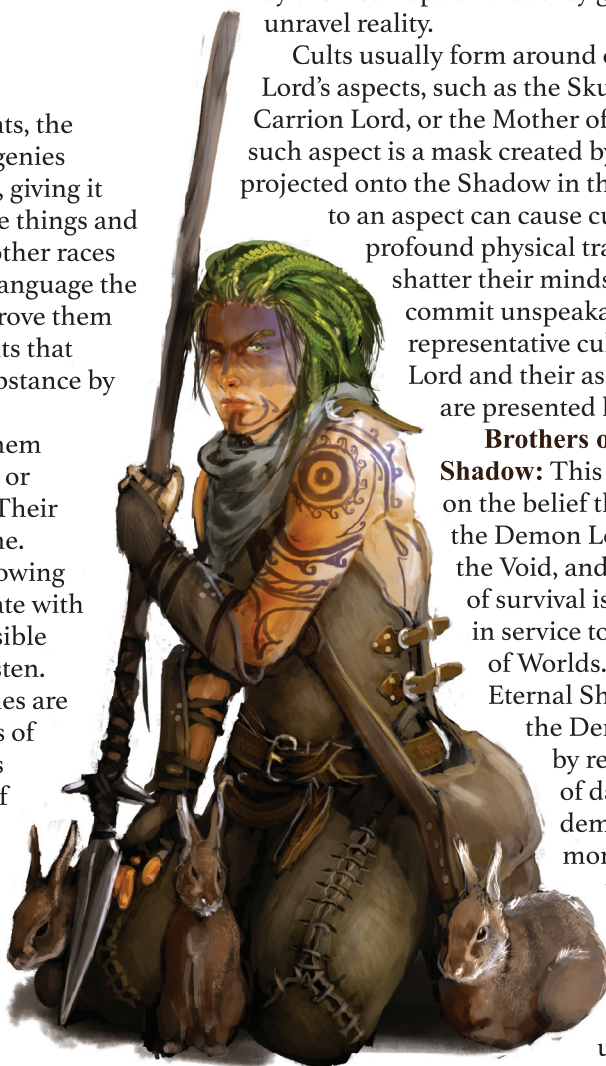
Whatever form the Demon Lord takes, the cult that grows around it attracts people of all different walks. Some are nihilists, hating everything about existence and eager to drag everyone and everything with them into oblivion. Others serve because they are deluded, unable or unwilling to see that the entity they worship is nothing more than a facade behind which chaos and ruin lurk. Others are simply evil, so thoroughly warped by their corruption that they gladly work to unravel reality.

Cults usually form around one of the Demon Lord's aspects, such as the Skull King, the Carrion Lord, or the Mother of Monsters. Each such aspect is a mask created by mortal belief and projected onto the Shadow in the Void. Devotion

to an aspect can cause cultists to undergo profound physical transformations, shatter their minds, and drive them to commit unspeakable atrocities. Three representative cults of the Demon Lord and their associated traditions are presented here.

Brothers of the Eternal

Shadow: This cult was founded on the belief that nothing can stop the Demon Lord from escaping the Void, and the only hope of survival is to earn a place in service to the Destroyer of Worlds. Devotees of the Eternal Shadow work to hasten the Demon Lord's arrival by recovering vile relics of dark magic, releasing demons to possess mortal creatures, and taking actions meant to destabilize civilized lands. For their efforts, cultists undergo a horrible



transformation of both body and mind. Their flesh becomes waxy, their teeth blacken, and in time, their bodies become so deformed that they cannot move openly without drawing unwanted attention to themselves. The grotesque masks most cultists wear are typically less frightening than their true appearances.

The cult's associated traditions include Demonology†, Forbidden, and Shadow.

Revelers of the Glistening Prince: The Glistening Prince loiters on the boundaries between the mortal world and the Void, whispering false promises to mortals and immortals alike of power, sexual gratification, wealth, and status. Small cults have formed in imperial lands to honor this voice in the shadows, congregating on the nights of the new moon. The chiming of a bronze blade in utter darkness is said to summon the Glistening Prince's vile voice.

To join the cult, an initiate must carve a bit of flesh from his or her body, then burn it in a brass brazier filled with charcoal, incense, and sheep dung. The more painful the wound, the higher the initiate's standing in the cult.

The cult's associated traditions include Demonology†, Forbidden, and Illusion.

Seekers of the Wandering Star: Every 88 years, a blazing red star with a fiery tail appears in the skies above Urth, remaining there for eight days before fading away. The appearance of the mysterious star is considered an ill omen, and much strangeness occurs while its baleful light shines upon the world. The Seekers of the Wandering Star believe that the star is a god, and that its purpose is to carry the devout into the infinite. When the star appears, the seekers make blood offerings to their deity on rooftops and in high towers in the hope of attracting its attention.

While awaiting the wandering star, the seekers keep busy conducting ceremonies in secret places. They call forth beings that dwell in the dark between the stars, recruit new members to the cult (preferably people of wealth and status), and fund expeditions to ancient sites important to their god.

The cult's associated traditions include Celestial, Demonology†, and Fire.

Small Gods

Beyond the religions described in this book, countless gods are known in the world—so many, in fact, that simply naming them all would be the work of a lifetime. Most such gods are insignificant, however, and so are grouped together as small gods. These comprise a vast and colorful pantheon of deities, some possibly real and others likely imaginary. Small gods might be deified ancestors, spirits in nature, powerful faeries, or monsters conjured from nightmare. Though they are often unique individuals, some appear as aspects or fragments of other gods, or are depicted as sainted agents of more prominent deities. And of course, many small gods are simply nasty devils preying on gullible mortals, or masks worn by the Demon Lord as it plants the seeds of yet another cult.

Small gods can be patrons of cities or towns, guilds, orders, and secret societies. Some are little more than names, while others have elaborate histories. In any case, though, small gods rarely have formal institutions to support them. Belief in a small god tends to be localized, tied to a particular place or class of people. One small god might inspire a statue in a prominent place, while another has a hidden altar whose location is known only to a handful of followers. In the end, small gods come and go with great frequency, and the remnants of their faiths can be found across the Empire and beyond.

Creating Your Own Religions

Even with all the religions and gods described in this supplement, you might find that you want to create your own faiths—and you should. The creation of new religions, new gods, and the people who worship them is a powerful world-building tool, and the more detail you add to your games, the more realistic they become.

However, you don't need to write up a detailed overview of every new faith, incorporating extensive backstory and connections to the world. In most cases, all you really need is a deity, a symbol, and a few associated traditions. Create only as much material as you need to introduce players and characters to a new religion. Then allow the full development of that faith and its place in the world to happen in the game.



MALGERE
HIRCUM



Magic of the Gods

The influence of religion on the development of civilization extends beyond influencing how mortals see the world and their place in it. Devotees of the gods have learned to shape the world through prayer, using magic to perform miracles or create relics of lasting power.

Serving the Gods

Characters pledged to serve the gods believe their divine patrons exist. Otherwise, why worship them? Belief in the game has power. It shapes divinities from the fabric of magic enveloping the world and allows individuals to perform miraculous feats through force of will and devotion. Since the gods are real, at least to those who serve them, it's possible for a servant to find favor from his or her deity—or to incur that deity's wrath.

Divine Favor

Religious people obey the tenets and keep to the strictures of their faith for many reasons. Some do so out of fear. Others have hopes of gaining some reward. Still others keep the faith simply because they believe it to be proper. The gods sometimes reward followers who prove exceptional in their service with divine favor, a blessing that aids them in whatever tasks they undertake.

Gaining Divine Favor

A character with 0 Corruption can attempt to gain divine favor by spending time at a holy site. During that time, the character must pray, forgo comforts, burn incense, perform rites, and undertake other activities according to his or her faith. After a number of hours equal to 2d6 – the character's Power score, roll 2d20 (or 3d20 if the character has the priest path). If two dice come up as 20, the creature gains divine favor.

Whether or not a character received divine favor, the attempt to gain divine favor can be made only once every 3d6 days. The GM rolls and keeps the result a secret. Additional attempts to gain divine favor have no effect—and might risk divine wrath.

Benefits of Divine Favor

Divine favor comes in one of four forms, chosen by the GM.

Information: The player can ask the GM 1d3 questions, and the GM must answer each truthfully.

Healing: The character or a creature the character designates within short range heals all damage.

Fortune: The character gains Fortune.

Quest: The character is given a quest by his or her deity, which must be undertaken within a certain period of time decided by the GM. Completing the quest usually awards the character with a relic, an enchanted object, or something else needed to complete a larger mission. Failing to complete the quest within the allotted time might incur divine wrath.

Divine Wrath

Just as characters can win divine favor, so too can they incur divine wrath—the sudden, powerful manifestation of a deity's displeasure. Divine wrath might be incurred for various reasons, as determined by the GM. Typical scenarios include the following.

- A priest consistently violates a stricture of his or her religion.
- A priest acts in direct opposition to the tenets of his or her faith.
- A priest gains 4 Corruption or more.
- A character desecrates a holy site.
- A character murders, tortures, or abuses a priest.
- A character destroys a holy relic.

Whenever one or more characters in the group commit such an action, the GM rolls 2d20 (or 3d20 if one of the characters is a priest). If two dice come up as 1, all characters involved in the action suffer divine wrath.

Whether or not a character incurs divine wrath, that character is not at risk of incurring divine wrath again from the same deity for 3d6 days. The GM rolls and keeps the result a secret.

Manifestations of Divine Wrath

Divine wrath can take any form the GM chooses, though the following are usually suitable.

Plague: The character becomes diseased. While diseased in this way, the character takes a –1d6 penalty to Health. Whenever the character completes a rest, he or she must make a Strength challenge roll with a number of banes equal to his or her Corruption score. On a success, the character removes the affliction. On a failure, the diseased affliction remains. If the total of the roll is 0 or less, the penalty to Health worsens by 1d6.

Insanity: The character gains 2d6 Insanity.

Pain: The character takes 1d6 damage and becomes impaired for 1d6 days.

Cursed: The character becomes cursed. While cursed in this way, the character makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 3 banes. The curse can be lifted by divine favor, magic, or making restitution for the act that incurred the divine wrath.

Spells

The clearest expression of divine power comes through spells, and the most devoted servants of the gods learn spells that reflect their patrons' spheres of influence. A priest of the New God can lay hands on the injured and heal them of their wounds, while a priest of the Dark Gods can call upon their power to strike with tremendous force.

The spells described in this book expand on the spells found in *Shadow of the Demon Lord*, and reflect the spells priests might learn from their associated traditions. These spells are not restricted to priests, though, and any character can learn them provided they meet the requirements.

In addition to the traditions they discover, all priests have access to certain common aspects of their power. Whenever a priest would learn a spell of rank 3 or higher, he or she can choose to learn *consecrate* in place of that spell.

CONSECRATE PRIEST UTILITY 3

Target One temple, shrine, or monument to your religion you can see within short range
Duration 24 hours

The target and the area within 5 yards of it become holy ground for the duration, gaining the benefit described for holy ground for your religion. If your religion does not have such a benefit, this spell instead grants the following benefit:

While in the area of the holy ground created with this spell, whenever you cast an attack spell from a tradition related to your religion, you make the attack roll with 1 boon and creatures in the area make challenge rolls to resist the attack with 1 bane.

Permanence If you cast this spell in the same area each day for a month and a day, the effect becomes permanent.

Arcana Spells

SUPPRESS MAGIC ARCANA UTILITY 4

Area A sphere with a radius in yards equal to your Power centered on a point you can see within short range.
Duration 1 minute

You purge the area of magic for the duration. Creatures in the area take a -3 penalty to Power (minimum 0) for as long as they remain there.

Battle Spells

HEROIC SURGE BATTLE UTILITY 1

Duration 1 minute

If you are charmed or frightened, remove the affliction.

For the duration, you make attack rolls using weapons with 1 boon.

INVOKE THE ANCESTORS

BATTLE UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Honored Dead as your patron deity.

Target One creature within short range

Duration 1 minute

The target makes an attack with a weapon.

For the duration, whenever you use your Prayer talent to grant 1 boon on an attack roll and the roll results in a success, the next attack you make before the end of the round deals 1d6 extra damage.

INVOKE THE DARK GODS

BATTLE UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Dark Gods as your patron deities.

Target One creature you can see within short range

Duration 1 minute

Until the end of the round, the target makes attack rolls with 3 boons.

For the duration, whenever you use the Prayer talent, you gain a cumulative +1d6 bonus to Health that lasts until the spell ends.

Celestial Spells

WALL OF LIGHT CELESTIAL UTILITY 0

Area A circle with a 1-yard radius, with any orientation, centered on a point within medium range
Duration 1 minute

Light spreads through the area and remains for the duration. From either side, the circle emits light into 5-yard-long cone-shaped areas.

INVOKE THE MAIDEN

IN THE MOON CELESTIAL UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Maiden in the Moon as your patron deity.

Target One creature within short range

Duration 1 minute

Moonlight shines down on the target until the end of the round. While the target is illuminated in this way, attack rolls against the target are made with 1 bane.

For the duration, whenever you use your Prayer talent to grant 1 boon on an attack roll made using a spell or on a challenge roll made to resist an attack spell, you grant the target of the Prayer 2 additional boons.

HALO CELESTIAL UTILITY 2

Duration 1 minute

A celestial glow shines from around your head for the duration, filling a sphere with a 5-yard radius centered on you with light. Until the spell ends, whenever you take damage, each sighted creature within short range must get a success on a Perception challenge roll or become blinded for 1 round.



Curse Spells

JINX

CURSE ATTACK 1

Target One creature within short range

Make an Intellect attack roll against the target's Will. On a success, the target becomes cursed for 1 minute. While cursed in this way, the target makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane. In addition, whenever the total of the target's roll is 0 or lower, one item it carries falls to the ground and moves 1d6 yards away from it.

Triggered When a creature you can see within short range makes an attack roll or a challenge roll, you can use a triggered action to cast this spell against the triggering creature. On a success, the effect lasts for 1 round instead of 1 minute.

Death Spells

INVOKE FATHER DEATH

DEATH UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen Father Death as your patron deity.

Target One incapacitated creature you can see within medium range

Duration 1 minute

The target heals damage equal to half its healing rate.

For the duration, whenever you use the Prayer talent to grant 1 boon on an attack roll, the attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

WRATH OF THANATOS

DEATH ATTACK 5

Target Any number of undead creatures within long range

Shadowy tendrils erupt from the center of your chest and streak toward each target, darting around or passing through obstacles in their paths. Each target takes 20 damage. A creature incapacitated by this damage dies instantly and is utterly destroyed.

Sacrifice You can expend a casting of this spell to cast the *death fog* spell from the Death tradition.

Divination Spells

PRAYER OF THE SEER

DIVINATION UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Seer as your patron deity.

Target One creature within short range

Duration 1 minute

Until the end of the round, you turn any success on an attack roll against the target into a failure.

For the duration, whenever you use the Prayer talent and the triggering roll results in a success, you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon until the end of the round.

SOOTHSAY

DIVINATION UTILITY 3

Requirement You must use implements of divination such as cards, dice, tea leaves, or notched sticks.

Describe a course of action, a goal, or an event that will happen at some point during the next week. If you concentrate on what you described for 1 minute, the GM gives you a useful piece of advice about the action, goal, or event. The GM might simply tell you something, or the information might be presented as a short phrase or a cryptic rhyme.

Sacrifice You can expend a casting of this spell to cast a rank 2 or lower spell from the Divination tradition.

Earth Spells

OPEN PASSAGE

EARTH UTILITY 5

Target A point you can reach on an object at least 2 yards wide and 2 yards tall

You touch the target and cause a cube of open space to appear centered on the point. The open space is up to 2 yards tall and 2 yards wide. It extends into the object a number of yards equal to 5 + your Power score, or until it reaches another open space.

Sacrifice You can expend a casting of this spell to cast the *earthquake* spell from the Earth tradition.

Enchantment Spells

INVOKE REVEL

ENCHANTMENT UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen Revel as your patron deity.

Target One creature within short range

Duration 1 minute

You remove one of the following afflictions from the target: charmed, compelled, or frightened.

For the duration, when you use your Prayer talent to grant 1 boon on an attack roll and the attack roll results in a success, the target of the triggering attack becomes charmed for 1 round.

INVOKE THE QUEEN

OF SUMMER

ENCHANTMENT UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Queen of Summer as your patron deity.

Target One creature within short range

Duration 1 minute

For 1 round, while the target is within short range of you, attack rolls against you are made with 1 bane.

For the duration, whenever you use the Prayer talent and the triggering roll results in a success, the target heals 1 damage.

BEGUILE

ENCHANTMENT ATTACK 4

Target One living creature within short range

Make an Intellect attack roll against the target's Will. If you or members of your group attacked the target since you last completed a rest, you make the attack roll with 1 bane. On a success, the target becomes charmed until you complete a rest. While the target is charmed in this way, you can use a triggered action when the target would take a turn and is within short range of you to decide what the target does on its turn.

INCITE MADNESS

ENCHANTMENT ATTACK 5

Target One creature within medium range

You shatter the target's reality. Make an Intellect attack roll against the target's Intellect. Against a target with Health 20 or lower, your attack roll results in an automatic success. Against a target with Health 50 or higher, you make the attack roll with 1d3 banes. On a success, the target gains Insanity equal to its Will score.



ΟΝΟΒ ΟΑΙΛΥ ΣΙΝΕ ΣΕΣΣ
ΜΑΤΤΑΝ ΜΣΔΙΑΒ ΜΑΤΥΜ
Relexa, potas bene.

Pen Spells

MADDENING REVEL

FEY UTILITY 2

Duration 1 minute

The scent of wine fills a sphere with a 5-yard radius centered on you and moves with you for the duration. When a living creature in the area makes an attack roll, it can choose to gain 1 Insanity to make the attack roll with 1d3 boons. The spell grants boons only to creatures who gain the Insanity. Gaining Insanity in this way does not cause a creature to become frightened. Furthermore, a creature that goes mad as a result of gaining insanity from this spell rolls 3d6 instead of a d20 to determine the form the madness takes.

Fire Spells

FLAMES OF PASSION

FIRE UTILITY 1

Target Up to three creatures you can reach
Duration 1 minute

You touch each target to imbue it with the fire of your faith. For the duration, each target sheds light in a 5-yard radius and makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon.

Life Spells

INVOKE THE WORLD MOTHER

LIFE UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the World Mother as your patron deity.
Target One creature within short range
Duration 1 minute

The target heals damage equal to half its healing rate.
For the duration, whenever you use your Prayer talent, you or a creature you choose within short range heals damage equal to your Power score.

REVIVE

LIFE UTILITY 4

Target One creature, killed no longer than 1 minute ago, that you can reach

You touch the target and restore it to life. The target must make a Strength challenge roll. On a success, it heals 1 damage and gains 1d6 Insanity. On a failure, it dies.
Sacrifice You can expend a casting of this spell to cast the *moderate healing* spell from the Life tradition.

Nature Spells

HEALING POULTICE

NATURE UTILITY 0

Requirement You must spend 1 hour foraging for herbs in a wilderness environment where such herbs might grow.
Target The herbs you foraged
Duration 24 hours

The target herbs become a healing poultice. At any time before you complete a rest, you can use an action to administer the poultice to a creature you can reach. When the creature completes a rest while wearing the poultice, it heals extra damage equal to half its healing rate. A creature can benefit from just one poultice at a time.

INVOKE THE OLD FAITH

NATURE UTILITY 0

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Old Faith as your religion.
Target One creature within short range
Duration 1 minute

The target heals damage equal to half its healing rate.

For the duration, whenever you use your Prayer talent, you can also cause overgrowth to cover a square patch of ground, 2 yards on each side, within short range. The area becomes difficult terrain.

FACE IN THE FOREST

NATURE UTILITY 2

Target One Size 2 or larger tree you can reach
Duration Concentration, up to 1 hour

You touch the target and become aware of the exact position of each tree within 1 mile of it. This knowledge lasts for the duration, during which time you must maintain contact with the tree. Each time you use an action to concentrate on the spell, you can choose to perceive from the space occupied by a Size 2 tree whose position you learned from this casting of the spell. Your visage appears in the bark of the affected tree and allows you to see and hear from that tree's space using your normal senses. If the tree from which you perceive is destroyed, the spell ends and you gain 1 Insanity.

CALL SPRIGGANS

NATURE UTILITY 4

Area A cube of space, 3 yards on a side, originating from a point within medium range and resting on a solid earthen or rocky surface
Duration 1 minute

The ground in the area trembles as **1d3 spriggans** rise from it, shaking off dirt and rocks as they do. Each spriggan must make a Will challenge roll. You impose 2 banes on the roll if only 1 spriggan appears, or 1 bane if only 2 spriggans appear. On a failure, the spriggan becomes compelled for the duration. The spriggans remain until the spell ends, at which point they sink back into the earth.

AWAKEN TREE

NATURE UTILITY 5

Target One tree you can reach
Duration 1 minute

You touch the target tree and imbue it with magical power. The tree uproots itself and becomes a compelled **monster** of its Size with the following additional traits:

Defense +3
Immune asleep, blinded, dazed, fatigued, frightened, stunned; the monster cannot be moved against its will or knocked prone while it stands on the ground

Fire Vulnerability The monster takes double damage from fire.

Primal Spells

EYE OF THE HUNTER

PRIMAL UTILITY 1

Duration 1 hour

Emerald light shines from your eyes for the duration. When you cast the spell, choose one creature you can see within medium range. You make attack rolls against the target creature with 1 boon. If the creature is in an obscured area, your attack rolls against the creature ignore banes imposed by that obscured area.

Triggered You can use a triggered action to cast this spell on your turn. If you do so, the duration becomes 1 minute.

INVOKE THE HORNED KING

PRIMAL UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the Horned King as your patron deity.
Target One creature within short range
Duration 1 minute

The target makes attack rolls with 2 boons until the end of the round.

For the duration, whenever you use the Prayer talent to grant a boon on an attack roll, the triggering creature can move up to half its Speed after the attack without triggering free attacks.



Rune Spells

RUNIC ARMOR

RUNE UTILITY 5

Target One suit of armor worn by a creature you can reach
Duration 1 minute

You inscribe a gleaming rune on the target armor that remains for the duration. While the armor bears the rune, attack rolls against the creature wearing the armor are made with 2 banes.

Shadow Spells

GRAVE VISAGE

SHADOW UTILITY 1

Duration 1 minute

You mask your true appearance with shadows so that you appear to be a corpse for the duration. Each living creature within short range of you that can see you and is not a member of your group must get a success on a Will challenge roll or become frightened for 1 round.

Until the spell ends, undead do not attack you unless you attack them first.

GATE TO THE UNDERWORLD

SHADOW UTILITY 4

Requirement You must have one specially prepared skull worth 1 ss within your reach.

Target A point in space you can see within medium range
Duration 1 hour

You must concentrate for 1 minute while casting this spell, during which time you must maintain contact with the target, causing runes scrawled on the skull to flare with green light. At the end of this time, the skull moves to the target point and disappears, leaving behind an oval-shaped opening to the Underworld that remains open for 1 hour. The opening is 1 yard wide and 1 yard tall. It can have any orientation you choose. It has a front, but it does not have a back.

All natural light, as well as any light created by a rank 4 or lower spell, within medium range of the opening becomes shadows for the duration.

A creature can move through the opening and enter the Underworld. In the same way, creatures in the Underworld can move out from the opening where it appears there.

While the opening exists, you can speak the name of any dead creature. If that creature's soul resides in the Underworld, it comes to the edge of the opening at the end of the next round, remaining there until the spell ends. If you offer the creature an ounce of warm, fresh blood, it will answer up to three questions, though it is limited to what it can remember from its life.

Spiritualism Spells

SPIRIT OF THE HORNED KING SPIRITUALISM UTILITY 5

Target One creature you can see within medium range
Duration 1 minute

A shadow of the Horned King appears behind the target and moves into its space, then disappears. Until the spell ends, the target gains all of the following benefits:

- The target has darksight.
- The target gains a +10 bonus to Health.
- The target gains a +4 bonus to Speed.
- The target makes Strength and Agility attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon.
- The target's weapon attacks deal 1d6 extra damage.

In addition, whenever a creature gets a failure on an attack roll against the target, you can use a triggered action to move the target up to a number of yards equal to twice your Power.

Telepathy Spells

DREAM WALK TELEPATHY UTILITY 5

Duration 8 hours

You must concentrate for 1 minute while casting this spell. At the end of that time, you fall asleep for the duration.

If you were holding a bit of nail, flesh, or hair from a creature when you cast the spell, you can enter a dream of that creature regardless of your distance from it. You enter the dream and observe what happens in it, and you cannot be detected for the duration. Until the spell ends, you can visit the dreams of any number of creatures, though it takes 10 minutes to move from one dream to another, and you must have a bit of nail, flesh, or hair from each creature you visit. While in a creature's dream, you can incorporate yourself into the dream and communicate with the creature, provided the creature knows at least one language.

When inside a creature's dream, you can take control of the dream by making an Intellect attack roll against the creature's Will. On a success, you cause the creature to dream whatever you want it to dream. If you force the creature to experience something it would find disturbing, the creature can make a Will challenge roll. On a success, the creature forces you out of its dream and can wake up if it chooses. On a failure, the creature gains 1 Insanity and derives no benefit from having rested when it finally awakes.

Theurgy Spells

INVOKE THE NEW GOD THEURGY UTILITY 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen the New God as your patron deity.

Target One creature you can see within short range
Duration 1 minute

The target gains a +1d6 bonus to Health for the duration. While the target has this bonus, once per round when you use the Prayer talent, you regain the ability to use a triggered action.



Water Spells

ICE ARMOR WATER UTILITY 1

Duration 1 minute; see the effect

You become fully sheathed in ice for the duration. Until the spell ends, you have a +2 bonus to Defense, and you are immune to damage from cold or ice. The next time you take damage from fire, you take half damage and this effect ends.

INVOKE OLD MAN WINTER WATER ATTACK 1

Requirements You must have the Prayer talent and must have chosen Old Man Winter as your patron deity.

Target One creature within short range
Duration 1 minute

You hurl a stream of freezing water at the target. Make a Will attack roll against the target's Agility. On a success, the target takes 1d3 damage and becomes immobilized for 1 round.

For the duration, whenever you use the Prayer talent to grant a boon on an attack roll and the attack roll results in a success, a burst of cold erupts in a 1-yard radius around the target of the attack. Each creature in the area takes 1d3 damage.

BLIZZARD WATER ATTACK 5

Area A cube of space, 10 yards on a side, originating from a point within long range
Duration 1 minute

Snow spreads through and heavily obscures the area for the duration. Creatures treat the area as difficult terrain.

When you cast the spell and at the end of each round for the duration, each creature in the area must make a Strength challenge roll. On a failure, a creature takes 5d6 damage and becomes impaired for 1 round, or just takes half the damage on a success. While impaired in this way, a creature is slowed. A flying creature that gets a failure on this roll also falls prone.



*Decathedra quotiens surgis... jam saepe notali... pedicant
 viscerae, Lesbia, tunicas... sic constringuntur gemitu
 Spleenade culi et virias intrant Vaneasque natis.*

Relics

Many of the relics scattered across the world have origins rooted in the gods and religion.

Blade of Secrets

An ancient weapon forged from meteoric iron by members of the first witches' coven, the *Blade of Secrets* was created to combat the Devil and his innumerable legions. The witches, having broken with the Old Faith, found the dark forces converging on them, tempting them with offers of power and secrets best left undiscovered. To combat the Devil, the first coven forged a weapon that would focus their power and drive off unwanted attention from supernatural beings.

The *Blade of Secrets* has been handed down through generations, always finding its way into the hands of those champions who need it the most. Though an effective weapon of exquisite make in its own right, it is also a potent implement in the hands of a witch, helping to focus greater power than he or she could ordinarily wield.

Enchanted Sword When you attack with the *Blade of Secrets*, you make the attack roll with 1 boon and the attack deals 1d6 extra damage (or 2d6 extra damage to faeries).

Implement of Witchcraft If you make this relic your implement, you gain a +1 bonus to Power.

Call Forth the Flame You can use an action or a triggered action on your turn to cause flames to erupt from the blade. The flames emit light in a 5-yard radius and burn for 1 minute. While the *Blade of Secrets* is aflame, your attacks with the weapon deal 1d6 extra damage.

Until this effect ends, you can use your action to touch the *Blade of Secrets* to another weapon made from metal within your reach. The flames spread to the weapon touched, so that for 1 minute, attacks made with the affected weapon deal 1d3 extra damage.

Once you use this power, you cannot use it again until you complete a rest.

Bowl of Mists

After toppling the Witch-King's dark kingdom, Kalasan forces spread out to secure the borders of their new Empire. This rapid expansion brought them into conflict with the indigenous Woad peoples, who were unwilling to bend the knee to a foreign conqueror despite that conqueror having vanquished the Witch-King's evil. Though the Woad and their druid allies held off imperial forces for a time, they were defeated in the end and saw their tribes scattered across Rûl. Remnants of their struggle survive in the Empire only as ruins, lost battlefields, and the relics created by the heroes of the Woad.

One such relic is the *bowl of mists*. A vessel of gray crystal 13 inches in diameter and 6 inches tall, the bowl is scribed with magical whorls that hint at its power. Azala, a great druid and staunch ally of the Woad, created the bowl to call forth fog to conceal the movements of warriors. The bowl was last seen in the hands of a Woad shaman on the edge of the Northern Reach.



Billowing Fog Whenever you fill the bowl with clean, fresh water, the liquid immediately becomes still. It remains so no matter how much the bowl is shaken, though turning the bowl upside down empties it. After 1 minute within the bowl, the water begins to shimmer as mist rises from its surface.

A creature touching the bowl after the mist begins to rise can use an action to make a Will challenge roll. On a success, mist unfurls around the bowl in a 10-yard radius. It then spreads out horizontally from the bowl at a rate of 150 yards per minute, until it reaches a 1-mile radius about 10 minutes later. The mist partially obscures everything in its area, and creatures in the area make Perception challenge rolls to see with 1 additional bane. This mist lasts for 3d6 hours and cannot be dispersed by wind. Pouring the water from the bowl causes the mist to dissipate 10 minutes later.

On a failed challenge roll to activate the bowl, the water evaporates and the bowl cannot be used again until the light of the risen moon falls on the relic.

Cloak of the Wolf Lord

Long ago, the Horned King and the mystical creature known as the Lord of Wolves feuded over who had dominion over the beasts of the world. Heated words turned to violence, and the two battled without rest for twelve days. In the end, the Horned King triumphed and slew the Lord of Wolves, but only after suffering a grievous wound.

The World Mother, pitying her husband and grieving over the loss of such a noble beast, promised to heal the Horned King's wound—but only if he honored the Wolf Lord by granting it immortality. The Horned King agreed, but being an angry and vengeful god, he tore the Wolf Lord's pelt from the carcass, transforming it into a cloak and binding its spirit there. Now, anyone who dons the cloak can draw on the power of the Wolf Lord.

Form of the Wolf Lord If you wear this cloak at night, you can use an action to transform yourself (along with everything you are wearing or holding) into the Wolf Lord. Use its statistics box in place of your own, as described in the Assuming Different Forms sidebar on page 147 of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*. You remain in this form until dawn or until you become incapacitated.

Doom of the Wolf Lord Each time you return to your normal form after having taken the form of the Wolf Lord, you must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity. If gaining this Insanity causes you to go mad, the cloak falls from your body and you immediately and permanently transform into an ordinary wolf (as a **small animal** with the Pack Fighting trait).

WOLF LORD

Size 2 animal

Perception 17 (+7); darksight

Defense 16; **Health** 60

Strength 15 (+5), **Agility** 13 (+3), **Intellect** 12 (+2), **Will** 13 (+3)

Speed 12

ATTACK OPTIONS

Teeth (melee) +5 with 2 boons (3d6 + 1 plus Trip)

Trip The target must make an Agility challenge roll. On a failure, it falls prone or takes 1d6 extra damage if already prone.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Darting Attack The Wolf Lord moves up to half its Speed and then attacks with its teeth. If it gets a failure on the attack roll, it can use a triggered action to retreat.

Dawn Spear

As the final battle surged around the hated Witch-King, a warrior named Moenghus sought to gain the gods' favor in the fight. Looking to the sun, he saw in it the power he would need to vanquish the Witch-King's evil host. So he constructed a pair of wings, donned them, and flew up into the heavens to touch his spear to the celestial orb. The Queen of Summer rewarded his cunning and courage by infusing the bronze tip of his spear with holy light. The *Dawn Spear* has a polished bronze haft and a head that burns with the light of the sun.

Light from the Sun The *Dawn Spear* emits light in a 20-yard radius. The light created by the artifact suppresses shadows and darkness created by any magic. Covering the tip of the spear suppresses the light.

Blazing Spear Your attacks with this spear deal 1d6 extra damage, or 3d6 extra damage to spirits and undead.

When the total of an attack roll made using the relic is 20 or higher and exceeds the target number by at least 5, you and each sighted creature within 10 yards of you must get a success on a Perception challenge roll or take 3d6 damage and become blinded for 1 minute.



Eye of the Seer

The *Eye of the Seer* currently resides in a lead-lined box in a vault hidden inside the Watcher's Redoubt. That great temple of the Seer is built atop the Cliffs of Shazekeel, where the Shield Mountains tumble into the southern shores of the Nyxian Ocean. The sibyl Anoxithris dwells there. When not in the grip of the lotus petals to which she is addicted, she peers into the *Eye of the Seer* in search of visions of the doom that creeps over the world.

The sibyls of the Seer's cult believe that this heavy orb of black obsidian is truly the Seer's missing eye, cut out by a titan in a time long forgotten. Others suggest that the relic might be a twin to the dreaded *Eye of the Demon Lord* (described in *Tales of the Demon Lord*), for it taxes the mind and blights the power of life around it.

Accursed Glass If you touch the *Eye of the Seer*, you must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1d3 Insanity and become cursed. While cursed in this way, you gain 1d3 Insanity at the end of any round in which you are not within short range of the relic. If you go mad from gaining Insanity in this way, your brain blasts out from the back of your head, causing you to die immediately.

The curse lasts until another creature becomes cursed by the relic, which forces you to make a Will challenge roll with 1 bane. On a failure, you gain 1d6 Insanity. Any resulting madness is resolved as described above.

Inner Magic The *Seer's Eye* has Power 6 and contains the following Divination spells: *augur*, *prophecy*, *locate*, *soothsay* (described in this book), and *clairvoyance*. If you are cursed by the relic, you can cast spells from it.

Blighted Relic If you are cursed by the *Seer's Eye*, each time you complete a rest, each living creature within short range of the relic must make a Strength challenge roll. On a failure, a creature takes a cumulative 1d6 penalty to Health and becomes impaired until it completes a rest. The penalty decreases by 1 point each time an affected creature completes a rest.

Face of Frost

A mask carved from wood painted blue and fringed with the fur of a polar bear, the *Face of Frost* bears the likeness of Old Man Winter. Carved by the god himself, the mask has brought nothing but misery to all those who have found it. Despite its dark reputation, the god's priests scour all lands for it, believing it belongs to them.

Curse When you put on the mask, you become cursed as if by a rank 5 spell until you become incapacitated. While cursed in this way, you cannot remove the mask. Removing the curse causes the mask to disappear and reappear at a place of the GM's choosing.

Immune to Cold While cursed by the mask, you are immune to damage from cold or ice.

Fury of Frost If you become injured while you are cursed by the mask, a blast of freezing cold spreads out from the mask in a 5-yard-radius sphere. Each creature in the area must make a Strength challenge roll with 1 bane. A creature takes 2d6 damage on a failure, or half the damage on a success. You then make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 minute.

Hammer of the Stone King

The first king of the dwarfs after their fall from grace was Ourabald the Great, who delved into the heart of a volcano to forge what would become the symbol of his people's independence. A mighty hammer imbued with runic magic, the *Hammer of the Stone King* was wielded by Ourabald and a long line of sons after him in their wars against giants and goblins, elves and humans. The hammer was lost when Haribald the Unready fell in battle against the Witch-King, and it has not been seen since.

The *Hammer of the Stone King* is a stout warhammer with an unusually large head. One side of that head is forged in the shape of a clenched fist, while the other end is a long, tapering spike.

Enchanted Warhammer When you attack with the *Hammer of the Stone King*, you make the attack roll with 1 boon, and the attack deals 1d6 extra damage.

Hammer Fall As an attack, you strike the ground with the warhammer, sending a shock wave rippling through the ground from that point across a line, 10 yards long and 1 yard wide. Each creature on the ground in the area other than you must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or take 3d6 damage and fall prone.

Idol of Nazzan

At certain times, when the stars align in the night sky, a strange fever grips the world. Artists and poets awaken in a cold sweat, their imaginations gripped by horror as they set out to capture their dreams in whatever medium

they can. The result of their efforts is always some horrific model, sketch, or poem that has no place in the world. Usually, such works are quickly destroyed by the hands that created them. Sometimes, one makes its way into the world, bringing terror and death to all who encounter it.

A fusion of human and animal forms captured in stone, the *Idol of Nazzan* invites madness to any who look upon it. A thing conjured from an insane imagination, this relic has been molded by the trembling hands of someone who has seen its ghastly shape in dark dreams.

Maddening Dreams Any creature that sleeps within 500 yards of the *Idol of Nazzan* experiences strange and unsettling dreams—visions of monstrous beasts, unnatural humanoids, bizarre vistas, and mind-bending events. Upon waking, the creature must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain no benefit from the rest and gain 1 Insanity.

Enchanted Implement If you make the *Idol of Nazzan* your implement, the relic grants you 1 boon to attack rolls you make as a result of you casting a spell while you hold it.

Hidden Power The idol is a reservoir of magic power you can draw on to cast your spells. To cast a spell using the idol, roll a d6.

On a 1, you gain Insanity equal to your Will score and the spell is not cast.

On a 2–5, you gain Insanity equal to the number rolled and you must make a Will challenge roll. On a success, you cast the spell without expending a casting.

On a 6, you cast the spell without expending a casting.

The Maiden's Hourglass

Glittering silver sand fills this hourglass, whose spherical bulbs are set within a silver frame. Though it functions as a normal hourglass, the Maiden in the Moon created this device for a mortal who had captured her heart. Imbuing it with magic that would slow time for him, she hoped to lengthen the time they had together. Her efforts were ultimately in vain, though, for the powerful relic attracted the attention of despicable individuals who murdered the mortal and made off with the device. The relic's power has waned since the mortal's death, as shown by its diminished capabilities in the hands of those who have discovered it in the long years since.

Enchanted Implement If you make the *Maiden's Hourglass* your implement, the relic can extend your spells. While you hold the relic, any spell you cast with a duration of 1 round or longer has its duration doubled.

Slow the Flow of Time You can use an action to call upon the hourglass's power. Make an Intellect challenge roll. On a success, the flow of silvery sand from the top bulb is frozen, and time stops for 1 round. You are not affected by this stoppage of time, but everything else in the world is. During this round, you can act normally, and you treat all creatures as defenseless until time starts flowing once more. If you deal damage to any creature or object while time has stopped, you become stunned until the end of the next round and time immediately resumes.

On a failure, you become frozen in time for 1d6 + 1 minutes. While frozen in time, you are defenseless and perceive nothing until time resumes.

Once you successfully use the hourglass to stop time, the relic's magic wanes. Roll a d20. On a 1, the hourglass disappears and reappears at another place in the world of the GM's choosing. Any other number indicates the number of days that must pass before you can use the relic again.



Pale Horse Statuette

One of the most prized relics belonging to the Solemn Brethren, the *Pale Horse Statuette* went missing from the Cathedral of Death a century ago. Members of the brethren placed the blame on Fortunate Freydr, an infamous scoundrel who took credit for many high-profile robberies in his day. Though any stolen relic would be a great affront to the priests, the statuette was a grievous loss, for it summons a shadow of Father Death's white horse to whoever calls upon it. The cult of Father Death still hunts for the relic and would pay a high reward for its return.

The *Pale Horse Statuette* is an 8-inch-tall exquisite carving of a rearing horse in white marble that always feels cool to the touch. If left in one place for more than an hour, it causes all plants within 1 yard of it to wither and die.

Cursed Statuette When you touch the relic, you must get a success on a Strength challenge roll or become cursed until someone else becomes cursed by it. You can choose to fail this roll. While cursed, whenever you make a fate roll, you must roll twice and use the lower result.

On a Pale Horse If you are cursed by the *Pale Horse Statuette* and holding it, you can use an action to call upon the Pale Horse. The relic disappears and the Pale Horse (see the statistics box) appears on a solid surface of your choice within short range. The Pale Horse is friendly to you and obeys your commands. It remains until you use an action to dismiss it, which causes the relic to reappear in one of your hands, or at your feet if your hands are full; or until the Pale Horse becomes incapacitated, which causes it and the statuette to disappear and reappear at a place of the GM's choosing. Once the Pale Horse appears, the relic cannot be used again in this way for 1d6 days.

PALE HORSE

Size 2 frightening spirit

Perception 15 (+5); truesight

Defense 15; **Health** 50

Strength 15 (+5), **Agility** 12 (+2), **Intellect** 10 (+0), **Will** 15 (+5)

Speed 12

Immune damage from cold, disease, fire, and poison; gaining Insanity; asleep, blinded, deafened, diseased, fatigued, frightened, immobilized, poisoned, slowed

Insubstantial The Pale Horse takes half damage from weapons, can move through solid objects and other creatures, and ignores the effects of moving across difficult terrain.

Bestow Insubstantiality The creature who summoned the Pale Horse can mount it. While mounted, the Pale Horse's rider gains its Insubstantial trait.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Hooves and Teeth (melee) +5 with 1 boon (2d6 + 2)

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Gallop The Pale Horse moves up to three times its Speed.

Revel's Die

Each time *Revel's Die* finds its way into mortal hands, chaos results. A dodecahedron carved from bone, the die bears a different rune on each face. The runes do not correspond to any known language, and efforts to decipher them with magic always fail. Some believe that they are symbols tied to the words of power the genies used to fashion the world, but if so, their meaning has proven elusive.

Enchanted Implement If you make *Revel's Die* your implement, whenever you make an attack roll as a result of casting a spell, make a fate roll. On a 1, you make the attack roll with 1d3 banes. On a 6, you make the attack roll with 1d3 boons.

Cast the Die You can use an action or a triggered action on your turn to roll *Revel's Die*. Roll a d20 and consult the following table to see what happens. Then roll a d6. On an odd number, the relic disappears and reappears at another place in the world of the GM's choosing.

Revel's Die Effects

d20	Effect
1	A huge monster appears in an open space of the GM's choosing within medium range. The creature is hostile to your group.
2	You transform (as if by the <i>animal shape</i> spell) into an animal of your Size. The effect lasts for 1 hour.
3	You and each member of your group must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or gain 1 Insanity and become dazed for 1 minute.
4	You swap places with a creature of your choice within long range.
5	You and each member of your group within medium range of you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 bane for 1 hour.
6	You and each member of your group regain 1 expended casting.
7	A pulse of energy spreads out from the relic into a sphere with a 2d6-yard radius. Each creature in the area must make a Will challenge roll. On a failure, the creature takes 2d6 damage and gains 1 Insanity, or just takes half the damage on a success.
8	You and each member of your group within short range of you remove 1 Insanity.
9	1d3 + 1 medium monsters appear in open spaces of the GM's choosing within short range of you. They are hostile to all other creatures.
10	You gain 1 Insanity and heal damage equal to your healing rate.
11	You and each member of your group within short range of you take damage equal to the individual's healing rate.
12	You heal all damage, and one creature of your choice within short range takes the damage you healed.
13	The GM chooses one member of your group. The target must get a success on a Will challenge roll with 1 bane or transform into a monster of its Size for 1 minute, or until it is incapacitated. A target transformed in this way is under the GM's control.
14	You make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 hour.
15	Each creature that is not a member of your group within short range of you heals damage equal to its healing rate.
16	You and each member of your group within short range of you make attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 hour.
17	Each creature that is not a member of your group within short range of you removes all afflictions and makes attack rolls and challenge rolls with 1 boon for 1 minute.
18	You and each member of your group heal all damage and remove all Insanity.
19	You and each member of your group within short range of you gain 1d6 Insanity.
20	You gain 3d6 Insanity and permanently increase an attribute of your choice by 1.

Seed of Life

According to legend, a faun named Matilda served the World Mother her entire life, forgoing marriage and friendships to protect the land. When the faun died, the World Mother came to fetch her soul, so that the faun would live forever in her company. To honor her passing, the World Mother bestowed a golden acorn upon the people who tended the faun in her last days, telling them to plant the seed when their need was greatest.

Enchanted Implement If you make the *Seed of Life* your implement, you increase the number of castings for all Nature spells you know by 1.

Plant the Seed You can use an action to dig a small hole in the ground, drop the seed in the hole, and cover it up. A great oak tree springs up from that spot 1 minute later, immediately reaching Size 10. For seven days, any creature that rests within 1 mile of the tree heals all damage and removes 1 Insanity. Additionally, the tree nourishes the land within 1 mile of it, causing crops to double in yield, cleansing sources of water, and eliminating all sources of disease. At the end of the seventh day, the tree and the *Seed of Life* from which it sprang disappear, and the seed reappears in some other place of the GM's choosing.

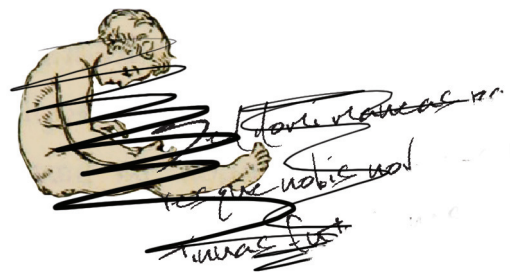
Virtue's Goblet

During Astrid's travels, she disguised herself and visited seven taverns over seven nights, begging in each establishment for water. The first six barkeeps refused her and cast her out, thinking her nothing more than a filthy vagrant. The seventh was a virtuous man, and he gave her water from his own cup. As a reward, Astrid blessed that cup, so that anyone who sipped from it would find relief from their ills. *Virtue's Goblet* appears as a simple wooden cup, with an odd depression on one side that resembles a thumbprint.

Cleansing Goblet Any liquid poured into *Virtue's Goblet* instantly becomes pure, clean water.

Healing Power While holding the goblet, you can call upon its healing powers by making a Will challenge roll. On a success, the next living creature to drink from the goblet heals all damage, removes all Insanity, and removes the diseased and poisoned afflictions.

A failure causes *Virtue's Goblet* to become an ordinary cup for 24 hours. After the third failure, the goblet disappears and reappears at another place of the GM's choosing.





False Wonders

An Adventure for Novice Characters

In the Shrine of the Errant Mother, the statue of Astrid's Passion weeps blood. Witnesses have carried word of the miracle everywhere, drawing people from all across the Holy Kingdom to gaze upon it and give praise to the New God. Unfortunately, the statue's bloody tears come from the demon possessing it, which has been wounded by the fumbling efforts of a well-intentioned priest.

The characters complete this adventure by uncovering the truth about what's going on and destroying the demon before it escapes.

Background

A few weeks ago, Robert Croy brought his sixteen-year-old daughter Rein to the Shrine of the Errant Mother for help. Not only had she been acting strangely of late, she had bloated to twice her size overnight. Sister Samantha, the caretaker of the shrine, rightly deduced that a demon had possessed the young woman. Fearing that the possession would destroy Rein, and with Seven Spires a week's travel away, Samantha performed an exorcism to drive the demon out—but she was only partly successful.

Instead of being sent back to the Void, the demon jumped into the statue of Astrid's Passion, where it currently hides. The demon's presence in the statue has caused blood to spill from the wounds created by the knives sticking out of the statue's body. Samantha has no idea that the demon is in the statue and has thus interpreted the event as a manifestation of divine favor resulting from her good works. Now that word has spread, people have come from all around to witness the statue and receive its blessing.

The magic Samantha used to drive the demon out left it weakened. The demon can leave the statue, but it can only enter a body housing a corrupted soul. Thankfully, it has found several such souls in the pilgrims who have gathered to seek salvation and will make its move once night falls.

Getting Started

Before you run this adventure, you need to come up with a reason for the group's involvement. If the characters have ties to the Cult of the New God, consider having a contact send them to investigate the miraculous event at the shrine and verify its authenticity. If they have no such ties, the characters might be passing by the shrine on other business.

A Faithful Gathering

The adventure starts when the group comes upon a crowd of people gathered around a small stone shrine bearing the symbol of the New God on its door. The shrine stands on the north side of an east-west road, across from a large building whose signboard proclaims it "The Roadside Inn and Livery." Farmland stretches for miles all around, and the characters can see barns and houses to the northeast, northwest, east, west, and south. Behind the shrine stands a small wooden shack with an iron stovepipe sticking out the side. The people gathered around the shrine talk quietly to one another, pray, kneel, and generally convey a sense of religious awe.

The Shrine

The Shrine of the Errant Mother stands alongside an old road in the western reaches of the Holy Kingdom (see Chapter 8 of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*). It was built on a site where the prophet Astrid was supposed to have rested en route to Caecras to face her accusers, and where she performed a miracle by driving out demons that had possessed a family living nearby.

The shrine is a stone building about 5 yards wide and 8 yards long, with a roof of slate. A single door grants access to a sparsely furnished interior dominated by a towering statue of Astrid (Size 1), which is pierced by real swords. A low wooden barrier divides the area holding the statue from the rest of the room. Candles line the walls throughout, and a small offering box hangs on the wall near the door.

Sister Samantha is inside, permitting no more than eight people at a time to enter the shrine. The people gathered out front are waiting to enter. Unless the characters make a show of being on business for the Cult of the New God or use force to push past the other people waiting, they need to wait about four hours for their turn to enter.

MOB OF COMMONERS

DIFFICULTY 10

Size 3 human

Perception 9 (-1)

Defense 10; **Health** 44

Strength 11 (+1), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 9 (-1), **Will** 9 (-1)

Speed 10

Mob A mob takes half damage from attacks that target individual creatures and double damage from attacks that affect creatures in areas. The mob acts as a single creature, but it counts as 10 creatures for the purpose of choosing targets. A mob makes Strength, Intellect, and Will challenge rolls with 1 boon.

Creatures can move through a mob's space, but they treat the area as difficult terrain. The mob can squeeze through openings large enough to accommodate Size 1 creatures and can move through spaces occupied by creatures of any Size.

Spawn When the mob becomes incapacitated, it dissipates and 1d6 commoners appear in open spaces with the space formerly occupied by the mob. The commoners can take the next available turn.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Clubs (melee) +1 with 2 boons (3d6, or 1d6 if the mob is injured)

END OF THE ROUND

Overwhelm If the mob is not injured, each creature that isn't a swarm or a mob that is in the mob's space or within 1 yard of it must get a success on an Agility challenge roll or take 2d6 damage.

The Faithful

About one hundred people have converged on the shrine to witness the miracle. All are human, and over half of them bear some malady. Some walk with crutches. Others stare vacantly, strings of drool falling from their lips as their caregivers wait to partake of the statue's blessing. A few people gibber madly, while others show the scars of having survived disease, injury, or some other life-threatening peril.

For the most part, the people waiting are friendly and are excited to bear witness to what is clearly a sign of divine favor. Most talk about the hardships of their lives and their hope to receive healing from the statue. If the characters push their way to the front of the line without showing authorization of some kind from the Cult of the New God, the atmosphere swings to hostile. The faithful assemble into 4 mobs of commoners and attack as the characters try to press past them.



The Corrupted

Of the people gathered at the shrine, the only ones important to the adventure are the six who bear some amount of Corruption. Some have come to the shrine hoping for redemption, while others were drawn by the demonic presence haunting the site. The player characters might interact with some, all, or none of these people before nightfall, as you choose.

Old Martha: A kindly grandmother, Old Martha (as a **high cultist** with 6 Corruption) looks after the children of the faithful that have gathered at the shrine, telling them stories and making sure they are clean and fed. Hunched by age, she has a wrinkled face and thinning white hair, wears a homespun dress, and tends to cackle. Under her clothing, a baby's hand grows out of her belly, grasping anything it can reach. Martha is a devoted cultist of the Demon Lord and believes that her master has chosen this site to communicate his wishes.

Little Jimmy: A strange little boy with black hair and dark eyes, Little Jimmy (as a **Size 1/2 commoner** with 3 Corruption) keeps away from the other children, preferring to keep his own company. He came here on his own, and though a few people have wondered about his parents, he never stays around long enough to be questioned. Jimmy lit his house on fire, killing his parents and two siblings, after his father gave him a thrashing for leaving the family sword outside overnight. Jimmy has come to the shrine seeking forgiveness.

Lumpen Ment: The brutish Lumpen Ment (as a **veteran** with 4 Corruption) loves young women too much. He takes them and holds them, crushing the life from them. After killing his fourth victim, he fled his home, knowing that he would hang if caught. Unfortunately, the spirit of one of the dead women dogs his steps as a **phantom** and has tried to kill him several times. Lumpen hopes the blood of Astrid's statue will cleanse him of his sins and put the spirit to rest.

August Furth: A man of good looks and fit body, August Furth (as a **mercenary** with 2 Corruption) has done terrible things as a sword for hire, and too much innocent blood stains his hands. He feels genuine remorse for what he has done and came to the shrine in the hopes of being redeemed.

Ula Meeks: After drowning her child in a washtub, Ula Meeks (as a **hired killer** with 3 Corruption) stabbed her husband fifty times with a kitchen knife. She fled justice and drifted south until she met Old Martha, who took her under her wing and broke her mind with diabolical whispers. A young woman in her twenties, Ula has blonde hair and a pretty face. She tends to stare at shadows when no one is engaging her. She is completely under Old Martha's control, and would do anything to protect her.

Grinning Gill: No one is as deft with a blade as Grinning Gill (as a **pickpocket** with 1 Corruption). A street thief from Seven Spires, he's been quietly building

a criminal organization under the nose of the Cult of the New God. An attractive young man with bronze skin, a mop of black hair, and a whip-thin body, Gill specializes in kidnapping and in trafficking slaves from Dis. He built a reputation around providing the less virtuous priests of the cult with pliable courtesans, then disposing of the bodies after they had served their purpose. After a cardinal was stabbed by one of Gill's young boys, the thief found himself unwelcome in Seven Spires. He was drifting west when he stumbled onto the Shrine of the Errant Mother, and he is now lying low until he can figure out his next move.

Sister Samanda

Sister Samanda (as an **acolyte of the New God**) has tended the Shrine of the Errant Mother for a little over a year. Her youth and inexperience shows in her mannerisms and posture. She has brown skin, a pretty face, and long black hair that she plaits in two braids hanging to the middle of her back. She wears the vestments of her faith—black robes and a wooden disk displaying the New God's symbol on a leather cord tied around her neck.

Samanda is overwhelmed by the recent turn of events at the shrine, but she believes in her heart that she had some hand in the miracle. She tends to the people who have gathered at her door but finds the attention daunting. If the characters are connected to her faith in any way, or if they waited patiently to enter the shrine, she welcomes them as brothers and sisters. She tells them the story of the shrine and how the statue started bleeding (though she doesn't initially mention the exorcism or her part in it). If the characters bullied their way inside the shrine, Samanda is unfriendly and encourages them to wait their turn.

Samanda doesn't allow anyone to move beyond the railing, though she can be convinced to let a character have a closer look at the statue with a success on an Intellect or Will attack roll against her Will. Characters affiliated with the Cult of the New God make the attack roll with 1 boon, while characters Samanda is unfriendly toward make the roll with 1d3 banes.

Secrets

Characters speaking with Samanda might sense that she's holding something back. She won't say anything in the presence of the faithful or to characters who have not earned her friendship, but if convinced to talk, the acolyte reveals that she thinks she was responsible for the miracle. She tells characters about the "successful" exorcism of young Rein and of how she believes her effort won the New God's favor.

If asked about the exorcism, Samanda tells the characters that Rein was brought to the shrine three weeks ago by her father Robert, who runs the Roadside Inn and Livery. Rein was always a quiet and strange little

girl, who had been obsessed with an invisible friend when she was younger. When Robert brought her in, she had bloated to twice her normal size. Rein shrieked and clawed at her body, as if it were stuffed with something. After Samantha cast the demon out, Rein's body deflated and Robert took her home. Samantha hasn't seen either of them since.

The Statue of Astrid's Passion

The statue stands nine feet tall and depicts a woman dressed in a shawl and robes. Steel swords pierce her body at various points, and blood dribbles from those wounds. Anyone willing to smell or taste the blood confirms that it is real. No magical aura emanates from the statue, and any inspection confirms that it is perfectly ordinary—aside from the blood leaking out of solid stone.

The Shack

About ten yards behind the shrine, a tiny one-room shack with wooden walls stands atop a stone foundation. Wooden shingles cover its slanting roof. A small glass window and door grant access through the front, and a second glass window offers access from the east.

Samantha lives here, having inherited the shack from the last priest who tended the shrine. The place lacks amenities. A cot sits against the wall under the window, next to a table holding a pitcher, basin, brush, and small mirror. A trunk sits under the cot, holding clothing and a small bag containing 22 cp. A potbellied stove stands by the door, with a pot and a pan sitting on top. An iron bin holds a few logs and a box of matches. On a shelf nearby, enough provisions to allow one person to eat for a few days are neatly stacked.



The Farms

Five farms near the shrine grow wheat and barley alongside small patches of vegetables. Each farm is run by a married couple with the help of 1d6 + 1 children and 2d6 farmhands. The farms don't play into the adventure unless you want them to. One of the possessed pilgrims could run to a farm and attack people working in the fields, or a farm family might be descendants of the demonic cultists who once worshipped beneath the inn.



The Roadside Inn and Livery

Business has never been better for Robert Croy, owner of the Roadside Inn and Livery. The people coming to see the statue need food, drink, and shelter, all of which Croy is happy to provide. The characters find this large building crowded with people, with a staff of three servers running to and from the kitchens, and not





a single room left for rent. Furthermore, Croy is just about out of provisions and has sent his stable boy with a wagon to a nearby town to replenish his stores.

A low wall surrounds the inn and livery, forming a yard in the front for wagons. The inn stands two stories tall, with the main floor taken up by the restaurant and bar, kitchens, a storeroom, and quarters for the serving staff, Croy, and Croy's daughter Rein. A staircase climbs to the second floor, with four small rooms able to sleep two guests each and a large common room able to sleep a dozen. A ladder leads up to a stuffy attic, where blankets and pillows have been arranged to accommodate a dozen more.

A ladder leads down from the kitchen to a storeroom below. Robert has no idea that a cult of the Demon Lord once occupied the inn, using a secret room beyond the storeroom for dark rituals.

The livery is not much more than a barn, with stalls for twenty-four horses and a hayloft above.

Talking with the Locals

Characters who approach Croy and his staff find them too busy to spare more than a few words. Croy apologizes for the lack of accommodations and lets the characters join other pilgrims sleeping on the restaurant floor after closing time. He does not allow the characters to see his daughter, claiming she is ill and not able to take visitors.

The servers include three young women named Maggie, Alice, and Florence. After hours, the three spend time out behind the restaurant, sharing a pipe of tobacco and a bottle of rotgut. If befriended, they reveal that Rein had been acting strangely a few weeks ago, but they haven't seen her lately. They believe that Robert locked her in her room and can tell the characters which room that is.

The kitchen staff includes three cooks, two scullions, and a large, blustering man seemingly incapable of speaking a kind word. None of them know anything about Rein, though one of the scullions thinks she's nice. They're too busy and too exhausted to talk, having taken up sleeping on the uncomfortable kitchen floor since giving up their barracks to guests.

Rein

After the exorcism, Robert Croy brought his daughter back to her room at the inn, hoping that the injuries done to her body would heal. When they didn't, he planned to take her to Seven Spires, but the inn got so busy that he couldn't get away. Though he's wracked with guilt about it, he's been forced to leave Rein alone for much of the last three weeks, aside from bringing her food and water.

If the characters investigate Rein's room, they find the door locked. Robert has the only key, but any character with a burglar, locksmith, or related

profession can easily open the lock. Inside, a horrid stench assails the senses. Rein huddles on her bed in the corner. The sixteen-year-old appears to be covered in a canvas sheet, but the characters soon realize that the material is in fact her loose, stretched skin from when the demon bloated her body. Any character that sees her must get a success on a Will challenge roll or gain 1 Insanity.

The experience of possession and exorcism has destroyed Rein's mind, leaving her shattered. She has moments of lucidity, but they are rare. While the characters are present, she asks, "Have you seen him? Have you seen the watcher in the walls? I keep looking, but he's gone. Into the mother, I guess." If the characters can calm her down, either with magic or with a success on a Will challenge roll made with 3 banes, Rein can impart the following information:

- She had a friend no one else could see when she was younger. This friend lived in the walls and would tell her secrets.
- Only she could see this friend, who manifested in the woodgrain of the paneling covering the inn's walls. He would follow her, creeping across the walls, but became perfectly still when anyone else looked at him.
- Convinced that she had outgrown her friend, Rein stopped talking to him years ago. He came back a few weeks past to tell her he was trapped and dying. He begged for help, asking Rein to go into the inn's cellar storeroom through a crack in the wall. When she did, she found a strange room with a lump of wax in the middle of the floor and huge worms crawling around it.
- Rein remembers touching the wax. Then her next memory was of waking up in pain in the shrine with her father and the priestess.

The trauma to her body and mind has ruined Rein. Unless the characters come up with a reasonable way to help her, she takes her own life a few days later, slashing her throat with a spoon she's been sharpening while waiting for her meals.

The Hidden Chamber

If the characters explore the storeroom under the inn or are directed to it by Rein, they can push the room's shelves aside to find the crack in the wall, which is wide enough for a Size 1 creature to wriggle through. Inspecting the crack reveals a considerable amount of blood and skin, as if some creature pulled itself through. (This was Rein, bloated by the demon.)

Beyond the opening is a small dark cave with 10 void larvae wriggling around a mound of wax at the center of the floor. Charcoal drawings on the walls depict sexual acts involving humans and demonic creatures, ritual sacrifice, torture, and the eating of

flesh. Inspecting the room by magical means reveals a faint aura of dark magic, emanating from the wax lump and reeking of Demonology.

The waxy substance is tallow made from human fat, which the long-gone cultists who once occupied the inn used to contain the demon they summoned. Trapped in the wax over the years after the cultists disappeared, the demon was able to reach out to Rein but was forced to bide its time until it could manifest strongly enough to fully snare her. In recent weeks, rats in the storeroom began to gnaw at the wax, freeing enough of the demon's power that it could reach out to Rein once more, then allowing it to possess her when she touched the foul substance.

Characters searching the room find an assortment of sacrificial knives, goblets, crumbling robes, and masks, all of which are worth 1d6 gc to a collector. There's also an incantation scroll containing castings of *offering of blood*, *call lesser demon*, and *possession*, all from the Demonology tradition[†].

Am I Demon?

The demon, known as the Watcher in the Walls, hides within the statue of Astrid in the shrine. Once night falls, it slips free to possess one of the six corrupted pilgrims. You can determine the person it corrupts by rolling on the following table, which also tells you what the demon does while inside its host. The possession changes the character, causing him or her to become huge and bloated. After the character performs the indicated behavior, the demon compels it to flee the area.



Demonic Hosts

d6	Host	Behavior
1	Old Martha	Old Martha tries to kill Sister Samanda and then burn down the shrine.
2	Little Jimmy	Little Jimmy goes to the inn and tries to burn it down.
3	Lumpen Ment	Lumpen Ment heads to the inn to kill all the women working there. The phantom haunting him goes to the characters to enlist their aid in preventing the murders.
4	August Furth	August Furth attacks any pilgrims outside the shrine, chopping them up with his sword. He stops after he kills a dozen.
5	Ula Meeks	Ula seeks out a man and stabs him fifty times. She then repeats this process, stopping only after killing her third victim.
6	Grinning Gill	Gill goes to the inn and kills Robert, and then he searches for Rein and kills her too. He eats their hearts before moving on.

The characters should run across the possessed pilgrims throughout the night and can hopefully stop them from carrying out the demon's will. If a host becomes incapacitated—players have to state their intention to avoid killing the victims—the demon jumps to another one of its potential hosts, determined randomly. If the result indicates that the demon will jump to the same body it is leaving or the body of a dead character, it instead returns to the statue in the shrine, causing blood to fountain from the sword wounds for 1 minute. After that time, it attempts to jump to a new body. If the characters destroy the statue (Size 2, Defense 5, Health 40), they release a **medium demon** with the Foment Discord demonic talent (see Chapter 10 of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*).

Conclusion

The adventure ends when the group kills the demon or the demon escapes in the body it possesses. If a possessed victim escapes, the group might be inspired to chase down that character, possibly leading to new adventures. You might also add additional chambers to the secret room under the inn, posing new dangers or revealing secrets about the old cult, as you decide.



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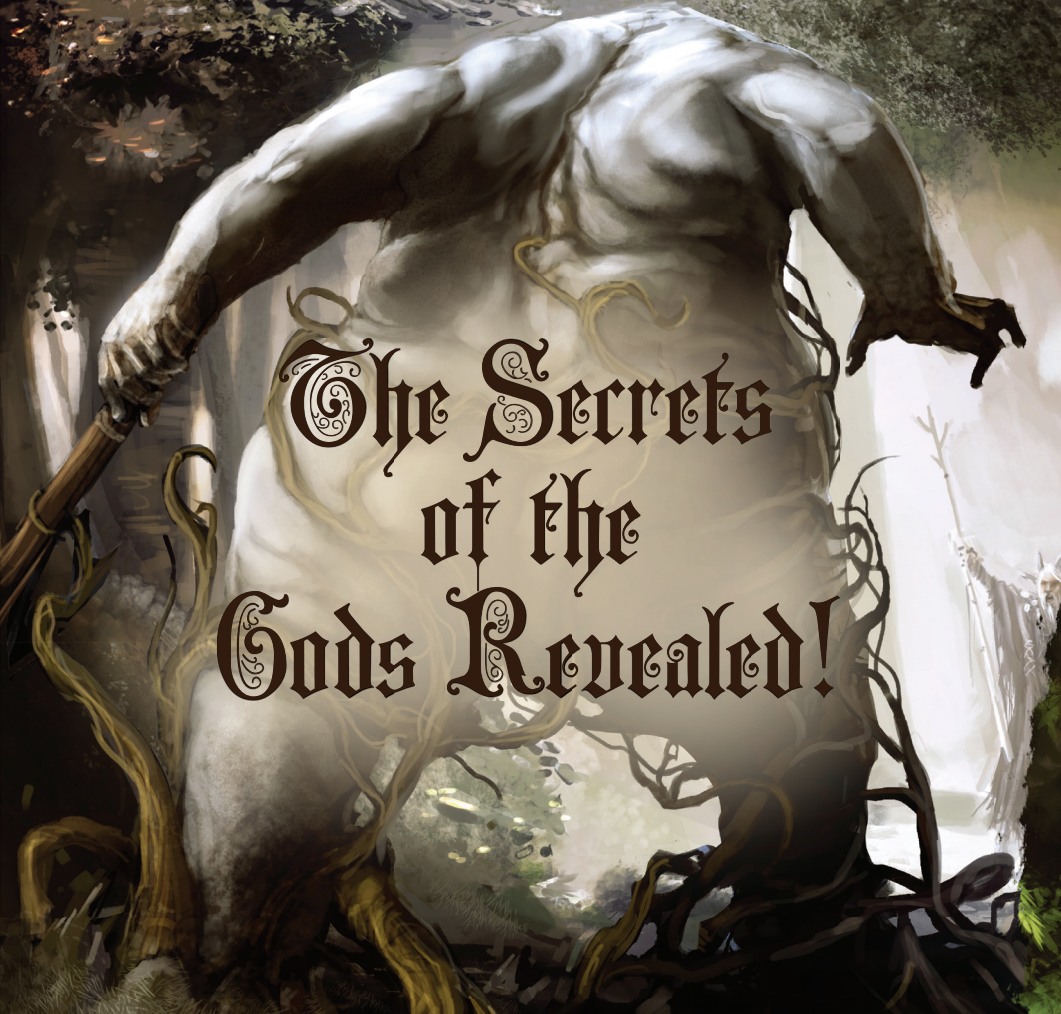
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exquisite agony

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TO HELL!



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