

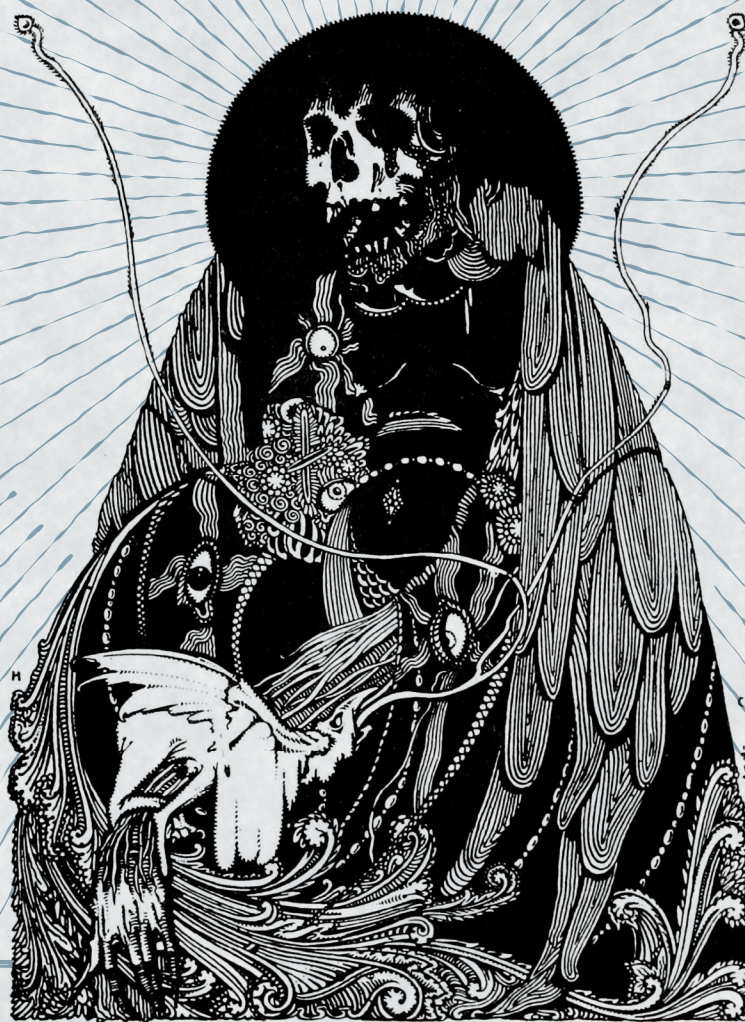


Masque **RED** OF THE **DEATH** PLAYER'S GUIDE



BY JEREMY FORBING

Masque OF THE **RED** **DEATH** PLAYER'S GUIDE



CREDITS

Lead Designer: Jeremy Forbing

Producer: Anthony Joyce

Editor: R P Davis

Additional Design: BJ Hensley

Additional Material and Inspiration: M.T. Black

Graphic Design and Layout: Gordon McAlpin

Illustrations: Joyce Maureira, Gordon McAlpin

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Playtesters (Dungeon Masters are marked, followed by their players where possible): David Solon Phillips, Jonathan Forbing, Paul Myers, Timothy Schuchard, Michael Todd, Jim Mason, Robert Prichard, Timothy Hanson, Tom Hicks, Hal Kim, Jeff Hay (DM), Cindy Richard, Andrew Collins, Derek E. Dions, Margaret Kamphorst, Connor Rittner, Ryan Rushtan, David Bowlin (DM), Dr. Jade Simmons, Sydney Leigh Simmons, Candeda Gilmore, Rebecca Patton, Jessie Patton, Travis Legge (DM), Sarah Scharnweber, Ryan Davis, Sheridan McGuire, Aaron Lynde, Zach Lynde, Thomas Vaultonburg, Gabe Banks, Peter Brennan (DM), Bengt Olav Olsen (DM), Karita Kristiansen, André Szajnfeld, Gunnar Olai Dahle Sivertsen, Ulrik Bøe, Jon Jarrett Nygren, Eirik Støylen, Barbro Westlund-Storm, DM Dean (DM, with players Isaac, Beth, Aaron, Candice, JP, and Nick), Francisco Giménez (DM), Román Gorojovsky, Guadalupe L. Reyes, Matt Nocivelli (DM), Marcin Roszkowski (DM), and M.T. Black (DM & Playtest Coordinator). Extra thanks go out to James Sharkey (DM), Jeff Ibach, Chris Lubrecht, Caitlin Sharkey, Scott Thomas, Joe Bakter, and Katie Benson, as well as the many playtesters whose names were not provided.

Dedication: To Celine Massuger, Jeremy's beloved wife, and to their beautiful children, Owen and Isaac Forbing.

Special Thanks* to all the devious minds who, across decades of books, articles, and adventures, have abetted the creation and evolution of Gothic Earth, including:

- The creators of TSR's original ***Masque of the Red Death and Other Tales*** boxed set for second edition D&D (1994): William W. Connors with Anne K. Brown, Andria Hayday, Colin McComb, Shane Hensley, D.J. Heinrich, Sarah Feggestad, Peggy Cooper, Tim Coumbe, Angelika Lokotz, Paul Hanchette, Richard Pike-Brown, Jonatha Ariadne Caspian, Karen Boomgarden, David C. Sutherland III, Robh Ruppel, Ned Dameron, and Stephen Fabian;
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- *Per the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild, this book also includes Community Content adapted from the works of many other DMs Guild authors, including:* Catherine Evans, the Adventurers League admin team (Amy Lynn Dzura, Claire Hoffman, Greg Marks, Alan Patrick, Lysa Penrose, and Travis Woodall, with Robert Adducci and Bill Benham), Igor Moreno, Oliver Clegg, and Mark Gellis.

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FOREWORD

FIRST OFF: THIS IS NOT A SETTING BOOK! While setting material is included to support the info herein, the present volume is primarily a rules resource. It provides complete DUNGEONS & DRAGONS fifth edition rules for Gothic Earth, a classic campaign world. The various setting guides and adventures already published for it remain the best sources for its deeper secrets.

25 years ago, William W. Connors and his editorial accomplice Anne K. Brown unveiled the *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH and Other Tales* boxed set ([now available on the DMs Guild](#) in both print and digital editions). It transposed the dark flavor of the *Ravenloft Campaign Setting* into a twisted 19th-century analog of the world you and I call home. Existing Ravenloft mechanics for games of Gothic Horror (such as fear checks, horror checks, altered spells, and dark powers tempting those who commit acts of evil) combined with variant character classes and other new rules to fit this shadowy reflection of Earth.

For one young man already obsessed with tabletop RPGs, it was a literal game-changer. Teenaged me had detoured away from fantasy RPGs to games of horror set in a version of our own world, so the prospect of such a setting for D&D was the perfect thing to lure me back. Yet it wasn't until I got home and read the actual books—with their haunting descriptions and beautifully sinister black-and-white artwork—that I realized this new way of

playing D&D would be taking over my gaming life for a while. Soon, my friends knew this was *my* setting (we all claimed our own little fictional fiefdoms back then), and I'd be the one DMing it.

Ten years later, we'd all switched to the third edition of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, and *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH* was licensed to White Wolf Publishing, who published a new campaign setting book. I fell in love all over again, and once again my gaming friends understood: Gothic Earth was my jam, and if anyone in our group ran a campaign, it would be me.

Of course, now I want the opposite—I hope *everyone* will run it! Ideally, this product will inspire more DMs to run *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH* adventures, and existing fans will heed the invitation to walk its dark streets once more. Other DMs Guild creators have already released *Gothic Earth supplements and adventures* (such as *Jolene—or, The Beauty From Beyond the Stars* by Catherine Evans). Perhaps through our combined efforts, new generations of players will hear the call to clandestine battle, raging against the Red Death's plans to crush the human spirit forever...

In any case, I'm very grateful that the DMs Guild allows me to write this love-letter to the setting that captured the imagination of that awkward kid, and to give back to a game that equipped him to overcome social challenges, survive his mental health difficulties, and change his life forever.

—*Jeremy Forbing*

JEREMY FORBING worked as a theatre artist in San Francisco before he moved to Los Angeles to quit acting and get married. Today, he and his wife Celine have two sons, Isaac and Owen. He is a Mithral-bestselling author on the DMs Guild, where his creations range from the *Ravenloft Archetypes* series of player options (which *Critical Role* creator Matt Mercer praised as “Well thought out, well presented, and a fantastic supplement to any campaign”) to the Adventurers League module *CCC-YLRA01-01 Her Dying Wish*.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	3	Parson	54
INTRODUCTION: WELCOME TO GOTHIC EARTH	5	Pugilist.....	56
Handling History and Horror	6	Socialite.....	57
Tools & Resources.....	6	Slayer	58
CHAPTER 1: ADVENTURES ON GOTHIC EARTH	7	Spy	60
Damage, Healing, and Equipment	7	Tactician	62
Changes to Character Creation.....	7	CHAPTER 4: BACKGROUNDS	64
Character Advancement.....	8	Backgrounds and Society	64
New Skill: Science.....	10	Choosing Your Background.....	64
New Conditions: Detached and Stressed	10	Lifestyle Expenses.....	67
Special Saving Throws: Fear Saves, Horror Saves, and Dark Powers Checks.....	10	CHAPTER 5: WEALTH, EQUIPMENT, AND WEAPONS	69
Devastating Injuries	13	Wealth and Currency	69
New Combat Options	14	Equipping Your Character	69
Spellcasting	15	Weapons	70
Changes to Spells	17	Explosives	73
CHAPTER 2: CLASSES	19	Gear & Services.....	75
Scion.....	20	CHAPTER 6: QABALS	84
Shepherd.....	28	Lost Qabals.....	87
Sleuth.....	30	CHAPTER 7: A PRIMER FOR DUNGEON MASTERS	90
Soldier	34	Horror and Madness.....	91
Stalwart.....	37	Dark Powers	95
CHAPTER 3: ARCHETYPES	40	Sinkholes of Evil	98
Adept	41	Rewarding Roleplaying Interaction	100
Artifact Hunter	42	Social Combat	102
Charlatan.....	44	Detective's Competence	103
Criminal.....	46	Magic Items.....	104
Expert.....	47	Optional Rules	104
Gunslinger.....	48	APPENDIX A: A GUIDE TO GOTHIC LONDON	111
Laborer	49	APPENDIX B: CHARACTERS FROM PAST EDITIONS	116
Medium	50	APPENDIX C: PLAYER NEW RULES SUMMARY	117
Mystic.....	52		
Outrider	53		





.... INTRODUCTION WELCOME TO GOTHIC EARTH

The "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood.

—Edgar Allan Poe, "*The Masque of the Red Death*"

WELCOME TO THE **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**, a radically different style of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaign, set in the world known as Gothic Earth. Though it bears a mysterious connection to the Domains of Dread known as Ravenloft, this macabre realm is far larger, an entire world of its own.

The fading empires of Europe enjoy a brief respite from war with one another, yet they still compete to colonize and exploit vulnerable peoples on other continents. However, resistance to this imperialist encroachment is stronger than it has ever been. In Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Americas, nations new and old are rising to greater power, even as they wrestle with emerging rivalries, internal conflict, and other growing pains that will define the coming century. Intrepid explorers attempt to map the North and South Poles. Scientific knowledge and technology are growing by leaps and bounds, as railroads bridge the ends of continents, firearms and other weapons of war are more deadly than ever, and gas street lamps are slowly being replaced by electric lights.

Yet Gothic Earth diverged from our Earth long ago. It is a world where magic is practiced only in secret, yet remains a real and potent force—and also a path to madness and damnation. In ancient Egypt almost 5,000 years ago, in the shadow of the first pyramid, an alien darkness entered the world, and it has manipulated humanity's destiny from the shadows ever since.

Known as the Red Death, it tainted magic itself, twisting the minds of those who dare to use it. Thanks to this being's influence, terrifying monsters still lurk on the edges of civilization, creatures of frightening power and horror. Nameless corruptions haunt old forests, chthonic

abominations arise on lonely moors, and accursed monstrosities emerge from unknown seas.

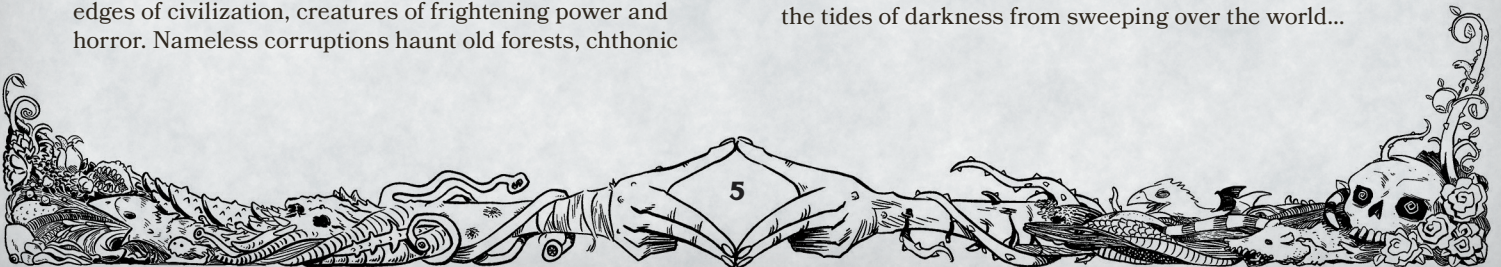
Only a select group of people know of the existence of magic or the supernatural. Even fewer know of the Red Death as a mysterious and malevolent entity that imposes its own dark will upon the world. By the 1890s, its influence is stronger than ever, and no corner of the globe is left untouched by its sinister hand. Yet at various times and places in history—the Library of Alexandria at the height of Roman power, Arthurian Britain, the dawn of the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment—heroes have arisen to oppose the worst of the Red Death's schemes and avert disaster.

Recently, in Victorian London, Sherlock Holmes and his great friend Dr. Watson became famous for stalking nefarious criminals across the foggy streets. Yet this celebrated duo also waged another, secret war, opposing the Red Death's supernatural horrors. They allied with others, heroes forged in the struggle against such threats as the vampire Count Dracula or the blasphemous experiments of Jekyll, Moreau, and Frankenstein.

You, too, are counted among these hidden defenders of humanity. You and your comrades are few, but you come from diverse backgrounds: false charlatans and true mystics, new immigrants and returning veterans of war, researchers of antiquity and inventors of modern wonders. What unites you are glimpses of the terrible reality behind the veil of civilization, and the will to strike back against the terror in the shadows.

Perhaps you learned the truth in some antediluvian book of arcana. Perhaps secrets were whispered to you at an accursed altar beneath a gibbous moon. Or perhaps you confronted some nameless depravity yourself, barely surviving to share the tale with the handful of stalwarts willing to believe.

However you came to know it, the truth compels you to join this battle, waged in secret for millennia, to prevent the tides of darkness from sweeping over the world...





HANDLING HISTORY AND HORROR

GOTHIC EARTH IS A WORLD OF FANTASY HORROR. Though it parallels our own world in the 1890s, it is an alternate version, focused on fictional nightmares like Dracula, Mr. Hyde, Frankenstein's monster, Professor Moriarty, etc. If you plan to add any of the all-too-real human horrors of the era to your game (such as racism, colonialism, patriarchal oppression, etc.) that choice must be carefully considered. Never include such subject matter just because you think it might be "historical."

For many players, in-game events connected to real-world trauma or injustice are not part of the experience they agree to when playing a tabletop RPG. While there are groups for whom defeating real-world evils in-game can be cathartic, all participants need to discuss these matters and decide unanimously on what specific content can be included *before play begins*. Consent to encounter certain story elements in the game must be given, not assumed, and withholding it is not something anyone needs to explain or defend; any player (including the DM) should feel comfortable changing their mind or reopening the relevant discussion at any time.

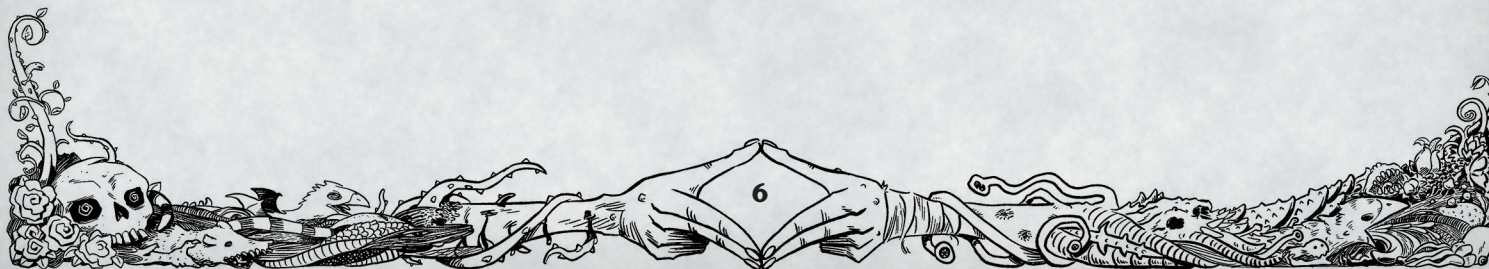
CONTENT WARNING

In these pages, the authors endeavor to emphasize the fantasy horror adventure elements of the setting, rather than the kinds of real-world issues discussed above. However, other elements of the text depict subjects that may be sensitive for some readers, including traumatic injuries, poverty, gun violence, certain traditions related to organized religion, and certain (fictionalized) mental health conditions. Effort has been made to handle these areas with care and respect for our audience. In most cases, the amount of attention these subjects receive here is equivalent to their treatment in the D&D fifth edition *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Some recommendations are described here for dealing with sensitive subjects and situations. The *TTRPG Safety Toolkit* is a resource created by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk. The *TTRPG Safety Toolkit* is a compilation of safety tools that have been designed by members of the tabletop roleplaying games community for use by players and GMs at the table. You can find it at bit.ly/ttrpgsafetytoolkit.

Not all tools will be right for every group. In seeking what works for you, other potential resources to consider include *The Luxton Technique* by P.H. Lee, *The X-Card* by John Stavropoulos, *Lines and Veils* by Ron Edwards, *Script Change* by Brie Sheldon, and *Consent in Gaming* by Monte Cook Games, all searchable online in various editions.





... CHAPTER 1 ...

ADVENTURES ON GOTHIC EARTH

CIVILIZATION'S GREATEST WEAPONS against the evil of the Red Death are strength of will and the stubborn determination to do what is moral and just, even in the face of overwhelming evil. No physical force can threaten the Red Death, but it is vulnerable to the power of those spirits it cannot corrupt. Unfortunately, the great Evil knows this, and its insidious agents work constantly to undermine the defiant compassion within the human heart.

As a result, adventures on Gothic Earth present different kinds of challenges than most D&D campaigns. These variations are supported by specific new rules, some of which are adjustments chosen from those listed as options in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, while others are custom mechanics to better simulate this unique setting.

You may note some references to the detached and stressed conditions, new conditions described later in this chapter. Also frequently mentioned is the Red Death Madness Effects table from chapter 7, "A Primer for Dungeon Masters."

Character creation, character advancement, spellcasting, and certain other rules also have new details described later in this section.

DAMAGE, HEALING, AND EQUIPMENT

All D&D games involve danger, but the rules often make it very hard for characters to die. Gothic Earth, however, offers the constant threat of a final death. Resurrection is seldom available, and injuries are traumatic. The characters are mere mortals, and the threats they face are evil and supernatural. Worse, the world is very much on the monsters' side.

Thus, **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** uses special rules related to inflicting and recovering from harm. Many of these rules are described later in this chapter, but a brief summary follows:

New Combat Options. Advances in the art of warfare allow characters to make use of new actions, reactions, and bonus actions in combat.

Devastating Injuries. The taint of the Red Death has made Gothic Earth a very dangerous place. Whenever a creature is reduced to 0 hit points, it may suffer a greater injury that impacts

its overall effectiveness. Such injuries often have long-term effects.

Firearms and Explosives. These potent items are features of the 1890s setting, available for purchase. Rules on these kinds of gear are described in chapter 5, "Wealth, Equipment, and Weapons."

Healer's Kit Dependency. A **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** character can't spend any Hit Dice after finishing a short rest until someone expends one use of a healer's kit to bandage and treat the character's wounds. On Gothic Earth, a healer's kit often takes the form of a first aid kit or physician's bag.

Slow Natural Healing. Gothic Earth characters don't regain hit points at the end of a long rest. Instead, a character can spend Hit Dice to heal at the end of a long rest, just as they can at the end of a short rest. (Characters who finish a long rest still regain a number of Hit Dice equal to half of the character's total number of them, with a minimum of one die.)

CHANGES TO CHARACTER CREATION

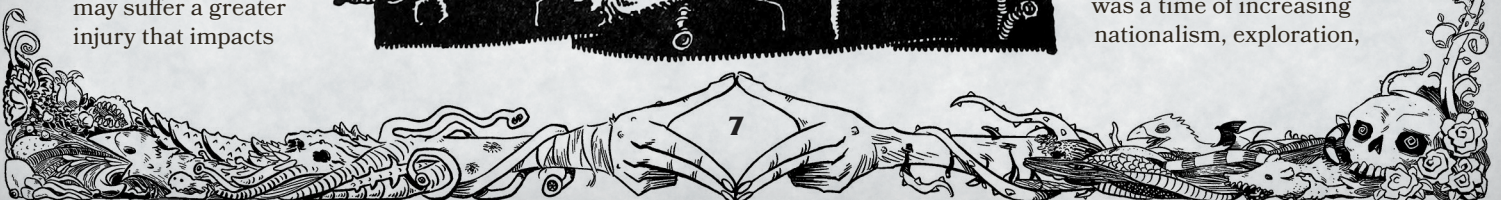
The process of creating characters for **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** is slightly different than it is for other kinds of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaigns. Most steps of the character creation procedure presented in the *Player's Handbook* are the same, but a couple have changed:

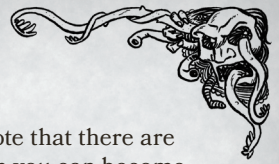
1. CHOOSE YOUR RACE

Unless you have special approval from the DM, your character's race is Human. Humans dominate the Gothic Earth world, and player characters in a **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign should almost always be human.

In the world of Gothic Earth, most people consider dwarves, elves and other nonhuman races as figures of myth and fairy tales. Many of the benefits associated with the nonhuman races of D&D would also have less impact in this setting. A mountain dwarf's proficiency with medium armor or his advantages with stonework have less value in a world where bullets have made armor nearly obsolete and steel skyscrapers replace stone buildings.

Choose a real-world nationality for your character, based on the geopolitics of the late 1800s. This was a time of increasing nationalism, exploration,





international travel, immigration, and continuing colonization. Your average person was more likely to meet representatives of other cultures now than at any previous point in history.

A character's cultural background affects how others view and react to them. In the late 19th Century, stereotypes abound, even among people with great physical and cultural similarities.

The humans of Gothic Earth are basically the same as those described in the normal D&D rules. (If your campaign uses the optional rules for Feats, the variant human option provided in the *Player's Handbook* should also be available).

Humans reach adulthood in their late teens and only rarely live to see a whole century. In this period of human history, the average lifespan is rising. By the mid-19th century, life expectancy was around 40 years for males and 42 years for females. For children who will be born in 1901, those figures will be 45 and 50, respectively. Replace the normal human languages trait with the following:

Languages. You can speak, read, and write English as well as a second language of your choice. At the DM's option, you may replace the second language with proficiency in your choice of one type of artisan's tools.

2. CHOOSE YOUR CLASS

New classes, described individually in chapter 2, "Classes," are for **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** characters native to Gothic Earth, and replace the regular D&D classes. In most instances, a new class can be found in these rules which corresponds to an existing one. For example, the soldier class is in many ways similar to the fighter, and most spellcasting classes can be simulated with some version of the scion class.

You will also choose an archetype for your character during creation. This choice can be as important as your choice of class, and you make it as part of taking your first class level. Archetypes are detailed in their own section.

When choosing your proficiencies, note that there are some new tools and weapons with which you can become proficient (as described in chapter 5, "Wealth, Equipment, and Weapons"), as well as a new skill: Science.

3-6. DESCRIBE YOUR CHARACTER, CHOOSE EQUIPMENT, AND COME TOGETHER

These steps are essentially unchanged, except as follows:

- All backgrounds have been replaced. New backgrounds are described in chapter 4. Backgrounds gain increased importance in some ways, entirely determining your starting money, granting a special benefit, and providing additional income over time.
- New equipment appears in chapter 5.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Characters advance in levels normally, but certain features are always gained as you advance, regardless of your class or classes.

The **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** rules require the optional Multiclassing rule described in the *Player's Handbook*, giving you the option of gaining a level in a new class whenever you advance in level, instead of gaining a level in your current class.

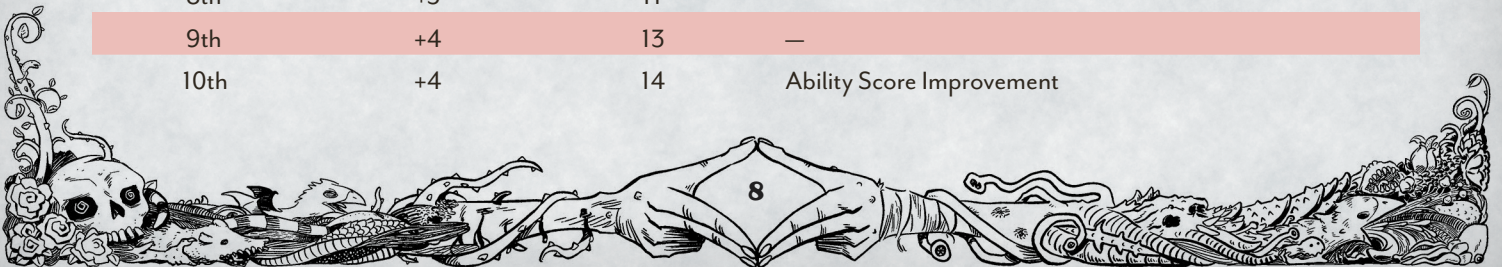
Your levels in all your classes are added together to determine your character level. Unlike those in the *Player's Handbook*, **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** classes do *not* require prerequisite ability scores when multiclassing.

Your proficiency bonus is always based on your total character level, as shown in the Character Advancement table below. Other features you gain based on your total character level, rather than your class level, are described as follows.

The most important one of these features is each character's pool of *resolve points*.

MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

TOTAL CHARACTER LEVEL	PROFICIENCY BONUS	RESOLVE POINTS	CHARACTER FEATURES GAINED (in Addition to Class/Archetype Features)
1st	+2	3	Resolve Points, Ritualist
2nd	+2	4	Sustaining Bonds
3rd	+2	5	—
4th	+2	6	Ability Score Improvement
5th	+3	8	Resolute Attack
6th	+3	9	—
7th	+3	10	Ability Score Improvement
8th	+3	11	—
9th	+4	13	—
10th	+4	14	Ability Score Improvement





RESOLVE POINTS

At 1st level, you gain a pool of resolve points, representing your tenacity of purpose and sense of self, which fuel certain class and archetype features. You gain a number of resolve points equal to your total character level + your proficiency bonus, causing this number to increase as you gain levels.

Maximum Resolve. Your resolve point maximum is equal to your total character level + your proficiency bonus, and you regain spent resolve points equal to half your maximum whenever you finish a long rest.

The number of resolve points you have can't go below 0, and cannot exceed an amount equal to your total character level + your proficiency bonus. If you have Inspiration, you can expend it to regain 1 spent resolve point.

Spending Resolve. The maximum number of resolve points you can spend at once on a single use of any feature (including those described here, as well as any provided by a class or archetype), is equal to your proficiency bonus.

Uses of Resolve. Your resolve points fuel some class and archetype features, and you can also spend them to use the following benefits:

- **Overcoming Wounds.** You can spend 1 resolve point as a bonus action to regain 1d4 hit points. If you wish, you can spend additional resolve points on a use of this feature, regaining an additional 1d4 hit points for each additional resolve point spent.
- **Overcoming Fear and Horror.** Whenever you fail a fear or horror save (as described in the following section), you can choose to spend 1 resolve point to avoid the effects of the failed save. If you do so, you instead take 1 level of stress.
- **Resolute Focus.** Whenever you make an attack roll, saving throw, or ability check, you can spend 1 resolve point to gain advantage on that roll.
- **Unarmored Resolve.** As long as you have at least 1 resolve point and you are not wearing armor or wielding a shield, your AC cannot be less than 11 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus.

RITUALIST

Unlike in the normal D&D rules, all intelligent creatures—including player characters—can cast spells as rituals. If you have some kind of written record of a spell (such as a spellbook or scroll), and that spell has the ritual tag, you can cast the spell as a ritual, using the normal components. **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** uses special rules for casting rituals, explained later in this chapter. Like all spellcasting, a successful casting of a ritual requires a Dark Powers check.

SUSTAINING BONDS

At 2nd level, all characters gain a special feature: If one or more of your Bonds is either to a non-adventuring NPC or

to a secure place free of the taint of evil, interacting with these people or places can allow you to regain resolve points and Hit Dice more quickly.

Whenever you finish a long rest within 50 feet of a place in which you feel a sense of real (if temporary) peace and to which you have a Bond, you regain all spent resolve points and Hit Dice at the end of that long rest, instead of half your maximum for each.

Similarly, if you spend a meaningful length of time having a calm, undisturbed interaction with an NPC to which you have a Bond, the next time you finish a long rest, you regain all spent resolve points and Hit Dice at the end of that long rest, instead of half your maximum for each. This only works if that NPC is not involved in your struggle against supernatural threats, and does not accompany you on adventures.

Like other Bonds, your Sustaining Bonds are yours to define (with your DM's assistance and approval). You can either create such characters and places, or choose them from those which have already appeared in the campaign.

If you have several Bonds that could qualify for this feature, you must choose three of them as the Sustaining Bonds which grant the described benefits. You can change which Bonds are your Sustaining Bonds whenever you gain a level.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

All characters gain the Ability Score Improvement feature when they reach 4th level, 7th, and 10th levels, based on their total character level, rather than their levels in individual classes. When you gain this feature, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

RESOLUTE ATTACK

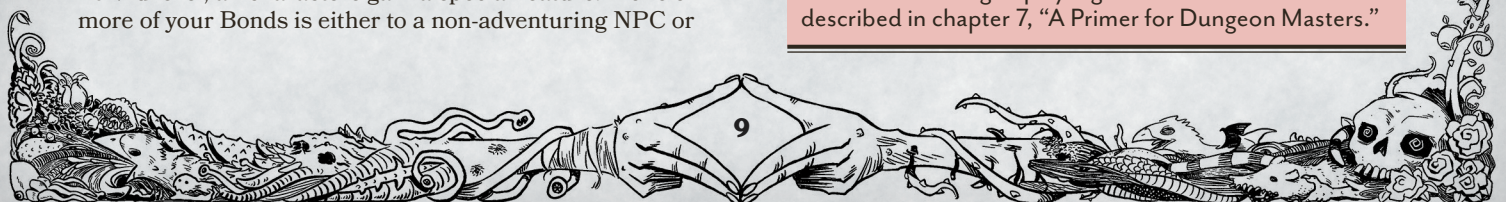
At 5th level, player characters learn to focus themselves in battle when threatened by the inhuman minions of the Red Death. You can activate this feature by spending

ADVANCEMENT BEYOND 10TH LEVEL

No character class in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** includes more than 10 levels. Most who choose to oppose the Red Death won't live nearly so long. Also, it is extremely rare for any human being on Gothic Earth to attain the kind of superhuman prowess which characters of 11th level and higher possess.

Should characters survive a **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign long enough to become so formidable, they become secret heroes among those who battle the Red Death, equivalent to a Sherlock Holmes or Abraham van Helsing, and may be used as NPCs in future campaigns by your DM.

If you wish to use this style of play for a more broadly heroic and less gritty phase of your campaign, an optional rule for continuing to play higher-level characters is described in chapter 7, "A Primer for Dungeon Masters."





3 resolve points during your turn. When you do so, for 1 minute afterwards, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn. Using this feature requires your concentration, just as if you were concentrating on a spell. If your concentration ends early, so does your use of this feature.

NEW SKILL: SCIENCE

Like other skills, the Science skill is used when you make a related ability check. The default ability score for checks using this skill is Intelligence.

Science. Your Intelligence (Science) check lets you recall scientific facts and theories. It measures your knowledge of physical sciences such as astronomy, chemistry, and physics, representing a general knowledge of the principles behind new technologies. Practical applications are often covered by a different skill or tool proficiency, but this proficiency allows you to understand the basic theories behind those applications.

NEW CONDITIONS: DETACHED AND STRESSED

The detached and stressed conditions work like the other conditions described in the *Player's Handbook*. The stressed condition is expressed in levels, just like the exhausted condition. Detached characters do not actively resist attempts to influence their mind or actions.

DETACHED

- A creature suffering the detached condition has disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws and ability checks.
- All Charisma checks against a detached creature have advantage.
- When a successful Charisma check suggests a course of action to the creature, the creature pursues it as if it were under the effects of a *suggestion* spell, even if it is immune to being charmed. This is not a magical effect. Depending on the course of action, it may choose to stop pursuing it as soon as it is no longer detached. When suggested courses of action conflict, the creature chooses which to pursue.

STRESSED

A variety of effects, from horrifying sights to attempts at influence, can inflict the stress condition. Stress is measured in seven levels. An effect can give a creature one or more levels of stress, as specified in the effect's description.

If an already stressed creature suffers another effect that causes stress, its current level of stress increases by the amount specified in that effect's description, but inflicting more stress levels does not increase a creature's stress beyond the seventh level.

STRESS CONDITION EFFECTS

STRESS

LEVEL EFFECT

1	-1 penalty on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws
2	-2 penalty on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws
3	-3 penalty on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws
4	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws, and on Intelligence checks
5	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws, and on Intelligence and Charisma checks
6	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws, and on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma checks.
7	Detached condition

A creature suffers only the effects of its *current* level of stress, not those of any lower or higher ones.

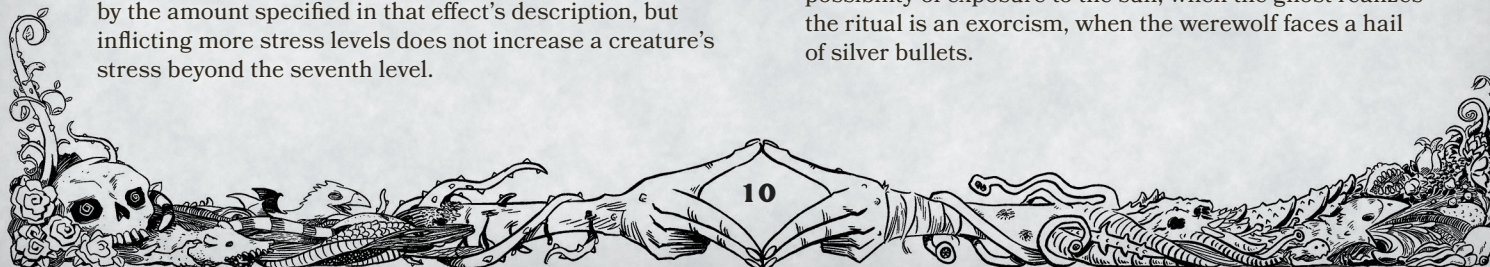
Recovering from Stress. All stress effects end if a creature's stress level is reduced below 1. A creature's stress level is reduced by 1 for every 10 minutes it has gone without receiving a stress level, provided it has not had any interaction during that time with any of the sources of its stress. Finishing a short or long rest reduces a creature's current stress level by half (rounded down), in addition to any other reduction from time passing.

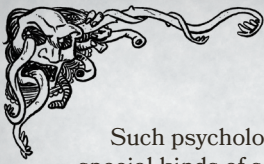
SPECIAL SAVING THROWS: FEAR SAVES, HORROR SAVES, AND DARK POWERS CHECKS

Beneath the genteel surface of human civilization, fear, horror, and supernatural evil are pervasive in the world of Gothic Earth. Unlike the godlike heroes in much of myth and high fantasy, player characters in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** are not heedless of the danger they face.

The brave few who oppose the Red Death may confront slaving monsters that can kill with a touch, become haunted by memories of horrendous and macabre cruelties, or witness alien phenomena the very existence of which scars their sanity. In some cases, they may not find such phenomena merely terrifying or horrific, but also supernaturally tempting...

Even non-human creatures, more accustomed to the unnatural, may know fear or horror in the face of real threats: when the vampire is confronted with the possibility of exposure to the sun, when the ghost realizes the ritual is an exorcism, when the werewolf faces a hail of silver bullets.





Such psychological consequences are represented by special kinds of saving throws described here: fear saving throws, horror saving throws, and Dark Powers checks. (This section expands upon the optional rules for Fear and Horror saving throws described in chapter 9 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.)

DMs running adventures on Gothic Earth should find ways to create in their players a sense of the near-constant dread found beyond every darkened doorway. Fear and horror saves provide a concrete method to help players visualize, feel and understand the terror that overshadows the mind and heart of a gothic hero. The DM decides when such saving throws are called for, using the causes and criteria described below as a guide.

RESOLVE AGAINST HORROR

If these rules seem likely to keep player characters from risking ventures against the Red Death's minions at all, keep in mind the rules for the resolve points possessed by all player characters in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**.

Specifically, if a character with resolve points available fails a fear or horror saving throw, they can immediately spend 1 resolve point. If they spend the resolve point, they take 1 level of stress instead of suffering the normal effects of a failed save. However, per the description of the stressed condition, these accumulated levels have worsening effects, likely making fear and horror harder to resist later...

FEAR SAVES (MORALE)

Type of Roll: Wisdom saving throw, usually DC 15

All characters in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** have fears, and only by mastering these fears can they prevail. Any creature—player character or otherwise—might have fear overtake them whenever they face overwhelming odds or dire physical danger.

The DM decides when a fear saving throw is called for. Examples of events that could cause a creature to make a fear save include:

- When it and at least half of its allies present are surprised.
- The first time takes damage when at least half of its allies present have fled or been removed from the battle.
- At the end of any of its turns after its first turn in battle when no attempt by the creature or its allies to harm the opposing side has succeeded.
- When it is helpless and threatened by imminent death (such as a human trapped underwater).
- When it takes damage from a single source that reduces it from its hit point maximum to 3 or fewer hit points all at once.
- When it confronts a supernatural threat of a type it has not previously encountered.



Rolling the Saving Throw. Since fear can erode a character's willpower in the face of obstacles, a fear saving throw is a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw (the DM can adjust this DC based on the severity of the situation). On a failure, the creature must either spend 1 resolve point (if it can) or become frightened of the relevant source of fear for 1 minute. If frightened, it can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If the creature spends the resolve point, it instead suffers 1 level of stress.

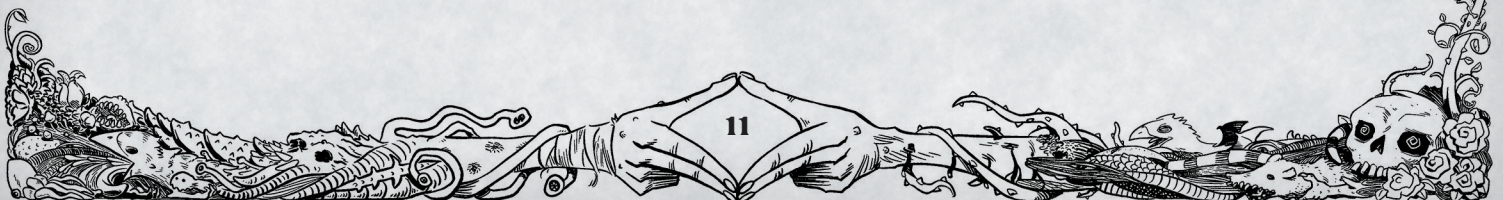
DETERMINING THE DC

While early sessions of **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaigns are meant to be terrifying, for lower-level play (4th level or lower), some DMs may wish to lower the default DC of Fear and Horror saving throws from 15 to 13, on par with most saving throws characters make at that level. Of course, since this is merely a default DC, the DM can also make the determination differently each time such a save is rolled.

HORROR SAVES (SANITY)

Type of Roll: Charisma saving throw, usually DC 15

Real horror is far beyond mere fear. It entails revulsion and anguish. Often it arises when someone sees something completely contrary to the common





SPECIAL SAVING THROWS SUMMARY

EFFECT	SAVING THROW TYPE	DC	SPECIAL
Fear Save	Wisdom	15/varies	A creature who fails the save must spend 1 resolve point or become frightened for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the save at the end of each of his or her turns, ending the effect on itself with a successful save. If it spends the resolve, it is instead suffers 1 level of stress.
Horror Save	Charisma	15/varies	A creature who fails the save must spend 1 resolve point or roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table. If it spends the resolve, it is instead suffers 1 level of stress.
Dark Powers Check	d20 roll (no related ability score)	The creature's proficiency bonus	A creature who fails the save gains a Dark Power, an unholy gift that is usually accompanied by an alteration to their appearance or nature. The DM has rules for how Dark Powers are gained. If a 1 is rolled on the d20 for a Dark Powers check, the saving throw always fails.

understanding of what can or should occur in the world, or upon the realization of a dreadful truth.

Whether it is the shock of realizing that certain merciless atrocities are possible or the stunning realization of one's own monstrous nature, horror permanently colors a character's view of the world. When a mortal creature witnesses scenes of terrible cruelty or beholds events that simply should not be, the DM should call for a horror saving throw. Examples of events that could cause a creature to roll a horror save include:

- When it sees a particularly gruesome or cruel death
- When it discovers a corpse in a putrid or unnatural state of decay
- When it finds evidence of the death or agony of a close friend or loved one
- When it witnesses terrible pain or violation (such as torture or an involuntary transformation)
- When it confronts a scene of intense suffering (examples: examining beggars ravaged by disease; watching a surgeon amputate a limb)
- When it encounters demented or macabre cruelty (example: finding dismembered bodies that have been turned into marionettes)
- When it deciphers a piece of text written in a language so alien that it threatens to break a character's mind
- When it makes direct contact with the mind of an alien creature
- When it realizes an element of its surroundings is drastically wrong and has been for quite some time without it knowing (examples: discovering that the seemingly normal ground on which it stands is actually part of massive creature; discerning that it and its allies the only people in a remote village who are not evil shapeshifters; deducing that the plague victims surrounding them in an infirmary are all victims of a vampire who still has them in its mental thrall)

If a character succeeds on a horror saving throw caused by a particular source of horror, that source should not compel further horror saves until significant time has passed (likely a day or so) or until a change of context makes it horrifying in a new way.

Rolling the Saving Throw. The maddening effects of horror can alter a character's personality or threaten their sense of self. Therefore, a horror saving throw is a DC 15 Charisma saving throw (the DM can adjust this DC based on the severity of the situation). On a failure, the creature must either spend 1 resolve point (if it can) or roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table. If the creature spends the resolve point, it instead suffers 1 level of stress.

FEAR VS. HORROR

The distinction between the need for a fear save or a horror save can sometimes seem a bit blurry. One important difference between the two is that characters making fear saves are almost always exposed to some physical threat. Further, a fear saving throw is typically called for when you are immediately frightened by something, but the fear would wear off after you have a chance to assess, escape, or conquer the object of that fear.

A horror saving throw, on the other hand, is made when you stumble upon something human eyes were never meant to see, or that is so terrible as to cause physical sickness or a psychotic break. A horror saving throw is indicated if having more opportunity to understand the object of your horror would make you more horrified, rather than less.

For example, while exploring a vampire's lair, you might make a fear saving throw if the vampire suddenly sprang up before you. If you stumble upon a hospital wing full of living victims being gradually drained of blood to satisfy the monster's hunger, a horror saving throw would be in order. If the vampire jumped out right when you found the hospital wing, you might need to make both checks.





DARK POWERS CHECKS

Type of Roll: Roll a d20. If the roll is lower than the proficiency bonus of the creature making the Dark Powers check, it fails.

Whenever a mortal performs an evil act on Gothic Earth, there is a chance that the Red Death itself responds, both rewarding and punishing the transgressor in a single stroke. These gifts sometimes serve to frighten those who gain them back into righteousness, but the goal of the Red Death is to inflame mortals' sins, teasing the morally weak into infinite spirals of doom.

Because the Red Death has tainted magic itself, any successful casting of any spell of 1st level or higher also requires a Dark Powers check.

The DM can force any intelligent mortal creature—player character or otherwise—to roll a Dark Powers check when it commits an act of true evil. The DM judges what constitutes such an act, using the following examples as a guide:

- When it murders an innocent person.
- When it tortures a sentient creature (including brutal beatings, even when performed to extract information in service of the cause of good).
- When it betrays a sacred vow.
- When it creates undead.
- When it uses necrotic damage to kill a creature.
- When it uses poison damage to kill a creature that is not a major agent of evil.
- When it defiles or desecrates a sacred place or object (such as fouling holy water, performing human sacrifice upon an altar sacred to the faith of good people, or violating the grave of a blessed saint).

Rolling the Check. A Dark Powers check is a simple, unmodified roll of a d20 (much like a death saving throw). When you roll a Dark Powers check, a result of 1 on the d20 is always a failure.

Since more powerful creatures are more likely to attract the Red Death's notice, the DC of a Dark Powers check is equal to the creature's proficiency bonus.

When the Dark Powers check is prompted by casting a spell, if the spellcaster's intent is not evil, the DM can choose to make the DC equal to the spell's level or the caster's proficiency bonus, whichever is lower. Certain spells attract more attention, especially spells that are extremely destructive, spells which could inspire hope and faith via miraculous healing, or spells that call on the energies of death itself. Any Dark Powers check made for casting an evocation or necromancy spell is made at disadvantage.

A creature who fails such a check has attracted the notice of the Red Death, which changes them forever. It grants the creature a Dark Power, an unholy gift that is usually accompanied by an alteration to their appearance or nature. The DM has rules for how Dark Powers are gained. While this may seem like a boon, such gifts corrupt, and there is always a price.

QABALS

When the Red Death arrived in ancient Egypt, around 2700 BC, it began to taint magic. Over centuries, this corruption spread, until no spell could be used without attracting the attention of the great Evil. Once, this had been a world of vibrant wonders, which could have evolved into a realm of magical abundance similar to the Forgotten Realms or Eberron. Instead, it became a place where most magical creatures died out, where spellcasting was forbidden and eventually forgotten. Only a few small groups gathered secretly to preserve knowledge of the sorcerous arts.

In the Western occult tradition, these groups have become known as qabals. Some merely sought to hoard lore for themselves and pursued no larger purpose. Many fell to the Red Death's influence over time, becoming servants of evil. Yet a few qabals decided to fight against the darkening of magic, and for this heroism they are still remembered today.

The first qabal known to have organized around opposition to the Red Death was a secretive order known as Provocatio, or "the Defiance," based out of the lost great Library of Alexandria. Though it was destroyed on the eve of what would have been their boldest strike against the great Evil, many of its members escaped and went on to create new qabals. Thus their traditions live on.

In the 1890s, qabals remain an important part of humanity's resistance against the Red Death. More detailed descriptions of some of these groups appear in chapter 6, "Qabals."

DEVASTATING INJURIES

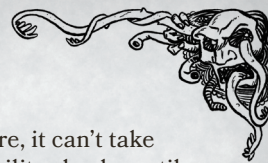
Whenever a creature takes 10 or more points of damage at once from a single source, if that damage reduces the creature to 0 hit points, it must roll a Constitution saving throw if it is not killed outright. The DC equals 15 or half the damage taken, whichever number is higher.

With a successful roll, the creature suffers 1 level of stress. On a failure, it must roll on the Devastating Injury Effects table.

Magical healing of 6th level or higher (such as *heal* or *regenerate*) removes any injury gained from this table.

- **Eye Injury.** The creature has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight and on ranged attack rolls. Unless it receives medical treatment for trauma within the next hour, it loses the eye and these effects are permanent. A creature that has no eyes after suffering this injury is blinded.





DEVASTATING INJURY EFFECTS

d100	EFFECT
1–5	Eye injury
6–10	Arm or hand injury
11–15	Foot or leg injury
16–20	Horrible scar
21–30	Limp
31–70	Severe bleeding
71–80	Internal injury
81–90	Blow to the head
91–100	Gruesome

- **Arm or Hand Injury.** The creature can no longer hold anything with two hands, and it can hold only a single object at a time. Unless it receives medical treatment for trauma within the next hour, it loses the arm or hand and these effects are permanent.
- **Foot or Leg Injury.** The creature's speed on foot is halved, and it must use a crutch or cane to move. Any time the creature uses the Dash action, it falls prone at the end of that movement. It also has disadvantage on Dexterity checks related to balance. Unless it receives medical treatment for trauma within the next hour, it loses the arm or hand and these effects are permanent. If the creature receives a peg leg or other prosthesis, it can move without a crutch or cane.
- **Horrible Scar.** The creature is disfigured by an unconcealable wound. It has disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks and advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks. Unless it receives medical treatment for trauma within the next hour, the scar is permanent.
- **Limp.** The creature's speed on foot is reduced by 5 feet. Any time the creature uses the Dash action, at the end of that movement it must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. Unless the creature receives magical healing or medical treatment for trauma within the next hour, the limp is permanent.
- **Severe Bleeding.** The creature's hit point maximum is reduced by 1 for every hour the wound persists. If its hit point maximum is reduced to 0, it dies. This injury only permanently heals when the creature receives magical healing or medical treatment for trauma.
- **Internal Injury.** Whenever the creature attempts to take an action in combat, it must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it loses its action and is stunned until the end of its next turn. On a success, it does not need to roll any saving throws for this injury for 1 minute. This injury only heals when the creature receives magical healing or medical treatment for trauma.
- **Blow to the Head.** Whenever the creature attempts to take an action in combat, it must make a DC 15

Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it can't take reactions and has disadvantage on ability checks until the end of its next turn. This injury heals when the creature is returned to its hit point maximum.

- **Gruesome.** The creature must roll a horror saving throw.

MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR TRAUMA

1890s medical techniques may help those with permanent injuries. A DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check can be made to perform surgery with the proper tools. On a success, the character recovers, but only if they spend the 10 days following the check doing nothing but resting. If the character is restored to its hit point maximum after receiving magical healing, it can end this rest early while still gaining its benefits.

NEW COMBAT OPTIONS

Due to the advent of extremely precise weapons and training techniques, **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** characters can target specific points on or around their enemy to achieve a special effect. At the same time, the well-known deadliness of 19th century arms makes many foes more open to options like negotiation or surrender.

This grants four new options: Fanning, Exerting Influence, Taking Aim, and Targeted Strikes. You can use one or more of these options on each of your turns. Unless otherwise stated, these options can be used with any attack, not just those made with firearms.

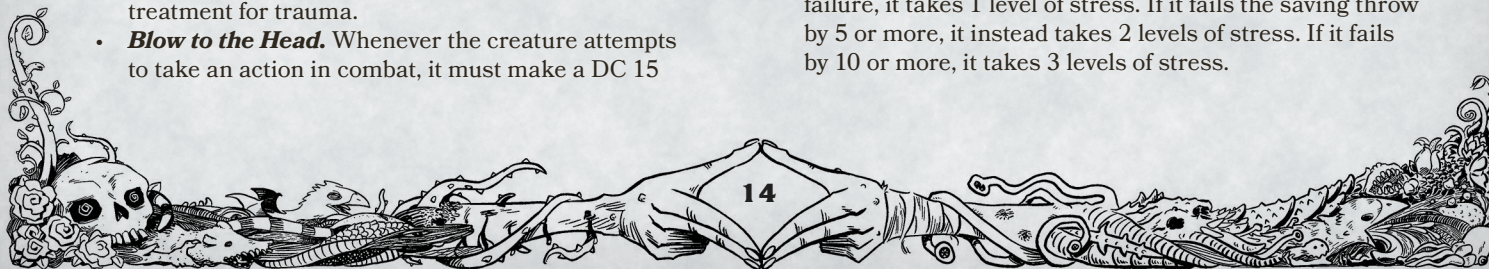
NEW ACTION: FANNING

When wielding a ranged weapon with which you are proficient that has the reload property, you can use your action to attempt to strike multiple targets. Choose a 10-foot square within that weapon's normal range. Each target in the area must roll a Dexterity saving throw (DC equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Dexterity modifier). On a failure, a target takes damage equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus.

The damage is of the same type as the damage the weapon would inflict on a normal attack. After you use this action, the weapon must be reloaded (as described under the Reload weapon property in chapter 5) before you can attack with it again.

NEW ACTION: EXERTING INFLUENCE

When you take the Exerting Influence action, rather than attack someone physically, you try to defeat them in a battle of wills. As an action, you roll a Charisma check (modified by any appropriate skill proficiency) to inflict levels of stress on a creature that can see or hear you. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw against a DC equal to the result of your Charisma check. On a failure, it takes 1 level of stress. If it fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it instead takes 2 levels of stress. If it fails by 10 or more, it takes 3 levels of stress.





NEW REACTION: TAKING AIM

You spend a round concentrating on your next intended attack. Taking Aim is a reaction, triggered by the end of your turn, provided you did not move more than 5 feet during that turn.

When you take this reaction, choose a target within range of your weapon and begin concentrating, as if on a spell. While you are still concentrating on Taking Aim, you have advantage on your first weapon attack roll each turn against the chosen target.

You stop concentrating at the end of your next turn unless you use your reaction on Taking Aim again. Your concentration also ends early if you do anything that would normally end concentration on a spell (such as casting a new concentration spell or failing the Constitution saving throw from taking damage), if you move more than 5 feet during a turn, or if you make an attack that does not target the chosen target at which you aimed.

NEW BONUS ACTION: TARGETED STRIKE

Once during your turn, immediately before making a weapon attack as part of the Attack action, you can use your bonus action to modify that attack, making it a Targeted Strike. You cannot make a Targeted Strike if the weapon attack it would modify uses a weapon with which you are not proficient or if you have disadvantage on that attack.

When you make a Targeted Strike, choose one of the options listed below and modify your weapon attack accordingly. For all required saving throws against this feature, the DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Dexterity, Intelligence, or Wisdom modifier (your choice).

- **Advancing Strike.** The damage from the modified attack is reduced by half, but if the attack hits, you choose a friendly creature besides yourself who can see or hear you. That creature can use its reaction to move up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks from the target of your attack. The target of this attack also has disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes against the chosen creature before the end of its next turn.
- **Knockback Strike.** If the modified attack hits, the target must roll a Strength saving throw. On a failure, if the target is Large or smaller, you can choose to either knock it prone or push it up to 10 feet away from you.
- **Marking Strike.** If the modified attack hits, the target must roll a Wisdom saving throw. If it fails, you mark the creature until the end of your next turn. This effect ends early if you are incapacitated or you die, or if someone else marks the creature. While it is within 5 feet of you, if a creature marked by you makes an attack roll that doesn't target you, it has disadvantage on the attack roll.
- **Strike to Kill.** On a hit, the modified attack inflicts additional damage equal to your proficiency bonus if it hits a creature within 5 feet of you. If the attack roll is

made at advantage, it also scores a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20. However, if the damage from the modified attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points, you cannot choose to knock the creature out instead of killing it, even if the attack was a melee attack.

- **Strike to Wound.** If the modified attack hits a living creature, that creature must roll a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it must roll on the Devastating Injury table. In addition, if the damage from this attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the creature is not killed. Instead it falls unconscious and is stable.

SPELLCASTING

The main change to spellcasting in the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** setting is the corruption of magic itself. This means that any creature casting a spell of 1st level or higher that is not a ritual must make a Dark Powers check, risking exposure to the seductive powers of the Red Death. However, other metaphysical constraints impose further changes on certain spells and magical effects.

CASTING SPELLS

Magic is wrong on Gothic Earth. Dreadfully wrong. In the ancient past, in unknown circumstances, something evil slipped through the cracks in reality and began to poison the ley lines of magic that flow across the Earth.

Unopposed for long years, the Red Death squats like a hideous spider over the web of magic, and taints every spell cast on Gothic Earth. It hungers for the souls of magic users, seeking to corrupt them and steal their delicious life essence for itself. Any spellcasting or use of other occult manifestations may send the caster down a road to darkness and damnation.

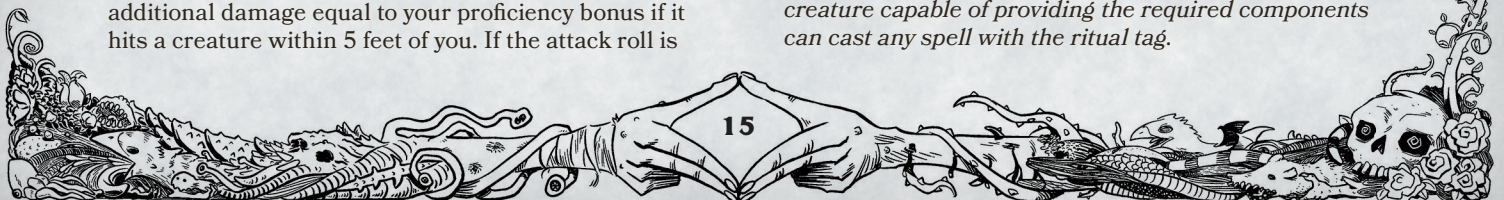
When a creature that is not already a servant of the Red Death casts a spell of 1st level or higher, it must make a Dark Powers check. The spell is still cast whether or not this check succeeds. If the spellcaster's intent is not evil, the DM can choose to modify the DC of the Dark Powers check, making it equal to the spell's level or the caster's proficiency bonus, whichever is lower.

SPELL NOTATION

Asterisks are used to denote the sources of various spells in the text. A single asterisk ("*") indicates a new spell introduced in this book. Double asterisks ("**") indicate a spell from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*. Other spells are from the *Player's Handbook*.

RITUAL CASTING

The Red Death has tainted all magic on Gothic Earth, and one of the most insidious manifestations of this taint is the empowerment of ritual magic for the use of those who do not understand it. As a result, *any intelligent creature capable of providing the required components can cast any spell with the ritual tag.*





To do so, the ritual caster must also have a physical record of the spell itself, such as an occult tome (including the Book of Shadows bestowed by the fragment of Forbidden Lore sharing the same name), a rubbing from eldritch hieroglyphics, an ancient scroll, or an artifact carved with descriptions of the spell's components.

The ritual version of a spell takes 10 minutes longer to cast than its normal casting time, and is always cast at the spell's normal level. At the end of the casting time, the caster makes an Intelligence (Arcana) check. The DC is equal to 12 + the level of the spell.

On a success, the spell is cast normally. If the spell is cast successfully, the caster must make a Dark Powers check as normal for any spell of 1st-level or higher. The DM has rules for gaining Dark Powers.

On a failure of the Intelligence check to cast a ritual, the spell is not cast. Simple failure on this check means that the spell fails outright, with no other positive or negative result, as the unknowable magical energies of Gothic Earth simply do not heed the character's desires.

A spell cast in this way does not use any kind of spell slot and requires no preparation other than a previous reading of the spell and the ability to provide the necessary components.

One or more intelligent creatures can assist in the casting of a ritual by participating for the entirety of the casting time. They cannot use the Help action on this check, however. Instead, each creature assisting in this way grants a cumulative +1 bonus on the caster's Intelligence check. If the caster fails the Dark Powers check for performing the ritual successfully, the unspeakable horror of the Dark Power manifesting itself

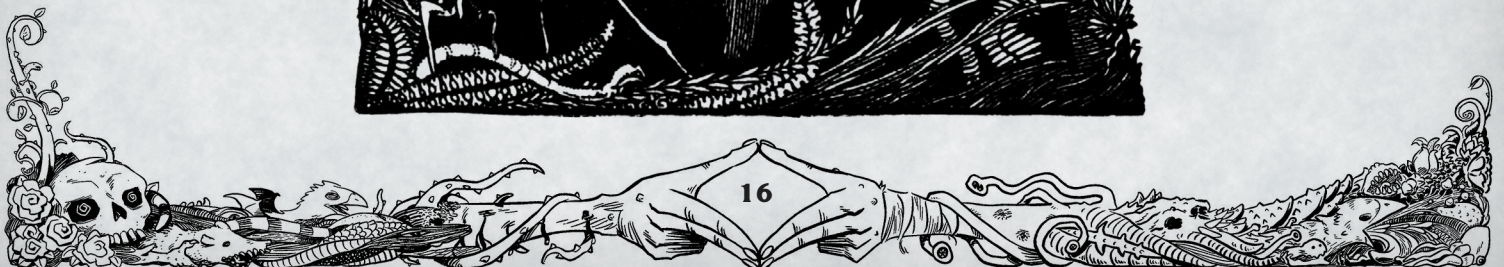
on the caster forces every creature assisting to roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table in the DM's Horror and Madness rules.

When a creature uses a ritual to cast a spell that it could normally cast using resolve points (such as by using a class feature), the creature doesn't need to roll the Intelligence check—it automatically succeeds.

RITUAL SPELL LIST

For convenience, here is a complete list of all the spells appearing in the *Player's Handbook* and *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* that can be cast as rituals (meaning they bear the ritual tag in their spell description):

<i>alarm</i>	<i>identify</i>
<i>animal messenger</i>	<i>illusory script</i>
<i>augury</i>	<i>Leomund's tiny hut</i>
<i>beast sense</i>	<i>locate animals or plants</i>
<i>ceremony**</i>	<i>magic mouth</i>
<i>commune</i>	<i>meld into stone</i>
<i>commune with nature</i>	<i>phantom steed</i>
<i>comprehend languages</i>	<i>purify food and drink</i>
<i>contact other plane</i>	<i>Rary's telepathic bond</i>
<i>detect magic</i>	<i>silence</i>
<i>detect poison and disease</i>	<i>skywrite**</i>
<i>divination</i>	<i>speak with animals</i>
<i>Drawmij's instant summons</i>	<i>Tenser's floating disk</i>
<i>feign death</i>	<i>unseen servant</i>
<i>find familiar</i>	<i>water breathing</i>
<i>forbiddance</i>	<i>water walk</i>
<i>gentle repose</i>	





SLOW CASTING

If there is a spell which you are already able to cast using your resolve points (as granted by certain options for the Forbidden Lore feature of a scion), occasionally you may be able want to cast it without spending resolve points, using *slow casting* to do so.

When you use slow casting, you cast a spell you already know as a ritual, even if it doesn't have the ritual tag. The psychic cost of using this magic is paid with the extra time and effort a ritual requires, rather than your personal resolve.

However, when you use this special form of ritual casting, you must always roll the Intelligence (Arcana) check normally required when casting rituals in Gothic Earth, as described under the Ritual Casting rules, even though you already know the spell. If the check fails, the spell is not cast.

When you slow cast a spell you know, if the spell has a casting time of 10 minutes or less, the casting time is increased by 10 minutes. If the normal casting time is greater than 10 minutes, that casting time is doubled.

Once you have used slow casting twice, you are incapable of slow casting until you finish a short or long rest.

CHANGES TO SPELLS

Gothic Earth resides in its own demiplane, isolated from all others. Even the Domains of Dread known as Ravenloft, to which this world has some mysterious tie, remain locked away. Travelers from Faerûn or Sigil, City of Doors, do not find their way here, nor are the natives capable of leaving their plane. That was not always the case, however.

Once the world known as Gothic Earth was rich in magical energies. In many ways, it was not unlike the world that evolved into the Forgotten Realms. This was long before the advent of the written word, the wheel, cold steel, or many of the other features that mark the typical D&D game. Then, however, the Red Death arrived.

Somehow, this event sealed off the borders of the world, rendering it inaccessible for other planar travelers, whether native to Gothic Earth or outsiders, such as the Red Death itself. (There are a few exceptions to this barrier, but those will be spoken of in their proper time and place.) Perhaps this invading entity closed off the ability for other beings from its home realm to follow it, whether out of greed or fear. Or perhaps some larger multiversal force sees the great Evil that has infected this world for what it is, and quarantined this plane to contain it.

Whatever the reason, no spell—not even *wish*—allows one to escape from Gothic Earth. *Astral projection*, *teleport*, *plane shift*, and similar spells cast for the purpose of leaving this world simply fail, as do effects that banish a creature to another plane of existence. These restrictions apply to magic items and artifacts that have properties that transport or banish creatures to other planes.

Magic that allows transit to the Border Ethereal, such as the *etherealness* spell and the Etherealness feature of incorporeal undead, is the exception to this rule. A creature that enters the Border Ethereal from Gothic Earth is pulled back upon leaving that plane.

For the purpose of spells whose effects change across or are blocked by planar boundaries (such as *sending*), Gothic Earth is considered its own plane. Magic that summons creatures or objects from other planes functions normally here, as does magic that involves an extradimensional space. Any spells cast within such an extradimensional space (such as that created by *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*) are subject to the same restrictions as magic cast on Gothic Earth.

Spells that allow contact with beings from other planes function normally, with one proviso: the Red Death can sense the casting of such a spell, and if the caster fails the accompanying Dark Powers check, the Red Death can choose to make itself or one of its leading servants the spell's recipient, so that it becomes the one who is contacted.

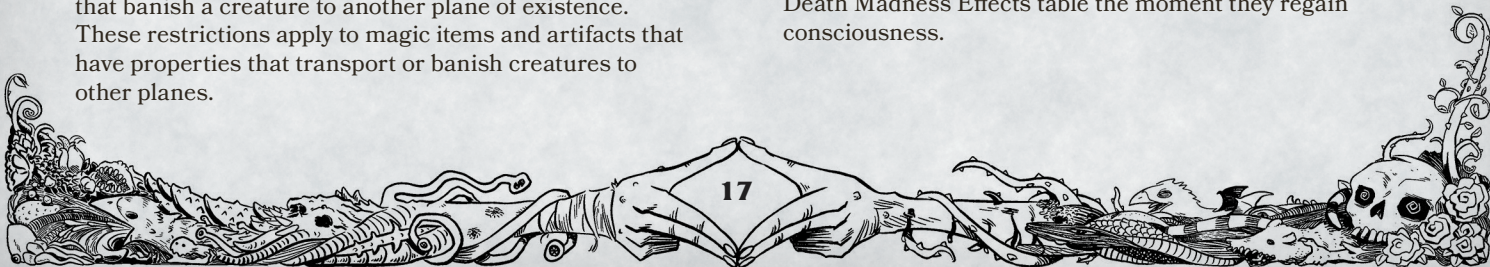
Characters from other worlds may find their way into Gothic Earth. They are subject to these rules as well, meaning they are unlikely to ever leave. However, characters from other planes who receive spells from deities or otherworldly patrons continue to do so on Gothic Earth.

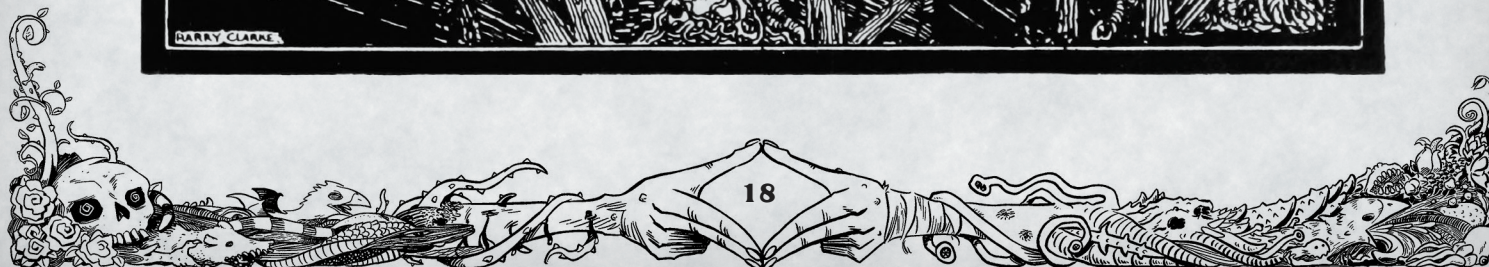
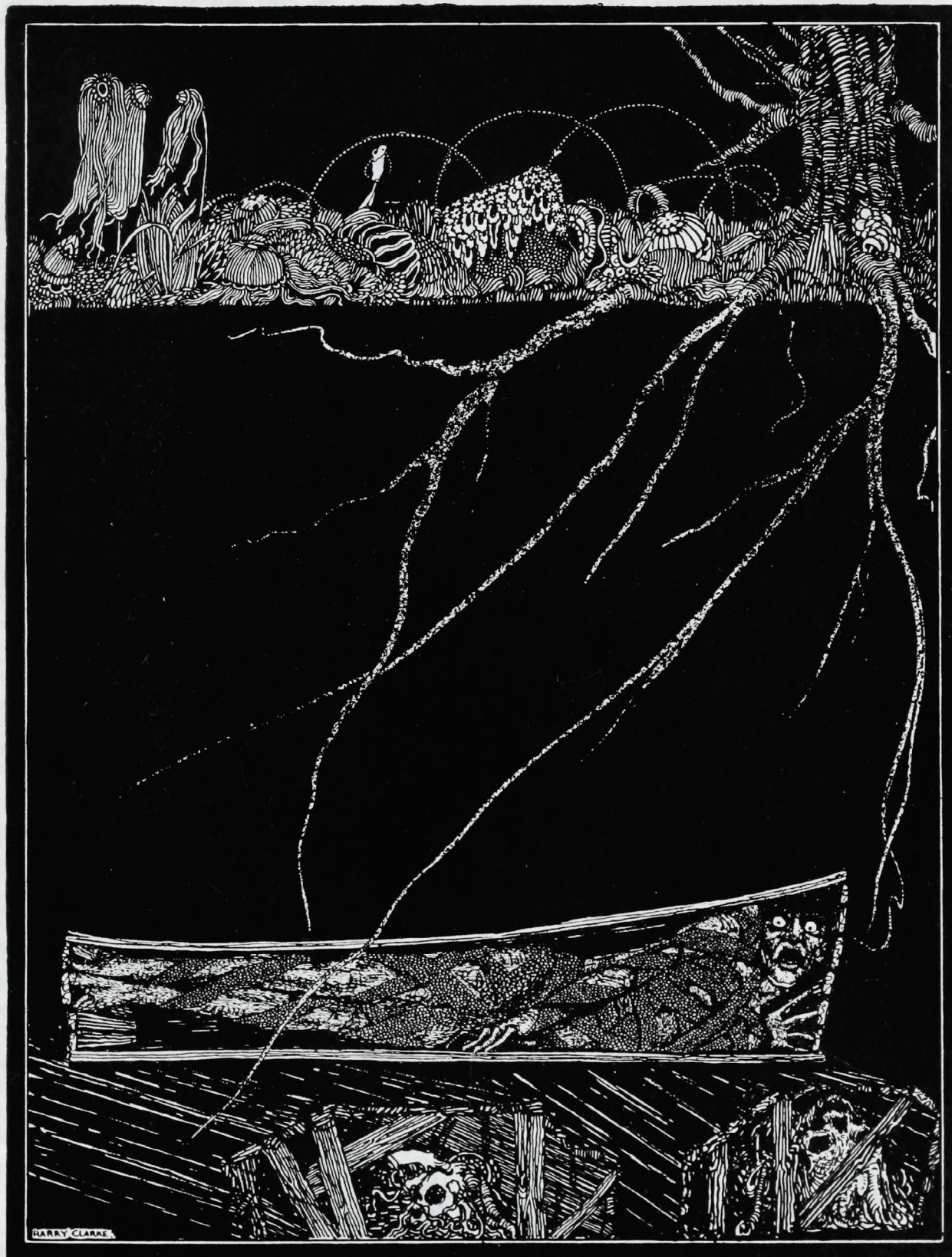
The sensory effects of spells are suppressed whenever possible, as spells have evolved over the millennia to draw less attention to their casters. This especially true for cosmetic effects that might be perceived by onlookers unaffected by the spell itself. For example, the effects of the *color spray* spell are visible only to the caster and to the affected targets, and the projectiles conjured by *magic missile* are perceptible only by their effects on their target. A recipient of *barkskin* feels fortified by primal energies, yet their skin's appearance barely changes, while the *shield* spell shows no visible sign of the protection it invokes.

In other cases, at the DM's discretion, the cosmetic attributes of certain spells may also change to suit Gothic Earth's atmosphere of inevitable horror. Changes such as those described in the Cosmetic Spell Modifications section in chapter 2 of *Curse of Strahd* are entirely appropriate.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Some say one's demise is the only true escape from Gothic Earth and the Red Death's influence, but not all are allowed to pass on to their final rest. When a mortal who has been dead for at least 24 hours returns to life, either by way of a spell or some supernatural means, it is no longer sane. Unless they are returned to life by a *true resurrection* spell (which no character is likely to ever have access to), such a character rolls on the Red Death Madness Effects table the moment they regain consciousness.







... CHAPTER 2 ...

CLASSES

Character classes in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** differ greatly from those in the base D&D game. By the 19th century, Gothic Earth has seen a huge proliferation of professions, trades, crafts, arts, and academic specialties, while magic has become corrupt and so uncommon most do not believe in it. New classes represent the heroes of this era.

Most inhabitants of Gothic Earth do not seek adventure, but your character is no ordinary person. At some point, an encounter with the influence of the Red Death changes them. Their eyes open to a stranger, darker world, compelling them to challenge the preternatural forces that threaten all humanity.

Classes in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** represent differing approaches to this larger cause, rather than specific vocations or professions, which are better represented by the archetype you choose for your class. When choosing a class, think about how your character confronts challenges.

A member of the soldier class, for example, specializes in physical confrontation, while the sleuth seeks information and understanding. The scion leverages a connection to supernatural, while a shepherd relies on connections with other people, and stalwarts simply seek to outlast their opposition.

The classes are described here using the same format as the *Player's Handbook* and D&D Basic Rules. Your class gives you a variety of special features, such as a soldier's facility for armed combat, or a sleuth's talent for detailed observation.

Combined with the archetype you choose for your class when you gain your first level, a class grants you only a few features at first, but as you advance in level, you gain more, while existing features improve.

Advancing in more than one class may be rare in some D&D games, but **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** embraces the multiclassing rules by default. A soldier who discovers a talent for information gathering may become a sleuth, for example. Whenever a character gains a level, they can choose between the classes listed here without restriction.

The classes are described in alphabetical order.

CALCULATING ARMOR CLASS

Remember that when the game gives you more than one way to calculate your Armor Class, you choose only one of them to use. For example, if you have at least 1 resolve point and are not wearing armor, your AC equals 11 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus. The Forceful Prowess feature of the Stalwart class says your AC can't be less than 12 + your Dexterity modifier + your Constitution modifier. If you are a Stalwart, you don't mix these options together. Instead, you choose which one determines your AC.

Also, note that none of these classes grant any armor proficiencies. Due to the penetrating power of firearms, armor is generally not useful on Gothic Earth.

MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH CHARACTER CLASSES

CLASS	DESCRIPTION	HIT DICE	PRIMARY ABILITY	SAVING THROW PROFICIENCIES	WEAPONS PROFICIENCIES
Scion	The bearer of an ancient legacy of occult power	d6	Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma	Wisdom, Intelligence	Simple weapons
Shepherd	An influential leader and inspiring comrade	d8	Wisdom or Charisma	Wisdom, Charisma	Simple weapons, plus your choice of either handguns or one martial weapon
Sleuth	An astute observer skilled at uncovering what is hidden	d8	Intelligence and Wisdom	Dexterity, Intelligence	Simple weapons, plus your choice of either handguns or one martial weapon
Soldier	A master of combat with specialized weapons training	d10	Strength or Dexterity	Strength, Dexterity	Simple weapons, handguns, longarms, and three other martial weapons of your choice
Stalwart	A resilient and athletic survivor	d12	Strength and Constitution	Strength, Constitution	Simple weapons, handguns, and your choice of either longarms or two other martial weapons of your choice





SCION

You are the inheritor of supernatural might, of a kind wielded in ancient epochs of wonder before recorded memory. While many frauds might claim knowledge of the arcane arts, adepts with true powers such as yours are few and far between.

Perhaps you made a disciplined study of the lore of the ancient masters, or you pursued a spiritual path of wisdom. You may even be descended from some kind of inhuman creature, and the taint of your eldritch heritage imbues you with strange powers.

However you gained your occult gifts, they are both awesome and terrible. Using your inner, psychic strength, you can assert your will upon the world. Scions of the past could read minds, fade into invisibility, and transform their bodies into living iron. They used their powers to seize control of the physical world and bend it to their will; how will you use yours?

CLASS FEATURES

As a scion, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d6 per Scion level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 6 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d6 (or 4) + your Constitution modifier per level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Armor: None

Weapons: Simple weapons

Tools: Choose one (which can include gaming sets, musical instruments, or vehicle types).

Saving Throws: Intelligence, Wisdom

Skills: Choose two skills from Arcana, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Religion, and Science.

SCION MULTICLASSING

If you gain your first level of the Scion class by multiclassing, instead of gaining all the proficiencies described above, you gain proficiency with one of the following skills of your choice: Arcana, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Religion, or Science.

EQUIPMENT

As a 1st level character, you start with a simple weapon of your choice, and any one spellcasting focus or set of artisan's tools of your choice. You can purchase additional equipment using the starting money granted by your background.



THE SCION

LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Forbidden Lore, Scion Archetype
2nd	Eldritch Awareness
3rd	Archetype Features
4th	Additional Forbidden Lore
5th	Scion Resurgence
6th	Archetype Features
7th	Additional Forbidden Lore
8th	Occult Strike +1d8
9th	Archetype Features
10th	Consumptive Power, Additional Forbidden Lore





FORBIDDEN LORE

Your legacy as a scion grants you access to secret magical techniques known as Forbidden Lore. Some require intense research and study, whereas others may be acquired as instinctive psychic gifts. Many allow you to cast spells by expending personal energies or channeling the power of the spiritual world. When you cast a spell by spending resolve points, you create and expend the necessary spell slot (if any) as part of the casting.

When you gain your first level in this class, you learn three fragments of Forbidden Lore from those listed at the end of this class description. You must fulfill all prerequisites for any fragment of Forbidden Lore you choose.

You learn an additional fragment of Forbidden Lore when you reach 4th level in this class, and again at 7th level and 10th level.

Spellcasting Focus. You can use a crystal, orb, or wand as a spellcasting focus for any spells you cast, whether you learn those spells from this class or from an archetype. Certain fragments of Forbidden Lore may grant the use of other foci as well. See chapter 5, “Equipment,” in the *Player's Handbook* for spellcasting focus options.

Trained Ritualist. Whenever you make an Intelligence (Arcana) check to cast a spell as a ritual, you have advantage on that roll. If you already know the spell by other means, allowing you to cast it without using a ritual, you automatically succeed on the check and don't need to roll at all.

New Lore. Whenever you gain a level in your Scion class, you can choose one fragment of Forbidden Lore you already know and replace it with another Forbidden Lore that you could learn at that level. You must meet all prerequisites for the new fragment.

Ancient Languages. You learn two additional languages of your choice.

SCION ARCHETYPE

Choose an archetype for your Scion class from those listed in chapter 3, “Archetypes.” Your choice grants you skill proficiencies and other features when you choose it at 1st level. It also grants you additional archetype features at 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels.

ELDRITCH AWARENESS

At 2nd level, you gain a preternatural intuition that allows you to sense the hopes and fears of those in your immediate presence, and to potentially influence them, granting you the following benefits:

Overwhelming Presence. You can spend 1 resolve point as an action to force each creature of your choice in a 10-foot cube originating from you to make a Wisdom saving throw against the spellcasting DC for your Forbidden Lore. The creatures that fail their saving throw are all either charmed or frightened by you (your choice) until the end of your next turn. On a successful save, the

target is unaffected, and it automatically succeeds on further saving throws against your use of this effect until you finish a long rest. Whether the saving throw succeeds or fails, the target does not realize you targeted it with this effect.

Protective Empathy. You sense the hostile intentions of those around you before they strike. In response to an attack hitting you, you can use your reaction to impose disadvantage on that attack roll, possibly causing it to miss. You cannot use this ability if you have 0 resolve points.

SCION RESURGENCE

At 5th level, your occult studies allow you to draw vigor from your own focused mental energies. Immediately after you spend resolve points during your turn, you can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to the number of resolve points you spent.

OCCULT STRIKE

At 8th level, you can enhance your combat prowess with occult energies. Once on each of your turns, when you make a damage roll, you can inflict an extra 1d8 psychic damage against one target of that damage roll.

CONSUMPTIVE POWER

At 10th level, you gain the ability to sacrifice your physical durability in exchange for inner strength. Whenever you would spend resolve points, you can pay this cost with your hit points instead. Your current hit points and hit point maximum are both reduced by the number of hit points you spend. This reduction can't be lessened in any way, and the reduction to your hit point maximum lasts until you finish a long rest.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

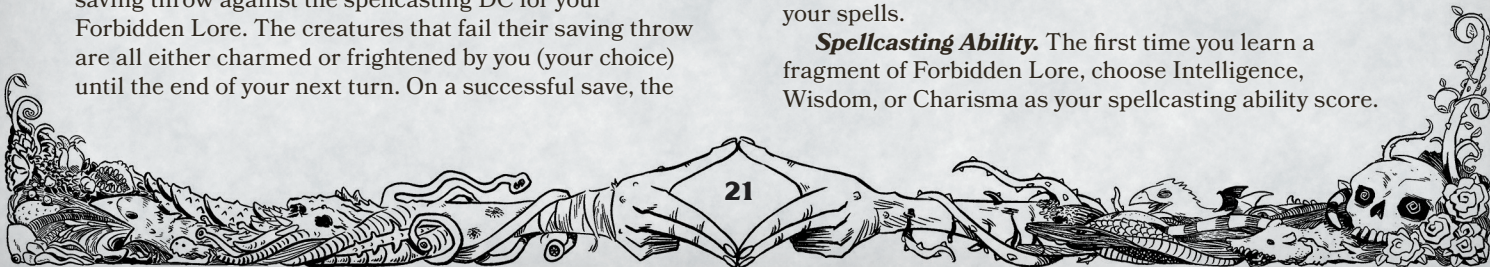
FORBIDDEN LORE

Scions and certain other characters can learn secret Forbidden Lore, allowing access to supernatural power. The uses of Forbidden Lore are divided into ancient techniques known as fragments.

If a fragment of Forbidden Lore has prerequisites, you must meet them to learn it. You can learn the fragment at the same time that you meet its prerequisites. Any level prerequisite listed refers to your total character level.

You cannot learn the same fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, unless its description specifies that you can. Many of these uncanny powers work like spells or require a target to make a saving throw. In these cases, you use the spellcasting ability score you chose for your Forbidden Lore, as described below. Other Scion class features requiring a saving throw use the same DC as your spells.

Spellcasting Ability. The first time you learn a fragment of Forbidden Lore, choose Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma as your spellcasting ability score.





You use the modifier for the chosen ability score when setting the saving throw DC for any spell you cast, or any Forbidden Lore. You also use it when you cast a spell that requires an attack roll.

Spellcasting save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your spellcasting ability score modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your spellcasting ability score modifier

Dark Powers Checks. As always, any creature casting a spell of 1st level or higher must make a Dark Powers check, risking exposure to the seductive powers of the Red Death. Due to the metaphysical barriers surrounding Gothic Earth, certain spells—specifically those directly relating to other planes—may have limitations, or simply fail. The DM should warn you about a spell that is not usable in the setting when you select it. Other spells may still function, but have unexpected effects unique to this setting—in such cases, the DM may not warn you at all.

Certain spells attract more attention. Any Dark Powers check made for casting an evocation or necromancy spell is made at disadvantage.

ADEPT SPELLCASTING

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Arcana skill

Choose one of the following classes: sorcerer, warlock, or wizard. You learn one cantrip of your choice from that class's spell list. You also choose one spell of 1st level or higher from the same spell list, which you have written on a scroll, grimoire, or other physical record. If you have had the chance to study this written record since the last time you finished a long rest, you can cast this spell at its lowest level by spending a number of resolve points equal to the level of that spell (cantrips do not require any resolve points).

No cantrip or other spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore can be an evocation spell, nor can it be of a level higher than your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you can use any arcane focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once; each time you choose it, you learn a different cantrip and a different spell of 1st-level or higher, both chosen from the same spell list you chose when you first gained this fragment of Forbidden Lore.

AKASHIC THEOSOPHY

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the History skill

You can tap into an otherworldly well of ancient spiritual knowledge. As an action, you can choose one skill or tool. For 10 minutes, you have proficiency with the chosen skill or tool. This effect ends early if you use this feature again. When you use this feature, if you have already used it one or more times since the last time you finished a short or long rest, you must make a horror save.

BLATANT EVOCATION

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Arcana or Religion skill

Choose one evocation spell of 1st level or higher from any class's spell list. You have this spell written on a scroll, grimoire, or other physical record (if you have the fragment of Forbidden Lore called Book of Shadows, that grimoire can serve as your record). If you have had the chance to study this written record since the last time you finished a long rest, you can cast the chosen spell at its lowest level by spending a number of resolve points equal to 1 + the level of that spell (2 resolve points for a 1st-level spell, 3 resolve points for a 2nd-level spell, etc.).

The level of any spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore must be lower than your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you can use any arcane focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell gained from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning a different evocation spell of 1st level or higher each time you choose it.

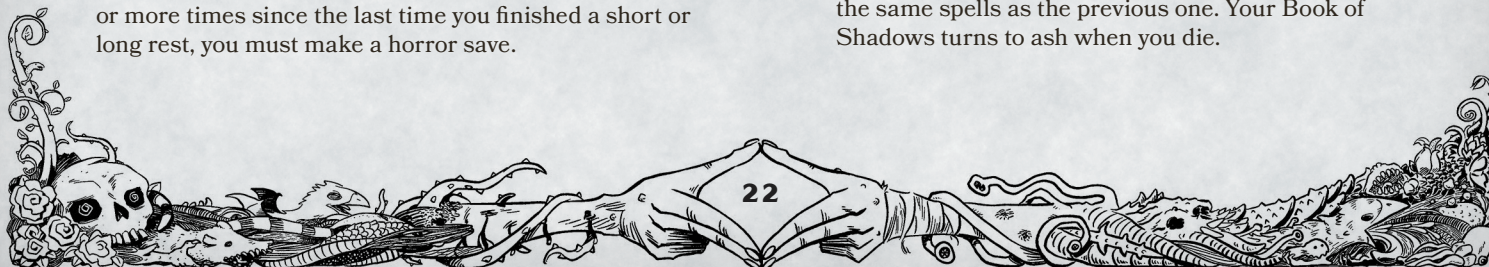
Note that any Dark Powers check you make when you cast an evocation or necromancy spell is rolled with disadvantage, so you should take extra care when casting spells you gain from this Forbidden Lore.

BOOK OF SHADOWS

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Arcana skill

You possess a magically-crafted grimoire called a Book of Shadows, which grants you the following benefits:

- **Ritual Grimoire.** You can inscribe magical rituals in your Book of Shadows. Choose two 1st-level spells that have the ritual tag from any class's spell list (the two needn't be from the same list), which are recorded in your Book of Shadows. You can cast the chosen spells as rituals as long as you have your Book of Shadows in hand. You can't cast the spells except as rituals, unless you've learned them by some other means.
- **Researching New Rituals.** On your adventures, you can add other ritual spells to your Book of Shadows. When you find a spell with the ritual tag, you can add it to the book if the spell's level is equal to or less than your proficiency bonus and if you can spare the time to transcribe the spell. For each level of the spell, the transcription process takes 2 hours and costs \$50.00 (or the equivalent in local currency) for the rare inks and other materials needed to inscribe it.
- **Replacing the Book of Shadows.** If you lose your Book of Shadows, you can perform an 8-hour ceremony to create a new one. This ceremony can be performed during a long rest, and it destroys the previous book. The new Book of Shadows has all the same spells as the previous one. Your Book of Shadows turns to ash when you die.





CLOAK OF THE MENTALIST

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Deception skill

As an action, you force a creature within 60 feet of you to roll an Intelligence saving throw. On a failure, it takes 1d4 psychic damage, and you can choose to either become invisible to that target until the end of your next turn or give it disadvantage on Wisdom (Insight) and Wisdom (Perception) checks against a creature of your choice until the end of its next turn. Whether the saving throw succeeds or fails, the target does not realize you targeted it with this effect.

If you are 5th level or higher, this damage is increased to 2d4, and when a creature succeeds on its Intelligence saving throw, it still takes half the normal damage, but suffers no additional effect.

ECTOPLASMIC PROJECTION

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Arcana or Deception skill

You learn the *minor illusion* cantrip. When you cast *minor illusion*, you can create both a sound and an image with a single casting of the spell. If you are 3rd level or higher, this fragment also allows you to spend 1 resolve point to cast the *silent image* spell as an action. If you are 5th level or higher, you can spend 2 resolve points to cast *phantasmal force* as an action.

ELDRITCH INVOCATION

Prerequisite: 3rd level or higher

You have obtained power via brief mental communications with some kind of inhuman entity. You gain one of the eldritch invocations available via the warlock class feature of the same name. You must meet all listed prerequisites for any eldritch invocation you learn, treating level prerequisites as referring to your total character level.

If an eldritch invocation requires a warlock spell slot for a certain use (such as casting a spell), you can create the required spell slot at the moment you need it by spending a number of resolve points equal to that spell slot's level.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning a new eldritch invocation each time you choose it.

(If you have the fragment of Forbidden Lore called Book of Shadows, you are considered to already have the Pact of the Tome warlock feature and the Book of Ancient Secrets eldritch invocation for purposes of fulfilling prerequisites for eldritch invocations.)

EXACTING SPIRITUALISM

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; ability to cast at least one spell of 1st-level or higher using resolve points

You apply a rigorous precision to your spellcasting, allowing you to enhance your spells when you take time to cast them perfectly. Whenever you cast a spell using slow casting, you gain special benefits. When you gain this fragment of Forbidden Lore, choose two metamagic options from those listed under the Metamagic feature of the sorcerer class. When you cast a spell using slow casting, you can apply your choice of either one of the chosen metamagic options to the spell. You can use only one metamagic option on a spell when you cast it, unless otherwise noted. If the metamagic option has a sorcery point cost of 1, you do not need to pay that cost. If it has a sorcery point cost of 2 or higher, you must spend a number of resolve points equal to the normal sorcery point cost -1.

In addition, whenever you cast a spell using slow casting, you gain a number of temporary hit points equal to the spell's level + your proficiency bonus.

FAITH HEALING

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Religion skill

As an action, you touch a living creature that has 0 hit points. The creature becomes stable. If you continue touching it for 1 minute while taking no other actions or reactions, the creature can spend 1 Hit Die, regaining hit points normally, as if at the end of a short or long rest. A creature healed in this way cannot spend a Hit Die again until the next time they finish a short or long rest.

GOETIC WITCHCRAFT

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Arcana skill

You can use an occult sigil to bind a daemonic spirit into a metal object, imbuing it with magical properties. At the end of a long rest, you can spend 1 resolve point to touch one nonmagical metal object that is a piece of jewelry (such as a ring or amulet) or a melee weapon.

Until the end of your next long rest or until you die, the object becomes a magic item, granting a +1 bonus to AC to a creature who wears it if it is jewelry or a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls if it is a weapon. You can only enchant one item at a time using this fragment of Forbidden Lore.

In addition, you can use any arcane focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from your other Forbidden Lore.





HERMETIC FORMULAE

Prerequisites: Proficiency in the Arcana skill; Intelligence 13 or higher

Choose two 1st-level spells from the wizard spell list. You have these spells written in a spellbook, or on scrolls or another form of physical record (if you have the fragment of Forbidden Lore called Book of Shadows, that grimoire can serve as your record). If you have had the chance to study this written record since the last time you finished a long rest, you can cast either spell as a 1st-level spell by spending 1 resolve point.

In addition, you can use any arcane focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

No cantrip or other spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore can be an evocation spell.

METAPHYSICAL THEORY

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Arcana skill; Intelligence or Charisma 13 or higher

You gain two metamagic options of your choice from those listed under the Metamagic feature of the sorcerer class. You can use only one Metamagic option on a spell when you cast it, unless otherwise noted. You must pay any required sorcery point cost by spending the same number of resolve points.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning two new Metamagic options each time you choose it.

MIRACULOUS DISPLAY

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Religion skill; Wisdom 13 or higher

You learn one cantrip from the cleric spell list, and can cast the *ceremony*** spell as a ritual. You also choose one spell of 1st level or higher from the cleric spell list, which you can cast at its lowest level by spending a number of resolve points equal to the level of that spell (cantrips do not require any resolve points).

No cantrip or other spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore can be an evocation spell, nor can it be of a level higher than your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you can use a holy symbol as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning a different cleric cantrip and a different cleric spell of 1st level or higher each time you choose it.

CEREMONY

1st-level abjuration (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (25 gp of powdered silver; consumed)

Duration: Instantaneous

When you cast the spell, choose one of the following rites. The target of which must be within 10 feet of you throughout the casting.

Atonement. You touch one willing creature whose alignment has changed, and you make a DC 20 Insight check. On a success, you restore the target to its original alignment.

Bless Water. You touch one vial of water and cause it to become holy water.

Coming of Age. You touch one young adult humanoid. For the next 24 hours, whenever the target makes an ability check, it can roll a d4 and add the number rolled to the ability check. A creature can benefit from this rite only once.

Dedication. You touch one humanoid who wishes to be dedicated to your god's service. For the next 24 hours, whenever the target makes a saving throw, it can roll a d4 and add the number rolled to the save. A creature can benefit from this rite only once.

Funeral Rite. You touch one corpse, and for the next 7 days, the target can't become undead by any means short of a *wish* spell.

Wedding. You touch adult humanoids willing to be bonded together in marriage. For the next 7 days, each target gains a +2 bonus to AC while they are within 30 feet of each other. A creature can benefit from this rite again only if widowed.

ODIC ALCHEMY

Prerequisite: Proficiency with alchemist's supplies

You can temporarily alter the physical properties of one nonmagical object, changing it from one substance into another. You perform a special alchemical procedure on one object composed entirely of wood, stone (but not a gemstone), iron, copper, or silver, transforming it into a different one of those materials. For each 10 minutes you spend performing the procedure, you can transform up to 1 cubic foot of material. After 1 hour passes or you lose your concentration (as if you were concentrating on a spell), the material reverts to its original substance.

In addition, you can use any arcane focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from your other Forbidden Lore.





QABALISTIC INITIATION

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; must be a member of a qabal

You have joined a qabal, one of the hidden orders that keeps the secrets of magic alive despite the taint of the Red Death. Your qabal has taught you to cast certain spells, and you learn more as you gain levels.

Each qabal has its own special spell list, consisting of two 1st level spells, two 2nd level spells, and two 3rd level spells. You can spend 1 resolve point to cast any one of the 1st level spells listed for your qabal. If you are 5th level or higher, you can also spend 2 resolve points to cast any one of the 2nd level spells listed for your qabal. If you are 9th level or higher, you can spend 3 resolve points to cast any one of the 3rd level spells from your qabal list.

In addition, your qabal teaches you how to employ a particular kind of spellcasting focus, usable when casting any spell you gain from this or any other fragment of Forbidden Lore. Whatever the nature of that focus (which may take a unique or unusual form), it must be the only object held in that particular hand, otherwise it cannot be used to cast spells at all.

SAMPLE QABALS

Lists of the spells (and spellcasting foci) taught by certain powerful qabals are provided in chapter 6. The information included makes each qabal description particularly useful with the Qabalistic Initiation fragment of Forbidden Lore. If you become a member of a qabal for which this information is not provided, your DM will assist you in determining the benefits you receive for Qabalistic Initiation.

PARLOR TRICKS

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Arcana or Deception skill

When you gain this fragment of Forbidden Lore, you learn the prestidigitation cantrip, as well as your choice of one of the following cantrips: *friends*, *mending*, *produce flame*, *resistance*, *shillelagh*, or *vicious mockery*.

In addition, you can use any arcane focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

PSYCHIC ASSAULT

As an action, you force a creature within 60 feet of you to roll a Charisma saving throw. On a failure, it takes 1d8 psychic damage, and cannot take reactions until the end of its next turn.

If you are 5th level or higher, this damage increases to 2d8, and when a creature succeeds on its Charisma saving throw, it still takes half the normal damage, but suffers no additional effect.

PSYCHOKINETIC STRIKE

As an action, you force a creature within 30 feet of you to roll a Strength saving throw. On a failure, it takes 1d6

force damage, its speed is reduced by 10 feet for 1 minute (to a minimum of 5 feet) and you push it up to 10 feet away from you if it is Large or smaller and within 15 feet of you. If it hits a creature or object in its path while being pushed, it falls prone.

If you are 5th level or higher, this damage increases to 2d6, and when a creature succeeds on its Strength saving throw, it still takes half the normal damage, but suffers no additional effect.

ROSICRUCIAN THEURGY

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Arcana and Religion skills

You can perform an esoteric religious ceremony that heals wounds. When you choose this Forbidden Lore, you gain a pool of d12s that you spend to fuel your healing. The number of dice in the pool equals 1 + your proficiency bonus. By performing a ceremony which takes 1 minute, you can touch a humanoid or beast and heal it, spending dice from the pool. The maximum number of dice you can spend at once equals your proficiency bonus. Roll the dice you spend, add them together, and restore a number of hit points to the target creature equal to that total. You regain all expended healing dice when you finish a long rest.

SAINT CUTHBERT'S CUDGEL

Prerequisite: Proficiency in the Religion skill

You can use a bonus action to imbue a melee weapon that inflicts bludgeoning damage with holy might. Until the end of your next turn, you can use your spellcasting ability instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of melee attacks using that weapon. In addition, the next time you hit with a melee attack using that weapon before the end of your next turn, you inflict additional psychic damage on that creature equal to 1d4 + your spellcasting ability modifier (minimum 1).

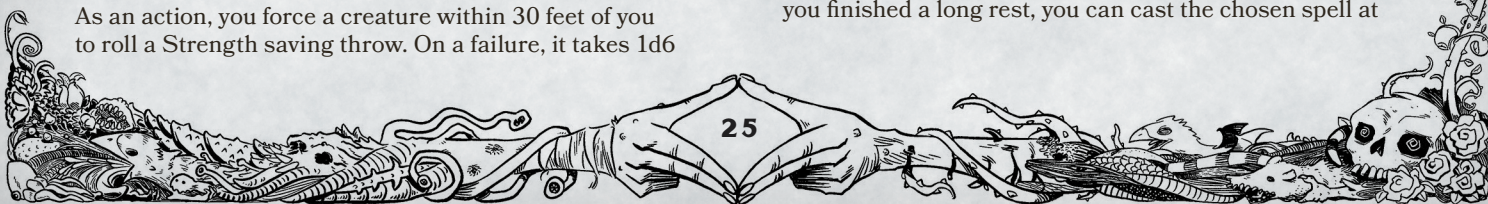
When you inflict this extra damage, the target suffers the attack's normal effects, and you bellow out a magical challenge that your opponent finds difficult to ignore. While it is within 5 feet of you, the target has disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes that doesn't target you before the end of its next turn.

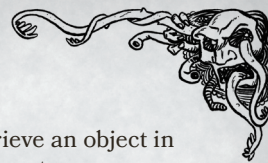
If you are 5th level or higher, the psychic damage is equal to 2d4 + your spellcasting ability modifier, instead of 1d4.

SECRETS OF THE SCHOLOMANCE

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Arcana or Medicine skill

Choose one necromancy spell of 1st level or higher from any class's spell list. You have this spell written on a scroll, grimoire, or other physical record (if you have the fragment of Forbidden Lore called Book of Shadows, that grimoire can serve as your record). If you have had the chance to study this written record since the last time you finished a long rest, you can cast the chosen spell at





its lowest level by spending a number of resolve points equal to the level of that spell.

The level of any spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore must be equal to or lower than your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you can use a melee weapon that you are proficient with and that lacks the two-handed property as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning two additional necromancy spells of 1st level or higher each time you choose it.

Note that any Dark Powers check you make for a necromancy spell you cast is rolled at disadvantage, so you should take extra care when casting spells you gain from this Forbidden Lore.

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

As an action, you create a bonfire on ground that you can see within 60 feet. The magic bonfire fills a 5-foot cube for 1 minute, but ends early if you take damage or fall unconscious. A creature in the bonfire's space when you cast the spell must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or take 1d12 fire damage.

A creature must also make the saving throw when it moves into the bonfire's space for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there. The bonfire ignites flammable objects in its area that aren't being worn or carried.

If you are 5th level or higher, this damage increases to 2d12, and when a creature succeeds on its Dexterity saving throw, it still takes half the normal damage.

SUPERNATURAL PERFORMANCE

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Deception, Performance, or Sleight of Hand skill; Charisma 13 or higher

You learn one cantrip of your choice from the bard spell list. You also choose one spell of 1st level or higher from the bard spell list, which you can cast at its lowest level by spending a number of resolve points equal to the level of that spell (cantrips do not require any resolve points).

No cantrip or other spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore can be an evocation spell, nor can it be of a level higher than your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you can use a musical instrument as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning a different bard cantrip and a different bard spell of 1st level or higher each time you choose it.

TELEKINETIC LEGERDEMAIN

You learn the *mage hand* cantrip. Whenever you cast *mage hand*, the hand is invisible, and you can use a bonus action to control it instead of your action. You can use the hand to stow one object it is holding in a container worn

or carried by another creature, or to retrieve an object in a container worn or carried by another creature.

If you are proficient with a tool light enough to be used by the hand, you can use the hand to perform precise work with the tool at range (such as picking a lock with thieves' tools). You can perform a task with the hand without being noticed by a creature if you succeed on a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check contested by the creature's Wisdom (Perception) check.

TELEPATHIC CONTACT

You can telepathically speak to any creature you can see within 120 feet of you. You don't need to share a language with the creature for it to understand your telepathic messages, but the creature must be able to understand at least one language or be telepathic itself. You can choose to concentrate on this feature as an action, as if it were a spell, gaining the ability to use this feature with up to six creatures at once, as long as you maintain your concentration.

This fragment also allows you to spend 1 resolve point to cast any one of the following spells as an action: *beast bond*, *detect evil and good*, or *detect magic*. If you are 3rd level or higher, you can spend 2 resolve points as an action to cast either *detect thoughts* or *locate animals or plants*.

THELEMIC WILL

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher, proficiency in the Arcana and Deception skills

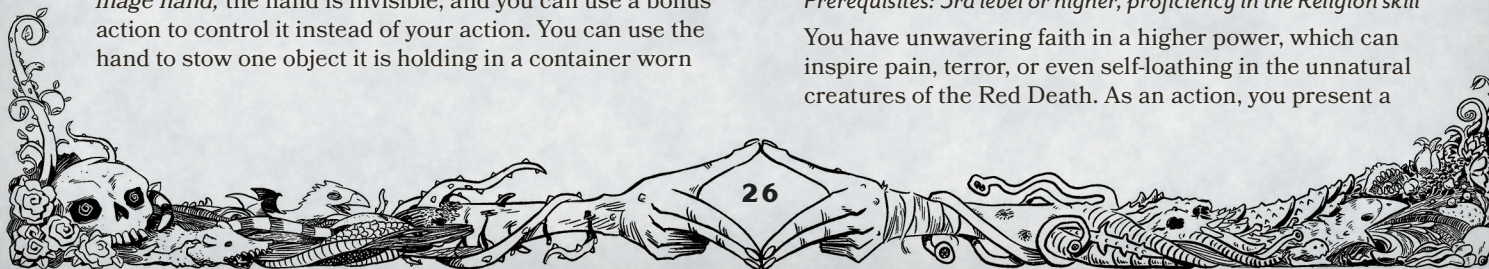
Aligning your true nature with your desired destiny, you can enthrall a creature by sheer will. As an action, spend 1 resolve point and choose one creature that you can see within 5 feet of you. If the target can see or hear you, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by you until the end of your next turn. The charmed creature's speed drops to 0, and the creature is incapacitated and visibly dazed. On subsequent turns, you can use your action to maintain this effect, extending its duration until the end of your next turn. However, the effect ends if you move more than 5 feet away from the creature, if the creature can neither see nor hear you, or if the creature takes damage. Once the effect ends, or if the creature succeeds on its initial saving throw against this effect, you can't use this feature on that creature again until you finish a long rest.

If you are 5th level or higher, when you charm a creature with this ability, instead of reducing its speed to zero and causing it to be incapacitated, you can spend 1 additional resolve point to choose the target's movement and action on its next turn.

TURN HORRORS

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher, proficiency in the Religion skill

You have unwavering faith in a higher power, which can inspire pain, terror, or even self-loathing in the unnatural creatures of the Red Death. As an action, you present a





holy symbol or sacred text and speak a prayer censuring the creatures of darkness. Each aberration, fiend, or undead that can see or hear you within 30 feet of you must make a Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes damage.

A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from you as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of you. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Once you use this fragment of Forbidden Lore, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

URIEL'S BLADE

Prerequisites: Proficiency in the Religion skill

You can use a bonus action to imbue a melee weapon that inflicts piercing or slashing damage with holy flame. Until the end of your next turn, you can use your spellcasting ability instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of melee attacks using that weapon. In addition, the next time you hit with a melee attack using that weapon before the end of your next turn, you inflict additional fire damage on that creature equal to 1d4 + your spellcasting ability modifier (minimum 1).

When you inflict this extra damage, the fire leaps to a different creature you can see within 5 feet of the original target, which also takes the same amount of fire damage.

If you are 5th level or higher, the fire damage is equal to 2d4 + your spellcasting ability modifier, instead of 1d4.

WAYS OF THE SHAMAN

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher; proficiency in the Nature skill; Wisdom 13 or higher

You learn one cantrip from the druid spell list. You also choose one spell of 1st level or higher from the druid spell list, which you can cast at its lowest level by spending a number of resolve points equal to the level of that spell (cantrips do not require any resolve points).

No cantrip or other spell chosen for this fragment of Forbidden Lore can be an evocation spell, nor can it be of a level higher than your proficiency bonus.

In addition, you can use a druidic focus as a spellcasting focus for any spell you gain from this or any other Forbidden Lore.

You can choose this fragment of Forbidden Lore more than once, learning a different druid cantrip and a different druid spell of 1st level or higher each time you choose it.

WHISPERS OF BAPHOMET

Prerequisites: 5th level or higher, proficiency in the Religion skill

You learn the spells *hellish rebuke* and *summon lesser demons*.** You can cast either one by spending a number

of resolve points equal to the spell's level. In addition, you can cast *summon lesser demons*** as a ritual, as if it had the ritual tag. When you cast a spell gained from this Forbidden Lore, you have disadvantage on the Dark Powers check for casting that spell. Finally, while you are within any kind of maze or tunnel, you can't become lost except by magical means.

SUMMON LESSER DEMONS

3rd-level conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S, M (a vial of blood from a humanoid killed within the past 24 hours)

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You utter foul words, summoning demons from the chaos of the Abyss. Roll on the following table to determine what appears.

d6 DEMONS SUMMONED

1–2 Two demons of challenge rating 1 or lower

3–4 Four demons of challenge rating ½ or lower

5–6 Eight demons of challenge rating ¼ or lower

The DM chooses the demons, such as manes or dretches, and you choose the unoccupied spaces you can see within range where they appear. A summoned demon disappears when it drops to 0 hit points or the spell ends.

The demons are hostile to all creatures, including you. Roll initiative for the summoned demons as a group, which has its own turns. The demons pursue and attack the nearest non-demons to the best of their ability.

As part of casting the spell, you can form a circle on the ground with the blood used as a material component. The circle is large enough to encompass your space. While the spell lasts, the summoned demons can't cross the circle or harm it, and they can't target anyone within it. Using the material component in this manner consumes it when the spell ends.

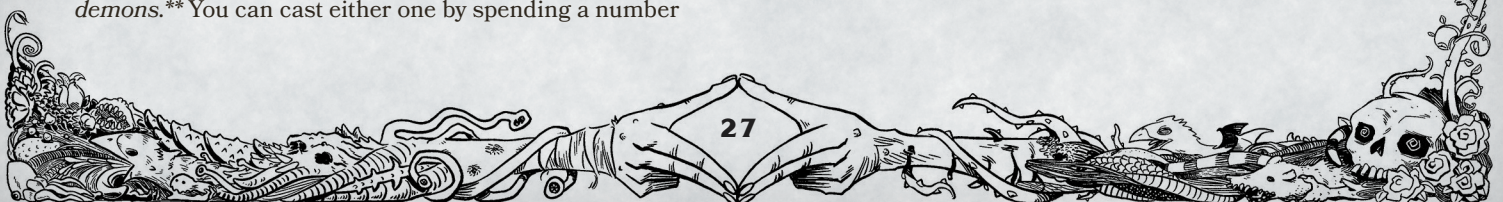
At higher level. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 6th or 7th level, you summon twice as many demons. If you cast it using a spell slot of 8th or 9th level, you summon three times as many demons.

ZEALOUS VOW

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher, proficiency in the Religion skill

Your intense personal beliefs drive you to strike down minions of evil. As a bonus action, you can utter an oath of enmity against a creature you can see within 10 feet of you. You gain advantage on attack rolls against the creature for 1 minute or until it drops to 0 hit points or falls unconscious. This effect ends early if you use it again on another creature.

Once you use this fragment of Forbidden Lore, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.





SHEPHERD

You have great personal and social influence over those around you. Some members of this class invest deeply in their relationships to inspire others to greatness. Others merely seek to manipulate, con, or deceive for their own benefit. Either way, you thrive when working as part of a group, and you're at your best when you have the full attention of your audience.

You may be a military officer, an influential artist, a political agitator, a crusading lawyer, a dishonest gambler, a powerful aristocrat, or simply the captain of the neighborhood baseball team. In most situations, you tend to function as the "face" of your group, taking the lead during interpersonal interactions and convincing others to support your group's goals.

CLASS FEATURES

As a shepherd, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per shepherd level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8 (or 5) + your Constitution modifier per level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Weapons: Simple weapons, plus your choice of either handguns or one martial weapon

Tools: Choose any two (which can include gaming sets, musical instruments, or vehicle types). If you wish, you can replace one of these proficiencies with knowledge of an additional language.

Saving Throws: Wisdom, Charisma

Skills: Choose three skills from Animal Handling, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Perception, Performance, Persuasion, Religion, and Science.



SHEPHERD MULTICLASSING

If you gain your first level of the Shepherd class by multiclassing, instead of gaining all the proficiencies described above, you gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following skills: Animal Handling, Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Perception, Performance, Persuasion, Religion, or Science.

THE SHEPHERD

LEVEL

1st	Harrowing Condemnation, Intuitive Inspiration, Shepherd Archetype
2nd	Bolster Allies, Savoir-Faire
3rd	Archetype Features
4th	Inspiring Leadership
5th	Resolute Shepherd
6th	Archetype Features
7th	—
8th	Defensive Teamwork
9th	Archetype Features
10th	Compelling Oratory

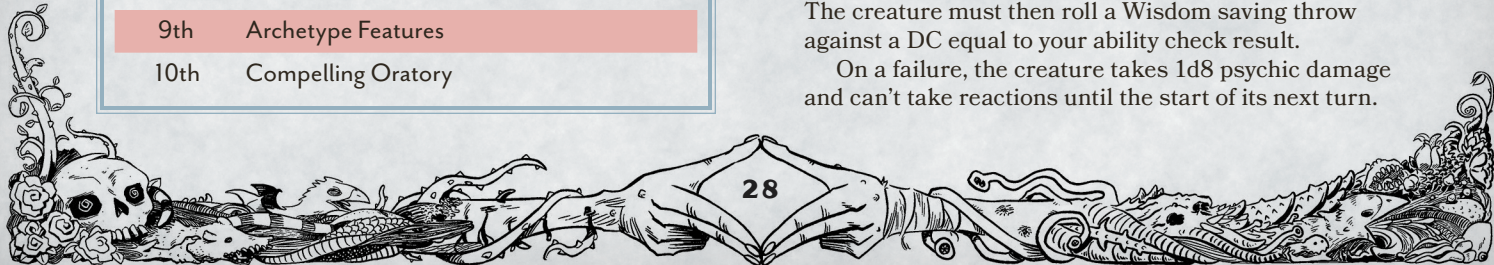
EQUIPMENT

As a 1st level character, you start with any one simple weapon of your choice, and any one musical instrument or set of artisan's tools of your choice. You can purchase additional equipment using the starting money granted by your background.

HARROWING CONDEMNATION

Your powerful words and personal insights allow you to destroy an enemy's morale. As an action, choose one creature within 30 feet with whom you share a language that can hear you and make a Wisdom (Insight), Intelligence (Investigation), or Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, Performance, or Persuasion) check. The creature must then roll a Wisdom saving throw against a DC equal to your ability check result.

On a failure, the creature takes 1d8 psychic damage and can't take reactions until the start of its next turn.





When you reach 5th level in your Shepherd class, you roll 2d8 for the psychic damage from this feature, instead of 1d8. At 10th level, this increases to 3d8.

Frightful Harrowing. When you use this feature, you can choose to spend 1 resolve point, but you must do so before the target rolls its saving throw. If you do so, on a failed save you add your proficiency bonus to the psychic damage you inflict, and the target also suffers the effects of failing a fear saving throw.

INTUITIVE INSPIRATION

You can inspire others to excellence by sharing your own perspective or insight with them, whether through simple explanation, stirring oratory, dramatic action, or artistic performance. As a bonus action, choose one creature other than yourself within 60 feet of you who can hear you. The creature chosen gains a d6 Intuitive Inspiration die. If it is below its hit point maximum, it also gains temporary hit points equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus.

Once within the next 10 minutes, a creature with an Intuitive Inspiration die can roll the die and add the number rolled to one ability check, attack roll, or saving throw it makes. The creature can wait until after it rolls the d20 before deciding to use the Intuitive Inspiration die, but must decide before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails.

Witnessing the use of your Intuitive Inspiration grants you increased confidence and fighting spirit. When a creature you can hear or see within 60 feet of you rolls an Intuitive Inspiration die from you, you gain temporary hit points equal to the number rolled on the Intuitive Inspiration die. (As detailed in the *Player's Handbook*, when you already have temporary hit points and gain more of them, you choose which temporary hit points to keep.)

Once the Intuitive Inspiration die is rolled, it is lost. A creature can have only one Intuitive Inspiration die at a time. Your Intuitive Inspiration die changes as you gain levels in your Shepherd class. The die becomes a d8 at 4th level, and a d10 at 10th level.

You can use this ability a number of times equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus, regaining expended uses when you finish a long rest.

SHEPHERD ARCHETYPE

Choose an archetype for your Shepherd class from those listed in chapter 3, "Archetypes." Your choice grants you skill proficiencies and other features when you choose it at 1st level. It also grants you additional archetype features at 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels.

BOLSTER ALLIES

At 2nd level, you inspire comrades to greater valor when they fight and recover alongside you.

As an action, you can choose a willing creature within 30 feet who can see or hear you, and who is able to make a reaction. That creature can immediately use its reaction to make one weapon attack. If the attack hits a hostile

creature within 5 feet of you, it inflicts additional damage equal to your Charisma or Wisdom bonus (your choice), and you add your proficiency bonus to your Armor Class until the start of your next turn.

In addition, if you or any friendly creatures who can hear you regain hit points by spending Hit Dice at the end of a short or long rest, each of those creatures regains extra hit points equal to your proficiency bonus.

SAVOIR-FAIRE

Starting at 2nd level, you rely on a quick wit and the knowledge you pick up from other people to get you out of tight corners. You can add half your proficiency bonus, rounded down, to any Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma check you make that doesn't already include your proficiency bonus.

INSPIRING LEADERSHIP

Beginning at 4th level, whenever you grant a creature temporary hit points (such as with your Intuitive Inspiration feature), it can immediately use its reaction to move up to its speed, without provoking opportunity attacks.

RESOLUTE SHEPHERD

At 5th level, when a creature rolls the highest possible number on an Intuitive Inspiration die from you, or rolls a 20 on the d20 for an attack roll which you granted it with your Bolster Allies feature, you regain 1 spent resolve point.

In addition, if you have no uses of your Intuitive Inspiration feature remaining when you finish a short rest, you regain your expended uses of that feature, as if you had finished a long rest.

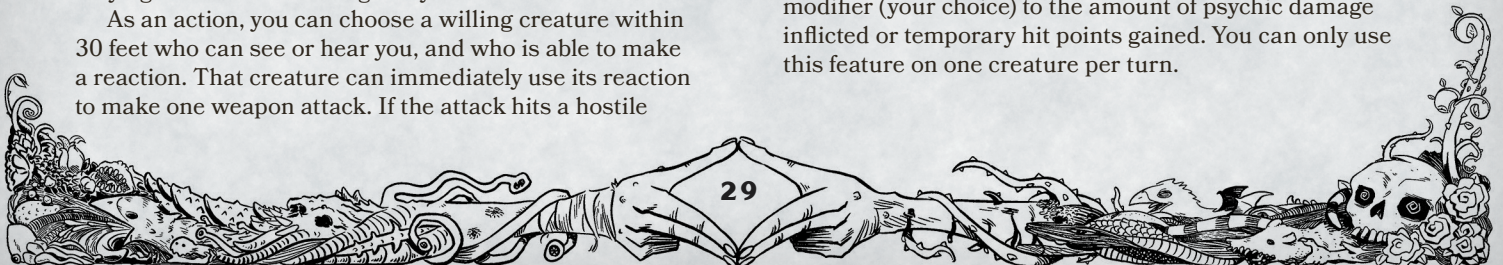
DEFENSIVE TEAMWORK

At 8th level, when an attack which you granted with your Bolster Allies feature or which you aided with the Help action hits, you can expend one use of your Intuitive Inspiration to cause the attack to deal extra damage. The extra damage equals the number rolled on your Intuitive Inspiration die + your proficiency bonus.

If the target of the attack was within 5 feet of you, you can also push the target up to 5 feet away from you.

COMPELLING ORATORY

At 10th level, the intense force of your personality can traumatize those you condemn or bolster the spirits of those you aid. Once per turn, when you inflict psychic damage on a creature or grant a creature temporary hit points (such as when it spends an Intuitive Inspiration die from you), you can add your Wisdom or Charisma modifier (your choice) to the amount of psychic damage inflicted or temporary hit points gained. You can only use this feature on one creature per turn.





SLEUTH

Your expertise relates to things hidden and unknown, and how they may be revealed. In this era of progress and invention, such know-how is valuable in any number of pursuits. Scientists seem to announce new innovations every week, scholars decipher ancient writings, and doctors develop miraculous cures, while journalists make all these events public knowledge.

Meanwhile, less public forms of discovery are also taking place in the shadows. Criminals discern new ways to claim what others would keep from them and detectives expand the new science of forensics to track those criminals down—all while spies serving rival powers play their own game of stolen secrets for the highest of stakes.



CLASS FEATURES

As a sleuth, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d8 per sleuth level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 8 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d8

(or 5) + your Constitution modifier per level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Weapons: Simple weapons, plus your choice of either handguns or one martial weapon

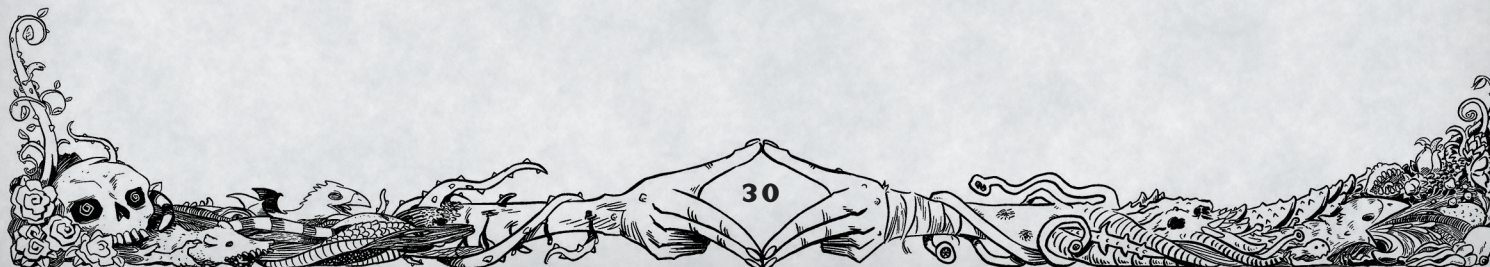
Tools: Choose any two (which can include gaming sets, musical instruments, or vehicle types). If you wish, you can replace one of these proficiencies with knowledge of an additional language.

Saving Throws: Dexterity, Intelligence

Skills: Choose any three

THE SLEUTH

LEVEL	PRECISION DAMAGE	FEATURES
1st	+1d6	Astute Expertise, Precision Damage, Sleuth Archetype
2nd	+1d6	Attentive Action, Penetrating Insight
3rd	+1d6	Archetype Features, Specialist Techniques (2)
4th	+1d6	Calculated Ambush
5th	+2d6	Resolute Insight
6th	+2d6	Archetype Features
7th	+3d6	Additional Specialist Technique
8th	+3d6	Know Thy Enemy
9th	+4d6	Archetype Features, Reliable Expertise
10th	+4d6	Voice of Reason





SLEUTH MULTICLASSING

If you gain your first level of the Sleuth class by multiclassing, instead of gaining all the proficiencies described above, you gain proficiency with one skill of your choice and one type of tool of your choice.

EQUIPMENT

As a 1st level character, you start with one simple weapon of your choice, and one set of artisan's tools of your choice. You can purchase additional equipment using the starting money granted by your background.

ASTUTE EXPERTISE

Choose two of your skill proficiencies, or one of your skill proficiencies and your proficiency with one type of tool. You gain expertise with those proficiencies, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses them.

PRECISION DAMAGE

You can leverage your powers of observation to land precise strikes. Once per turn, you can deal an extra 1d6 damage to one creature you hit with an attack if you have advantage on the attack roll. The attack must use a finesse or ranged weapon.

If you have succeeded on a Wisdom (Insight) check against a creature within the last minute, you can inflict your precision damage on that creature, even if you do not have advantage on the attack roll. However, you can never inflict precision damage if you have disadvantage on the attack roll.

When you reach 5th level or higher as a sleuth, your precision damage increases to 2d6. It increases to 3d6 when you reach 7th level in this class, and to 4d6 when you reach 9th level.

SLEUTH ARCHETYPE

Choose an archetype for your Sleuth class from those listed in chapter 3, "Archetypes." Your choice grants you skill proficiencies and other features when you choose it at 1st level. It also grants you additional archetype features at 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels.

ATTENTIVE ACTION

At 2nd level, your quick thinking and attention to your surroundings allow you to act with startling speed. You can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Use an Object action, or to make an ability check using any one of the skill or tool proficiencies for which you have expertise, as long as that ability check could normally be made with one action.

PENETRATING INSIGHT

At 2nd level, you can use your bonus action to make a Wisdom (Insight) check against a creature you can see that is not incapacitated, contested by the target's Charisma (Deception) check. If you succeed, you gain advantage on the next attack roll you make against that creature before the end of your next turn. Also, for 1 minute (or until you target a different creature with this feature), you have advantage on Intelligence or Wisdom checks to discern information about the target and on Charisma checks to influence it.

SPECIALIST TECHNIQUES

At 3rd level, you learn two Specialist Techniques from the options listed at the end of this class description, gaining the listed benefits of both options you choose.

You learn one additional Specialist Technique when you reach 7th level in this class.

CALCULATED AMBUSH

Starting at 4th level, you have advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in the combat yet. In addition, any hit you score against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.

RESOLUTE INSIGHT

At 5th level, when you use your action to make an Intelligence or Wisdom check to discern or recall information, if the check fails, you can spend 1 resolve point to reroll that check with advantage.

In addition, whenever you finish a short rest, you regain 1 spent resolve point if one or more times since the last time you finished a short or long rest you have personally uncovered an important clue, hiding creature, or concealed object that was previously unknown to you or any of your allies.

KNOW THINE ENEMY

At 8th level, whenever you succeed on a contested Wisdom (Insight) check against a creature, you also discern some additional facts about them. The DM tells you if the creature is your equal, superior, or inferior regarding two of the following characteristics of your choice:

- An ability score of your choice
- Armor Class
- Current hit points
- Total class levels (if any)
- Levels in a particular class (if any)

At the DM's option, you might also deduce a fact about the creature's history or one of its personality traits.





RELIABLE EXPERTISE

At 9th level in this class, whenever you make an ability check for which you have expertise, you can treat a roll of 8 or lower as a 9.

VOICE OF REASON

At 10th level, you have advantage on saving throws against becoming charmed or frightened. In addition, when one or more allies within 30 feet of you make a saving throw against becoming charmed or frightened, you can use your reaction to grant one or two of those allies who can hear you advantage.

SPECIALIST TECHNIQUES

Options for the Specialist Techniques feature are listed here in alphabetical order. You can never take the same Specialist Technique option more than once, no matter how many times you get to select one, even if that Specialist Technique offers different choices.



ACADEMICIAN

You gain a +2 bonus to all Intelligence checks, and while you are in a good library or well-equipped laboratory, you have advantage on Intelligence and Wisdom checks that include your proficiency bonus.

ALIENIST

You gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following skills: Arcana, Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Persuasion, Religion, or Science. In addition, you automatically succeed on ability checks to counsel a character afflicted with madness. When a character who can hear you makes a Wisdom, Intelligence, or Charisma saving throw, you can spend 1 resolve point as a reaction to give them advantage on the roll.

CULINARY ARTIST

You gain proficiency with cook's utensils, and have advantage on ability checks to detect poison in food or drink. During a long rest, you can prepare and serve a meal that helps you and your allies recover from the rigors of adventuring, provided you have suitable food, cook's utensils, and other supplies on hand. The meal serves up to seven people, and each person who eats it regains two additional Hit Dice (up to their normal maximum) at the end of the long rest. In addition, for the next 24 hours, when those who partake of the meal roll a 1 on a Hit Die, they can reroll the die and must use the new roll.

DETECTIVE

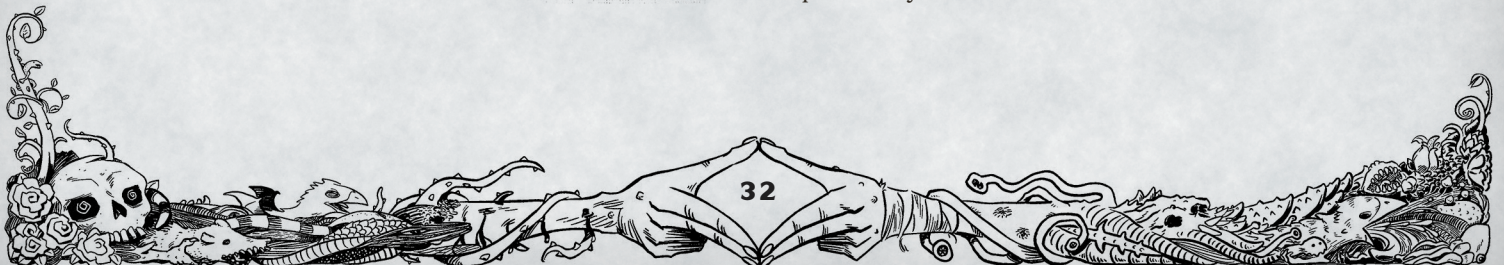
You gain proficiency with your choice of one of the following skills: Insight, Investigation, Perception, or Science. If you wish, you can gain proficiency with photographer's sets instead of one of the listed skills.

If you spend 10 minutes talking to a stranger, you uncover hidden information about them by studying their mannerisms, tiny scuffs on their clothing, and so forth. At the DM's discretion, you deduce one of the following pieces of information about them: a recent location they've visited, an object they've handled, or a person they've spoken with.

If you are 5th level or higher, using this feature only takes 1 minute instead of 10. If you are 8th level or higher, you can discern this information as an action by making a Wisdom (Insight) check contested by the stranger's Charisma (Deception) roll.

DIPLOMAT

You gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following skills: Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Performance, or Persuasion. When you make an ability check with the chosen skill to influence a creature that is indifferent or hostile towards you, you add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.





EXPLORER

You gain your choice of either the Mounted Benefits or Travel Benefits listed under the Outrider's Seasoned Traveler feature. You gain no other benefits of that feature except those described under the category you select.

FOCUSED EXPERTISE

Choose one skill with which you are proficient and one tool with which you are proficient. You gain expertise with both the selected proficiencies, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses them.

JOURNALIST

You gain proficiency with your choice of either photographer's sets or typewriters. In addition, whenever you fail a Charisma check to gain information (such as convincing someone to reveal a secret to you, asking around for the best person to talk to about rumors and gossip, or blending into crowds to get the sense of key topics of conversation), you can spend 1 resolve point to roll 1d8 and add the die to your ability check total, possibly causing it succeed.

When you gain this Specialist Technique, choose one particular village, town, city, or other settlement to be your hometown. In your hometown, when you use this feature to add a die to your failed Charisma check, you roll 1d12 instead of 1d8.

MECHANIC

You gain proficiency with one tool of your choice, and you can grant temporary hit points to crafted objects. By spending 10 minutes using appropriate tools to work on an object or structure you can touch, you can make a DC 10 ability check with those tools. On a success, you grant that object (or a section of it equivalent to a 5-foot cube if it is larger than that) temporary hit points equal to your proficiency bonus + your level.

METAPHYSICIAN

You gain one fragment of Forbidden Lore of your choice from those listed under the Scion class, for which you must meet all prerequisites normally. You also gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following skills: Arcana, Religion, or Science.

MOUNTAINEER

You gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following skills: Athletics, Acrobatics, Nature, or Survival. You gain advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks related to climbing or riding and Dexterity (Acrobatics) checks related to keeping your balance. Also, you are acclimated to high altitude, including elevations above 20,000 feet.

PERFORMER

You gain proficiency in your choice of either the Performance skill or one musical instrument, and if you perform for at least 1 minute, you can attempt to enthrall your audience. After 1 minute of performing, you can spend 2 resolve points to choose any number of humanoids within 60 feet of you who watched and listened for that entire minute. Each target must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw (DC equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma bonus) or be charmed by you. While charmed in this way, the target has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to perceive any creature other than you until your performance ends or until the target can no longer hear you. You can choose to end the performance at any time, otherwise it can last up to 1 hour, though it ends early if you are incapacitated or can no longer speak. It also ends early for an individual target if it takes any damage, you attack it, or it witnesses you attacking or damaging any of its allies.

Whether the target fails or succeeds on its saving throw, it has no hint that you tried to charm it.

PHYSICIAN

You gain proficiency in your choice of alchemist's supplies, microscopes, or one of the following skills: Insight, Medicine, or Science. As a bonus action, you can expend one use of a healer's kit to cause a creature you can touch to regain 1 hit point. If you continue tending to the creature's wounds for 10 minutes while taking no other actions, you can make a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check to allow the creature to spend Hit Dice to regain hit points, as if at the end of a short rest. The maximum number of Hit Dice a creature can spend in this way is equal to your proficiency bonus.

STUDENT OF WARFARE

You gain your choice of one option from the Martial Discipline feature of the Soldier class. You ignore prerequisites when choosing Martial Disciplines with this feature, but you can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one.

You also gain proficiency with your choice of either longarms or any one martial weapon.

TOXICOLOGIST

You are well educated in the science of poisons: their creation, their effects, and their handling. You are proficient with poisoner's kits, and have advantage on ability checks you make to identify particular types of poison. When you would make a saving throw against poison or take poison damage, you can use your reaction to roll 2d4. You add the total to your saving throw result or, if you would take poison damage, you reduce the damage by that total.





SOLDIER

Whether or not you've ever had any actual military training, your experience and instincts combine to give you the mettle of a warrior.

Warfare itself is quickly evolving in this period. Over the years between the Renaissance and the 1890s, the fighter of past eras has evolved into more of a specialist. Soldiers enlisted in a military force usually excel at a few weapons rather than acquiring proficiency with many.

While horseback cavalry units remain a crucial part of military planning, the ever-growing deadliness of longarms and artillery makes the tactics of the Napoleonic Era obsolete. Marshaling an infantry formation on an open field is increasingly an invitation for slaughter. At sea, steam-powered metal has completely replaced wood and sails. During the American Civil War, the dug-in trench warfare of the Petersburg–Richmond theatre of operations provided a glimpse of horrific conflicts to come. As the century closes, the Boer Wars are teaching the British Army hard lessons in guerilla warfare and commando tactics.



CLASS FEATURES

As a soldier, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d10 per soldier level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Weapons: Simple weapons, handguns, longarms, and three other martial weapons of your choice.

Tools: Choose any two (which can include gaming sets, musical instruments, or vehicle types). If you wish, you can replace one of these proficiencies with knowledge of an additional language.

Saving Throws: Strength, Dexterity

Skills: Choose two skills from Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, History, Insight, Intimidation, Perception, Stealth, and Survival

SOLDIER MULTICLASSING

If you gain your first level of the Soldier class by multiclassing, instead of gaining all the proficiencies described above, you gain proficiency with simple weapons, handguns, longarms, and two other martial weapons of your choice.

THE SOLDIER

LEVEL FEATURES

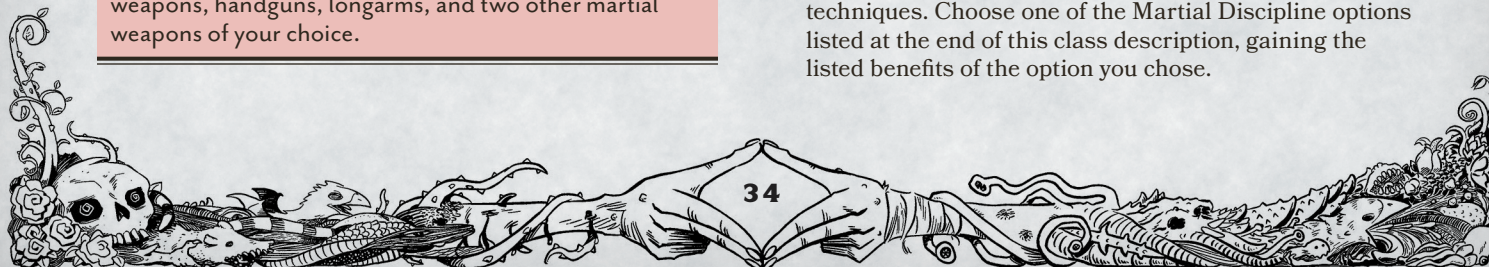
1st	Martial Discipline, Soldier Archetype
2nd	Weapon Specialization
3rd	Additional Martial Discipline, Archetype Features, Swift Combatant
4th	Calculated Ambush, Protective Mark
5th	Resolute Soldier, Weaponmaster's Smite
6th	Archetype Features
7th	Additional Martial Discipline
8th	Know Thy Enemy
9th	Archetype Features
10th	Grizzled Veteran, Additional Martial Discipline

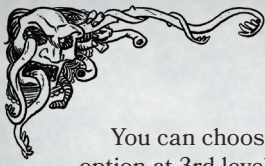
EQUIPMENT

As a 1st level character, you start with any two simple or martial weapons of your choice. You can purchase additional equipment using the starting money granted by your background.

MARTIAL DISCIPLINE

You have mastered one or more specialized military techniques. Choose one of the Martial Discipline options listed at the end of this class description, gaining the listed benefits of the option you chose.





You can choose one additional Martial Discipline option at 3rd level, and then again at 7th level and 10th level.

You can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one.

SOLDIER ARCHETYPE

Choose an archetype for your Soldier class from those listed in chapter 3, "Archetypes." Your choice grants you skill proficiencies and other features when you choose it at 1st level. It also grants you additional archetype features at 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels.

WEAPON SPECIALIZATION

Starting at 2nd level, your focused training in the use of certain weapons allows you to strike more precisely with them. When you hit with an attack roll using any weapon with which you are proficient, you deal an extra 1d4 damage on a hit.

If the target is within 5 feet of you, the extra damage increases to 1d6 instead of 1d4.

The extra damage is the same type as the weapon's damage. However, attacks made as part of a bonus action only inflict this extra damage if they are melee attacks. Attacks using the lower damage value specified by the scattershot weapon property never inflict this extra damage.

SWIFT COMBATANT

At 3rd level, when you use the Attack action, if you have at least 1 resolve point, you can immediately use a bonus action to make an extra weapon attack with a weapon you are holding that does not have the heavy or two-handed properties. Once you make this bonus attack, you cannot do so again until after the end of your next turn.

In addition, if a handgun or longarm is fouled (as described under the handgun and longarm properties), you can spend 1 resolve point to attempt to temporarily clear it as an action, rolling a DC 10 Intelligence (gunsmith's kits) check. If you succeed, the weapon temporarily stops being fouled. 1 minute after you use this effect, the weapon resumes being fouled as it was before.

CALCULATED AMBUSH

Starting at 4th level, you have advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in the combat yet. In addition, any hit you score against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.

PROTECTIVE MARK

Starting at 4th level, if you mark a creature with the Marking Strike option of a Targeted Strike, while you are within 5 feet of the marked creature, you can use your reaction to make a weapon attack against it whenever it makes an attack roll that doesn't target you.

RESOLUTE SOLDIER

Starting at 5th level, when you score one or more critical hits that inflict damage on one or more creatures during your turn, at the end of that turn you regain 1 spent resolve point. If you also reduced at least one creature to 0 hit points during that turn, you regain 2 spent resolve points instead.

WEAPONMASTER'S SMITE

Starting at 5th level, when the stakes are high you can be even more effective with your favored weapons. When you inflict the extra damage from your Weapon Specialization feature, you can spend 1 or more resolve points to augment the damage.

You increase the extra damage to 2d4 for 1 resolve point, and if you spend more than 1 resolve point, you increase the extra damage by another 1d4 for each additional resolve point spent (making it 3d4 for 2 resolve points, 4d4 for 3 resolve points, and 5d4 for 4 resolve points).

The maximum number of resolve points you can spend on a single use of this feature, or on any other class or archetype feature, is equal to your proficiency bonus.

If the target on which you inflict this damage is within 5 feet of you, the dice of extra damage you roll for this feature are d6's instead of d4's.

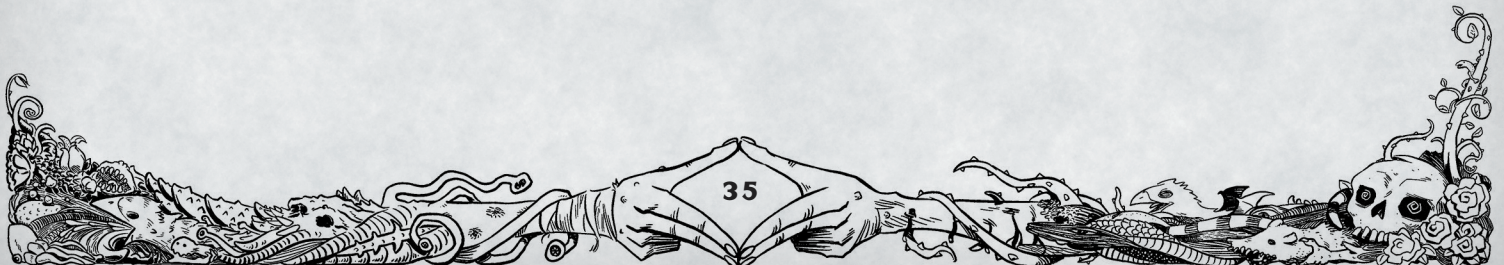
IMPROVED CRITICAL

Starting at 8th level, your weapon attacks and unarmed strikes score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

GRIZZLED VETERAN

At 10th level, whenever you make a Charisma (Intimidation) check against humanoids or beasts, you are considered proficient in the Intimidation skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

In addition, when you make an attack roll that includes your proficiency bonus, you can spend 2 resolve points to add double your proficiency bonus to the roll, instead of your normal proficiency bonus. If applying this bonus to an attack roll increases the total to 20 or higher, if the attack hits, you can spend 1 additional resolve point to turn the attack into a critical hit if it isn't one already.





MARTIAL DISCIPLINES

Soldiers and certain other characters can master specialized military techniques known as Martial Disciplines. Options for this feature are listed alphabetically below.

If a Martial Discipline has prerequisites, you must meet them to learn it. You can learn the Martial Discipline at the same time that you meet its prerequisites. Any level prerequisite listed refers to your soldier level.

You can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one.

ARCHAIC

You are proficient with all martial weapons, and you gain a +1 bonus to melee attack rolls while you are not wielding a firearm with either hand.

BATTLEFIELD DEFENSE

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher

As long as you are not wearing armor or using a shield, your base AC equals 12 + your Dexterity modifier + your Wisdom modifier. In addition, when you have cover against an attack, if it still hits, you have resistance against that attack's damage.

BOXER

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher

You gain a +1 to attack rolls when making unarmed strikes. When you hit a creature with an unarmed strike or an improvised weapon attack, you can roll a d4 in place of the normal damage, and the creature has disadvantage the next time it makes an attack roll, Strength check, or Dexterity check before the end of its next turn.

CAVALRY

While you are mounted, unmounted creatures you hit with weapon attacks can't make opportunity attacks against you or your mount for the rest of the turn if they are smaller than your mount, and you can re-roll any weapon damage die that rolls a 1. You must use the new roll.

DEMOLITIONS EXPERT

You are proficient with demolitions kits, and whenever one or more creatures you can see must roll Dexterity saving throws against an area effect you created, you can choose a number of them equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus to gain advantage on that saving throw. If they succeed, they have resistance against any damage they still take from the area effect.

GREAT WEAPON FIGHTING

When you roll a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack you make with a melee weapon that you are wielding with two hands, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll. The weapon must have the two-handed or versatile property for you to gain this benefit.

HARRYING

When you hit a creature with an unarmed strike or a melee attack using a weapon that doesn't have the heavy, two-handed, or versatile property, the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the end of its next turn.

NAVAL SKIRMISHER

As long as you are not wearing armor or using a shield, you have a climbing speed equal to your normal speed, and you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

POINT BLANK SHOT

Being within 5 feet of a hostile creature doesn't impose disadvantage on your ranged attack rolls with one-handed weapons, and your ranged attacks ignore half cover and three-quarters cover against targets within 30 feet of you.

SHOOTIST

You gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

SNIPER TRAINING

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher

Whenever you have advantage on a ranged weapon attack roll and hit a target 30 or more feet away, you deal an extra 1d10 piercing damage if the lower of the two d20 rolls would also hit the target. In addition, when you are hidden from a creature and miss it with a ranged weapon attack, making the attack doesn't reveal your position unless the creature was less than 30 feet away from you.

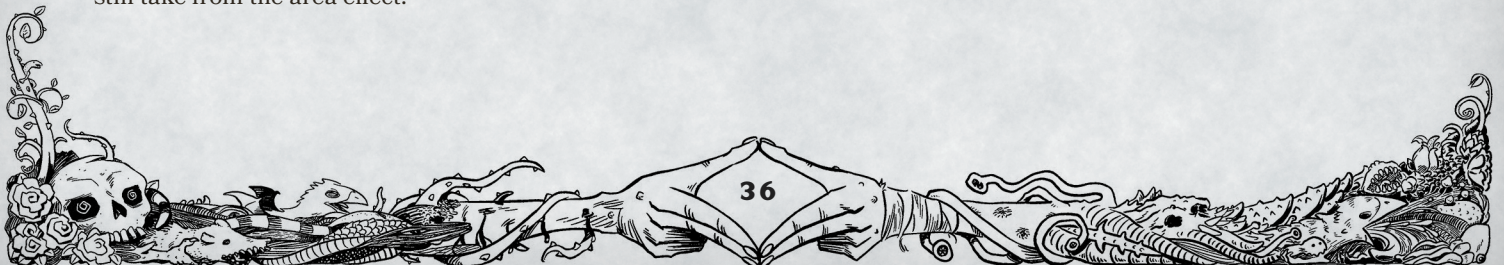
TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

When you engage in two-weapon fighting, you can add your ability modifier to the damage of the second attack.

WEAPON FOCUS

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher

Choose one of the following groups of weapons: finesse weapons, heavy weapons, light weapons, simple weapons, or versatile weapons. You gain a +1 bonus to melee attack rolls you make with weapons from the chosen group.





STALWART

Whether you are an Olympic athlete, a nomad dwelling in a harsh wilderness, a rugged Antarctic explorer, a toughened street fighter, a sailor who's seen it all, or simply someone born stronger and sturdier, your talents for physical achievement and survival set you apart.

Such fortitude grants distinct advantages, even among those cultures which no longer value physical prowess the way they once did. Despite the relative safety enjoyed in many places, the world as a whole remains a dangerous place, especially for those unsheltered by wealth or social class. Even in the heart of civilization, one does not need to wander far to find real physical peril-- And many members of this class harbor a fierce need to test the limits of their own capabilities.

In combat, you are a fierce opponent, with or without weapons. Even when you don't strike your enemies with the trained precision of a soldier, there are few opponents you can't outlast.



CLASS FEATURES

As a stalwart, you gain the following class features.

HIT POINTS

Hit Dice: 1d12 per stalwart level

Hit Points at 1st Level: 12 + your Constitution modifier

Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d12 (or 7) + your Constitution modifier per level after 1st

PROFICIENCIES

Weapons: Simple weapons, handguns, and your choice of either longarms or two other martial weapons of your choice

Tools: Choose any two (which can include gaming sets, musical instruments, or vehicle types). If you wish, you can replace one of these proficiencies with knowledge of an additional language.

Saving Throws: Strength, Constitution

Skills: Choose three skills from Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, Insight, Intimidation, Nature, Perception, Religion, Science, and Survival

STALWART MULTICLASSING

If you gain your first level of the Stalwart class by multiclassing, instead of gaining all the proficiencies described above, you gain proficiency with one type of artisan's tool or vehicle of your choice.

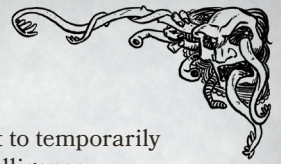
EQUIPMENT

As a 1st level character, you start with any one simple weapon of your choice and any one martial weapon of your choice. You can purchase additional equipment using the starting money granted by your background.

THE STALWART

LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Forceful Prowess, Stalwart Archetype
2nd	Tenacious Strike +1d6
3rd	Archetype Feature, Steadfast Focus, Swift Combatant
4th	Protective Mark, Stalwart Technique
5th	Hardened Survivor, Tenacious Strike +1d8
6th	Archetype Feature
7th	—
8th	Uncanny Durability
9th	Archetype Feature
10th	Iron Stamina, Tenacious Strike +1d10





FORCEFUL PROWESS

You've learned to rely on your own personal mettle and endurance in moments of difficulty, granting you the following benefits:

- Your AC can't be less than 12 + your Dexterity modifier + your Constitution modifier, regardless of what kind of armor you may or may not be wearing.
- While you are not wearing medium or heavy armor, your speed increases by a number of feet equal to 5 times your proficiency bonus.
- You add half your proficiency bonus (rounded up) to any Strength or Constitution check you make that doesn't already include your proficiency bonus.
- You can roll a d4 in place of the normal damage of your unarmed strike.

STALWART ARCHETYPE

Choose an archetype for your Stalwart class from those listed in chapter 3, "Archetypes." Your choice grants you skill proficiencies and other features when you choose it at 1st level. It also grants you additional archetype features at 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels.

TENACIOUS STRIKE

Starting at 2nd level, you are able to outlast opponents with your superior endurance and athleticism. When you hit with a weapon attack, the target takes 1d6 extra damage if it's below its hit point maximum. If the target is within 5 feet of you, you add half your Stalwart level to this extra damage.

This extra damage increases as you gain levels in your Stalwart class, becoming 1d8 at 5th level and 1d10 at 9th level.

STEADFAST FOCUS

Starting at 3rd level, maintaining your internal focus allows you to shrug off injuries. While you have 1 or more resolve points, bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage that you take from non-magical weapons is reduced by an amount equal to your proficiency bonus.

SWIFT COMBATANT

At 3rd level, when you use the Attack action, if you have at least 1 resolve point, you can immediately use a bonus action to make an extra weapon attack with a weapon you are holding that does not have the heavy or two-handed properties. Once you make this bonus attack, you cannot do so again until after the end of your next turn.

In addition, if a handgun or longarm is fouled (as described under the handgun and longarm properties),

you can spend 1 resolve point to attempt to temporarily clear it as an action, rolling a DC 10 Intelligence (gunsmith's kits) check. If you succeed, the weapon temporarily stops being fouled. 1 minute after you use this effect, the weapon resumes being fouled as it was before.

PROTECTIVE MARK

Starting at 4th level, if you mark a creature with the Marking Strike option of a Targeted Strike, while you are within 5 feet of the marked creature, you can use your reaction to make a weapon against it whenever it makes an attack roll that doesn't target you.

STALWART TECHNIQUE

At 4th level, you choose one Specialist Technique from the options listed under the Sleuth class and gain the listed benefits.

You can never take the same Specialist Technique option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one, even if that Specialist Technique offers different choices.

HARDENED SURVIVOR

Starting at 5th level, when an attacker that you can see hits you with an attack, you can spend 1 resolve point as a reaction to gain resistance to all damage except psychic and necrotic damage until the end of your next turn.

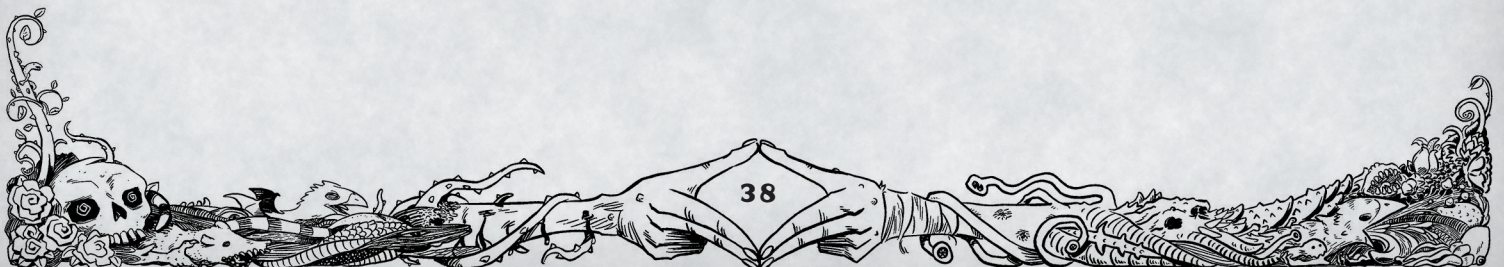
In addition, whenever you finish a short rest, if you have not been reduced to 0 hit points since the last time you finished a short or long rest, but during that time a creature you could see was reduced to 0 hit points while it was within 10 feet of you, you regain 1 expended resolve point.

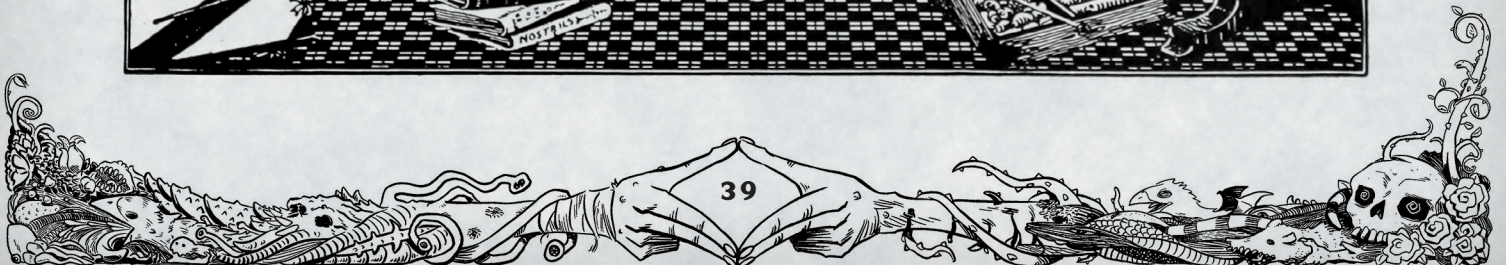
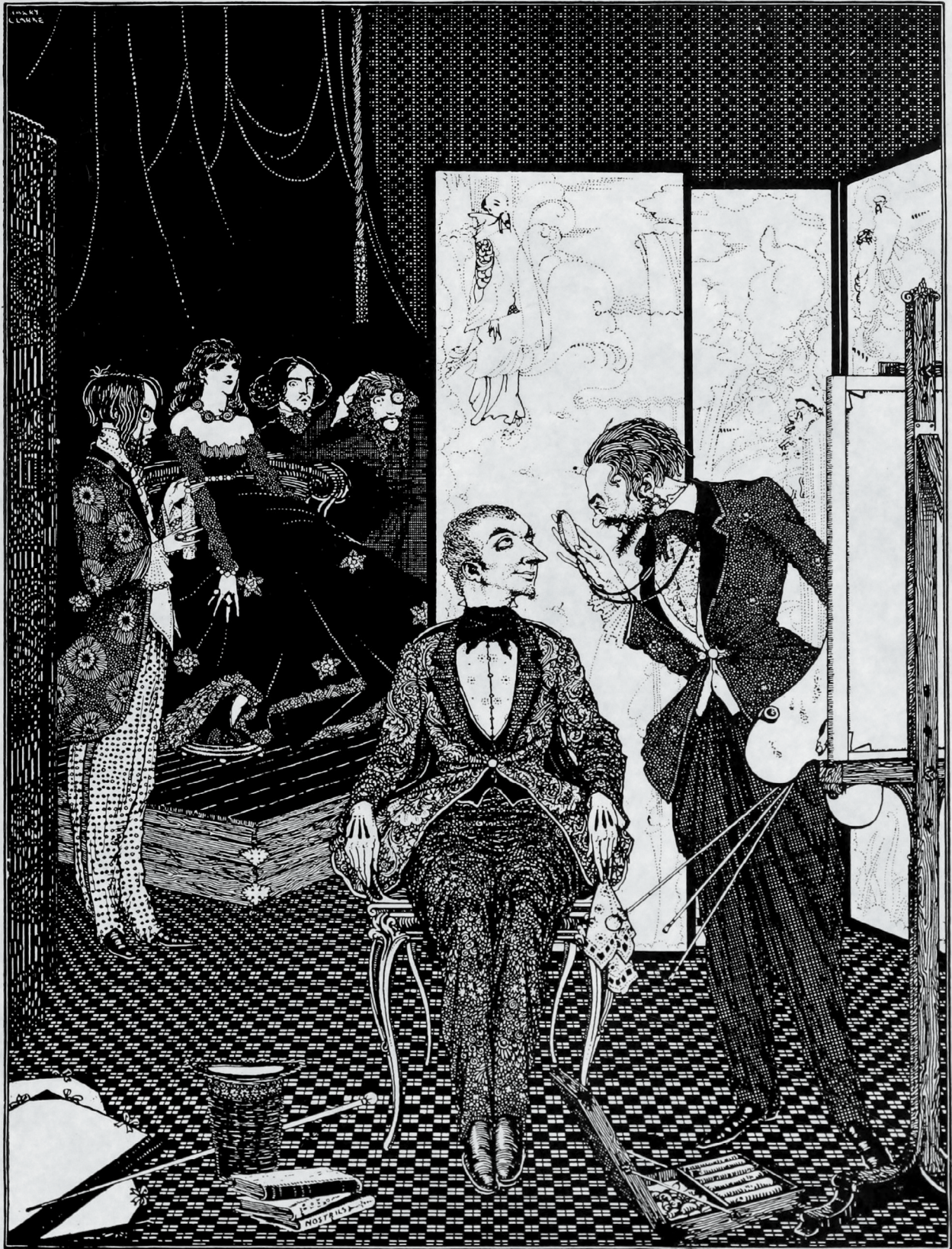
UNCANNY DURABILITY

Starting at 8th level, you can endure assaults that would devastate others. Whenever you fail a saving throw, you can spend 1 resolve point to roll 1d8 and add the die to your saving throw total. If applying this bonus to a death saving throw increases the total to 20 or higher, you gain the benefits of rolling a 20 on the d20.

IRON STAMINA

At 10th level, when you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can spend 3 resolve points to drop to 1 hit point instead. When you use this feature, once before the end of your next turn, you can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to your Constitution modifier + half your stalwart level.







... CHAPTER 3 ...

ARCHETYPES

IN THE **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** rules, while a class represents general aptitudes and a larger approach to overcoming challenges, choosing a class's archetype defines your character's calling. It shapes your relationship to society, your allies, and the world—as well as your means of combatting the insidious evil behind the scenes.

Whenever you gain your first level in a class, you choose an archetype for that class. Unlike in the normal D&D rules, archetypes are not subclasses that are already connected to a certain class. Instead, they are specific vocations that define how you use the capabilities granted by your choice of class. You only gain a new archetype when you gain levels in a new class, but when you do, you can choose any archetype you wish.

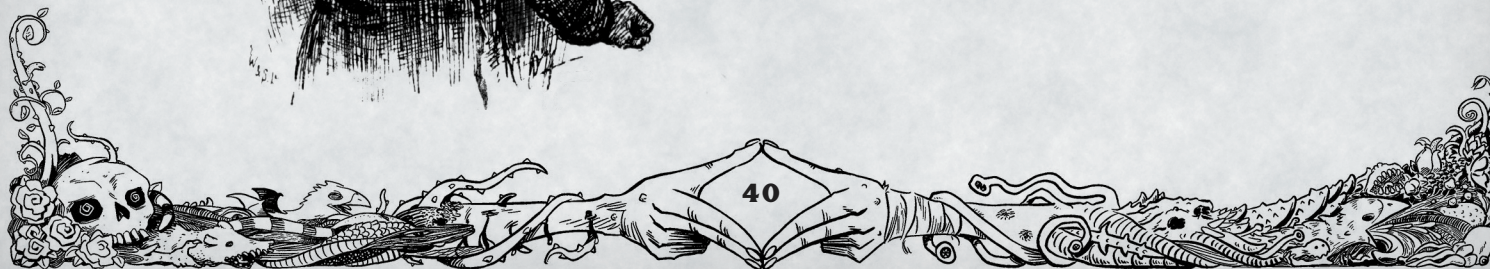
At 1st level, an archetype usually grants you some proficiencies and one or two other capabilities linked to exploration or social interaction.

An archetype is forever linked to the class for which you choose it. At 1st level, for example, if you begin with the Sleuth class and choose the Criminal as your archetype for that class, you gain only gain further Criminal archetype features by gaining levels in the Sleuth class, as explained under that class's features. If you later multiclass and gain levels in the Soldier class, those levels do not grant you any additional features from the Criminal archetype, no matter how many levels you gain—instead, you choose a new archetype for your Soldier class, and gain features in that archetype accordingly.

You can never choose the same archetype more than once, no matter how many new classes you multiclass into.

PLAYER CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

ARCHETYPE	DESCRIPTION
Adept	A secretive spellcaster and keeper of ancient arcane lore
Artifact Hunter	An acquirer of rare antiquities
Charlatan	A con artist or stage magician who might blunder into true magic
Criminal	A rogue with a talent for thriving outside of the law
Expert	A scholar, tradesperson, or other specialist with highly-valued skills
Gunslinger	A master of firearms, ranged combat, and trick shots
Laborer	A steadfast worker able to tackle challenges few others could endure
Medium	A seer who views the hidden world beneath reality, whether they like it or not
Mystic	A metaphysical visionary who opens their mind to transcendent perceptions
Outrider	A scout or explorer accustomed to life on the frontier
Parson	A cleric or layperson representing a religious institution
Pugilist	A practitioner of advanced unarmed combat techniques
Slayer	A relentless hunter devoted to destroying monsters at all costs
Socialite	An influential sophisticate skilled at leveraging social privilege
Spy	A covert agent of espionage with specialized skills
Tactician	A master of the battlefield, adept at gaining the upper-hand against enemies.





ADEPT

True magic is all but unknown to the general populace of Gothic Earth. You are one of a few individuals who secretly preserve the ancient knowledge of spellcasting and magical lore, as it has been passed down by members of the secret magical societies known as qabals.

As an adept, you are both an arcane spellcaster and a collector of information about qabals—those that currently exist as well as the famous and infamous qabals of the past.

Adepts conduct research in areas around the globe for knowledge about the identities, symbols, members, and history of these secret societies. In the case of contemporary qabals, it may be a matter of survival for you to determine whether a qabal is a potential ally, a neutral organization to be respected but left alone, or a dangerous enemy to be destroyed.

THE ADEPT

LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Master Ritualist, Adept Talents
3rd	Student of the Arcane, Augment Spells
6th	Studied Resolve, Additional Forbidden Lore
9th	Mental Sanctum, Additional Forbidden Lore

MASTER RITUALIST

At 1st level, you gain the Book of Shadows option from the fragments of Forbidden Lore listed under the Scion class.

You also gain one additional fragment of Forbidden Lore of your choice at 6th level, and again at 9th level. You must fulfill all prerequisites for any fragment of Forbidden Lore you choose for this feature.

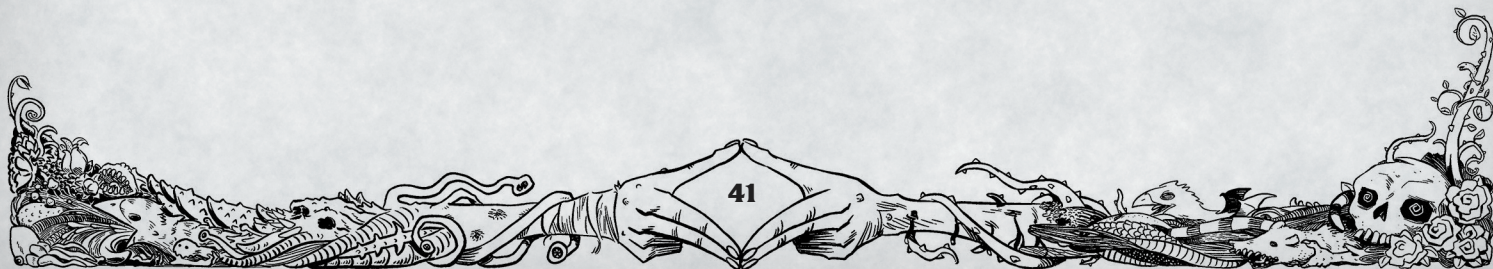
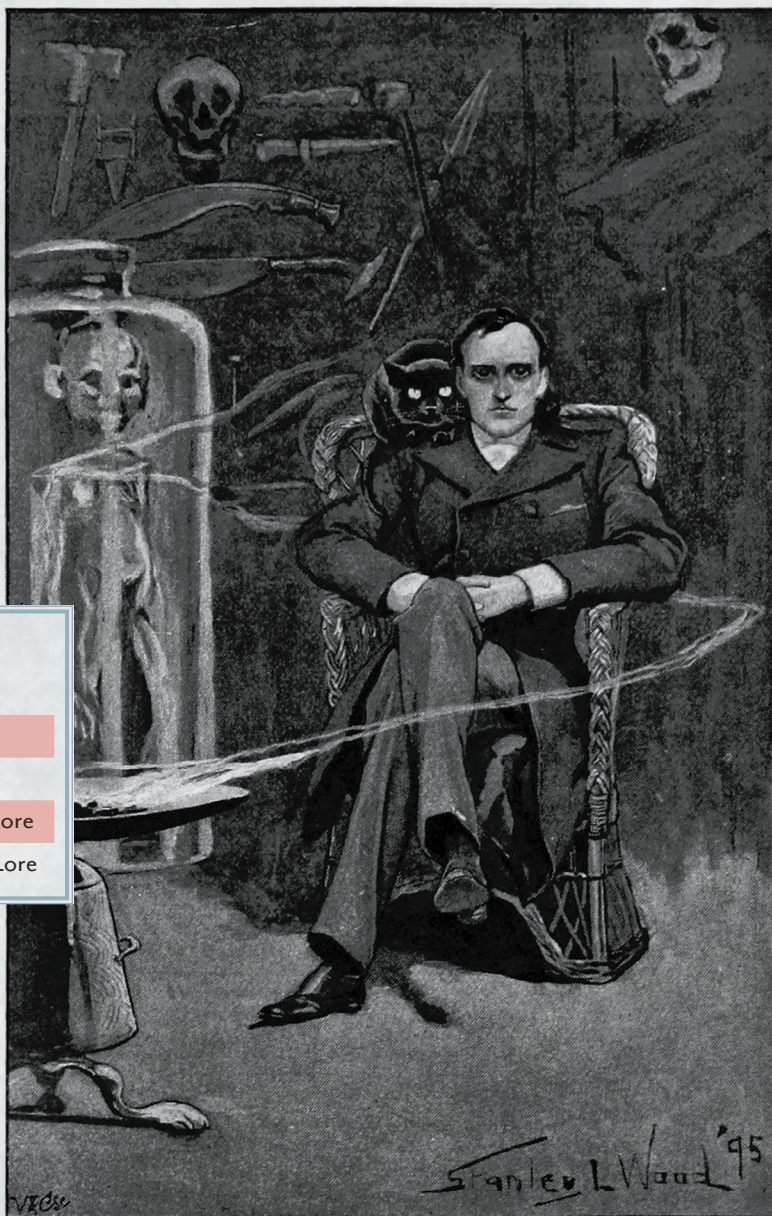
In addition, when you cast a spell as a ritual, if you are proficient with the Arcana skill, you double your proficiency bonus when adding it to your Intelligence (Arcana) check to cast the ritual spell.

ADEPT TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with the Arcana skill. If you are already proficient with the Arcana skill, you gain proficiency with one of the following skills of your choice: Deception, History, Insight, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, Religion, or Stealth. You also gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following: alchemist's supplies,

calligrapher's supplies, disguise kits, forgery kits, or herbalism kits.

In addition, you are known in the world of the secretive qabals that preserve magical knowledge, granting you access to a hidden network of supporters and operatives who can provide assistance in eluding the minions of the Red Death. You know a set of secret signs and passwords you can use to identify such operatives, who can provide you with access to a disguised safe house, free room and board, or assistance in finding information. These co-conspirators never endanger their lives for you or risk revealing their true identities.





STUDENT OF THE ARCANES

At 3rd level, you gain one of the following fragments of Forbidden Lore of your choice: Adept Spell, Blatant Evocation, Hermetic Formulae, Qabalistic Initiation, or Supernatural Performance. You must fulfill all prerequisites for any fragment of Forbidden Lore you choose for this feature.

AUGMENT SPELLS

Starting at 3rd level, when you spend resolve points to cast a spell, you can spend additional resolve points to increase its level, provided that the spell has an enhanced effect at a higher level. The spell's level increases by 1 for each additional resolve point you spend. The total number of resolve points you spend on a use of this feature (including the resolve point cost of the spell) cannot exceed your proficiency bonus.

STUDIED RESOLVE

Starting at 6th level, when you finish a short rest, if you have spent resolve points to cast one or more spells of 3rd level or higher since the last time you finished a short or long rest, you regain 2 resolve points.

MENTAL SANCTUM

Starting at 9th level, your thoughts can't be read by telepathy or other means unless you allow it, and you have advantage on saving throws against effects that would cause you to be charmed or frightened, or which would inflict psychic damage on you. If a creature inflicts psychic damage on you, you can use your reaction to inflict the same amount of psychic damage on them.



ARTIFACT HUNTER

You search for antiquities and mysteries of the past, obtaining and studying the remains of bygone cultures—their bones, their ruins, their surviving masterworks, and their tombs. You might describe yourself as an archaeologist, antiquarian, or acquirer of rare antiquities, but others often call you a tomb raider or grave robber. Characters of the artifact hunter archetype range from those who plunder for wealth or fame to others who consider it their duty to illuminate the past or keep the world's greatest treasures from falling into the wrong hands.

Because of the great rivalries and frequent moments of danger endemic to your vocation, you develop prowess with a signature weapon, usually one with other uses beyond battle. A long or extending staff useful for probing potential traps is a good example, as is a light hammer good for both pounding in pitons and bashing skulls. Distinctive or archaic armaments such as blowguns, nets, or whips are especially favored for this purpose, the better to grow one's personal reputation.

THE ARTIFACT HUNTER

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Artifact Hunter Talents
3rd	Delver's Prowess, Signature Weapon
6th	Historical Insight
9th	Signature Precision

ARTIFACT HUNTER TALENTS

You learn two languages of your choice, and you gain proficiency with handguns and one martial weapon of your choice. If you are not proficient with the History skill, you gain proficiency with that skill; otherwise you gain proficiency in your choice of one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Arcana, Athletics, Investigation, Perception, Religion, or Survival.

You also gain expertise with the History skill, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses it.

In addition, when you enter a structure that is more than 100 years old, you can correctly ascertain its original purpose and determine its builders, whether they were members of a particular historical nation you've studied, or even members of some unknown species or race, provided they have at least some tie to a human culture. You also automatically succeed on checks to determine the monetary value of art objects more than a century old.





DELVER'S PROWESS

Beginning at 3rd level, you are adept at navigating the dangers of lost tombs and shadowy tunnels. If a secret door or trap is within 30 feet of you, the DC of ability checks to find or notice it is 5 lower for you.

Also, as long as you are not blinded, deafened, or incapacitated, you have advantage on Dexterity saving throws against effects that you can see, such as explosions or traps.

SIGNATURE WEAPON

At 3rd level, choose one type of weapon with which you are proficient that does not have the handgun, heavy, longarm, or two-handed properties. This becomes your signature weapon. Whenever you gain a level, you can change your signature weapon to a different weapon if you wish. You can only have one weapon type as your signature weapon.

You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with your signature weapon, and while you are wielding it, you can use a bonus action to do one of the following:

- **Extended Reach.** You take the Use an Object action, targeting an object within 10 feet of you, even if it would normally be too far away for you to interact with.
- **Quick Disarm.** You choose one target within range of your signature weapon. If the target does not succeed on a Strength saving throw, it drops one item of your choice that it is holding. When you cause an item to be dropped in this way, you can choose to pull it up to 5 feet closer to you before it falls to the ground, or you can let it fall at the target's feet. If the target is using two or more hands to hold a single item, or if it is larger than Medium size, it has advantage on this saving throw.
- **Swift Defense.** You flourish your weapon protectively, causing attack rolls against you to be made at disadvantage until the end of your turn.

The DC of any saving throws required by this feature equals 8 + your proficiency + your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier (your choice).

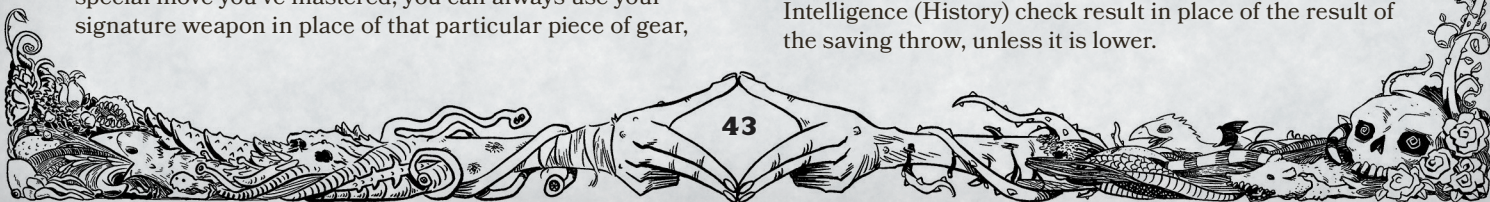
In addition, when you gain this feature, choose one kind of adventuring gear worth \$10.00 or less that weighs 15 lbs. or less. Whether by clever engineering or some special move you've mastered, you can always use your signature weapon in place of that particular piece of gear,



with no penalty or loss of effectiveness. (For example, you may be adept at lashing out with a whip to grasp an object above you securely, as if it were a grappling hook; you could have a secret compartment in a weapon's handle, allowing it to function as a map case; or you have practiced quickly binding a foe's hands with your lasso, allowing you to use it in place of manacles.)

HISTORICAL INSIGHT

Starting at 6th level, you can survive moments of danger by recalling similar situations in history. When you fail a saving throw, you can spend 1 resolve point as a reaction to roll an Intelligence (History) check. You use your Intelligence (History) check result in place of the result of the saving throw, unless it is lower.



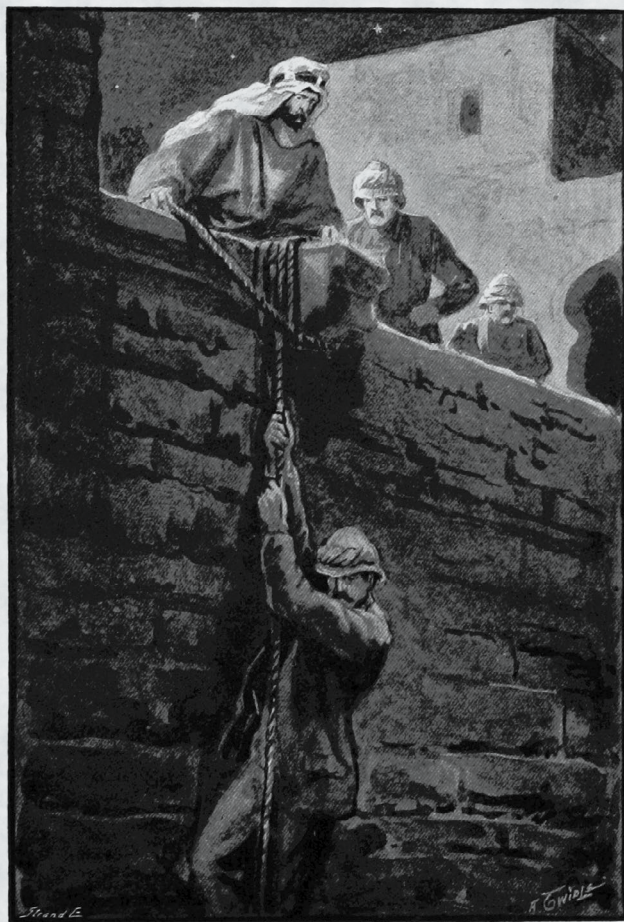


In addition, whenever you roll a Charisma (Deception, Intimidation, or Persuasion) check to influence any creature (living, undead, or otherwise) that was born more than a century ago, you are considered proficient in the applicable skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the Charisma check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

SCHOLARLY PRECISION

At 9th level, once on each of your turns when you miss with a weapon attack using your signature weapon, you can make another attack with the same weapon as part of the same action.

In addition, once per turn, when you fail an Intelligence check or Wisdom check that included your proficiency bonus, you can spend 1 resolve point to reroll that check.



CHARLATAN

You are one of the many stage magicians, prestidigitators, illusionists, cult leaders, or false mediums at work in Gothic Earth as the 19th Century winds to a close.

Common sense should steer people away from things too good to be true, but common sense seems to be in short supply when you're around. You know what people want and you deliver—or rather, you very convincingly promise to deliver.

For the most part, the cunning grifters who claim mystical powers know nothing of the Red Death or the true art of magic. Every now and then, however, a charlatan stumbles upon real occult insights or abilities.

When such unfortunate souls survive their discovery, if their survival is to continue, they must quickly learn to respect the supernatural forces they once misrepresented. Some even master the hidden energies they have tapped to attain greater magical powers of their own.

Saving Throw DCs. Some features of this archetype force other creatures to make saving throws. The DC for these saves is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. If you gain spells from this archetype, Charisma is also your spellcasting ability score, used for both saving throws and spell attacks.

THE CHARLATAN

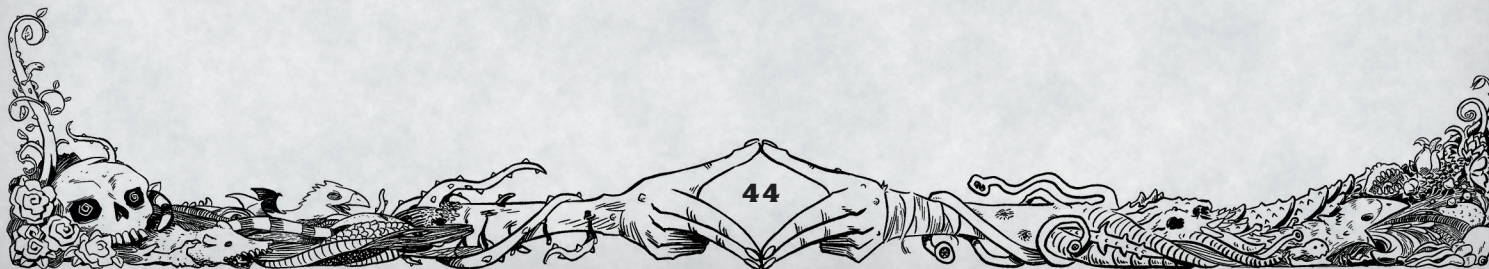
LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Charlatan Talents
3rd	Deceptive Performance, Ritual Practice
6th	Greater Ritual Practice
9th	Beguiling Defense

CHARLATAN TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency in two of the following skills of your choice: Arcana, Deception, Performance, or Sleight of Hand. You also gain proficiency with disguise kits and forgery kits if you don't have them already.

In addition, you can always find a place to conduct your esoteric performances, whether at a theater, private party, the home of a wealthy patron, or even at a circus. At such a place, you receive free lodging and food of a modest or comfortable standard (depending on the quality of the establishment), as long as you perform each night. In addition, your performance makes you something of a local figure. When strangers recognize you in a town where you have performed, they typically take a liking to you.





DECEPTIVE PERFORMANCE

When you reach 3rd level, you can use your skills and showmanship to try to distract one creature you can see. The creature must be able to see and hear you, and it must understand your language. As an action, make a Charisma (Deception or Performance) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check contested by the creature's Wisdom (Insight) check. If your check succeeds, until the end of your next turn, your movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks from the target and your attack rolls against it are made with advantage.

If your check fails, the target can't be distracted by you in this way for 1 hour.

In addition, if your check succeeds against a creature you have already successfully used this feature against within the last minute, it also has disadvantage on Wisdom and Intelligence checks for 1 minute.

RITUAL PRACTICE

At 3rd level, you have practiced conducting special rituals infused with the trappings of the occult, reflected in one of the options described here. If you choose the Hidden Powers option, your deceptive performances have unlocked true access to supernatural powers; otherwise, your occult prowess is only a clever deception. You gain your choice of one of two options for this feature, either Hidden Powers or Marshal Belief, both described below:

Hidden Powers. You can choose two fragments of Forbidden Lore from those listed under the Scion class. Both fragments you choose must require proficiency in the Deception skill as a prerequisite, and you must fulfill all other prerequisites as well.

Marshal Belief. You can perform a nonmagical ritual that inspires others with an empowering belief in your supernatural gifts. As an action, you start a performance that lasts at least until the end of your next turn. When you do so, you can choose a number of humanoid within 60 feet of you who can see and hear you, up to a number equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1). Until your performance ends, when one of the chosen targets makes a saving throw, or an ability check that is not a Wisdom check, it can roll 1d4 and add the result to the roll.

Each round, you can choose to use your action to continue the performance, causing it to last until the end of your next turn. If you extend this performance for at least 1 minute, the chosen targets must each succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by you.

While charmed in this way, the target idolizes you, it speaks glowingly of you to anyone who talks to it, and it hinders anyone who opposes you, although it avoids violence unless it was already inclined to fight on your behalf. This effect ends on a target after 1 hour, if it takes any damage, if you attack it, or if it witnesses



you attacking or damaging any of its allies. If a target succeeds on its saving throw, the target has no hint that you tried to charm it.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

GREATER RITUAL PRACTICE

At 6th level, you gain your choice of one of two options for this feature, either Counter Outside Influence or Unleashed Power, both described below:

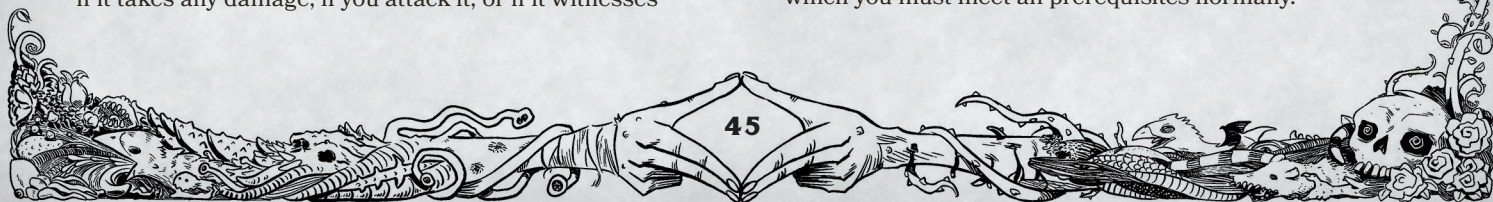
Counter Outside Influence. As an action, you can start a performance that lasts until the end of your next turn. During that time, you and any creatures within 30 feet of you who are friendly to you have advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed. A creature must be able to hear you to gain this benefit. The performance ends early if you are incapacitated or silenced or if you voluntarily end it (no action required).

Unleashed Power. You gain one fragment of Forbidden Lore of your choice from those listed under the Scion class, for which you must meet all prerequisites normally.

BEGUILING DEFENSE

Beginning at 9th level, you are immune to being charmed, and when another creature attempts to charm you, you can use your reaction to attempt to turn the charm back on that creature. The creature must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or be charmed by you for 1 minute or until the creature takes any damage.

In addition, you gain one fragment of Forbidden Lore of your choice from those listed under the Scion class, for which you must meet all prerequisites normally.





CRIMINAL

You have a knack for performing illegal activities, living outside the law, and profiting at the expense of others. You're far closer than most people to the world of murder, theft, and violence that pervades the underbelly of civilization. Flouting the rules and regulations of society is how you've survived this long.

You may be driven to crime by a life of deprivation, the need or desire for wealth, or just the thrill of getting away with it. You likely see members of the law enforcement community as the "enemy." Yet there are greater threats.

Criminals, too, come into contact with the evil supernatural forces that taint the world. You may find yourself lending your expertise to a group of adventurers or heroes, or even to representatives of legal authorities, in order to combat a threat that goes far beyond any crime or punishment.

THE CRIMINAL

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Criminal Talents
3rd	Evasive Footwork, Street Gang Tactics
6th	Redirect Attack
9th	Seize Initiative

CRIMINAL TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with your choice of two of the following: disguise kits, forgery kits, poisoner's kits, thieves' tools, one gaming set of your choice, or the Deception, Intimidation, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth skills. You are also proficient with handguns.

In addition, you maintain a network of contacts who look out for you. You can find a place to hide, rest, or recuperate among these accomplices, unless you have shown yourself to be a danger to them. They will shield you from the law or anyone else searching for you, though they will not risk their lives for you.

EVASIVE FOOTWORK

At 3rd level, you can take the Hide action as a bonus action, and climbing no longer costs you extra movement. When you make a running jump, the distance you cover increases by a number of feet equal to your Dexterity modifier.

In addition, when you hit a creature with a melee attack during your turn, that creature can't make opportunity attacks against you for the rest of your turn.



STREET GANG TACTICS

At 3rd level, you have advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and that ally isn't incapacitated.

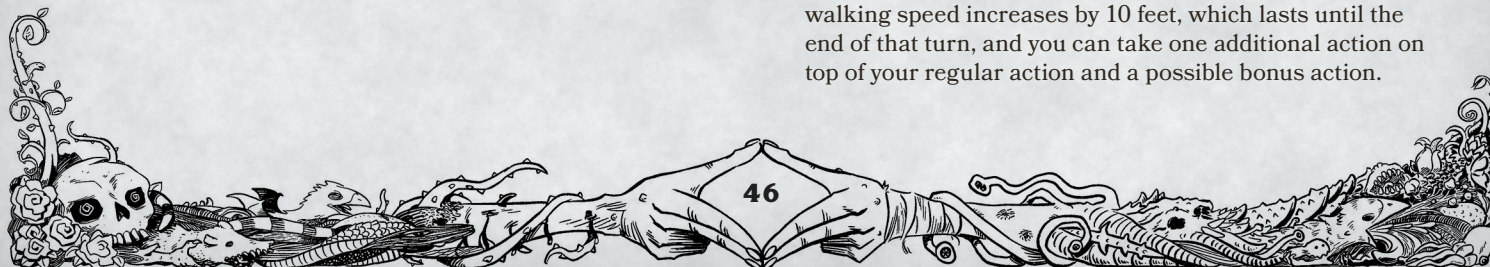
In addition, once during your turn, if you have advantage on an attack roll with a ranged or finesse weapon and hit, you can cause the weapon to inflict an extra 1d8 damage on the target.

REDIRECT ATTACK

Starting at 6th level, when a creature misses you with a melee attack roll, you can spend 1 resolve point as a reaction to cause that attack to hit one creature of your choice, other than the attacker, that you can see within 5 feet of you.

SEIZE INITIATIVE

Starting at 9th level, you are adept at seizing the opportunity to strike decisively or flee before the battle truly begins. During your first turn of each combat, your walking speed increases by 10 feet, which lasts until the end of that turn, and you can take one additional action on top of your regular action and a possible bonus action.





EXPERT

You have mastered special skills valued by civilized society. Those of this archetype often learn their profession or craft by serving an apprenticeship. Once trained, some use their knowledge to provide services that are in high demand, while others merely make a decent living.

This archetype is extremely flexible, as the various fields of possible specialization suitable for the era are many. Successful tradesmen, scholars, scientists, physicians, artisans, inventors, journalists, and others may be considered experts.

THE EXPERT

LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Expert Talents
3rd	Past Master, Refocused Effort
6th	Practiced Acuity
9th	Reliable Training, Additional Specialist Technique

EXPERT TALENTS

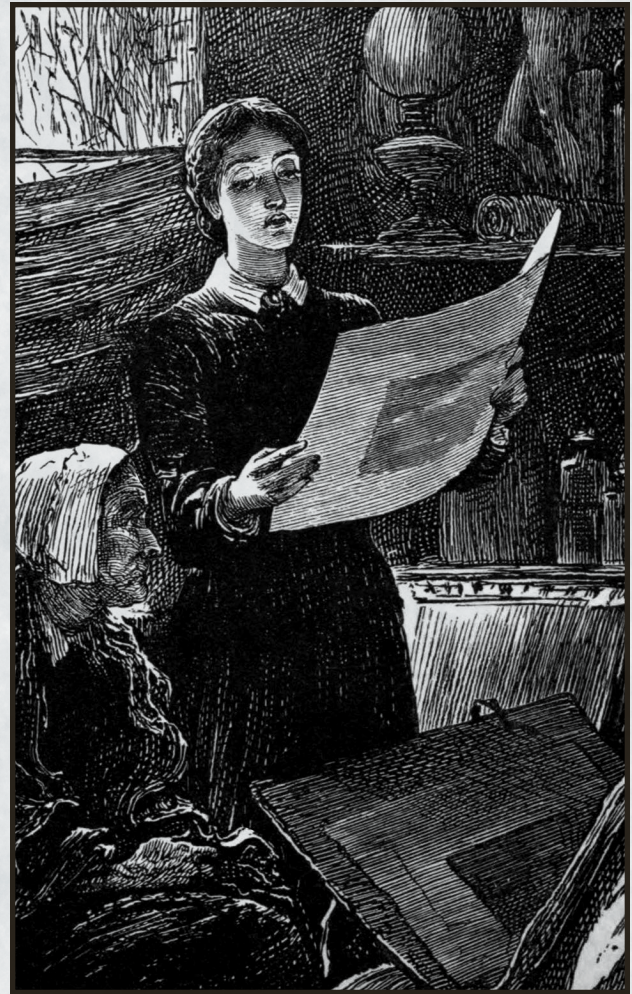
At 1st level you gain proficiency with any two skills of your choice and you can speak, read, and write one additional language of your choice. If you wish, you can instead replace one of these skill proficiencies or the extra language with proficiency in one gaming set, musical instrument, tool, vehicle type, or weapon of your choice.

In addition, your specialized talents command a certain amount of attention, and you can parley this attention into access to people and places you might not otherwise have, for you and your allies. Political leaders, reclusive scholars, wealthy socialites, and crime bosses, to name a few, might be interested in seeing demonstrations of your skill or employing someone with your uncommon abilities.

PAST MASTER

At 3rd level, you choose one Specialist Technique from the options listed under the Sleuth class and gain the listed benefits. You learn an additional Specialist Technique option when you reach 9th level in your class for this archetype.

You can never take the same Specialist Technique option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one, even if that Specialist Technique offers different choices.



REFOCUSED EFFORT

Starting at 3rd level, when you fail an ability check to use a tool, you can spend 1 resolve point to reroll that check with advantage.

PRACTICED ACUITY

Starting at 6th level, whenever you have advantage on an ability check or attack roll that uses Dexterity, Intelligence, or Wisdom, you can reroll one of the dice once, provided the roll also lets you add your proficiency bonus.

RELIABLE TRAINING

Starting at 9th level, whenever you make an ability check that lets you add your proficiency bonus, you can treat a d20 roll of 9 or lower as a 10.





GUNSLINGER

You are an expert in the use of firearms or other ranged weapons. Most “shootists” specialize in handguns, but others prefer the greater range of longarms. Competition shooting is popular in this era and is one of the first sports included in the modern Olympic Games.

The archetypal gunslinger of the American West, once a common sight in frontier settlements, is a dying breed by the 1890's. A few legendary pistoleers like the Sundance Kid and Wyatt Earp remain alive, but six-gun duels on dusty boomtown streets are now largely confined to history and popular fiction.

THE GUNSLINGER

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Gunslinger Talents
3rd	Crack Shot, Deadeye
6th	Veteran Shootist
9th	True Grit

GUNSLINGER TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with gunsmith's kits and the Intimidation skill, as well as with handguns and longarms.

In addition, your skill with lethal weapons gives you a fearsome reputation. No matter where you go, people tend to be afraid of you. When you are in a civilized settlement, you can get away with minor criminal offenses, such as refusing to pay for drinks at a tavern or breaking down doors at a local shop, since most people will not report your activity to the authorities.

CRACK SHOT

At 3rd level, you gain your choice of one of the options from the Soldier's Martial Discipline class feature. You ignore prerequisites when choosing Martial Disciplines with this feature, but you can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one.

In addition, if a handgun or longarm is fouled (as described under the handgun and longarm properties), you can spend 1 resolve point to attempt to temporarily clear it as an action, rolling a DC 10 Intelligence (gunsmith's kits) check. If you succeed, the weapon temporarily stops being fouled. After 1 minute, the weapon resumes being fouled as it was before.

Finally, when you make a one-handed attack with a weapon that has the secondary property, if the weapon is a handgun, having already made another weapon attack that turn does not cause you to attack with disadvantage.



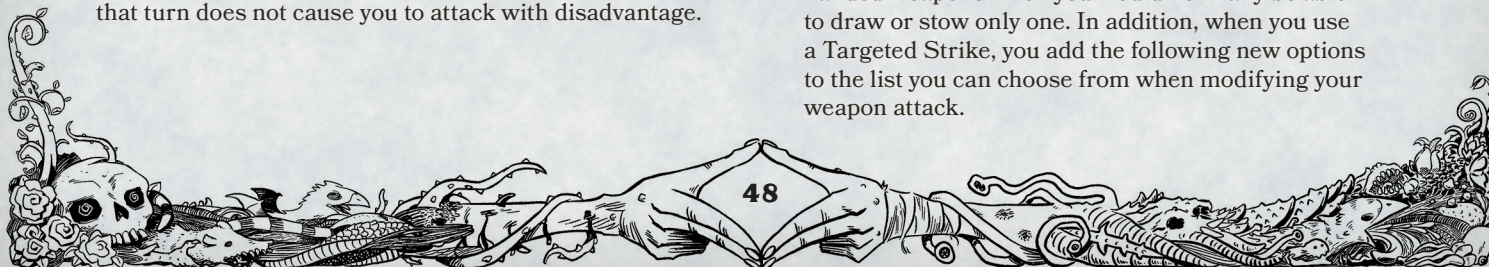
DEADEYE

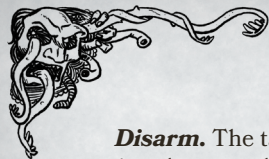
At 3rd level, whenever you hit with a Targeted Strike (as described under the rules for New Combat Options in chapter 1), if your chosen Targeted Strike option requires one or more targets to make saving throws, you can spend 1 resolve point to cause one target to make its saving throw at disadvantage.

If the Targeted Strike that triggers your use of the Deadeye feature is also a critical hit, you can use this feature without spending a resolve point.

VETERAN SHOOTIST

Starting at 6th level, you can draw or stow two one-handed weapons when you would normally be able to draw or stow only one. In addition, when you use a Targeted Strike, you add the following new options to the list you can choose from when modifying your weapon attack.





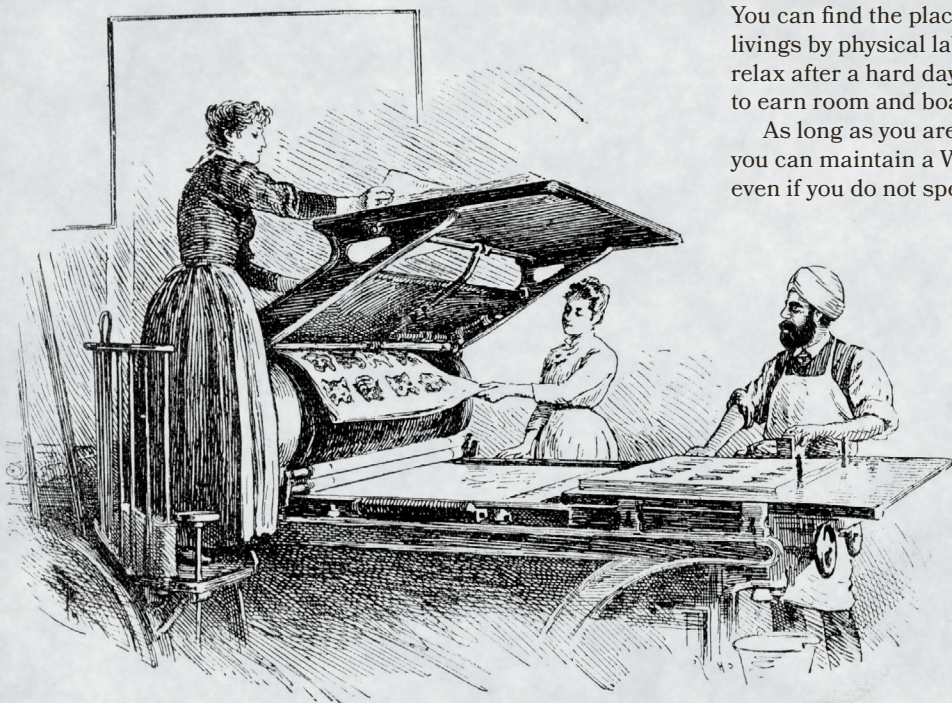
Disarm. The target must succeed on a Strength saving throw or drop one item of your choice that it is holding. If the target is using two or more hands to hold a single item, or if it is larger than Medium size, it has advantage on this saving throw. When you cause an item to be dropped in this way, you can choose to push it up to 5 feet away from you before it falls to the ground, or you can let it fall at the target's feet.

Pin Down. The target must make a Dexterity saving throw. If it fails, its speed is reduced by half until the end of its next turn, and the next time it willingly moves before the end of your next turn, you can use your reaction to make a weapon attack against it.

Terrify. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw. If it fails, it suffers the effects of failing a fear saving throw.

TRUE GRIT

Starting at 9th level, when you have a weapon in hand, you can spend 3 resolve points as an action to force a humanoid that can see you within 30 feet to make a fear saving throw. The DC equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. If the creature fails, in addition to being frightened, it is also restrained until the frightened condition ends.



LABORER

Plenty of people work hard, but not like you. Whether you coax crops from infertile lands, hammer iron into railroad tracks, or build skyscrapers of steel, your body and will have been forged by your profession. You take justifiable pride in your striving and your craft, and it is difficult for others to match your efforts.

Far too often, hard work is overlooked, undercompensated, and exploited, despite its obvious importance to any community. Workers' movements, trade unions, and other groups seeking to address these problems are rising to greater prominence in the 1890s. Beyond seeking fair compensation for your labors, part of you also craves the more personal satisfaction of testing your mettle against great tasks and succeeding. What challenge could be worthier than setting your will against the unholy machinations of the Red Death?

THE LABORER

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	An Honest Day's Work, Laborer Talents
3rd	Relentless Focus
6th	Practiced Fortitude, Skilled Laborer
9th	Demand Attention

AN HONEST DAY'S WORK

You can find the places where those who make their livings by physical labor congregate to seek work or to relax after a hard day, and you can also find enough work to earn room and board in any settlement.

As long as you are working at least 50 hours a week, you can maintain a Working Class or Modest lifestyle, even if you do not spend the required money to do so.

LABORER TALENTS

At 1st level you gain proficiency with one of the following skills of your choice: Animal Handling, Athletics, Insight, Intimidation, Nature, Perception, and Survival. You also gain proficiency with two tools of your choice. If you wish, you can replace one of your tool proficiencies with proficiency in one vehicle type of your choice.

In addition, if there is an individual or organization that hires day laborers in a community, you can identify





them quickly, as long as you speak the language. You can recognize the trademarks and insignias of such employers, and can recall information such as the names and reputations of those in charge, or who they've recently done business with.

RELENTLESS FOCUS

At 3rd level, during your turn you can spend 2 resolve points as a bonus action to gain the following benefits for 1 minute:

- You gain resistance to all damage except for psychic and necrotic damage.
- You have advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws.
- When you inflict damage with a successful attack roll for an unarmed strike or for a weapon attack using Strength, you can spend 1 resolve point to reroll a number of the damage dice up to your Constitution modifier (minimum 1). You must use the new rolls.

This effect ends early if you become unconscious, charmed, or frightened, or if your turn ends and you haven't attacked a hostile creature since your last turn or taken damage since then. You can also choose to end this state as a bonus action. When your relentless focus ends, you gain one level of exhaustion

PRACTICED FORTITUDE

At 6th level, your carrying capacity (including maximum load and maximum lift) is doubled, and you have advantage on Strength checks made to push, pull, lift, or break objects or to escape grapples.

In addition, when you would take 1 or more levels of exhaustion, you can spend 1 resolve point to reduce the total levels of exhaustion you take by 1. This may reduce the number of exhaustion levels you take to zero.

SKILLED LABORER

At 6th level, you choose one Specialist Technique from the options listed under the Sleuth class and gain the listed benefits.

You can never take the same Specialist Technique option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one, even if that Specialist Technique offers different choices.

DEMAND ATTENTION

At 9th level, creatures within your reach provoke an opportunity attack from you when they make an attack roll that doesn't include you, and if you hit a creature with an opportunity attack, the target's speed is reduced to 0 until the end of the current turn.

MEDIUM

You are a tortured soul, for you have been blessed and cursed to see the hidden reality behind the mundane world—a reality twisted by the horrific influence of the Red Death.

The burden of this power weighs upon you constantly. Sometimes, you glimpse images of people you realize are dead spirits, or dream of distant places and events. A choice lies before you: accept your lot and use your gifts in service of a greater cause, or live in fear of perceptions and powers beyond your control.

THE MEDIUM

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Medium Talents, Spirit Sense
3rd	Doors of Perception, Hidden Secrets
6th	Sight Beyond Sight
9th	Third Eye Open, Additional Forbidden Lore

MEDIUM TALENTS

When you choose this archetype, you gain proficiency in two of the following skills of your choice: Arcana, Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Nature, Perception, or Religion.

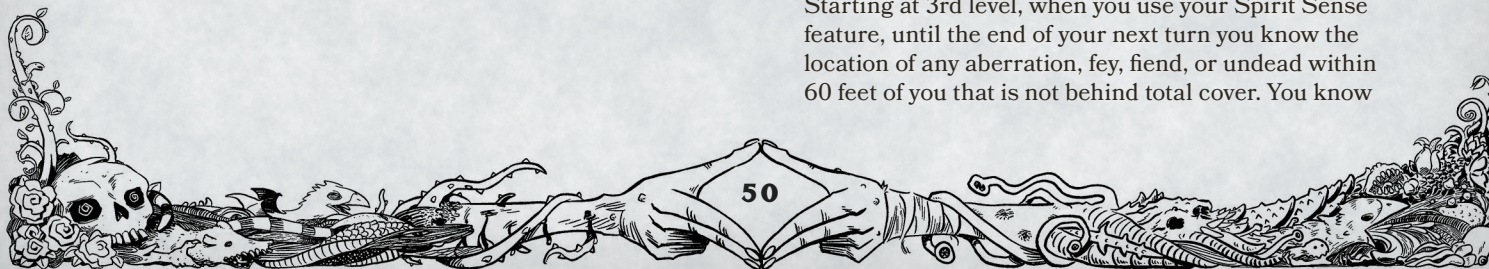
In addition, your supernatural senses have revealed a unique and powerful secret to you. The exact nature of this revelation may vary. It might be a great truth about the cosmos, the deities, the powerful beings of the outer planes, or the forces of nature. It could be the location of a lost civilization or some relic of the past that could rewrite history. You might have uncovered the true nature of a supernatural agent of the Red Death who dwells among unsuspecting mortals. Work with your DM to determine the details of your discovery and its impact on the campaign.

SPIRIT SENSE

You can spend 1 resolve point as an action to instantly detect the presence of aberrations, fey, fiends, and undead within 30 feet. This does not determine a creature's exact location, only the general direction if they are within 30 feet. If your proficiency bonus is +3 or higher, aberrations, fiends, and undead can always understand your spoken words, and you can always understand theirs, and you gain advantage on Charisma checks and Wisdom (Insight) checks against them.

DOORS OF PERCEPTION

Starting at 3rd level, when you use your Spirit Sense feature, until the end of your next turn you know the location of any aberration, fey, fiend, or undead within 60 feet of you that is not behind total cover. You know





the type of any being whose presence you sense, but not its identity. Within the same radius, you also detect the presence of any place or object that has been consecrated or desecrated. If you can see the sky when you use this feature, you also know what the weather will be at your location for the next 24 hours (clear skies, rain, snow, etc.).

HIDDEN SECRETS

At 3rd level, you gain two fragments of Forbidden Lore of your choice from those listed under the scion class. You must fulfill all prerequisites as for any fragment you choose.

You also gain one additional fragment of Forbidden Lore at 9th level.

SIGHT BEYOND SIGHT

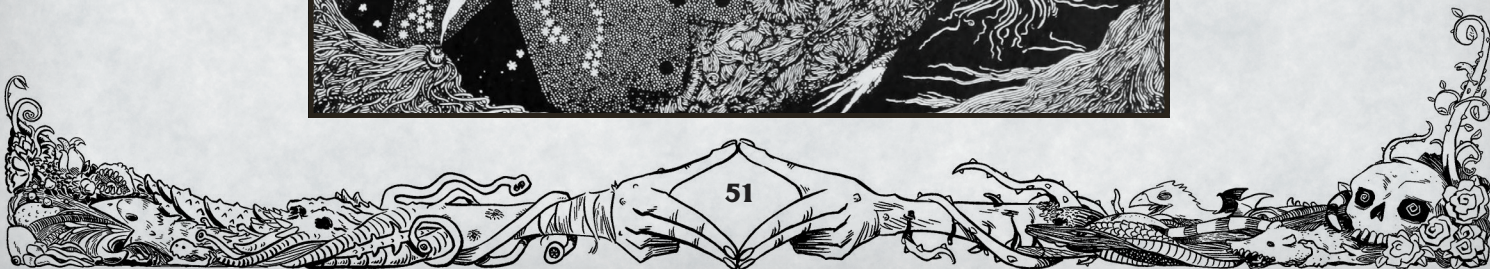
At 6th level, you can spend 3 resolve points to cast either *clairvoyance* or *speak with dead*, creating and expending the necessary spell slot as you cast the spell. You don't need material components when casting either spell in

this way, and if you cast *speak with dead*, you can always understand what the target of this casting says, and it can understand your questions, even if you don't share a language or it is not intelligent enough to speak. You cast these spells using the spellcasting ability you chose for your Forbidden Lore.

THIRD EYE OPEN

Starting at 10th level, you can spend 2 resolve points as an action to increase your powers of perception. Whenever you do so, choose one of the following benefits, which lasts until you are incapacitated or you take a short or long rest. The benefit ends early if you use this feature again.

- You gain darkvision out to a range of 60 feet.
- You can see into the Ethereal Plane within 60 feet of you.
- You can read all languages.
- You can see invisible creatures and objects within 10 feet of you that are within line of sight.
- You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks to find hidden creatures and objects within 30 feet of you.





MYSTIC

You seek to transcend the physical world, hoping to attain a state of being focused on spiritual matters rather than material ones. You may pursue higher truths as part of a religion or other form of established metaphysical practice, or you could see yourself as a visionary, driving your own explorations into new realms of human experience such as spiritualism or theosophy.

Members of religions without an established ecclesiastical hierarchy, especially those revering nature or otherworldly spirits, are often more suited to this archetype than the Parson archetype. Yet representatives of all belief systems may be mystics.

As part of your mystical practice, you learn to unlock new mental faculties, allowing you to see the power of realities beyond your own at work in the world around you. This grants you increasingly accurate visions of hidden places and future events normally hidden from mortal perceptions.

THE MYSTIC

LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Mystic Talents, Psychic Phenomena
3rd	Mystic Spellcasting
6th	Foretelling Dreams, Additional Forbidden Lore
9th	Shared Precognition, Additional Forbidden Lore

MYSTIC TALENTS

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, you gain proficiency with your choice of two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Arcana, Athletics, History, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Nature, Perception, Religion, and Survival. If you wish, you may substitute one of the skill proficiencies with proficiency in your choice of any one musical instrument or set of artisan's tools.

Those who look into your eyes can sense that there is something special about you. Common people will extend you every courtesy and do their utmost to help you. Unless you have shown yourself to be a danger to them, they will even take up arms to fight alongside you, should you find yourself facing an enemy alone.

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

You gain one of the Forbidden Lore options listed under the Scion class. You must fulfill all prerequisites for any fragment of Forbidden Lore you choose for this feature.

You also gain one additional fragment of Forbidden Lore of your choice at 6th level, and again at 9th level.

MYSTIC SPELLCASTING

When you gain this feature at 3rd level, you gain one additional fragment of Forbidden Lore, chosen from the following list: Miraculous Display, Supernatural Performance, or Ways of the Shaman. You ignore prerequisites when choosing your fragment of Forbidden Lore for this particular feature.

FORETELLING DREAMS

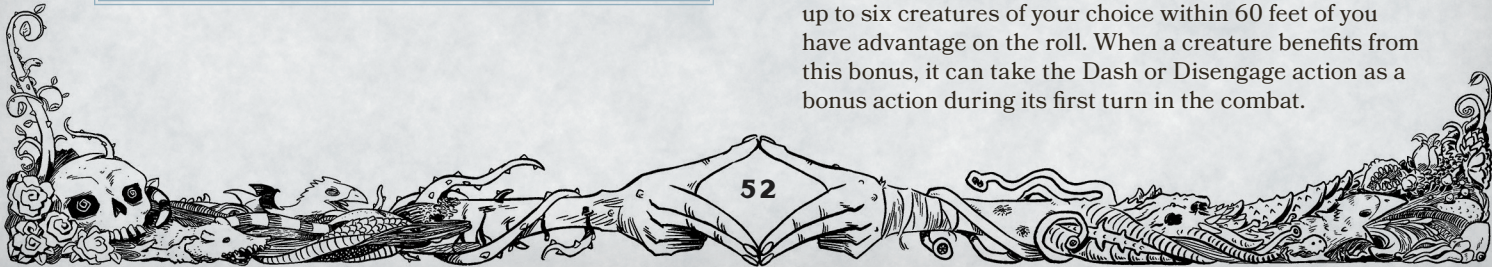
When you gain this feature at 6th level, glimpses of the future begin to press in on your awareness. When you finish a long rest, you can choose to roll two d20s and record the numbers rolled. You can replace any attack roll, saving throw, or ability check made by you or a creature that you can see with one of these foretelling rolls. You must choose to do so before the roll, and you can replace a roll in this way only once per turn. This feature cannot be used to replace the roll for a Dark Powers check.

Each foretelling roll can be used only once. When you finish a long rest, you lose any unused foretelling rolls.

When you roll the two d20s to generate the foretelling roll results, immediately afterwards you must also roll a horror save; visions of the future are not always conducive to sanity.

SHARED PRECOGNITION

Starting at 9th level, your prophetic gifts are truly uncanny, and you can share your insights with others. Whenever you roll a Dexterity check for initiative, you and up to six creatures of your choice within 60 feet of you have advantage on the roll. When a creature benefits from this bonus, it can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action during its first turn in the combat.





OUTRIDER

You thrive in remote and dangerous places. Perhaps you are a hunter living off the land, a cavalry scout, a professional guide or trailblazer, an explorer mapping uninhabited lands, or an officer on a vessel sailing uncharted waters.

You have practiced powers of observation and facility for wilderness travel that allow you to scout ahead of your comrades during expeditions, or to engage in harassment tactics against more powerful forces.

Though Westerners of this era imagine themselves to be masters of the world, there are large sections of Australia, the Americas, Africa, and even Eurasia which they have yet to visit. Many seeking to survey such regions are only agents of colonialism, “revealing” territories already well-known to their native inhabitants. Yet truly uncharted lands and waters remain in the world, beyond the frontiers of humankind and, perhaps, even beyond the reach of the Red Death itself.



THE OUTRIDER

LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Outrider Talents, Seasoned Traveler
3rd	Accustomed to Danger
6th	Hunter's Focus
9th	Evasive Maneuvers

- Your group can't become lost except by supernatural means.
- Even when you are engaged in another activity while traveling (such as foraging, navigating, or tracking), you remain alert to danger.
- If you are traveling alone, you can move stealthily at a normal pace.
- When you forage, you find twice as much food as you normally would.
- While tracking other creatures, you also learn their exact number, their sizes, and how long ago they passed through the area.

OUTRIDER TALENTS

Choosing this archetype grants you proficiency with one type of vehicle or tool of your choice, as well as your choice of two of the following skills: Animal Handling, Athletics, Insight, Investigation, Nature, Perception, Stealth, or Survival.

You also have an excellent memory for maps and geography, and you can always recall the general layout of terrain, settlements, and other features around you.

SEASONED TRAVELER

You gain certain special benefits when mounted, and you also gain certain other special benefits while traveling long distances, as follows:

Mounted Benefits. While mounted you have advantage on saving throws to avoid falling off your mount if you are not incapacitated. Mounting or dismounting a creature costs you only 5 feet of movement, rather than half your speed.

Travel Benefits. You gain the following benefits when traveling for an hour or more:

- Difficult terrain doesn't slow your group's travel.

ACCUSTOMED TO DANGER

Starting at 3rd level, you navigate dangerous places with instinctive prowess. You ignore difficult terrain, and when an enemy ends its turn within 5 feet of you, you can move up to half your speed as a reaction without provoking opportunity attacks.

In addition, you gain your choice of one option from the Soldier's Martial Discipline class feature. You ignore prerequisites when choosing Martial Disciplines with this feature, but you can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one.

HUNTER'S FOCUS

Starting at 6th level, you can spend 1 resolve point as a bonus action to choose one creature you can see within 60 feet of you. You have advantage on any Wisdom check





you make to find that creature or discern information about it, and whenever you hit that creature with an attack, you deal an extra 1d8 damage of the same damage type as that attack (or 1d12 damage if it is a humanoid or beast).

These benefits last for 1 hour, but can only target one creature at a time. If the creature drops to 0 hit points before these benefits end, you can use a bonus action on a subsequent turn of yours to focus on a new creature within 60 feet that you can see.

EVASIVE MANEUVERS

Beginning at 9th level, when you are subjected to an effect that allows you to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, you instead take no damage if you succeed on the saving throw, and only half damage if you fail.

In addition, opportunity attacks against you are made with disadvantage.



PARSON

You define your life in relationship to an organized religion. Parsons may follow any belief system, and this archetype can include any cleric or layperson who represents religious institutions in other aspects of society.

If you were raised in a European culture, you probably practice one of the many denominations of Judaism or Christianity. If you hail from lands further East, you are more likely a Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, or Taoist. The true depth of your belief (or lack thereof) is for you to decide, as is how much loyalty you have towards any established hierarchy.

You are knowledgeable about religious teachings and practices, and can act as a source of morale to comrades battling the supernatural. In fact, the truly devout are among the greatest enemies of the Red Death, for they feel a deep conviction to rid the world of its dark and sinister agents.

Parsons range from soft-spoken, nurturing community leaders to adamant believers gripped with missionary fervor, or even violent zealots crusading against perceived enemies of their faith.

Saving Throw DCs. Some features of this archetype force other creatures to make saving throws. The DC for these saves is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier (your choice).

THE PARSON

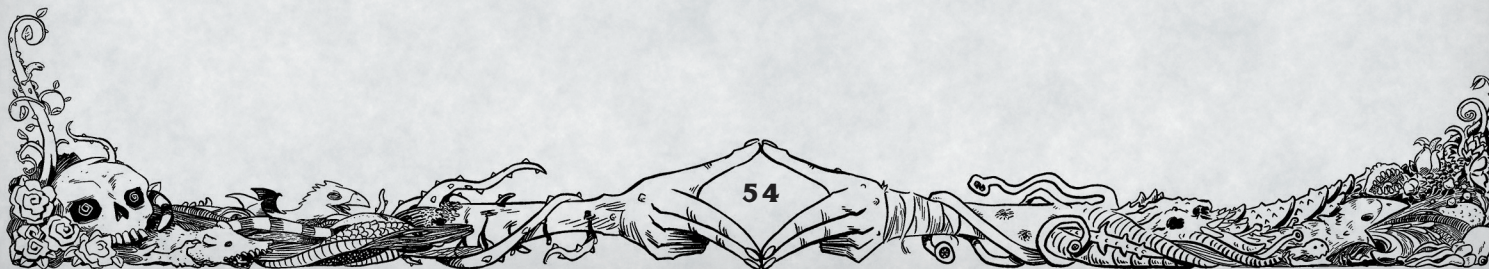
LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Parson Talents, Ecclesiastical Support
3rd	Aspect of Faith
6th	Greater Aspect of Faith
9th	Disciplined Mind

PARSON TALENTS

At 1st level, you learn two languages of your choice. You also become proficient in the Religion skill and your choice of one of the following skills: History, Insight, Persuasion, or Nature. You have expertise with both skill proficiencies you gain from this feature, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses them.

In addition, when you would make the Intelligence (Arcana) check to cast a spell as a ritual, you can make an Intelligence (Religion) check instead.





ECCLESIASTICAL SUPPORT

As a respected representative of your faith, you can rely on certain benefits. Fellow members of your religion will provide you with lodging and food as necessary, and pay for your funeral if needed. You have special access to temples, churches, or other places of worship for your faith.

If you are accused of a crime, your faith's leaders will support you if a good case can be made for your innocence or the crime is justifiable. You can leverage your religion's political power for access to people and places you might not otherwise have, for you and your traveling companions. Powerful political figures, renowned scholars, and wealthy members of the upper class, to name a few, might be willing to meet with you based on your standing as a member of the clergy.

Of course, part of your clerical duties involves securing financial provision. You must ensure that the equivalent of at least \$5.00 per month in local currency, goods, or services are donated to the coffers of your religious organization. This can come from believers you inspire to generosity, or from personal sources of income. If you fall behind on this designated offering, you must make up back dues to remain in your faith's good graces.

ASPECT OF FAITH

At 3rd level, your relationship with your religion manifests in a specific extraordinary talent, which may be supernatural in nature, or simply tied to the force of your personality. You gain your choice of one of two options for this feature, either Focused Belief or Words of Influence, both described below:

Focused Belief. You gain your choice of two fragments of Forbidden Lore from those listed under the Scion class. Each fragment you choose must require proficiency in the Religion skill as a prerequisite, and you must fulfill all other prerequisites as well.

Words of Influence. You can infuse your words with powerful conviction. When a creature within 30 feet of you that can hear you makes an attack roll, you can spend 2 resolve points as a reaction to righteously admonish the attacker, imposing disadvantage on the attack roll. If the attack still hits, the target has resistance to damage from that attack.

In addition, if you speak to a humanoid alone for at least 1 minute, you can attempt to seed its mind with overwhelming passions. At the end of the conversation, you spend 1 resolve point to force the target to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target is charmed by you or frightened (your choice) for the next hour, until it is attacked or damaged, or until it witnesses its allies being attacked or damaged. Even if the target succeeds on its save, the target has no hint that you tried to influence it.

While under your influence, the target tries to avoid the company of others, including its allies. If frightened, the target seeks out what it considers the safest, most secret place available to it and hides there.



GREATER ASPECT OF FAITH

At 6th level, you gain your choice of one of three options for this feature—Faithful Loyalty, Growing Influence, or Miraculous Orison. All three of the options you can choose from are described below:

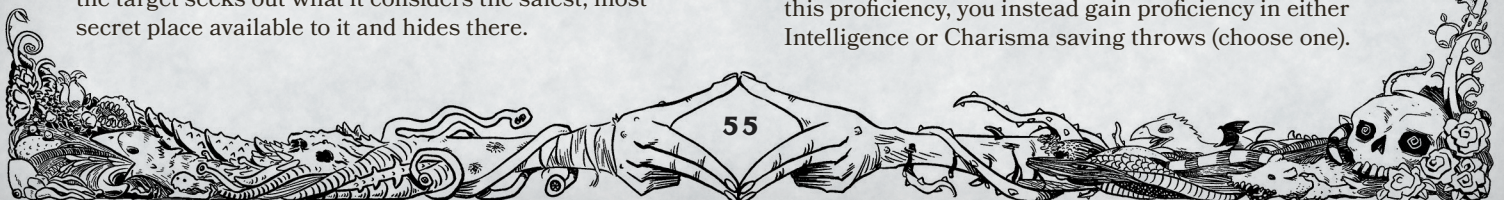
Faithful Loyalty. Your demeanor of discipline and faith inspires intense loyalty in those around you. Friendly creatures besides you have advantage on attack rolls while you are within the melee range of the target of their attack. When an attack gains advantage from this feature, or from your Help action, if the attack hits, the attacker gains temporary hit points equal to your proficiency bonus.

Growing Influence. If you did not choose the Words of Influence option for your Aspect of Faith feature at 3rd level, you can choose it as your option for this feature.

Miraculous Orison. You gain one fragment of Forbidden Lore of your choice from those listed under the Scion class, for which you must meet all prerequisites normally. If you did not choose the Focused Belief option for your Aspect of Faith feature at 3rd level, you can choose two fragments of Forbidden Lore for this option instead of one.

DISCIPLINED MIND

At 9th level, your long walk of faith has brought you great internal fortitude and practiced moral authority. You gain proficiency in Wisdom saving throws. If you already have this proficiency, you instead gain proficiency in either Intelligence or Charisma saving throws (choose one).



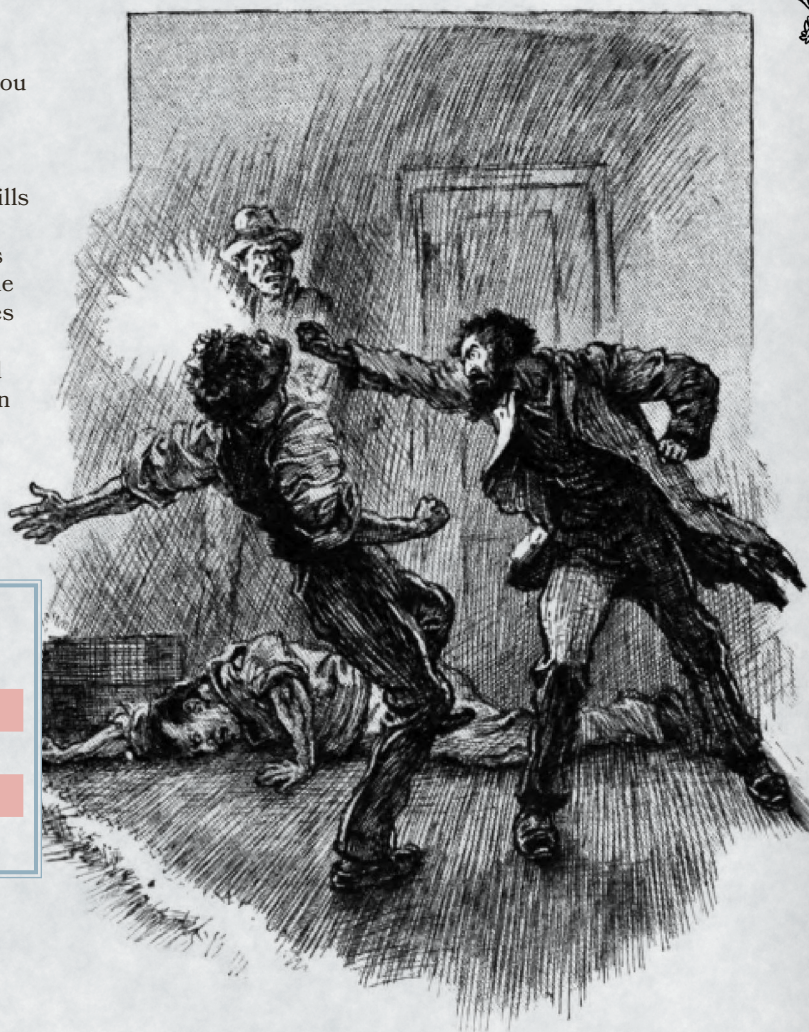


PUGILIST

You are an expert in the fine art of fisticuffs, whether you learned to fight at a gymnasium teaching the Queen's rules, in the back alleys of Chicago, or from a Shaolin Master in China.

A thousand paths could lead someone with your skills to oppose the Red Death, and you're not one to back down from a fight. Places where unarmed combat arts are practiced sometimes attract the brutal agents of the Red Death. Sinister spies infiltrate ancient monasteries seeking sinister secrets. Thugs with supernatural advantages profit from unfair matches in underground boxing bouts, often leaving opponents dead rather than merely defeated.

Over time, you can combine training and force of will to cultivate preternatural power, allowing your blows to harm all manner of unnatural foes—even those who are already dead.



THE PUGILIST

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Expert Brawler, Pugilist Talents
3rd	Deadly Hands
6th	Empowered Strike, Stunning Strike
9th	Resurgent Tenacity

EXPERT BRAWLER

Beginning at 1st level, while you are not wearing armor or wielding a shield, you gain the following benefits:

- You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes.
- You can roll a d4 in place of the normal damage of your unarmed strike.
- When you use the Attack action on your turn, if you attack with an unarmed strike or a light weapon, you can make one unarmed strike as a bonus action. For example, if you take the Attack action and attack with a dagger, you can also make an unarmed strike as a bonus action, assuming you haven't already taken a bonus action this turn.

PUGILIST TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, History, Insight, Intimidation, Religion, or Stealth. You also gain proficiency with one type of artisan's tools or one musical instrument.

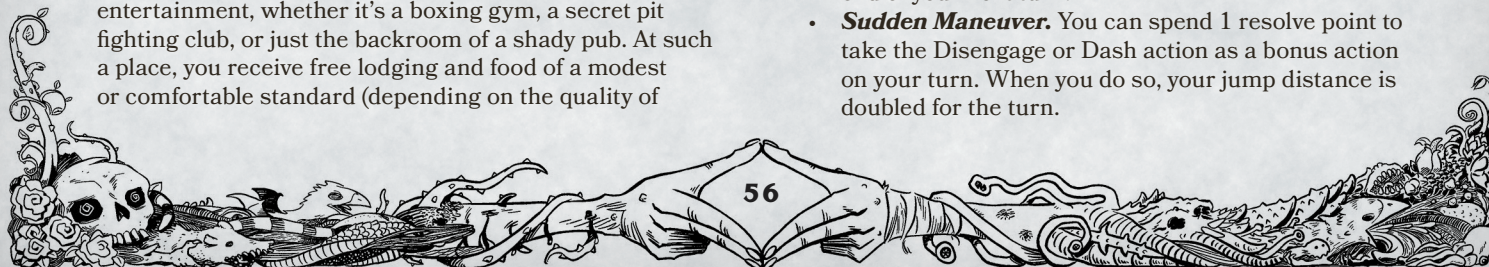
You can always find a place to fight for others' entertainment, whether it's a boxing gym, a secret pit fighting club, or just the backroom of a shady pub. At such a place, you receive free lodging and food of a modest or comfortable standard (depending on the quality of

the establishment), as long as you fight each night. In addition, your reputation as a fighter grants you local fame. When strangers recognize you in a town where you have publicly fought, they typically take a liking to you.

DEADLY HANDS

At 3rd level, your walking speed increases by 10 feet while you are not wearing armor or wielding a shield, and you gain two additional uses for your resolve points:

- Fists of Legend.** Immediately after you take the Attack action on your turn, you can spend 1 resolve point to make two unarmed strikes as a bonus action. If at least one of these attacks hits, you can spend 1 additional resolve point to choose one creature you hit with at least one of these attacks. That creature takes additional bludgeoning damage equal to your proficiency bonus and can't take reactions until the end of your next turn.
- Sudden Maneuver.** You can spend 1 resolve point to take the Disengage or Dash action as a bonus action on your turn. When you do so, your jump distance is doubled for the turn.





EMPOWERED STRIKE

Starting at 6th level, while you have at least one resolve point, your unarmed strikes count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance and immunity to nonmagical attacks and damage.

STUNNING STRIKE

Starting at 6th level, when you hit another creature with a melee weapon attack, you can spend 2 resolve points to attempt a stunning strike. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw ($DC = 8 + \text{your proficiency bonus} + \text{your Wisdom bonus}$) or be stunned until the end of your next turn.

RESURGENT TENACITY

Starting at 9th level, if you have no more than half of your hit points left during your turn, you can take one additional action on top of your regular action and a possible bonus action. When you do so, you also gain temporary hit points equal to twice your level.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

SOCIALITE

The upper crust of society has more than its share of people who have little or no experience with everyday life in the real world. Yet even among the less extravagantly wealthy classes, it is possible for someone to become spoiled or idle, or to contrive some means of living an easy life. There are always folk who figure out how to avoid physical labor or hardship, favoring the use of money, personal charm, status, or even intimidation to get their way.

You fall into this category, and yet your copious free time often breeds a certain curiosity. This may drive you to poke your easygoing nose into a life of crime, an intellectual hobby, or even some kind of social crusade to help those less fortunate. Each of these paths can eventually lead to the struggle against the Red Death. Even if you are not a full-fledged member of the upper class, your past or present relationships with influential persons who have seen you as a peer provide you with a huge advantage.

THE SOCIALITE

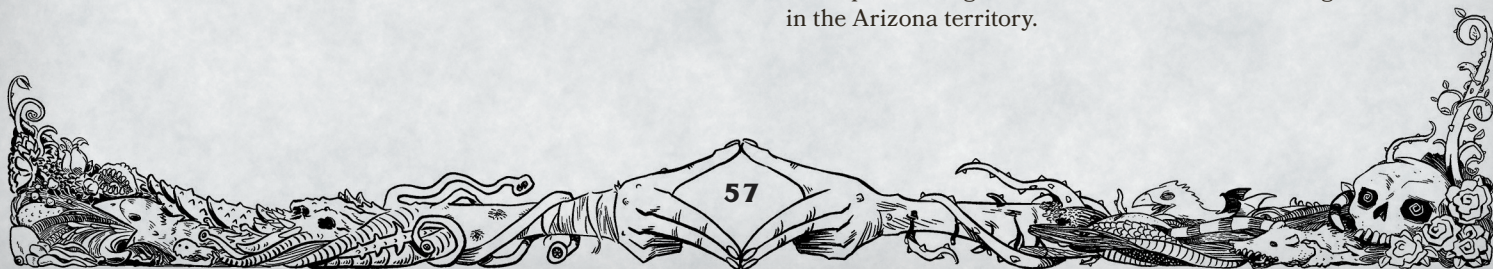
LEVEL	FEATURES
1st	Dandy, Socialite Talents
3rd	Credit Rating, Motivate Ally
6th	Aid Negotiation
9th	Above Confrontation

DANDY

Beginning at 1st level, as long as you are sustaining a Comfortable, Wealthy, or Aristocratic lifestyle (as described in the Backgrounds section), you gain a bonus to your Charisma (Persuasion) checks against creatures who can both hear and see you. This bonus is equal to half your level (rounded up).

Also, thanks to your demeanor of upper class privilege, people are inclined to think the best of you. You are welcome in high society, and people assume you have the right to be wherever you are. Those of lower status make every effort to accommodate you and avoid your displeasure, and you can secure an audience with a local official or another member of your social class if you need to.

In certain situations, especially if you are in a place where the local populace is disdainful towards members of the upper class from your particular culture, the DM may decide to impose disadvantage on your Charisma checks. For example, if you are the pampered heir of a wealthy New Yorker family, you may encounter some disrespect among the residents of a frontier mining town in the Arizona territory.





SOCIALITE TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with the Persuasion skill, and with your choice of one of the following skills: Athletics, Deception, History, Intimidation, Insight, Intimidation, Performance, or Religion. You also gain proficiency with one type of gaming set or one musical instrument, and you have advantage on rolls you make to determine the monetary value of a luxury item.

CREDIT RATING

At 3rd level, when you make a Charisma check during your turn, you can use a bonus action to make a Charisma (Persuasion) check at the same time. You can choose to substitute the result of this extra Charisma (Persuasion) check for the result of the original Charisma check.

If you have already used this feature at least once since the last time you finished a short or long rest, you must spend 1 resolve point to use it again.

MOTIVATE ALLY

At 3rd level, you can spend 1 resolve point as a bonus action to motivate one of your companions to strike a particular enemy. When you do so, choose a friendly creature who can see or hear you. That creature can immediately use its reaction to make one weapon attack against a target of your choice. If the attack hits, it inflicts 1d8 extra damage.

AID NEGOTIATION

Starting at 6th level, when a friendly creature who can see or hear you makes a Charisma check, you can use your Social Standing feature as a reaction to make a Charisma (Persuasion) check of your own. If the result of this extra Charisma (Persuasion) check is higher than the friendly creature's Charisma check, you can substitute your result for theirs.

ABOVE CONFRONTATION

Starting at 9th level, the aura of privileged detachment you project causes others to either ignore you in battle or fear the consequences of harming you. If a humanoid creature targets you directly with an attack roll or harmful spell, it must first make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature must choose a new target or forfeit targeting someone instead of you, potentially wasting the attack or spell. On a successful save, the creature is immune to this effect for 24 hours. A creature is also immune to this effect for 24 hours if you target it with an attack or a harmful spell. The saving throw DC for this feature equals 8 + your Charisma modifier + your proficiency bonus.

SLAYER

A prior encounter with supernatural evil affected you profoundly. Any other possible vocation you might have pursued has been eclipsed by your all-consuming private war against the hated minions of the Red Death. Despite being a mortal, you combine patience, zeal, and relentless training to hunt down supernatural threats by any means necessary. Over time, you even develop supernatural capabilities of your own, becoming an expert in unearthing and defeating terrifying foes.

You may have seen one of your loved ones return from death as a soulless zombie, watched a werewolf shred a relative to bits with its claws and fangs, wandered through a graveyard and encountered the restless spirits of dead friends, or narrowly escaped being transformed into a vampire. Whatever the motivation, your crusade now commands absolute focus, and your innocence can never be regained.

You know safety lies in numbers, so you develop special tactics to support and protect your companions, and over time you build a network of supporters. Your dedication inspires others, granting them courage to face the same horrors you are drawn to destroy. You are adept at keeping those horrors' attentions focused firmly on you instead of your comrades. One day you will go down fighting, but you need not fight alone.

THE SLAYER

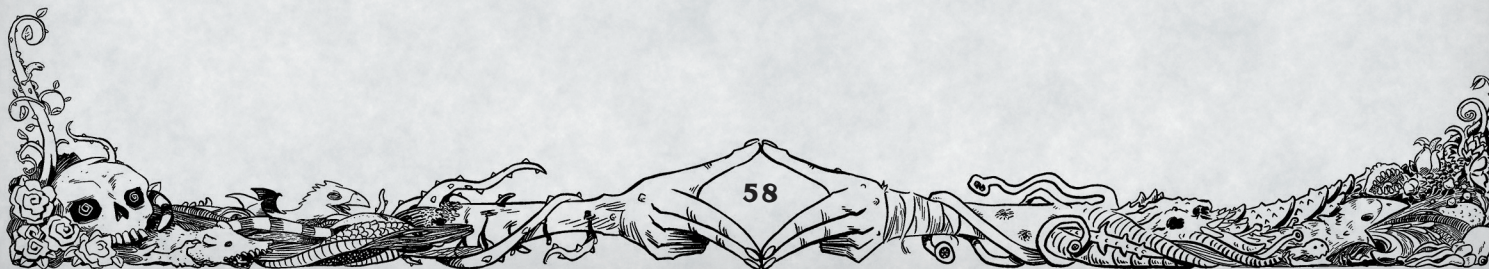
LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Slayer Talents, Favored Foe
3rd	Hunter's Sense, Smiting Mark
6th	Supernatural Vigilance
9th	Defiant Zeal

SLAYER TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with one set of artisan's tools and with your choice of one of the following skills: Arcana, Insight, Investigation, Intimidation, Nature, Perception, Religion, Stealth, and Survival.

You are in frequent contact with people in the segment of society that your chosen quarries most often move through or prey upon. These people might be associated with the criminal underworld, the rough-and-tumble folk of the streets, or members of high society. This connection comes in the form of a contact in any city you visit, a person who provides information about the people and places of the local area.





FAVORED FOE

Beginning at 1st level, you have significant experience studying, tracking, hunting, and even talking to a certain type of supernatural enemy. Choose one type of favored foe from the following: aberrations, constructs, elementals, fey, fiends, monstrosities, oozes, or undead. Alternatively, you can choose humanoid shapechangers (such as lycanthropes and doppelgangers) as your favored foe.

You have advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track your favored foes, as well as on Intelligence checks to recall information about them. When you gain this feature, you also learn one language of your choice, typically one spoken by your favored foe or creatures associated with it. However, you are free to pick any language you wish to learn.

HUNTER'S SENSE

At 3rd level, you gain the ability to peer at a creature and magically discern how best to hurt it. As an action, choose one creature you can see within 60 feet of you. That creature must make a Charisma saving throw ($DC = 8 + \text{your proficiency bonus} + \text{your Wisdom modifier}$). On a failed save, you immediately learn whether the creature has any damage immunities, resistances, or vulnerabilities and what they are. If the creature is hidden from divination magic, you sense that it has no damage immunities, resistances, or vulnerabilities.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain all expended uses of it when you finish a long rest.

SMITING MARK

At 3rd level, you can augment an attack with mystical energies. When you make a Targeted Strike using the Marking Strike option (as described under New Combat Options in chapter 1: "Adventures on Gothic Earth"), on a hit the target creature takes an extra 1d6 radiant damage. When you reach 9th level, this extra radiant damage increases to 2d6.

If you inflict extra damage from this feature on a creature that is your favored foe, you roll d8s for this damage instead of d6s.

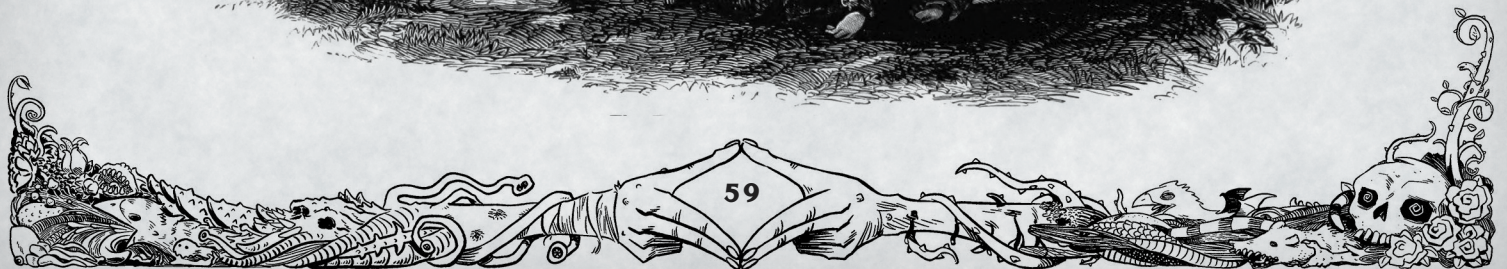
SUPERNATURAL VIGILANCE

At 6th level, you have developed a preternatural ability to outwit your unholy prey. While in darkness, you are invisible to any creature that relies on darkvision to see you in that darkness.

Also, if a creature is your favored foe, or if it has taken radiant damage from your Smiting Mark feature within the past minute, whenever that creature forces you to make a saving throw or targets you with an opportunity attack, you can roll 1d6, adding the number rolled to your saving throw or to your Armor Class against the opportunity attack.

DEFIANT ZEAL

At 9th level, you learn to inspire those around you to rise up against the Red Death's minions. As a bonus action, you unleash a battle cry infused with supernatural defiance. Up to ten other creatures of your choice within 60 feet of you that can hear you gain advantage on attack rolls and saving throws until the start of your next turn. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.





SPY

You are an agent of espionage. You may be covertly sanctioned by a government agency or other organization, working undercover to collect information in service of a personal agenda, or simply selling the secrets you unearth to the highest bidder.

Although your capabilities are not much different from those of a burglar or smuggler, a criminal often thrives on their reputation among others of their ilk, while spies almost always prefer to avoid attention. You follow strict protocols to keep your achievements unnoticed.

Just as important as the rules of tradecraft you follow is the need to keep personal emotions distinct from professional attachments. Your business is betrayal, after all. No one can earn your loyalty unless you become certain that you are both on the same side.

Spies are rarely popular (except as fictional characters), but as long as nation distrusts nation, there will be work for those who can gather information that others wish to keep hidden, and there is plenty of international distrust in the 19th Century. Political intrigue, war and rebellions are abundant, and spies work for individuals as well as governments. The secret war against the Red Death has engendered its spies as well, covert agents hoping to unearth the secrets of humanity's undying adversary.

COVER IDENTITY

You have created a second identity that includes documentation, established acquaintances, and disguises that allow you to assume that persona.

You can also forge documents including official papers and personal letters, as long as you have seen an example of the kind of document or the handwriting you are trying to copy.

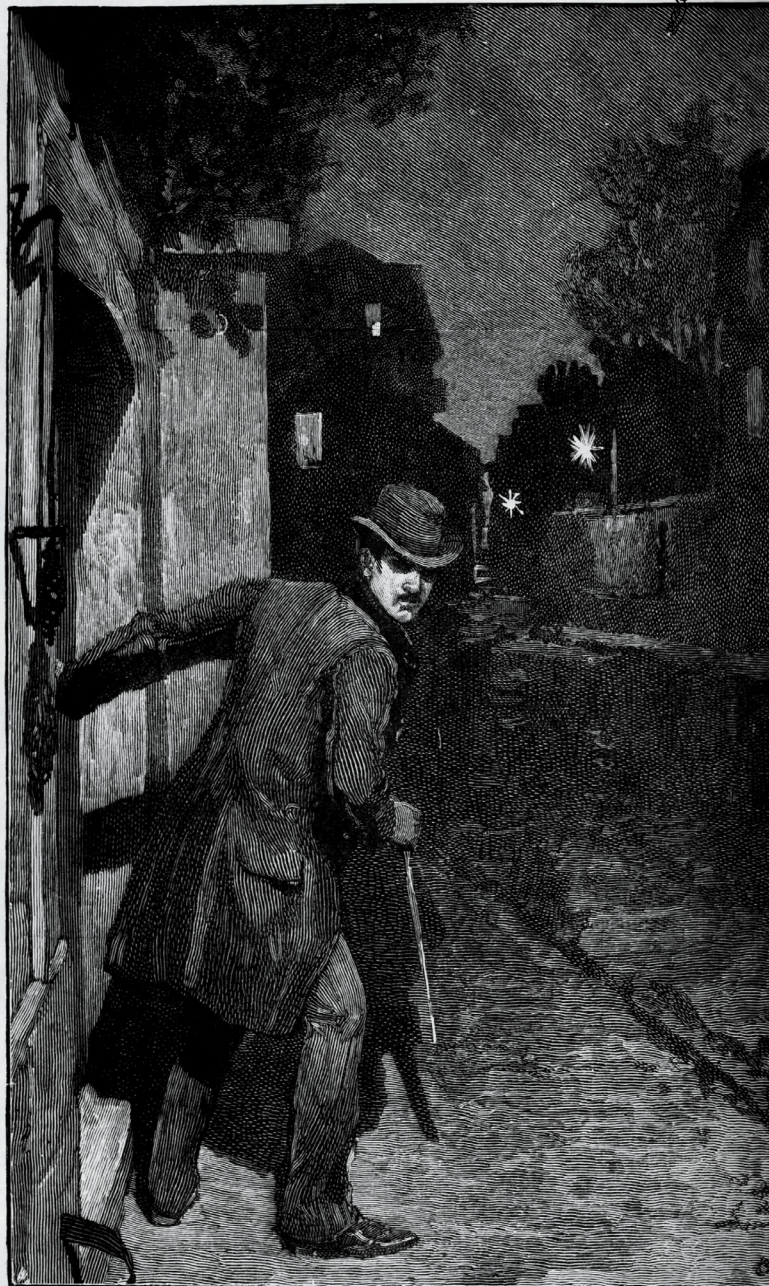
SPY TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with your choice of two of the following: disguise kits, forgery kits, poisoner's kits, thieves' tools, one gaming set of your choice, or the Deception, Intimidation, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth skills. You are also proficient with handguns.

In addition, you have a reliable and trustworthy contact who acts as your liaison to those you share information with. You always know how to get messages to and from your contact, even over great distances; specifically, you know which locals can deliver messages for you.

ASSASSIN'S QUARRY

At 3rd level, you can devote all of your skills and powers of observation to defeating a single target. As a bonus action, you designate one creature you can see within



THE SPY

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Cover Identity, Spy Talents
3rd	Assassin's Quarry, Clandestine Linguist
6th	Manipulative Charm, Relentless Tail
9th	Infiltration Expertise





30 feet of you as the target of this feature. You gain the following benefits against that target:

- You deal an additional 1d6 damage to the target when you hit it with an attack (or an additional 1d8 damage if you are 5th level or higher).
- Any attack roll you make against the target is a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 on the d20.
- If you reduce the target to 0 hit points, you immediately gain the benefit of having taken the Dodge action that turn, and your walking speed increases by 10 feet until the end of your next turn.
- You have advantage on Wisdom checks to find the target or discern information about it.

These benefits last until you finish a short or long rest, or until you successfully use this feature against a different target.

Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

CLANDESTINE LINGUIST

At 3rd level, you learn two languages of your choice, and you can unerringly mimic the speech patterns and accent of a creature that you hear speak for at least 1 minute, enabling you to pass yourself off as a native speaker of their language, provided you can speak it.

You can also ably create written ciphers. Others can't decipher a code you create unless you teach them, they

succeed on an Intelligence check (DC equal to your Intelligence score + your proficiency bonus), or they use magic to decipher it.

MANIPULATIVE CHARM

At 6th level, when you converse with a creature with whom you share a language for at least 1 minute, you can spend 1 resolve point to force it to make a Wisdom saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier). If you or your companions are fighting the creature, the saving throw automatically succeeds. On a failure, the creature is charmed by you for 1 hour or until you or your allies do something harmful to it or one of its allies. The charmed creature regards you as a friendly acquaintance.

If the effect lasts for the full hour, at the end the charmed creature makes a Wisdom (Insight) check against the same DC as the Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, it doesn't realize you were manipulating it unless confronted with compelling evidence, and it likely remains friendly to you. On a success, it realizes you were manipulating it, likely becoming indifferent or hostile.

RELENTLESS TAIL

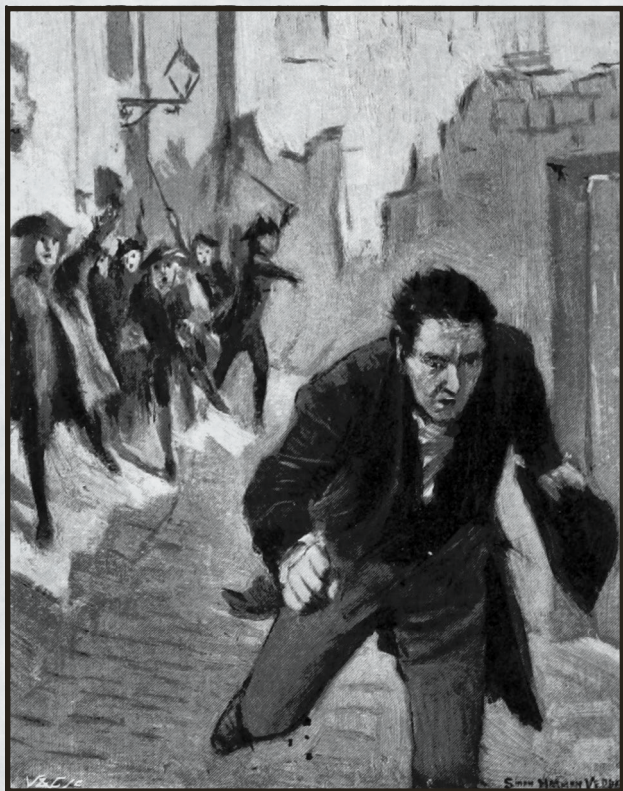
At 6th level, your quarry finds it difficult to elude you, if it even knows you exist. When a creature is the target of your Assassin's Quarry feature, you can try to hide from that creature even when you are only lightly obscured from the creature, and it has disadvantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks to notice you.

If the target moves during its turn, at the end of its turn you can use your reaction to move up to 30 feet, but must end that movement closer to the creature than when you began. If you are hidden when you move in this way, your movement does not cause you to stop being hidden from the target, provided you are obscured from the target in some way when the movement ends.

INFILTRATION EXPERTISE

Starting at 9th level, you can unfailingly create new false identities for yourself. You must spend seven days and \$25.00 (or the equivalent in local currency) to establish the history, profession, and affiliations for an identity. You can't use this feature to establish an identity that already belongs to someone else (stealing another person's identity requires a bit more effort). For example, you might acquire appropriate clothing, letters of introduction, and official-looking certificates to establish yourself as a member of a trading house from a remote city so you can insinuate yourself into the company of other wealthy merchants.

Thereafter, if you adopt the new identity as a disguise, other creatures believe you to be that person until given an obvious reason not to.





TACTICIAN

You feel at home and in control on the battlefield, and the larger the forces involved in a conflict, the more at home you are. Whether or not you have received formal military training, you possess an intuitive understanding of the geometry of combat.

You may be an officer in one of the armies of the great powers, a resistance leader seeking to protect your home from conquest or colonialism, a street gang leader adept at outthinking both your rivals and the police, a mercenary captain, or simply someone who discovered a gift for leadership in desperate times.

As groups of would-be heroes organize themselves in opposition to the malign influence of supernatural horrors, tacticians such as yourself discover new and dire applications for your skills. A war is being fought, secret or not, and you are uniquely suited to marshal humanity's defenders against the Red Death.

THE TACTICIAN

LEVEL FEATURES

1st	Tactician Talents
3rd	Martial Maneuvers
6th	Master of Tactics
9th	Seize Initiative

TACTICIAN TALENTS

At 1st level, you gain proficiency with martial weapons, and with one of the following skills: Deception, History, Insight, Intimidation, Medicine, Perception, or Persuasion.

In addition, you have an instinctive sense for the dynamics of military organizations and bureaucracies. Rank-and-file enlisted soldiers who ally with you recognize your authority and influence, and in the absence of official commands they defer to you as if you were one of their own officers. When you are on friendly terms with a military organization, you can successfully requisition simple equipment for temporary use, as well as one-way transportation. You can also usually gain access to friendly military encampments and installations.

MARTIAL MANEUVERS

At 3rd level, your deep understanding of combat allows you to use special maneuvers. You learn three maneuvers of your choice from among those available to the Battle Master archetype of the fighter class in the *Player's Handbook*. If a maneuver you use requires your target to make a saving throw to resist the maneuver's effects, the saving throw DC equals + your proficiency bonus + your Strength or Dexterity modifier (your choice).



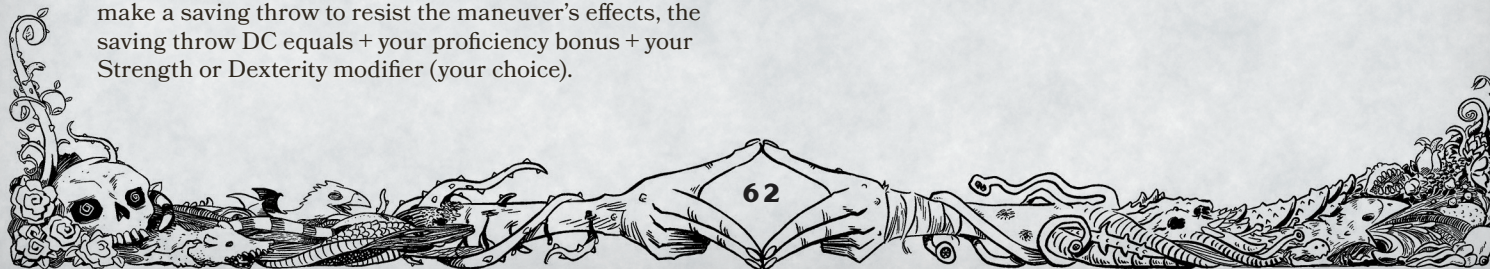
To fuel these maneuvers, you have three superiority dice, which are d8s. A superiority die is expended when you use it. You regain your expended superiority dice when you finish a short or long rest. In addition, when you roll initiative, you can spend resolve points to regain expended superiority dice, regaining one die for each resolve point spent. The maximum number of resolve points you can spend on a single use of this feature, or on any other class or archetype feature, is equal to your proficiency bonus.

MASTER OF TACTICS

Starting at 6th level, you can use the Help action as a bonus action. Additionally, when you use the Help action to aid an ally in attacking a creature, the target of that attack can be within 30 feet of you, rather than 5 feet of you, if the target can see or hear you.

SEIZE INITIATIVE

Starting at 9th level, you are adept at seizing the opportunity to strike decisively or flee before the battle truly begins. During your first turn of each combat, your walking speed increases by 10 feet, which lasts until the end of that turn, and you can take one additional action on top of your regular action and a possible bonus action.







... CHAPTER 4 ...

BACKGROUNDS

IN **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**, much of the purpose fulfilled by backgrounds in the default D&D rules has been moved to archetypes, so these rules use modified versions. These simplified backgrounds correspond to the seven lifestyle categories presented in the *Player's Handbook* rules, but some of the names have changed: the seven backgrounds are **Penniless**, **Impoverished**, **Working Class**, **Modest**, **Comfortable**, **Wealthy**, and **Aristocratic**. A version of the lifestyle expense rules tied to these categories is woven into each background. The Modest, Comfortable, Wealthy, and Aristocratic lifestyles correspond directly to those of the same names in the existing D&D rules, while the other lifestyles are renamed but equivalent to the *Player's Handbook* lifestyles (Penniless is equivalent to the lifestyle the PHB labels "Wretched," Impoverished is equivalent to "Squalid," and Working Class is the same as "Poor"). Starting background and lifestyles describe where you come from before play, but can change over time.

On Gothic Earth, character backgrounds are primarily an expression of three linked factors around which most civilized cultures revolve in the 1890s: wealth, economic class, and social norms. Since these backgrounds are general descriptions of your social class rather than specific histories, you should decide what led to your character being at that particular level of society. Most likely, you were born into it.

Who influenced you growing up? What was your relationship with those who raised you? Is there anyone in your social cohort who is of particular significance? What is your reputation among others who share your background?

BACKGROUNDS AND SOCIETY

While many in the late 19th Century speak of egalitarianism as an ideal, barriers between social strata remain rigid and difficult to escape. Even as the middle class gains greater power and influence in Europe, the aristocracy and their descendants still set fashions, control nearly all the wealth, and dominate politics.

Even in younger countries like the United States (where a strong middle class has already formed), the rich still enjoy extreme privileges. In many ways, they seek to emulate the Old World nobility; building their own castles or having ancient ruins brought over brick-by-brick, and traveling to Europe almost constantly.

The brutal class hierarchy of Gothic Earth's most powerful nations is held together by politeness, etiquette, and other social norms. From the costermonger on the street to the most influential land baron, and even for those who seek to overthrow this system, doing things "properly" can be crucial to everyday survival.

While the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** rules in this book depart from strict historical accuracy in many places, the abstract rules of each background do nod to some of the complexities of social class. As presented in this chapter, each character's background is closely linked to their place in society and their relationship with money.

CHOOSING YOUR BACKGROUND

Foes of the Red Death come from every level of wealth, refinement, or privilege. Among these secret heroes, the most important qualifications are not the benefits of rank, but a courageous heart and the ability to withstand the supernatural evil that eternally conspires to corrupt humanity.

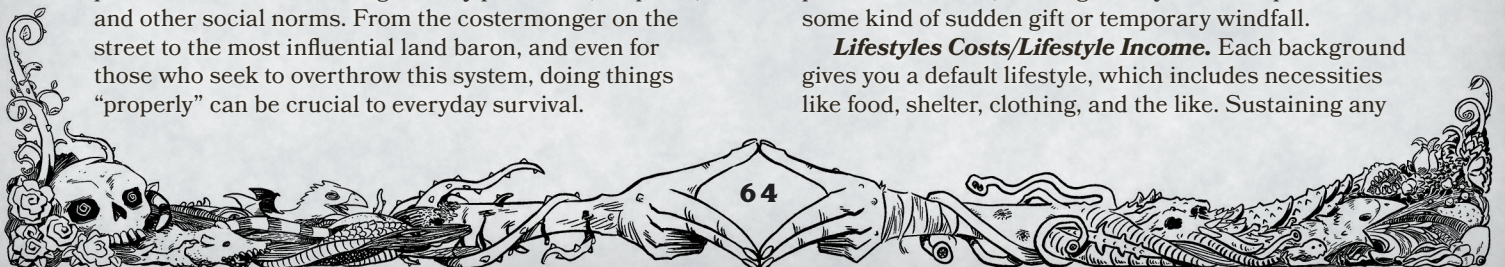
Still, a character's economic background can be a factor in the success or failure of investigations. DMs are encouraged to express the effects of social class by imposing advantage or disadvantage on certain rolls, especially for those on the extreme ends of the economic spectrum. This will most commonly apply to Charisma checks, as money and upper-class connections open many doors, while in less well-off places, the locals often distrust those who have not shared their hardships. The inhumane conditions of a Penniless lifestyle may impose disadvantage on Constitution saving throws against disease. Studies show that affluence and power can diminish the capacity for empathy, especially towards those unlike one's self, which may cause Wealthy or Aristocratic characters to suffer disadvantage on some Wisdom (Insight) checks.

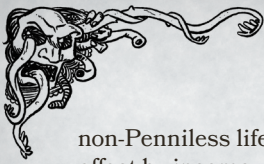
Starting Spending Money. Regardless of their past, characters in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** all begin play with some spending money at hand, as determined by their background. This money is used to buy starting equipment and to finance their beginning adventures. This is cash on hand, rather than a precise accounting of total wealth.

Don't feel like you require a huge amount of starting money to buy all the gear you need. Most investigators only need a few items on their person to succeed. Having a diverse array of backgrounds is a smarter strategy than everyone being rich, and if more equipment is required later, funds can be pooled by the entire group.

For characters who seem like they should have more wealth at hand than their starting spending money indicates, assume their other assets to be somehow tied up—funding investments, waiting in trust funds, paying for the needs of family members or dependents, etc. For poorer characters, starting money can be explained as some kind of sudden gift or temporary windfall.

Lifestyles Costs/Lifestyle Income. Each background gives you a default lifestyle, which includes necessities like food, shelter, clothing, and the like. Sustaining any





non-Penniless lifestyle costs money, though it may be offset by income.

By default, in these rules you determine your lifestyle at the start of each month. You roll your daily income, subtract your lifestyle cost, and multiply that total by 30 (for 30 days). On a positive result, you make money; on a negative result, you must pay to sustain your lifestyle.

Rules for sustaining your lifestyle are described in greater detail at the end of this section.

Background Benefit. Each background grants you a special benefit. Even if your fortunes or lifestyle change, such starting features remain permanent, unless the description specifies otherwise.

POVERTY IS NOT A SUPER-POWER

Each of the various backgrounds receives a tangible benefit, and the lower the income, the more mechanically useful the benefit. This is only a matter of game design, not any kind of attempt at authentically simulating 19th century social classes. If the benefits were not balanced against the lifestyle, there would be little reason to ever select one that provides less money.

While each such ability nods to a fictional justification, neither the background income/cost numbers nor the provided benefits should be considered to reflect (or comment on) actual history. They are no more realistic than the spellcasting of a scion or the vampiric powers of Count Dracula.

PENNILESS

You are accustomed to living in inhumane conditions. With no safe place to call home, you must shelter wherever you can. Where possible, you have relied on charity to survive. True social safety nets do not exist in this era, and there are few ways for those who fall into this lifestyle to improve their circumstances.

In the 1890s, despite the barriers between social classes, it is entirely possible for even those with more affluent backgrounds to fall into this kind of penniless existence. Depressions and economic panics occur throughout the decade, with banks failing and stocks falling, and it is all too easy for the merciless tides of fortune to drag people down.

Sustaining a Penniless Lifestyle. While this remains your lifestyle, you face abundant dangers. Violence, disease, and hunger follow you wherever you go. You lack any means of securing your belongings, and most of those who don't share your extreme deprivation find it easier to pretend that people like you don't exist.

Starting Spending Money: $1d4 \times 10$ dollars

Lifestyle Cost: None

Lifestyle Income: None

Background Benefit: The dangers of living without shelter have put you on the constant look-out for threats. If this is your starting background at 1st level, you add your proficiency bonus to all Dexterity checks for initiative.

IMPOVERISHED

You come from a desperate and often violent environment rife with disease, hunger, and misfortune. Despite these terrible living conditions, you were fortunate enough to retain some kind of rudimentary shelter from the elements. Most people at this lifestyle level have suffered some terrible setback. They remain beneath the notice of most people in polite society, and have few legal protections.

Sustaining a Impoverished Lifestyle. While this remains your lifestyle, you are barely scraping by, and though you have shelter, it is only livable in the most basic sense. Leaky stables, flimsy hovels, and vermin-infested rooms in boarding houses are the types of places those at this level of society call home. The food and drink you live on is comparably unpleasant.

Starting Spending Money: $2d4 \times 10$ dollars

Lifestyle Cost: .10 dollars per day

Lifestyle Income: $1d20 \times .01$ dollars per day

Background Benefit: You have deep inner reserves of willpower. If this is your starting background at 1st level, whenever you finish a short rest, you regain 1 resolve point.

WORKING CLASS

Civilization offers many comforts, but you have had little opportunity to enjoy them. You've had access to the resources necessary to make your existence sustainable, but there is likely much about your circumstances that is unpleasant. You benefit from some legal protections, but you still have to contend with violence, crime, and disease.

Little changes for the poor in the 1890s, though civilization's forward march makes things better in small ways. Social reform—a burgeoning fad among the upper classes—does provides some possibility of education, health care, and improved working conditions in certain hazardous jobs (such as work in factories or mines).

Sustaining a Working Class Lifestyle. While this remains your lifestyle, your accommodations might be a room in a flophouse or a tiny tenement room in the slums. You are accustomed to simple food and lodgings, threadbare clothing, and unpredictable conditions.

Starting Spending Money: $3d4 \times 10$ dollars

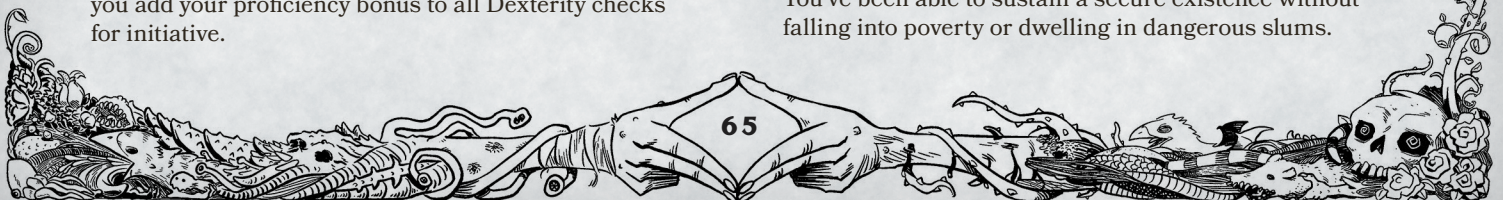
Lifestyle Cost: .20 dollars per day

Lifestyle Income: $1d6 \times .10$ dollars per day

Background Benefit: You can summon up great strength of will in times of trouble. If this is your starting background at 1st level, whenever you finish a short rest, if you have fewer than half your resolve points remaining, you regain 1 resolve point.

MODEST

You've been able to sustain a secure existence without falling into poverty or dwelling in dangerous slums.





You've enjoyed consistent access to shelter, sustenance, and sanitation, and you can maintain and secure your possessions with relative ease.

You are able to maintain employment in a humble but consistent profession, such as domestic work, assisting a shopkeeper, or military service—room and board may even be part of your compensation. Successful entertainers can sometimes secure a modest lifestyle for themselves as well.

Sustaining a Modest Lifestyle. While this remains your lifestyle, you don't go hungry or thirsty, and your living conditions are clean, if simple. You likely live in either a rural area or an older neighborhood in a large city, renting a room of decent size and quality, or perhaps even owning your own very small home.

Starting Spending Money: 4d4 × 10 dollars

Lifestyle Cost: 1 dollar per day

Lifestyle Income: 1d4 dollars per day

Background Benefit: You have cultivated talents that help keep you from poverty. If this is your starting background at 1st level, you gain proficiency in one skill of your choice, and gain proficiency with one type of tool, vehicle, or musical instrument of your choice.

COMFORTABLE

You've enjoyed the full benefits of the strong middle class that has formed in many countries, such as the United States. In this era, literacy is on the rise, and many of the middle class are gaining privileges once available only to the most aristocratic families, including international travel, better living conditions, and decent salaries in burgeoning industries.

Prosperous shopkeepers and skilled tradespersons tend to inhabit this rung on the economic ladder, as do local religious leaders, military officers, and doctors or lawyers who do not serve a particularly affluent clientele.

Sustaining a Comfortable Lifestyle. While this remains your lifestyle, you likely retain ownership of your own mid-sized home or rent a fine private apartment somewhere. Your possessions are secure and well-maintained, and you can afford nicer clothing. Middle-class neighborhoods host many families living at your level of society, but you may also choose to dwell in the less-impressive accommodations of an upper class area, or to retain a more spacious residence in a less affluent community.

Starting Spending Money: 5d4 × 10 dollars

Lifestyle Cost: 2 dollars per day

Lifestyle Income: 2d4 dollars per day

Background Benefit: You have been fortified by the cleanliness and education of your upbringing. If this is your starting background at 1st level, you have advantage on saving throws against nonmagical diseases that are common in your homeland, as well as proficiency with one skill, tool, vehicle, or musical instrument of your choice.

WEALTHY

You may not have been a full member of the ruling aristocracy, but you still come from a life of luxury. Members of this social class often come from so-called "new money," having grasped new opportunities presented by the growth of technology and industry to accumulate affluence beyond that of their forbears. Others are fallen or lower-ranking members of the ruling classes, who have not adapted to thrive in a changing world.

Sustaining a Wealthy Lifestyle. While this remains your lifestyle, you always keep respectable lodgings, usually a spacious home in a good part of town or a comfortable suite at a fine hotel. You, your family, or your business may have some employees, but you don't have a full staff at your direct disposal while adventuring. However, you likely have at least one full-time assistant or valet, who has a variety of duties in helping maintain the standard of living to which you are accustomed.

Starting Spending Money: 6d4 × 10 dollars

Lifestyle Cost: 4 dollars per day

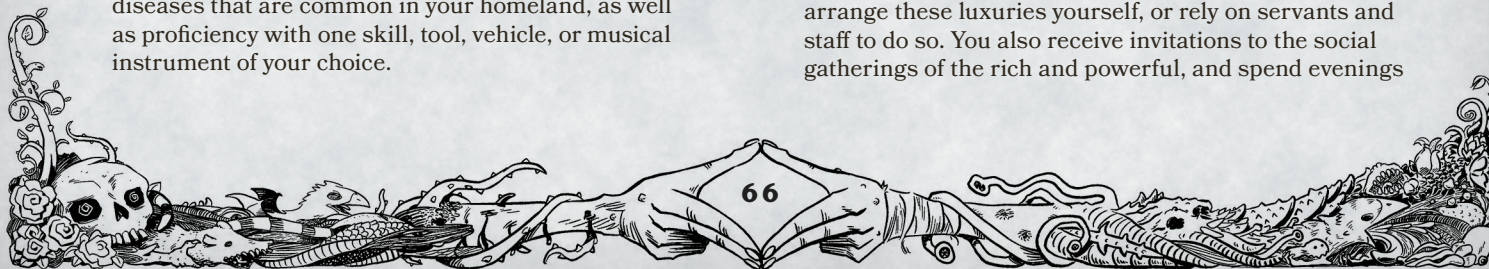
Lifestyle Income: 4d4 dollars per day

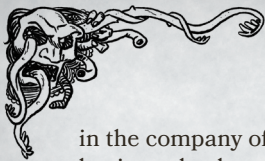
Background Benefit: You grew up amid cleanliness and prosperity, granting you lifelong benefits. If this is your starting background at 1st level, you have advantage on saving throws against nonmagical diseases that are common in your homeland. In addition, while you sustain a Wealthy or Aristocratic lifestyle, you retain the services of a loyal assistant (statistics as a **noble**). This assistant can arrange your correspondence, manage your calendar, keep your wardrobe and possessions, and perform other mundane tasks. This person will leave your service if frequently endangered or abused. They will not fight for you or follow you into obviously dangerous areas except on rare occasions (at the DM's discretion), and even then only after thorough convincing and the offer of additional "hazard pay" (which is at least as expensive as the services of a skilled hiring, as described in the *Player's Handbook*).

ARISTOCRATIC

In an age when class snobbery rules, you've stood at the top of the hierarchy. You come from a life of plenty and comfort, where you moved in circles populated by society's most powerful. You are accustomed to the most excellent clothes, dining, and lodgings, with servants attending to your every need. Many who enjoy this prosperous lifestyle never spare a thought for those without such extravagant wealth, yet philanthropy is also a popular high society hobby.

Sustaining an Aristocratic Lifestyle. While you sustain this lifestyle, you don't worry about mundane concerns such as housing, sustenance, or clothing—all these needs are fulfilled in extravagant ways. You may arrange these luxuries yourself, or rely on servants and staff to do so. You also receive invitations to the social gatherings of the rich and powerful, and spend evenings





in the company of politicians, celebrities, and successful business leaders. Yet the more you mix with the ruling class, the more you risk being drawn into political intrigues, old grudges, and petty rivalries.

Starting Spending Money: $7d4 \times 10$ dollars

Lifestyle Cost: 10 dollars per day (at the DM's discretion, to remain at certain elite levels of society, the cost may be even higher)

Lifestyle Income: $4d8$ dollars per day

Background Benefit: The privileges of your upbringing insulate you from many common concerns. If this is your starting background at 1st level, you have advantage on saving throws against nonmagical diseases that are common in your homeland. In addition, while you sustain a Wealthy or Aristocratic lifestyle, you retain the services of three servants. These are personal attendants (statistics as **commoners**) who run errands, manage your affairs and possessions, and can carry messages for you. They will perform mundane tasks for you, but they do not fight for you, will not follow you into obviously dangerous areas, and will leave if they are frequently endangered or abused.

LIFESTYLE EXPENSES

Backgrounds determine your starting spending money as well as the default lifestyle you live. While your secret battle against the force of darkness may consume much of your attention, you must also attend to basic necessities like shelter, sustenance, and clothing—all of which cost money. Lifestyles are an abstract system for determining the costs and potential gains of your day-to-day existence on Gothic Earth.

Of course, for some, shelter means a small rented room, while for others, anything less than a large home with all the latest amenities is unacceptable. On Gothic Earth, these concerns take on additional importance, due to the inflexible stratification that separates different economic classes. Each background not only provides starting wealth, but also simple rules for a character's income over time. This explains how much money a character can expect to gain (or spend) during their non-adventuring hours.

Those who struggle against the Red Death may occasionally receive stipends, rewards, or expense money for their efforts, perhaps from leaders in the fight against darkness. For the most part, however, the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** rules do not assume a character is consistently acquiring wealth in their adventures as they might in other D&D games.

The rules here expand only slightly on the rules for lifestyle expenses in the *Player's Handbook*, by including both costs and income. This version still accounts for cost of living and other expenses, including mundane details of your fight against the Red Death (such as cleaning of weapons, resupplying ammunition, maintenance for your means of transportation, etc.).

Each background is tied to the lifestyle of the same name, but that represents only the past. You may seek a different lifestyle, or even find yourself unable to maintain the one you have.

SUSTAINING YOUR LIFESTYLE

At the start of each month, you must sustain your current lifestyle or lose it. Each background has a listed lifestyle cost per day, which is fixed, along with a daily income, which is rolled. Both determine whether you lose or gain money in the course of sustaining your lifestyle.

At the start of the month, roll your daily income, then subtract your lifestyle cost from the number rolled. This may result in a negative number, indicating you have suffered a financial loss. Whether this number is positive or negative, just multiply it by the number of days you need to pay for that month. Usually, it is simplest to calculate the cost of your background's lifestyle over a 30-day period, multiplying your result by 30.

If the final result is positive, you gain that many dollars, adding them to your personal spending money.

If the final result is negative, you must spend that amount in dollars to sustain your lifestyle. If you cannot afford to spend this money, your lifestyle will worsen.

CHANGING YOUR LIFESTYLE

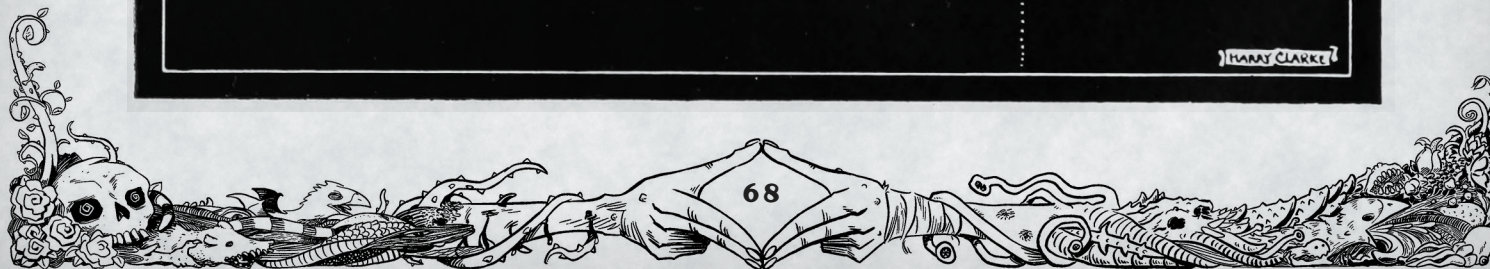
A lifestyle alteration is often involuntary. If you are unable or unwilling to pay your lifestyle costs for the next 30 days, your current lifestyle decreases. Your new lifestyle for that month depends on the amount of money you pay, as multiplied by the number of days for which you need to sustain yourself. However, you retain the income of your old lifestyle until you've gone at least 2 months without being able to sustain it. At that point, your income decreases to that of the most recent lifestyle you paid for.

Conversely, it is possible to attain a more affluent lifestyle. This is generally due to good fortune, but can also be aided by a conscious decision to change your circumstances. To change your lifestyle for the next month, you simply pay the increased cost in dollars per day. However, daily income does not increase until you have lived a new lifestyle for three months.

LIFESTYLE EXPENSES AND INCOME

LIFESTYLE	COST/DAY	INCOME/DAY
Penniless	—	—
Impoverished	.10 dollars	$1d20 \times .01$ dollars
Working Class	.20 dollars	$1d6 \times .10$ dollars
Modest	1 dollar	$1d4$ dollars
Comfortable	2 dollars	$2d4$ dollars
Wealthy	4 dollars	$4d4$ dollars
Aristocratic	10+ dollars	$4d8$ dollars







... CHAPTER 5 ...

WEALTH, EQUIPMENT, AND WEAPONS

THOUGH THE GOLD coin is the usual method of payment in the worlds of D&D, most societies in the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** setting have advanced to a method of paper money, as described below.

WEALTH AND CURRENCY

By default, all financial transactions on Gothic Earth are assumed to be handled in dollars, or in the main unit of currency in the nation where the campaign takes place. The use of this unit of currency is strictly for the sake of convenience.

With these rules, DMs ignore conversion altogether and value a gold piece at the same amount as the dollar (as used in the United States, Australia, and some other countries) or other currency. In the U.S., this makes copper pieces equal to a penny, silver pieces around the same value as a dime and platinum pieces on par with ten dollars. This method makes pricing items easy, but it in no way accurately reflects what the actual prices of these items would be. It is an abstract rule to simplify bookkeeping for players and DMs while making it easy to convert items from other D&D sources.

This approach may not be realistic to some, and those who feel compelled are free to do their own research if they feel it suits their game. However, since this would also involve complicated mathematics and hours of study, the default system does not require such measures.

Exchange Rates. In countries where wealth is measured in neither gold pieces nor dollars, the base unit of national currency is treated as also being roughly as valuable as the D&D gold piece. So, 1 gold piece = 1 dollar = 1 yen = 1 pound sterling = 1 peso, rupee, drachma, dinar, franc, ruble, etc.

THE HISTORICAL (IN)ACCURACY OF THE CURRENCY RULES

If you desire a logical explanation for the ahistorical prices on Gothic-Earth, its alternate history (relative to our own world) provides one. The Red Death and its servants have increased their power over the world's financial systems by manipulating and simplifying international commerce. These secret rulers of the world intervene to devalue gold and set straightforward exchange rates, creating a globalized economy they can more easily control.

STARTING WEALTH AND EQUIPMENT

To determine how much money and gear a character begins play with, as well as a character's ongoing income, refer to the character's background.

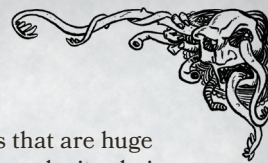
EQUIPPING YOUR CHARACTER

The style and technology of equipment available during the 1890s on Gothic Earth differs greatly from those used in other D&D settings, but many common items in the *Player's Handbook* are available and essentially unchanged. Most basic equipment remains relatively the same. Rope is still rope, and a crowbar is still a crowbar.

WORLD CURRENCY EXAMPLES

COUNTRY	CURRENCY USED
Arabia	riyal
Austria	florin
Belgium	franc
Bulgaria	lev
Canada	dollar
China	yuan
Denmark	krone
Egypt	pound
England	pound
Finland	markka
France	franc
Germany	mark
Greece	drachma
Hungary	korona
India	rupee
Ireland	pound
Italy	lira
Japan	yen
Luxembourg	franc
Mexico	peso
Netherlands	gulden
Norway	krone
Persia	dinar
Portugal	reis
Rumania	leu
Russia	ruble
Spain	peseta
Sweden	krona
Switzerland	franc





DMs should allow players to select standard adventuring equipment from the *Player's Handbook*. Certain items available in the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** setting either differ significantly from their normal D&D counterparts or are entirely new. These items are detailed in this chapter.

The list of items here is kept fairly simple. The goal is to keep the game focused on telling tales of suspense and horror, rather than bogging things down with long passages of historical trivia or exacting research. Much of the descriptive text here is adapted from previous editions of the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign setting.

WEAPONS

While the days of knights in shining armor are now relegated to antiquity, most who confront the minions of the Red Death still consider a weapon in hand far superior to a bare fist.

In civilized places, characters caught openly brandishing weapons may find themselves treated as criminals by the local law. Concealment and caution are the best ways to avoid unnecessary entanglements with the local law enforcement.

SPECIAL WEAPONS

New weapons with special rules are described here.

Bola. A Large or smaller creature hit by a bola is knocked prone. If you have advantage on an attack with a bola and hit, if the lower of the two d20 rolls would hit, you can cause the creature to become restrained until it is freed as well as prone.

Until a creature knocked prone by the bola is freed, it can only stand from prone by using its action to make a DC 10 Strength check or Dexterity check. If the creature rolls a 15 or higher on this check, it is freed as well. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the bola (AC 10) also frees the creature without harming it, ending the effect and destroying the bola.

When you use an action, bonus action, or reaction to attack with a bola, you can make only one attack with it, regardless of the number of attacks you can normally make.

Boomerang. After you make a thrown attack using this weapon, it automatically returns to your hand at the end of the turn as long as you have a hand free and are proficient with it. Catching a boomerang weapon does not require an action or reaction, but you cannot catch it if you are currently unable to take reactions (such as if you are incapacitated or have already used your reaction). If you do not catch a boomerang you threw, it lands in a random space within 5 feet of you.

Cutlass. All creatures can make attack rolls with this weapon underwater without being at disadvantage (for most weapons, only creatures with swim speeds can attack normally underwater).

Lasso. A Large or smaller creature hit by a lasso is restrained until it is freed. A lasso has no effect on

creatures that are formless, or creatures that are huge or larger. A creature can use its action to make its choice of a Strength check or Dexterity check contested by your own Strength or Dexterity check (your choice). If you are proficient with the lasso, you add your proficiency bonus to your check. Dealing 5 slashing damage to the lasso (AC equals 8 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus if proficient with the lasso) also frees the creature without harming it, ending the effect and destroying the lasso. The creature is also freed immediately if you are not holding the lasso with two hands.

When you hit a creature with the lasso, you cannot attack another creature with that lasso until after the end of that turn. If you have a target restrained with your lasso at the beginning of your turn, you can use your action that turn to make an attack roll against the restrained target, looping your lasso around it more and choking it. The weapon's damage die for this attack is a d10, and the attack deals bludgeoning damage. Once a creature takes this damage, it is suffocating until it is freed.

Sabre, Cavalry. When you are mounted, you inflict 1d10 damage instead of 1d8 with this weapon against creatures smaller than your mount.

WEAPON ENHANCEMENTS

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Basket hilt	+\$5.00 to weapon cost	+.5 lbs. to weapon weight
Bayonet	\$0.75	1 lb.
Sword cane	+\$5.00 to weapon cost	+1 lb. to weapon weight

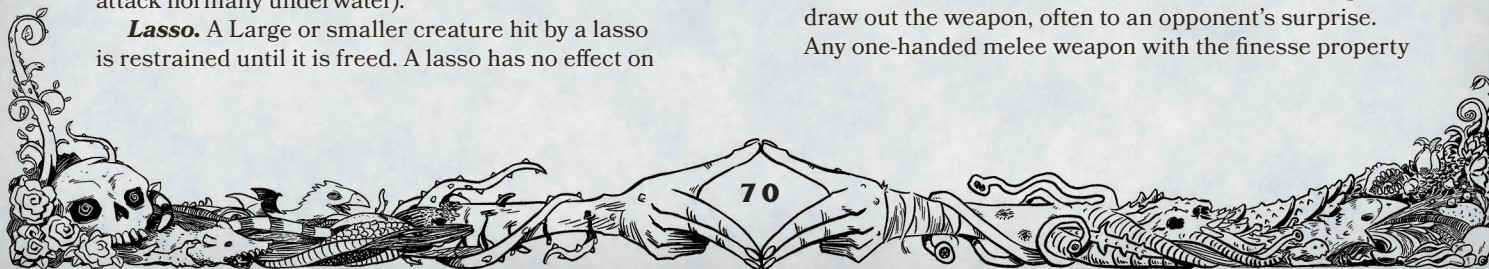
WEAPON ENHANCEMENTS

The following items and services can be used to enhance weapons in various ways.

Basket Hilt. This enhancement creates an enclosing structure that protects the wielder's hand, giving the weapon the protected grip property. It can be applied to any melee weapon that inflicts piercing or slashing damage and does not have one of the following properties: heavy, light, two-handed, or versatile.

Bayonet. This weapon consists of a long blade affixed to the end of a long rifle barrel for use in close combat. A bayonet can be affixed to a longarm (such as a rifle) or removed from one as a bonus action. When you use a longarm with an attached bayonet to make a melee attack, you treat it as a spear. While the bayonet is attached, the longarm can be still be fired as a ranged weapon, but at a -1 penalty to attack rolls. A bayonet can also be used as a dagger when it is not attached to a longarm.

Sword Cane. Certain artisans can conceal a rapier or other small blade within a gentleman's walking cane. The user can take a bonus action to unscrew the top and draw out the weapon, often to an opponent's surprise. Any one-handed melee weapon with the finesse property



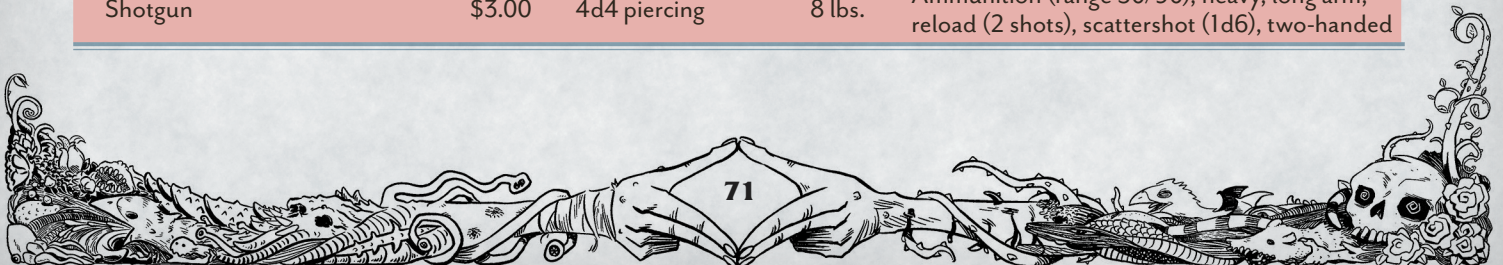


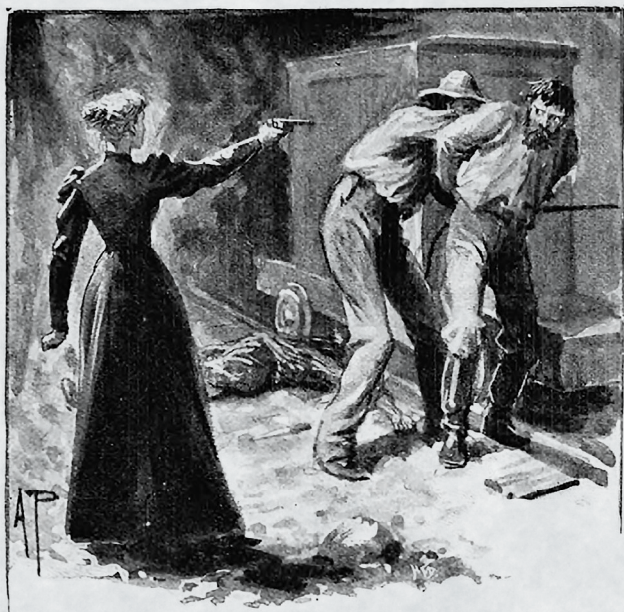
WEAPONS

ITEM	COST	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
<i>Simple Melee Weapons</i>				
Baton/Club	\$0.75	1d4 bludgeoning	2 lbs.	Light
Dagger/Hunting Knife	\$2.00	1d4 piercing	1 lb.	Finesse, light, thrown (range 20/60)
Handaxe/Hatchet	\$1.00	1d6 slashing	2 lbs.	Light, thrown (range 20/60)
Pocket knife	\$0.75	1 piercing	0.1 lb.	Light, finesse
Tomahawk	\$2.50	1d6 slashing	2 lb.	Finesse, light, thrown (range 20/60)
<i>Martial Melee Weapons</i>				
Boomerang	\$5.00	1d4 bludgeoning	1 lb.	Light, special, thrown (range 20/60)
Bola	\$.10	1d4 bludgeoning	2 lbs.	Light, special, thrown (range 20/60)
Cutlass	\$25.00	1d8 slashing	3 lbs.	Finesse, protected grip
Knife, Bowie	\$7.00	1d6 piercing	2 lbs.	Finesse, light, thrown (range 10/30)
Lasso	\$3.50	—	3 lbs.	Finesse, reach, special
Machete/Kukri	\$10.00	1d6 slashing	3 lbs.	Finesse, light
Rapier/Foil	\$25.00	1d8 piercing	2 lbs.	Finesse
Sabre	\$17.00	1d6 slashing	3 lbs.	Finesse, protected grip
Sabre, cavalry	\$27.00	1d8 slashing	4 lbs.	Special, protected grip
Whip	\$2.00	1d4 slashing	3 lbs.	Finesse, reach

FIREARMS

<i>Simple Ranged Weapons (Firearms)</i>				
Derringer	\$5.00	2d4 piercing	1 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), handgun, loading, secondary
<i>Martial Ranged Weapons (Firearms)</i>				
Carbine, breech loading	\$3.50	2d8 piercing	7 lbs.	Ammunition (range 60/180), longarm, loading, two-handed
Carbine, lever action	\$12.50	2d8 piercing	7 lbs.	Ammunition (range 60/180), longarm, reload (5 shots), two-handed
Pistol, army	\$3.50	2d6 piercing	4 lbs.	Ammunition (range 40/120), handgun, heavy, reload (6 shots), secondary
Pistol, navy	\$2.50	2d4 piercing	3 lbs.	Ammunition (range 40/120), handgun, reload (6 shots), secondary
Rifle, breech loading	\$5.00	3d6 piercing	9 lbs.	Ammunition (range 80/240), heavy, longarm, loading, two-handed
Rifle, lever action	\$15.00	3d6 piercing	9 lbs.	Ammunition (range 80/240), heavy, longarm, reload (5 shots), two-handed
Scattergun (sawed-off shotgun)	\$2.50	3d4 piercing	7 lbs.	Ammunition (range 20/60), heavy, longarm, reload (2 shots), scattershot (2d4), two-handed
Shotgun	\$3.00	4d4 piercing	8 lbs.	Ammunition (range 30/90), heavy, long arm, reload (2 shots), scattershot (1d6), two-handed





that inflicts piercing damage can be built into a sword cane. This option offers adventurers a chance to provide themselves with arms without raising suspicion. Wielding this weapon on the frontier, however, will most likely get its owner branded as a “dandy.”

NEW WEAPON PROPERTIES

The weapons introduced in this chapter may have one or more of the following new properties.

Fouled. Less of a property than a condition, this indicates the weapon is on the verge of no longer being usable. If you roll a 1 or 2 on an attack roll with a weapon that is already fouled, it is no longer usable, and must be either be repaired (for half the price of replacing it) or replaced.

Handgun. This firearm gives proficient wielders advantage on attack rolls against targets wearing nonmagical medium or heavy armor within normal range.

A handgun's action must remain clean and in good working order to function safely. When you roll a 1 or 2 on an attack roll with this weapon, it gains the fouled property (described above) until you spend 10 minutes cleaning it with a gunsmith's kit and make a successful DC 10 Intelligence (gunsmith's kit) check.

Longarm. This firearm gives proficient wielders advantage on attack rolls against targets wearing nonmagical armor.

A longarm's action must remain clean and in good working order to function safely. When you roll a 1 or 2 on an attack roll with this weapon, it gains the fouled property (described above) until you spend 10 minutes cleaning it with a gunsmith's kit and make a successful DC 10 Intelligence (gunsmith's kit) check.

A creature with a Strength of 7 or lower suffers disadvantage on all attack rolls with longarms, since the force of the internal explosion that propels the

TYPES OF HANDGUNS

Easier to conceal than long guns, handguns usually carry six rounds at a time. These weapons are divided into three categories: derringers, navy pistols and army pistols, but a character acquires a general proficiency with handguns, rather than with any individual type.

A *derringer* is the smallest type of handgun, and it holds only a single round. While not as deadly as large firearms, the advantage of this gun is its light weight and the ease of concealing such a small weapon. Derringers are the preferred method of self-defense for the members of the upper classes, who consider it less “barbaric” than other guns. Derringers are considered simple weapons, rather than martial.

The *navy pistol* is a lightweight six-shooter that uses .38 caliber ammunition. It lacks the stopping power of the army pistol, but is more dangerous than the derringer. Navy pistols are commonly found in urban areas as an accepted firearm for the lower class.

Army pistols are the heaviest and deadliest category of handguns. These six-shooters use .45 caliber bullets and have a long barrel. These weapons are commonly used by those seen as being outside of civilized society and are better reserved for frontier settlers, rugged cowboys and hardened explorers.

ammunition causes the weapon to move when it is fired unless it is securely braced.

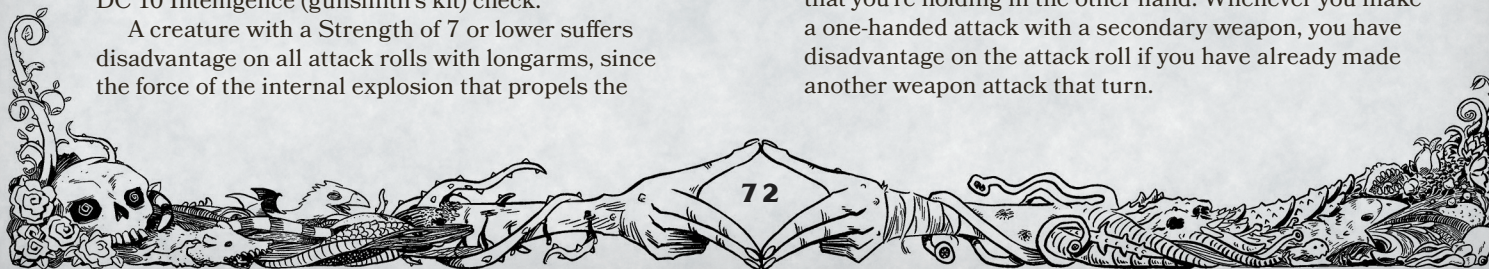
Protected Grip. This weapon has a basket hilt or other protective structure over the wielder's hand. It grants advantage on saving throws to avoid dropping or losing the weapon, and also allows you to use a bonus action to punch with it as a melee attack. The weapon's damage die for this attack is a d4, and the attack deals bludgeoning damage.

Reload. A limited number of shots can be made with a weapon that has the reload property. A character must then reload the weapon using an action before they can attack with it again. (Unlike the firearms with the reload property described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, 19th century guns can only be reloaded with an action.)

Scattershot. This firearm disperses pellets rather than firing a bullet. Targets within the maximum range of this firearm but not within its normal range take the reduced damage listed with this property.

Instead of choosing to fire it normally at a single target, you can choose a 10-foot cube area within the normal range of the firearm and try to hit everyone in it. You make a separate attack roll for each creature in the area. Each creature hit takes the reduced amount of damage listed with this property.

Secondary. When you take the Attack action and attack with a weapon that you're holding in one hand, you can use a bonus action to attack with a secondary weapon that you're holding in the other hand. Whenever you make a one-handed attack with a secondary weapon, you have disadvantage on the attack roll if you have already made another weapon attack that turn.





TYPES OF RIFLES

Individuals who need a gun to provide both power and range seek out longarms. These guns include rifles, carbines, repeating rifles, repeating carbines, shotguns and scatterguns, but a character acquires a general proficiency with longarms, rather than with any individual type.

Rifles are the standard longarms. Whether it is for military use, game hunting, private target shooting, or dangerous law enforcement situations, the rifle is a reliable weapon. They are breech loading weapons that require the shooter to manually load the shell into the base of the barrel before each shot is taken. After each round is fired, the shooter must reload before taking aim again.

Lever action rifles have the advantage of being able to hold multiple rounds. A mechanical lever brings the next round into the firing position within the weapon after each shot is taken. These rifles are also sometimes called repeating rifles.

Carbines are a much lighter version of traditional rifles, but have a shorter range of fire and produce less of an impact. Like the rifle, the carbine has a lever action

version. The carbine uses the same ammunition as the rifle.

The *lever action carbine* is simply a carbine which operates under the same basic mechanics as the lever action rifle.

The *shotgun* is most often a two-barreled breech-loading weapon that has a very short effective range when compared to the rifle; it can, however, inflict tremendous damage if used properly. Instead of firing a single projectile at a time like the rifle, the shotgun disperses a spray of small pellets at its target. It is difficult to catch more than one target at a time within the weapon's range of fire at a distance close enough to be effective.

The *scattergun* is a variation of the shotgun. Its barrels are shortened (leading to the weapon commonly being called a "sawed-off shotgun") and it is designed to spray a barrage of pellets that can strike multiple targets. This longarm is easier to conceal than most, fitting under a large coat or even in a large carrying bag. It uses the same ammunition as a shotgun.

USING FIREARMS

In the era portrayed by the **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign setting, reasonably safe and accurate firearms are readily available. The Industrial Revolution's methods of mass production grant the common man easy access to handguns and rifles at prices that most can afford.

Literally hundreds of types of firearms are available to characters. However, for ease of use, they have been grouped together into basic types by their similarity. DMs and players who want to add more detail to their characters are free to reorganize these groupings and even research the specifics of other models of firearms to suit their purposes.

Ammunition. Firearms all have the ammunition property. The bullets or shells that serve as ammunition for firearms are immediately mutilated upon use and cannot be fired again even if recovered.

AMMUNITION

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Derringer (box of 25 rounds)	\$0.20	0.4 lb.
Pistol, army (box of 25 rounds)	\$0.25	0.5 lb.
Pistol, navy (box of 25 rounds)	\$0.25	0.5 lbs.
Rifle/carbine (box of 25 rounds)	\$0.30	0.5 lbs.
Shotgun/scattergun (box of 25 rounds)	\$0.35	0.75 lbs.

OPTIONAL RULE: DEADLY & DEAFENING

When a handgun or longarm is fired, it makes a shockingly loud sound. DMs who wish to simulate the effects of this in play can require any character who has been close to this noise to make a Constitution saving throw at the end of the turn. The DC = 15 – the number of feet the character was away from the noise. The DC can also be higher in close quarters, where the deafening sound is likely to echo.

A character who fails this save has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks related to hearing for 1 minute. They can repeat the saving throw at the end of their turns, ending the effect on a success. A character who fails the saving throw by 5 or more is deafened for the same duration.

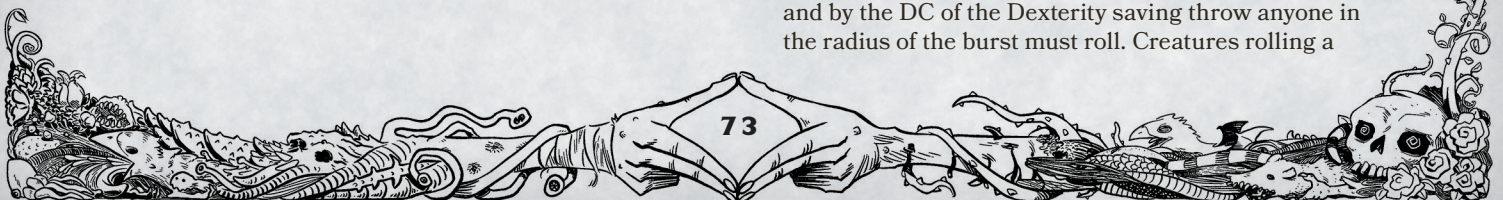
EXPLOSIVES

Using an explosive effectively requires care and preparation. It is seldom a matter of just tossing a bomb over your shoulder as you run. Though characters may attempt this action, the chances are greater for the character (and perhaps some innocents) to get caught in the resulting explosion as well. Explosives are volatile, powerful creations of science that can only be controlled with precision and planning.

EXPLOSIVE PROPERTIES

Explosives may have one or more of the following new properties.

Burst. Explosives inflict their damage in a sphere centered on the point where they explode. The burst property is followed by the radius of the sphere in feet, and by the DC of the Dexterity saving throw anyone in the radius of the burst must roll. Creatures rolling a



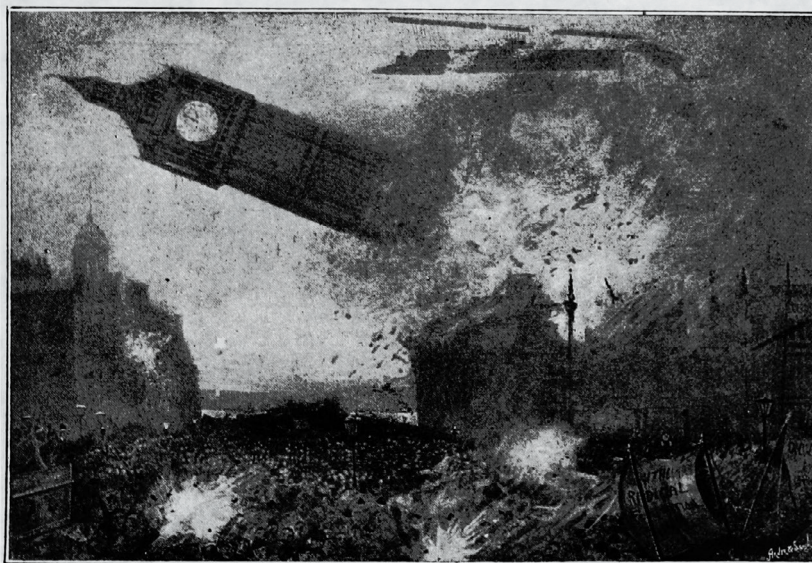


successful Dexterity saving throw take half damage. In addition, anyone within the burst radius will be deafened for 2d20 rounds, and anyone outside the burst but less than 20 feet away from the outer edge of its radius must roll a Constitution saving throw against the same DC or be deafened for the same duration.

Hand-toss. Hand-tossed explosives can be lit or otherwise activated and then thrown some distance away, as a thrown weapon using the range increment listed with this property. If you are merely trying to hit a particular 5-foot space rather than a specific creature or object target, you roll against an AC of 10. If you hit, the explosive immediately detonates at the point you targeted.

If you miss, look at the number rolled on your 20. If it is a 1, the explosive travels only 5 feet from you in the direction of the target and then detonates. Otherwise, it travels half the intended distance, and if the number rolled is odd, it detonates. If the number is even, the explosive fails to detonate. If this is the case, it can be detonated later by appropriate means (such as a gunshot or someone picking it up and throwing it again).

Volatile. Explosives with this property may go off if you take damage of certain types (listed with the property), unless you are canny enough to take appropriate action. If you take damage of one or more of those types while such an explosive on your person, you must make an Intelligence saving throw against the DC listed with this property. If you have multiple such explosives, you make one saving throw for all of them, against the highest of all the DCs listed with this property, but add +1 to the DC for each volatile explosive beyond the first.



If you fail, all volatile explosives is on your person detonate immediately, each inflicting their normal damage. You automatically fail any subsequent Dexterity saving throws to avoid or reduce this damage (others around you can make their saves normally).

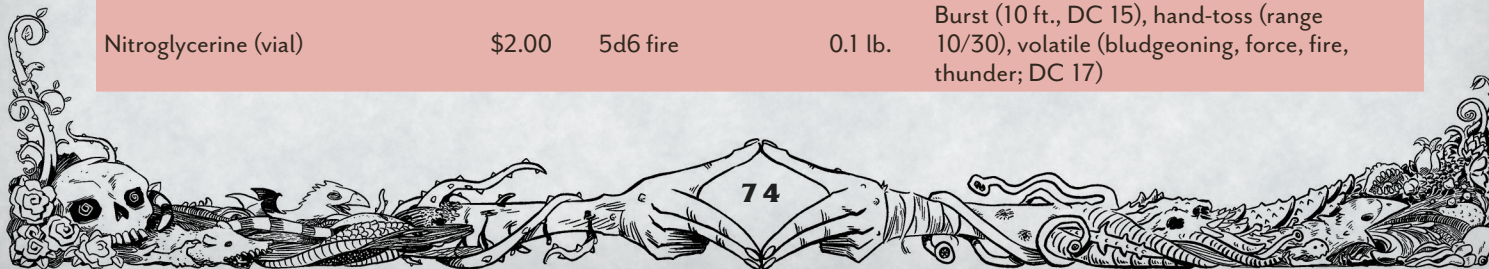
EXPLOSIVE ACCESSORIES

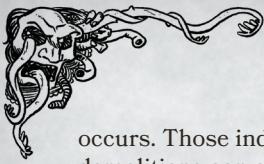
Explosives may be used with (or require) one of the following accessories.

Fuse. As mentioned, the preferred method for the applied use of any explosive is to do so from a safe distance at the precise time of the user's choosing. There are several methods of detonating explosives, but the most common way is with a blasting cap connected to a lighted fuse. The longer the fuse, the longer the time a character has before the explosion

EXPLOSIVES

ITEM	COST	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
Bomb, improvised	\$1.50	3d6 piercing	1 lb.	Burst (5 ft., DC 12), hand-toss (range 20/60), volatile (bludgeoning, force, fire; DC 10)
Dynamite (stick)	\$1.50	3d6 bludgeoning	0.5 lbs.	Burst (5 ft., DC 12), hand-toss (range 20/60), volatile (fire; DC 11)
Extra dynamite (per stick)	\$1.50	+1d6 bludgeoning per extra stick (max 10d6)	0.5 lbs.	Burst (+5 ft. per extra stick, DC 12), hand-toss (range 20/60), volatile (fire; DC 11)
Gunpowder (hand container)*	\$1.00	3d6 fire	2 lbs.	Burst (10 ft., DC 12), hand-toss (range 10/30), volatile (fire; DC 12)
Gunpowder (small keg)*	\$2.50	4d6 fire	5 lbs.	Burst (10 ft., DC 12), stationary, volatile (fire; DC 13)
Gunpowder (large keg)*	\$8.00	7d6 fire	20 lbs.	Burst (10 ft., DC 12), stationary, volatile (fire; DC 15)
Nitroglycerine (vial)	\$2.00	5d6 fire	0.1 lb.	Burst (10 ft., DC 15), hand-toss (range 10/30), volatile (bludgeoning, force, fire, thunder; DC 17)





occurs. Those individuals who are skilled with demolitions can cut a fuse to fit their needs; exact timing, however, is not possible. Because some fuses burn at a faster rate than others, an inexperienced person setting a charge could be in for a nasty (and potentially fatal) shock when the fuse burns much faster than expected.

The fuse itself is a length of flammable cord directly wired to the blasting cap. When flame is applied to the fuse, it begins to burn along its length until it reaches the end, where the blasting cap is located. When the fire reaches the blasting cap, the cap ignites, setting off the explosion. The caps and fuses are safe to transport under proper conditions. This is by far the most reliable method and is preferred by professionals in the field.

A fuse is set for a certain number of rounds, as determined by the one who set it. When you set a fuse, roll a DC 15 Intelligence (Demolitions Kits) check. If you succeed, the fuse lasts for the number of rounds you chose (usually 1 to 6). After the set number of rounds goes by, the DM secretly rolls initiative for the explosive, and the explosive detonates on that initiative the following round. If you fail, the DM secretly rolls 1d4. If the number rolled on the d4 is odd, that number is subtracted from the number of rounds you chose to determine when the explosive detonates; if the number rolled is even, the number rolled is added to the number of rounds instead.

Plunger and Wire. This method of detonating explosives is the most precise when it comes to timing. The demolitionist sets a charge on the explosive and then runs a length of wire to the plunger device (hopefully a safe distance from the blast). When the plunger is depressed, an electrical charge travels along the wire and immediately detonates the explosive. Barring any difficulties, the demolitionist should achieve the desired result every time. When using wire there is less than can go wrong with the detonation process and the plunger eliminates the need for a possibly unreliable count down. The wire is typically purchased in coiled lengths of 50 feet, but additional wire can be obtained to allow detonation from greater distances.

When you set a plunger and wire, you roll a DC 10 Intelligence check (adding your proficiency bonus if you have proficiency with demolitions kits). If you succeed, you know you have successfully connected the plunger, wire, and explosive to each other, and the explosive will detonate instantly whenever the plunger is depressed (unless the wire is deliberately disconnected or cut beforehand). If you fail, you are uncertain if you have everything properly connected or not, and unless you spend extra time double-checking everything, the DM randomly determines whether or not the detonation fails when the plunger is depressed.

GEAR & SERVICES

The prices below reflect the cost of items made of average quality. Many products can be made easily and quickly in the 1890s that only few years before would have been time consuming and costly. Common household items and clothing are among some of the things that, through

TYPES OF EXPLOSIVES

The rules in this chapter divide all explosives into the following three types:

Dynamite is commonly used in mining and is one of the most stable explosives to utilize, thus making it the preferred choices for adventurers seeking to use it against the enemy. Dynamite generally comes in the form of short sticks that can easily be concealed within a coat. Dynamite sticks deliver a good deal of explosive power and their fuses can either be lit with a flame or wired to detonate. For a greater impact, several sticks of dynamite can be secured together. A successful Intelligence (demolitions kit) check can determine exactly how many sticks it will take to do the job at hand.

Used in large quantities for demolitions work, **gunpowder** is usually cheaper to acquire than sticks of dynamite. It usually comes in bulky wooden kegs, in which case it is far more cumbersome than dynamite while also being less efficient. Long fuses can be used to ignite the powder or it can be wired to explode. As an explosive, gunpowder is difficult to use in close combat. As is the case with sticks of dynamite, it is common to have several cases of gunpowder linked together for a greater impact upon detonation. A successful Intelligence (demolitions kit) check can determine exactly how much gunpowder are needed.

The magic item called **smokepowder**, as introduced in the Forgotten Realms adventure *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, is essentially a magical form of gunpowder. On Gothic Earth, the two substances function identically (though gunpowder does not work at all in the Forgotten Realms due to divine intervention).

The chemical mixture known as **nitroglycerine** is not at all easy to manufacture and is rarely seen outside of a laboratory or a demolitions warehouse. While highly effective when used as an explosive, it is also extremely dangerous.

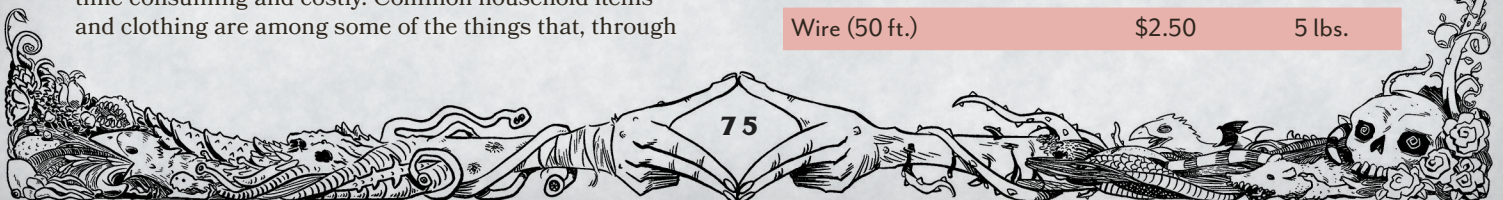
the use of improved technology, are now readily available at affordable prices.

Some items are repeated here from the *Player's Handbook*, usually due to a change in price or description in this era.

The DM should feel free to increase price amounts if an item would be considered uncommon or difficult to find. In many places, some products are just not easy to acquire. Also, some items can be purchased at a higher cost to reflect more expensive materials used in their construction, such as a gold-embossed button-hook or engraved pocket watch.

EXPLOSIVES ACCESSORIES

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Plunger	\$10.00	10 lbs.
Fuse (50 ft.)	\$5.00	5 lbs.
Wire (50 ft.)	\$2.50	5 lbs.





ADVENTURING GEAR

This section describes items that have special rules or require further explanation.

Binoculars. These viewing aides are popular among explorers, adventurers, and those wealthy enough to travel often. The binoculars listed here allow an observer to clearly view an object as if it were one-tenth the number of feet away it actually is (for example, viewing an object 100 feet away as if it were only 10 feet away), but objects closer than 10 feet are hard to focus on.

Burner, Bunsen. This item is used as a heat source for work in scientific laboratories. The Bunsen burner

produces high intensity flames that are not smoky and do not flicker excessively. These items, however, require a gas feed, usually from a city's gas line. For this reason, Bunsen burners are rarely seen outside the halls of science or academia, although some serious experimenters have adapted them for private use.

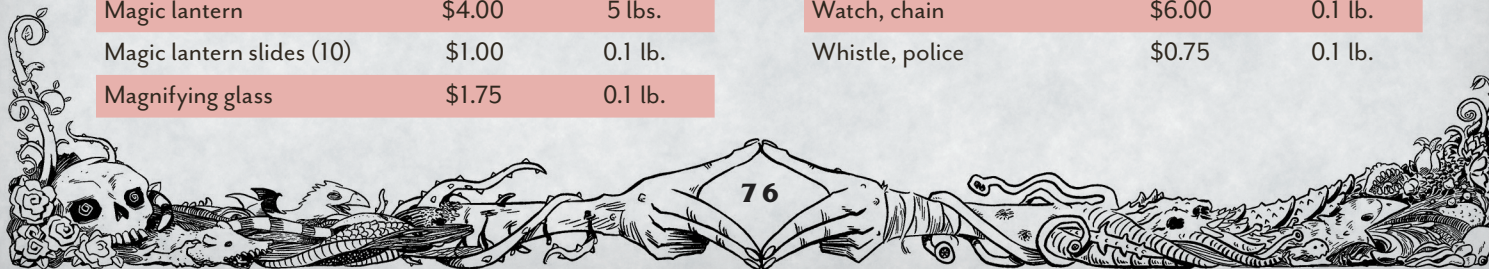
Cabinet Bag. This carrying bag resembles the stereotypical "doctor's bag." Stiff leather sides hold the shape of the bag while a hinged top of soft leather provides easy access to the objects within.

Calling Cards. A required convention of etiquette among the upper classes, a calling card usually bears the name, title and address of its owner, although some individuals choose to omit the address, title, or both.

GENERAL PRODUCTS

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Alcohol (fuel)	\$0.10	1 lb.
Backpack	\$2.00	2 lbs.
Binoculars	\$10.00	2 lbs.
Book, cloth cover	\$1.00	0.5 lbs.
Book, leather cover	\$1.50	0.5 lb.
Book, paper cover	\$0.50	0.25 lb.
Burner, Bunsen	\$0.75	1 lb.
Cabinet bag	\$3.00	2.5 lbs.
Calling cards (50)	\$0.10	0.1 lb.
Camera, box	\$3.00	3 lbs.
Camera, folding	\$8.00	2 lbs.
Clock, alarm	\$1.50	1 lb.
Club bag	\$3.00	2 lbs.
Compass, magnetic	\$1.00	0.1 lb.
First aid kit	\$2.00	2 lbs.
Goggles (tinted or clear)	\$0.75	0.1 lb.
Handbag	\$1.25	1 lb.
Handcuffs	\$3.50	0.5 lbs.
Handkerchief	\$0.05	—
Hourglass	\$1.00	1 lb.
House paint, gallon	\$1.00	10 lbs.
Ink, 1-ounce bottle	\$0.50	0.1 lb.
Inkstand	\$0.35	1 lb.
Lantern, harness	\$1.00	1 lb.
Lightbulb	\$0.30	—
Lunchbox	\$0.25	1 lb.
Magic lantern	\$4.00	5 lbs.
Magic lantern slides (10)	\$1.00	0.1 lb.
Magnifying glass	\$1.75	0.1 lb.

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Matches (25/box)	\$0.05	0.1 lb.
Matchbox, silver	\$1.15	0.1 lb.
Measuring tape (5 feet)	\$0.25	0.1 lb.
Monocle	\$1.25	0.1 lb.
Music Box	\$4.50	1.5 lbs.
Notebook, pocket	\$0.10	0.1 lb.
Notebook, tablet	\$0.25	0.2 lb.
Opera glasses	\$2.50	1.25 lbs.
Pen, writing	\$1.00	0.1 lb.
Pencil	\$0.01	0.1 lb.
Photographic plate	\$1.00	1.5 lbs.
Physician's bag	\$12.50	6 lbs.
Pipe, meerschaum	\$5.00	0.25 lbs.
Pocketbook	\$0.75	0.1 lb.
Scissors	\$0.75	0.5 lbs.
Soap, bar	\$0.03	0.25 lb.
Spectacles	\$2.75	—
Spyglass	\$7.00	1 lb.
Stepladder, 5 ft.	\$1.00	5 lbs.
Stereoscope	\$0.50	0.25 lb.
Suitcase	\$2.00	1 lb.
Telescope	\$12.50	2 lbs.
Tripod, wooden	\$1.50	5 lbs.
Trunk	\$2.50	5 lbs.
Wallet	\$0.50	0.1 lb.
Watch, pocket	\$2.50	0.1 lb.
Watch, chain	\$6.00	0.1 lb.
Whistle, police	\$0.75	0.1 lb.





The card is handed to a butler or secretary so that this individual may properly announce the caller. If the sought-after host is not at home, the card can be left behind as a reminder of the call.

Camera, Box. Perhaps the most commonly used camera of the period for landscape and studio photography, this item is bulky, cumbersome and fragile. To take a picture, a photographic plate must be inserted into the camera. Once exposed, the plate can be developed using a photographer's set. Taking high-quality pictures also requires a photographer's set (described in the "Artisan's Tools" section of this chapter).

Camera, Folding. Very similar to the box camera in operation, the folding camera has the advantage of easier storage and transportation through a soft body frame with accordion folds that can be collapsed and carried or stored in a relatively small place. Taking high-quality pictures requires a photographer's set.

Compass, Magnetic. This is a small, handheld device used in navigation. Within its casing is a lodestone that rotates a directional display. If properly steadied, the arrow always rotates toward the north. A character using a compass always knows which direction is north (barring any kind of large magnetic interference), giving them advantage on ability checks to avoid becoming lost in wilderness environments.

Club Bag. A cross between a duffle bag and a briefcase, this item is commonly fashioned from canvas and leather. More exotic varieties of club bags, made from the hides of alligators and other exotic creatures are also available for those who can afford them. The growing middle class makes good use of these handy carrying cases, while the upper class often makes a show of owning the more exotically constructed varieties. The club bag has soft sides and a metal frame, and closes with a metal clasp.

First Aid Kit. This kit is a leather pouch or metal box containing bandages, gauze, rubbing alcohol, smelling salts, disposable gloves, and pain-relieving medicines. Otherwise, it is identical to a healer's kit, and has ten uses. As an action, you can expend one use of the kit to stabilize a creature that has 0 hit points, without needing to make a Wisdom (Medicine) check.

Handcuffs. The equivalent of manacles in this era, steel handcuffs are used primarily by law enforcement agents. Civilians may find them difficult to acquire. They can bind a Small or Medium creature. Escaping these handcuffs requires a successful DC 22 Dexterity check. Breaking them requires a successful DC 22 Strength check. They are made with double locks, which means each cuff can be locked and unlocked independently of the other. Each set of handcuffs comes with one key. Without the key, a creature proficient with thieves' tools can pick one of the locks with a successful DC 16 Dexterity check using those tools. Handcuffs have 20 hit points.

Lantern, Harness. Resembling a smaller version of a common bull's-eye lantern, this device casts bright light in a 15-foot cone and dim light for an additional 15 feet. Once lit, it burns for 2 hours on a 4 ounces of oil (about

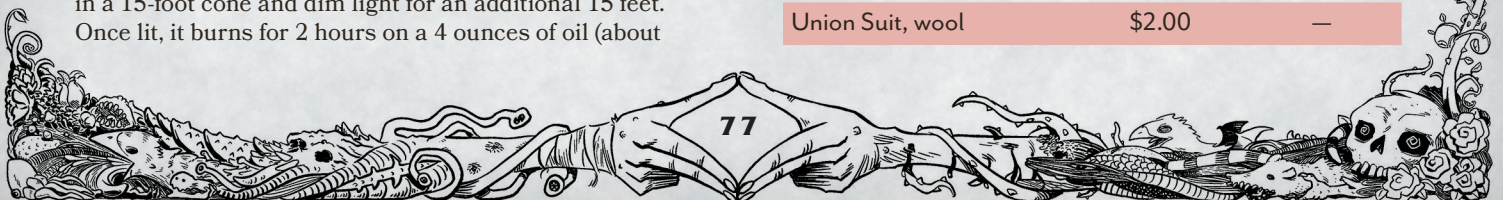
a quarter of a flask). Though it sheds less light than larger lanterns, it can be clipped to a belt, leaving the user's hands free. It can become quite hot, however, and must be handled with great care.

Magic Lantern. An extremely popular form of entertainment, this device projects an image onto a screen using a lens to enlarge and focus the image. The images are painted on glass slides that are inserted into the machine. It is employed for religious, educational, artistic, scientific and topographical uses as well.

Opera Glasses. These items are ornate, less powerful versions of the more common binoculars. Opera glasses generally magnify at a power of 2 or 3 times, limiting

GARMENTS

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Belt, leather	\$0.30	—
Blouse	\$1.25	—
Bonnet	\$2.25	—
Boots, riding	\$3.00	—
Boots, soft	\$1.50	—
Boots, rubber	\$1.25	—
Cap	\$0.50	—
Cape, Opera	\$1.00	—
Dress, common	\$4.00	—
Dress, fancy	\$7.50	—
Gloves, kid	\$1.00	—
Hat, Bowler	\$1.00	—
Hat, Deerstalker	\$1.25	—
Hat, Ten Gallon	\$1.75	—
Hat, Silk Top Hat	\$4.00	—
Overalls	\$2.50	—
Overcoat	\$11.00	—
Pants	\$1.75	—
Petticoat	\$1.00	—
Raincoat (oil slicker)	\$4.00	—
Shirt	\$1.00	—
Shoes	\$1.00	—
Skirt, dress	\$3.50	—
Skirt, walking	\$2.50	—
Suit, hiking/riding	\$8.00	—
Suit, bespoke	\$12.00	—
Suit, daily business	\$5.00	—
Suit, dress	\$9.00	—
Union Suit, wool	\$2.00	—





their use severely. A favorite vanity piece of the social elite, these viewing spectacles are rarely ever seen outside the theatre, except perhaps on display in the homes of those wealthy enough to afford going to lavish theatrical events on a regular basis.

Physician's Bag. This contains the basic implements of modern medicine, including bandages, gauze, rubbing alcohol, smelling salts, disposable gloves, and pain-relieving medicines. A physician's bag is nicer than a first aid kit, coming in a cabinet bag and containing additional specialized tools such as a stethoscope, scalpels, post-mortem knives, and the like. Otherwise, it is identical to a healer's kit, except that it only has 5 uses, and by purchasing \$1.00's worth of supplies, all expended uses can be replenished. As an action, you can expend one use of the kit to stabilize a creature that has 0 hit points, without needing to make a Wisdom (Medicine) check. It also grants characters proficient in the Medicine skill advantage on Wisdom (Medicine) checks when they are physically examining the patient.

Pipe, Meerschm. This smoking pipe is named after the light stone from which it is carved. These pipes are popular with gentlemen of the era, and have been associated with the image of the "Great Detective" Sherlock Holmes.

Stereoscope. This popular novelty device uses optics to fool the eye into seeing an artificial three-dimensional image. Constructed mostly of wood, the viewer looks at two slightly different images (usually photographs) through mirrors. They are a common household item among Westerners.

Whistle, Police. These thin metal whistles are standard issue for the constables of the era who use them to summon aid or backup. The whistles used by the London police can be heard up to 500 feet away, or up to 10 times that far with a successful Wisdom (Perception) check (DC = 12 + 1 per 500 feet of distance from the whistle).

ARTISAN'S TOOLS

The types of artisan tool sets described here either supplement those in the *Player's Handbook* or provide more detail on their versions in Gothic Earth. For gaming sets or musical instruments that exist in different versions of the same item (such as higher or lower quality chess sets or pianos), one proficiency covers all iterations of that tool.

Carpenter's Tools. This kit contains an assortment of carving tools, hammers and other items that may enable a character to make repairs to wooden objects or fashion new items from appropriate materials. However, a supply of lumber and other materials is necessary for larger projects.

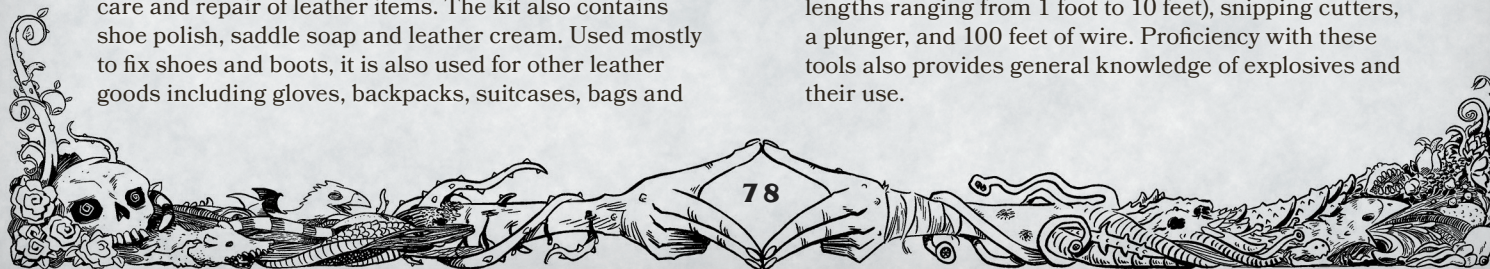
Cobbler's Tools. This kit contains tools that include knives, punches and awls. A cobbler's kit is used for the care and repair of leather items. The kit also contains shoe polish, saddle soap and leather cream. Used mostly to fix shoes and boots, it is also used for other leather goods including gloves, backpacks, suitcases, bags and

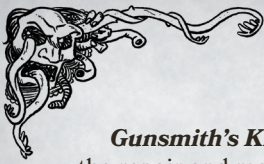
TOOLS

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Artisan's tools		
Carpenter's tools	\$15.00	15 lbs.
Cobbler's tools	\$5.00	5 lbs.
Demolitions kit	\$20.00	20 lbs.
Gunsmith's kit	\$5.00	2.5 lbs.
Mechanic's tools	\$25.00	10 lbs.
Microscope	\$18.00	5 lbs.
Photographer's set	\$25.00	5 lbs.
Sewing kit	\$2.50	1 lb.
Smith's tools	\$20.00	25 lbs.
Typewriter	\$25.00	10 lbs.
Watchmaker's tools	\$30.00	2.5 lbs.
Gaming sets		
Backgammon set	\$5.00	1 lb.
Baseball gear (ball, mitt, bat, and glove)	\$2.00	3 lbs.
Chess set, common	\$1.00	0.5 lb.
Chess set, fine	\$5.00	1 lb.
Marbles (50)	\$1.00	1 lb.
Playing cards (traditional 52 card deck, plus 2 Jokers)	\$0.50	—
Tennis set (balls, two rackets)	\$3.50	2 lb.
Musical instrument		
Banjo	\$4.00	5 lbs.
Bugle	\$2.50	1 lb.
Guitar	\$9.00	3 lbs.
Harmonica	\$0.30	0.1 lb.
Piano, grand	\$90.00	500 lbs.
Piano, cottage (upright)	\$40.00	350 lbs.
Tambourine	\$1.50	1 lb.
Violin, standard	\$6.00	1 lb.

many other items. In this era, proficiency with either cobbler's tools or leatherworker's tools can be used interchangeably with both.

Demolitions Kit. This does not contain actual explosives, but it does include the implements for using them safely, including 50 feet of fuses (usually pre-cut in lengths ranging from 1 foot to 10 feet), snipping cutters, a plunger, and 100 feet of wire. Proficiency with these tools also provides general knowledge of explosives and their use.





Gunsmith's Kit. These tools are designed to aid in the repair and maintenance of most handguns and rifles. It includes brushes, both long and short, to help keep barrels clear of debris, as well as oil and cloth to keep all parts in good working condition, and some small metal tools. A character that also has access to a proper machinist's shop can craft firearms using these tools.

Mechanic's Tools. A small assortment of tools necessary for repairing and maintaining the wonders of the modern age, such as electrical devices, mechanical devices and steam engines. These include pliers, wrenches, wire, tape, snipping cutters, rubber gloves, a small rubber mallet, and more. Mechanic's tools are the functional equivalent of tinker's tools, and proficiency with either one includes proficiency with both.

Microscope. This optical device has gone through many changes in recent times, becoming smaller in size and somewhat portable if great care is given to its transportation. It is rarely found outside academic or scientific halls, but can be used to examine minute objects and is useful in many scientific pursuits. It is fragile and subject to easy breakage.

Photographer's Set. This portable case contains everything needed to take high quality photographs, including a fold-up camera and tripod, flash equipment, flash powder, photographic plates, photographic paper, developing chemicals, camera repair tools, and even a small amount of makeup.

Sewing Kit. This small kit contains needles, various threads, a few stray buttons and a small pair of scissors. The tools here are meant to repair small tears and to make slight alterations to clothing and costumes. For more extensive work, a sewing machine and appropriate materials are required. For modern garments, the sewing kit is the functional equivalent of weaver's tools, and proficiency with either one includes proficiency with both.

Smith's Tools. The art of the smith is not entirely dead in the modern age. Though not as essential to a town's survival as it once was, blacksmithing is still a respected and useful profession. This large, heavy kit includes a leather apron and a wide assortment of metalworking tools, such as hammers, chisels, and tongs, as well as finer tools for doing decorative work on metal. In many cases, however, use of these tools also requires access to a working forge or anvil.

Typewriter. Recently designed with the "QWERTY" style typing board, this device is rapidly becoming a staple in the business environment. Typing at the speed required for professional employment as a typist requires

an ability check, and proficiency is tested during hiring. While some models require the typist to lift the carriage in order to see the work, improvements to this device are taking place all the time. Some models are elaborately decorated with flower designs and other decals. Cheaper models are nondecorative and simply functional.

Watchmaker's Tools. This set of tools contains a collection of fine instruments for the maintaining and repairing of the delicate inner mechanics of pocket watches and other chronometrical devices. Watchmaker's tools often include a magnifying lens (sometimes made to be attached to a cap or to fit directly over the eye), miniature pliers, tweezers, polishers and fine brushes for cleaning out debris.

EQUIPMENT PACKS

All of the equipment packs described in the *Player's Handbook* are still available on Gothic Earth, and most remain just as useful. Each is a more convenient (and often cheaper) means of buying the items in it than picking them up individually. In addition, the following equipment pack (introduced in *Curse of Strahd*) is also available.

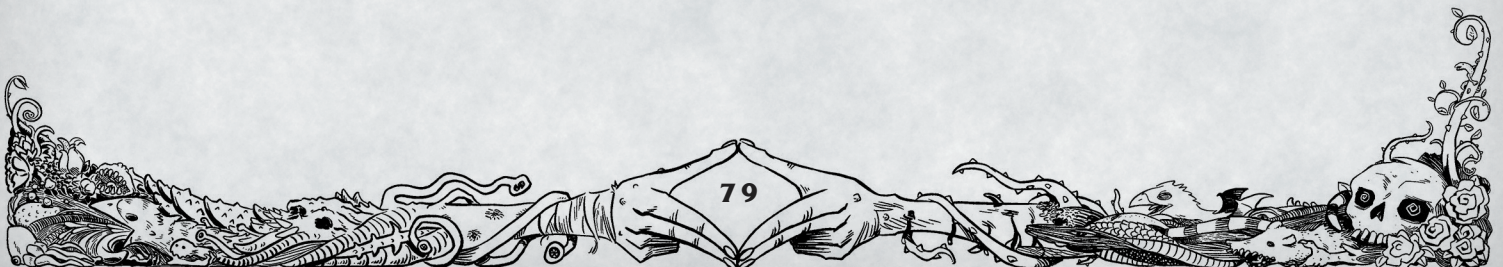
Monster Hunter's Pack (\$33). Includes a chest, a crowbar, a hammer, three wooden stakes, a holy symbol, a flask of holy water, a set of manacles, a steel mirror, a flask of oil, a tinderbox, and 3 torches.

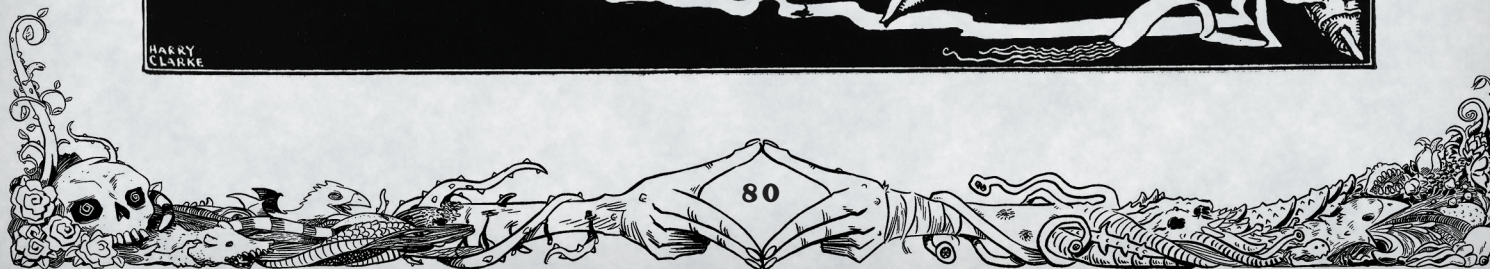
TRANSPORTATION

ITEM	COST
Ocean liner (per 100 miles)	\$2.50
Railroad (per 50 miles)	\$1.50
Riverboat (per 50 miles)	\$1.00
Cab, hansom (per mile)	\$0.20
Cab, four-wheeler (per mile)	\$0.10
Omnibus (per person, to any destination on local route)	\$0.05

COMMUNICATION

ITEM	COST
Telegram (per word)	\$0.05
Telegram (per world, international)	\$0.25







... CHAPTER 6 ...

QABALS

IN THE SHADOWS of Gothic Earth, many qabals gather, preserving forbidden lore against the curse of the Red Death and the ravages of time. Whether or not they still remember their original goals, and whether they have remained true to their purpose or fallen utterly under the control of the Red Death, most organize themselves into independent cells, using secretive procedures like those of professional spies to cover their tracks.

Not all of those engaged in the secret war against the Red Death are members of qabals, but for millennia these covert orders have provided the main structure for all organized resistance. Through unity, they have won many victories no individual ever could, while also weathering an endless number of cruel defeats.

A Qabal's Sigil. Each qabal has a sigil, a special symbol meaningful only to those who know of the qabal's existence. Most qabal members carry some version of that symbol (an engraving on jewelry, a custom calling card, a surreptitious tattoo, or even the depicted object itself) so that comrades in the battle against the great Evil can recognize them when they meet. This includes not only members of other cells from the same qabal, but also members of other qabals with whom they share a common cause. Usually, when qabal members who don't already know each other meet, a sigil is only part of identifying each other, alongside secret phrases and code words.

Structure and Leadership. In the traditional organizational methods handed down from the most ancient of these groups, each area where a qabal is frequently active has its own secret cell of a half-dozen or so members. That cell recognizes a single leader. The leader, in turn, is a member of a "ranking cell", consisting of a select group of 5–10 members who each lead a separate cell of their own. The leaders do not discuss the other members of the cells they lead unless absolutely necessary.

Conversely, cell members who are not in leadership positions usually know little or nothing of cells elsewhere. This structure makes it very difficult for a single member who is captured and interrogated by agents of the Red Death to reveal information under torture that would threaten the qabal as a whole.

For these hidden orders, paranoia is the price of survival. Even the most virtuous qabals will kill to punish betrayal or to keep their secrets out of the wrong hands. Nevertheless, members of different qabals can and do work together, sharing necessary information about the Red Death's machinations while withholding any details about how their separate factions actually work.

Qabalistic Initiation. Lists of spells, spellcasting foci, and other details are provided after each qabal's description. The spells and foci are for use with the Qabalistic Initiation option of the scion's Forbidden

Lore feature. Brief descriptions of each qabal are included as well. Each qabal also has a default alignment which most of its members share, as well as a special symbol (or "sigil"). Should you become a member of a qabal for which a spell list is not provided, your DM will assist you in determining the benefits you receive for Qabalistic Initiation.

The spells and spellcasting focus listed for each only benefit a player character member of that qabal if that character also has the Qabalistic Initiation fragment of Forbidden Lore. They also give a general sense of the kinds of spells members of the qabal tend to know, listing those which are taught to members who seek formal instruction. To be clear, neither the Qabalistic Initiation option nor any other class feature is required to join a qabal.

JOINING A QABAL

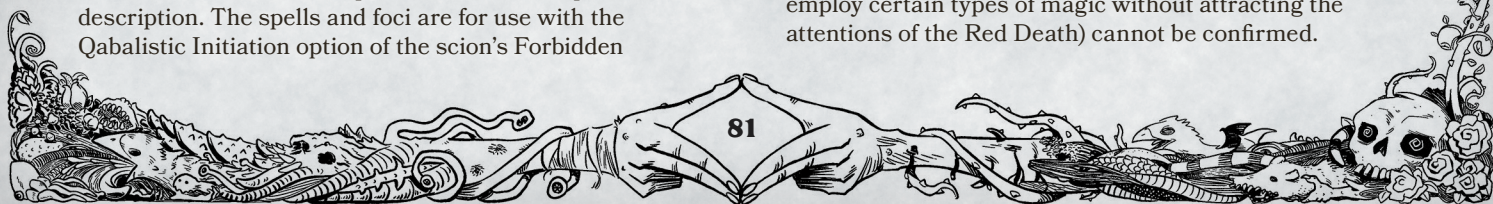
In some campaigns, the player characters will all be members of a qabal—either all comprising a cell of the same qabal, or as members of separate qabals allied in the war against the Red Death. In many cases, however, qabal membership will be attained over the course of the game, and the characters will start with little or no connection to any of these secret orders. Certain campaigns may never have player character qabal members, with these organizations remaining mysterious factions lurking in the background as the story unfolds.

Whichever of these is the case, the DM and players should discuss whether any given character would begin as a qabal member before play begins.

A PARTIAL LIST OF OTHER QABALS

There are far more qabals currently active on Gothic Earth than can be described in this volume. A list of many good and neutral qabals is included here. Qabals described in detail elsewhere in this chapter are not included in the list. Certain qabals described here claim to have been influenced by beings from other worlds, or even claim such beings as their founders, but the inflexible nature of Gothic Earth's planar boundaries makes such claims highly dubious.

Some have suggested that the Romani ethnic subgroup known as the Vistani should be classified as a qabal, given their secretive customs and the oral traditions by which they are said to pass on occult lore within family groups. However, labelling an entire culture as a magical secret society is a strange proposition, and rumors about innate supernatural capabilities being passed on within Vistani groups (chiefly the ability to employ certain types of magic without attracting the attentions of the Red Death) cannot be confirmed.





Qabal Name	Alignment
The Betrothed	chaotic good
The Baltimore Gun Club	neutral good
The Community of Thoth	lawful good
The Company of the Dance	lawful good
The Consanguinity of the Azure Robes	lawful neutral
The Divine Madness	chaotic neutral
The Eleusinian Consortium	chaotic good
The Emerald Enclave	neutral
The Exorcists of the Silver Flame	lawful good
The Fellowship of the Tattered Scroll	chaotic neutral
The Followers of the One	chaotic neutral
The Followers of the Way	neutral
The Guiding Hand	lawful neutral
The Haywain Drivers	neutral good
Heirs of the Piper	neutral good
The Hermetic Order of the Radiant Crescent	chaotic neutral
The Interiad	neutral
The Keepers of the Left	lawful neutral
The Knights of Mars the Terrible	chaotic neutral
The Millstone Sisterhood	neutral good
The Order of the Balefire	neutral good
The Order of the Crimson Chalice	lawful good
The Order of the Cruciform Sword	lawful good
The Pilgrims of the Radiant Dawn	lawful good
The Seven	?
The Society of the Sanctified Mind	lawful good
The Spanish Hermetic Society	lawful neutral
The Students of the Reborn Truth	neutral
The Sword That Has Been Drawn	lawful good
Those Who Have Seen	lawful neutral
The Undying Flame	lawful neutral
The Unseen Hand	lawful neutral
The World Spiritual League	neutral

DIE WÄCHTERN

Founded nearly a millennium ago, one of the most established qabals is “the Watchers”, or Die Wächtern. Though most members hail from Europe or North America, the group acts globally, and has dedicated itself to the elimination of the Red Death’s minions wherever

they can be found. Like all qabals, it is a secret from the larger populace, but among those who oppose the great Evil, it is perhaps the most well-respected modern qabal.

Its new leader is Professor Abraham van Helsing, said to have won a decisive victory against Dracula himself by organizing a small group of British socialites into a formidable team of vampire hunters. Founded during the First Crusade by Christian knights, the qabal still bases its oaths and codes of conduct on Judeo-Christian dogma, and most members are religious Westerners who see their work as a holy quest. Members are no longer required to be knights as they were in ancient times, but they must be of “exceptional character” and are required to swear a sacred oath to support the qabal and its war against the horrors of the Red Death.

The returning crusaders who established Die Wächtern at the start of the 12th century had seen true evil in the atrocities committed by their fellow crusaders even before they ran afoul of the creatures of the Red Death. They stumbled upon an ancient underground complex, where they discovered a cache of arcane knowledge and supplies brought to the Holy Land by scholars who had fled the destruction of the Library of Alexandria. They believed divine providence had guided them to their find, yet they were soon beset by unholy forces. They nearly died at the hands of the Red Death’s servants, but their survival was the first of many victories to come.

Returning to their homes in Saxony, the knights gathered at a hidden sanctuary south of Leipzig. They began a new, holier war against the evil menace revealed by the forbidden lore they had found. Their covenant challenged each of them to live up to the example of Provocatio, the Defiance, the ancient qabal whose records they had uncovered. For centuries, the Watchers united men and women of faith from various sects of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in their secret war against supernatural evil. Their legacy of undaunted heroism persists to this day, though a catastrophic defeat in the early 1600s all but destroyed the order.

A few qabalists escaped their mysterious attacker (rumored to have been Dracula himself), but they could not preserve the order’s records. A vast arcane library including ancient tomes from the Defiance itself was lost. Few setbacks in the war against the Red Death have been so devastatingly bleak. Yet the few survivors recreated Die Wächtern in Amsterdam, and have assembled a vast new archive of occult knowledge.

Sharing information with the astonishing speed afforded by new technologies such as the telegraph, the modern qabal lives up to its name, creating a web of vigilance that stretches across the civilized world.

1st-level Spells: *detect evil and good, sanctuary*

2nd-level Spells: *augury, lesser restoration*

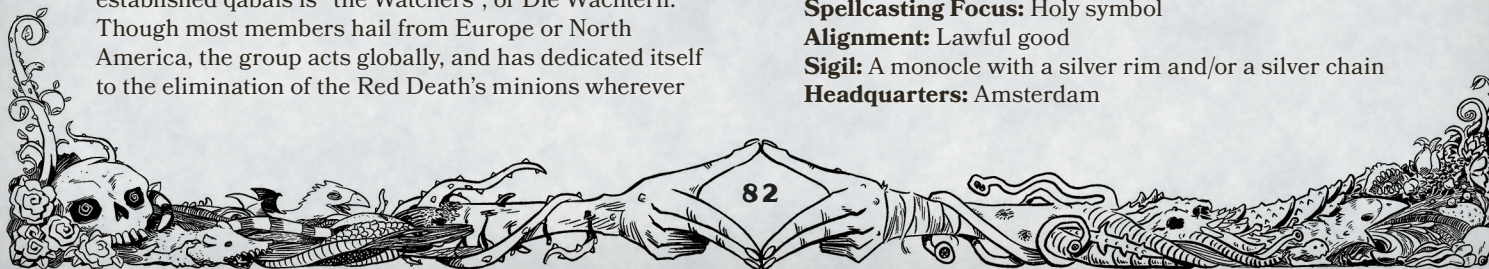
3rd-level Spells: *magic circle, remove curse*

Spellcasting Focus: Holy symbol

Alignment: Lawful good

Sigil: A monocle with a silver rim and/or a silver chain

Headquarters: Amsterdam





THE GHOST CIRCLE

As its name indicates, this is the modern revival of the lost qabal known as the Circle. Though the original was founded in London, most of its leading members were deeply devout religious scholars who migrated west with the Puritans and settled in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. As well-versed in classical scholarship as the teachings of the Bible, these learned magical adepts used the same secret protocols practiced by other qabals to keep their activities hidden from their superstitious neighbors in the colony.

One of the Circle's primary pursuits in the New World was seeking to meet with practitioners of magic from various subgroups of the nearby indigenous coastal peoples, such as the Wampanoag, Massachusett, and Abenaki. Individual tribes among these First Nations had suffered great losses from colonization, disease, and warfare. The Circle qabalists worked hard to earn the trust of as many of the remaining practitioners of magic as they could. The colonists' arrival had heralded a great growth in the Red Death's influence in this region, and members of the Circle were only able to combat the great Evil's minions with the aid of native allies.

Some early successes may have made the Circle too ambitious. By means much like those which brought the Red Death to Gothic Earth, a new and powerful entity now called Zemlak the Destroyer arrived in our world. The adepts of the Circle attempted to banish this entity, but Zemlak was far too powerful. It defeated the qabalists, revealing the identities of those who survived its wrath to its minions among the Puritans. The Salem Witch Trials were more than mere mass hysteria; they were an attempt to eliminate the remaining members of the Circle.

This attempt was almost completely successful. The Circle ceased to exist as an organized qabal, and the few members who were not killed survived only by fleeing back to England or seeking sanctuary with the same indigenous allies who had tried to warn them of their foolish hubris.

Only a few successors of the version of the qabal that met its end in New England are active today, a single cell recently relocated to Boston. In the Circle's original home of London, however, a larger resurgence has taken place. This group consists primarily of younger occult researchers who came together in the 1880s after discovering a trove of the Circle's lost literature. The name "the Ghost Circle" came from the notion that the Circle was rising from its own death to take action in the world once more. The leaders are a trio of women who each operate their own cells, frequently changing locations and identities as necessary.

Members of the Ghost Circle bring a vast array of scientific weapons to bear in their activities. Their primary approach is always observation and investigation, and it is only in rare cases that they choose to take direct



The Ghost Circle Headquarters, London.

action. However, by combining the powers of modern physics, engineering, medicine, and psychology with a broad knowledge of the occult, they have had a number of notable victories in their war against the horrors of the supernatural.

The cell that keeps the legacy of the ancient Circle alive in New England only recently connected with the British cells, thanks to the efforts of a young qabalist named Theresa O'Neill. Drawn to Boston with her allies in 1889, she became aware of visiting agents of the Ghost Circle through divination magic. Sister to a Boston police detective who does not believe in the supernatural at all, Miss O'Neill is only a neophyte spellcaster, but her investigative skills are well-honed. She carefully tracks the Red Death's rising American influence in coded reports she shares with the leadership in London. She knows the being called Zemlak is still active, and that it is now one of the Red Death's leading lieutenants.

Another notable new recruit is a young man (born in 1872) by the name of Thomas Carnacki, who has already had several successful adventures against the occult despite his relative lack of experience. Whether his efforts will bring him fame and fortune or only an untimely death remains to be seen.

1st-level Spells: *bless, detect magic*

2nd-level Spells: *magic weapon, see invisibility*

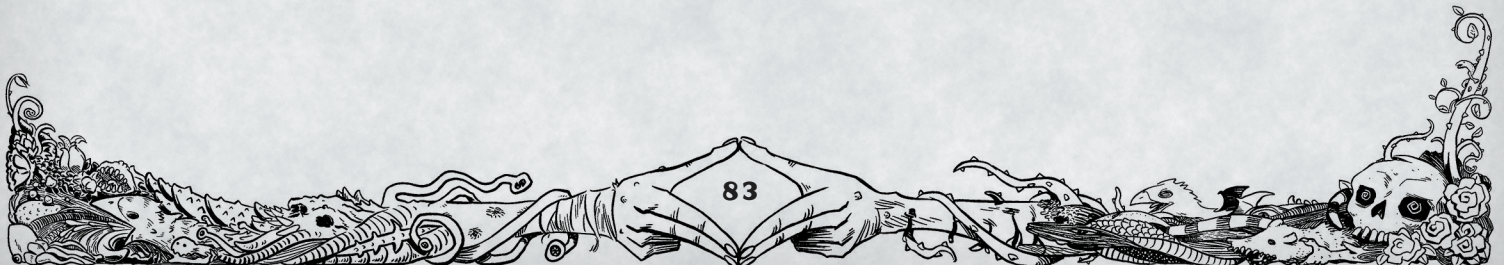
3rd-level Spells: *dispel magic, magic circle*

Spellcasting Focus: A magnifying glass

Alignment: Neutral good

Sigil: A pentacle

Headquarters: London (a townhouse in the bohemian neighborhood of Chelsea)





LA LUMIERE

Often known by its English name, “the Enlightenment,” La Lumiere was established over a century ago in Paris, during the historical era that shares its name. Three previously separate qabals (the Alliance, the Society of Keepers, and the Sisterhood) became one, dedicated to the belief that learning, culture, science, art, and individual freedom are humanity’s best hope for a bright future—a future free of the Red Death’s control.

La Lumiere’s members work against supernatural evil in much the same manner as other qabals, but their main activities revolve around supporting those who wish to expand the frontiers of the arts, sciences, and other areas of learning. This tradition began with Andre Lescot, a relatively low-ranking French government official who was nevertheless able to subtly redirect resources and sponsor programs to transform the palace known as the Louvre into what it is today: the greatest museum on Gothic Earth.

Three smaller qabals unified around the vision Lescot espoused: That there can be no livable future in which human compassion and artistic expression do not advance at the same rate as scientific and economic progress. (Rumors say Lescot inherited this credo from his parents, who died mysteriously in 1719, having been involved in a similar previous qabal that disappeared not long after.)

Membership requirements are quite strict. This qabal includes a fair number of the world’s best-known artists and scientists, but most eschew fame, advancing their cause anonymously. To even be considered for recruitment, one must be of the highest intelligence, cultural awareness, and refinement. Only those with a deep belief in the priority of individual rights over the laws of society are invited to join.

Qabalists of La Lumiere have little respect for national borders, seeing people everywhere as belonging to one true community that includes all of humankind. Some members could even rightly be called anarchists. All strive for a new ordering of the world, the dawn of a more civilized age in which all people unite to end human suffering.

Despite their steadfast opposition to the Red Death—which directly undermines La Lumiere’s goals with its attempts to sow fear and ignorance—most of this qabal’s members abhor violence. Many could be called pacifists. When direct action against the great Evil is required, they must navigate their personal ethical codes, seeking to inflict no more harm than is absolutely necessary.

1st-level Spells: *faerie fire, sleep*

2nd-level Spells: *continual flame, locate animals or plants*

3rd-level Spells: *daylight, love’s lament**

Spellcasting Focus: Any lantern, torch, lamp, or candle

Alignment: Chaotic good

Sigil: A candle in a silver holder

Headquarters: Paris (in a secret complex beneath the Place du Carousel at the heart the Louvre)

LOVE’S LAMENT

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (60-foot cone)

Components: V, M (a musical instrument)

Duration: Instantaneous

The music created by this spell draws upon the sadness, guilt, and despair of those around you. Each creature in a 60-foot cone has disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks related to hearing until the end of your next turn, and it must make an Intelligence saving throw. A creature that fails the saving throw takes 3d10 psychic damage and is poisoned until the end of its next turn, as it calls to mind memories of all its lost loves and disappointments in life.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the psychic damage increases by 1d10 for each slot level above 3rd.

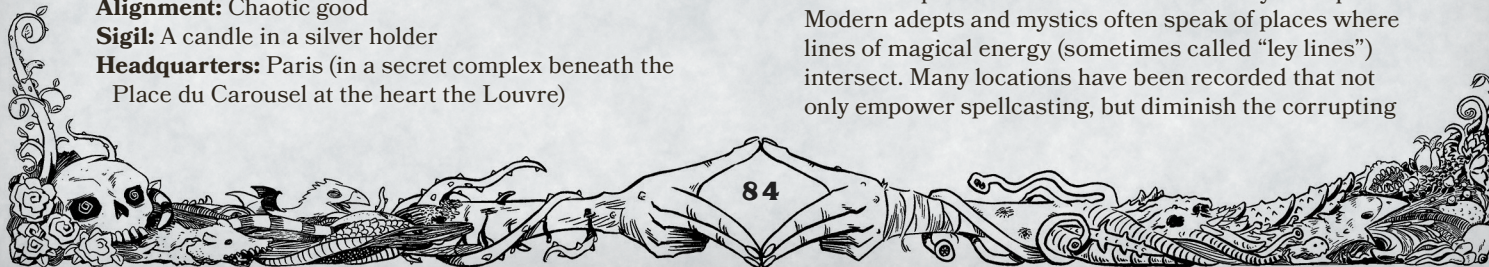
THE NATION OF NINE

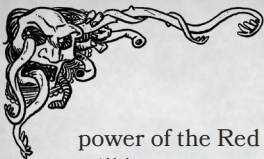
This is a far-ranging, decentralized union of qabals concerned with the preservation of sacred places. They oppose threats to the natural world and associate the corruption of the Red Death with colonialism and the spread of technology. Most members hail from cultures that have been on the wrong end of European empire-building, although at least one of its associated qabals includes a fair number of agents of Western European descent, who use their cultural fluency and privilege to perform covert missions against the imperial powers.

The Nation is even more secretive than most qabals, since their activities often place them in direct opposition to the world’s leading political regimes as well as supernatural foes. Some say their name indicates they are a union of nine separate qabals, but even this number cannot be confirmed by outsiders.

Each of the various sub-qabals keeps its own sigil. Contact between them is rare, except among leaders. When lesser agents must identify themselves to members of another sect, they do so with the sigil of the qabal they are meeting, rather than their own. The first of the recorded sub-qabals was Libertad (“Liberty”), whose activities are recorded as early as 1589. Their most noteworthy work was with abolitionist and anti-monarchist movements in various Western countries, and they were especially active around the French Revolution and the lead-up to the American civil war. They are also said to have engaged in mystical espionage to aid the Union cause in that conflict.

Yet Libertad was also involved with the central mission that has since unified it with all of the Nation of Nine’s other qabals. Since ancient times, humankind has identified special locations as sources of mystical power. Modern adepts and mystics often speak of places where lines of magical energy (sometimes called “ley lines”) intersect. Many locations have been recorded that not only empower spellcasting, but diminish the corrupting





power of the Red Death. In many places, these sites are still kept secret, often under the vigilance of the Nation, in the hope that their unique properties need not be lost.

People living near such places tend to feel an intuitive impulse to protect and preserve them, but several factors can remove this instinct. Growing settlements, the clearing of natural features, increased reliance upon technology, and the imposition of outside cultural values all work, on many levels, to obscure any need to defend such sites. This is especially true when such “civilization” is imposed by an invader.

Some of the most well-known of the world’s magically sacred sites have already been depowered, corrupted, or devastated by the Red Death’s agents. Stonehenge’s sorcerous potency is greatly diminished, the great pyramid at Giza focuses energies that have long since been corrupted, and Angkor Wat was abandoned after being nearly destroyed. The Nation of Nine is determined to defend those that remain.

Some have theorized that these places are marshalling points, where the Earth itself concentrates its resistance to the invasive power of the Red Death. Members of the Nation believe such locations are vital to saving humanity from the great Evil. Therefore, they consider opposing the relentless march of what some would call “progress” to be an absolute moral imperative. Though many of these qabalists have known the horrifying outrages of oppression, their larger mission is not only about preserving or avenging any particular cultural group. Rather, they have united for the salvation of all humankind.

1st-level Spells: *fog cloud, hunter’s mark*

2nd-level Spells: *heat metal, pass without trace*

3rd-level Spells: *conjure animals, plant growth*

Spellcasting Focus: Any druidic focus

Alignment: Neutral

Sigil: Varies by subgroup

Headquarters: None (individual member qabals are said to be headquartered around the world, with two

tied to locations in West Africa, and others based in Madagascar, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Melbourne, Seattle, and Mexico City)

PLACES OF POWER

Certain magically powerful places, including the sacred sites defended by the Nation of Nine, grant one or both of the following benefits while a character is in that location:

- Dark Powers checks are rolled with advantage.
- Resolve point costs for casting spells are reduced by half (rounded up).

SCIIONS OF ALCHEMAE

Like the members of La Lumiere, the Scions of Alchemae (sometimes known as the Brotherhood of Alchemae, though given the growing numbers of female numbers, this name is falling into disuse) place great value on reason and scientific inquiry. However, this qabal is unique in that pure science is seen as having a value that eclipses all other things.

Art, emotions, morality, charity, and the like are all seen as distractions. New members are not even approached until they have made an important scientific advancement or discovery.

This qabal was founded in Persia in the 1200s, where its members used rigorous research and applied magic (seen as merely an advanced scientific pursuit) to investigate and harness the properties of light. Followers of the Code Alchemae have been responsible for many new fields of science and technology, yet at other times they have sought to discredit certain innovators.

For example, Alessandro Volta, inventor of the battery, was a Scion of Alchemae, but for unknown reasons the qabal has worked to undermine certain independent contemporary scientists, such as Anna Mesmer and Nikola Tesla. Others prominent members of the Scions have included Thomas Edison, John Dalton,





Marie Skodowska (known as Marie Curie after marrying a fellow Scion in 1896), Aureliano Maestre de San Juan, Dmitri Mendeleev, Huang Lü, Joseph Priestley, Rupa Bai Furdoonji, Ada Lovelace, and Victor Frankenstein.

1st-level Spells: *find familiar, identify*

2nd-level Spells: *calm emotions, locate object*

3rd-level Spells: *animate dead, clarity of mind**

Spellcasting Focus: Alchemist's supplies

Alignment: Lawful neutral

Sigil: A mortar and pestle

Headquarters: London (relocated from Persia for unknown reasons sometime during the 1700s)

CLARITY OF MIND

3rd-level abjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You touch a target and grant it extraordinary focus for the duration. The target has advantage on Wisdom and Intelligence saving throws against spells. Once during that duration, the target can choose to gain advantage on a Wisdom or Intelligence saving throw that is not against a spell. Once the target does so, the spell ends immediately.

In addition, until the spell ends, the target does not have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks in areas that are lightly obscured, nor on attack rolls against creatures that are heavily obscured.

THE SWORD OF HUNYADY

Founded by a descendant of the ancient Romanian warlord (and secret foe of the undead) Janos Hunyadi, known as the “White Knight of Christendom,” this qabal has only existed for ten years. Yet it already well-respected among those who battle supernatural evil. They are based in the small town of Hunedoara, only a day’s travel from several centers of power for the being believed to be the Red Death’s greatest servant, Count Dracula himself.

The founder of the qabal is Magda Arany, who traces her ancestry back to Janos Hunyadi through his son, King Matthias I of Hungary and Croatia. Magda was also a student of Abraham van Helsing, and the Sword of Hunyadi maintains a close alliance with Die Wächtern to this day. She came to believe that the influence of Dracula and other undead monstrosities in Romania would inevitably lead to great battles for the fate of humanity—battles that would be fought in her homeland.

The other qabal members share their founder’s vision of impending conflict, and spend their days preparing. Much of their time is spent in training their comrades.

Each new member is expected to be formidable in at least one of the “Four Pillars” at the core of the qabal’s doctrine: faith, scholarship, martial prowess, and magic. Once initiated, recruits are expected to conduct informal classes to teach their fellow qabalists what they know.

The other main requirement of membership is an unquenchable desire to do battle with the forces of evil. All new candidates must be sponsored by an existing member. They will spend weeks having what they think are merely informal (if deep and esoteric) conversations with a “friend of friend”, who is actually one of the qabal’s leaders (most often Magda herself). If the prospective member is deemed acceptable, the leader extends them an invitation to join. So far, so much care has been taken to choose recruits of the right inclination that this invitation has never been refused.

Once a single cell based in Hunedoara, the qabal has now established other small groups in major cities across the regions of Transylvania and Wallachia. Recently, the qabal has realized that Dracula himself has not been spending his time in Romania, and so individual members have been sent abroad to investigate the Count’s activities. Sooner or later, the greatest of vampires will return to his homeland, and the qabal intends to be prepared.

Currently, the Sword of Hunyadi’s priority is synthesizing information gained from disparate sources, including knowledge passed on by Die Wächtern and contacts in other good-aligned qabals. They believe the minions of the Red Death are on the move, planning something of unprecedented scope, and obtaining a larger picture of what this means is considered a vital goal.

Another major pursuit is recovering the many legendary artifacts said to rest in hiding places across their homeland. A local magical phenomenon aids them in this. Each year, on St. George’s Day eve on May 4 (or April 24 in the Orthodox calendar), hidden magical treasures in Transylvania betray their resting places by means of a blue flame which flickers over their burial places all night long. Thus, this is an important time of year for the qabal, though they must move with even greater caution than usual. For on that same night, some related occult effect seems to empower the servants of the Red Death from dusk until dawn. Even the local folktales tell of these enchantments, and it is said no Transylvanian in their right mind ventures outdoors on this strange night.

1st-level Spells: *protection from evil and good, shield*

2nd-level Spells: *darkvision, mirror image*

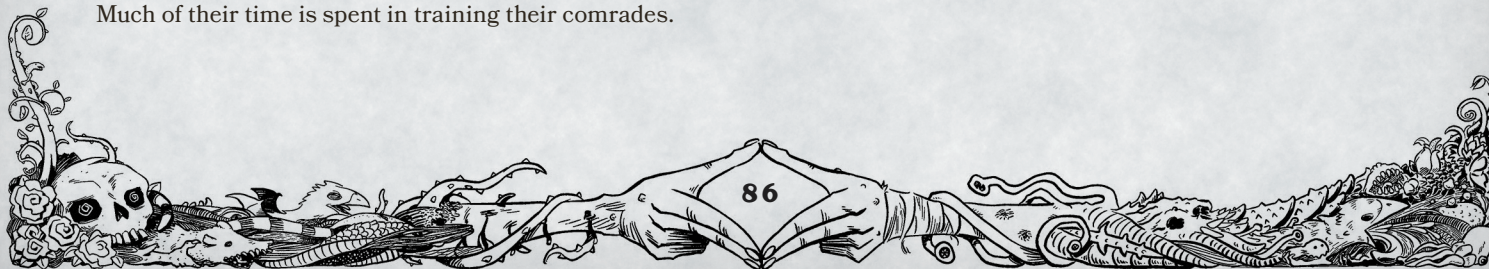
3rd-level Spells: *clairvoyance, magic circle*

Spellcasting Focus: A vial of holy water

Alignment: Lawful good

Sigil: A coin bearing the likeness of Janos Hunyadi

Headquarters: Castle Hunedoara, Transylvania





EVIL QABALS

Though this chapter focuses on good and neutral qabals, it must be noted that the number of such qabals is easily equaled or exceeded by the number of corrupted ones. The very nature of magic makes it very difficult for most qabals to avoid falling into evil without disbanding. Some of these qabals are cults, worshiping sinister entities. It is unknown if any of the beings to which they devote themselves (if they even exist) are servants of the Red Death.

These compromised qabals differ greatly in their beliefs, philosophies, approaches, and goals. For example:

Founded by survivors of the Defiance, the *Six-Fingered Hand* remains dedicated to destroying the Red Death, but members believe that the only way to defeat it is to destroy Gothic Earth itself(!), a goal they actively pursue.

Members of the *Company of the Yellow Sign* are traveling actors and other theatrical professionals, all obsessed with the text of a play that drives anyone who reads it mad.

The *Fellowship of the Crimson Dawn*, a fashionable London semi-secret society founded in 1887, is obsessed with uncovering occult "truths." Few of the qabal's influential members realize that their well-respected leaders have become both adepts of startling power and devoted servants of evil.

The unnamed entity worshipped by the *Cult of the Heir* is described as the rebellious daughter of Orcus, the Roman god of the underworld. Their occult texts describe this being (known only as "the Heir") as the embodiment of betrayal and deceit, rewarding her most fanatical qabalists with the secrets to cheat death itself and gain immortality.

The *Sons of Mihnea* collect unwilling blood sacrifices to nourish a dhampir (half-vampire) believed to have a family tie to Dracula himself.

The *Church of the Far Realm* receives messages from "Hidden Masters" who claim to dwell outside of this plane of existence. These revelations instruct the qabal's members to perform potent arcane rituals, each intended weaken the planar boundaries around Gothic Earth, until the Hidden Masters are able to push through.

The *Cult of the Hell Hound Whisperer* seeks to corrupt those who feel they have been passed over for advancement or defeated by unfair means, casting blame for such failures on others and enticing their targets into grand betrayals. They believe their schemes will one day allow them to resurrect their deity, whom they believe lies dead in the realms beyond.

Other evil qabals include the *Army of Set the Undying*, the *Black Flame*, the *Circle of Five*, the *Circle of Thirteen*, the *Cult of the Cosmic Beauty*, the *Eye*, the *Fearsome Army of Madrid*, the *Guild of the Dark Flower*, the *Hermetic Order of Maejik*, the *Just and Mighty Order of Kahl*, the *Order of the Endless Night*, *PRIME*, the *Transected Circle*, the *White Legion*, and *Zemlak's Children*. Though some individual members may yet be redeemable, all evil qabals serve the Red Death's purposes to some degree.

LOST QABALS

Many renowned qabals have taken up the fight against humankind's undying adversary over the millennia. The prototype for most qabals is Provocatio, the Defiance, which rose and fell in early centuries of the Common Era. From the ashes of the Defiance grew other orders, studying in secret to preserve what little magic they remembered and make certain that the Red Death did not corrupt everything utterly.

Other ancient qabals who took up the hallowed cause of defending humanity include:

The Stone. One of the first qabals to assume the mantle of the Defiance, the Stone grew powerful in 6th century Britain, during the reign of the king legends now name as Arthur Pendragon. The storied adept Merlin, said to be descended of fiends yet dedicated to the cause of good, led this qabal until his unexplained disappearance.

The Stone persisted for centuries, lasting into the era of the Holy Roman Empire. Eventually, however, authorities were corrupted and manipulated into persecuting the qabal's members. At the same time, creatures of the Red Death began assassinating key leaders, and the Stone was finally crushed. However, it is said that disciples of the Stone's teachings later founded successor qabals such as the Circle and the Scions of Alchemae.

The White Wizards. Like the Stone, the qabal known as the White Wizards was founded by Merlin himself. They were a much more widespread network, however, stretching beyond Europe to the Middle East and North Africa. They excelled in communicating magically from afar, and it is said some members never even met a fellow qabalist in person.

This ability to quickly disseminate information across great distances allowed the White Wizards to identify and destroy many of the minions of the Red Death. Their main focus was defeating fallen and corrupted qabals, and their adepts were particularly skilled in defeating other spellcasters. While this group outlasted the Stone, agents of the great Evil eventually destroyed the web of magical communication that connected the qabal's membership, and its activities faded from history.

The Phoenix. Arising from the ashes of a Europe devastated by the Black Plague, the Phoenix was an Italian qabal that emerged in the 1300s. Scholars of Gothic Earth's secret history often credit the Phoenix with sparking the larger cultural movement now known as the Renaissance. It is whispered among qabalist scholars that the Phoenix's swift genesis began with the actions of a lord who had once served the Red Death, but betrayed his former master in the interests of saving humanity.

This qabal sought to unite the great minds of the era, including explorers, mystics, philosophers, scientists, and artists. Many believe that great men like Leonardo da Vinci, the architect Brunelleschi, and the painters Piero della Francesca, Raphael and Michelangelo were all members of the Phoenix at one time or another.





Its well-traveled members ventured far from the qabal's Mediterranean birthplace, eventually founding cells in places as distant as the Middle East and Asia. The sharing of knowledge between such disparate places and cultures re-acquainted these qabalists with knowledge about the Red Death that had been lost centuries before.

The end of the qabal is poorly understood today, but most evidence lays the blame for the Phoenix's eventual downfall at the feet of the infamous Niccolo Machiavelli. Some theories say Machiavelli had fallen under the influence of the Red Death; others propose that those actions which spelled the qabal's undoing were perpetrated by an inhuman creature who had disguised himself as the influential political genius. In any case, by the time colonialism began to spread the Red Death's evil to new continents, the Phoenix was no longer an obstacle to the great Evil's plans.

The Circle. While members of many evil qabals smuggled themselves to the Americas, eager to awaken sleeping evils and corrupt magical creatures there, some champions of good made the migration as well. One of the most effective qabals in the New World arrived with the Puritan settlers of what is now Massachusetts. The Circle was destroyed during the Salem Witch Trials, though it has recently been reborn. More details appear in this chapter's description of its successor qabal, the Ghost Circle.

The Lost Kingdom. Whether this qabal ever even existed is a hotly debated topic among modern qabalists. If it did exist, it would have predated even the Defiance by millennia. Some argue that it is not only real, but that it still exists today, while others deny the whole idea is wishful thinking.

If the legends are to be believed, just before the Red Death entered the world, a disciple of the Egyptian wizard Imhotep fled the Third Dynasty with a devoted band of adepts and mystics. This student, named as Sadett, saw the direction her master's work was heading and believed his eldritch research would call forth otherworldly corruption. She led her followers to an inaccessible valley in what are now called the Congolese rain forests. For 4,000 years since, their descendants have ruled their own nation and kept it secret from other civilizations.

Despite this isolation, there are rumors that the Lost Kingdom sends agents into the outside world to track the spread of the Red Death's corruption and follow humanity's progress in spite of it. It is also said that, on rare occasions, they allow outsiders to join their ranks, including the late Scottish explorer David Livingstone. Although Livingstone never admitted to it, even when asked on his deathbed, many qabalists are certain he spent considerable time within the Lost Kingdom during his explorations. Over the course of the 1890s, the names of other famous explorers—such as Florence Baker and her husband Samuel, Richard Burton, Professor George Challenger, Mary Kingsley, Malcolm Murray, Allan Quatermain, and Alexandrine Tinné—are sometimes linked to the legend as well.

The most alluring portion of the myths surrounding the Lost Kingdom may be the description of various protective and concealing enchantments woven over their hidden city, allowing spellcasting without fear of the Red Death's taint.

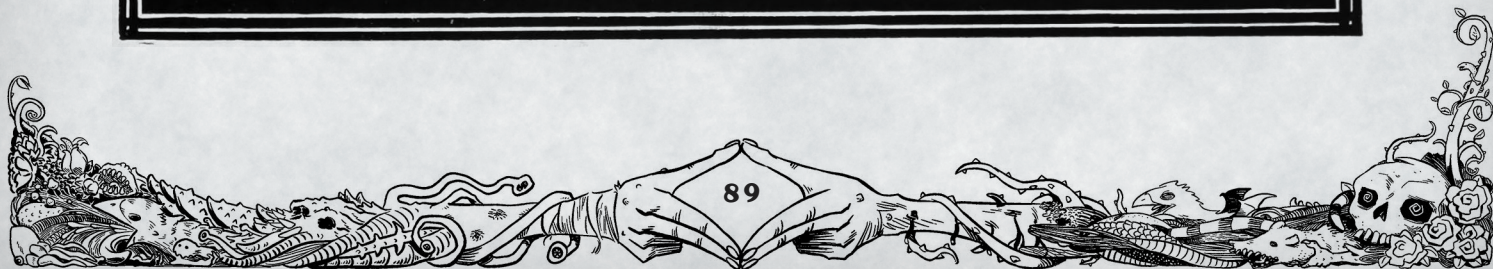
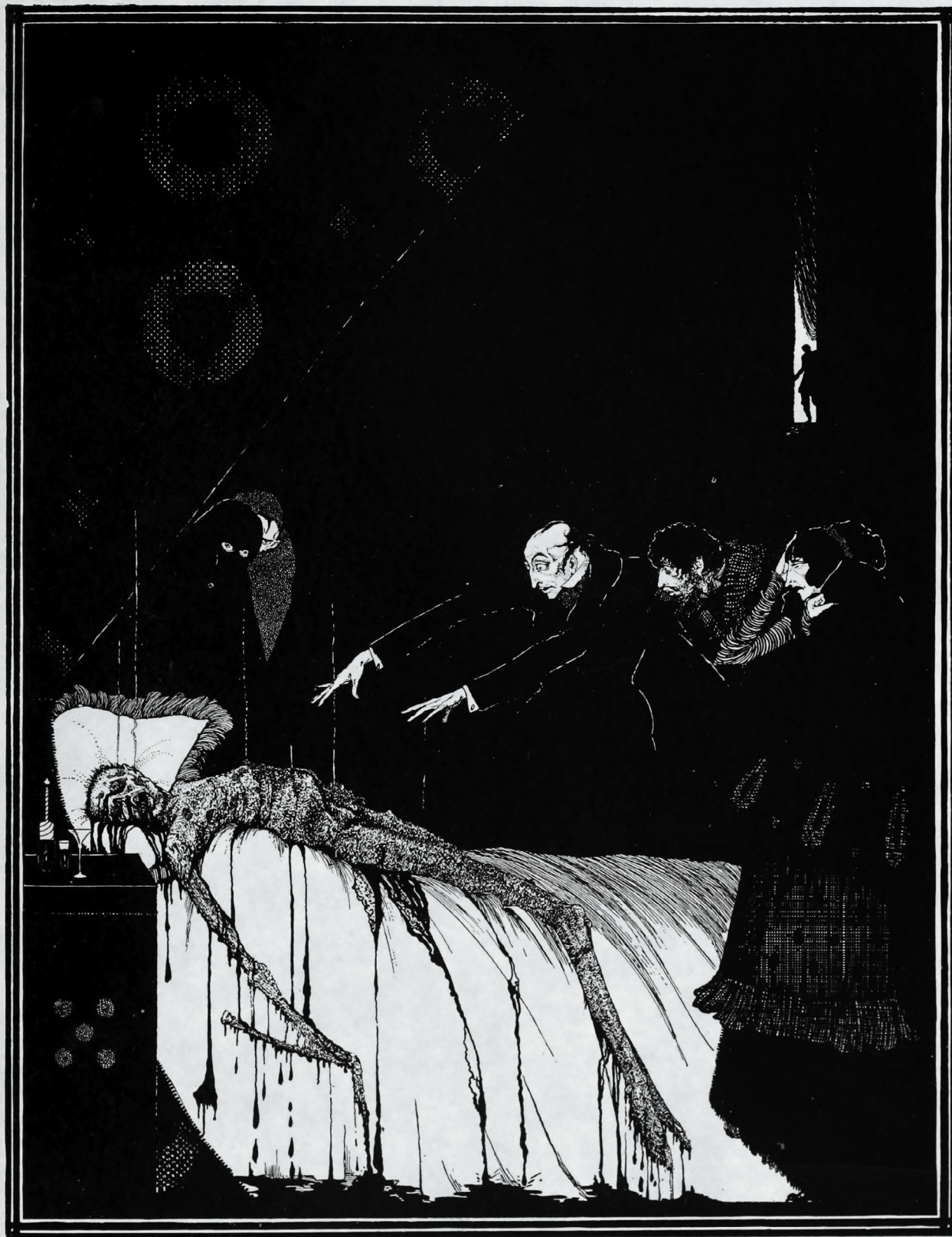
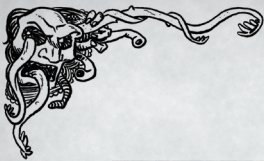
THE SOCIETY OF THE WHITE ROSE

One of the most highly-regarded modern qabals is the Society of the White Rose (sometimes called the Fellowship of the White Rose), which for many years has organized resistance to the Red Death across six continents. Many members of other good aligned qabals can recall having had White Rose contacts, and quite a few have a story about the time they received crucial aid or information from that qabal's agents.

However, none of those stories seem to take place after 1889. Since the beginning of the 1890s, even people who can recount positive experiences with the qabal are unable to recall any specific details about its members or their meeting places. As of now, it seems no one remembers any specific details about the White Rose. The fact that the Society was one of the most far-reaching and reliable qabals in the secret war makes this phenomenon all the more confusing. More than a few adepts and mystics even recall having joined the qabal and taken action as members, but no longer remember any details about the organization itself.

The authors hope to reveal more details about this strange and tantalizing mystery, along with many other secrets of Gothic Earth, in a future publication, under the planned title of *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH Dungeon Master's Handbook*.







... CHAPTER 7 ...

A PRIMER FOR DUNGEON MASTERS

While this book is a guide for players, this chapter includes some important rules and tips for Gothic Earth Dungeon Masters. However, none of the content need be kept secret, and many of these rules are likely to be referenced by players as well. More detailed guidance on playing as the Dungeon Master for **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** appears in the previous published versions of the setting for the second and third edition D&D rules. Some of their advice has been gratefully adapted for this chapter.

In addition to those books, some of the text from the fourth edition *Dungeon Master's Guide* and the third edition *Ravenloft Dungeon Master's Guide* has also been adapted here, in accordance with the DMs Guild Community Content Agreement.

RUNNING GOTHIC EARTH adventures differs greatly from masterminding a campaign in more traditional D&D worlds. While other games may feature mysteries and battles with horrific abominations in fantastic settings, a **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** adventure explores the nuances of fear and the essence of heroism in a comprehensible historical age—and is hopefully all the more horrifying for that familiarity.

Gothic Earth is a world inspired by the real history of the 1890s, but also one in which magic exists and the taint of corruption eats away at the heart of the world. This world is home to close analogs (or rather, the original versions) of many of the most horrific villains from the Ravenloft setting. Instead of Strahd von Zarovich of Barovia, this world is home to a certain Transylvanian count whose thirst for blood has enabled him to live beyond the bounds of time. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde live in the same symbiotic torment that haunts the darklord of the domain of Nova Vaasa, while Frankenstein's monster stalks the night driven by an undying hatred much like that of the creature who haunts Mordenheim. This is a world of ghosts and mummies and werewolves, where ancient Egyptian tombs lie in wait for the archaeologists and explorers who eagerly unlock their doors and loose their curses upon the unwary.

The role of the Dungeon Master is particularly crucial in a **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** game session. The DM must set the stage, weave a web of deceit and misdirection, fill the saga with fearsome atmosphere, and choreograph the tale into a *danse macabre*, all while creating and portraying intelligent and fallible supporting characters and villains with individual motives and weaknesses.

The popular phrase “playing mind games” is a fairly accurate description of a DM's relationship to their players in this setting. **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** relies on deduction, clever ruses, glibness of tongue, subterfuge,

and inspiring the imagination with thoughts of terror. Special attention must be paid to the cycle of fear and hope players experience during a game session.

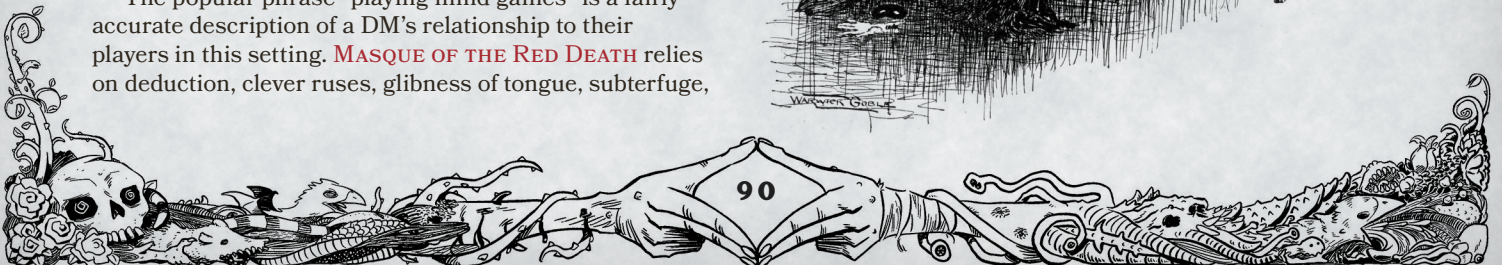
These adventures rely on investigation and the fight for survival, but this goes beyond solving overt puzzles, gathering clues, and overcoming combat challenges. Over time, the characters must unravel a web of plot twists and conflicting machinations that tangles fallible mere mortals with agents of a literal evil incarnate.

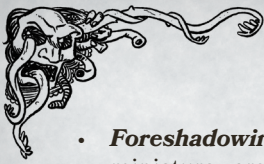
The archetypal **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign reveals its horror layer by layer, like nested Russian dolls. Comprehending the first level of a story opens the way to a second layer of plotting and motives behind the first. And beneath that layer is another and another until the heroes reach the heart of the matter, that master plot that links mere mortal evils back to the cosmic horror of the Red Death and its minions.

As the adventure unfolds its mysteries, they should mix those of a mystic nature with interweaving plots of NPCs to cause confusion and misdirection. Most importantly, the elements of the adventure should impact the players (not merely the characters) on an emotional level.

Useful storytelling devices for adventures on Gothic Earth (with examples) are listed below:

- **Pathos.** The evocation of pity or sadness, often created by seeing undeserved personal misfortune, such as a poor orphaned waif crying for help from a burning building.
- **Injustice.** Involving the characters in the plot on behalf of someone who has grievously and unfairly wronged by others.
- **Sympathetic Villains.** An antagonist who performs evil for a noble or relatable cause, such as to rescue the lost soul of a loved one.





- **Foreshadowing.** A smaller plot that portrays a miniature version of the larger arc of the campaign, such as a small local dispute that parallels an evil mastermind's insidious plan.
- **Empathy.** Understanding the pain of an NPC (even a villainous one), such as when an enemy is revealed to be unjustly accused or misunderstood.
- **Surprise Reveals.** Just when the characters think they see where the plot is going, you pull out the rug from under them: for example, they discover that the kindly priest desperate to save his community from a mysterious killer is actually the alter ego of the murderer himself.
- **The ticking clock.** Creating a sense of desperation and impending doom if the heroes do not act expeditiously.

Plot twists and feints are what the game is about. Things should rarely be what they seem, and when they are, their purpose or motive may not bow to local conventionality. Fair seems foul and foul seems fair while the mighty have vulnerabilities and the weak have hidden strengths.

To make the adventures grim and horrible, contrasts should be provided in a story—interruptions of quiet interludes and moments of peace, happiness, and light help to make the shadows darker.

Both the DM and the players should think about conserving their characters' resources—including their hit points—until the final confrontation, when combat may, in fact, be unavoidable.

Gothic Earth adventures should devote as much focus to talking one's way through a conflict or developing clever problem-solving techniques to master a challenge as other D&D games devote to combat or exploration. The DM should be quick to listen to their players' musings and logic. When the players put great effort into developing complex plans or clever strategies, that effort should be rewarded with special successes or increased chances for victory.

Indeed, the DM can allow ideas from players to inspire new directions for the story, only to twist the answer in an unexpected direction so that it resembles, but is not identical to, the player's thoughts. This provides spontaneous evolution for the adventure while rewarding players with a feeling that they are unraveling the mystery.

HORROR AND MADNESS

In the more familiar D&D worlds, when mortal creatures battle tentacled aberrations and intrude on sacrificial rituals, their minds usually remain fully engaged with the reality before them, even if they are haunted by the disturbing memories later. On Gothic Earth, the response is quite different. Alongside primal fear, the most common reaction to such nightmarish confrontations is instinctive denial.

Most who see these things refuse to admit their reality, insisting the attacking werewolf was a rabid animal, the vampire's missing reflection was a trick of the light, or that the ghouls in the cemetery were enraged grave-

robbers. When faced with eldritch horrors or any evil beyond the banal corruption of civilized society, the human mind recoils... because that is what the Red Death wants to happen.

Its manipulations have deeply changed the psychology of the human race and transformed the way people respond to the supernatural. Most believe in a rational world, where magic and true evil cannot exist, and they cannot reconcile their mundane conception of reality with anything outside of it.

And when denial fails, another phenomenon can take hold: the mind-altering influence of the Red Death. It has interwoven its power with this world's magic and with evil itself, both of which are tangible forces in the world (even if few people are aware of that fact). Its alien sorcery combines with the rigid worldview it has nurtured in humanity, undermining the faculties of those who behold monstrous horrors.

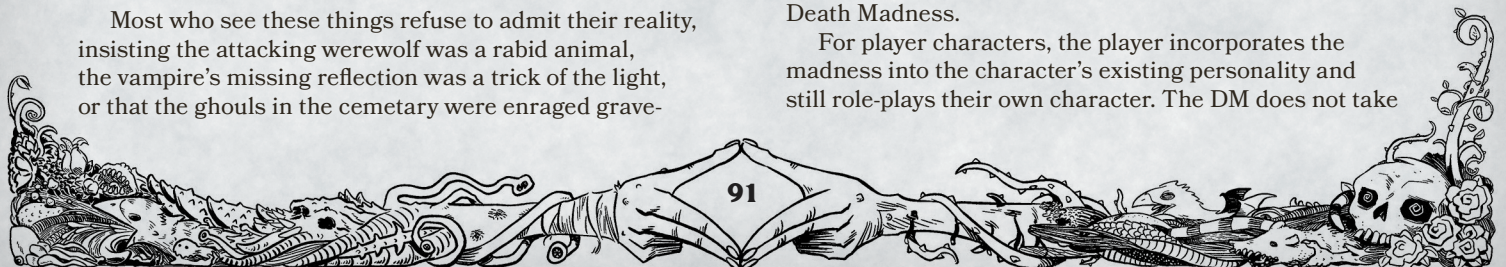
Mortals understand these disruptions as madness, but despite any similarities in effect, they are far from any condition that could affect the human mind due to normal causes. While the budding science of alienism (psychology) may be used to treat these maladies, each is an expression of the Madness of the Red Death, that entity's attempt to corrupt human perceptions and self-control. Rather than being powerless in the face of such insidious attack, those who defend humanity can use their Resolve Points to resist.

Since Red Death Madness is a supernatural affliction, if your game involves any NPCs or other characters living with actual mental illness, none of the rules in this section should be used in their depiction. In fact, including any more realistic challenges to characters' mental states in your game is a decision everyone involved in the game should make together.

When a creature fails a Horror saving throw or suffers another cause of madness, they roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table and suffer the effect described. (These rules are based on the optional Madness rules described in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, which they replace entirely for games set on Gothic Earth.) The default duration of any effect rolled on the table is 1d10 minutes, unless the victim is already suffering one or more madness effects. If it is already suffering just one effect, the duration is increased to 24 hours. If it is already suffering two or more Red Death Madness effects, the new one lasts indefinitely until cured. In some cases, however, the circumstances by which such an effect is afflicted determines the duration.

When rolling on the Red Death Madness Effects table, the creature rolls a d6 to determine the madness effect with which it is afflicted. If the result is an effect with which it is already afflicted, roll again, using a d10. If this next result is also an effect with which it is already afflicted, roll again using a d20, and keep rerolling if necessary until you get a new type of Red Death Madness.

For player characters, the player incorporates the madness into the character's existing personality and still role-plays their own character. The DM does not take





control of a character as it slips into insanity, though the DM might make suggestions on how such a character would deal with these dramatic changes to their state of mind.

However, if a character rolls a 20 on the Red Death Madness Effects table, the DM then has the option of taking such a character for their use as an NPC.

FANTASY, REALITY, MADNESS, AND CONSENT

Real mental illness is far more complicated than the mechanics of any roleplaying game could ever capture. In the interest of compatibility, the effects here closely follow the model of the optional Madness rules described in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but with some differences (for example, the changes to a character's mental state created by Red Death Madness effects are referred to as Personality Traits rather than Flaws).

No effect on the Red Death Madness Effects table is meant to bear anything more than a passing resemblance to any real neurodivergence or mental health issue. They are all supernatural conditions filtered through the extremely flawed 1800s century understanding of "insanity" (an outdated term which, by the 21st century, has no place in the science of psychology). On Gothic Earth, evil and horror are tangible cosmic forces, and the Red Death uses its supernatural influence over these forces to inflict these effects, as consequences of confronting the unreal terrors described in Gothic horror stories and fantasy fiction.

While the authors of the present volume have sought to present this material respectfully, and to draw a clear line between the fictionalized states of mind on the Red Death Madness Effects table and the actual science of mental health, the Horror & Madness rules will not be right for every player or every group. Obtaining unanimous consent, as described in the "Handling History and Horror" section at the beginning of this book, will be very much needed here. Do not to assume the use of these rules unless everyone in the group has directly consented to having the Red Death Madness effects inflicted on their characters.

If your group does not use the Horror & Madness rules, use the following simple replacement: whenever a horror saving throw would be called for, substitute a fear saving throw instead.

RED DEATH MADNESS EFFECTS

The effects described here correspond to the entries on the Red Death Madness Effects table, and are listed in the same order as they appear:

Anhedonia. You gain the following Personality Trait: "I take no pleasure in social interaction, and seek to be alone as much as possible."

Cyclothymia. You gain the following Personality Trait: "I suffer from great mood swings, and when I am not full of manic energy, I'm depressed and unmotivated."

RED DEATH MADNESS EFFECTS

d20	MADNESS EFFECT
1	Anhedonia
2	Cyclothymia
3	Entomophobia
4	Hebephrenia
5	Melancholia
6	Pyromania
7	Monophobia
8	Agoraphobia
9	Avolition
10	Kleptomania
11	Hemophobia
12	Dysthymia
13	Aphasia
14	Catatonia
15	Partial Amnesia
16	Atychiphobia
17	Neurasthenia
18	Nyctophobia
19	Paranoia
20	Psychopathy

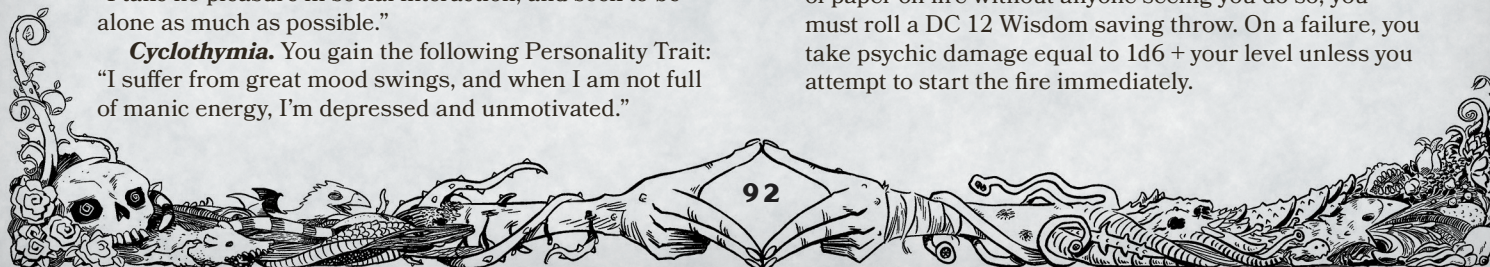
Entomophobia. You gain the following Personality Trait: "I am terrified of bugs, insects, and spiders."

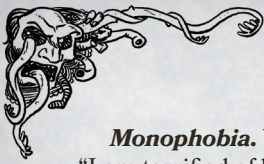
Whenever you start your turn within 10 feet of such a creature that you can see, you must make a fear save.

Hebephrenia. You gain the following Personality Trait: "I struggle to carry out everyday tasks, and my words are often a confusing jumble." Whenever you finish a long rest, you must roll a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, you suffer disadvantage on Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) checks until the next time you finish a long rest.

Melancholia. You gain the following Personality Trait: "I'm depressed because I know everything I do ends in failure." Whenever you finish a long rest, you must roll a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, you take 1 level of exhaustion.

Pyromania. You gain the following Personality Trait: "I need to see everything burn." When you do not have some reliable means of starting a fire (such as matches and kerosene) on your person, you suffer disadvantage on all ability checks until you acquire such means. If you have the opportunity to set something larger than a sheet of paper on fire without anyone seeing you do so, you must roll a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, you take psychic damage equal to 1d6 + your level unless you attempt to start the fire immediately.





Monophobia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I am terrified of being alone.” Whenever you start your turn with no allies within 10 feet of you, you must make a fear save.

Agoraphobia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I am terrified of open spaces.” Whenever you start your turn in an open space (as defined by the DM), you must make a fear save.

Avolition. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I have no motivation to put forth any effort, and only grudgingly comply with the requests of others.” You have disadvantage on Dexterity checks for initiative.

Kleptomania. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I cannot resist stealing small items whenever I think I can get away with it.” If you have the opportunity to steal an object small enough to be hidden on your person, without anyone seeing you do so, you must roll a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, you take psychic damage equal to 1d6 + your level unless you attempt to steal the item immediately.

Hemophobia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I am terrified of the sight of blood.” Whenever you start your turn within 10 feet of a living creature that has been reduced to half its hit point maximum or less, or

something else that is bleeding or bloody, you must make a fear save.

Dysthymia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I am so depressed I can no longer make important decisions, or even sleep!” You have disadvantage on death saving throws and on Dexterity checks for initiative, and whenever you finish a long rest, you must roll a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, you take 1 level of exhaustion.

Aphasia. You often lose the ability to speak. Whenever you finish a long rest, you must roll a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, until the next time you finish a long rest, you become incapable of normal speech, and cannot cast spells with verbal components.

Catatonia. Whenever you finish a long rest, you must roll a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, for 2d8 hours, you are incapacitated (see the condition), you can't move or speak, and you are unaware of your surroundings. At the end of that time, you must roll another DC 15 Constitution saving throw; if you fail, these effects are extended for another 2d8 hours.

Partial Amnesia. You lose some of your memories. You know who you are, and you all proficiencies, racial traits, class or archetype features, and background benefits, but doesn't recognize other people or remember anything that happened before the madness took effect.

Atychiphobia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I have a debilitating fear of failure.” Whenever you make a d20 roll for which you have disadvantage, you must make a fear save.

Neurasthenia. You have weak nerves. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I suffer constant anxiety and I am easily overwhelmed by events around me.” You have disadvantage on Dexterity checks for initiative, and if you do not have the highest initiative result, you must make a fear save.

Nyctophobia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I am terrified of the dark.” Whenever you start your turn in an area that is lightly or heavily obscured by darkness, you must make a fear save.

Paranoia. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I am convinced that powerful enemies are hunting me, and their agents are everywhere I go. I am sure they're watching me all the time.” Whenever you make an opposed roll or a Dexterity check for initiative, you must make a fear save.

Psychopathy. You gain the following Personality Trait: “I no longer feel empathy or remorse, and I don't care who I have to hurt to get what I want.” You have disadvantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks, and your alignment changes to Neutral Evil.

RECOVERING FROM RED DEATH MADNESS

Once Red Death Madness takes root, it is hard to eliminate. The most reliable means of curing madness is magic, though that can be risky for the spellcaster. Otherwise, if the afflicted character can get to a place of calm and safety, there is hope they can recover their





senses, especially under the care of someone skilled in the burgeoning science of psychology. However, characters who go too long before starting the process of regaining their mental health make that process much more difficult.

MAGICAL CURES

A *calm emotions* spell can suppress the effects of madness for the duration for those that fail the saving throw against the spell. *Lesser restoration* and *remove curse* allow a target with Red Death Madness to make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw the next time they finish a short or long rest, with success ending one madness effect from which they are suffering. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic is the only sure cure for madness. When used in this way, *greater restoration* ends up to three madness effects of the caster's choice on the target.

RECOVERY BY RESOLVE

If a character with at least 1 resolve point finds a secluded place where they feel safe to collect themselves, they can start the process of trying to recover from Red Death Madness. If it is begun within 24 hours of the madness effect being gained, this attempt takes 8 hours. During that 8 hours, the afflicted character cannot perform any activity more strenuous than they would during a short rest, nor can they take damage or make any fear saves, horror saves, or Dark Powers saves.

At the end of the 8 hours, the afflicted character can make a Wisdom saving throw. The DC is 20 minus the afflicted character's current number of resolve points. Success on the Wisdom save ends one Red Death Madness effect from which the afflicted character is suffering. If the roll succeeds by 5 or more, one additional madness effect, if such exists, is also cured. On a failure, the afflicted character suffers no adverse effects, unless they fail the roll by 5 more, in which case their grip on sanity loosens, and they must roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table once again.

If the afflicted character has another character attempting to aid and counsel them for the entire 8 hours, the counselling character may be able to help by making a Charisma or Wisdom check with an appropriate skill just before the afflicted character rolls their Wisdom save. On a success, the afflicted character gains advantage on their Wisdom saving throw to recover from Red Death Madness. (A counselling character with the Alienist Specialist Technique from the Expert archetype automatically grants advantage on this saving throw.)

If the Red Death Madness to be cured has been in effect for longer than 24 hours, the process takes 7 days rather than 8 hours. A counselling character who wishes to assist must spend at least 24 hours with the afflicted character over the course of the 7 days, otherwise their assistance has no effect.

SANITARIUMS

Content Note: This section discusses institutionalization for mental illness.

Sanitariums on Gothic Earth are more advanced than similar institutions in other D&D worlds. Psychologists work with the latest theories and treatments in an attempt to cure even the most violent and uncontrollable victims. However, these institutions vary widely in effectiveness. While peace and quiet are often part of the treatment for mental illness, they become less curative when a character is locked away in a place where "peace" comes from opium or absinthe, or where "quiet" comes from an isolated room with well-padded walls and occasional experimental "treatments."

Since most people in this scientific and rational age do not believe in ghosts, monsters or magic, it is not at all unusual for characters heard babbling about encounters with a werewolves or ghosts to be labelled as insane. During the 1890s, it became "fashionable" to suffer from multiple personality disorder, and many were diagnosed incorrectly with that mental illness. Characters with no Red Death Madness or major mental health challenges may find themselves in an asylum or hospital. They may actually become afflicted with Red Death Madness, due to time spent within the institution meant to be curative.

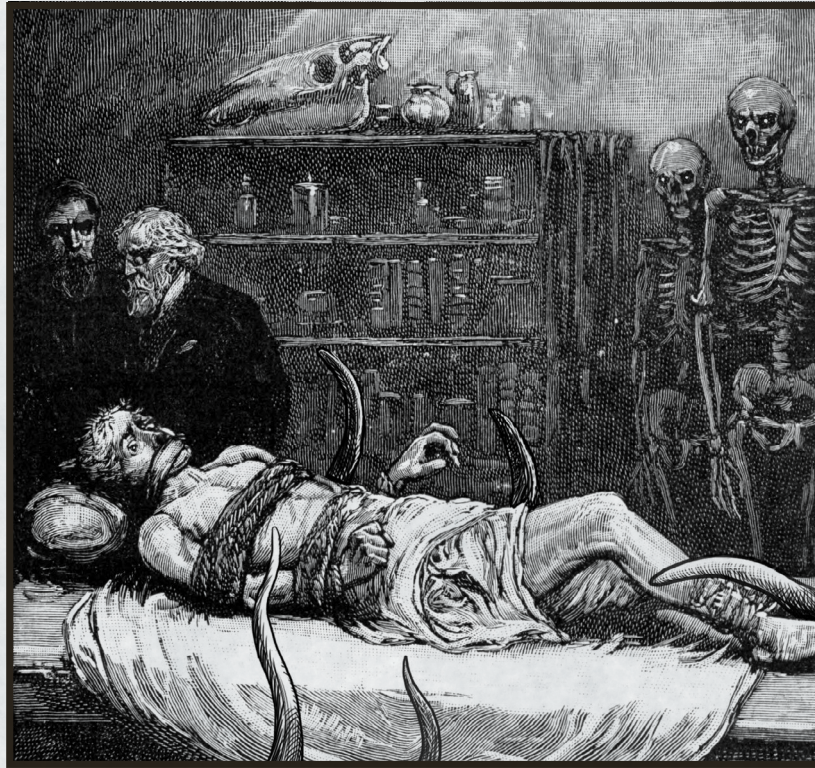
Sanitariums are given one of three ratings relative to the sanity of these therein, similar to the attitudes of NPCs: Helpful, Indifferent, or Hostile. These each have an effect on characters dwelling in them.

A **helpful** sanitarium gives characters who have been there for at least the last 7 days a +5 bonus on Wisdom saving throws to recover from Red Death Madness.

An **indifferent** sanitarium may or may not help any character confined within it. A character who has spent at least the last 7 days in an indifferent sanitarium treats each successful Wisdom saving throw they make to recover from Red Death Madness as if the roll had been 5 higher, but also treats each failed Wisdom save they make to recover from Red Death Madness as if the roll had been 5 lower.

A **hostile** sanitarium actively degrades the mental health of those who spend time there. Harmful treatments, abusive attempts at discipline, or even outright torture may be administered, forcing additional horror saves. Even characters who are fortunate enough to avoid such excesses must make a horror save at the end of every 10 days they spend in a brutal sanitarium. In addition, any character who has spent the last 7 or more days within such a brutal sanitarium has disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws to recover from Red Death Madness.





DARK POWERS

Evil comes in many forms, but it is never as dangerous as when it is convenient. The Red Death poisons with a subtle hand. Those who believe “the end justifies the means” often find themselves caught in a web of corrupting darkness, no matter how earnestly they claim good intent. Each moral shortcut leads farther from the light and one step closer to damnation.

The threat of seduction via the Dark Powers granted by the Red Death should serve as a discouragement for characters who consider performing acts of evil, even in the name of good. Each time a Dark Power is gained, a character falls further and deeper into corruption, seduced by power and darkness.

As described elsewhere, even the mere act of casting a spell is another chance to draw the Red Death’s attention, and each failure makes redemption that much harder. Yet there are other means of obtaining these sinister gifts. Acts of true evil always risk attracting the notice of a far greater evil.

The Price. If the number of Dark Powers a creature possesses is ever higher than their total number of Hit Dice, from that day forward that creature belongs to the Red Death, body and soul, becoming an NPC under the DM’s control.

THE PATH OF CORRUPTION

Dark Powers are granted according to six stages, which map the character’s descent into evil. The path from innocence to damnation in the Red Death’s service is

far too short. Each stage grants a different kind of Dark Power, starting with Stage One.

STAGE ONE: THE CARESS

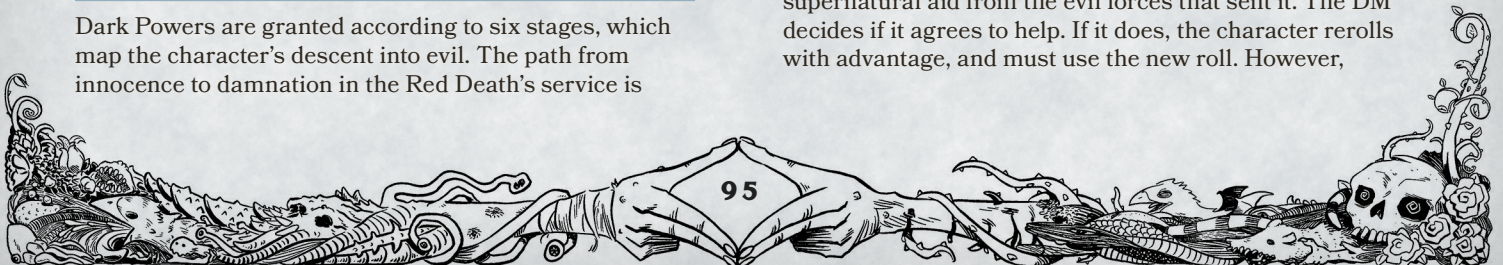
A character with no Dark Powers receives their first one in the form of an unholy being who appears and offers assistance.

The character learns the *find familiar* spell and can cast it as a ritual. Even if they do not cast it, the next time they finish a long rest, the familiar appears as if they had. The familiar is either an imp or a quasit, as chosen by the DM. If the character already has a familiar, this new one replaces it.

When the imp or quasit appears, it is in the form of a beast, as per its Shapechanger trait, and it avoids assuming its true form unless it is alone with its master or under duress. If the familiar is dismissed or killed, it reappears the next time the character finishes a long rest if the character has not already brought it back themselves.

The familiar assists the character, but its goal is to corrupt them, and it has the following Personality Trait: “I keep a list of my master’s sins, which I recite gleefully at the most disturbing times.” Even when the familiar is not physically present, its fell spirit is always in telepathic contact.

When the character rolls a 1 on an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, it can ask this familiar to grant supernatural aid from the evil forces that sent it. The DM decides if it agrees to help. If it does, the character rerolls with advantage, and must use the new roll. However,





when this happens, the familiar chooses the character's movement and action on its next turn.

The next time the character gains a Dark Power, they immediately reach Stage Two, and gain their new Dark Power as described in that stage.

STAGE TWO: THE ENTICEMENT

A character who already has one or more Dark Powers is rewarded for returning to their evil ways with a new Dark Power, a minor boon that comes with an embarrassing curse.

The DM chooses one 1st-level spell the character does not already know. It cannot be an abjuration, divination, or evocation spell. The character can cast the chosen spell once at its lowest level, regaining the ability to do so when they finish a long rest. Casting this spell requires a Dark Powers save as normal.

At the same time, the character gains a unique curse that only afflicts them when they try to perform certain tasks in the harsh light of the sun. The DM chooses one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, Deception, Medicine, Performance, Persuasion, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth. While in sunlight, the character has disadvantage on checks with the chosen skill. The DM and the player should cooperate to determine the form this curse takes, based on the skill affected (Examples: For Acrobatics their limbs feel heavy when they attempt certain movements, for Deception the character grins like a demented madman whenever they lie, for Medicine their hands spasm and clench when they treat or examine a patient, etc.)

The next time this character gains a Dark Power, they roll a d6 and subtract the number of Dark Powers they possess from the number rolled. If the result is 1 or lower, they proceed to Stage Three, otherwise, they gain another Stage Two power.

STAGE THREE: THE INVITATION

A character who continues in their evil ways is offered further corruption via a new Dark Power, a magical item empowered by the Red Death. This item is chosen to

assist the character in their evil endeavors, but carries a frustrating curse.

The DM chooses one magic item, which should be a permanent item, not a consumable one like ammunition, a potion, or a scroll. This is an uncommon magic item unless the character's proficiency bonus is +3 or higher, in which case it is rare one. The character gains the chosen item, either finding it placed mysteriously among their personal items or discovering that one nonmagical item they already own is empowered with eldritch might. The character gains the following Personality Trait: "I am unwilling to part with this item of power, and I keep it within reach at all times."

This item requires attunement, even if other items of this kind do not. No one can attune to this item except the character who received it as a Dark Gift. The item gains one minor detrimental property, from the table in the Artifacts section of chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, replacing all references to the artifact with this item.

The next time this character gains a Dark Power, they roll a d8 and subtract the number of Dark Powers they possess from the number rolled. If the result is 2 or lower, they proceed to Stage Four, otherwise, they gain another Stage Three power.

STAGE FOUR: THE EMBRACE

The character is marked as a true villain, undergoing a troubling transformation which also provides a powerful boon. This transformation creates serious mental or physical changes, marking them for their deeds. Such a character can no longer live a normal life, though often their new form can be hidden with special effort. Roll or choose from the following table to determine the character's new Dark Power.

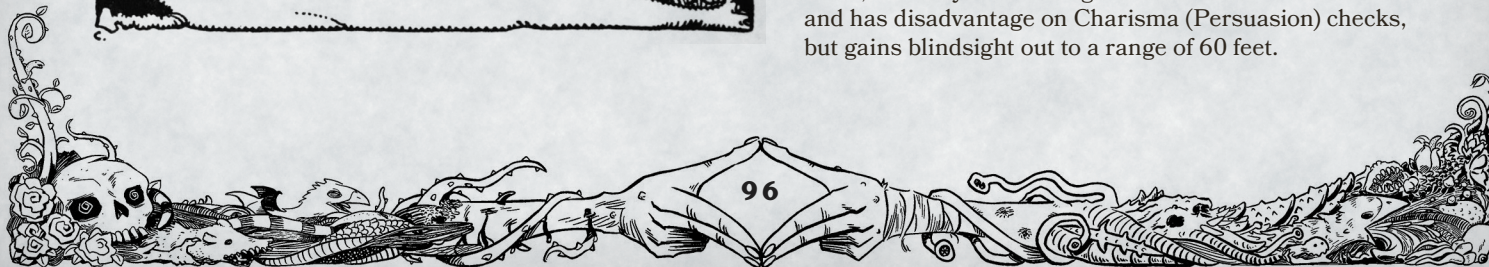
The next time this character gains a Dark Power, they roll a d10 and subtract the number of Dark Powers they possess from the number rolled. If the result is 3 or lower, they proceed to Stage Five, otherwise, they gain another Stage Four power.

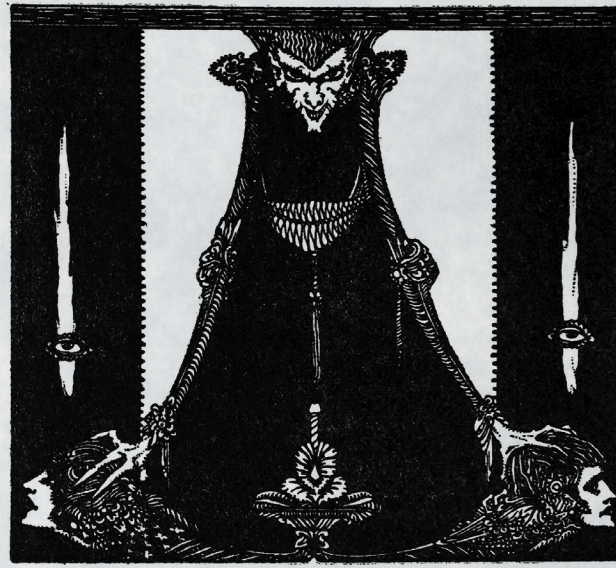
STAGE FOUR DARK POWERS

d12	DARK POWER	d12	DARK POWER
1	Darkened Gaze	7	Inhuman Eyes
2	Call of Dagon	8	Second Face
3	Living Death	9	Smoldering Breath
4	Nocturnal Intangibility	10	Devilish Hooves
5	Forked Tongue	11	False Lycanthropy
6	Aural Infestation	12	Whispers of the Red Death

These Dark Powers' effects are as follows:

Darkened Gaze. The character's eyes turn completely black, and they can no longer see. The character is blind and has disadvantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks, but gains blindsight out to a range of 60 feet.





Call of Dagon. The character develops gills, gaining the ability to breathe underwater and a swimming speed of 30 feet. If the character has gone more than 8 hours without being fully submerged in water, they suffer disadvantage on Constitution saving throws until they are submerged again.

Living Death. The character's skin is cold and clammy to the touch, and they smell like a recently embalmed corpse, with perfumes and chemical smells barely covering a hint of rot. The character gains resistance to cold and poison damage and vulnerability to fire damage.

Nocturnal Intangibility. At night, the character can spend 1 resolve point or 1 Hit Die to move through solid objects as though they were difficult terrain until the end of their next turn. A character who ends his or her turn inside an object takes 5 (1d10) force damage.

Forked Tongue. The character's tongue forks like that of a serpent. When speaking the truth, the character's voice is a hissing whisper, but lies and threats comes naturally, granting the character advantage to all Charisma (Deception or Intimidation) checks, but imposing disadvantage on all Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

Aural Infestation. Worm-like insects have taken residence in the character's ears, imposing disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing. As an action, the character can pull an insect from their ear, which can be consumed by any willing creature to restore 1 hit point. A character who benefits from eating one of these insects cannot do so again until they finish a long rest; until then, eating additional insects provides no benefit, and instead causes the character to become sickened, taking 1 level of exhaustion.

Inhuman Eyes. The character's irises are no longer circular, but take a new and inhuman shape (such as the vertical slits in cat's eyes, or the horizontal ones possessed by goats). The character gains darkvision out to 60 feet and advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks

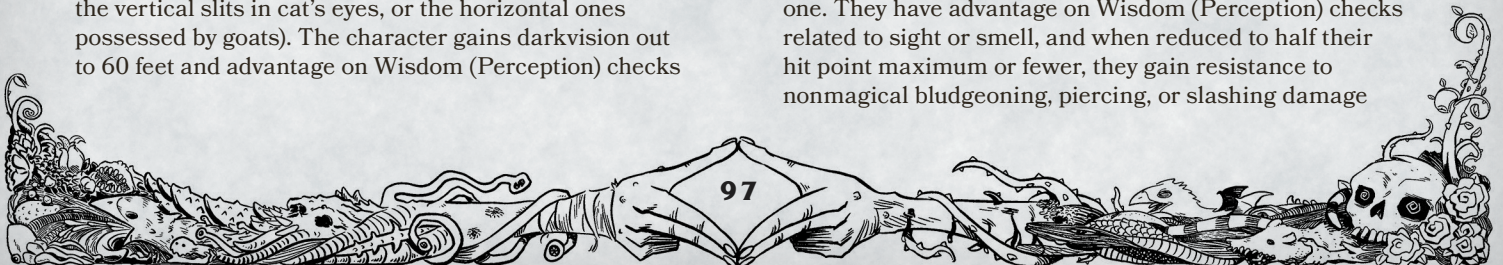
that rely on sight, but has disadvantage on Wisdom (Animal Handling) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks.

Second Face. The character grows an additional face on the back of their head. At inopportune times it begins to discuss the sins and flaws of those nearby, imposing disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) and Charisma (Persuasion) checks, but also granting advantage on Wisdom (Insight) checks. While the second face is uncovered, the character cannot be surprised, except when incapacitated.

Smoldering Breath. The character's throat and lungs burn as if they are breathing in smoke, and they exhale wisps of smoke with every breath. They cough loudly in moments of stress, granting them disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks. However, they can cough up a billowing cloud of smoke, casting the *fog cloud* spell, which must be centered on themselves. The duration is changed to 1 minute, and the spell does not require concentration. They can cast *fog cloud* in this manner once, regaining the ability to do so when they finish a short or long rest.

Devilish Hooves. The character's feet transform into large black hooves, and they can no longer wear shoes or other footwear. This gives them disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks, and causes ability checks to follow the character's tracks to be rolled with advantage. However, the character's speed increases by 5 feet, and they ignore difficult terrain.

False Lycanthropy. The character's hair grows long, thick, and unkempt, while their eyes take on a slight reddish glow, their eyebrows grow thickly together, their teeth sharpen, and a brand of a pentagram appears on the inside of their left hand. The character is not a werewolf (unless they have actually contracted that form of lycanthropy), but has all the classical signs of being one. They have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks related to sight or smell, and when reduced to half their hit point maximum or fewer, they gain resistance to nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage





that is not silver or adamantite. However, they are vulnerable to bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage from silver weapons, and if they touch wolfsbane or a silver object, they suffer disadvantage on all Dexterity checks, Constitution saving throws, and melee attack rolls for 1 minute.

Whispers of the Red Death. The character hears distracting, deceitful whispers from an unseen malevolent force, which occasionally contain a kernel of truth. This imposes disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing, but also allows the character to cast the *augury* spell once, regaining the ability to do so whenever they finish a long rest.

STAGE FIVE: THE CREATURE

A character at this stage has been reshaped into a creature of the night, and they gain an additional Dark Power to speed them down the path of corruption. At the DM's discretion, a player character who falls this far from grace may be removed from the player's control permanently, becoming a villainous non-player character.

The character gains the Sunlight Sensitivity racial trait: while in sunlight, the character has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight. They are utterly tainted by evil—cats hiss at their approach, and milk sours at their touch. Choose one of the following creature types: aberration, fey, fiend, or undead. Effects such as the *detect evil and good* spell detect the character as being a creature of the selected type, rather than a humanoid.

The character also receives an extra Ability Score Increase, identical to the feature of the same name they gain at 4th level. They gain proficiency in the Arcana skill if they don't already have it, and they gain one fragment of Forbidden Lore of the DM's choice for which they meet the prerequisites.

The next time this character gains a Dark Power, roll a d12 and subtract the number of Dark Powers they possess from the number rolled. If the result is 4 or lower, they proceed to Stage Six, otherwise, they gain another Stage Five power.

STAGE SIX: THE DARKLORD

A character who already has five Dark Powers commits one final act of evil, proving themselves beyond redemption. The character now belongs to the DM, not the player, and they are transformed into some kind of monster of an appropriate type. They are now a darklord, a general in the armies of evil and a leading servant of the Red Death, and they will return to menace heroes who stand against the dark forces they now serve—especially their former comrades. Often, when the Red Death gains such a pleasing new servant, it removes certain limitations—disfigurements, sunlight sensitivity, and the like—that previous failed Dark Powers checks had imposed.

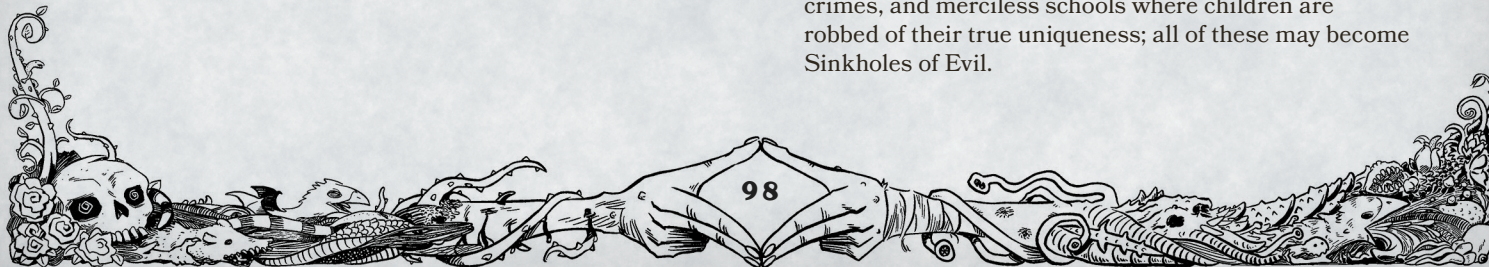


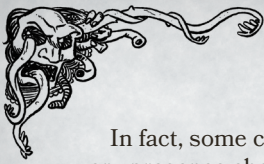
SINKHOLES OF EVIL

In some places on Gothic Earth, where the influence of monsters and magic lies most heavily, mortal magic gutters in the face of the Red Death's true power. While Gothic Earth is permanently cut off from the other planes of the D&D multiverse, these locations are so infused with evil that they still manage to partially detach from the rest of the world.

Such areas fester like boils between Gothic Earth and the thin membrane of the Border Ethereal. They come into being when foul passions arise with such strength or frequency that their evil nature seeps into the very substance of the world. These are known to those who fight the Red Death as Sinkholes of Evil.

Laboratories in which blasphemous experiments profane nature, unholy shrines where worshippers shed their humanity, crooked trees blighted by nearby atrocities, banks or counting houses that contain a miser's ruthless greed, homes bloodied by horrific crimes, and merciless schools where children are robbed of their true uniqueness; all of these may become Sinkholes of Evil.





In fact, some creatures are of such power that their very presence changes the surrounding area. Though there are many monsters and creatures of evil that haunt the dark reaches of Gothic Earth, not all are direct servitors of the Red Death.

Thanks to the corruption of magic, no Regional Effect or Lair Effect (as featured in the descriptions of certain monsters) can be dismissed or counteracted by mortal magic, even if the monster has little connection to the greater evil that haunts humanity.

Not every brutal cruelty or act of wickedness spawns a sinkhole. Graveyards, battlefields, and the like may evoke fear and horror, but few are physically changed by these emotions. Generally, the presence of the supernatural—such as a vampire inhabiting a mausoleum, or the specter of a cruel Confederate general haunting the location of his final battle—speeds such a place's transformation. In other cases, even with no such visitation, acts of terrible or repeated cruelty worthy of epic notoriety create these places of horror.

Such evil taints space and time, accruing an otherworldly miasma known as *ethereal resonance*. Sinkholes of Evil are not separate worlds of their own, but small demiplanes adjoining Gothic Earth. Sometimes these places encompass the lair of one of the Red Death's most formidable servants.

A Sinkhole of Evil is alive. It thinks, and hates, and is empowered with terrible talents that can distort and harm the perceptions of any sentient creature. Such a place also has unique planar traits that differentiate it from normal locations on Gothic Earth. Sinkholes of Evil are assigned ranks by which their darkness dice—which modify some rolls within these hellish locales—are determined, as well as their malevolent Intelligence.

SINKHOLES OF EVIL ATTRIBUTES

Sinkhole Rank	Darkness Die (Dormant)	Darkness Die (Awakened)	Intelligence Score
Minor	None	1d4	8 (-1)
Major	1d4	1d6	12 (+1)
Greater	1d6	1d8	16 (+3)

Rank. A Sinkhole of Evil's rank determines its darkness die, which represents the potency with which evil manifests there. A darkness die is either added to or subtracted from certain die rolls in the location. The rank also determines how intelligent such a sentient place is when it is awakened. Most such sites remain dormant most of the time, however; the difference between dormant and awakened Sinkholes of Evil is described in the following section.

A Sinkhole's rank signifies the emotional significance of the evil acts that created it, and the accompanying *ethereal resonance* (as described following). Most Sinkholes are minor, and have no effects except general eeriness until they are awakened; until then, the evil sleeps. Major sinkholes constantly manifest their unholy taint, and are never safe places for mortals.

A greater sinkhole seldom exists without the presence of supernatural evil.

However, no Sinkhole of Evil is trivial. Each one is a monstrosity wicked place that has been the site of horrific suffering. However, its rank describes how much the place was transformed by the evil acts that created it, and how much it echoes those horrors physically.

Turning Undead. When an undead creature in the area of a Sinkhole of Evil makes a Wisdom saving throw against an attempt to turn, control, rebuke, or otherwise influence it, it rolls the darkness die for the Sinkhole and adds the result to its saving throw.

Fear and Horror Saves. When any creature makes a fear or horror save within a Sinkhole of Evil, it must roll the Sinkhole's darkness die and subtract the result from that saving throw.

Ethereal Resonance. The creation of a Sinkhole of Evil corrupts the site and fills it with a taint of negative emotions related to the evil that transformed it. When intruders trespass here, they are immersed in the fog of this taint and may suffer penalties to any actions influenced by the nature of the place's nature.

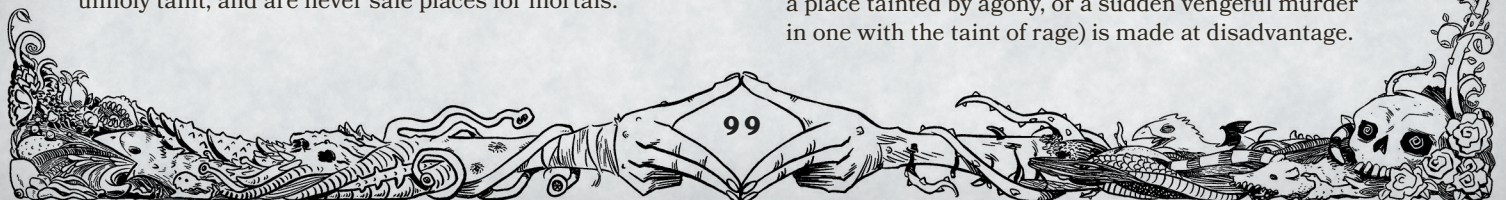
Further, the potency of this taint is even stronger on the Border Ethereal. Overlying images symbolizing the lair's taint permanently mark the area. This ability of emotions to attain physical substance in the walls between dimensions is known as *ethereal resonance*.

The taint that shapes the *ethereal resonance* of a Sinkhole always comes down to one primary emotion: agony, despair, fear, greed, hatred, lust, rage, etc. This describes the fundamental nature of the place and the acts that created. A place may have been the site of many varied emotions, negative and otherwise, but only one taint defines its *ethereal resonance*.

In the Border Ethereal, the sights, sounds, smells, textures, and physical features of a Sinkhole always reflect the taint of its *ethereal resonance*. For example, when viewing a Sinkhole of Evil tainted by despair in the Border Ethereal, you might see a place colored only in shades of gray, with a damp ashen haze clinging to everything. Every object you touch might be frigid, hard, and smooth, like a tombstone in the dead of a cold night. You might hear winds that howl and groan as if grieving, or hear snatches of mournful violin music echoing in the distance. You might smell withered vegetation, mold, and the musty air of a mausoleum.

When a creature makes a saving throw to avoid acting on or experiencing an emotion that matches the emotional resonance taint of a Sinkhole, the DM can roll the darkness die and subtract the result from that saving throw. For example, if a character makes a Wisdom saving throw against the *fear* spell while within a Sinkhole of Evil tainted by the emotional resonance of fear, the DM can reduce that saving throw by an amount equal to the result of a darkness die roll.

In addition, any Dark Powers check made within a Sinkhole of Evil for an act that has special resonance with the Sinkhole's *ethereal taint* (such as an act of torture in a place tainted by agony, or a sudden vengeful murder in one with the taint of rage) is made at disadvantage.





Dormancy and Awakening. A Sinkhole of Evil is usually dormant, seeming to be nothing more than its physical form. Other creatures and challenges may still be present, but they do not threaten intruders in an organized fashion. While dormant, the Sinkhole's intelligence is fitful and dreaming. The heroes may encounter a phantom form representing the Sinkhole's ethereal resonance, appearing and then disappearing. Or they may encounter no manifestation of it at all, save a tangible feeling of unease.

It is only when evil acts are committed that echo the taint of the Sinkhole's ethereal resonance that the place's sentience begins to awaken. As this occurs, heroes may begin to feel watched, hear breathing, catch fleeting glimpses of something passing, witness mysterious shadows, smell odd things, or discover that items have been moved. Awakening always brings a sense that something is different and changed: perhaps there is a persistent sound or sensation, or some event seems to occur again and again.

When awakened, a Sinkhole of Evil turns its attention toward trespassers. It knows who and what is within it, and begins to marshal resistance to those who are not welcome. Its mind influences creatures of evil within it, organizing them to surveil and, when the time is right, attack intruders.

The environment of an awakened Sinkhole of Evil transforms in some way that hinders trespassers. A phantom fog may arise to cause confusion or sow fear, despair or panic. A persistent alarm may grow louder and more frequent. Agents begin a series of hit and run encounters. Doors may shut and lock. New barriers, hazards, and obstacles materialize to channel heroes in one direction.

The presence of an evil supernatural creature whose wickedness is directly tied to the taint of the ethereal resonance also awakens a Sinkhole of Evil.

Lairs of Evil. Sinkholes of Evil are even more deadly when they are home to creatures that have been changed by the touch of the Red Death or that have willingly sacrificed their will and a piece of their soul to become one of the Red Death's notorious generals or their lieutenants. Such unholy refuges are known as Lairs of Evil.

A Lair of Evil vibrates with the echo of its master's hateful will. It provides not only shelter and a safe haven to hide its denizen when it is most vulnerable, but also hideous strength. It may have a name or several names, or its name may be lost in the tides of time. When the name is unknown, or when it is considered ill luck to call the place by its proper name, local folk will use an epithet or descriptor to name the place. For example, local peasants call Castle Dracula "the Black Castle" or "the Place of the Impaler" (though qabalists of the Sword of Hunyady now believe Dracula has lairs in more than just one of their homeland's castles).

A Lair of Evil is always of major rank or higher, and it is always considered awakened when its master is present.

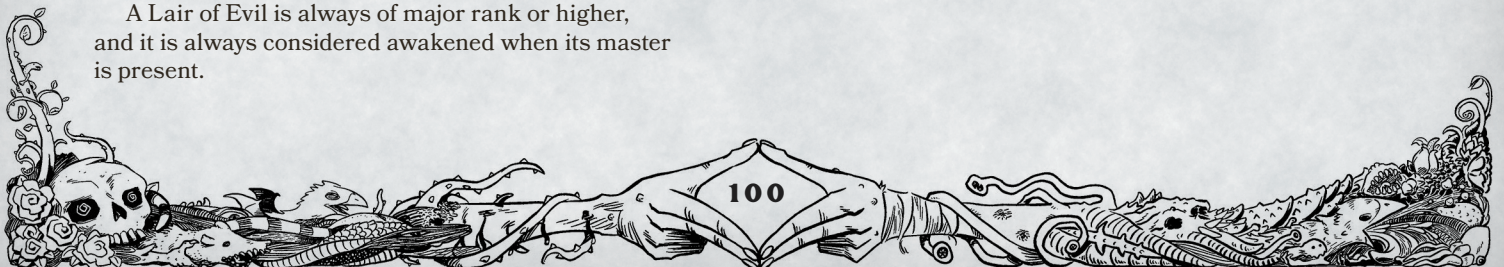


REWARDING ROLEPLAYING INTERACTION

In many D&D games, especially on Gothic Earth, there may be significant portions of a game session that consist only of roleplaying interaction. Often, one or more player characters may engage in a scene of interpersonal interaction—with each other or with an NPC—which is driven by a character's personality or emotions as much as it is driven by the goals of the adventure.

While you should be aware of all the different types of players in your group and their various preferred playstyles (a session where you never even roll dice may delight some players, but bore others), it can deepen the story of your campaign to dramatize certain non-physical conflicts between player characters and/or NPCs.

These kinds of scenes can be even more useful at the beginning of a session, and can help refocus players on their characters, especially when there has been a longer break between sessions. They can also serve to resolve conflicts that arise during standard play between player characters. When a piece of a character's backstory or personality is tied to the plot of your adventure, scenes of roleplaying interaction can remind everyone of these elements and make the session more satisfying.





AWARDING XP FOR ROLEPLAYING INTERACTION

You can encourage players to seek this kind of in-character drama by granting tangible rewards for such play, just as you would for traditional encounters.

For every 15 minutes that one or more player characters spend in significant, focused roleplaying that advances the story of the campaign, award each participant experience points equal to the Easy XP threshold for that player character's level. This information can be found on the XP Thresholds by Character Level table in the Encounter Building section of chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (it is also repeated below for your convenience).

ROLEPLAYING INTERACTION REWARDS

LEVEL	XP REWARD PER 15 MINUTES OF ROLEPLAYING INTERACTION
1st	25
2nd	50
3rd	75
4th	125
5th	250
6th	300
7th	350
8th	450
9th	550
10th	600

While you should employ a lighter touch in these situations than you might in a combat encounter or exploration scene, it is still your place as the DM to help manage the flow of these interactions. Your chief concerns should be to maintain focus on advancing the story and keep all the players entertained.

Don't grant XP rewards for time the players use to digress, idly chatter, repeat themselves, wander off topic, argue to a standstill, or engage pointlessly with minor characters. You may notice that a particular player is trying to stretch things out in order to gain additional XP, and you should let them know that you will be decreasing awards accordingly.

Remember that all you are rewarding is time devoted to social interaction. You should take care not to judge any player's skill at roleplaying as part of determining these XP rewards—all you are judging is how much time they spent participating in meaningful character interaction.



DMING INTERACTION SCENES

Your best tool in running such scenes is identifying the nature of the conflict.

Any interesting roleplaying interaction is built on some kind of disagreement or attempt to fulfill an unmet need. Someone wants something, and the point of the scene is finding out whether or not they get it. Often (as in real life), the conflict is simply one person wanting an admission that the other is wrong.

If there is no conflict or uncertain outcome involved, one or more players will quickly lose interest, and you should move the game forward quickly, before it stops being entertaining. Generally, however, players are goal-oriented, and such a scene is driven by their attempt to achieve some larger aim.

A DM should try to shepherd such a scene towards a resolution, but do so cautiously. Sometimes the best way to make sure you aren't forcing a particular outcome on a player is to allow the scene to end in an impasse or standstill, but there are ways to manage this (as described below).

Other than gently nudging them towards a satisfying conclusion, try to sit back and allow the players to lead the action. If you are roleplaying an NPC, try not to dominate the conversation.

If a player seems a bit lost, don't pressure them to roleplay to any degree that would make them uncomfortable, but help them focus on the scene's most important elements:

- What does their character want?
- What is stopping them from getting it?
- What are they doing to overcome such obstacles?





Amid such interpersonal conflict, the characters might employ emotional pleas, rational debate, a mix of implied (or overt) threats and rewards, and other such tactics.

ENDING AN INTERACTION SCENE

Over time, you should see the scene unfold into one of two likely outcomes:

- The characters are moving towards resolution.
- Both sides are entrenching themselves, digging in their heels and resisting compromise.

In the latter case, step in to try to avoid such an impasse. You can suggest new negotiating positions to the players or remind them of alternate lines of argument. Of course, you shouldn't force a compromise, but if the players are still seeking one you can be the one to help them find it.

At the same time, don't let the scene go on past the point of being entertaining. A good sign that a particular interaction has played itself out is when people start repeating themselves or simply finding new ways to restate their main argument.

When it is time to wind things down, start asking the main participants what their intentions or final decisions are. If things are resolving themselves, the interaction likely ends with some kind of compromise or with one side capitulating to the other. Otherwise, it is ending in a stalemate.

Such an ending can still be rewarding, informing the character's actions and compelling them to deal with unanswered questions later in the session. However, the rules below also offer some methods for avoiding an unnecessary impasse.

RESOLUTION & RESOLVE

Since stalemates often feel unsatisfying to players, there is one more inducement you can offer in the interest of resolution: In such an interpersonal conflict, characters who give in regain 2 spent resolve points. (If a character is already at their maximum resolve, you can, as always, offer them Inspiration.)

Characters who win don't receive an extra reward beyond the satisfaction of their victory, but those willing to relent are able to conserve the willpower they would have expended by continuing to stand their ground, and they restore their personal resolve accordingly.

If one side in the stalemate is an NPC, it is often best to let the player characters have more influence. If you feel it is better to have your NPC refuse to give in, you should allow the player characters on the other side to regain 2 spent resolve points.

Sometimes, however, an impasse is between two player characters, and neither side will give in. In this situation, if the scene began with one side petitioning the other, allow the petitioner to regain 2 spent resolve points. Beyond that, it is important to the players' sense of agency that you accept the stalemate and move on.

It can often be helpful to remind players of this rule at the beginning of the scene—giving in is often contrary to human nature, but players are less likely to dig in early if they are aware there is a reward for compromise.

SOCIAL COMBAT

Some social interactions in D&D are best resolved mechanically, but should also require more than a single Charisma or Wisdom check. The Exert Influence action and the new conditions introduced in chapter 1 can be used to run social combat: non-physical conflict between characters. High stakes negotiations or intense debates to determine a course of action are examples of social combat. These rules allow a creature to be "defeated" through interpersonal influence rather than battle.

Social combat rules are not a substitute for roleplaying interpersonal interactions in the manner to which your group is accustomed. Rather, they are a means for tracking progress in such situations and determining when (or if) victory is achieved.

These rules strive to be simple. The Exert Influence action allows characters who make successful Charisma checks to inflict levels of the stress condition on others. A creature with enough stress becomes detached, causing it to give in.

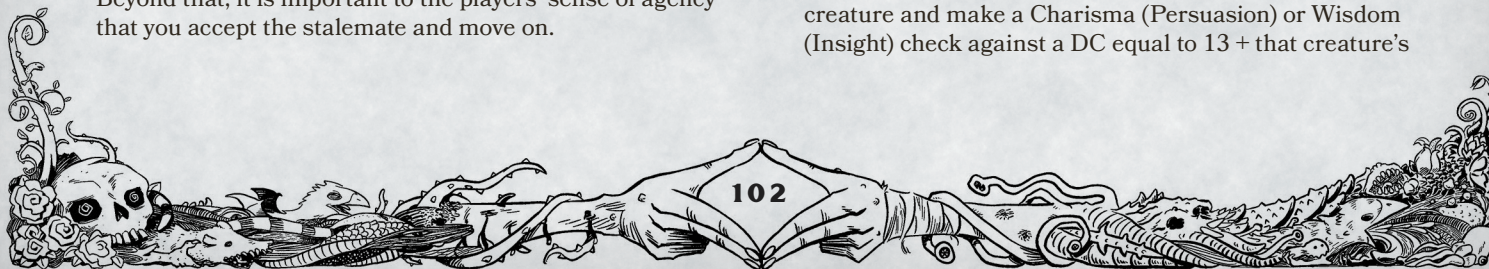
For example, if the characters have evidence a mortician has been selling bodies to a necromancer, they may attempt to convince the mortician to reveal the necromancer's identity. However, if the mortician fears the wrath of the necromancer more than the characters, getting this information may require a great deal of convincing. The characters may employ a variety of tactics—threatening to reveal what they know to the local law, lying about what tortures they will inflict on the mortician, trying to explain the protection they can offer, telling horrifying stories about the consequences of necromantic experiments, etc.—represented by a number of Charisma checks resisted by the mortician. If they enjoy enough success, they inflict cumulative levels of stress, eventually wearing down the mortician's resistance and obtaining the necromancer's name.

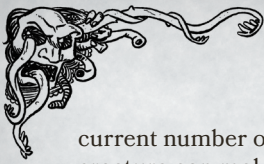
ADDITIONAL BONUS ACTIONS FOR SOCIAL COMBAT

At the DM's option, the following additional bonus actions can add depth to conflicts using the social combat rules.

Assess. As a bonus action, you can make a Wisdom (Insight) check against a creature you can see or hear within 15 feet. The DC equals that creature's passive Charisma (Deception) score. On a success, you gain advantage on the next Charisma check or Wisdom saving throw you make against that creature before the end of your next turn.

Reassure. As a bonus action, you can choose a creature and make a Charisma (Persuasion) or Wisdom (Insight) check against a DC equal to 13 + that creature's





current number of stress levels. On a success, that creature can make a Wisdom saving throw against the same DC, recovering 1 level of stress on a success as long as it shares a language with you.

Threaten. When you hit with an attack roll during your turn, you can use a bonus action to halve the damage inflicted. The target must then succeed on a Wisdom saving throw ($DC = 9 +$ the ability modifier you applied to the attack roll (usually Strength)) or take 1 level of stress. If you are proficient in the Insight or Intimidate skills, add your proficiency bonus to the DC. A creature that is already frightened has disadvantage on this saving throw.

DETECTIVE'S COMPETENCE

A common difficulty in many role-playing games comes up when players fail to uncover a piece of information that is crucial to the adventure moving forward. For example, they might fail to find a secret door that is the only way into an important location. Generally, the failure to obtain information is not interesting.

In **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**, this problem can be exacerbated. Adventures in this setting tend to focus on investigation. Also, Arthur Conan Doyle's tales of Sherlock Holmes provide major inspiration for the setting, and a Holmes story is about solving a mystery based on the many clues the Great Detective finds, rather than his failure to notice those clues at all.

There are a number of ways to handle this (including crafting adventures that do not grind to a halt based on failure to gain information), but these rules offer a relatively simple one: the price of an unsuccessful roll to learn necessary information can be paid in other ways, rather than merely failing to learn the information.

If a player character has failed an ability check to gain a piece of information, if the DM believes gaining the information is better for the progress of the game, the DM can give the player the option to gain it by spending a resolve point.

If a player does not have (or wish to spend) a resolve point, the DM can instead offer one of the following consequences:

- The activity required to gain the information takes 10 times longer than it normally would.
- The character must either spend a Hit Die or suffer one level of exhaustion, due to the extreme concentration or other great effort required. The character does not regain any hit points from spending a Hit Die in this way.
- The act of gaining the information draws immediate unwanted attention.
- An unfriendly creature elsewhere becomes aware of both the information gained and the fact that the character knows it.

DETAILING MAGIC ITEMS

When a magic item appears in the campaign, the most important thing for the DM is to have a sense of how it was created. Sometimes you don't want to have every specific detail sketched out (especially when improvising due to an unexpected player action), but it is still best to conceive some idea of where the item came from.

Beyond the item's origin, it is also useful to think of how it has changed hands since. Unless the characters are the very first ones to take possession of the item since its creation, it has likely been coveted by many or left many legends in its wake.

EXAMPLE MAGIC ITEM: THE PIPE ORGAN OF LAKE AVERNE

Wondrous Item, rare (requires attunement)

The stops and pedals of this large pipe organ can be operated in particular combinations to cast certain mind-affecting spells. When the organ is played indoors, the sound of it always carries throughout the entirety of any structure it is within.

The pipe organ is 20 feet wide, 30 feet long, and 15 feet tall, and is not easily transported. Moving it requires disassembling it and reassembling it elsewhere. Both assembly and disassembly each require 1 hour and three successful DC 15 Intelligence (pipe organ) checks, increasing the time by 30 minutes for each failed check before three successes are achieved. A creature that attempts to play the pipe organ without being attuned to

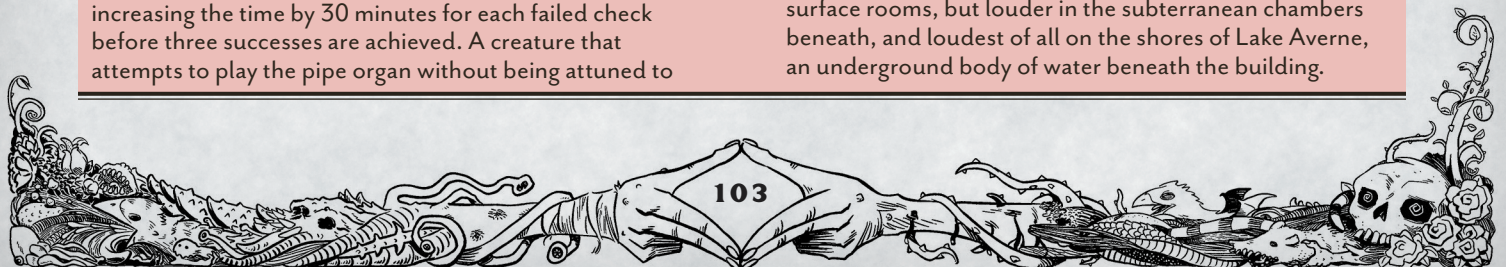
it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or take 2d4 psychic damage.

You can use an action to play the organ and cast one of the following spells: *calm emotions*, *charm monster*, *confusion*, *crown of madness*, *dream*, *enemies abound***, *enthrall*, *fear*, *love's lament**, or *Tasha's hideous laughter*. Once the organ has been used to cast a spell, it can't be used to cast that spell again until the next dawn. The spells use your spellcasting ability and spell save DC.

When you use the organ to cast a spell that forces targets to make a Wisdom saving throw, the targets have disadvantage on the saving throw. When you use the organ to cast a spell that has a range of 5 feet or greater, you can spend 1 resolve point to double the range of the spell. This effect applies whether you are using the instrument as the source of the spell or as a spellcasting focus.

Whenever a creature plays the organ, their skin takes on a sickly pallor until the next sunset. For that duration, whenever the creature is in direct sunlight, it has disadvantage on Charisma checks.

This organ is said to have been crafted by a mysterious figure who secretly assisted the architect Charles Garnier in designing and building Paris's Palais Garnier Opera House. According to the tales, music from the organ can still be heard there, only quietly in the Opera House's surface rooms, but louder in the subterranean chambers beneath, and loudest of all on the shores of Lake Averno, an underground body of water beneath the building.





The DM decides which of these options are available, depending on the situation. The process of paying this alternate price for information can start with a player request or the DM's suggestion.

Determining which information or rolls (if any) qualify for this rule is left entirely left to the discretion of the DM, but make careful note of intent when a players asks to use this option. If a player is trying to short-circuit an interesting investigation, that is likely to hurt the play experience. However, allowing players to move past a frustrating or uninteresting stopping point created by poor die rolls is likely to make the game better rather than worse.

MAGIC ITEMS

Every magic item on Gothic Earth is unique. If a character acquires a *+1 dagger*, it is the only *+1 dagger* in the world. Even if another dagger somewhere around the globe grants a *+1* bonus, it also has benefits or curses unique to it.

Each magic item should have a unique history, and likely its own name as well. That *+1 dagger* could be the *blade of Marcus Brutus*, used to inflict the fatal wound during the assassination of Julius Caesar.

Magic items in this world should be rare and wondrous. Most of the enchanted objects on Gothic Earth have found their way into the hands of the Red Death's minions. In addition, due to the tainting of magic, every magic item on Gothic Earth is cursed in some way, unless it is consumable (a potion, scroll, or piece of magical ammunition).

The curse need not be a major one—for a minor item, it could as simple as forcing its owner to wake up abruptly each morning at dawn. The DM should create an appropriate curse, or roll for one Minor Detrimental Property using the table in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

CASTING SPELLS WITH MAGIC ITEMS

When a creature uses a magic item as the source of a spell it casts (as opposed to merely using it as a spellcasting focus), the creature does not need to immediately make a Dark Powers check for casting that spell.

Instead, whenever the creature finishes a short or long rest, if it has cast one or more spells using a magic item since the last time it finished a short or long rest, the creature makes a single Dark Powers check. The creature has disadvantage on the check if any of the spells were evocation or necromancy spells, or if any of the spells were of a level higher than the creature's proficiency bonus. The DM can adjust the DC of this check just as they would the DC of a normal Dark Powers check.

OPTIONAL RULES

The use of the rules here is not assumed in the default version of *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH*, but at the DM's discretion, they can be implemented as described without substantial disruption to the game.

FEATS

If you want to use the optional Feat rules introduced in the *Player's Handbook*, they should be easy to integrate into the Gothic Earth setting with no changes necessary. Some additional feats can also be made available, which are listed here.

ALTERNATE CAREER

Prerequisite: 4th level or higher

You have the experience and training to succeed in multiple distinct vocations. You can choose one Specialist Technique from the options listed under the Sleuth class and gain the listed benefits.

You can never take the same Specialist Technique option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one, even if that Specialist Technique offers different options.

COMPETITOR

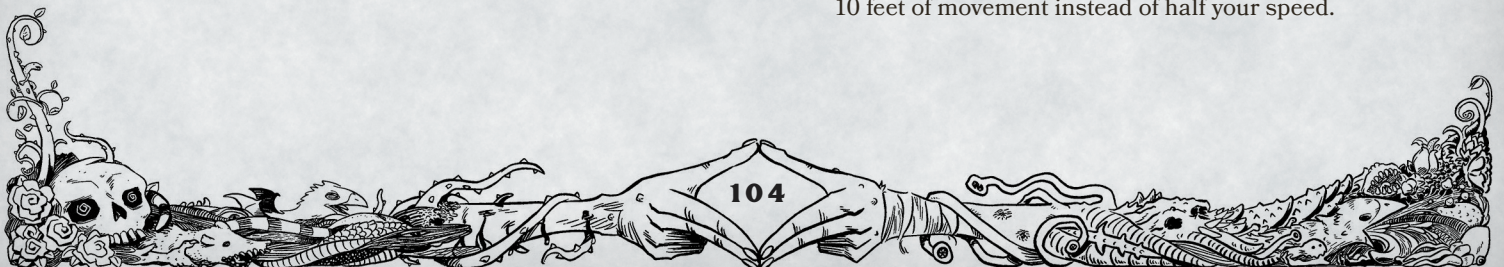
You are an expert in games, sports, and other competitions. You gain the following advantages:

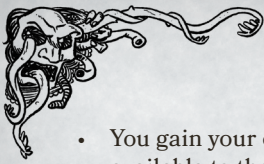
- Increase one of your ability scores by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You gain proficiency with one type of gaming set or vehicle.
- You always know the current gambling odds on any public game, competition, or sport.
- You have 3 competition points. Whenever you make an ability check that is directly related to a game, sporting event, or competition, or that is contested by another creature's ability check, you can spend a competition point to gain advantage on that roll. You regain your expended competition points when you finish a long rest.

EQUESTRIAN

You are an expert in horseback riding. This gives you the following benefits:

- You gain proficiency with the Animal Handling skill. You also gain expertise with this skill, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with it.
- You have advantage on all ability checks and saving throws related to controlling, maneuvering, or staying on a mount.
- You can mount or dismount a creature by expending 10 feet of movement instead of half your speed.





- You gain your choice of one of the Martial Disciplines available to the Soldier class, which can only be chosen from the following options. You can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once:
- **Dueling.** When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.
- **Harrying.** When you hit a creature with an unarmed strike or a melee attack using a weapon that doesn't have the heavy, two-handed, or versatile property, the target's speed is reduced by 10 feet until the end of its next turn.
- **Mounted.** While you are mounted, unmounted creatures you hit with weapon attacks can't make opportunity attacks against you or your mount for the rest of the turn if they are smaller than your mount, and you can re-roll any weapon damage die that rolls a 1. You must use the new roll.

HYPNOTIST

Prerequisites: 3rd level or higher, proficiency in the Insight and Science skills

You have received extensive training in the new science of post-hypnotic suggestion. You automatically succeed



on ability checks to counsel a character afflicted with Red Death Madness, and if you speak to a creature for 10 minutes while you have its undivided attention, you can make an Intelligence (Science) or Wisdom (Insight) check. The creature must then make a Wisdom saving throw against a DC equal to your ability check result. If the saving throw fails, the creature is affected as if you had cast the *suggestion* spell on it (though this is not a magical effect). While a creature is under these effects, it has disadvantage on all Wisdom saving throws you force it to make.

Once a creature has failed a Wisdom saving throw against this effect, it will always have at least a small vulnerability to your hypnotism. If such a creature can hear or see you, you can use an action to grant the creature confidence, as if it has benefitted from a *guidance* spell cast by you.

While such a creature can hear you and is within 30 feet of you, if you can see it, you can also give it a one-word command, and the creature must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier (your choice)). On a failure, it must obey the command, as if it had failed a saving throw against a *command* spell cast by you.

None of the spell-like abilities granted by this feat are actual magical effects. They do not require a Dark Powers check, and are not affected by the casting of *counterspell* or *dispel magic*.

JADED URBANITE

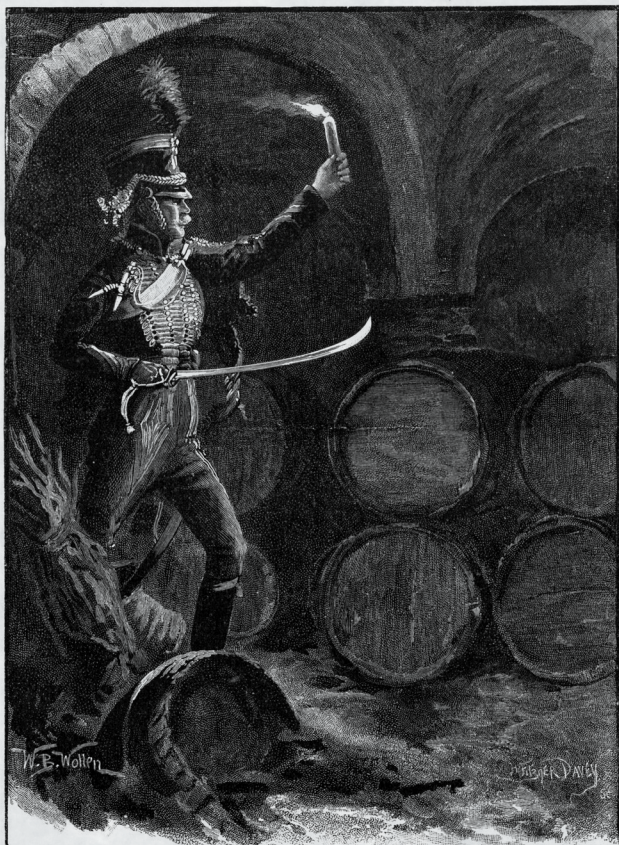
Whether you grew up in a large city or spent time in one as an adult, you are familiar with life on crowded urban streets, and you know to be on constant guard against attack, theft, or clever deceit. This grants you the following benefits:

- Choose one of the following skills: Deception, Insight, Intimidation, or Persuasion. You gain proficiency in that skill if you don't have it already, and you also gain expertise, meaning you double your proficiency bonus on ability checks with it.
- You have advantage on saving throws against effects that would cause you to take psychic damage or become charmed.
- Within a village, town, or city, you are never slowed by difficult terrain unless it is magical, and you can move through spaces occupied by non-hostile humanoids and beasts as if they were allies.
- When you are surprised, you can still take a single action during the surprise round, but it can only be the Dash, Disengage, or Help action.

MILITARY TRAINING

You gain your choice of one option from the Martial Discipline feature of the Soldier class, for which you must meet all prerequisites normally. You can never take the same Martial Discipline option more than once, no matter how many times you get to choose one. In addition, you gain proficiency with one weapon of your choice.





PISTOL EXPERT

Thanks to extensive practice with handguns, you gain the following benefits:

- You are proficient with all handguns.
- Being within 5 feet of a hostile creature doesn't impose disadvantage on your ranged attack rolls.
- When you make a one-handed attack with a weapon that has the secondary property, if the weapon is a handgun, having already made another weapon attack that turn does not cause you to attack with disadvantage.

PROGNOSTICATOR

By concentrating, you can gain glimpses of future events. You know the *true strike* cantrip, and you can spend 1 resolve point to cast one of the following spells, chosen at the time of casting: *detect poison and disease* or *hunter's mark*. If you are 5th level or higher, you can also spend 2 resolve points to cast *augury*. When you cast a spell in this way, you do not need to make a Dark Powers check.

Your spellcasting ability for all spells and cantrips gained from this feat is Intelligence or Wisdom (your choice). You cast these spells and cantrips innately, without verbal or somatic components, though you must still expend any material components.

SIXTH SENSE

You are sensitive to the presence of the supernatural in its many manifestations. You know the *guidance* cantrip, and you can spend 1 resolve point to cast one of the following spells, chosen at the time of casting: *detect evil and good* or *detect magic*. If you are 5th level or higher, you can also spend 2 resolve points to cast *see invisibility*. When you cast a spell in this way, you do not need to make a Dark Powers check.

Your spellcasting ability for all spells and cantrips gained from this feat is Intelligence or Wisdom (your choice). You cast these spells and cantrips innately, without verbal or somatic components, though you must still expend any material components.

STEADY PILOT

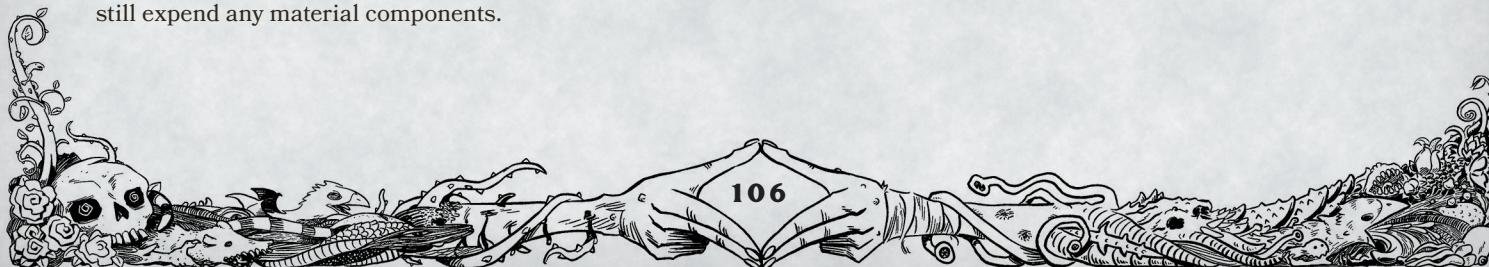
You are highly skilled in operating and steering vehicles of a certain type. This feat grants you the following benefits:

- Increase your choice of either your Dexterity or Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You gain proficiency with navigation tools and with your choice of either land vehicles or water vehicles.
- You gain expertise with your proficiency in your choice of either land vehicles or water vehicles, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with the chosen proficiency.
- You can use a sudden maneuver to aid an ally in combat. You can use the Help action to aid an ally's attack roll, even if they are not within 5 feet of you, so long as you can see both your ally and their target, and both are aboard a vehicle you are piloting.

TELEPATH

You have a natural psychic ability to touch others' minds, granting you the following benefits:

- You learn the *message* and *psychic shock** cantrips.
- You learn certain spells and gain the ability to innately cast them. You can cast each spell at its lowest level without using a spell slot. Once you cast a spell in this way, you must finish a long rest before you can cast that spell with this benefit again. The first spell you learn and cast in this way is *charm person*. At 5th level, you also learn and cast the *detect thoughts* spell with this feat. At 9th level, you also learn and cast the *sending* spell.
- If you are 3rd level or higher, you can telepathically speak to any creature you can see within 30 feet of you. You must share a language with the creature for it to understand your telepathic utterances. You can speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.
- You add a bonus equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1) to all Wisdom (Insight) checks.





Your spellcasting ability for all spells and cantrips gained from this feat is Intelligence or Wisdom (your choice). You cast these spells and cantrips innately, without verbal or somatic components, though you must still expend any material components. When you use this feat to cast a spell, you do not need to make a Dark Powers check.

PSYCHIC SHOCK

Illusion cantrip

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

You invade another creature's mind, and for one split second, you cause them to perceive some image, noise, or memory that would cause them stress.

Choose a target you can see or hear within range. The creature makes an Intelligence saving throw. If it fails, the creature takes 1d6 psychic damage, and it has disadvantage on the next Wisdom check it makes before the end of your next turn. If the creature has not yet acted this combat, it suffers an additional effect: it makes its next attack roll at disadvantage.

You do not know what image the creature saw unless you can read its thoughts by other means (such as the *detect thoughts* spell). If the creature fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it does not realize a cantrip caused this effect and believes the flash of emotional pain it experienced came from its own mind.

At Higher Levels. This spell's damage increases by 1d6 when you reach 5th level (2d6), 11th level (3d6), and 17th level (4d6).

TRAINED CHEMIST

The unlocked secrets of chemistry drive many of the innovations of the modern age. The full benefits of these advancements are only available due to the efforts of knowledgeable scientists such as yourself. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You gain proficiency with alchemist's supplies and demolitions kits, and with the Science skill.
- You gain expertise with alchemist's supplies and demolitions kits, which means your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with either of these proficiencies.
- As an action, you can identify one potion you are holding, as if you had tasted it.
- When you finish a short rest, if you have alchemist's supplies and a healer's kit, you can help others heal more quickly. After being treated by you with both your alchemist's supplies and a healer's kit during a short rest, a creature that spends Hit Dice to regain hit points can choose to reroll some of those spent Hit Dice if they dislike the results. The maximum number

of Hit Dice they can reroll at the end of a single short rest is equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one). They must use the new rolls.

NONHUMAN CHARACTERS

With the DM's prior permission, a character in Gothic Earth could be a member of a nonhuman race. Though humans in their hundreds of millions dominate the globe, the DM may decide that there yet remain nonhuman communities hidden away in the unexplored wilderness or deep underground. The DM should respectfully consider the myths and legends of real cultures when choosing where and how these communities continue to exist.

For example, elves could be the Huldrefolk of Scandinavia, or the Nawao of the Hawaiian Islands. Dwarves could be the Korobokuru described in the folklore of the Ainu people of northern Japan, or resemble the Tolkienesque crafters of Germanic mythology. A persistent rumor in Gothic Earth posits that the legendary half-fiend adept Merlin sired an entire bloodline of demi-human descendants; in normal D&D terms, they would be tieflings.

Cultural influences within certain races' existing descriptions may indicate obvious ties. The unique heritage of the genasi from *Princes of the Apocalypse* likely ties them to the Arabian Peninsula, where fireside tales and sacred scriptures alike speak of their genie ancestors. The firbolg from *Volo's Guide to Monsters* can share both history and homeland with their Celtic equivalents of the same name.

If nonhuman settlements still exist, they would likely spend a good portion of their time and any magical abilities they retain in concealing their existence or their real nature from human society. Any member of such a race leaving their hidden enclaves would need some means—likely supernatural—of avoiding notice or disguising themselves as humans.

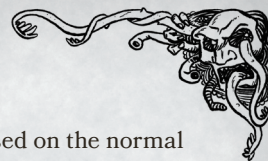
Of course, like all use of magic, reliance on eldritch aid to remain hidden increases the likelihood of these races incurring some taint from the Red Death. Such consequences may explain why nonhuman races are so rare in this world.

HIGHER-LEVEL CHARACTERS

The **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** rules assume your character's career progresses no further beyond 10th level. A level of power beyond this makes the setting's themes of overwhelming horror and undying evil more difficult to portray, as our underdog protagonists become super-heroic rather than merely heroic.

However, if you wish to continue into the third or even fourth tiers of the D&D rules, existing rulebooks can give a DM material for higher-level adventures. Since the classes in this document top out at 10th level, characters who advance beyond such heights will need to multiclass





by necessity. Such characters increase their proficiency bonus based on their total character level, as shown in the Character Advancement table in chapter 1 of the *Player's Handbook*. When their total character level reaches 14th, and again at 17th level, these characters receive an additional Ability Score Increase.

LONGER CASTING TIMES

In previous editions of **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH**, the casting times of spells were lengthened relative to other D&D worlds, and special ability checks for casting were always required. These adjustments reflected the increased amount of effort it takes to tap into the corrupted and depleted magical energies of Gothic Earth. This is still an element of these rules, but in order to hew more closely to the default fifth edition D&D ruleset, resolve points have been included as an alternate cost.

If you wish, you can include similar rules to limit magic in your campaign, though you should be mindful of allowing spellcasting to remain a valid path for a player character. Balancing encounters as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* becomes much more difficult when spellcasters have their ability to contribute in combat diminished to this degree.

When using this rule, there are two alternatives available:

Slowest Casting. All spells use the Slow Casting rules described in the spellcasting section, even if the spell is cast using resolve points. The only spells that can be cast without the use of resolve points are those with the ritual tag.

Under these rules, combat spells take much longer to cast, altering their utility. For example, a *fireball* spell no longer helps when ambushed by assassins, but that spell may be useful in blasting open the entrance to an abandoned mine or burning down a haunted house.

Alternate Casting Times. Using this optional rule, whenever a spell is cast, you consult the following table

to determine its longer casting time, based on the normal casting time in the spell description.

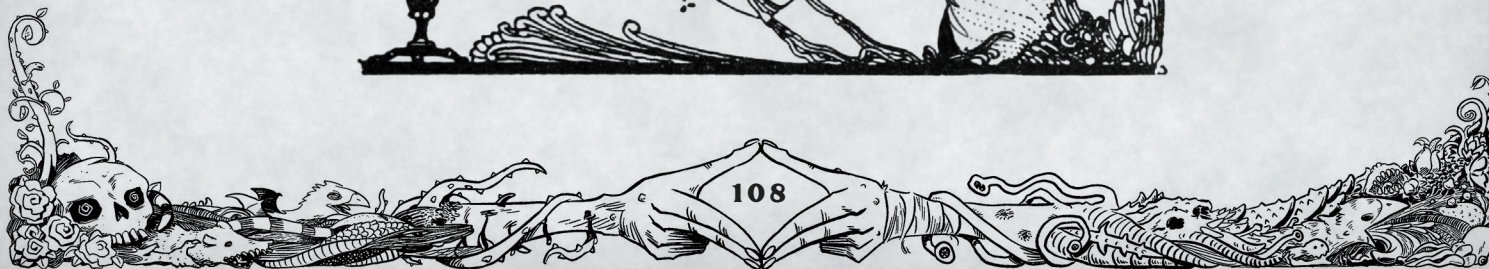
Listed Casting Time	Gothic Earth Casting Time
Reaction	Reaction
1 bonus action	1 action
1 action	2 actions*
1 minute	10 minutes
10 minutes	1 hour
1 hour	8 hours
8 hours	24 hours
24 hours	24 hours

* A spell with a casting time of two actions requires you to use your action to begin casting during your current turn. The spell is not cast until your next turn, when you must use another action to finish casting on it. If you do not finish the spell on your next turn following the turn when you started casting, the spell fails as if it never been cast.

LIMITED SPELL LISTS

Magic is strange in Gothic Earth. Spells of fire and thunder are far less common than curses and augmentations. This is part of the reason why certain spells (chiefly evocation spells) are more difficult to cast in these rules. The world of Gothic Earth shuns flashier displays of magic, tending instead towards the subtle movements more easily disguised as coincidence or providence.

As a result, you may wish to limit the spells available in a **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign to those more appropriate for the Gothic Earth setting. In doing so, we suggest DMs rely upon their own aesthetic sense of what is and isn't appropriate for the setting when including spells from the *Player's Handbook*, *Elemental*





Evil Player's Companion, *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, *Elminster's Guide to Magic*, and other sources.

For those hoping to have a quick list provided, clear tables with amended spell lists for, amended spell lists for all *Player's Handbook* spellcasting classes are provided in the adventures *Jolene—or, The Beauty From Beyond the Stars* and *The Ghostly Library*, both set in Gothic Earth and available on the DMs Guild.

HIDDEN HIT POINTS

If you're a DM who wants to sow fear in the hearts of players as well as characters, one extreme optional rule seldom fails to raise tension: Keep track of the player characters' hit points yourself.

In this variant, each player knows their character's hit point maximum, but when they take damage, it becomes your job as the DM to subtract it from that maximum privately, so the players don't know exactly how many they have left. When a zombie's slam attack hits, don't say it deals 4 damage; instead, provide a colorful description of the blow. Describe the force with which it hit and the pain it inflicted, and let the player guess how much damage it dealt.

When using this option, you should be prepared to describe each character's health to its player when called upon. If a character has only taken a little damage, you can describe them as "A little rattled, with just a few stinging scratches." A character with only a few hit points left might have "Stiff limbs and blurry vision" and be "Struggling just to stay standing."

One caveat to this rule; when a character is first reduced to half its hit point maximum or less, you should always let them know. Try to do so in a way that is clear about that fact as well as descriptive. Some rules require knowledge of whether a character is at below half their hit points, and you do want to allow players some sense of their current durability. A term from previous editions of D&D, "Bloodied," is a useful shorthand for saying a character or creature is down to half or fewer hit points.

This optional rule leaves the characters uncertain about their foes' capabilities and their own ability to survive, which is likely to create tension. People fear the unknown, after all. It also encourages players to stay engaged with the descriptive fiction of the game, rather than its mechanical rules.

THE LOVECRAFTIAN SPIRAL

The **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** rules are designed to emulate Gothic Horror, an important genre with its own particular tropes, and one that predates the works of the author H.P. Lovecraft by a number of years. Nonetheless, in the world of tabletop roleplaying games, the influence of that writer's Cthulhu Mythos looms large, and some groups may want to better model that style of horror.

To be clear, there are substantial differences between the Lovecraftian tradition of horror and the Gothic Horror that has been portrayed in **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** since the release of the original boxed set in 1994 (though

Lovecraft himself was a major inheritor of the Gothic tradition, as were the literary pioneers of most varieties of genre fiction we recognize today).

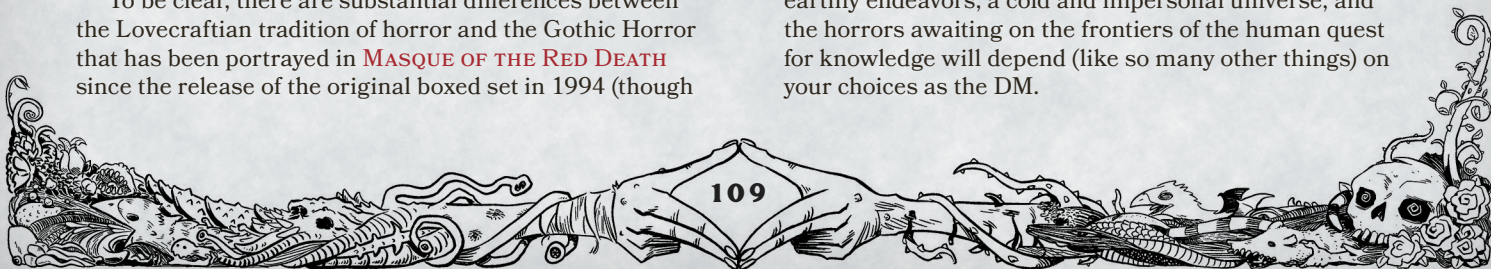
For example, in the "Cosmic Horror" of Lovecraft's mythos, the universe is indifferent to human morality, but in Gothic Horror good and evil are larger cosmic forces. In Lovecraft's tales the madness is an inevitable consequence of beholding the world's hidden horrors, which can almost never be defeated, while Gothic writers often portray certain heroes retaining both life and sanity, even in the face of absolute horror, via their strong moral character. The darkest threats in Gothic Horror tend to come from folklore and classical mythology, as opposed to incomprehensible alien monstrosities like Cthulhu and the other Great Old Ones. There are many other differences, but the main point is that **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** is not *Call of Cthulhu*, so portraying that kind of Cosmic Horror requires different rules and sensibilities.

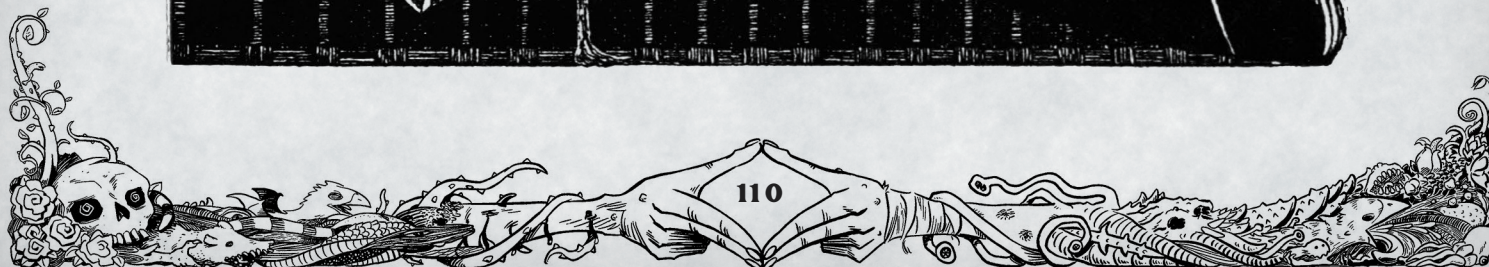
The mechanical rules change relates to increased use of Red Death Madness. Despite "sanity rules" appearing in many classic tabletop RPGS, their use can be problematic for some groups. As with other uses of the Horror & Madness rules in this book, applying the variant mechanics below requires obtaining consent from everyone involved in the game, as described in the "Handling History & Horror" section at the beginning of this book. Frequent imposition of Red Death Madness effects could be triggering for those with any personal connection to mental health issues, and could even set back progress in personal therapy for someone living with such a condition.

If everyone consents and you choose to apply the inevitable Lovecraftian spiral into madness in your campaign, give these rules changes to your players:

- There are no fear saving throws, only horror saving throws.
- When you roll a horror save, it is an Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma save (your choice).
- Resolve points cannot be spent to ignore the effects of a failed horror save. You must roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table.
- When you fail a Dark Powers check, you must also roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table, in addition to any other effects.
- When you roll on the Red Death Madness Effects table, the duration of the new madness effect you roll is based on how many forms of madness you already have at the time, as follows:
 - *No current madness effect*: 1d10 minutes.
 - *1 madness effect*: 1d10 × 10 hours.
 - *More than 1 madness effect*: Until cured.

Other changes required for Cosmic Horror have more to do with the plot and general dynamics of the campaign, rather than rules, so applying ideas such as the futility of earthly endeavors, a cold and impersonal universe, and the horrors awaiting on the frontiers of the human quest for knowledge will depend (like so many other things) on your choices as the DM.







... APPENDIX A ...

A GUIDE TO GOTHIC LONDON

...The old Cross, which is, even technically, the centre of the city, is so in sober moral geography. The Strand roars toward Fleet Street, and so to Ludgate Hill, crowned by St. Paul's Cathedral; Whitehall sweeps down to Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. Trafalgar Square, which guards it at the third angle, saves it to some extent from the modern banalities of Piccadilly and Pall Mall, mere Georgian sham stucco, not even rivals to the historic grandeur of the great religious monuments, for Trafalgar really did make history; but it is to be observed that Nelson, on his monument, is careful to turn his gaze upon the Thames. For here is the true life of the city, the aorta of that great heart of which London and Westminster are the ventricles.

—Aleister Crowley

This Appendix is chiefly adapted from period editions of Baedeker's *Great Britain* and *The London Quarterly Review*, now in the public domain, as well as the third edition **MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH** campaign setting book. As such, it is written from an in-world perspective and flavored with a Victorian Londoner's voice, idiosyncrasies, and biases.

LONDON, THE METROPOLIS of the British Empire and the largest city in the world, lies in the southeast of England, spanning both banks of the mighty river Thames. A center of industry and history reaching back more than a thousand years, it embraces parts of the four counties of Middlesex, Essex, Kent, and Surrey. It is a city recognizable not only for its verdant and peaceful parks, filled with brave statues of heroes, but its tiny dank alleys and the cobwebbed mews that overlook its cobblestone streets.

Few Westerners would deny that London leads the world in education, cultural sophistication, and entertainment. It is also a city of mystery, wrapped in shadows, whether to hide the decaying slums of Cheapside and Billingsgate or the secret machinations of the great Evil and its minions.

THE POPULACE

The population, swollen by the advances of the Industrial Revolution, is more than four and a half million. The city has doubled in size in the last half-century, now about 15 miles long from east to west, and 9 miles wide from north to south, and covering 122 square miles of ground.

As the capital of a massive empire, London draws immigrants from both the colonies and poorer parts of Europe. A large Irish population settled here after the Great Famine (1845–1849); at one point, Irish immigrants made up about 20% of London's population. London is also home to a sizable Jewish community (estimated to be around 46,000) and a very small Indian population consisting largely of transitory sailors known as *lascars*.

COMMON NAMES

The following names are the most common in London.

Female Names: Ada, Agnes, Alice, Amy, Ann, Annie, Beatrice, Bertha, Catherine, Charlotte, Clara, Daisy, Dorothy, Edith, Eleanor, Eliza, Elizabeth, Ellen, Elsie, Emily, Emma, Ethel, Eva, Mary, Florence, Frances, Gertrude, Gladys, Grace, Hannah, Harriet, Hilda, Jane, Jessie, Kate, Lilian, Lily, Louisa, Lucy, Mabel, Margaret, Martha, Maud, May, Minnie, Nellie, Rose, Sarah, Violet, Winifred

Male Names: Albert, Alexander, Alfred, Archibald, Arthur, Benjamin, Bertie, Cecil, Charles, Christopher, Daniel, David, Edgar, Edward, Edwin, Ernest, Francis, Frank, Fred, Frederick, George, Harold, Harry, Henry, Herbert, Horace, Isaac, James, John, Joseph, Leonard, Percy, Peter, Philip, Ralph, Reginald, Richard, Robert, Samuel, Sidney, Stanley, Stephen, Sydney, Thomas, Tom, Walter, Wilfred, Wilfrid, William, Willie

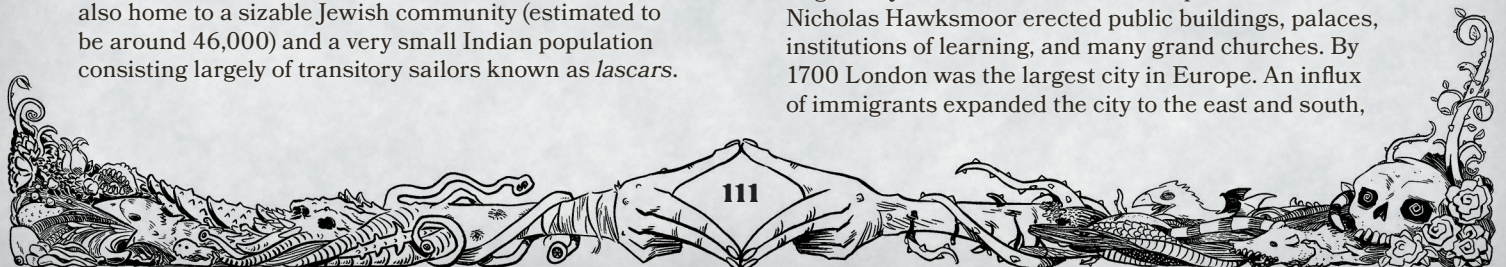
Surnames: Allen, Baker, Bennett, Brown, Carter, Clark, Clarke, Cook, Cooper, Davies, Davis, Edwards, Evans, Green, Griffiths, Hall, Harris, Harrison, Hill, Hughes, Jackson, James, Johnson, Jones, King, Lee, Lewis, Martin, Moore, Morgan, Morris, Parker, Phillips, Price, Roberts, Robinson, Shaw, Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Thompson, Turner, Walker, Ward, Watson, White, Williams, Wilson, Wood, Wright

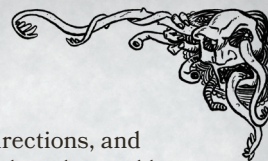
HISTORY

Victorian London is a modern city with ancient roots. Gaslights limn the twisting cobblestone streets each night, bringing light to the darkness of ages. People rush from place to place using the Tube, underground railways that travel beneath the Thames, no longer needing the many bridges so integral to travel for centuries before.

The Romans garrisoned the site of what is now London nearly two millennia ago, but who can say how long the native Britons lived here before that? After Rome's retreat, it was first the capital of a Saxon kingdom, then the nation's leading city in the era of King Canute. Finally, after William the Conqueror was crowned here, he made London the center of royal power. The following centuries brought pestilence, fire, rebellion, and civil war. In the three years from 1664 to 1666 alone, the plague carried off 100,000 Londoners, and the Great Fire destroyed 13,000 homes.

After each disaster, however, London rebuilt and grew. Legendary architects such as Christopher Wren and Nicholas Hawksmoor erected public buildings, palaces, institutions of learning, and many grand churches. By 1700 London was the largest city in Europe. An influx of immigrants expanded the city to the east and south,





although those with wealth and power chose to live in the north and western sections and have continued to do so for centuries.

CURRENCY

The pound sterling is the currency used in London. The pound divides into shillings and each shilling into pence. The symbol for the pound is £, for shillings it is s., and for pence it is d.

NOTE: For purposes of translating prices from the base D&D rules, the pound may be considered equivalent to the gold piece, the shilling to the silver piece, and the pence to the copper piece. This is a simplified abstraction determined for ease of play. For details on the historical (in)accuracy of these equivalencies, please see chapter 5. UK residents who are innately familiar with these currencies will likely find it easier to use the real ratios of pounds to shillings and pence instead.

ACCOMMODATION

There are many options for accommodation in London. Good hotels include the Metropole Hotel, the Grand Hotel, the Savoy Hotel, and Morley's Hotel. Average hotels include Burr's Hotel, Rowland's Hotel, and the Bedford Hotel. (Per the Lifestyle rules, the cost of lodging is generally included in the cost for maintaining the appropriate Lifestyle.)

Boarding Houses and Private Lodgings are readily obtainable in London, through application to a respectable house-agent or by advertisement. The dearest and best are in the West End. The neighborhood of the British Museum is another convenient quarter for boarding and lodging houses at more moderate prices.

RESTAURANTS

The Holborn and the Criterion are two of the largest and best-known restaurants in London. St. James's Hall, the Verrey, and the Cafe Royal are all first-class restaurants and expensive. More reasonably priced options include the Monico, the Frascati, and the London Tavern. Cafés include the Vienna Café, the Café de Paris, and Baker's Café.

TRANSPORT

There are nearly 200 railway stations in London, including those of its famous underground railway. Horse-drawn cabs stand in waiting for new visitors at all the railway stations and landing-stages, and may be secured nearly anywhere else in the city as well. The faster, more comfortable *hansom cabs* are designed to seat two people, though they carry three just as often. The humbler *four-wheelers* carry twice as many passengers for half the price. Cab transportation is more expensive in Central London than elsewhere, adding 5 d. (or .05 £) per mile to the cost.

Omnibuses (large enclosed horse-drawn vehicles stabilized with springs) traverse the streets in

predetermined routes going nearly all directions, and fares are much cheaper than a cab ride, though travel by this means takes twice as long. Most omnibuses have enough benches to seat one or two dozen people, though the multi-level double-decker omnibuses may seat even more. Horse teams pull these great vehicles on steel rails, much like trains, allowing them to move so many people, though fresh horses from the stable are required every 4 or 5 hours.

In the outlying districts, cable-drawn tramway lines supplement the bus systems. These cable cars are comfortable and the fares are equivalent to those of omnibuses.

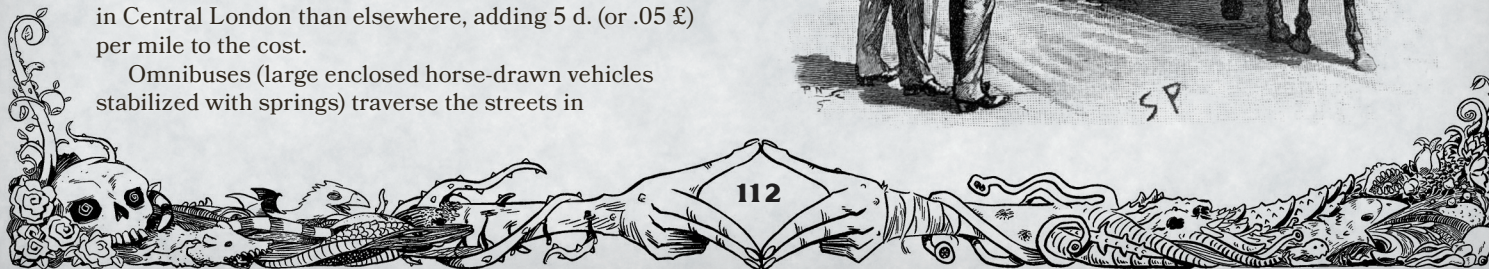
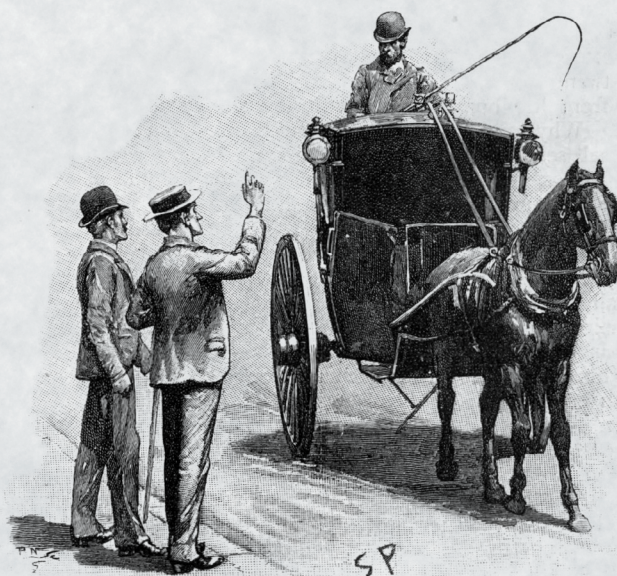
During summer, well-appointed stage-coaches ply the routes to various places of interest around London, affording, in good weather, a delightful way of seeing the scenery.

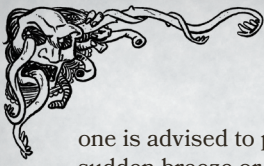
Steamers from all parts of the world make port in London. Those steamships hailing from the Continent or from other close ports such as Scotland and Ireland land their passengers at wharves below London Bridge, while the larger oceanic liners enter docks lower down the river. In this latter case, the passengers often finish their voyage to London proper by special trains.

Numerous smaller steamboats ply the river Thames, calling at about fifty intermediate piers between Hampton Court to the west and Southend and Sheerness to the east. In Central London (between London Bridge and Chelsea), these steamers are usually available every 10 minutes, while intervals of 30 minutes are more common elsewhere.

LONDON RAIN & FOG

Light showers, cloudy skies, and the famous London fog are common in the city all year round. The temperature often fluctuates greatly over the course of single day. A frequently heard saying is, "There's no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing." Even in the summer,





one is advised to pack a light jacket or sweater, in case of sudden breeze or nighttime chill.

Fashionable Londoners consider the lightweight black umbrellas sold by the Ordog-Utterson Umbrella Company to be an absolute necessity. This attitude is reinforced in advertisements, which usually feature a young woman approaching a gentleman in one London's upper-class neighborhoods as storm-clouds threaten, always with the words: "A cold wind blows from the east. Have you got your Ordog-Utterson?"

NEWSPAPERS

At least 400 newspapers are published in London and its environs. The principal morning papers are the *Times*, *Daily News*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Standard*, *Morning Post*, *Morning Advertiser*, and *Daily Chronicle*. The leading evening papers are the *Pall Mall Gazette*, *St. James's Gazette*, *Evening Standard*, *Globe*, *Evening Post*, *Star*, *Evening News*, and *Echo*.

CLUBS

One of the greatest and most important changes in modern society is the present system of clubs. The facilities of living have been wonderfully increased by them in many ways, whilst the expense has been greatly diminished. For a few pounds a year, advantages are to be enjoyed which no fortunes save the most ample could otherwise procure.

The Clubs are chiefly devoted to social purposes. Most of the club-houses at the West End are very handsome and admirably fitted up, affording every possible comfort. Members are admitted by ballot, and the introduction of guests by a member is allowed in some, but not in all the clubs. The cuisine is usually admirable.

Principal clubs include: the Albemarle, the Alpine Club, the Athenaeum Club, the Carlton Club, the City Liberal Club, the Conservative Club, the Diogenes Club (of which Mycroft Holmes is a member), the East India United Service Club, the Empire Club, the Isthmian Club, the Lord Nugent's Windham Club, National Club, the Oriental Club, the Orleans Club, the Prince's Club, the Reform Club, the Savage Club, the Travelers' Club, and the Union Club.

As an example of what these institutions are like, the Athenaeum consists of over 1,000 members, drawn from nearly every walk of life (excluding those living in true poverty). Civil servants and politicians socialize here with clergy members, scientists, artists, and merchants. Many of these are to be met with every day, living with the same freedom as in their own homes. The building is a sort of palace, kept by staff and servants with the same exactness and comfort as a private dwelling. Every member has the command of an excellent library (including many maps as well as the daily papers and principal periodicals) and the resources for writing anything from casual correspondence to expansive novels. Meals and other refreshments are available to members at all hours.

THEATRES

London boasts about sixty-five theatres, most of which are in or near the Strand. Opera is performed at Her Majesty's Theatre and the Covent Garden Theatre. The most significant theatre is Drury Lane, which features spectacular plays and pantomimes. Among the other leading theatres are the Lyceum, the Haymarket, St. James's, Princess's, the Adelphi, the Globe, and many more.

MUSIC HALLS

World class concerts are performed at the Alhambra, the London Pavilion, St. James's Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, the Crystal Palace, and many others.

AMUSEMENTS

Favorite places of entertainment include Tussaud's Waxworks, the Egyptian Hall, the Royal Aquarium, and the Olympia exhibition center. Picture exhibitions may be seen at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, the Royal Society of British Artists, the Dori Gallery, and other places.

COMMON LONDON OCCUPATIONS

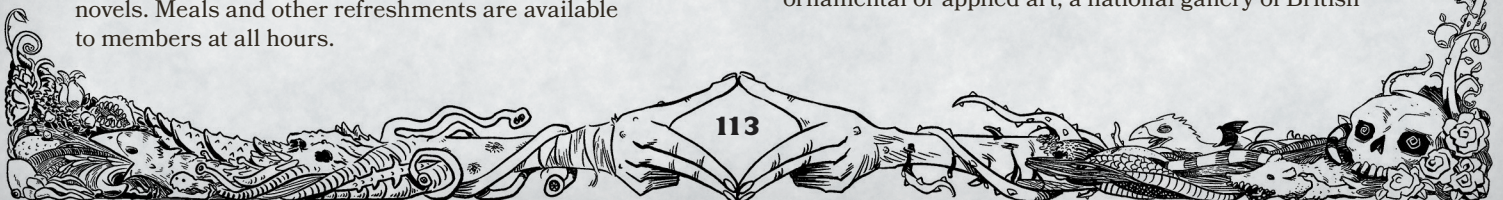
Alderman, Baker, Barber, Blacksmith, Bleacher, Bottler, Brewer, Butcher, Carter, Chambermaid, Clerk, Clothier, Coachman, Composer, Conductor, Confectioner, Constable, Copyist, Currier, Distiller, Drayman, Dressmaker, Druggist, Dyer, Fitter, Glazier, Grocier, Hackman, Hominy, Hostler, Huckster, Joiner, Labourer, Lineman, Liner, Livery, Machinist, Maltster, Mantuamaker, Mason, Mechanic, Miller, Milliner, Moulder, Notions, Nurse, Peddler, Physician, Plasterer, Plumber, Porter, Potter, Pressman, Puddler, Seamstress, Sexton, Stationer, Tailor, Tallowmaker, Teamster, Tinner, Tobacconist, Upholsterer, Waiter, Warper, Watchman, Wheelwright, Whitewasher

LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

In the area of Westminster, the **London Library** stands on St. James Square. An independent lending library with nearly 100,000 books, it was founded in 1841 on the initiative of Thomas Carlyle, a Scottish author and social commentator who was dissatisfied with some of the policies at the British Museum Library. The Library's collections, which range from the 16th century to the present day, are strong within the fields of literature, fiction, fine and applied art, architecture, history, biography, philosophy, religion, topography, and travel.

Burlington House is the headquarters of the Royal Academy, Royal Society, and several other learned bodies. Next door is the **Museum of Practical Geology**.

South Kensington Museum includes a museum of ornamental or applied art, a national gallery of British





The Reading Room, British Museum.

art, an art library, an art training school, and a school of science.

A handsome and most convenient structure, the **Natural History Museum** contains the extensive natural history collections of the **British Museum**. The British Museum, a huge building with an Ionic portico, contains a series of extensive and highly valuable collections, including several excellent libraries. Its most well-known exhibits may be its Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Assyrian collections.

Mudie's Select Library, a gigantic establishment, also possesses hundreds of thousands of volumes.

Lambeth Palace, for 600 years the residence of the Archbishops of Canterbury, has an excellent old library (admission by special permission only).

OTHER POINTS OF GREAT INTEREST

Trafalgar Square, one of the most excellent open spaces in London, contains the Nelson Column and statues of Sir Henry Havelock, Sir Charles Napier, George IV, and General Gordon. To the northeast is the church of St. Martin's in the Fields.

The open space to the South of Trafalgar Square, between the Strand and Whitehall, is **Charing Cross**, the center of the city. It is from here that the routes to London destinations are officially measured, radiating from this common point as recorded in the authorized Book of Distances all cab drivers are required to carry (to be referenced by customers upon request to prevent overcharging). For most sightseers, if not native Londoners, Charing Cross is the central hub of the city they experience in their excursions.

On the north side of Trafalgar Square stands the **National Gallery**, erected in 1832–38 and enlarged in 1860, 1876, and 1887. From the large number of artists represented, the collections it contains are of the highest value to the student of art, and there is no lack of masterpieces of the first rank. About 1100 pictures in all are exhibited.

Whitehall, leading to the south from Trafalgar Square, passes the Admiralty, the Horse Guards (headquarters

of the military authorities), and the various government offices (all to the right). To the other side are **Scotland Yard** (headquarters of the police), the United Service Museum, and the banqueting hall which is the only relic of what was once the palace of Whitehall.

To the left, a massive building in the richest late-Gothic (Tudor) style, the Palace of Westminster, contains the **Houses of Parliament**. The exterior is adorned with many statues, and the interior is fitted up with great taste and splendor. The Victoria Tower, the largest of the three which adorn the building, is 340 feet high. The clock tower is at the north end of the palace, with its great bell known as Big Ben, and since its 1859 completion has become an important landmark.

Buckingham Palace is the London residence of the Queen, and contains a fine picture-gallery (access to this is difficult to obtain).

Westminster Abbey is said to have been founded in the 7th century, rebuilt by Edward the Confessor (1049–65), and dating in its present form mainly from the latter half of the 13th century, with numerous important additions and alterations. It has many royal burial-vaults and a long series of monuments to celebrated people.

Hyde Park is the most famous and fashionable of the London parks, covering an area of nearly 400 acres. The large body of artificial water is called the Serpentine. To the west, **Kensington Gardens** adjoins the park.

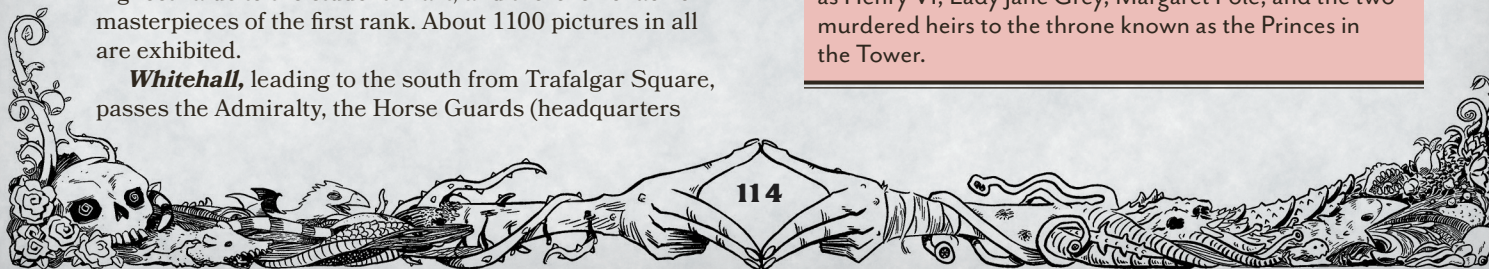
One of the chief landmarks of the city stands a few yards south of Newgate Street. This is **St. Paul's Cathedral**, an imposing Romanesque building with a beautifully proportioned dome, erected in 1675–1710 on the site of an older building destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666.

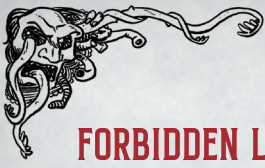
Erected in 1825–1831, **London Bridge** commands a good view of the river and much of the city itself. It is the most important of the bridges over the Thames and the scene of immense traffic.

THE MOST HAUNTED BUILDING IN LONDON

The **Tower of London** is an iconic castle that has served as a secure ancient fortress, a royal palace, and an infamous state-prison. Beyond its prominent role in the nation's history, it has also served variously as an armory, a treasury, a menagerie, the home of the Royal Mint, a public record office, and the home of the Crown Jewels of England (now kept in the Record or Wakefield Tower). At least six ravens are kept at the Tower at all times, in accordance with the belief that if they are absent, the kingdom will fall.

As a whole, the Tower is a complex of several buildings set within two concentric rings of defensive walls and a moat. Many have been beheaded within these fortifications, including Anne Boleyn, said to haunt the tower now as a ghost, alongside other apparitions such as Henry VI, Lady Jane Grey, Margaret Pole, and the two murdered heirs to the throne known as the Princes in the Tower.





FORBIDDEN LORE

London, with its massive population, attracts evil creatures of every kind. In the sunlight hours, nannies walk with their charges, but in the dark corners of the night, vampires, werewolves, ghosts, hags, golems, trolls, zombies, and demons can all be found. Its ever-increasing population and nexus for world travel make it a rich source of potential victims, while beneath its streets, there yet remain broken temples to dark gods of the Roman Empire and other ancient powers.

Those who fight the Red Death know that this city contains some of the oldest and most deadly horrors human beings have ever seen, or even dreamed of in their worst nightmares. Rare encounters with the *sidhe*, a race of fey who once ruled the British Isles, are mostly reported in Ireland, but a group of them have claimed misty corners of the labyrinth of tunnels beneath London as their domains. Most of the *sidhe* (also known as *eladrin*) left Gothic Earth, and the majority of those who remain are chaotic evil and savage in temperament, great masters of magic tainted by the Red Death. Other fey creatures attend them as servants. A few *sidhe* who resisted evil by giving up spellcasting hide under London as well, hunted for sport by their corrupted kin.

Yet the most numerous servants of the Red Death in London are its human agents. There is no shortage of cultists, zealots, and fanatics looking to inflict their iniquitous schemes upon the unwitting populace. Sherlock Holmes himself is said to have uncovered an occult conspiracy among London's criminals, a network he spent much of his career trying to dismantle. The British Empire pillages many ancient nations. Whether brought back by conquerors, archaeologists, or simple thieves, relics and other treasures find their way here from all corners of the globe. Many such items are poisoned by the Red Death's corruption.

Yet at this point in history, London may also have more defenders against this darkness than any other city. Many qabals call London their home base, and it was here that the brave fellowship formed which eventually dealt a meaningful defeat to the powerful Count Dracula.

As the 1890s begin, the great detective Sherlock Holmes is presumed dead. Before his descent at Reichenbach, Holmes secretly inspired and recruited many to the cause of humanity's defense. Today, Holmes' associates Doctor Watson and Professor George E. Challenger continue this work as best they can.

The associates recruited in England by Professor Abraham van Helsing during his struggle against Dracula

all now live in London or visit the city regularly. Two of them—the educator and notable suffragist Mina Harker and her solicitor husband Jonathan—have been recruited to van Helsing's qabal, Die Wächtern. Few qabalists can be said to have had more direct confrontations with the Red Death's lieutenants, nor to have won more astonishing victories. In fact, Mina has recently been made the overall leader of the qabal's London cell, and the bearer of a holy relic. Passed down from the founders of Die Wächtern, it is said to be the *bowl of Bartimaeus*, the beggar healed of blindness by Jesus in gospel accounts. This plain wooden bowl allows Mina to cast *true seeing* once, regaining the ability to do so each Sunday at dawn, but once the spell ends, she is blinded until the next time she finishes a short or long rest.

Other qabals based in London include the Ghost Circle and the Scions of Alchemae, both described in detail in chapter 6, “Qabals.” Sherlock Holmes himself never joined any established qabal, despite his efforts against the Red Death and his own alliance with van Helsing (to whom he was introduced by Pope Leo XIII himself, during the affair known as “The Case of the Vatican Cameos”). Some might argue that Holmes's personal network (including his Baker Street Irregulars and other intelligence gatherers) served the same function for the Great Detective.

Sherlock's older brother, government official Mycroft Holmes, is said to exercise tremendous influence over all of Britain, though his true position is a highly sensitive secret. This is despite his seldom going anywhere aside from his own home and the nearby Diogenes Club (notable for its misanthropic rules allowing no one to talk at all except in a single room set aside for that purpose). Possessed of a flawless memory and inhuman analytical faculties, Mycroft is likely the more intelligent Holmes brother, but unlike Sherlock he has no desire to venture out into the world, whether to search out mysteries or to perform any other task.

However, perhaps as a posthumous recognition of his brother's secret work, Mycroft has caused the establishment of Scotland Yard's Special Branch Section 13, tasked with investigating strange and supernatural threats. A secret London telephone network created by the government links Section 13 to Mycroft and other high-level assets. As of yet, this new branch of Her Majesty's government has little more than a fraction of the occult expertise possessed by the qabals, and its understanding of eldritch matters remains woefully incomplete.





.... APPENDIX B

CHARACTERS FROM PAST EDITIONS

MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH has a long history of offering new player character types. Effort has been made to ensure a version of every one of those options is playable with the fifth edition rules included in this volume—from the new classes and kits (packages to modify classes) in the original 1994 boxed set for the second edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules, to the new classes and prestige classes (special classes you can only multiclass into) for third edition ten years later, based on material from the *Living Death* Organized Play campaign.

The following table offers suggestions for how best to recreate all of the character type options available in the above-listed sources.

Prior Edition Class, Kit, or Prestige Class	Suggested Class	Suggested Archetype
Adept	Scion	Adept
Antiquarian	Sleuth	Expert
Artifact Hunter	Any	Artifact Hunter
Athlete	Stalwart	Any
Cavalryman	Soldier	Outrider
Charlatan	Any	Charlatan
Criminal	Sleuth	Criminal
Dandy	Shepherd	Socialite
Detective	Sleuth	Expert
Exorcist	Scion	Parson
Explorer	Stalwart	Outrider
Forbidden Loremaster	Sleuth	Adept
Intellectual	Sleuth	Any
Journalist	Sleuth	Expert

Prior Edition Class, Kit, or Prestige Class	Suggested Class	Suggested Archetype
Laborer	Any	Laborer
Lycanthrope Hunter	Sleuth	Slayer
Master Inventor	Sleuth	Expert
Mechanic	Stalwart	Expert or Laborer
Medium	Any	Medium
Metaphysician	Scion	Expert
Mystic	Scion	Mystic
Parson	Shepherd	Parson
Performer	Shepherd	Expert
Physician	Sleuth	Expert
Qabalist	Scion	Adept
Sailor	Soldier or Stalwart	Outrider or Laborer
Scholar	Sleuth	Expert
Scientist	Sleuth	Expert
Scout	Sleuth	Outrider
Shaman	Scion	Mystic
Shootist	Soldier	Gunslinger
Sleuth	Sleuth	Any
Soldier	Soldier	Any
Spiritualist	Sleuth	Mystic
Spy	Sleuth	Spy
Tradesman	Any	Expert
Undead Hunter	Sleuth	Slayer





.... APPENDIX C

PLAYER NEW RULES SUMMARY

RESOLVE POINTS

You have a number of resolve points, which you spend to fuel certain features.

Maximum Resolve. Your resolve point maximum equals your proficiency bonus + your level (3 at 1st level, 6 at 4th level, 11 at 8th level, etc.). You begin play at your maximum. The number of resolve points you have can't go below 0, and cannot exceed your maximum.

Regaining Resolve. You regain resolve points equal to half your maximum when you finish a long rest.

Spending Resolve. The maximum number of resolve points you can spend on single use of any feature is equal to your proficiency bonus.

Uses of Resolve. Your resolve points fuel some class and archetype features, but you can also spend them to use the following benefits:

- **Overcoming Wounds.** You can spend 1 resolve point as a bonus action to regain 1d4 hit points. If you wish, you can spend additional resolve points on a use of this feature, regaining an additional 1d4 hit points for each additional resolve point spent.
- **Overcoming Fear and Horror.** Whenever you fail a fear or horror save (as described in the following section), you can choose to spend 1 resolve point to avoid the effects of the failed save. If you do so, you instead take 1 level of stress.
- **Resolute Focus.** Whenever you make an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, you can spend 1 resolve point to gain advantage on that roll.
- **Unarmored Resolve.** As long as you have at least 1 resolve point and you are not wearing armor or wielding a shield, your AC cannot be less than 11 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus.

NEW CONDITION: DETACHED

- A creature suffering the detached condition has disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws and ability checks.
- All Charisma checks against a detached creature have advantage.

- When a successful Charisma check suggests a course of action to the creature, the creature pursues it as if it were under the effects of a *suggestion* spell, even if it is immune to being charmed. This is not a magical effect. Depending on the course of action, it may choose to stop pursuing it as soon as it is no longer detached. When suggested courses of action conflict, the creature chooses which to pursue.

NEW CONDITION: STRESS

Stress is measured in seven levels. An effect can give a you one or more levels of stress, as specified in the effect's description. If you already have stress, your current level of stress increases by the amount specified (not to exceed seven levels of stress).

A creature suffers only the effects of its current level of stress, not those of any lower or higher ones.

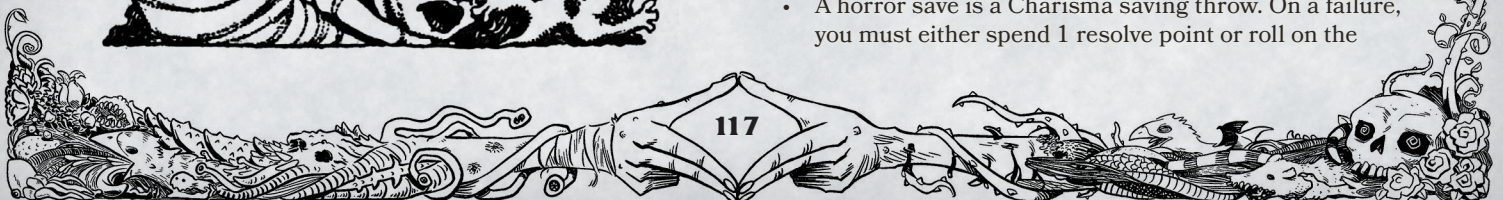
STRESS CONDITION EFFECTS

STRESS LEVEL	EFFECT
1	-1 penalty on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws
2	-2 penalty on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws
3	-3 penalty on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws
4	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws, and on Intelligence checks
5	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws, and on Intelligence and Charisma checks
6	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws, and on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma checks.
7	Detached condition

SPECIAL ROLLS

Your DM may ask you to make the following rolls:

- A fear save is a Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, if you don't spend 1 resolve point and take 1 level of stress, you become frightened for 1 minute. If frightened, you can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of your turns, ending your frightened condition on a success.
- A horror save is a Charisma saving throw. On a failure, you must either spend 1 resolve point or roll on the





Red Death Madness Effects table. If you spend the resolve point, you instead take 1 level of stress.

- A Dark Powers check is a simple unmodified d20 roll you must make whenever you cast a spell, or when the DM judges that you have committed an act of true evil. The DM will tell you what happens if you fail.

NEW ACTION: EXERTING INFLUENCE

As an action, you roll a Charisma check (modified by any appropriate skill proficiency) to inflict levels of the stress condition on a creature that can see or hear you. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw against a DC equal to the result of your Charisma check. On a failure, it takes 1 level of stress. If it fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it instead takes 2 levels of stress. If it fails by 10 or more, it takes 3 levels of stress.

NEW ACTION: FANNING

When wielding a ranged weapon with which you are proficient that has the reload property, you can use your action to attempt to strike multiple targets. Choose a 10-foot square within that weapon's normal range. Each target in the area must roll a Dexterity saving throw (DC equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Dexterity modifier). On a failure, a target takes damage equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus. After using this action, you must reload.

NEW REACTION: TAKING AIM

Taking Aim is a reaction, triggered by the end of your turn, provided you did not move more than 5 feet during that turn. When you take this reaction, choose a target within range of your weapon and begin concentrating, as if on a spell. While you are still concentrating on Taking Aim, you have advantage on your first weapon attack roll each turn against the chosen target. Your concentration ends at the end of your next turn. It also ends early if you move more than 5 feet during any turn, if you make an attack that does not target the chosen target at which you aimed, or by the same means that would normally end your concentration on a spell.

NEW BONUS ACTION: TARGETED STRIKE

Immediately before making a weapon attack as part of the Attack action on your turn, you can use your bonus action to modify that attack, making it a Targeted Strike. You cannot make a Targeted Strike if the weapon attack it would modify uses a weapon with which you are not proficient or if that attack would be made at disadvantage.

When you make a Targeted Strike, you choose one of the following options. For all required saving throws, the DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Dexterity, Intelligence, or Wisdom modifier (your choice).

- **Advancing Strike.** The damage from the modified attack is halved, but if the attack hits its target, you

choose a friendly creature who can see or hear you. That creature can use its reaction to move up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks from the target of your attack. The target hit also suffers disadvantage on the next attack roll it makes against the chosen creature before the end of its next turn.

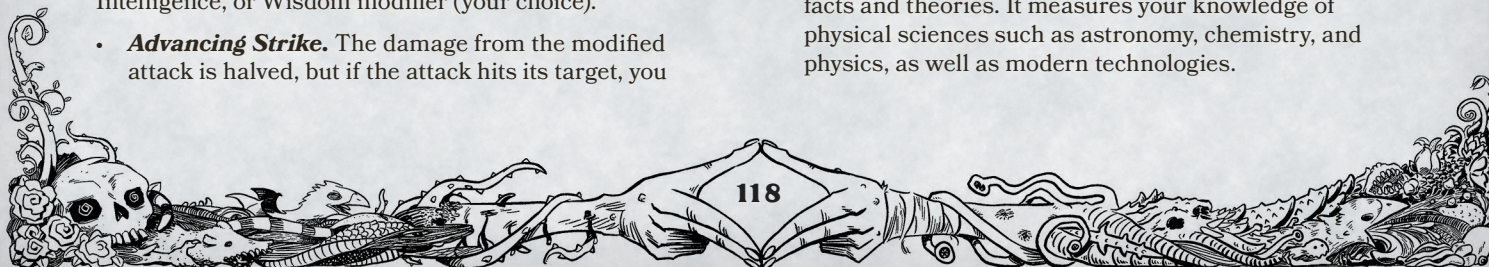
- **Knockback Strike.** If the modified attack hits, the target must roll a Strength saving throw. On a failure, if the target is Large or smaller, you can choose to either knock it prone or force it to move up to 10 feet away from you.
- **Marking Strike.** If the modified attack hits, the target must roll a Wisdom saving throw. If it fails, you mark the creature until the end of your next turn. This effect ends early if you are incapacitated or you die, or if someone else marks the creature. While it is within 5 feet of you, if a creature marked by you makes an attack roll that doesn't target you, it suffers disadvantage on the attack roll.
- **Strike to Kill.** The modified attack inflicts additional damage equal to your proficiency bonus if it hits a creature within 5 feet of you. If the attack roll is made at advantage, it also scores a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20. However, if the damage from the modified attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points, you cannot choose to knock the creature out instead of killing it, even if the attack was a melee attack.
- **Strike to Wound.** If the modified attack hits a living creature, that creature must roll a Constitution saving throw. If it fails, it must roll on the Devastating Injury table. In addition, if the damage from this attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the creature is not killed. Instead it falls unconscious and is stable.

NEW RULES FOR HEALING AND DAMAGE

- **Healer's Kit Dependency.** You can't spend any Hit Dice after finishing a rest until someone expends one use of a healer's kit to bandage and treat your wounds. (A healer's kit is often a first aid kit or physician's bag.)
- **Slow Natural Healing.** You don't regain hit points at the end of a long rest. Instead, you can spend Hit Dice to heal at the end of a long rest, just as at the end of a short rest. (As normal, you also regain Hit Dice equal to half your level at the end of a long rest.)
- **Devastating Injuries.** When you take 10 or more points of damage at once from a single source, if it reduces you to 0 hit points, you must roll a Constitution saving throw. The DC equals 15 or half the damage taken, whichever number is higher. On a success, you merely take 1 level of stress. On a failure, roll on the Devastating Injury table.

NEW SKILL: SCIENCE

Your Intelligence (Science) check lets you recall scientific facts and theories. It measures your knowledge of physical sciences such as astronomy, chemistry, and physics, as well as modern technologies.





DUNGEON MASTER'S CHEAT-SHEET

While the materials included with this product should cover every rule players need, sometimes the DM may have to adjudicate situations where the rules reference the *Masque of the Red Death Player's Guide*. While we encourage you to pick up that book, we also know not every DM will have access to the full rules, so here are a few tips to help manage these situations in play.

FEAR AND HORROR SAVES (AND MADNESS)

- The default DC for fear saving throws and horror saving throws is 15. For characters of 3rd level or lower, you may wish to default to DC 13.
- When a situation (such as a failed horror saving throw) calls for a roll on the Red Death Madness Table, if you do not have access to that table (which appears in the *Masque of the Red Death Player's Guide*), you can substitute one of the various madness tables in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (also appearing in the *D&D Basic Rules*, available for free online), choosing which one to use based on how many madness effects the character is already experiencing before rolling, as follows:
 - **No current madness effects:** Roll on the Short-Term Madness Table (effect lasts for 1d10 minutes).
 - **One current madness effect:** Roll on the Long-Term Madness Table (effect lasts for 24 hours).
 - **Two or more current madness effects:** Roll on the Indefinite Madness Table (effect lasts until cured).
- If a character with at least 1 resolve point finds a secluded place where they feel safe to collect themselves, after 8 hours of peaceful rest there, they can make a Wisdom saving throw (DC = 20 minus the character's current number of resolve points). On a success, the character can end one madness effect on itself. If another character is present to offer aid and counsel for the whole 8 hours, that character can make a Charisma or Wisdom check with an appropriate skill, with success granting the recovering character advantage on the save.
- Magic can also help with madness effects. A *calm emotions* spell can suppress the effects of madness for the duration for those that fail the saving throw against the spell. *Lesser restoration* and *remove curse* allow a target with Red Death Madness to make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw the next time they finish a short or long rest, with success ending one madness effect from which they are suffering. A *greater restoration* spell or more powerful magic is the only sure cure for madness. When used in this way, *greater restoration* ends up to three madness effects of the caster's choice on the target.

DARK POWERS CHECKS

- The DC for a Dark Powers check is equal to the character's proficiency bonus. Even though it is an unmodified d20 roll, failure doesn't occur often, but when it does, the effects are dramatic. Characters who consistently perform acts of evil or who rely too much on spellcasting will likely run out of luck sooner or later. As with all other rolls, the DM is free to impose advantage or disadvantage on Dark Powers checks, dependent on circumstances.
- Cantrips do not require a Dark Powers check.
- When a character is casting a spell with good intent, the DM can choose to decrease the DC of a Dark Powers check, making it equal the level of the spell (if it is lower than the caster's proficiency bonus).
- **Dark Powers Stage One:** The first time a character fails a Dark Powers check, it gains a dark gift: it learns the find familiar spell and can cast it as a ritual. Even if they do not cast it, the next time they finish a long rest, a familiar (an imp or quasit, chosen by the DM) appears as if they had (any existing familiar is replaced). The familiar assists the character, but its goal is to corrupt them, and it has the following Personality Trait: "I keep a list of my master's sins, which I recite gleefully at the most disturbing times." The next time the character fails a Dark Powers check, they proceed to Stage Two.
- **Dark Powers Stage Two:** When a character that has already failed one or more Dark Powers checks fails another, the DM chooses one 1st-level spell the character does not already know that is not an abjuration, divination, or evocation spell. The character can now cast the chosen spell once at its lowest level, regaining the ability to do so when they finish a long rest. However, the DM also chooses one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Athletics, Deception, Medicine, Performance, Persuasion, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth. While in sunlight, the character has disadvantage on checks with the chosen skill. Characters at this stage who fail another Dark Powers check must roll a d6 and subtract the number of Dark Powers they possess from the number rolled. If the result is 1 or lower, they proceed to Stage Three, otherwise, they gain another Stage Two power. Stage Three is beyond the scope of this document, and is described (along with even higher stages) in the *Masque of the Red Death Player's Guide*.

MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH

CHARACTER NAME

CLASS & LEVEL

ARCHETYPE

PLAYER NAME

CLASS & LEVEL

ARCHETYPE

TOTAL LEVEL

NATIONALITY

ALIGNMENT

EXPERIENCE POINTS

STRENGTH

INSPIRATION

PROFICIENCY BONUS

DEXTERITY

SAVING THROWS

- ☐ ____ Strength
☐ ____ Dexterity
☐ ____ Constitution
☐ ____ Intelligence
☐ ____ Wisdom
☐ ____ Charisma

CONSTITUTION

SKILLS

- ☐ ____ Acrobatics (Dex)
☐ ____ Animal Handling (Wis)
☐ ____ Arcana (Int)
☐ ____ Athletics (Str)
☐ ____ Deception (Cha)
☐ ____ History (Int)
☐ ____ Insight (Wis)
☐ ____ Intimidation (Cha)
☐ ____ Investigation (Int)
☐ ____ Medicine (Wis)
☐ ____ Nature (Int)
☐ ____ Perception (Wis)
☐ ____ Performance (Cha)
☐ ____ Persuasion (Cha)
☐ ____ Religion (Int)
☐ ____ Science (Int)
☐ ____ Sleight of Hand (Dex)
☐ ____ Stealth (Dex)
☐ ____ Survival (Wis)

INTELLIGENCE

WISDOM

CHARISMA

PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)

OTHER PROFICIENCIES & LANGUAGES

ARMOR
CLASS

INITIATIVE

SPEED

CURRENT HIT POINTS

HIT POINT MAXIMUM _____

TEMPORARY HIT POINTS

CURRENT RESOLVE POINTS

RESOLVE POINT MAXIMUM _____

STRESS ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

HIT DICE

DEATH SAVES

SUCCESSSES ☐ ☐ ☐

TOTAL _____

FAILURES ☐ ☐ ☐

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

NAME

ATK BONUS DAMAGE/TYPE

FIREARM ATTACKS

NAME

ATK BONUS DAMAGE/TYPE

FOULED

			☐
			☐
			☐

EQUIPMENT

PERSONALITY TRAITS

IDEALS

BONDS

FLAWS

SUSTAINING BONDS

FEATURES & TRAITS

MADNESS TRAITS



CHARACTER NAME

AGE	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
EYES	SKIN	HAIR

CHARACTER APPEARANCE

QABALS & CONTACTS

BACKGROUND

STARTING LIFESTYLE

CURRENT LIFESTYLE & COST

LIFESTYLE INCOME

BACKGROUND BENEFITS & FLAWS

ADDITIONAL FEATURES & TRAITS

CHARACTER BACKSTORY

TREASURE



A CENTURY OF HORROR NEARS ITS END... WILL HUMANITY END WITH IT?

Gothic Earth is a DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® setting like no other—a benighted mirror of our own world in the 1890s. Nations old and new arise beyond the reach of Europe's fading empires. Railroads, firearms, electric power, and other wondrous inventions spread across the globe, while magic is a lost secret, tainted forever by an ancient evil.

Thousands of ago, an alien force invaded Gothic Earth: the Red Death. It manipulates and corrupts humankind, while its minions—vampires, werewolves, doppelgangers, and worse—thrive in the shadows. Now, this terrible entity's carefully-woven plans come together. A few brave investigators risk their lives against the darkness... Will you be one of them?

The rules in these pages usher you into the tales of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelley, and Bram Stoker. Find tools within to oppose the Red Death's agents, from Jack the Ripper and Mr. Hyde to Count Dracula himself. Join hidden qabals, rediscover forbidden lore and spells, and explore the horrors of Ravenloft® in a whole new way with the *Masque of the Red Death Player's Guide*.

