



CHAPTER ONE



DEITIES

DIVINE MYSTERIES

From the frozen forests of Irrisen to the sweltering jungles of Sargava, and from the harsh deserts of Qadira to the scattered islands of the Steaming Sea, the Inner Sea region is the heart of the Pathfinder campaign setting. Yet within any one of the region's panoply of nations, a wide variety of beliefs and ideals hold sway. And wherever people's hopes and needs diverge from those of their neighbors, so too do their religions.

The following pages detail the faiths of the “core 20”—the 20 gods most important to the Inner Sea region because of either their widespread worship or their historical tendency to help or harm the people of the Inner Sea. While there are far more than 20 gods in the Pathfinder campaign setting, and on other continents or worlds the ranking of the deities' relative importance may change, these are the gods whose names are best known in Inner Sea nations. (For information on lesser-known deities, demigods, and other powerful extraplanar entities, see Chapter 2.)

Just because the following gods are well known, however, doesn't mean they're all well loved. Along with the gods of justice and righteousness are those worshiped by thieves and murderers, the greedy and the corrupt. These latter are often honored in secret, through foul rites aimed at fouler goals, yet their presence is still felt and feared across the Inner Sea region. After all, even the most twisted mind can see the benefit of allying oneself with a higher power, and for many, the price of a soul is nothing compared to the rewards that can be earned in this life.

Not everyone around the Inner Sea chooses to worship a god, but those who hear the calling—especially those who become priests—often find themselves branded by their affiliation, for good or ill. Choose yours wisely.

USING THE ENTRIES

All of the god entries in this chapter follow the same format, designed to help you find what you need quickly and easily.

Quote: Each section starts with a sample quote from the god's holy text, a scholarly work about the god, or a common prayer to the god.

Statistics and Obedience: After the quote, the first page of each write-up lists the god's key statistics for quick reference. First comes the title by which the god is most commonly known, followed by areas of concern; the god's alignment; the magical domains available to that deity's clerics; regions around the Inner Sea where worship of that god is particularly common; and the nationality, race, or ethnicity with which the god is most

commonly associated. Note that while in some cases, the information listed in the Nationality entry is literal fact—such as for the ascended gods, who started out as mortals—in other cases it's more of a social or political construct. The gods are fully capable of manifesting in whatever physical forms they want, appearing in different guises to different congregations, and they often existed long before the nations that claim them in this manner.

After the statistics come rules for obediences and granted powers. These are used by devout characters with the evangelist, exalted, and sentinel prestige classes (see pages 198–203), as well as any characters who take the Deific Obedience feat on page 210. The obedience details the specific rituals these characters must conduct each day in order to gain additional powers from their gods, and the sections for each prestige class give the rules for particular boons. Some boons grant a “sacred or profane” bonus if the deity is neither good nor evil. This bonus matches the type the character chose when first performing that god's obedience, as described in the deity's obedience entry.

Introduction: This section gives a general overview of the god and his or her history, personality, and concerns.

The Church: In this section you'll find an overview of the church and its goals, structure, and rites.

Paladin/Antipaladin Code: Not all gods allow paladins among their faithful, but for those who do, this sidebar provides a sample code that a holy warrior of the faith would follow. Individual paladins may vary somewhat in terms of which aspects of a god's tenets they prioritize highest, and two paladins of the same faith may still have differing interpretations on how best to implement a god's divine mandates. If a god instead has antipaladins (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 118), their code is listed in this sidebar.

Temples and Shrines: This section discusses places of worship, both temples where large congregations gather and smaller, simpler shrines that might be maintained by a few faithful—potentially even in secret.

A Priest's Role: This section discusses a priest's role within both the church and his or her community, discussing everything from priests' typical daily routines to how they commonly further their god's goals in society.

Adventurers: Not all who worship a god feel called to become clergy or spellcasters powered by divine faith. Here you'll find details on how laypeople who worship the god in question—particularly those whose professions point

INNER SEA GODS



DIVINE MYSTERIES

them toward a life of adventure—differ in personality and function from those who worship other gods.

Clothing: This section discusses ceremonial garments typical to the faith. Though many worshippers—and even priests—forgo churchly vestments in favor of more practical or inconspicuous attire much of the time, most show off their affiliation in some fashion, even if it's just in choosing colors or symbols associated with their deity.

Holy Texts: This section presents a brief overview of the god's most widely recognized holy texts.

Holidays: Holy days and other celebrations may vary by region, but some occasions observed by the faithful throughout the Inner Sea region are detailed here.

Aphorisms: Certain sayings and oaths common to the faith appear here.

Relations with Other Religions: This section discusses both the god's personal opinion of other deities and their congregations' prejudices toward other faiths. This is a general overview, and individual congregations can vary considerably from region to region—the churches of two gods might be at each other's throats in one nation because of a mixing of politics and religion, but might still work together in another. Similarly, individual

worshippers may vary considerably in their mind-sets, and a Sarenite who seeks to cleanse cultists of an evil god with fire and sword might be just as much a follower of the Dawnflower as one who seeks to redeem such cultists through compassion and understanding.

Realm: This section details the god's home and private domain, usually somewhere on the Outer Planes, where the god lives with the souls of his or her deceased faithful.

Planar Allies: All gods have particular beings sworn to their service. This section details some of the best-known divine servitors, creatures that have repeatedly acted as divine representatives over the ages, responding to the prayers of the faithful.

For Faithful Characters: This section suggests rules elements to help customize religious characters to better reflect their faith. Here you'll find a list of archetypes, feats, magic items, spells, and traits either specifically designed to be used by characters of the god's religion or otherwise well suited to the church's themes and goals.

Variant Spellcasting: Because of their patron god's specialized interests, priests of a given deity are able to prepare certain spells that they wouldn't otherwise be able to, or at lower levels than normal.

CORE
DEITIES



ABADAR

UNTO EACH THING IS GIVEN A ROLE TO PLAY IN THE WORLD THAT FITS PERFECTLY WITH ALL OTHERS. WITH EACH TURN OF EVERY TINY WHEEL, CIVILIZATION SPREADS TO COVER THE WORLD, AND ORDER AND PROSPERITY FLOW FORTH.
—THE ORDER OF NUMBERS

MASTER OF THE FIRST VAULT

God of cities, law, merchants, and wealth

Alignment LN

Domains Earth, Law, Nobility, Protection, Travel

Favored Weapon crossbow

Centers of Worship Absalom, Andoran, Brevoy, Cheliox, Katapesh, Mana Wastes, Molthune, Nex, Osirion, Sargava, Taldor, Varisia

Nationality Taldan

Obedience Take a handful of mixed gems, coins, and keys.

Include coins from three or more different currency systems (such as from three different kingdoms), as well as at least three different keys—one of which should be the key to a lockbox, vault, or other such storage item. Kneel before a scale and balance the items as perfectly as you can on it, removing and replacing items in order to create the most equitable balance of items. Randomize the items you select each time you perform this obedience, so as not to let your obedience become routine. Meditate on the teachings from *The Order of Numbers*. Gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on saving throws against spells and effects generated by creatures with a chaotic alignment. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience. Once made, this choice can't be changed.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Diplomat (Sp)** *comprehend languages* 3/day, *calm emotions* 2/day, or *glibness* 1/day
- 2: City Dweller (Ex)** You never become lost in cities of more than 5,000 inhabitants—upon entering a city, even for the first time, you can always retrace your steps and intuit where particular districts must be. Furthermore, you pick up local accents and vernacular instantly, giving you the cant of a citizen. You also gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on Disguise and Knowledge (local) checks while in the bounds of a city.
- 3: Sneaky Bolt (Ex)** Three times per day, you can snipe with a crossbow while hidden, and have little chance of revealing your location. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. You can use this ability only if your target is within 30 feet of you and unaware of your presence or precise location. Once you roll your attack, immediately attempt a Stealth check for sniping without the normal –20 penalty.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Ordered Mien (Sp)** *Abadar's truthtelling** 3/day, *align weapon* (lawful only) 2/day, or *magic circle against chaos* 1/day
- 2: Diplomatic Immunity (Ex)** While within the bounds of a city of more than 5,000 inhabitants, you gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks. You also gain special status with the law. You're considered a person to be respected, and may obtain special treatment and assistance that ordinary citizens could not, such as information on political activity, criminal investigations, or threats against the city. Any bribes or fees that would normally be levied by the legal system are waived for you. City guards and officials with an initial starting attitude of unfriendly or hostile instead have an attitude of indifferent toward you. These benefits apply only when you identify yourself as an exalted of Abadar.
- 3: Scales of Balance (Su)** Once per day as a full-round action, you can pool and redistribute your current hit points and those of all willing allies within 30 feet of you. Total your current hit points and those of your willing allies, and then decide how you wish to redistribute them among the same individuals. You cannot give an ally more hit points than her maximum, nor can you leave an ally with 0 hit points.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Lawful Bulwark (Sp)** *shield of faith* 3/day, *shield other* 2/day, or *archon's aura*^{UM} 1/day
- 2: Unflagging Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a zelekhut inevitable. You gain telepathic communication with the zelekhut to a range of 100 feet, and the zelekhut follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for each Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home. The zelekhut doesn't obey any command that would violate its lawful alignment—such commands are met with grim refusal, and could even prompt the zelekhut to attack you if the command is egregious enough.
- 3: Dictum Blow (Su)** Once per day, you can channel the effects of *dictum* through your weapon, though you don't need to cast (or even know) the spell. You must declare your use of this ability before rolling your attack. On a hit, the target is affected as if caught in the area of *dictum* as cast by a cleric of a level equal to your Hit Dice (maximum 20). If the target is lawful or its Hit Dice exceeds yours, it is unaffected. If your attack misses or the creature is unaffected, the *dictum* effect is wasted.

INNER SEA GODS



ABADAR

Abadar is a patient, calculating, and far-seeing deity who wishes to bring civilization to the frontiers, order to the wilds, and wealth to all who support the rule of law. His primary desire is to see the purifying spread of civilization, enlightening the dark corners of the world and revealing the clockwork perfection of the cosmos. His nature is not hasty, for the pace of society's reach is slow but relentless. He strikes a careful balance between good and evil, seeing benefits on both sides and refusing to endorse one or the other. His followers believe he is responsible for elevating the various humanoid races from simple tribes to beings capable of creating huge cities. He puts words of diplomacy in the mouths of leaders, guides the pens of those who write laws, and steers coins into the hands of those who practice fair commerce.

The god of cities is stern, but rewards those who work hard and whose actions benefit others as well as themselves, though he is morally ambiguous enough to recognize that not every person can benefit from every decision. He frowns on the misuse of slaves or

beasts of burden, considering it a waste of resources and detrimental to the profitability of civilization as a whole; he views using cheap laborers rather than slaves as a better option, as then the workers can use their funds to participate in commerce and rise above their low station through established economic channels. Abadar understands, however, that the world changes in small increments, and that the most advantageous option for society is not always the most workable in the present. He respects cautious thought and rejects impulsiveness, seeing it as a base and destructive whim. He teaches that discipline, keen judgment, and following the law eventually lead to wealth, comfort, and happiness. He does not believe in free handouts, and because of this his temples sell potions and healing spells or scrolls rather than giving them to those in need. Any who protest are directed to the temple of Sarenrae.

Abadar is the master and guardian of the First Vault, a magical trove in his realm where a perfect version of every type of creature and object exists—a perfect sword, a perfect deer, a perfect wheel, and even a perfect law.

PALADINS OF ABADAR

Of all the neutral gods, only Abadar supports and promotes a holy order of paladins. As the god of civilization and order, Abadar recognizes the value of holy warriors in advancing society's aims. His paladins follow the standard paladin code of protecting the innocent, acting with honor and honesty, and respecting lawful authority. In addition, an Abadaran paladin upholds the following creed.

- I am a protector of the roadways and keep travelers from harm. No matter their destinations or goals, if they are peaceable and legitimate travelers who harm no others on the road, I will ensure that they pass safely.
- Bandits are a plague. Under my will they come to justice. If they will not come willingly before the law, where they can protest for justice in the courts, they will come under the power of my sword.
- Corruption in the courts is the greatest corruption of civilization. Without confidence in justice, citizens cannot believe in their countries, and civilization begins to disappear. I will root out corruption wherever I find it, and if a system is fundamentally flawed, I will work to aid citizens by reforming or replacing it.
- I am an aid to the markets. I ensure equitable trade between merchants and citizens. Theft and deceit on either side are intolerable.
- I make opportunities, and teach others to recognize them. When I aid others, I open the way for them, but will not carry them—they must take responsibility.

His mortal artists and artisans attempt to emulate these perfect forms, inspired by Abadar's mentoring. Likewise, his arbiters and judges keep these idealized laws in mind when crafting new laws or ruling on existing ones. It is said that centuries ago Abadar allowed mortals to visit the First Vault in dreams, the better to inspire them. There has been no record of such coveted visions occurring in a long time, however, perhaps because he has not found someone worthy, because he fears his enemies might steal the perfect forms, or because he is carefully pacing the advance of current civilizations to prevent them from growing too quickly and dissolving before they reach their peak.

His primary worshipers are aristocrats, artisans, judges, lawyers, merchants, and politicians, all of whom benefit from established laws and commerce. Those who are poor or who have been wronged also worship him, praying he might help reverse their ill fortune, for most mortals seek wealth and the happiness it brings. He expects his followers to abide by local laws (though

not foolish, contradictory, toothless, or purposeless mandates) and to work to promote order and peace. He has no tolerance for gambling or excessive drinking or drug use, as despite the lucrative nature of these industries, such vices inevitably weaken society rather than strengthen it.

Worshipers who lose Abadar's favor might find themselves short on money at a crucial time, tongue-tied in the middle of an important deal, or stymied in their craft or art. When he is pleased, deals are more profitable than expected, projects are completed early, and journeys to or within a city take less time than normal. His intervention in the mortal world is subtle, for he expects worshipers to do their own work; it usually takes the form of hints or opportunities rather than direct gifts.

Abadar is depicted as a handsome man with black hair dressed in fine garments, often with a gold cloak over a golden breastplate and bearing many keys. Humans, dwarves, and gnomes show him with a beard, whereas elves show him beardless and with long braids tied with golden thread. His voice is pleasant and even, his words firm but not harsh.

Abadar's holy symbol is a golden key, often with a city image on the head. His clergy is made up almost entirely of clerics, with a small number of paladins. Because of the emphasis on cities and civilization, he almost never has adepts among his priesthood—even the most remote settlements paying homage to Abadar are watched over by at least a cleric or a paladin. He is called the Master of the First Vault, Judge of the Gods, and the Gold-Fisted.

THE CHURCH

The worship of Abadar is both functional and theological. It is an excellent everyday faith, for it deals with matters that directly affect daily life. The churches of Abadar in each city encourage friendly competition with other cities to promote trade. Church law forbids clergy from attacking each other, regardless of political, national, or financial motivations, as warfare creates instability and chips away at the foundations of civilization. Thus, in wartime, the churches of Abadar often become neutral territory, not participating in the struggle and acting as safe havens and mediators in the conflict.

Priests of Abadar within a given city or temple arrange themselves in a set hierarchy, as in a mercantile house. The head of a smaller temple is called a banker, while the leaders of larger temples or greater geographical areas are archbankers. The church defines itself by its wealth, counting coins as blessings from Abadar. Competition between priest-backed business ventures remains friendly, and making money is at once a holy duty, a serious pursuit, and a beloved pastime, with all the fun and excitement of an organized sport.

Abadar's faith can be found anywhere people strive to make civilization work. It is most common in large cities, and its greatest holy site in the Inner Sea region is the Bank of Absalom. At this center of trade, the blessing of commerce flows out into the world, and the archbankers can control the interest rates and help adjust the economies of the nations that deal with its great vaults to maximize trade's benefits. Of course, this wonder of commerce is still only a shadow of the great banking houses in Abadar's district of Aktun in the Eternal City of Axis.

Services to Abadar include songs with complex harmonies (generally accompanied by hammered instruments such as dulcimers and glockenspiels) and the counting or sorting of coins or keys (often in time with the singing or music). Services and ceremonies always take place indoors, representing the shelter of civilization. Worshipers unable to reach an actual building make do with at least a crude structure or a even a sloping wall or cave that provides protection from the elements. Services usually take place in the morning, and it is customary to thank Abadar after a profitable or advantageous transaction.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

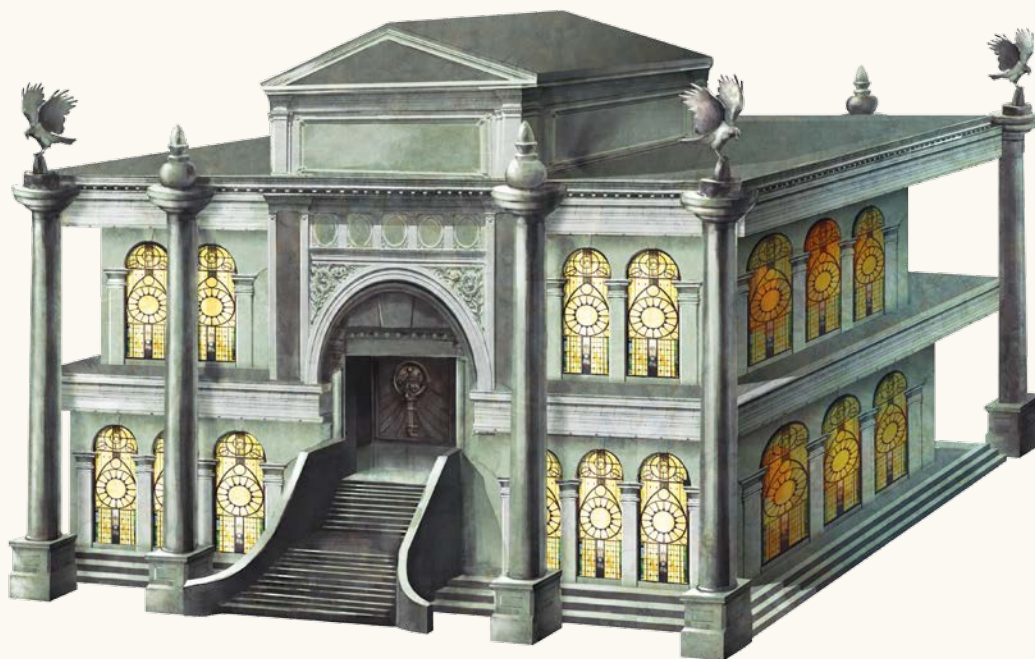
Abadar's temples are elaborate buildings with rich decorations and high, thick stained-glass windows. These windows have heavy frames (to guard against thieves) and usually feature vivid yellow glass that casts a golden hue on everything within the church. Most temples have a guarded vault for church treasures and wealth, and many also rent space in their vault to those who wish a safe place to keep their valuables. Any temple in a small town or larger settlement also serves as a

bank, currency exchange, and moneylender, which helps keep interest rates reasonable and consistent—while Abadar's clergy see making a profit off such exchanges as a holy duty, their loans and deals are rarely predatory or exploitative, as such practices weaken and destabilize the populace. The banker in charge of the temple watches the local economy and adjusts interest to stimulate growth, encourage investment, or help recover from a disaster. As priests often serve as lawyers and judges, the temples are usually built near courthouses.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Abadar's followers believe in advancing civilization, teaching the unenlightened about systems and trade, driving commerce in pursuit of comfort and happiness, and the idea that fairness lies in both the letter and the spirit of the law. They promote cooperation and believe the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, but also feel that self-interest is the best motivating factor for individuals within a society. While they have an acquisitive bent, they are thrifty rather than miserly, and know that helping their neighbors attain prosperity improves the lot of everyone, themselves included. They turn trails into roads and towns into cities, eliminate monsters and troublemakers in urban and rural areas, adjudicate disputes, make legal rulings, and reassure law-abiding people that the forces of order are watching over them.

Many urban clerics work with the local legal system as judges, lawyers, and clerks (often donating their services, much as a healing-oriented church might run a hospice or give food to the needy), although they are not usually politicians or part of the city's government. In wilder



areas, clerics act as judge and jury, seeking out threats to civilization and eliminating them. Younger priests who are physically fit often do tours through smaller towns and frontier areas to carry news, act as wandering magistrates, and make sure order leaves its footprint. As an arbiter of justice, each priest traditionally carries a single golden-headed crossbow bolt for when a criminal must be executed. This bolt goes to the dead criminal's family as compensation for the loss and as an initial stake to begin making an honest living.

Although Abadar's temples are mercenary when it comes to providing healing, they are generous when protecting public health, seeing it as an important component of their role as guardians of civilization. Likewise, when traveling with others (such as an adventuring party), clerics of Abadar do not charge their companions for healing, seeing it as an equivalent service to a fighter's sword swing or a ranger's scouting. Like a business, questing and traveling requires teamwork, and it is part of the cleric's responsibility to provide healing and magical support—for an equal share of the eventual profits.

A typical day for a priest involves waking, breakfast, prayer and the preparation of spells, reading or listening to the local news for anything worth investigating, and a period of work. At night, there is a brief prayer before the evening meal, and the evening is reserved for hobbies, time with family, or other non-work interests.

Most clerics of Abadar have at least 1 rank in Knowledge (local) in order to be familiar with the laws of their home cities. Most also dabble in Knowledge (local) and (nobility), or practice some sort of craft or profession—always something useful to a developing or established settlement. Clerics are not permitted to give money to those in need, only to lend it at a fair rate and record the transaction for the church's record. They are required to tithe, and most clerics have small investments in local businesses that generate enough income to cover the tithe.



Those whose talents for dealing with people exceed their business acumen often work as teachers, educating children and adults so they can advance themselves and better serve the community. Every cleric belongs to a particular temple, even those touring remote areas. If circumstances warrant distant travel or a long period near another city, the home temple files paperwork transferring the cleric's affiliation to a closer temple.

Inquisitors of Abadar, known as "taxmasters," confront the perpetrators of fraudulent payments and tax dodging, track down stolen goods, and battle thieves' guilds. Local officials usually grant them the legal right to threaten, punish, or even injure those who withhold the revenue that allows civilization to persist and grow, although the inquisitors are just as likely to turn around and rebuke nobles and other leaders who set taxes excessively high for mere personal gain. Hated and feared by most people, the taxmasters usually wear golden masks or mustard-yellow veils to protect their identities while performing these duties. Like clerics, inquisitors who serve

Abadar usually belong to specific temples and have established territories in which they perform their legal functions. Old, infirm, or recuperating taxmasters do most of the research that finds evidence of financial cheating. A typical inquisitor has ranks in Intimidate, in Knowledge (local), in Knowledge (nobility), and in Sense Motive. The more politic ones have ranks in Diplomacy as well, not only for gathering information but also to assure citizens that innocent mistakes that result in failure to pay taxes will be corrected but not punished.

Paladins of Abadar are not common, as their virtuous zeal doesn't mesh easily with the more balanced approach to ethics that the Master of the

First Vault practices, but the god understands that an active force for good is sometimes best for dealing with threats to civilization. Their specialized interests and abilities sometimes lead them to work behind

the scenes in lawful-evil nations where the leaders are exploiting the economy at the expense of their subjects. Paladins tend to be more fiscally aggressive than clerics, using their wealth to inspire others to join the cause, and willing to invest in promising enterprises, take a loss on a deal in order to motivate trade, and take greater risks with their money.

ADVENTURERS

The bulk of Abadar's worshipers work as judges, lawyers, merchants, and all the other roles necessary for keeping society running smoothly; relatively few are adventurers. The pursuit of adventuring as a way to make a living is an indication that local society has failed or broken down—most of Abadar's worshipers who become adventurers believe they have a holy calling to extend the reach of their god to places where civilization has been forgotten. For the most part, if you call Abadar your master, you believe strongly in eliminating agents of chaos, destroying monsters that threaten rural and urban society, teaching the unenlightened about systems and trade, and displaying the truth that law brings. You often mediate between opponents, and believe that fairness lies in both the letter and the spirit of the law.

Adventurers and explorers who worship Abadar rarely embark on solo expeditions, for they see adventuring parties as microcosms of society and believe strongly in the power of cooperation and the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. While priests of Abadar usually charge random petitioners for healing, the merchant god's followers are thrifty rather than miserly, and know that helping their adventuring companions and sharing resources with them will likely increase everyone's wealth down the road.

CLOTHING

Ritual garb for religious ceremonies includes white silk cloth trimmed with gold thread, a belt or necklace of gold links bearing a golden key, and a half-cloak of deep yellow or gold. Ceremonial items are always crafted out of precious metals if available and often decorated with gems or inlays, though not to the extent that the item becomes fragile or unusable. In casual situations, the faithful try to maintain an air of prosperity, or at least a tidy appearance, as a shabby, dirty person is a poor representative of wealth and civilization.

HOLY TEXTS

The average cleric of Abadar is rarely without numerous documents related to the internal processes of the church, but their holiest texts have a more educational focus.

The Order of Numbers: The faith's core text reads more like a city charter or legal treatise than a religious

text, and priests commission elaborately decorated copies to generate business in the community. More than two dozen carefully indexed chapters detail the beliefs and taboos of the church, and each copy has space for notes on local laws, all the ways such laws interact with church doctrine, names of key figures in the city, and so on. The inside cover bears the name of the book's owner, and possessing a copy that once belonging to a prestigious family or was passed down from a respected church official is a great honor.

The Manual of City-Building: Bound in heavy leather with bronze clasps and corners to protect it from being damaged by the heavy use it sees, this manual contains comprehensive advice on founding a town and building it into a city, including planning for roads, trade, defenses, utilities, expansion, and so on. The church updates the text every few years, and most older copies have a substantial appendix of revisions and footnotes. The oldest church in a city usually keeps its copy of this book on a special consecrated table, especially if the church was responsible for the city's founding.

HOLIDAYS

All of the Church of Abadar's observed holidays have to do with trade or civilization.

Market's Door: This holiday marks the first day the markets receive goods from the fall harvest. The actual date varies from year to year, but using historical trends and divination, the church determines the exact date and announces it a month in advance. Before the market opens, a priest blesses the market area and leads a group prayer for all present, thanking Abadar and asking him to look favorably upon the season's business. In cities where vendors must pay a fee in order to use the market, the church usually subsidizes a portion of the fee on this day.

Taxfest: The church views the annual collecting of taxes as a cause for celebration, seeing fair taxation as a necessary part of the building and maintenance of civilization. Whenever possible, the church sends a priest with each tax collector to ensure that the process is respectful and to make sure the taxpayer knows the collection is being monitored. Once all monies have been collected, the church opens up its doors and invites the townsfolk to participate in an enormous feast with their civic leaders, both to help the experience remain positive and to give the commoners a chance to express their opinions on how the newly collected funds ought to be spent.

APHORISMS

Abadar is the god of cities, and the sayings of his followers are commonplace in urban areas.

So It Is Judged: Abadar's approval of any legal verdict is invoked with this phrase. It also traditionally follows

Abadaran prayers or blessings, weddings (a legal and religious matter), and funerals. Superstitious folk whisper it whenever an act in the natural world supports their idea of law and justice, and many gamblers say it when chance goes in their favor (a mildly sacrilegious jest).

This Can Help Us All: Abadar's church doesn't believe in giving handouts, so most adherents choose to celebrate holidays by giving practical gifts such as tools, musical instruments, or even simple services like chopping a cord of wood or watching children. These gifts strengthen community bonds and demonstrate the advantages of civilization, and this phrase expresses thanks on behalf of both the individual and the community as a whole.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Abadar understands that an advanced civilization has spiritual needs met by many different gods, and thus maintains an approachable coolness where other deities are concerned. Only those who directly oppose his beliefs and purpose—notably Rovagug, and to a lesser extent Lamashtu—are his declared enemies, and even then he might be open to negotiation, though these opponents rarely are. He despises Norgorber for sanctioning theft and corrupting potential Abadaran worshipers like honest politicians and alchemists with the promise of illegitimate power.

He is friendly with Erastil (god of farming, necessary for transitioning people from a nomadic lifestyle), though the two often end up at loggerheads over Erastil's desire to keep communities small and pastoral as opposed to Abadar's sprawling urban utopia. Other deities frequently in his good graces include Iomedae (goddess of justice and rulership, necessary to preserve peace in a society), Irori (god of history and knowledge, critical for maintaining a stable civilization), Shelyn (goddess of art and music, excellent for bolstering civic spirit), and even Asmodeus (although only for the archdevil's belief in upholding laws and contracts). Abadar knows that his pursuits frequently anger Gozreh (god of nature), who would like to

see the natural parts of the world remain unspoiled, but he believes the two of them can eventually reach a compromise. Few deities call the even-handed god a friend, but many—especially Iomedae, who likes his attention to detail and planning, and Torag, who appreciates his devotion to law and commerce—consider him a valuable and pragmatic ally. He is on good terms with most empyreal lords as well, especially Arqueros (patron of bodyguards) and Eldas (patron of architecture and planning).

Like Abadar himself, his followers try to maintain positive but reserved relations with followers of other gods. They understand that it takes many different cultures to keep society advancing, and so are extraordinarily tolerant of other viewpoints—or at least, they strive to be so. Still, their dealings with the followers

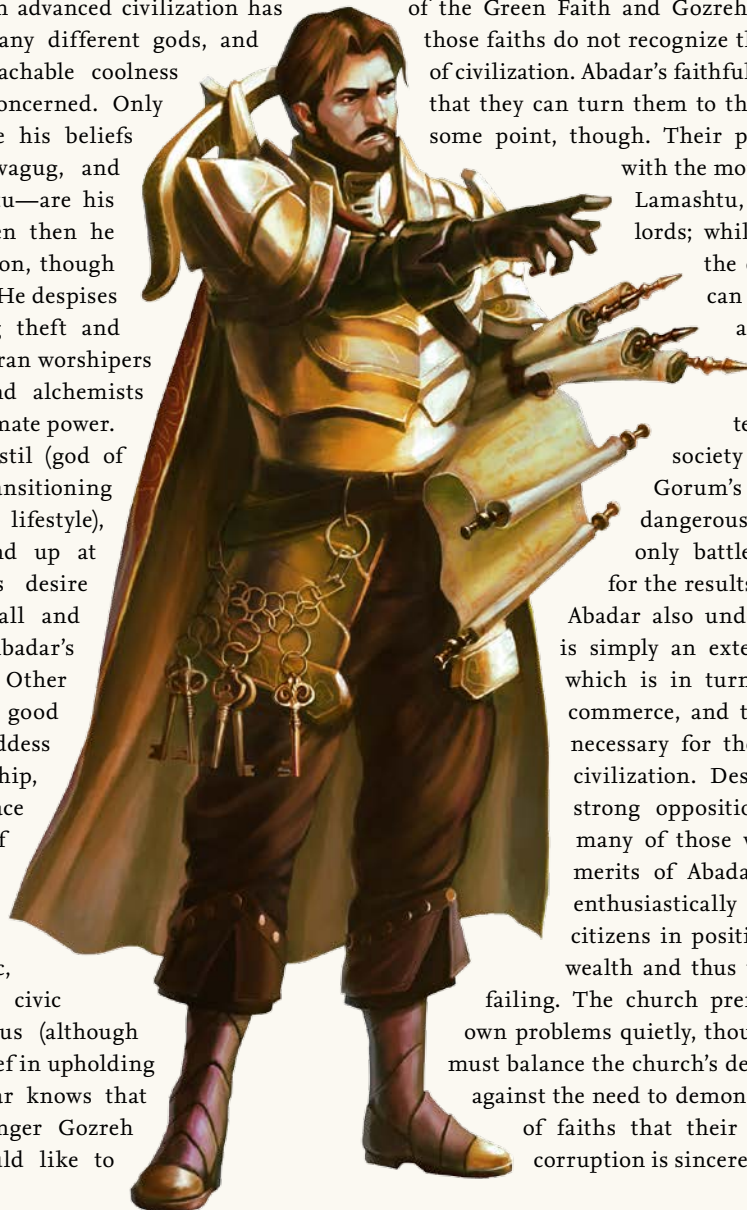
of the Green Faith and Gozreh are difficult, for those faiths do not recognize the obvious virtues of civilization. Abadar's faithful remain confident that they can turn them to the church's view at some point, though. Their primary enmity is

with the monsters of Rovagug, Lamashtu, and the demon lords; while the children of the chaotic good gods can be obnoxious and immoderate, at least they mean well, and tend not to damage society as grievously.

Gorum's followers can be dangerous, for they worship only battle and rarely care for the results of their wars, yet

Abadar also understands that war is simply an extension of politics, which is in turn an extension of commerce, and thus is sometimes necessary for the advancement of civilization. Despite the church's strong opposition to corruption, many of those who proclaim the merits of Abadar's worship most enthusiastically are prominent citizens in positions of power and wealth and thus vulnerable to this

failing. The church prefers to handle its own problems quietly, though the leadership must balance the church's desire for discretion against the need to demonstrate to members of faiths that their condemnation of corruption is sincere.



REALM

The god of civilization resides in the Eternal City of Axis, presiding over a district called Aktun that centers on the First Vault. Abadar's deific domain is distinguished by its own unique architecture, which blends together the styles of each mortal race that holds the god of civilization in high regard, as well as indicating an obvious boundary.

While Abadar's domain does not possess any grand walls or barriers separating it from the rest of Axis—the god's contractual agreements with the plane's natives make it unnecessary—entry can be attained only through four points. Each such gateway is defined by a great freestanding archway of solid gold, marked with Abadar's holy symbol of a golden key and watched over by his herald, Lawgiver. The titan's presence graces each of the four gateways simultaneously, either by divine replication or by somehow existing in four places at once via arrangement with the axiomite Godmind. (It's likely that it exists in even more places simultaneously, since the gates are never unguarded but Lawgiver is widely known to serve its patron on quests across other planes.)

PLANAR ALLIES

While most creatures and planar powers are at least neutral toward even-tempered Abadar, a few individuals have particularly distinguished themselves as friends of Abadar's faith. In addition to his servitor race, the horse-like orshevals (see page 277), the following are some of his best-known servants.

Cobblehoof (unique celestial hippogriff): This celestial hippogriff is tawny with a white head, and normally appears wearing a set of mithral breastplate barding (which is light enough that he can fly when wearing it). He is battle-trained and accepts a rider without question. "Old Cob" rarely speaks, but understands Common, Celestial, and several other languages. He loves eating deer and cattle, and presenting him with such a gift is a sure way to get on his good side. He has grown feisty in his old age and doesn't appreciate "youngsters" talking down to him or treating him like a mere beast.

The Ghost of Merema (unique spectre): In life, Merema was a wealthy priest of Abadar who warned against overcrowding in cities and encouraged the faithful to found new settlements rather than cramming together like rats. She now serves her god in death, sometimes appearing in the mortal world as a harbinger of coming plagues and warning residents to improve living conditions or move away. She has all the abilities of a spectre except that she cannot create spawn; destroying her (even with channeled positive energy) merely sends her back to Abadar's realm.

Lawgiver: This massive golden golemlike creature serves as Abadar's herald (see page 276 for more information on Lawgiver's role and abilities).

FOR ABADARAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Abadar may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Crossbowman (fighter)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 104
Urban druid (druid)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 101
Urban ranger (ranger)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 129

Feats

Crossbow Mastery	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 157
Divine Dignity	See page 210
Measured Response	See page 213
Perfect Casting	See page 215

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Abadar</i>	See page 246
<i>Elixir of truth</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 512
<i>Fugitive finder</i>	See page 255
<i>Golden judge's breastplate</i>	See page 251
<i>Key of the second vault</i>	See page 266
<i>Lyre of building</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 522
<i>Rod of metal and mineral detection</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 487
<i>Rod of rulership</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 488
<i>Safecamp wagon</i>	See page 268

Spells

<i>Abadar's truthtelling</i>	See page 228
<i>Blessing of the watch</i>	See page 230
<i>Dictum</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 269
<i>Fairness</i>	See page 233
<i>Order's wrath</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 317

Traits

Eye for Quality	See page 220
Eyes and Ears of the City	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333
Honey-Tongued	See page 220
Lover of the Law	See page 221

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Abadar may prepare *word of recall* as a 5th-level spell if their designated sanctuaries are the temples of their home cities; paladins may do so as a 4th-level spell under the same circumstances.



ABADAR

ASMODEUS

HAIL, ASMODEUS! DELIVER US FROM CHAOS THAT WE MAY SERVE YOU IN ETERNITY. UNMAKE THE LIES OF OUR BODIES AND RESHAPE OUR SOULS IN YOUR DESIGN.

—ASMODEAN MONOGRAPH

PRINCE OF DARKNESS

God of contracts, pride, slavery, and tyranny

Alignment LE

Domains Evil, Fire, Law, Magic, Trickery

Favored Weapon mace

Centers of Worship Cheliax, Isger, Nidal

Nationality devil

Obedience Using a ruby-bladed knife, inscribe symmetrical cuts into the flesh of another creature—preferably an unwilling sentient being you own or hold dominion over. The blade may be solid ruby or forged of metal and edged with serrated ruby fragments. Devout priests of Asmodeus take pride in crafting elaborate daggers made entirely of ruby. Drain the victim's blood into a bowl of bone made from the skull of a sentient humanoid. The amount of blood drained is up to you; you don't have to drain so much that you make the creature weak or too useless to serve you. Use the bowl of blood to draw a large pentagram on the ground. Kneel within the pentagram and concentrate on the glory you will bring to the Prince of Darkness's name. Gain a +4 profane bonus on saving throws against fire effects.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Pitiless Judgment (Sp)** *wrath*^{APG} 3/day, *flames of the faithful*^{APG} 2/day, or *bestow curse* 1/day
- 2: Tireless Judgment (Ex)** You gain Favored Judgment^{UM} as a bonus feat, choosing chaotic outsider, good outsider, or a subtype of humanoid. If you don't have the judgment class feature, you instead gain a +4 profane bonus on Survival checks made to track a creature or individual. This boon doesn't grant you any ranks in the Survival skill; therefore, if you have no ranks, you still can follow tracks only if the DC of the task is 10 or lower.
- 3: Resounding Judgment (Sp)** Once per day, you can channel the effects of *resounding blow*^{APG} through your weapon, though you don't need to cast (or even know) the spell. You must declare your use of this ability before you make the attack roll. On a hit, the target is affected as if you had cast *resounding blow* before your attack, and the surrounding area rings with the sound of vicious, booming laughter. You don't gain the stunning effect of the spell unless you have access to the judgment or smite ability. If your attack misses, the *resounding blow* effect is wasted.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Darkfire (Sp)** *burning hands* 3/day, *darkness* 2/day, or *deeper darkness* 1/day
- 2: Embersight (Su)** Your eyes take on the appearance of red-hot, glowing embers, granting you the ability to see in darkness much like devils. You gain darkvision to a range of 60 feet. If you chose either *darkness* or *deeper darkness* as the spell-like ability granted by your first boon, you can also see perfectly through both *darkness* and *deeper darkness*. If you already have darkvision to a range of 60 feet or more, instead increase the range of your darkvision by 10 feet. Your eyes make you extremely distinctive, causing you to take a –4 penalty on Disguise checks.
- 3: Hellfire Blast (Sp)** You can use *delayed blast fireball* once per day as a spell-like ability to throw a sphere of soul-scouring hellfire. The hellfire is a distinctive mixture of black and crimson flames in which screaming devilish faces can be seen twisting and writhing. Half the damage from this spell is fire, while the other half is unholy. This damage modification applies only to the *delayed blast fireball* you create through this boon, not to any other spells, effects, or attacks.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Unholy Warrior (Sp)** *protection from good* 3/day, *death knell* 2/day, or *defile armor*^{APG} 1/day
- 2: Deceitful Duelist (Ex)** Your devotion to the Prince of Darkness has imbued you with some of his trickery. Three times per day, you can attempt a feint as a swift action. You gain a +4 profane bonus on your Bluff check when attempting to feint using this ability. If you successfully attack a creature that has lost its Dexterity bonus to AC as a result of your feint, you deal an additional 1d6 points of damage. This is in addition to any other precision-based damage you deal—such as from a sneak attack—and isn't multiplied on a critical hit.
- 3: Diabolical Resistances (Su)** Your dark patron rewards your faith with a few drops of devilish blood in your veins, granting you a measure of the resilience enjoyed by devilkind. Your skin takes on a ruddy cast, and your teeth grow slightly sharper. To a casual observer you may look no different, but anyone who studies you closely notices these traits. You gain fire resistance 10 and a +4 profane bonus on saving throws against poison.

INNER SEA GODS



ASMODEUS

Asmodeus stands among the oldest beings of the multiverse. Fragments of heretical tomes like the *Asmodean Monograph*, the *Book of the Damned*, and the *Script of Flies* claim he was among those responsible for the creation of the stars, the planets, and the first mortal things, but that his pride led to a conflict over the free will of lesser creatures, sparking a war between order and chaos. The bravery of the goddess Sarenrae forced him to acknowledge his murderous role in the war, and he abandoned the battlefield, swearing that one day his opponents would understand the true depth of the conflict—a time when he would return and his inferiors would beg for the order he embodies. While many theologians and immortal agents of the gods deny the legitimacy of this Asmodean account of the multiverse’s prehistory, the supreme age of the topic and blurring between truth and lies make these records difficult to outright dismiss.

Asmodeus is a god of rigid hierarchies, imposing systems where every creature knows its place, the strong rule over lesser beings, and the weak are properly

subservient to their superiors. He is an omnipotent tyrant who creates and destroys as he sees fit. What mortals call “evil” is the natural order of the multiverse to his vast and ancient understanding—water flows downhill, fire burns, and the strong dominate the weak.

The Prince of Darkness is worshiped by creatures all across Golarion, though in most parts of the world this is limited to power-hungry diabolists, small cults, and harsh militaristic orders. In Cheliax—and by extension, Isger and Nidal—his worship is open and public, and to many those places are synonymous with devil-worship. However, Asmodeus does not seek worship; he merely wants obedience and acknowledgment that his will is both truth and law. He grants his worshipers magic not as a reward for their prayers, but to help bring the rest of the universe into his service. He revels in the art of negotiation and delights in deals that appear fair but that actually give one party a disparate advantage—those of superior intellect should recognize when such methods are used against them, and those who don’t see these traps deserve to have their dullness exploited.

Asmodeus himself is handsome, eloquent, tactful, patient, and incredibly brilliant. When crossed he is wrathful, terrifying, and destructive, though these periods are always brief, and he quickly regains his composure. He believes one's word is a binding contract, with consequences should it be broken. As such, he is always careful with what he says or agrees to. He opposes freedoms if they interfere with the process of governance, and thinks humility is a burden only the weak must bear. He is a domineering and manipulative deity, hell-bent on discovery and conquest. He has little use for qualities such as gentleness, compassion, or nurturing. He considers those who indulge in such as weak, unworthy, cowardly beings. Following his example, his servants espouse selfish, emotionless, and merciless behaviors, viewing romance, tenderness, and sincerity only suitable for their uses in manipulation.

In art Asmodeus is frequently shown as a red-skinned human with black horns, hooves, and a pale aura of flames. As an ancient being, countless interpretations of his appearance have fallen into and out of fashion among his mortal followers, yet always the features of a fearful immortal tyrant prevail. Most believe his devilish form is his true one, though persistent lore speaks of a more fiendish shape with constantly bleeding wounds. Asmodeus can take the form of any creature and uses this ability to intimidate, manipulate, or intrigue those he speaks with. He favors red gemstones and usually appears with a large ruby pendant, mace, or even a breastplate made entirely of a single dazzling gem.

Asmodeus has little interest in direct interaction with mortals, including members of his faith. He assumes mortals are weak but useful dupes and won't go out of his way to aid most. Occasionally, however, mortals of particular power, mercilessness, and finesse attract his attention. If the desire strikes him, he might manipulate fate to aid such tyrants, so long as doing so ultimately furthers his own ends. He does not hesitate to punish failure or even lethally assure that incompetence is not repeated. For casual infractions, he might taunt a mortal with a brief sensation of burning agony or cause writing to appear to burst into flame or weep blood. He has been known to assign lesser devils to guide potent but troublesome worshipers, letting his infernal servants prod them in useful directions as necessary.

Asmodeus's symbol is an inverted pentagram, though some cults use a pentacle instead. Asmodeus's extremely hierarchical priesthood includes clerics, inquisitors, sorcerers (especially those with the infernal bloodline), conjurers, diabolists (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Princes of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 1*), fallen paladins, and cruel soldiers. Many scheming bards and vicious monks are also affiliated with his church.

THE CHURCH

Most followers of Asmodeus are power-hungry priests, diabolists, greedy slavers, ruthless lawyers, wicked enchanters, or decadent nobles in search of secret pleasures. In lands such as Chelixa where his worship is open, Asmodeus's followers are much like people in other lands, except they believe in harsh punishments for lawbreakers, are accustomed to the appearance of imps in the company of spellcasters, and are openly tolerant of slavery, considering these things a mild price for keeping order. Many common people active in the church remember the chaos and suffering of civil war, or fear the violence and barbarism in places like Galt, and gratefully support the secure—if tyrannical—stability of Asmodeus's faith. In these lands, city guards, government officials, artisans, and even farmers and laborers willingly pay lip service to Hell if the alternative is being robbed by bandits or strung up by an angry mob. Most still pray to other gods for health and prosperity, which Asmodeus and the church allow as long as the Prince is acknowledged as superior and these other faiths do not challenge his position.

True followers of Asmodeus believe in law, order, and knowing their place in the grand scheme; in many cases, they aspire to a higher position and work to prove they are worthy of it. They study their betters to learn necessary skills, watch their equals and jockey for position, and keep an eye on their inferiors for signs of exploitable talent or dangerous ambition. They keep their friends close and enemies crushingly closer, usually acting through the proper channels rather than resorting to base tactics like assassination. Most Asmodeans find it far more effective to eliminate a rival by unearthing evidence (showing your skill in the process) than by a wasteful murder.

Services to Asmodeus require chanting long phrases without error, tolling bells, participating in or receiving public punishments, and other acts of domination or submission reinforcing one's position within the church. Blood sacrifice is also not unknown at Asmodean gatherings, typically the killing of a bull, goat, rooster, or another animal held as being particularly regal, virile, or benevolent. Humanoid sacrifices are not unheard of, but such are typically only required of groups that have fallen out of favor with the Prince of Darkness, are performing a magical rite, or have a member attempting to leave their fold. Minor devils, usually imps or bearded devils, are occasionally conjured to participate in the events, but sometimes more powerful entities might appear to show the Prince of Darkness's favor (or that of one of his more powerful minions). Services in temples converted from another faith often have rituals designed to blaspheme the deity once honored there, particularly on holidays celebrated by the previous tenants.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Public temples dedicated to Asmodeus thrive in Cheliah, where they often share space with the nation's bureaucracy, although secret shrines are scattered across Golarion. Public temples built specifically for Asmodeus have a distinctly gothic, diabolical aesthetic. Secret temples dedicated to Asmodeus are usually single, hidden rooms or basements, away from the public eye and secured against accidental discovery. Temples range from grand, opulent affairs with silk curtains and gold fixtures to altars of blackened metal in dark places. The Prince of Darkness appreciates the trappings of wealth but is more interested in sincere devotion to his cause than incidental displays. However, he realizes that greedy mortals enjoy these displays as evidence of their own power and success, allowing such ostentation to fuel their greed for more and their need for him.

Shrines to Asmodeus are usually simple things like standing stones, symmetrical rocks or trees with odd marks, or even statues of prominent but reviled rulers. The faithful have a feel for these places, whether or not they are clearly marked, and some are truly ancient, dating to an age when early humans were still trying to understand the patterns in the night sky and the darkness in their own hearts.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Priests of Asmodeus are careful in their exercise and pursuit of power, understanding that a foolish overextension might leave them vulnerable to those watching for any weakness. Within Cheliah, Asmodeus's priests are a force of order, keeping mortals and weak-minded devils in line or torturing prisoners to extract information. Outside Cheliah, priests work with slavers, bureaucratic governments, despots, and nobles in positions of power (or those hoping to be in power). They whisper dark promises in the ears of the desperate, arrange meetings between people of influence, and act as judges in lawless lands. Many travel to bind or destroy rogue fiends (especially demons), seeking to convince folk that their faith supports order and opposes wanton destruction.

Priests honor devils as envoys of their lord, greater or lesser players in the immense infernal bureaucracy that all right-minded individuals should join. Of course, they see lemures and other minor devils as expendable, and non-lawful fiends as even more so. Unlike typical conjurers who control devils with magical force, many Asmodean magic-users parley carefully with devils, rewarding those in the Prince's favor and abusing those out of it. An Asmodean conjurer

would no more send a called osyluth on a suicide mission than a priestess of Shelyn would send a called hound archon to a similar fate. All priests have at least a passing knowledge of Hell's organization and workings, and as such they take at least one rank in Knowledge (planes). Most keep their skills in negotiation sharp by taking ranks in Diplomacy. Some sell their services to broker mercantile transactions, treaties, bargains between devils and mortals, and so on.

A typical day for a priest begins with a prostrate prayer, a meal, and then either reporting to a superior for orders or following extant orders if no superior is present. Those with underlings issue orders after receiving their own. Evening prayers usually include a blood sacrifice, typically an animal or slave's blood. Significant prayer rituals often require greater sacrifice, possibly including a human or other intelligent creature—most temples use slaves, captured enemies, or traitors for this purpose. Divine spellcasters usually prepare their spells after evening prayer, typically during the deepest hours of night.



Like Hell itself, Asmodeus's church is carefully ordered, with a precise hierarchy of reports and detailed means of determining who is superior or inferior within the church—two priests of distant temples can easily establish their relative ranks with only a few sentences. Of course, some priests are effectively independent, especially in lands where their religion is forbidden, and use their magic to pursue their own agendas and interpretation of Asmodeus's will. Members of the organized church tend to look down upon such unaffiliated priests (much as academy-trained mages look down upon hedge wizards) and strongly encourage them to join a known temple.

Asmodean inquisitors command intense respect and fear. These priests seek out disease and corruption in the tree of the unholy in order to maintain orthodox beliefs. In lands where Asmodeus worship is public, the inquisitors are easy to spot in their iron masks and black robes, and are always alert to news of heresy or blatant violation of church doctrine. They maintain a network of contacts and informants, rewarding news with coin, prestige, and the authority to arrest and interrogate in addition to their duties within the church hierarchy.

ADVENTURERS

Beyond Asmodeus's clergy, many strict, conniving, and entitled individuals serve the Prince of Darkness. Worshipers are drawn to Asmodeus through any number of temptations, but in the end most trade service for the promise of wealth and power. Though Asmodeus is unquestionably evil, his lawful nature draws many law-abiding individuals to his faith, and his status as the recognized patron deity of Cheliox means that even a few good-natured souls exist uncomfortably within his church (though never as divine spellcasters, and rarely in positions of any real power).

Many soldiers and martially minded types welcome Asmodeus's dogma of force and dominance. While his church has few organized groups of soldiers, monastic orders or mercenary companies aligned with Hell are not that unusual. Among such militaristic servants of Asmodeus are those who extol him as a paragon of law and enforcer of order.

With the encouragement of the church, many go so far as to call themselves "paladins," relying on the reputations of virtuous crusaders to gain acceptance among commoners and those of modest faith. Although such armed propagandists lack the holy powers of true paladins, many supplement their strength of arms with magic items that allow them to perform miraculous feats. Most go out of their way to perform heroic deeds for communities in need—or to manufacture then thwart tribulations for those not in imminent need. Thus Asmodeus's servants hope to undermine the common knowledge of their god's evil, opening the minds and hearts of everyday people to the belief that Asmodeus has been judged too harshly, and that perhaps peace is worth harsh laws and rigid order. Once even a few entertain the previously unthinkable possibility of living alongside worshipers of the Prince of Darkness, the insidious seed of Asmodeus's faith has taken root.

CLOTHING

Asmodeus's impeccably clean and orderly priests dress mostly in dark tones, usually black with red accents. The exact type of clothing worn varies according to the local fashion and climate. Chelish garb has multiple layers, while in chilly Nidal clerics favor dark red robes trimmed with black fur over wool clothing, and in humid Isger priests wear black shirts and pants with red vests and short cloaks. Many ceremonies use horned masks or helmets, often resembling devils, goats, or rams. Like the Dark Prince, they favor rubies, and other red gemstones (such as carnelian, red beryl, red garnet, and sard) are popular for those who cannot afford true rubies. Among wealthier or ostentatious priests, red-hued *ioun stones* are very popular. *Maces of terror* and magic rods (particularly *rods of lordly might* and *rods of rulership*) are sought after by priests as status symbols.

HOLY TEXT

The Archfiend's doctrine is recorded in the *Asmodean Monograph*, though that work is greatly simplified and relies on numerous appendices and supplementary volumes. The common version of the text is a mere 1,000



pages, and covers history, the writing and exploitation of contracts, the nature of power, the purpose of law, the fallacy of evil, propaganda, diplomacy, subtleties of speech, the hierarchy of Hell, and dozens of other topics related to rulership, all within the context of the faith. Its supplemental texts number in the hundreds, each focusing on, interpreting, and expounding on particular topics. To those unfamiliar with the complete library associated with the *Asmodean Monograph*, a religious discussion between two zealots might appear to be a battle over who can produce the most obscure reference. Because the church idealizes laws and rules, knowing which ones trump others and which ones need to be bent or broken to advance a greater cause is crucial. A worshiper could commit an egregious crime against the church but still be forgiven or even rewarded if he found a way to justify it by brilliantly citing some forgotten bit of scripture and proving the act was beneficial to Asmodeus.

HOLIDAYS

A truly ancient being, old even among the gods, Asmodeus's concept of time is boggling to mortals, and he couldn't care less about marking a specific day of the week, month, or year as more important than any other—they all belong to him, and mortals should bow to him every day. However, the church does recognize a few holidays based on mortal traditions, often set in counterpart to the holy days of opposing good faiths. Thus, 10 Sarenith (countering Sarenrae's Burning Blades) and 16 Arodus (countering Iomedae's Armasse) are particularly popular. Most temples also celebrate Leap Day (31 Arodus), seeing it as an extra day to serve their god, giving him additional prayers.

Cheliax has its own set of national holidays somewhat associated with the faith. They celebrate the solstices and equinoxes as the Days of Wrath, holding bloodsport tournaments. 19 Calistril is Loyalty Day, marking the date when House Thrune cemented its hold over Cheliax. 14 Neth is Even-Tongued Day, a remembrance of bringing Andoran, Galt, and Isgar under Chelish control (now more a day of mourning for these lost territories). It is likely that if Cheliax grows, these quasi-Asmodean holidays will grow with it.

APHORISMS

There are countless blessings and exclamations in use by Asmodeus-worshippers, born of superstitions, ancient books of forbidden magic, and references in the *Asmodean Monograph*. Yet most are merely variants of three themes.

Great Is Asmodeus: A simple yet widely used exultation declaring that Asmodeus is the supreme deity and no other is worthy of veneration. "Hail, Asmodeus!" and "Power and glory to Asmodeus!" are also common.

Lend Me Your Might: Asmodeus's power is great, but it is not freely given—there is always a price. Such an

appellation is never spoken by a worshiper of Asmodeus without the willingness and readiness to offer something of great personal value in return, lest their cry indeed causes a devil to appear in a blast of smoke and brimstone.

The Kingdom Shall Be His: As Asmodeus claims to have once held power over all of creation, his faith envisions an hour when all the multiverse will come under his dominion once again. This exclamation serves as a validation among the faithful, a call to arms for infernal warriors, and a threat to all who would oppose his zealots.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Asmodeus is willing to deal with any god or entity as long as he believes that being will uphold its end of the bargain, which means he is open to all but Lamashtu and Rovagug. Even wily Calistria has worked with him in the past, though he typically considers the fickle goddess beneath his notice. Despite ethical differences, he has been a patron of Shelyn, an aide to Nethys, a supplier to Gorum, and an advisor to Iomedae, though it is not something his sometime partners care to admit. Though he is evil, he is quite charming and can often persuade reluctant deities to temporarily set aside their differences with him for the purpose of mutually beneficial arrangements. When dealing with potential enemies, he is careful to keep the terms of any agreement clear and obvious lest these parties become too suspicious of treachery, which would damage his perfect bargaining reputation.

Multiple cadres of lesser deities serve Asmodeus. The least of these are the infernal dukes, countless tyrants who rule fiefdoms throughout Hell, and the malebranche, burgeoning infernal dukes who seek dominion and power through the conquest of mortal worlds. These deities hold very specific areas of concern and might be worshiped by mortal cults or honored as saintlike patron beings among Asmodeus's faithful.

Of corresponding rank to infernal dukes but enjoying far greater infamy are the Whore Queens: Doloras, Eiseth, Mahathallah, and Ardad Lili. These four female infernal dukes number among the oldest beings in Hell, with Ardad Lili having supported Asmodeus since his original rebellion against Heaven. Although they hold Asmodeus as their liege, they have a close alliance and often skirt the laws and will of the Prince of Darkness to further their own often unified goals. As such, they often attract Asmodeus's suspicion and ire, though for mysterious reasons they rarely provoke his direct wrath. Those who serve the Whore Queens typically refer to them as the Queens of Light or Angels of Vengeance and are less likely to form strict hierarchies than most other servants of Hell.

Greatest among Asmodeus's followers are the Archdevils: Baalzebul, Barbatos, Belial, Dispaten, Geryon,

Mammon, Mephistopheles, and Moloch. Each holds absolute rule over one of the nine layers of Hell, with Asmodeus himself dominating Nessus, the deepest layer. Several have served Asmodeus since the earliest days of the multiverse and number among his most fanatical servitors and devoted allies. The archdevils are held as revered beings, second only to Asmodeus himself within the Prince of Darkness's church, and all encourage their own cults across the planes.

Asmodeans regard other religions with amusement. They worship young gods who possess a fraction of the power of Hell's master, deities who will eventually fall in line with Asmodeus's will. They confidently assert power when dealing with other churches, and as their lord is officially recognized as the patron deity of Cheliah, they can generally be assured that in that country, at least, other faiths must show them respect. They

are naturally inclined toward the followers of lawful deities, for they understand the need for order, and their dedication to law means they can at least agree upon rules within which to operate, while the congregants of chaos earn nothing but scorn.

REALM

While all of Hell—and some might argue all of existence—belongs to Asmodeus, the Archfiend claims Nessus, the deepest of Hell's layers, as his throne-layer. In the temple court of the Prince of Darkness, no sun or clouds reign over the cracked, volcano-blasted stone, only a vast, depthless night lit by three red stars. Much of Nessus's surface appears as an Elysian realm torn asunder in the wake of some terrible holocaust. Foreboding forests of ash hide lakes and seas of poison. Volcanoes endlessly erupt upon the horizon, spewing lava that never falls from the lifeless heavens. Deep fissures split the land, their depths emanating sickening crimson light. Roads paved in the skulls of fallen princes lead between vast palaces, connected either underground or by reaching cloisters. Little differentiates between terrain and temple in Nessus, as armies of enslaved souls have sculpted vast tracts and whole mountain chains with elaborate and terrifying statuary, facades, spires, and shrines.

Beneath this apocalyptic landscape lie the courts of Asmodeus: columned halls filled with terrifying scriptures and images no mortal should see. Here, Asmodeus's infernal dukes forgo the grandeur of the layers above, toiling amid armies of servants in some of the most elaborate and perverse workhouses in the multiverse, the whole realm being at once library, laboratory, and altar. Asmodeus's audiences with his archdevils or lesser beings take place in the Synod Eye, where eight thrones of salt and an island of glass orbit Asmodeus's massive Hellfire Throne. Beneath the flaming sigils of the diabolical elite falls a depthless gulf, a pit of absolute darkness that seethes with the barely restrained malice of Hell itself. From this pit, Asmodeus can conjure any view or illusion he wishes, or any bit of knowledge picked from the minds of his countless followers. When he wishes to be alone, however, the Archfiend retreats to the Catafalque, a private extradimensional hall which no one but the Prince of Darkness has ever seen.

ASMODEUS



PLANAR ALLIES

All manner of devils serve Asmodeus, and he has little use for other fiends who do not submit to his infernal hierarchy. The libraries of many churches keep expansive, mostly accurate records of prominent devils appropriate for summoning, whether they be common devils or the accomplice devils that eagerly aid Asmodeus's clergy (see page 279). The other deities who serve Asmodeus have their own diabolical vassals, favored breeds of devils, and unique agents, making it not uncommon for those priests who identify with Hell's lesser nobles to summon a wide array of infernal minions. The following are just a handful of the fiends most often summoned by the church of Asmodeus.

Arro the Ashensun (unique pit fiend): This lean, jet-black pit fiend is sullen and disinclined to converse, but is ruthless in battle and a strategic mastermind. He reports directly to the infernal duke Iaozrael, the Untarnished Angel, and bears with him a deadly orb he calls the Ashensun—a foul relic similar to an *orb of pure law* that also has the ability to quench any flame and spread utter darkness. Those who offer Arro the tongue of a freshly slain archpriest or goodly prince gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks when dealing with the pit fiend.

Basileus: This corrupted, angel-like creature serves as Asmodeus's herald. Down through the millennia, dozens of immortal beings have served as heralds of the Prince of Darkness, yet without fail, each herald has eventually garnered Asmodeus's disfavor, facing a quiet, ignominious, and likely torturous end within Nessus's depths. Asmodeus holds Basileus as the most perfect of all his current emissaries, for rather than elevating the messenger from among the ranks of his diabolical legions, the lord of Hell personally crafted his servant to meet his every expectation. An infernal automaton of sorts, Hell's herald is a being zealously devoted to the Prince of Darkness, even beyond the allegiances of devilkind. Although he rarely visits the mortal realm, wherever he treads he takes the form of the greatest terror of the age. This leads to highly varied reports of the herald's nature, even among Asmodeus's worshipers, and the confusion and apprehension seem to please both Basileus and his master greatly. For more details, see page 278.

Fristax (unique imp): This bright red imp has served more than 30 famed diabolists in his time, taking a role in some of the greatest diabolical incursions in history. Quite clever and insightful despite often acting like a fool, Fristax is skilled at suggesting brilliant and terrible machinations that his master takes as his own ideas. Those who offer the imp rewards in the form of kingly accoutrements—crowns, scepters, orbs, and so on—appeal to his egotism and gain a +2 bonus on Charisma checks.

FOR ASMODEAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Asmodeus may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Demagogue (bard)
Hungry ghost monk (monk)

Infiltrator (inquisitor)

Source

Ultimate Magic 26
Advanced Player's Guide 110
Ultimate Magic 45

Feats

Conversion Channel
Devilish Pride
Diabolical Negotiator
Hamatulatsu

Source

See page 209
See page 210
See page 210
The Inner Sea World Guide 287

Magic Items

Altar of Asmodeus
Barbed pentacle of Asmodeus
Circlet of persuasion
Diabolical masquerade mask
Half-plate of the Dark Prince
Hell's eye
Profane seal signet

Source

See page 246
See page 260
Core Rulebook 506
See page 263
See page 252
See page 255
See page 259

Spells

Beguiling gift

Burning gaze

Infernal healing

Infernal healing, greater

Planar binding
Shared sacrifice
Vision of Hell

Source

Advanced Player's Guide 205
Advanced Player's Guide 208
The Inner Sea World Guide 295
The Inner Sea World Guide 295
Core Rulebook 321
See page 240
Ultimate Magic 248

Traits

Asmodean Demon Hunter

Contract Master
Fiendish Confidence
Liar's Tongue

Source

Advanced Player's Guide 332
See page 219
See page 220
See page 221

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Asmodeus may prepare *lesser geas* as a 4th-level spell, and may prepare a variant of *geas/quest* as a 5th-level spell that allows a Will saving throw to negate its effects.



CALISTRIA

SAVOR THE THREE STINGS OF PASSION, GUILF, AND VENGEANCE. NO FOOD YOU EVER TASTE AND NO THING YOU EVER BUILD WILL SATISFY YOU AS MUCH AS MY GIFTS.
—THE BOOK OF JOY

THE SAVORED STING

Goddess of lust, revenge, and trickery

Alignment CN

Domains Chaos, Charm, Knowledge, Luck, Trickery

Favored Weapon whip

Centers of Worship Absalom, Galt, Kyonin, Nex, The River Kingdoms, The Shackles, Taldor, Varisia

Nationality elf

Obedience Engage in sexual activity with another individual in exchange for money, information, or another valuable resource. This must be a willing act on both your parts; you should not endanger yourself or otherwise enter a situation that makes you uncomfortable. Pray aloud to Calistria before and after the act, and encourage your partner to do the same. If no suitable partner is available, wrap yourself in yellow silk and hold your holy symbol against your chest. Meditate on the teachings of Calistria and fantasize about taking vengeance against one who wronged you. Gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with an intelligent creature that could be sexually attracted to you. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience. Once made, this choice can't be changed.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Waspsong (Sp)** *saving finale*^{APG} 3/day, *piercing shriek*^{UM} 2/day, or *sculpt sound* 1/day
- 2: Shimmering Sting (Sp)** Once per day, you can cast *rainbow pattern*. Rather than appearing as a multitude of colors, this spell manifests as a swarm of shimmering wasps. The wasps shine as brightly as gold and fly in an intricate, mesmerizing pattern. The saving throw DC for this ability is Charisma-based.
- 3: Vengeful Song (Su)** You can reflect a spell targeted against you back at its source with a blast of scornful music. Once per day when you have been specifically targeted by a spell, you may attempt a Perform check as an immediate action. If your Perform check equals or exceeds the spell's save DC, the spell returns immediately to its caster, who must suffer its effects. The caster can attempt a saving throw as normal to negate the returned spell's effects. If the spell normally allows no saving throw, calculate the Perform DC as if the spell did allow a save, taking into account any feats

or special abilities the caster may have that would affect the DC. If the spell had multiple targets (for example, a *magic missile* with three bolts, one of which was targeted at you), you reflect only the portion of the spell targeting you. This ability has no effect on area spells or any spells whose description has no Target entry.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Calistria's Tongue (Sp)** *charm person* 3/day, *eagle's splendor* 2/day, or *suggestion* 1/day
- 2: Stunning Touch (Su)** When using the dazing touch power granted by the Charm domain, you can cause the creature touched to become stunned for 1 round instead of dazed. If you don't have access to the Charm domain, you instead gain the ability to use the dazing touch power a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier, as listed in the ability; however, you only daze your opponents instead of stunning them.
- 3: Protective Grace (Ex)** You may add your Charisma bonus to your AC while wearing light or no armor. This bonus applies against touch attacks. Any condition that would cause you to lose your Dexterity bonus to AC also causes you to lose your Charisma bonus to AC.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Lucky Strike (Sp)** *divine favor* 1/day, *align weapon* (chaotic only) 2/day, or *keen edge* 1/day
- 2: Winsome Lash (Su)** You can lash out with your melee weapon as if it were a whip, no matter what the weapon's type truly is. Your melee weapon elongates and grows flexible, gaining an extra 5 feet of reach while still maintaining its ability to strike targets adjacent to you (provided the weapon could normally do so). Using this ability does not provoke attacks of opportunity, and you can apply this ability only to melee weapons. You can use this ability a number of rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). The rounds don't need to be consecutive, and activating and deactivating the ability is a free action.
- 3: Sting Like a Wasp (Ex)** For a number of rounds per day equal to your Charisma bonus, you can ignore attacks of opportunity you would otherwise provoke due to your movement. Using this ability is a free action, and the rounds in which you use it don't need to be consecutive. You still provoke attacks of opportunity normally for actions other than moving.

INNER SEA GODS



CALISTRIA

Calistria is the most widely worshiped elven goddess on Golarion—an ancient deity with a long memory for old slights, at once mysterious, alluring, temperamental, and passionate. Although most of her worshipers are elves, she is popular with other races as well, for at some point almost everyone has felt the fire of lust, engaged in trickery, or been driven to revenge. She is not so much a spiritual guide for the elven people as a cornerstone for their culture, never pushing them to act but always ready to assist when the time comes for action.

The Savored Sting is a sultry manifestation of everything in elves that is fascinating to other races, attracting men and women alike with her raw sexual magnetism. Her beauty is typically characterized as sensual, desirable, and arousing, or described in more vulgar terms. Gazing on Calistria's clothed body, viewers wonder what she looks like naked; her nude form drives their curiosity to even more intimate places. Although she considers herself female, Calistria has been known to take on a male form that is attractive enough to make any mortal flushed and weak in the knees.

She is mischievous, perplexing, devious, and silver-tongued, disarming her most powerful rivals with pretty words that, upon careful reflection, reveal themselves as humiliating insults. She “surrenders” by convincing enemies to hand over their weapons, leads suitors on for decades with hints of outrageous rewards, and outwits the most brilliant mortals as an afterthought. Though her sense of humor is rich and sharp, she considers silly jokes and crude pranks beneath one who can convey an hour's speech in one small gesture and a lifetime of emotion with a careful look. Lies are her meat and drink, half-truths are her favorite wine, and double entendres are a luscious dessert.

Calistria enjoys a quick resolution to petty affronts, but she is patient, unforgiving, and merciless when more seriously offended, willing to punish the offender with exacting artistry beyond the ken of mortals. Calistria does not forgive, she does not forget, and any evidence to the contrary is part of her plan to sting a foe in the most painful way possible after he believes the threat of vengeance is long past. She is a goddess of vengeance, not

CALISTRIA'S ANTIPALADIN CODE

Antipaladins of Calistria do not demand great things of others, but rather seek to emulate the Savored Sting in their manner. Most are women; their ranks are filled with those devoted to bloody vengeance and the shining lusts that spark it. Their tenets include the following adages.

- My life is my path, and none will sway me from it.
- I devote myself to the pursuit of my passions.
- I take what I desire, by trick or by force. If others resent my actions, they may attempt to take vengeance against me.
- All slights against me will be repaid tenfold.
- I am the instrument of my own justice. If I am wronged, I will take vengeance with my own hands.

CALISTRIA

justice, and feels no compulsion to stop at taking an eye for an eye; if she pushes beyond a response others might deem appropriate, it should serve as a lesson to those who get in her way.

Though gracious and personable to those who haven't drawn her ire, Calistria is fickle, changing loyalties as suits her needs and whims. Her changeability is not malicious; rather, she is uninterested in relationships becoming too strong or too emotional, believing such bonds to be foolish. Most of her partners and allies accept the affection she grants them and then move on, but those who persist in the chase after she has tired of being the prey find her claws sharp and certain. She sees love only as a weakness, a needless by-product of physical pleasures.

Calistria welcomes the worship of any mortal who lusts, deceives, or seeks revenge; she hears the prayers of the good, evil, unjustly accused, selfish, moral, criminal, and love-struck alike. Regardless of methods or motives, if a mortal's actions touch her concerns, she takes an interest in the outcome and may aid in achieving it. Her worshipers are thus diverse, but mostly transitional, only seeking her attention when they need her. As she in turn only engages with others when her interest is piqued, this satisfies her, and she does not ask for more.

Some mortals, unable to emulate or understand her shifting interests and allegiances, accuse Calistria of being evil, but in truth, she is simply amoral, eschewing right, wrong, and justice because she knows that the universe is not a fair place. If others choose to follow her path, so be it; if some are hurt by such a decision, she stands as a reminder that every creature has the right—and the responsibility—to avenge their injuries.

Calistria is usually depicted as a beautiful elven woman wearing a figure-hugging black dress accented with gold, often with a black or golden silk drape falling from her arms or drawn seductively across her face. Her eyes are dark and mysterious, but sometimes flash gold with passion or anger. She is commonly shown with giant wasps, her favorite creature—for unlike bees, wasps can sting again and again without dying. In her male form she usually wears a masculine version of her normal shape, with black leggings and a loose golden jerkin and cape, eyes smoldering with barely contained passion. Depending on the views of the surrounding society, Calistria's worshipers are also not afraid of depicting her in more scandalous attire or situations, and sexually explicit art featuring the goddess is common.

Calistria's holy symbol is three daggers pointing outward from a circle (representing her three aspects); many of her clergy carry daggers in her honor. Most of her priests are clerics or bards, though in some places more exotic spellcasters are the norm for her clergy, and even some non-spellcasters reach positions of moderate importance in her priesthood based on their cunning and achievements. Her titles include the Savored Sting, the Lady in the Room, and the Unquenchable Fire, as well as many vulgar epithets bestowed by those outside the faith.

THE CHURCH

Though any individuals bearing grudges may pray for Calistria's favor until they have been satisfied, typical lifelong worshipers of Calistria are prostitutes, spies, hedonists, enchanters, and illusionists; rare nonevil assassins pursuing a justified blood debt or former slaves seeking revenge on their masters might also call on her aid. Some crusaders, particularly elven ones, pray to Calistria to help achieve holy vengeance on their targets, and a fair number of shady merchants and con artists venerate her trickery aspect. Though all races are welcome in the church, elves, humans, and humanoids of mixed race are by far the most common, whereas very few dwarves worship her—even among those avenging slights against clan or kin, Calistria's shifting loyalties and disproportionate responses often seem shameful to dwarven society. Elven society, on the other hand, is by far the most accepting of her worship, as most elves see Calistria's independence from commitment as the only path of sanity for members of a race that lives centuries.

Calistria shows her favor with ease in obtaining companionship, heightened physical pleasure, and easy marks for schemes or acts of vengeance. Those who displease her often find themselves plagued by impotence, inability to achieve sexual satisfaction, or angry wasps with an unerring ability to sting in sensitive places. Sometimes she delays the manifestation of her ire, allowing strings

of positive events to culminate in eventual catastrophic failure to heighten the sting.

Ceremonies honoring Calistria may involve ritual sex, but generally are not elevated to the orgiastic excess described in the salacious stories of her detractors (though such rites do exist, and are often extremely popular). Most ceremonies take place in the temple, or outdoors in the natural settings typical of elven rituals. Regular worship services include invocations of the goddess's blessing over sexual encounters, the congregation's encouragement and promises of aid to members seeking vengeance, the consumption of spiced wine, and the performance of pageants enhanced with illusion and theatrical tricks. Special rituals conducted as needed include invocations of the goddess's blessing when a worshiper begins pursuit of a desired lover, divinations to determine her approval or disapproval of set courses of revenge, initiation rites for those who wish to devote themselves to the faith, and birth and death ceremonies.

The church puts little stock in the formalities of marriage. While such unions serve a valuable function in society, most of the Savored Sting's worshipers don't have a strong urge to settle down with one person (elves' longevity makes the prospect seem stifling to many) and they usually don't confuse physical attraction with emotional affection (with some members seeing the latter as a dangerous liability). Some faithful consider any relationship that lasts more than a few months to be a "marriage," though this confers no legal rights. Ending a relationship has no stigma, though these ends are often the start of long-term feuds if one person feels slighted. Some worshipers do see the appeal of long, committed relationships, but even these tend to be tolerant of other partners, or even polyamorous. Lacking the weight of law in their relationships, most expect inheritance and similar matters to go to blood relatives rather than partners in mutable passionate relationships.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

A typical Calistrian temple is a converted mansion with many rooms that can be locked for privacy. Each city can hold multiple temples, which often vary wildly in their interpretations of Calistria's wisdom, and sometimes engage in serious and bloody doctrinal disputes. Even within a given temple, arguments can be quite dangerous, as few feuds escalate as drastically as those between two Calistrions. The Savored Sting's faith is as changeable as the goddess herself: each temple tends toward good, evil, or neutrality, and this influences the activities that take place there.

Good temples elevate both the sanctity of pleasure achieved—their doctrines decreeing

those sexually satisfied to be more benevolent toward others and less prone to violence—and the drive of pleasure anticipated, seeing lust as a spur to creativity and ambition. The temples function as salons, ideal places to socialize, hear news and be seen, though their respect for privacy makes them good places for clandestine discussions as well. Evil temples are much like thieves' guilds: places to plant rumors, seek evidence of unfaithful lovers, and make shady plans, while heightening the sharper and more excessive aspects of desire and its fulfillment. Neutral temples (and elven temples in particular) try to mix both, taking a casual transactional approach to entertaining the lonely and lusty, and functioning as hubs for gossip and rumors, while avoiding the more violent plans for vengeance.

Many temples encourage wasps to nest under their eaves; guided by magic, the insects leave the residents alone but react angrily to trespassers. Wealthier temples may employ giant wasps as guardian creatures and spider eaters as flying steeds, while evil ones may bind abyssal



wasp swarms to guard the temple. Some harvest venom from the wasps for use by the temple guards, or for sale.

The practice of building shrines has never really caught on in Calistria's church. Life itself is a pilgrimage for Calistrians, and so they have no once-in-a-lifetime destinations of sacred nature. Ancient standing stones at the site of old temples might bear phallic or yonic carvings, and flat stones might be carved with the names of acts of great vengeance that took place at the site, but in general the church prefers to preserve its symbols and history in stories and adages.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

The church sees prostitution as a sacred calling of power and pleasure, and its clergy are adamant about ensuring the safety of those who engage in sex as a profession; temples do not make their priests into victims, and accept only willing adults as initiates. In cities where the church holds sway, residents tread carefully around courtesans and streetwalkers alike, lest an abused escort call on the temple for aid in avenging herself. All clergy undergo extensive training in the arts of conversation, body language, and seduction. Even the most uncomely or disagreeable priest knows how to turn on the charm at the right time, often surprising those who witness the change. Others may work—alone or in groups—as spies, investigators (for individuals or the government), or smugglers of exotic materials.

Calistria's church is organized democratically, and each priest receives a vote in temple affairs. Its hierarchy is very casual, with priests valued more for their ability to persuade others (or feared for their history of revenge) than their magical power. The high priest or priestess of a temple is addressed as "Revered One," but otherwise, titles are often unique to their bearers. Individuals might earn various honorifics based on deeds, assigned by the head of the temple and customized for the recipient, such as "of the Gentle Hands," "the Heartless Avenger," "of the Hundred Faces," or "the Shameless." Most temples focus on local issues and ignore the

works of their counterparts unless actively engaged in a vendetta against them.

Calistria's emphasis on personal freedom means that there is no "typical day" for one of her priests. Good clergy address the goddess's vengeance aspect by assisting patrons in finding legal recourse against those who wrong them, though they may resort to public shaming of guilty parties when the offense is inconsiderate rather than illegal (such as shoddy business practices, slander, or broken promises), or when the legal system does not provide satisfaction. They engage in sacred prostitution, and to a small extent they work as matchmakers, though usually for sexual interest rather than marriage.

Evil priests seduce others as leverage or future blackmail on behalf of themselves or clients, exchange valuable secrets, and make plots to unseat influential leaders or strong-arm reluctant merchants. A few work as thieves or assassins for the church, or even for the highest bidder, acting anonymously or under a pseudonym. The most alluring members demand payment in the form of secrets, exacerbating clients' lust in order to drive their prices higher, and fanning the flames of jealousy to inspire acts of revenge. Some lead double or triple lives as spies in extensive secret plots. Evil priests tend to be very competitive, trying to outdo their rivals in feats of intimacy, trickery, and vengeance, and as a result many are forced to wander for their own safety.

Priests of neutral temples advise petitioners on how best to pursue vengeance, usually urging them to find non-injurious recompense, though if the offense is great enough, they are not averse to giving advice or explicit aid in fulfilling a debt of blood. Viewing knowledge as valuable but neither good nor evil, they often fill their temple's coffers by brokering information, remaining aloof from the help or harm done with it. In some communities, a lone priest may be greatly respected and feared for what he knows and the careful web of peace he brokers with flesh and promises.

Alchemy, herbalism, and potion-making are common pastimes among priests, and some make a living selling poisons, aphrodisiacs, love potions, contraceptives, abortifacients, and their counteragents. Even good



priests sell nonlethal poisons designed to embarrass or humiliate the target (such as laxatives, those that simulate drunkenness, and so on). The followers of Norgorber carefully watch Calistria's priesthood to make sure they aren't overstepping their bounds or undercutting prices. If a temple has guardian wasps, the priests might be responsible for caring for or magically influencing them, and many become used to stings and resistant to venom. Some keep unusually large specimens as pets, and a few priests are known within the church for their cat-sized pet wasps with abilities similar to a familiar.

While temples rituals can vary, one of the most common is the Rite of the Triple Sting, a test faced when a temple initiate has completed his novitiate. In this test, the initiate must disguise himself and, in this new guise, seduce someone who has wronged him. The candidate must play upon the target's lust for him to lure her into revealing secrets that, if publicly exposed, would humiliate or even ruin her, or if she has no such secrets, into activities that could do the same. Once he has obtained this power over her, he must expose her vulnerability in public, and, his vengeance accomplished, reveal his true identity.

Once his sponsors in the temple have judged his attempt as worthy of Calistria's approval, the priest undergoes his initiation into the priesthood. This usually starts with a fast from sunset to sunset, alone in the temple, that he might experience the hunger that drives people to revenge. At sunset, a masked priest leads him to a private chamber, where he drinks from a cup of sharply spiced, honeyed wine, that he may taste the fire, the sweetness, and the intoxication that together comprise lust. Masked clergy members attend him and he selects a partner. The priests remove his clothes and burn them, discarding his old identity and welcoming him to his new one as a servant of the Savored Sting. Hallucinogenic herbs laced into the wine heighten both the mystical aspect and the disorientation of the experience as the initiate couples with a priest that may or may not be the one he chose. Some clerics who have dared to remove their partner's mask during the rite claim that the goddess herself lay beneath it, though such claims are usually dismissed as braggadocio or the effects of the psychoactive herbs in the wine. After the effects wear off, the new priest is escorted to a ritual bath and given his first set of clerical robes. His sponsors declare him sealed to the goddess, and begin filling him in on the temple's secrets.

Calistria's church is not known for its altruistic healing, though its priests have been known to sell cures for money or favors. Sometimes they heal without demanding payment, saying only that they will collect a service at some point in the future. Priests concerned with the goddess's lustful side are usually skilled at Acrobatics, Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Escape Artist, Intimidate, or Sense Motive. Priests more

attracted to her vengeful aspect study methods that aid them in finding their targets, such as Diplomacy, Disguise, Intimidate, Knowledge, and Sense Motive. Priests attracted to her trickster role usually focus on skills appropriate to thieves, deceivers, or diplomats, depending on the type of deception they enjoy.

ADVENTURERS

A follower of Calistria declares himself either a thrill-seeker and hedonist or someone who never forgives a slight. If he carries vengeance in his heart or a strong desire for the pleasures of the flesh, then he will find a willing ally in Calistria. In his mind, the world is a garden of delights, and he is determined to experience them all. If something stands in his way or causes him injury, he is more than willing to take revenge until his enemies call for mercy. A follower of Calistria is not necessarily cruel—though he can be—nor is he evil unless it suits his natural predisposition to be so. While he might enjoy crushing his foes, he might also find an equal satisfaction in bringing joy to another and allowing the person to find bliss and release in the union of their bodies. When someone worships the Savored Sting, he chooses above all to live life on his own terms, without the moral compass others might try to impose on him.

Calistria has long been a favored goddess of the elves because of her focus on personal freedom, and it may be that the elves' long lifespans are what make her hard-nosed approach to individual liberty so popular. (After all, some relationships grow old after a few centuries, and an elf who follows Calistria is always free to reassign his affections.) Half-elves and other half-breeds who were the product of exotic unions often support her as a way of embracing their heritage, and gnomes' constant search for variety and novelty makes her a natural fit for them as well. Calistria herself is generally imagined in the form of an elf, yet seems perfectly willing to accept the worship of anyone with a slight to avenge or a desire to make his body an altar.

CLOTHING

Formal clothing for Calistria's clergy is generally scant, typically dark leather or yellow silk that covers little and conceals even less, often augmented with henna dyes on the palms of the hands and in narrow bands on the arms, though individual clergy members tailor their clothing to their own styles of seduction. Some priests like to add other accent clothing like a wasp's colors, but most eventually grow out of this habit, as the insect represents the goddess but is not inherently divine or worthy of emulation. Adventurer-priests favor gold jewelry and gold plating or decorations on their armor. Church paraphernalia is usually made of slender wood or fine gold, and often includes erotic carvings or sculpture.

HOLY TEXT

Although Calistria's followers recommend several works of theater and literature as shining examples of how to execute the perfect seduction or revenge, the only text they hold as sacred is *The Book of Joy*. Some versions of this guide to passion include illustrations of sexual positions, instructions on reading and manipulating others' emotions, or collected anecdotes on satisfying revenge schemes to address various offenses; the sections included in each temple's unique copy of the text say much about the temple's leadership. Conservative cities sometimes make it illegal to possess a copy, but mischievous Calistrians print portions of the book as one-page "penny bibles" showing the most erotic portions of the manuscript in the hope of eliciting curiosity in the readers.

HOLIDAYS

Calistria's church as a whole has no set holidays, although each temple has established its own holidays to commemorate the avenging of old slights or great conquests and epic acts of trickery.

APHORISMS

To punctuate their vengeful desires, Calistria's worshipers circulate several bitter sayings and deadly sentiments.

I Stab Thee With My Heart: When carefully planned vengeance comes to fruition, the satisfaction of it is as exhilarating as any intimate act. The faithful whisper this saying as their daggers strike home, leave it in notes when explaining their targets' downfalls, and crow it during particularly juicy acts of revenge. Oddly, in the rare cases where members of the church pursue genuine love, couples use this expression to indicate the intensity of their feelings for one another.

Love the Food, Not the Chef: This saying is used as an admonition against the transgression of falling in love with the target of one's lust. It is also a reminder to not become consumed by vengeance to the exclusion of all other things. There is more to life than revenge, and there are many joys one can experience even while seeking retribution.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Calistria's interactions with other gods are complex and strewn with contradictions. Some stories even suggest that she was the force behind the creation or destruction of certain deities. Each temple has its own idea about which stories are true and which are false, and these differences only escalate the conflicts between factions. All agree that the other gods treat her very carefully and respectfully, as they fear her reprisal for an unintended slight.

In general, Calistria and Shelyn get along well, as erotic love leads to sex and common lust can turn into love, though Calistria believes Shelyn's insistence on love is a weakness. Calistria finds Urgathoa distasteful but respects her lust for life. She is intrigued by Norgorber and willing to work with him, though he is never quite sure if he is somehow being manipulated. She respects Desna, but thinks she's a little too hung up on her failures and setbacks. Calistria and Cayden Cailean are on very friendly terms, and just *how* friendly is the subject of much speculation.

Calistria's worshipers are open to dealing with members of most other faiths, provided it suits their needs or desires at the moment. Most of them evaluate people as individuals rather than members of groups or followers of creeds.

While they are implacably vengeful if roused, Calistrians rarely judge a person on the basis of social standing, ethnicity, or personal history. Their attitudes toward members of faiths they consider prudish range from amused to contemptuous, and some take a certain impish pleasure in seducing those with such beliefs. Every person presents an opportunity for rewarding exchanges of money, information, or caresses, so Calistrians are generally amiable until they are wronged. They tend to be found in cities, where it's easiest to indulge their hedonism and find willing partners, and have little interest in associating with those who would get in the way of their revels. Followers of Cayden Cailean tend to get along well with Calistria's faithful, and Shelynites focused on the beauty of eroticism often find common interests with Calistrians, who are ever attentive to the eroticism of beauty.



REALM

Despite her neutral nature, Calistria calls the fields of Elysium home. The fickle goddess often shifts her realm's location and size, and it's not uncommon for those seeking its borders to be unable to find it, or those who'd prefer to avoid it to stumble unprepared into its gardens of sensual delights. In this sense, Calistria's realm uniquely matches the goddess herself: beautiful, inviting, playful—and completely untrustworthy. Visitors might gradually notice the slight buzzing of wasps in the deep and otherwise silent forest, and then quite abruptly find themselves wandering a hedge maze of rose bushes or standing before one of the Savored Sting's palatial, baroque manors. Though Elysium may focus on positive and benevolent aspects of freedom and chaos, Calistria's minions don't always take the same tack, and her pleasure palaces can be extremely dangerous for the unwary.

PLANAR ALLIES

In addition to her servitor race, the vendenopterixes (see page 281), Calistria often sends the following entities to further her causes.

Menotherian: Appearing alternately as a perfect elf or a bear-sized wasp, Calistria's herald maintains an ardent curiosity about mortal elves. The Menotherian is a creature of spirit but has a physical body, and sometimes seeks attractive elves (using her elven form) to satisfy her carnal desires; this overwhelming experience is a sign of great favor among the devout. For more information, see page 280.

Threv (unique protean): This frog-like, shape-changing sorcerer has gray skin and strangely expressive eyes. Obsessed with vengeance, he is often the agent of Calistria's ire in the mortal world when she isn't angered enough to send her herald. He works cheaply for mortals seeking revenge, although those that lie to him to get a discount find themselves the target of his ire.

Tordurbar (unique chaos beast): Though most chaos beasts alternate between horrible forms, this strange being usually appears as a large fleshy mass, with heads, mouths, eyes, hands, hair, and various organs sprouting randomly and being reabsorbed in short order; in battle, it takes on more dangerous forms. Though it accepts payments for services in coin or magic, it prefers sexual favors, whether the summoner is male or female. It does not speak (except to coo and moan), preferring telepathic communication.

Velvet Wing (unique vendenopterix): A tan elven seductress with slightly ragged insect wings, this beautiful vendenopterix (see page 281) is often mistaken for a succubus. Her kisses and other intimate acts drain Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma (her choice), and she is adept at mimicking a specific person's voice and mannerisms.

FOR CALISTRIAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Calistria may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Charlatan (rogue)
Court bard (bard)

Source

Ultimate Combat 72
Advanced Player's Guide 81

Feats

Antagonize
Bloody Vengeance
Curse of Vengeance
Seductive Channel

Source

Ultimate Magic 143
See page 208
See page 209
See page 215

Magic Items

Altar of Calistria
Armor of the unquenchable fire
Elixir of love
Eyes of charming
Feather token, whip
Ring of unquenchable passions
Stinging stiletto
Vengeful kiss

Source

See page 246
See page 250
Core Rulebook 511
Core Rulebook 512
Core Rulebook 512
See page 259
See page 270
See page 257

Spells

Cape of wasps
Lover's vengeance

Phantasmal revenge

Secret speech
Seducer's eyes
Unnatural lust
Vengeful stinger

Source

Ultimate Magic 211
The Inner Sea World Guide 296
Advanced Player's Guide 235

See page 240
See page 240
Ultimate Magic 245
See page 245

Traits

Calistrian Courtesan

Enchanting Conniver
Holy Schemer
Opportunistic

Source

Advanced Player's Guide 333

See page 219
See page 220
See page 221

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Calistria may prepare *rage* as a 3rd-level spell and may prepare *suggestion* as a 4th-level spell (though those with the Charm domain have access to it earlier). Inquisitors add these spells to their spell list at 3rd and 4th levels, respectively.



CAYDEN CAILEAN

DON'T LET RULES GET IN THE WAY OF ENJOYING WHAT IS TRULY GOOD IN LIFE.

—*PLACARD OF WISDOM*

THE DRUNKEN HERO

God of bravery, ale, freedom, and wine

Alignment CG

Domains Chaos, Charm, Good, Strength, Travel

Favored Weapon rapier

Centers of Worship Absalom, Andoran, Galt, River Kingdoms, The Shackles, Taldor, Varisia

Nationality Taldan

Obedience Sing a song in praise of freedom, bravery, and your god's glory (and good looks). The song must be audible to those nearby—friend or foe. Between stanzas, you must pause to drink from a full mug of ale, wine, or other spirits. When the song is done, drink the remaining alcohol while mentally composing the song you will sing on the morrow. If a creature is attracted by your song, do your best to engage it in conversation about the merits of Cayden Cailean. If hostilities become inevitable, leap boldly into the fight without hesitation. Gain a +4 sacred bonus on saving throws against poison effects.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Liberation (Sp)** *liberating command*^{UC} 3/day, *knock* 2/day, or *dispel magic* 1/day
- 2: Drinking Buddy (Su)** Once per day as a standard action, you can create an illusory double of yourself that appears in a square adjacent to you. Your double acts on your initiative count, and can move up to your speed each round. It always attempts to flank with you against a single target you designate. If it must use Acrobatics to avoid an attack of opportunity during this movement, your double uses your bonus. Though your double can't attack, it is treated as threatening adjacent squares for the purposes of flanking with you. Anyone attacking your double or otherwise physically interacting with it can attempt a Will save (DC 25) to recognize the double as an illusion. The double has your AC, and if any hit would deal damage to it, the double dissipates. An opponent who recognizes your double as an illusion can't be flanked by it. The double lasts 1 round for every Hit Die you possess or until it is hit with an attack, whichever comes first.
- 3: Intoxicating Strike (Su)** Once per day, you can declare one of your attacks an intoxicating strike. You must declare your use of this ability before you attempt the attack roll. If your attack hits and you deal damage, your target immediately becomes intoxicated for 1 round for every Hit Die you possess.

An intoxicated creature takes a -4 penalty to AC, on attack rolls, and on skill checks, and its movement is reduced by 10 feet.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Libations (Sp)** *bless water* 3/day, *delay poison* 2/day, or *create food and water* 1/day
- 2: Freedom's Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a pair of bralanis azatas to aid you. You gain telepathy with the bralanis to a range of 100 feet. The bralanis follow your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to their home in Elysium. The bralanis don't follow commands that would cause them to commit evil acts or restrict freedom solely for the sake of law. Such commands not only earn refusal and scorn from the bralanis, but could cause the bralanis to attack you if the command is particularly egregious.
- 3: Wine to Water (Su)** As a full-round action, you transform a single serving of an alcoholic beverage into either potent holy water or a *potion of cure serious wounds*. A potion created in this way heals 3d8 points of damage plus 1 point of damage for every Hit Die you possess (to a maximum of 3d8+15). The holy water you create is more potent than usual, dealing 4d4 points of damage to an undead creature or evil outsider, and 2d4 points of splash damage to each such creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits. Holy water and potions created in this way last for 1 hour. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Charisma bonus (minimum 1).

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Devastating Duelist (Sp)** *bless weapon* 3/day, *brow gasher*^{UC} 2/day, or *greater magic weapon* 1/day
- 2: Light Weapon Master (Ex)** Whenever you fight with a dagger, kama, kukri, rapier, sickle, short sword, or starknife, you also gain a +2 deflection bonus to AC, provided you have the weapon training (light blades) class feature. If you don't have that class feature, you instead gain a +1 sacred bonus on attack rolls when using weapons from the light blades weapon group (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 47).
- 3: Critical Luck (Ex)** Keep a record of every time you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll, to a maximum number equal to your Charisma bonus. Anytime you roll a critical threat on an attack roll, you can trade in one of your tallied natural 1s to automatically confirm the critical hit. This tally resets to 0 every day, and any tallied natural 1s from the day before are lost.

INNER SEA GODS



CAYDEN CAILEAN

Cayden Cailean is one of the Ascended, a mortal man who became a god after passing the grueling tests of the magical *Starstone*. Three days after entering the Cathedral of the *Starstone* on a drunken dare, the good-natured sellsword emerged a living god, baffled and amused. His behavior changed little after his ascension: he continued to fight for just causes, sample various drinks, and avoid things he didn't want to do. Thus, Cayden Cailean became the patron of brave souls, alcoholic spirits, and the freedom to choose your own path in life. He expects his followers to be brave in the face of danger, though there is no shame in necessary retreat—he's the god of bravery, not reckless stupidity. Although many assume his faithful will accept any dare, the god's focus on freedom keeps his heroes from being manipulated so easily, and even the dullest hero of Cayden Cailean has the sense not to accept an impossible or suicidal challenge—though it is not uncommon to accept a risky one after a swig or two of “liquid courage.”

Cayden Cailean is outgoing, friendly, boisterous, unashamed, and flirtatious, even more so when he

indulges in fermented delights. He loves good-spirited toasts, friendly bar brawls, bawdy songs, and standing up for the underdog. He loathes slavery, mean-spiritedness, bullying, teetotalers, and restrictive laws and customs. He believes that everyone would get along better if they could all just sit down and have a drink, preferably in the company of attractive companions. A former mercenary, he believes in fair pay for a job well done, whether in coin, drink, or a tumble in the hay with an enthusiastic paramour.

Cayden Cailean's direct intervention in the mortal world isn't frequent, but he has been known to prevent a keg from emptying (often to help good folk survive a siege or convince them to congregate a little longer in a place of safety) or to push someone especially meek to show courage at a key moment. Having had his share of hard times as a mortal, he's not above helping someone for free now and then, or leaving an extra-generous tip for someone in need. This simple and welcoming philosophy makes him popular with adventurers, philanthropists, revelers, and those who fight for good, and it is traditional

among his adherents to toast his name with the first drink of the evening.

As the god of wine, Cayden's interest is in the merriment and socialization alcohol can facilitate rather than attempting to drown or forget sorrows, and he despises mean drunks or those who allow their drunkenness to hurt innocents. He has been known to inspire tipsy revelers to confess secrets better aired than left to fester, and he encourages his worshipers to push each other to greatness via friendly dares. A "Cayden's dare" is any foolish-seeming thing that turns out to have beneficial consequences, and at Caydenite weddings, it's common to tell jokes and stories explaining how the bride or groom is only present because of a drunken dare (especially if they're true).

Although his other divine concerns are flexible in interpretation, Cayden is as hard as nails when it comes to a person's right to freedom. Coupled with his love of drink, his refusal in his mortal days to go against his own beliefs for the sake of mere coin gave him a somewhat unreliable reputation. He believes there is no justice in a law that oppresses one person to benefit another, and over the centuries he has worked to counter slavery and the plots of deities who see human misery as a fair price to pay in pursuit of their goals. In places where the peasantry suffers from harsh taxes or demoralizing practices, he helps them topple their oppressors or at least aids them in escaping to more friendly lands. Though often seen as a god of righteous rebellion, he doesn't believe in vengeance or coups for their own sake, and is not a god of destructive chaos or madcap frivolity—his followers must take responsibility for the consequences of their actions.

Those who go against Cayden's simple tenets may find themselves ill the next time they drink, intoxicated when clarity is needed, or frightened by common animals or shadows. When he is happy, drinks are more delicious, the night air feels brisker and smells sweeter, and courage burns white-hot. An unexpected windfall of alcohol is a common sign of favor, yet can just as easily turn to vinegar or sewage in the mouths of the unworthy.

When Cayden Cailean appears to his followers, he usually looks much as he did in life: an average-looking bronze-skinned human with a tankard in one hand, often wearing chainmail. In grander art, he is sometimes shown fending off a swarm of devils with his well-worn rapier, all while holding his tankard high. Some artists portray the Drunken Hero with broken shackles hanging loosely from his wrists or fallen at his feet, representing breaking free of mortal concerns—though in areas where his faith has brought freedom from oppression or slavery, the shackles have a more literal interpretation.

Cayden Cailean is the only major god who uses a surname. In his early years as a god, he insisted that his last name be included in all forms of address, an unusual habit for someone normally so relaxed about formalities. The prevalent opinions on the matter are that he wished to distance himself from another mortal named Cayden (perhaps someone of evil intent) or to honor his parents, said to have died when he was young. This second theory is corroborated by his interest in sponsoring orphanages, perhaps as a thank-you to the long-gone orphanage that raised him. He ignores questions about the matter, insisting that it was decided long ago and there are more important things to talk about.

Cayden's holy symbol is a tankard of ale, with or without a rich head of foam on it. He is called the Drunken Hero, the Lucky Drunk, and many other affectionate nicknames. He's amused rather than offended by those who use his name as part of colorful oaths, and thus many of his clergy can be creative and prolific in their swearing. Most of his true "clergy" are clerics, but he is also honored by hordes of good-natured rogues, barbarians, and fighters who—despite not receiving any direct boons from the god—seek to spread his faith and emulate his relaxed attitude toward a mercenary or adventuring life. His priesthood also includes some inquisitors, mainly those questing to free slaves and overturn tyrants, as well as a handful of druids who attend to sacred vineyards and the other agricultural aspects of brewing.

THE CHURCH

Most Caydenites are common folk who seek simple contentment in their daily lives, like to have a drink with their friends, and find the courage to stand up to evil when it rears its ugly head, no matter what shape it takes. They are happy people, preferring to look on the bright side of things and accepting any downturn as a challenge to make right. Brewers, vintners, barkeeps, and innkeepers pray to the Drunken Hero for tasty beverages and the good business that comes from them. Happy drunks and revelers of all sorts toast his name. Wealthy folk do good deeds in honor of him, such as sharing a private store of wine in lean times. Cayden Cailean is a popular deity among good adventurers, who share his casual goals of questing and celebrating one's victories. Those not keen on adventuring often work as guides or explorers, enjoying the freedom of living and going wherever they please. While most worshipers are human, a significant number are half-elves, finding comfort and acceptance in a faith interested in good works and good times rather than formal hierarchies, ancient traditions, and old grudges. Although dwarves appreciate his interest in ale, few worship him, though some clans will lift a mug to him while telling stories about Torag, in which he typically takes the role of a humorous sidekick.

There are many mortals alive today with the surname Cailean, and they may be distantly related to the god, but children raised in church-funded orphanages also often take the god's surname as their own when they leave. Thus, the handsome farmhand might be a direct descendant of Cayden Cailean's brother, or merely a survivor of a goblin attack that wiped out entire families.

The faith is not inclined to formality, and official church holidays resemble festivals more than worship services. Services to Cayden Cailean always include a toast or a song, which typically involves shouting choruses, stomping feet, and the clanking of drinkware, and a simple toast at a wedding might become a game of "dueling dares" between the groomsmen. Services may be indoors or outdoors, aboveground or below, day or night—whatever is appropriate to the occasion.

Cayden's church essentially has no hierarchy, and the god himself sometimes has to send visions or dreams to his priests to encourage them to meet on an issue and decide how to deal with it. None of his priests really like other people telling them what to do, despite any good intentions, and while his faithful combat evil and injustice where they find it, they're rarely out to change the world in a systematic and orderly way. Elderly priests and those renowned as local

heroes often garner special respect within the church, but few attempt to lead by warrant of their age or reputations. Most priests believe that the people who discovered a problem are the best people to deal with it, and don't bother trying to follow a chain of command unless an issue turns out to be too big to handle alone. The majority of the god's clergy are amiable with each other, and while there can be personal rivalries, they can generally be solved with a shared drink or friendly bar fight.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Most of the Drunken Hero's sacred buildings are alehouses run by clergy members or small inns bearing a shrine to him above the bar. Large breweries often contain a small room set aside for the church, and members of the owner's family may enter the priesthood to secure prosperity for the brewery. In cities, the occasional feast hall might bear the symbol of Cayden Cailean on its sign or over its doors. These larger "temples" donate much of their earnings to promote the public good, ease the burden of the poor, buy slaves' freedom, or fund pious adventurers.

The casual nature of the faith—plus its popularity among non-spellcasting classes—means that a typical temple or shrine might only have a very low-level cleric on hand. If someone comes knocking covered in blood, however, any able cleric will usually patch her up, perform a healing incantation, and give her a stiff drink to numb any remaining pain.



A PRIEST'S ROLE

Cayden Cailean's easygoing nature and lack of a central church mean that his priests are able to use their discretion when it comes to deciding how to advance his cause in the world. Some are solo crusaders for good, while others found adventuring companies or support border towns in need of faith and comfort. Some brew ale or beer, some make wine, some plant crops for these beverages, and some involve themselves in the transport or sale of spirits. City-based clerics might be heavily involved with the local brewers' or vintners' guilds, and may even oversee the quality of spirits for the city government (provided any bureaucracy is kept to a minimum). In smaller communities, a cleric might work as a mediator, teach farmers how to brew their own drinks in small quantities, and encourage townfolk to share with their neighbors to create bonds of friendship. Explorer clerics and adventurers in distant lands often seek to assuage or combat the scars of slavery; look for new stories, rumors, and recipes to share; or act as healers and spiritual support for principled mercenary companies.

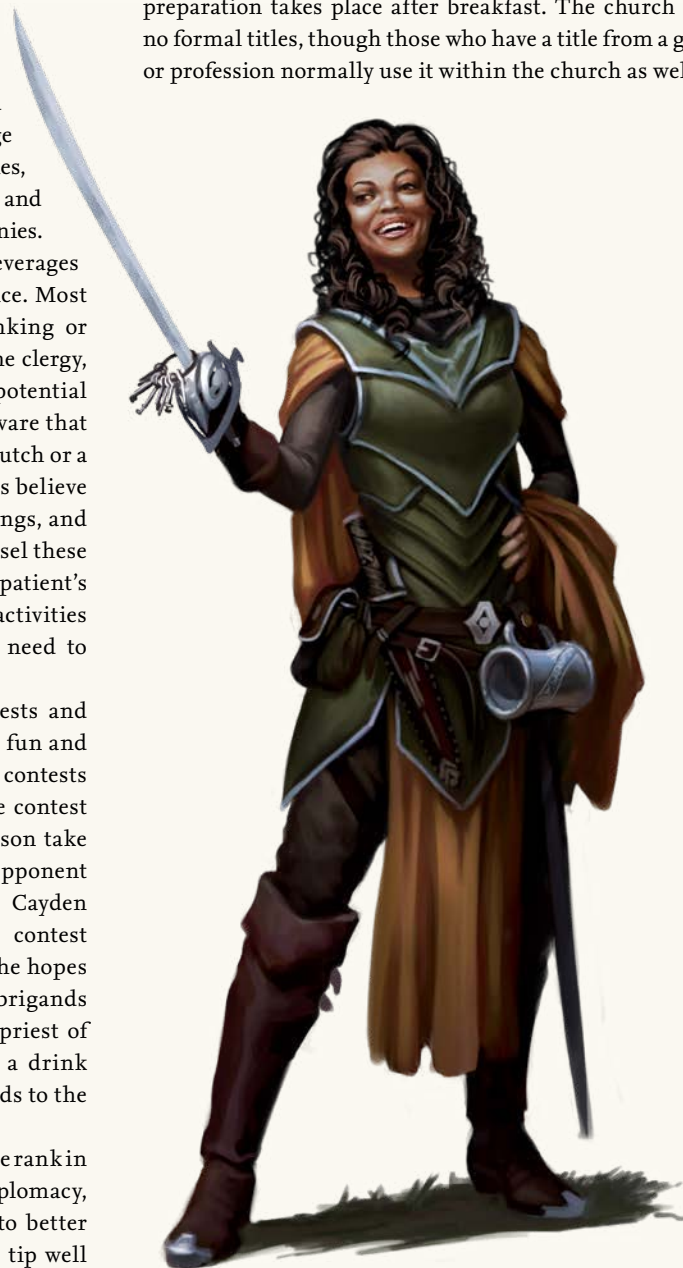
The god's close association with alcoholic beverages leads most clerics to have a high alcohol tolerance. Most individuals who are easily sickened from drinking or dislike the taste of alcohol usually do not enter the clergy, but the faith would never turn away a worthy potential who has no taste for booze. The church is also aware that some folk drink to the extent that it becomes a crutch or a poison to the will. Cayden Cailean and his priests believe this is a corruption and abuse of his favorite things, and sometimes a priest takes it upon himself to counsel these poor souls, often using minor magic to bolster a patient's resolve and steering the person toward work or activities that improve the patient's life and negate the need to drown his or her sorrows.

The clergy has a tradition of drinking contests and "dueling dares" or boasting contests, all in good fun and never with the intent to harm or humiliate. In contests that become heated, a competitor who feels the contest has gone too far may suggest that the other person take the Test of the *Starstone*, at which point the opponent usually says, "I'm great, but not so great as Cayden Cailean," refusing the dare and ending the contest honorably, usually buying the darer a drink in the hopes of becoming comrades. By custom, many brigands who consider themselves civilized will allow a priest of Cayden Cailean to pass safely in exchange for a drink and a blessing, though this courtesy rarely extends to the priest's companions.

A typical priest of Cayden Cailean has at least one rank in a useful Craft or Profession skill. Most study Diplomacy, Knowledge (geography), or Knowledge (nature) to better influence people or enhance their craft. Priests tip well

and have relatively relaxed attitudes toward marriage. Many also develop close platonic friendships with people of all genders. Given Cayden Cailean's own status as an orphan, priests and temple-taverns often foster orphans and children born of other traveling priests. These are raised by the church community, though if the parents' identities are known, they are still held responsible for their children's welfare.

A typical day for a priest involves waking, a prayer-toast, breakfast, and a period of work. Meals are always begun with a toast, and in some places late afternoon is marked with a swig of hearty, thick ale. Evening is for friends, family, telling stories, and personal interests. Spell preparation takes place after breakfast. The church uses no formal titles, though those who have a title from a guild or profession normally use it within the church as well.



While many bards claim Cayden Cailean as their patron, only a small number are so devout that they consider themselves part of the clergy. Bards are proud to point out that it was their forebears who first spread the news of Cayden Cailean's ascension, and bards believe that they (as a profession) have a dear place in the god's heart because of this. Their skills and magic make them excellent rabble-rousers in unhappy lands, and many like to keep an ear to the ground for such opportunities.

ADVENTURERS

The Drunken Hero attracts more than his fair share of adventurers and glory-seekers. A follower of Cayden Cailean is generally a happy and companionable traveler, looking to right wrongs and explore the world at her own discretion. Caydenites leave it to others to bear the burden of grim and tortured personas; for a follower of the Drunken Hero, the world is too big and life is too short and sweet to waste any time whining about it. This is not to say that Caydenite adventurers don't have a keen sense of justice. If one is stout enough to be an adventurer and serious about one's faith, one don't turn your back on the poor and oppressed—Cayden's faithful just do the job, show them how to take care of themselves, and then get back to the serious business of enjoying life.

CLOTHING

Formal raiment of a Caydenite priest is a simple brown tunic or robe with a wine-red stole bearing the god's ale-mug symbol, though most clergy and lay worshipers content themselves with a simple stein or other drinking vessel. Ceremonial objects are primarily functional rather than decorative, and a high priest of Cayden Cailean would think nothing of performing a blessing with water or wine from a common bar mug rather than a bejeweled font. His church's holy water may be blessed water, wine, ale, or other spirits, though the stuff intended for use against evil monsters is usually of inferior quality. After all, why waste good wine by throwing it at something?

HOLY TEXT

Cayden rarely spent enough time in one place to read a book, let alone write one, and he prefers to keep his message simple.

Placard of Wisdom: This simple document condenses Cayden's divine philosophy into a few short phrases suitable for hanging on the wall. Though the specific wording may vary from city to city or even tavern to tavern, the general message is "do good, enjoy life, have a drink now and then, and stand up for what you believe in"—easy words of common sense that appeal to all. In areas more focused on abolitionism, worshipers

may add lines to that effect, and it's not uncommon for philosopher-priests to add a few comments of their own, as Cayden himself doesn't seem to mind.

HOLIDAYS

The church believes that every day is a good reason to celebrate—life, good friends, good wine, and so on—and thus only acknowledge a few holidays that merit extra festivities.

Ascension Day: The actual date of Cayden's transformation from mortal to god is irrelevant even to him, but the church celebrates this event on 11 Kuthona with a toast of thanks to him for his gifts. Typically this is a hot alcoholic beverage with a sweet bread pastry of some kind.

First Brewing: After the first harvest, a small amount is set aside to create ale, wine, or stronger drink. When this is ready for tasting, the community comes together to sample the first brewing of the year and toast Cayden's name. Because of local variables in the date of the harvest and different brewing times, this holiday has no set date but is normally about 1 month after harvest-time.

Merrymead: Started in Druma, this holiday on 2 Calistril is about sharing the last of the previous year's mead with the community, and is celebrated through either sharing stories and drinks around a fire or—especially for the less pious—extensive pub crawls.

APHORISMS

Caydenites are an expressive lot, and followers from different regions all have their own local sayings and oaths. As many worshipers of Cayden Cailean are quick to swear, they often do so by their god's name. While many such oaths are ribald and improvised on the spot—both things Cayden appreciates—a few sayings are common.

In Cayden's Name: Flowery speeches are for bards, yet common warriors sometimes still need a poignant turn of phrase, either to exclaim in the heat of battle or offer in honor of the dead. Before combat it is said as a toast, followed by a healthy swallow of Cayden's brew. It is also used to seal oaths between comrades in arms, generally also followed by a healthy swallow of Cayden's brew.

Sweet Barleybrew! Usually uttered in surprise or amazement—whether at the sight of an approaching army, a taste of the brewmaster's best, or a peek at a barmaid's treasures—this exclamation can also call out unpleasant things, such as the taste of beer gone bad, the face of an orc, or the imminent arrival of the barmaid's father.

By the Light of the Starstone: Used both as an oath (on the rare times his followers swear serious oaths) and a declaration of something so profound that saying "Sweet barleybrew!" proves insufficient, this phrase is used even though most people have no idea what the Starstone looks like or if it actually gives off light.



RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Cayden doesn't go out of his way to provoke fights with other godly beings, but isn't afraid to take a few swings if challenged. He avoids evil deities unless they directly cause trouble, at which point he is all battle cries and heroic charges and inspiring speeches followed by lightning-quick cuts of his blade. The exception to this is Asmodeus, who is the antithesis of Cayden, and the Drunken Hero rarely passes up a chance to tweak the devil's nose.

He is on good terms with Desna, Sarenrae, and especially Shelyn (whom he delights in serenading). He enjoys swapping brews with Torag. Erastil is a little too somber and dutiful for Cayden's tastes, Irori too stuffy, and Abadar tolerable but too forgiving of oppression in the name of progress. Iomedae has little patience for what she sees as Cayden's poor discipline and shirking of responsibility. He occasionally trusts with Calistria but remains wary of her; on more than one bitter occasion, the beautiful goddess of lust has gotten the best of him, and those who imply that Cayden only took the Test of the *Starstone* in an attempt to impress Calistria quickly find themselves on his bad side.

While many other faiths recognize Cayden Cailean's worshipers as a force for good, many of the lawful

gods are leery of his faith's destabilizing influence, as it encourages people to shirk responsibilities. Still, most folks are happy to share a drink with a Caydenite, and even happier to have one on their side in a fight.

REALM

Situated on the plane of Elysium, Cayden Cailean's deific domain is split into two portions, both reflecting the Drunken Hero's persona as a carefree mortal adventurer and divine patron of the same.

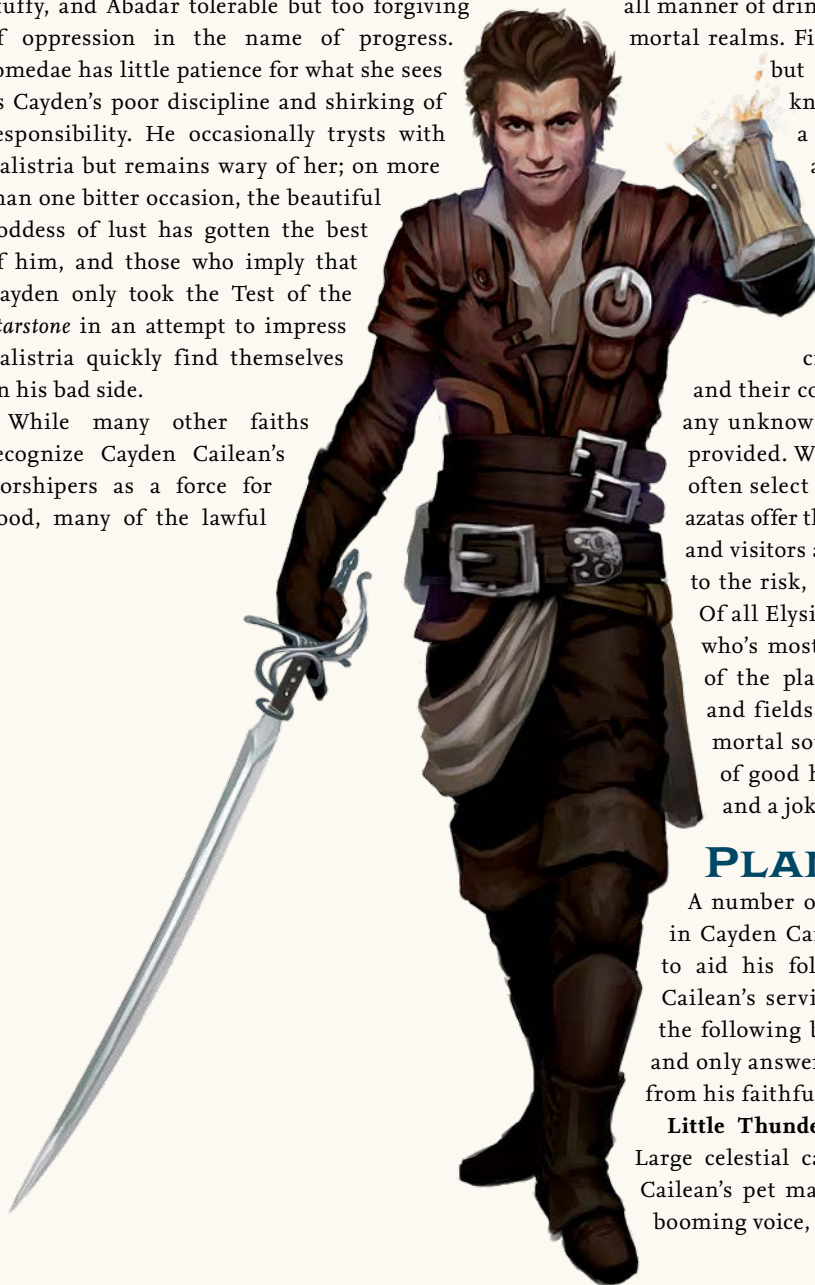
At the heart of his domain is an inner, urban cityscape of mixed architectural styles, filled with a multitude of bars, breweries, and feast halls where his petitioners and servitors share tales and boast of their deeds over all manner of drinks, some of which cannot be tasted in mortal realms. Fights are common and even expected, but they're always started with the full knowledge that whatever the outcome, a hangover is the worst that can befall anyone so long as they fight with passion rather than anger.

The revelry at the domain's heart is surrounded by the so-called Fields of Battle. Here warriors come not to tell their tales but to create new ones, testing themselves and their courage against one another or against any unknown but suitable opponent or situation provided. While Cayden Cailean's divine servants often select the challenges, many times the native azatas offer their own contests and dares to residents and visitors alike, offering rewards commensurate to the risk, especially when mortals are involved. Of all Elysium's gods, Cayden Cailean is the one who's most in tune with the mind-set of many of the plane's native creatures, and his halls and fields are full of such creatures, alongside mortal souls, planar travelers, and anyone else of good heart who feels like enjoying a drink and a joke.

PLANAR ALLIES

A number of rowdy azatas that attend the revels in Cayden Cailean's realm can often be convinced to aid his followers, and in addition to Cayden Cailean's servitor race, the ataxians (see page 281), the following beings also serve the god of freedom and only answer *planar ally* and similar calling spells from his faithful.

Little Thunder (unique celestial cayhound): This Large celestial cayhound is a favored son of Cayden Cailean's pet mastiff, Thunder. He speaks in a great booming voice, is quick to laugh, has a bawdy sense of



CAYDEN CAILEAN

humor, and is fond of strong beer. Once per day, he can growl at his maximum volume, equivalent to a *shout* spell. Like his father, he welcomes battle, but if innocents are in danger, he strives to move them to safety first. He prefers kegs of ale or wine or even potions as payment for his services, as he has difficulty using other items.

Luthier, the Knight of the Vineyard (unique half-celestial human): This man looks more like a fat minstrel than a knight, dressed in colorful leathers and carrying a mandolin and rapier. He also appears to be quite drunk, swaying with every step, mumbling half of his words, and frequently dropping his sword or instrument. Despite his appearance, he is a fearsome enemy of evil and cruelty, snapping to attention when the scent of blood is in the air, then dancing across the battlefield with acrobatic grace. His leather armor is as hard as steel, his mandolin produces notes as clear as church bells, and his hands are as fast and dexterous as those of any pickpocket. Luthier loves fine wine and fine food, and those wishing to bargain for his services should have both on hand for the discussion.

Thais: This five-winged angelic woman serves as Cayden Cailean's herald. She is usually sent to aid or protect Cayden Cailean's faithful, but might appear any place where slaves struggle against oppression, valiant rebels fight for freedom, the desperate and afraid need hope and courage, or a hero needs just a little luck to further some great cause. When not at Cayden Cailean's side, Thais spends time on the Material Plane, often in the guise of her former human form. She frequently takes mortal lovers of both sexes, and is even rumored to have had relationships over the years with Aroden, Calistria, and Nethys, as well as scores of lesser deities. She is a sworn enemy of Asmodeus, however, as his portfolios of tyranny and slavery are in direct opposition to her embodied philosophy, and once even faced the Prince of Darkness himself. She suffered a humiliating defeat at his hands, narrowly escaping only by sacrificing one of her wings. That wing, representing freedom from oppression, remains within Asmodeus's hellish trophy room, leaving Thais with only five wings. For more information, see page 282.

Valon, the Spirit of Spirits (unique ghost): This ghostlike creature is the friendly soul of a priest whose body was utterly destroyed long ago in a battle with evil. Knowledgeable in esoteric histories and obscure lore, he often held that beer was the greatest of any race's inventions. While he can manifest as an incorporeal creature, he prefers to possess the body of a willing humanoid (typically the cleric who calls him) as he misses the sensations of life, and he has been known to drink and carouse if the opportunity presents itself. If the cause is right, he is willing to serve in exchange for "a night on the town" in a borrowed body.

FOR CAYDENITE CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Cayden Cailean may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Cad (fighter)
Daredevil (bard)
Drunken brute (barbarian)

Source

Ultimate Combat 45
Ultimate Combat 32
Advanced Player's Guide 78

Feats

Courage in a Bottle
Drunken Brawler
Liberation Channel

Source

See page 209
See page 211
See page 213

Magic Items

Altar of Cayden Cailean
Carouser's retort
Drinking horn of bottomless valor
Lucky Drunk's mail
Red hound ring
Stagger-proof boots
Tankard of the Drunken Hero

Source

See page 246
See page 254
Ultimate Equipment 292
See page 252
See page 259
See page 270
See page 270

Spells

Blessing of courage and life
Enhance water
Freedom's toast
Heroism
Pick your poison

Source

Advanced Player's Guide 205
See page 233
See page 234
Core Rulebook 295
See page 238

Traits

Adventurous Imbiber
Fortified Drinker
Good-Natured
Strong-Willed

Source

See page 218
Advanced Player's Guide 333
See page 220
See page 223

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics, bards, and inquisitors of Cayden Cailean add *knock* to their spell lists as a 1st-level spell, but only to open welds, shackles, or chains used to imprison or hobble someone. A *create water* spell cast by his clerics or inquisitors can create simple ale or wine (1 cup per level), and *create food and water* spells cast by them can be used to make ale or wine rather than water (which spoils at the same rate the food does).





DESNA

BLESSED IS THE LONG ROAD, THE DESTINATION, THE HOMEWARD PATH, AND ALL WHO MAKE THE JOURNEY. LET EACH DREAM BE A BRIGHT STAR IN THE NIGHT SKY OF YOUR MIND, LIGHTING YOUR PATH IN THE DAY.
—PRAYER CARVED ON A SHRINE NEAR MAGNIMAR

SONG OF THE SPHERES

Goddess of dreams, luck, stars, and travelers

Alignment CG

Domains Chaos, Good, Liberation, Luck, Travel

Favored Weapon starknife

Centers of Worship Kyonin, Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Nidal, Numeria, River Kingdoms, Ustalav, Varisia

Nationality Varisian

Obedience Dance in a random pattern beneath the light of the stars, trusting in the guidance of destiny. If no stars are currently visible, softly sing or chant all of the names of stars that you know as you perform your dance. Let your mind expand and turn your thoughts away from where your feet might land, allowing your steps to fall where chance wills. When the dance feels complete, cease dancing. Ponder the steps you took and the position in which you stopped, and consider what portents these subtle clues might hold for the future. Gain a +1 luck bonus on initiative checks and a +4 sacred bonus on Perception checks made to determine whether you are aware of opponents just before a surprise round.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Traveler's Tricks (Sp)** *longstrider* 3/day, *darkvision* 2/day, or *phantom steed* 1/day
- 2: Starlit Caster (Su)** Over time you have learned to focus your magical power to better damage agents of evil. You add your Charisma bonus on your concentration checks, as well as on your caster level checks to overcome spell resistance. In addition, when you stand in starlight and cast a spell that deals hit point damage, you can have it deal an extra 2d6 points of damage. This bonus damage is untyped, and manifests as a glowing aura of starlight around the spell's original effect.
- 3: Starry Eyes (Su)** You gain darkvision with a range of 60 feet. If you already have darkvision with a range of 60 feet or greater, the range of your darkvision instead increases by 10 feet. This extension applies only to natural, permanent darkvision, not to darkvision that is granted by spells or other effects. In addition, while you stand in starlight the range of your spells (other than spells with the range of "personal" or "touch") increases as though your caster level were 1 level higher.

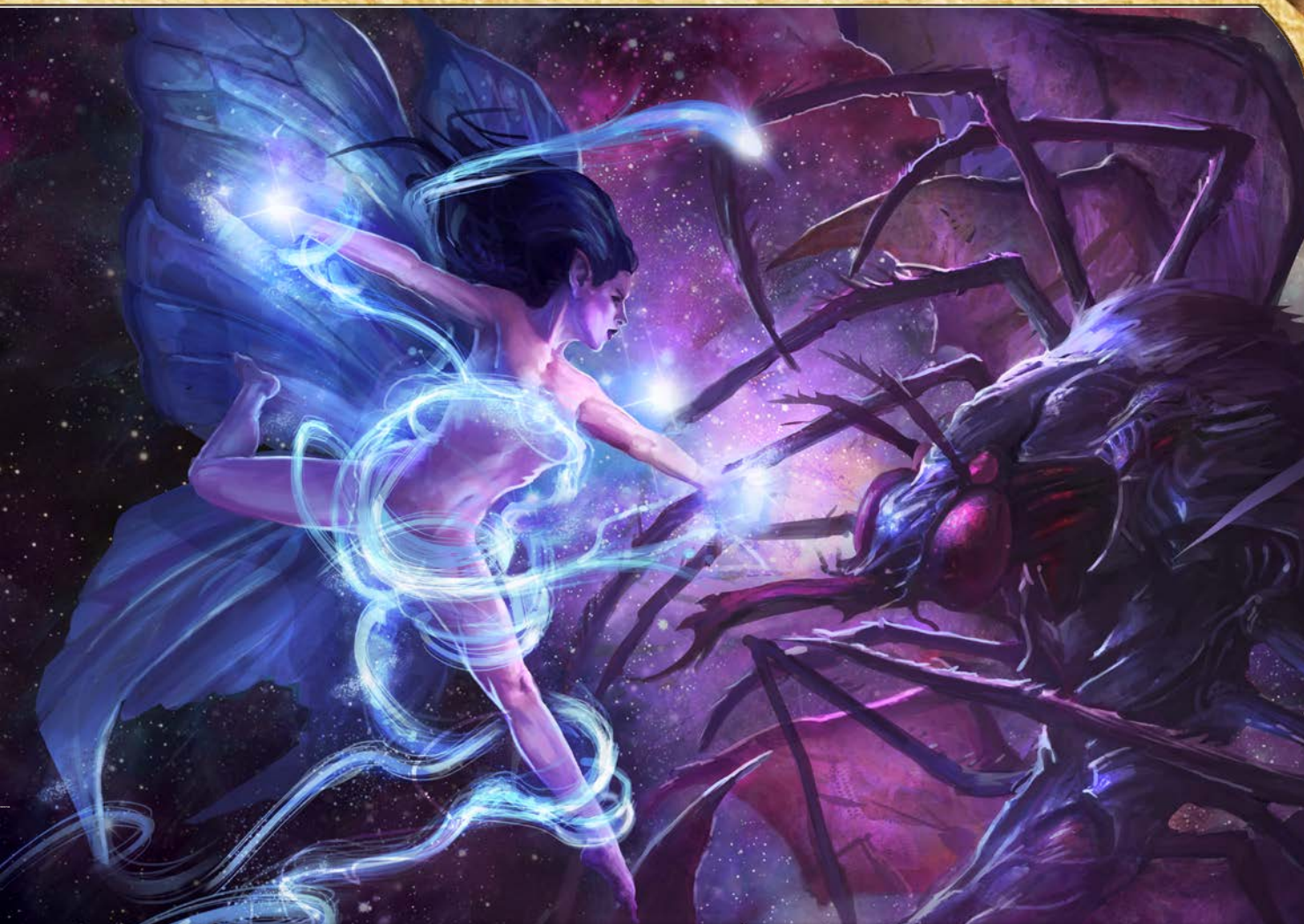
EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Slumberer (Sp)** *sleep* 3/day, *silence* 2/day, or *deep slumber* 1/day
- 2: Splendorous Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a lillend azata. You gain telepathy with the lillend to a range of 100 feet. The lillend follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home on Elysium. The lillend doesn't follow any commands that would cause it to take evil or overly lawful actions, and the creature could even attack you if the command is particularly egregious.
- 3: Blast of Motes (Su)** Whenever you channel positive energy to heal living creatures, a shower of starry motes cascades over all of the living creatures in the area of effect. These motes do not impede vision or stealth attempts, nor do they reveal invisible creatures, but they infuse the targets with divine luck. Targets of this ability reduce any miss chance they face by 10%. In addition, when targets of this ability roll damage dice, they may treat all 1s as 2s. The motes and their effects last for 1 round + 1 round for every 4 Hit Dice you have (maximum 6 rounds). If you don't have the ability to channel positive energy, you gain the ability to do so once per day as a cleric of a level equal to your Hit Dice (maximum 20), but only to heal living creatures. Whenever you use this ability, the beneficiaries are showered with starry motes, with the effects described above.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Fighting Chance (Sp)** *entropic shield* 3/day, *blur* 2/day, or *displacement* 1/day
- 2: See through Dreams (Su)** Desna's blessing allows you to see through half-real and fantastical images. You gain a +1 luck bonus on saving throws made against illusion spells and effects and against dream-based magic (such as *nightmare*). This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum +6).
- 3: Shooting Star (Ex)** You can throw your deity's star-shaped favored weapon with great speed and ease. Three times per day, you can make a single ranged attack with a starknife as a swift action. To throw a starknife as a swift action, you must have it in hand, have sufficient actions available to draw the starknife, or have the Quick Draw feat or a similar ability.

INNER SEA GODS



DESNA

Desna is an impulsive and aloof goddess who delights in freedom, discovery, and mystery. Her aloofness stems not from arrogance, but from confidence in her own abilities and her desire to be unburdened by troubles. She is a collection of contrasts—an ancient goddess who dislikes predicting the future, a traveler who cares nothing for her destination, a carefree creature of instinct haunted by a past stretching back eons, and a peaceful deity forced to battle with old enemies, eternally young despite the weight of ages and stars upon her.

Some believe Desna is flighty, frivolous, and easily distracted, but she has a cold side born of loss, tragedy, and battle. As a luck goddess, she always believes there is a chance for success, but knows that dreams can turn to nightmares and bright destinies can become dark fates; these opposites in her own nature define her and give her things to strive against. She challenges those who would corrupt her domain or who have wronged her friends or followers, striking at them with burning starlight, bad luck, and energies alien to Golarion.

Although her dominion over dreams and stars means that many seers, diviners, and mystics revere her as an informal goddess of prophecy, she delights in the freedom of people to choose their own destiny. She prefers to use prophecy as a tool for exploration and creating choices, not for limiting action and snuffing hope, and finds “doom and gloom” prophecies and those that seem to guarantee good people will commit horrible acts. She hands out such warnings only in the direst circumstances, generally in dreams, and if she must send dreams that portend despair, she may grace a follower in need with the benefit of a helpful spell upon awakening (such as *aid*, *magic vestment*, *prayer*, *protection from evil*, or *remove fear*) that persists throughout the day. Thus does she pair dark portents with hope that the outcome may still be bright.

When Desna has a message for one of her faithful, she prefers to intervene in dreams, sending simple impressions, visions, or even prophecies that the sleeper clearly remembers upon awakening. When dreams are unsuitable or time is short, she indicates her favor with flights of swallowtail butterflies, sparrows, dragonflies,

geese flying in a four-pointed star shape, or the timely arrival of messenger birds. She typically shows her disfavor with dreamless sleep that fails to refresh the sleeper (as if the person had not slept at all), sore feet, messenger animals losing their messages, and minor travel accidents.

Desna watches over those who travel for any reason. Trailblazers, scouts, adventurers, and sailors all praise her name. (Although most sailors honor Gozreh in some fashion, he is a temperamental deity, and a little luck from Desna often comes in handy during a storm.) Her influence over luck also makes her a favorite among gamblers, thieves, and others who rely on fortune for shady dealings.

Desna teaches her followers to indulge their desires, experience all they can, and trust instinct as a guide. Her faithful are often wide-eyed, exuberant people, embracing the world in all its strangeness, and willing to jump in with both feet. Desnans aren't afraid to get their hands dirty, their feet wet, or their knuckles (or faces) bloodied while living life to its fullest. Critics call them hedonists, but that's an exaggeration, as worldly experience, rather than pure sensation, is their true goal. Ascetics, hermits, and meticulous planners are unknown in her church. Her faithful teach that it's better to ask forgiveness than permission, as sometimes a unique opportunity requires a split-second decision, whether it's a chance to touch a dragon's egg, savor a rare fruit, or passionately kiss the mayor's son.

The goddess encourages her worshipers to believe in themselves and express their inner strengths, often in the form of music, dance, or theater. Many songs penned by her faithful become popular tunes for dancing and gatherings, and numerous old favorites are attributed to long-dead Desnan bards whose musical legacies have persisted for centuries. Some people believe the custom of a traveling bard paying for his lodging with a song stems from Desna's church, and like bards, followers of Desna encourage young folk to sing and dance in the hope of discovering hidden talents.

Desna usually appears to her followers as a beautiful but remote elven acolyte of her faith. In this guise, she aids people in need or suggests relevant excerpts from her holy writings, *The Eight Scrolls*, as a way to lead the faithful on the correct path. She is

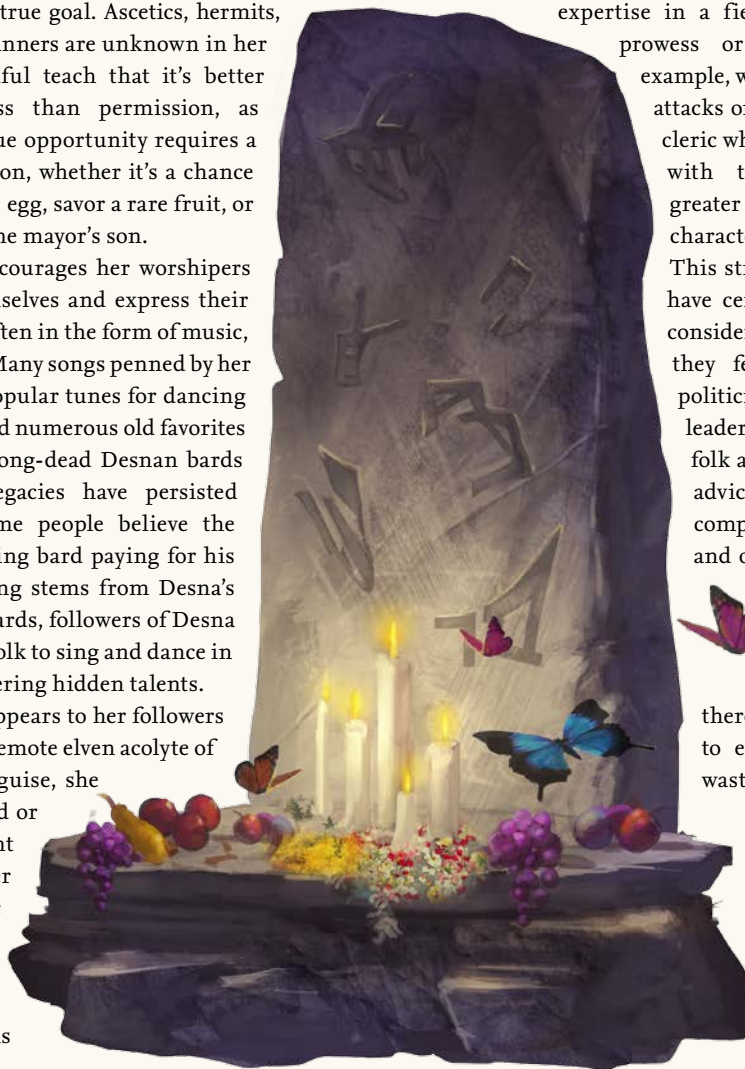
not above singing to lighten dour moods or dancing with those whose confidence is in need of reinvigoration. When Desna wishes to reveal her true nature, she transforms her common clothing into a billowing silken gown and grows brightly colored butterfly wings on her back, although in somber situations her wing colors are pale and moth-like.

Desna's holy symbol is a butterfly with images of stars, suns, and moons upon its wings. Most of her clergy are clerics, although about one-third of her priests are bards or rogues, with a number of neutral good druids and rangers also choosing her as their patron. She is called the Song of the Spheres, the Great Dreamer, Starsong, and the Tender of Dreams.

THE CHURCH

While Desna's faith is ancient—known even in the age of storied Thassilon—the church is extremely disorganized, with few actual temples or settled priests, and no formal chain of command. Physical and magical might are respected, as are knowledge and experience, with personal expertise in a field trumping mere combat prowess or spellcasting ability. For example, when dealing with a basilisk's attacks on a frontier town, a low-level cleric who has survived an encounter with the creature is accorded greater authority than a high-level character who has never faced one. This structure means that Desnans have certain ideas about what they consider to be “informed” authority; they feel free to ignore nobles, politicians, and other “meritless” leaders if more knowledgeable folk are on hand to provide better advice. Although they can be competitive with others inside and outside the church, these are friendly rivalries; they prefer to move on if a disagreement is going to turn ugly—after all, there's an entire world of wonder to explore, so there's no sense wasting time on an argument.

Services dedicated to Desna include singing, dancing, storytelling (especially of unusual dreams), footraces, and music. Some use exotic substances, herbal drinks, alcohol, or animal venom to spark unusual (or (for



the very lucky) lucid dreams. Many rituals involve sand because of its relation to sleep and the comparison of grains of sand to the number of stars in the sky. Dust made from crushed rose quartz (which can have a starry pattern when illuminated from behind) is used in the faith's rare ceremonies and blessings instead of water or sacred oil; Desnan priests carry holy quartz dust in glass flasks instead of holy water. Some luck-seeking faithful carry dice or other luck talismans carved of rose quartz.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Desna keeps few temples, preferring unattended shrines at crossroads and places of secluded beauty, like hilltops or peninsula points. Although unmanned, these shrines often hold simple provisions and a place to scrawl notes or feelings if visitors are so inspired. Her association with the stars and night sky means that her temples sometimes double as celestial observatories, or at least have one room partially open to the sky. In many cases, these observatories have markers on the walls or windows to indicate the positions of important stars on holy days (one-room churches might have a single hole in the ceiling to show a particular star's position, and keep the hole covered on other days to keep out rain or snow). Temples in large cities often take the form of tall towers with observatories at their tops, and with small libraries of astronomical and astrological charts. Rural temples usually incorporate an inn or stable as a service to travelers. As Desna maintains friendly—or, at least, non-conflicting—relationships with most good-aligned and civilized deities, it's not uncommon for her faith to be among those practiced in communal temples.

Butterflies and moths (as well as their caterpillar young) congregate at her holy sites; legends say the priests can call upon these creatures to defend the temple, devouring cloth and leather to leave would-be thieves naked but unharmed. Some temples maintain colonies of silk-producing moths, creating hardy and beautiful silk for use and sale by the temple. Every temple protects a small chest of silver coins (usually no more than 300 sp), which it uses to help fund journeys by the faithful. Needy travelers can petition the temple for financing, but this funding is normally available only for frontier exploration or travel to exotic locations—a trip to the next town might merit only a silver for water, bread, and a spare blanket. Those who exploit this generosity tend to suffer bad luck in the long run.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Priests of Desna—including clerics, bards, rogues, rangers, and occasionally druids—go where they please, earning money by telling fortunes, providing entertainment, and interpreting dreams. They help people when they can, but

prefer to make their acts seem like luck, coincidence, or the blessings of their goddess. Common skills for priests are Diplomacy, Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (history), Profession (harrover), Ride, and Survival.

Many of Desna's faithful are talented artists, writers, and entertainers, and the church expects all priests to at least be familiar with contemporary music, theater, and literature, even if an individual priest shows no talent for playing instruments, acting, or writing. Those without abilities in these areas are still taught to recognize such gifts in others and are expected to encourage the gifted to explore their talents. Worshipers with performance skills share them regularly at festivals, local venues, and celebrations such as weddings. The church also throws public parties to showcase such performances, and such events endear the church to the public, even if the offered fare is no more than cheese, warm bread, and watered wine.

Some Desnans are skilled fortune-tellers, using their gift for reading people to entertain and inspire hope. Like their goddess, they oppose the use of divination to create fear or despair; most brush off requests stemming from unhappiness or malice, such as when the listener or one of his enemies might die. The goddess expects her diviners to challenge any speaker who prophesies ill, misfortune, or doom, and when they hear of magical auguries predicting bad times, they actively intervene to make sure those events do not come to pass. In addition to soothsaying, some Desnans learn to interpret dreams in order to ease troubled minds and mend other wounds of the psyche. Recurring or shared dreams are of particular interest, as they often stem from inner traumas or external magical sources. Those plagued by insomnia or nightmares call on Desnan priests for aid, for their healing spells or even just a soothing touch are often enough to bring a tranquil night's sleep.

A typical day for a Desnan priest involves an early prayer (often spoken in bed moments after waking), recording remembered dreams in a journal, breakfast, study (the arts if so inclined, geography or the culture of a foreign land if not), and any duties assigned by a more experienced priest if one is present. After a light lunch, the priest goes for a walk or ride, either to someplace new or by taking a new path to a known place. Once at his destination, he attends to his duties there, helps passersby who require his skills, possibly entertains at a local gathering spot, seeks a place to stay for the night, dines, prays, and sleeps. Caravan masters like to hire priests of Desna to accompany their wagons for luck, especially in regard to warding off attacks from beasts, and this gives priests an excuse to travel when they have no other pressing matters. If a holy site needs maintenance or repair, the priest takes care of what is needed or hires a skilled person to do it.

Elder priests whose bodies can no longer handle physical travel tend to use magic to visit the minds of



DESNA

others in distant locations (using the *dream* spell) or even travel to distant planes (using the *astral projection* spell). Some use herbal or alchemical substances to enter a dreamlike state to explore higher levels of consciousness or commune with dream entities. A few such “Wakeless Ones” are so strong-willed that they have remained asleep and dreaming for years—they don’t even wake to eat or drink, and are instead sustained by faith, will, and dream-food. It is considered a noble end for a Desnan to die in her sleep, as it sets the sleeper on the first step of the final spiritual journey to the goddess.

Followers of the Song of the Spheres consider sleep a form of prayer, and traveling Desnans volunteer only for the first or last watch of the night so as to be able to sleep uninterrupted. If a priest believes he won’t get as much sleep as he likes that night (for example, if his comrades plan a midnight battle), he tries to fit a nap or two into his schedule for the day rather than risking being short on sleep. Divine priests prepare their spells during morning prayers, while Desna’s bard-priests generally prepare spells after those prayers.

Desna shares a mutual loathing with night hags and other creatures that prey on sleepers, so her priests oppose them, as well as spellcasters who use *nightmare*—priests go so far as to destroy spellbooks and magic items that use the spell. Because of Desna’s feud with Lamashtu, she charges her priests with protecting the common folk from dangerous beasts (especially from intelligent beast-like creatures such as worgs), although she holds no hatred for wary predators that avoid mankind.

Desna’s priests have a tradition of exploring distant places and leaving marks indicating someone of the faith has been there. This “found-mark” might be as simple as the goddess’s symbol scratched on a flat rock or tree trunk, as elaborate as a small shrine, or anything in between. Often, explorers leave personal glyphs or notes indicating who they are; in this way, they gain fame in the church, and someone who has marked many sites in this way is called a Founder—a title that confers no formal powers but garners high esteem among the faithful. Although Desnans constantly seek to make new discoveries, some particularly remote or hard-to-reach locales—such as mountaintops, islands, or the

tops of ruined buildings—have become pilgrimage sites in their own right, eventually bearing the mark of the original Founder surrounded by dozens of personal runes or butterfly symbols left by those who have followed in his or her path.

ADVENTURERS

Those who follow Desna follow their dreams. They accept and cherish the world’s surprises, but sometimes see the world not as it is, but as it could be. Their most cherished desire is to accumulate experiences, to find out what existence has to offer, and to expand their souls’ understanding of the myriad delights of the cosmos. Desna’s faithful are accustomed to making decisions quickly (though not rashly!), because they never know when opportunities might arise again. They express themselves freely, whether through voice, dance, music, or art, regardless of whether they’re any good at it.

Desnans don’t pick fights, and would rather leave than get involved in one—but if there’s no choice, or if innocents might be harmed by their departure, they hit hard and fast to end the battle quickly. Many members of the Desnan faith find themselves drawn to the Pathfinder Society, with its limitless potential for travel and adventure.

CLOTHING

Desna’s priesthood has no regalia or vestments beyond bright colors, often adorned with butterfly-wing patterns, and their goddess’s holy symbol. Worshipers typically have little problem recognizing each other, as they often work Desna’s symbol into jewelry, clothing, or tattoos, or bear her holy weapon, the starknife.

HOLY TEXTS

The faithful of Desna care little for heavy tomes of holy doctrine or arguments over the most righteous path. They prefer their religion concise, entertaining to read, and easy to carry.

The Eight Scrolls: These eight short scrolls contain all the official doctrine of the church, summarizing Desna’s early days as a goddess, her interactions with other deities, her



discovery of her powers, and the fixing of the stars in the night sky. The fifth scroll contains the church's words regarding the behavior of mortals, which sparks many friendly debates among the faithful. Desna is a goddess of inherent contradictions; fortunately, her loosely organized church accepts all plausible interpretations of the scrolls that do not radically deviate from standard church teachings. The scrolls are short enough that they all fit within two scroll cases (one if the writer's handwriting is particularly fine).

Shrine Writings: Wayside shrines to Desna are typically covered in graffiti, most inscribed by traveling followers of the goddess. It is said that the goddess herself grants inspiration at such places, and that those who add drawings, scribbled verses, or life observations upon the shrine are granted safe travels and good luck.

HOLIDAYS

Given their lack of unified structure and penchant for spontaneous celebrations, the church of Desna has few formal holidays. Two major festivals stand out from the dozens of minor occasions and celestial events.

Ritual of Stardust: This celebration takes place on the summer and winter solstices, bracketing the shortest and longest nights of the year (and thus the best day to travel and the longest night to view Desna's stars). A great feast starts at dusk with several large bonfires throwing sparks into the darkening sky. When dusk turns fully to night, the faithful sing until the fires burn down to glowing embers, then throw handfuls of sand laced with star gems (star rubies, star sapphires, or rose quartz) on the coals or into the air downwind of the festival. Pledges of friendship and journeys follow the stardust ritual, with the winking speckles of sand mirroring the stars in the sky and representing Desna bearing witness to the words. Some cultures include prayers for good harvests or mild winters, depending on the season.

Swallowtail Release: Legends tell of a portion of Desna's spirit plummeting from the heavens after a great battle with Lamashtu. A blind orphan nursed Desna's avatar back to health, and to thank the child, the goddess transformed her into an immortal butterfly. In this form, the child could forever fly around the world, seeing its wonders. In honor of this event, the church raises swallowtail butterflies, releasing them from a netted wagon on the first day of autumn in front of a crowd of the faithful. These "children of Desna" fill the air for the rest of the day's singing, feasting, and storytelling. Desna's followers believe it is good luck for a butterfly to rest on them during the festivities. Larger temples sometimes have enclosed gardens where they raise the caterpillars for eventual release on the holiday; smaller temples or those in climates that won't support butterflies might release dry leaves or corn husk fragments painted to look like butterflies.

DESNA'S SORROWS

All of Desna's followers know stories of the two greatest sadnesses that the goddess carries with her.

Ghlaunder's Hatching: While wandering the Ethereal Plane long ago, Desna discovered a strange cocoon that pulsed with magic. Curious, she broke it open and released a mosquito-like being called Ghlaunder, which immediately attacked her. She easily fended off its attacks, but the resilient creature managed to escape before she could destroy it. Now Ghlaunder plagues the mortal world as a demigod of parasites and infection. Desna still hunts the godling and his cults in the hope of wiping them out or perhaps turning his power to a more positive end, just as leeches can aid certain ailments and maggots can cleanse infected wounds. Her priests teach this story as an example of how every life contains mistakes and bad choices, but it is better to live, make those mistakes, and accept the challenges they present than to hide away and do nothing.

Lamashtu's Trap: In her earliest days as a goddess, Desna's mentor was Curchanus, a mostly forgotten god of beasts, travel, and endurance, and Desna spent many nights listening to stories of his travels. Curchanus's greatest enemy was Lamashtu, who longed for his control over beasts. Lamashtu set a trap for Curchanus, leading him on a strange wandering path into her realm, where she swarmed him with horrible monsters, finally attacking in the guise of a deformed jackal and tearing his beast-dominion from him. This wound was too great for the elder deity, and as his dying act he willed his power over travel to Desna. Since this theft, wild animals have treated mankind as invaders rather than a part of nature, and Desna still searches far and wide to find a way to force Lamashtu to surrender Curchanus's stolen power.



DESNA

APHORISMS

Desna's followers collect stories, phrases, and habits from many parts of the world. A few have become common among the faithful across the Inner Sea region.

Be Ready for Challenges and Unexpected Friends: Worshipers should train in combat or magic so they can overcome adverse situations in their travels. They should be especially vigilant for agents of the Old Cults and harmful creatures from the Dark Tapestry, but should welcome friendly travelers from far places and distant stars.

Feet Are for Walking: Desna teaches that it's better to wander and explore than to stay home and grow stale in thought and habit. Those who can't wander in the flesh may still explore through their dreams and through the stories of others.



DESNA

Follow a Hunch, but Bear the Consequences: If faced with a sudden problem, worshipers should be guided by intuition and emotions if reason doesn't provide an obvious answer. If this leads to something harmful, they are responsible for repairing the harm that is done.

Learn from What Is Different: Desna's followers should accept others who espouse friendship, regardless of race or religion. They learn redemption and acceptance from Sarenrae, appreciation of beauty from Shelyn, bravery from Cayden Cailean, passion from Calistria, magic from Nethys, combat from Gorum, nature from Gozreh, and more. Ignoring the teachings of other religions is ignoring the chance to learn.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

While friendly toward most other deities, Desna is ultimately a lone wanderer who remains aloof, and her sometimes-tragic history has left her cautious about leaving herself vulnerable to others. She is aware that some find her remoteness enticing, however, and she coyly

encourages even godly paramours to explore and discover new things while trying to court her. Recently, Cayden Cailean has made attempts to woo Desna, a flirtation she finds endearing.

Her detachment has not prevented her from acquiring enemies, most from long-standing feuds or old grudges. Her biggest enemies are Ghlaunder and Lamashtu—the former because she accidentally released him from his cocoon and thus set his evil loose into the multiverse, and the latter because she murdered Desna's mentor, Curchanus. Desna also battles Zon-Kuthon, for she wants the night to be a time of wonder rather than of fear and oppression, and Rovagug, who contests her for the void of space. The goddess also watches for signs of numerous forgotten and departed deities from ages long past, guarding against their unlikely but ever-possible return.

Desna's only true sources of comfort among the deities are Sarenrae, who tends the wounds she receives in battling the evils of the night, and Shelyn, who reinvigorates her spirits and creates new wonders to be explored.

Desna's followers don't spend much time worrying about anyone else's faith, although they're happy to talk about their own if asked. They're not averse to paying their respects at shrines or temples to most other good-aligned gods, or welcoming members of other faiths with which Desna is friendly into the safety of their temples or homes when those guests are threatened or in need. As long as others respect their ways, they'll return such respect; the road to truth passes through different landscapes for everyone, and a Desnan would never interrupt someone else's journey unless that person were in mortal peril. Desna's footloose dreamers are polite but cautious—some might say aloof—toward followers of deities who encourage their faithful to settle down, such as Abadar's congregations and worshipers of Erastil; they are protective of their right to wander, and don't take kindly to attempts to tie them to one place. Though members of other faiths might see Desnans as flighty or disapprove of their amusement at religious practices they consider stodgy, Desna's faithful can be just as implacable as the adherents of any other good-aligned faith when it comes to opposing evil. They are especially dedicated to guarding against the return of ancient, evil gods, and to rooting out cults of Ghlaunder and Lamashtu.

REALM

Desna's domain is shrouded in mystery. While most clergy agree that she makes her home in Cynosure, Golarion's pole star, details beyond that begin to drift significantly according to personal interpretation. Is her palace, the

fabled Sevenfold Cynosure, actually on the Material Plane, or is the star merely the gateway to a pocket dimension of her own devising? If it is in the star, is it a place of celestial fire or a garden of starry delights where the deceased faithful can dabble their feet in moonlit pools? Does the goddess actually reside there, or does she constantly wander the spaces between the stars and those unknown reaches from whence she first came? And given that she also maintains a small floating castle on Elysium, how many other “homes” does the goddess keep? As with many questions related to Lady Luck, the goddess’s answer is merely a wink and a smile, if she deigns to answer at all.

PLANAR ALLIES

In addition to her servitor races, the thyrlien (see page 285) and the lyrakien (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 38), the following unique outsiders serve the goddess of dreams, and willingly answer only to *planar ally* and similar spells cast by her worshipers.

Night Monarch: This enormous moth or butterfly serves as Desna’s herald, and rises to protect Desna’s faithful and combat her enemies in times of great need. Surprisingly stealthy despite its size, the Night Monarch soars through the sky in near silence. Spotting the Night Monarch is considered a sign of good luck and the blessing of Desna. Followers of Desna who spot the Night Monarch sometimes go so far as to set up shrines to the goddess marking the event. If destroyed, the Night Monarch reappears later in full health, but Desna’s mortal worshipers consider attacking the creature blasphemy and go to great lengths to avenge the creature’s temporary death. For more information, see page 284.

Nightspear (unique avoral): This fierce avoral (*Bestiary 2* 16) has jet-black feathers with white spots on the tips, and his eyes are a bright silver that becomes dull and opaque when he’s hunting or hiding. He is especially proud of his ability to pull up out of a full plummet with only inches to spare. He has an excellent singing voice and often belts out heroic songs of his own composing mid-battle.

The Prince of the Night Sky (unique djinni): This arrogant djinni once served Gozreh, but joined Desna when he found her attitude more to his liking. He appears as a djinni made of dense white smoke or inky black darkness dotted with bright stars (alternating between the two at whim). In either form, he has a long black beard, which he keeps meticulously combed. For payment, he prefers jewelry and items that summon air elementals.

Sorrowbrand (unique lillend): This dramatic lillend is a composer and author. Her scales are a silvery black, and she wears dozens of black silk ribbons in her hair. While she enjoys helping mortals, she constantly complains that it takes time away from her study and writing. She prefers payment in the form of bardic scrolls or long-lost songs.

FOR DESNAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Desna may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Guide (ranger)

Stargazer (oracle)

World walker (druid)

Source

Advanced Player’s Guide 125

Ultimate Magic 59

Ultimate Combat 43

Feats

Butterfly’s Sting

Trailblazing Channel

Source

See page 208

See page 217

Magic Items

Altar of Desna

Cloak of the night sky

Dream candle

Dreamwing cape

Necklace of netted stars

Ring of stairs and stars

Robe of stars

Shooting starknife

Staff of slumber

Starfaring robe

Starsong mail

Stone of good luck

Source

See page 247

See page 262

See page 263

See page 263

Ultimate Equipment 260

See page 259

Core Rulebook 528

See page 257

Ultimate Equipment 200

See page 270

See page 253

Core Rulebook 530

Spells

Beacon of luck

Dream

Dream feast

Find the path

Guiding star

Haze of dreams

Wandering star motes

Source

See page 229

Core Rulebook 274

See page 232

Core Rulebook 281

Advanced Player’s Guide 226

See page 235

Advanced Player’s Guide 255

Traits

Faithful Artist

Starchild

Stoic Optimism

Thrill-Seeker

Source

See page 220

Advanced Player’s Guide 333

See page 222

See page 223

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Desna’s clerics and druids may prepare *dream* as a 5th-level spell; rangers may prepare it as a 4th-level spell.





ERASTIL

THE FIRST GIFT YOU EVER RECEIVE IS YOUR FAMILY. WE ALL GROW FROM THE SEEDS OF OUR PARENTS' PLANT.

—PARABLES OF ERASTIL

OLD DEADEYE

God of family, farming, hunting, and trade

Alignment LG

Domains Animal, Community, Good, Law, Plant

Favored Weapon longbow

Centers of Worship Andoran, Cheliax, Galt, Isger, Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Mana Wastes, Molthune, Nirmathas, River Kingdoms, Varisia

Nationality Ulfen

Obedience Plant five seeds in fertile earth, spacing them out in the shape of an arrow. The seeds may be those of any plant that can potentially grow in the region, though edible plants are preferred. The seeds don't need to be from a type of plant that could thrive in that soil—all they must have is a chance at survival. If no suitable earth exists, place a small bundle of seeds (again, those that grow edible plants are preferred), a small bundle of preserved food, or a quiver of arrows in a place where a passerby might see it. Mark your gifts with Erastil's sign, and say a prayer for the health and safety of the communities in the area and those who may be in need of Erastil's guidance. Gain a +4 sacred bonus on Survival checks.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Family's Bond (Sp)** *cure light wounds* 3/day, *shield other* 2/day, or *prayer* 1/day
- 2: Twin Fang (Ex)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon an exact double of your animal companion. The double acts and thinks like your animal companion in every way, and obeys your commands just as the original would. Your original animal companion and its double understand and trust each other perfectly. The double remains for 1 round for every Hit Die you possess, and then vanishes. If you don't have an animal companion, you instead gain the ability to use *summon nature's ally V* as a spell-like ability once per day.
- 3: Faithful Archer (Ex)** You are particularly skilled at using Erastil's favored weapon. When using a longbow, you add your Wisdom bonus on attack and damage rolls against targets within 30 feet.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Animal Friend (Sp)** *charm animal* 3/day, *animal messenger* 2/day, or *summon nature's ally III* 1/day

- 2: Hunter's Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a pair of hound archons. The hound archons follow your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to their home in Heaven. The hound archons don't follow commands that would violate their lawful good alignment. Such commands will not only earn refusal and scorn from the hound archons, but could cause them to attack you if the command is particularly egregious.
- 3: Communal Table (Sp)** Your devotion to caring for your community allows you to evoke Erastil's divine bounty to feed your friends with a banquet of cooked game and simple beverages. Once per day, you can use *heroes' feast* as a spell-like ability. Creatures that eat from this communal table, a process that takes 1 hour, gain a +2 sacred bonus on attack rolls and Will saving throws instead of the usual +1 morale bonus. Whenever you cast this spell, choose one teamwork feat; you may select a new feat every time you cast this spell, but once it's cast, your selection can't be changed. Anyone who eats from the communal table gains the benefits of the chosen teamwork feat. The benefits of the *heroes' feast*, including the bonus teamwork feat, last for 12 hours. A character doesn't need to meet the prerequisites for a teamwork feat granted through this ability.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Sureshot (Sp)** *longshot*^{UC} 3/day, *deadeye's arrow*^S 2/day, or *flame arrow* 1/day
- 2: Tough Hide (Su)** When you wear armor made from leather or animal hide, the armor provides an extra +2 armor bonus to your AC. This bonus improves the normal armor bonus granted by the armor; in other words, it stacks with the suit's normal armor bonus. You also mystically subsume some of the qualities of the animal that gave its life for the armor. Gain the scent ability with a range of 30 feet while wearing armor made from leather or animal hide.
- 3: Farmer's Bond (Su)** Your time spent cultivating crops has given you a bond with plants. You can cast *speak with plants* 3 times per day. If you spend at least 1 hour during the day in direct sunlight, you don't need to eat that day. Finally, you become immune to poisons ingested from whole plants (not distilled poisons, such as assassins use) and any poison from attacks or effects generated by plant creatures.

INNER SEA GODS



ERASTIL

Erastil, also known as Old Deadeye, is an ancient deity who first became known on Golarion when early humanoids began to domesticate and dominate their natural surroundings. Pastoral legends claim that Old Deadeye crafted the first bow as a gift to mortals so that they might learn to hunt and survive in the dangerous world. Though civilization has continued to advance beyond simple villages, Erastil remains popular in tradition and in the frontiers of the world, a transitional figure between the worship of the Green Faith and the religions of cities.

Erastil is primarily a nature deity focusing on the plants and animals that farmers, hunters, and ranchers deal with in their challenging lives. He is also a god of close-knit communities and families, and has a protector aspect that only surfaces when such things are threatened. Erastil eschews crusades and brazen heroism, and he has no grand plans to eradicate chaos and evil from the world; he simply wants people to be able to live their lives in peace without the threat of being devoured by monsters, conscripted into an army, or destroyed by

world-ending magic. He is a stern patriarch whose spirit is as hard as wood. He isn't afraid to face down a bully, nor is he too proud to calm a frightened child. He teaches how to read the turning of the seasons, how to know when to sow and reap, how to tell when livestock are sick or gravid, how to poultice a wound and set a broken leg, how to spot a straggling sheep or the signs that a dog has gone rabid. He believes that cooperation leads to friendship and safety, and that if mortals respect the gifts of nature, it will sustain them. He loves customs that encourage strong family bonds—no matter how quaint they are by modern standards—and enjoys hunting for sustenance but not for sport. Happy weddings and new babies make him smile. He is not one to spout philosophy, and instead gives practical advice and hands-on teaching.

Old Deadeye believes that leadership is a virtue of strong souls and that groups function best when led by a benevolent leader—whether that group is his church, a community, or a family. Many communities strong in Erastil's faith follow the leadership of a village patron or matron, another elder, or the scions of a family renowned

ERASTIL'S PALADIN CODE

The paladins of Erastil are gruff, strict traditionalists. They seek to preserve the integrity of rural life and communities. Their tenets include the following affirmations.

- My community comes first, and I will contribute to it all that I can. If I don't give something back, who will?
- I must offer the poor in my community assistance, but I may not do the work for them—instead, I must teach them to contribute to the settlement. It is only through cooperation that a community grows strong.
- When danger threatens, I am not a fool. I seek first to make sure the weak and innocent are safe, and then I quell the danger.
- I keep to the old ways, the true ways. I am not seduced by the lure of money or power. I remember that true honor comes from within, not from the accolades of others.
- I remember that reputation is everything. Mine is pure and upstanding, and I will repair it if it is broken or tarnished. I stand by my decisions, and live so that none shall have cause to blame me.
- I show respect to my elders, for they have done much. I show respect to the young, for they have much left to do. I show respect to my peers, for they carry the load. And I shall carry it with them.
- I am honest, trustworthy, and stable. If I must leave my lands and community, before I go, I ensure that they will be tended in my absence. Even when duty calls, my duties to my home come first—letting them lapse makes me a burden on my people.

for their clearheadedness and past members' leadership roles. In Erastilian families, one family elder is likewise viewed as the leader of the clan or head of the household. The members of such groups typically defer to that leader's plan for peace and prosperity, contributing their own talents, skills, and labor for the betterment of the whole community.

Erastil believes that children should honor their parents and know when it is time to work or time to play. He dislikes the chaos and trouble that adventurers bring, and while they may have their uses when monsters come sniffing about, it is best if adventurers take care of the problem quickly, receive a meal and a place to sleep, then move on before their wanderlust catches on in otherwise quiet communities.

Erastil's avatar is an upright hunter with the head of an elk, clad in well-used leathers and carrying a simple bow. Old legends say that halflings and humans each see him as a member of their own race, even when members

of both races are looking at him at the same time. Some representations show him as fully human—usually of Ulfen or Kellid heritage—depicting how he sometimes appears to children, lost travelers, or those he simply doesn't wish to reveal his divine nature to. In most stories, Old Deadeye's arrows never miss, and a few communities still own a spent arrow supposedly once fired by Erastil, passed down through the generations and treasured for its connection to the god.

Depictions of Erastil in artwork are uncommon, as his followers prefer focusing their energy on more practical matters. Those physical representations that do exist are often carved wooden placards bearing his likeness—these aren't worshiped as icons, but serve as constant reminders of his presence. In other communities, a stuffed elk's head or just its horns serve this purpose. In more elaborate representations, Erastil is shown fighting off wild animals or teaching people how to hunt. On the walls of a few ancient caves predating the Azlanti era are painted primitive silhouettes of an elk-headed man performing similar acts.

Old Deadeye shows his approval through bountiful hunts, bumper harvests, mild weather, the appearance of straight paths, and the like, but he prefers to limit his direct intervention to helping needy people in lean times, as he does not want to encourage laziness. A hungry family might find their tiny garden provides bushels of vegetables, an old cow might start giving milk again, a weary hunter's prey might stumble or become entangled, and so on. Hoofed animals are considered channels for Erastil's power, with elk-horns being favored by his worshipers for making simple tools and weapons. Forked lightning is considered a sign of his presence, and creatures or structures struck by lightning are said to have been felled by Erastil's arrows. His anger is reserved for followers who betray his principles; he usually punishes them by changing them into something more useful to their community, such as a pig or a fruit tree. Mothers often warn misbehaving children that Erastil will transform them, and most communities have at least one small, gnarled tree that local legend claims was once an especially unruly child.

Erastil's favored weapon is the longbow, but his clerics and druids are proficient with the shortbow as well. Most of his priests are clerics, but a small minority are druids, rangers, and (most rare) paladins, while a few remote communities are served by adepts. Druids usually serve communities in places where natural hazards and the weather are their greatest threats, while paladins tend to be leaders in lands where monsters lurk. Often called Old Deadeye by his faithful, Erastil is also known as Elk Father and the Old Hunter. His holy symbol is a bow made of elk antlers with a nocked arrow.

THE CHURCH

A typical worshiper of Erastil is a common farmer, rancher, village artisan, or subsistence hunter who wants to live her life, take care of her family, and not worry about kings, wars, or monsters. Erastilians are not pretentious, and while they might be proud of their accomplishments, they're simple folk and their desires are modest—a good crop, a fine piece of land, fat livestock, and a healthy family. They look after their neighbors' farms in emergencies and expect the same in return, but are otherwise content to be left to their own business.

Among the faithful, elk iconography is common, but they have no taboos about hunting the animals as long as no part of the body goes to waste. Because elk shed their antlers at the start of winter, tools made from them are fairly common, and even children may own simple knives made from antlers. At birth, a firstborn child is given an elk tooth, supposedly to ensure fertility and a long life. In the extreme north, reindeer iconography is more common than that of elk, though the traditions and rituals among Erastil's worshipers are otherwise essentially the same.

Hymns constitute most of the church's music, often with a strong rhythm so they can be sung to keep time during repetitive work. Flutes, drums, horns, and other easy-to-make, easy-to-play instruments are also common.

Erastil is very pro-marriage, seeing it as the proper way to create families and frowning on those who would bend or break the sacred bonds with adultery or divorce. The church sees marriage as a way to "tame" unruly men and women, and most villages have at least one married couple who tied the knot after being caught in an indiscretion. Widowers and widows usually remarry, especially if there are still children in the house. Most of Erastil's priests are married, though they are not required to be.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

A temple to Old Deadeye is almost always a simple wooden building, longhouse, or even town hall that serves a rural community as a gathering place, with religion being only one of its many uses. Sparsely decorated, such structures often contain highly functional furnishings, as the faithful prefer not to waste their holy area with rows of awkward, heavy pews and statues when sturdy tables and stools would make the area well suited for mending tools and clothes, food preparation, and other helpful crafts. In some cases, temples of Erastil have no seating, leaving the congregation to stand.

In such temples, sitting during the faith's short services while not taboo, is looked down on for all but the elderly or infirm—and even they bring their own chairs or mats. A shrine to Erastil is usually little more than an antler- or bow-mark carved on a tree or rock.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Erastil's priests usually have a conventional role in a community—such as being farmers or artisans—in addition to their explicitly religious duties, and consider attending to the needs of their own land and families a form of devotion as well. Most of a priest's day is spent performing mundane tasks just like any other member of the village, with the priest pausing only to speak a blessing at the dawn's breaking, but always ready to drop what he's doing and pitch in when he's needed. They are often called upon to help build homes, deliver children, oversee trade, and bless crops. Erastil's priests are careful to put the needs of the community first, because Old Deadeye's gifts may give them an advantage in aiding their fellow townsfolk. For example, a cleric of Erastil



who is a shepherd might use his skill and magic to take care of all the village's animals rather than just his own, even if that means he makes less money selling his own sheep at market—the prosperity of the community and the health of its flock being more important than his own wealth. Priests usually have ranks in Diplomacy (though Intimidate may work just as well), Heal, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nature), and Sense Motive.

Priests bless farmland and herd animals, plan the planting and harvest, and look after injured folk and families in need. Priests often serve as community counselors and mediators, and are generally the first to step in with a firm hand to deal with a rebellious or disruptive member of the community, whether that

person is a frequent drunk, an abusive spouse, or a child prone to screaming tantrums. Adult troublemakers who repeatedly break the community's trust and prove unwilling to change are usually branded on the hand and exiled from the community. To prevent more problems, they're usually pointed in the direction of the nearest city. If something comes along that's too much for the priest to handle, such as bandits, an orc band, or a hungry monster, it is the priest's responsibility as a community leader to find those who can deal with the problem, such as experts from other communities who share the faith, or traveling adventurers.

Every few years the church encourages young priests to set out from the community in search of news, seeds for new crops, alternate techniques for animal husbandry, and other useful new skills that can aid their home villages. Though these wanderers appear to be fish out of water, their stubborn dedication to helping those back home has guaranteed the survival of many poor villages, whether they acquired desperately needed money to send back or by eradicated foul beasts that lurked nearby. Young adventuring priests often end up settling in remote villages saved by their heroic efforts, especially if there is no local priest. This gives the faith an opportunity to grow and establishes the bonds of a greater community outside the immediate interests of a single village—though the church prefers to focus on life in small settlements, it sees the surrounding communities as a kind of extended family and recognizes the importance of maintaining ties with them. Because a priest usually has a leadership role in a community, the priests of Erastil prefer to take charge when they are part of an adventuring party, and sometimes run into conflict with equally headstrong members of the group as a result.

Though druids are a minority among the clergy, all priests respect them for maintaining the natural world they and their people depend upon. They also give a nod to the rare paladins of the faith who are willing to take up swords and shields so the common folk can keep on with their lives. Rangers rarely become leaders in the church, as their skills and magic cater less to healing and growth compared to other priests.

Erastil's church is simple and practical. Most communities have only one or two priests, so complicated hierarchies are unnecessary, and priests defer to the wisdom of elder clergy. Visiting priests are shown hospitality as is appropriate for any guest, but unless these visitors are particularly important (such as the eldest priest in the country), they typically defer to the judgment of the local leaders. Priests who are part of a community are usually called elders, regardless of their rank within the community or the church. Traveling priests not associated with a community are called brothers or sisters.

ERASTIL



ADVENTURERS

Because of his focus on the home and family, and the need for adults to be practical providers for their children and communities, Erastil produces fewer adventurers than many other gods. When his faithful do strike out on an adventure, it's inevitably to help those they leave behind. Followers of Erastil seek riches not for their own sake, but for what such rewards can do for their families and communities, and those forced to embark on a long adventure regularly count the days until they can return to the warmth and simplicity of home.

Erastil's faithful desire to keep the peace, and while they do what they have to, the farther a conflict strays from regions that directly affect their chosen community, the less they feel compelled to continue the fight. They are paragons of stability—some might say too much so—yet while some might call Erastilian values quaint or backward, the faithful feel they serve as anchors for hearth, home, and family, and help folk understand their place in rural communities, where roles must be well defined.

CLOTHING

Given Erastil's focus on simplicity over frivolous adornment, the formal raiment of his clerics and druids is practical, and usually consist of a leather or fur cloak or shoulder-cape branded with his symbol or affixed with a wooden badge bearing his mark. Communities led by a druid may have a ceremonial horned hat or drape made from the tanned hide of an elk.

HOLY TEXT

The *Parables of Erastil* is the common text of the Erastilian faith. It gives homilies on strengthening family bonds, almanac-like advice on planting, and lore about game animals and tracking. The number of chapters varies from place to place, as communities omit things irrelevant to their way of life or add fables emphasizing local events or traditions.

HOLIDAYS

Erastil believes extensive and complicated ceremonies take time away from necessary things like tending to crops and putting food on the table, so most religious events are short and to the point. The solstices and equinoxes are holy days for the church (the week of the vernal equinox is called Planting Week by the faithful, and week of the autumn equinox is called the Harvest Feast, even though the associated rituals only take about an hour). The summer month of Erastus is named for Erastil.

Archerfeast: This holiday on 3 Erastus is a day of feasting, fun, and relaxation. Villages hold archery and stone-throwing contests, ranchers rope and trade calves and lambs, and young people ask permission to wed.

Cider is served cold during the day and hot at night. At sundown, an animal is offered to the god, and everyone in the community eats a piece to share in his blessing.

APHORISMS

Any folksy, rural saying is likely to spill from the mouths of Erastil's faithful as if it were the god's dogma. Two in particular are favorites.

Never Trust a Fool: Whether the fool is the village idiot trying to catch the moon with a spoon or a traveling adventurer trying to inspire the locals to rise up against the local lord, a sensible person ignores him, as no good will come of this "work."

Nothing Is More Satisfying Than the Fruits of a Day's Labor: This saying is used to chastise lazy folk and rebuke those who wonder what's so satisfying about a simple country life. Gold and gems make one weak; hard work in a field shows strength of body and character.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Erastil can be gruff and reserved, but he is still on good terms with most nonevil deities of Golarion. However, he is very set in his ways and frequently criticizes the particulars of his fellow deities' faiths and practices. Although Erastil's stodgy demeanor means that few deities go out of their way to fraternize with him, his skills at archery and tracking are among the greatest in the Outer Planes. More than once other deities have sought out the god of hunters for his aid and insight into slaying marauding beasts or finding someone lost in the multiplanar wilds—begrudgingly enduring Erastil's instructions for and opinions on making sure such a thing never happens again.

Despite being ill-suited to planar politics, Erastil does have several allies among the deities of Golarion. Although Erastil views Abadar as a good fellow who's perhaps forgotten where he came from, both want peaceful, orderly homes for their followers. Erastil frowns on Abadar's pomp and occasional heartlessness, but the god of cities sees the value of Erastil's work in setting people and villages on the path to the grand communities they could eventually be—even as he smirks over opinions he usually views as outmoded. Erastil also appreciates the work of Torag, especially his dedication to craftsmanship and clan, but neither stubborn deities can find much more of a common ground with the other besides the mutual respect of two old men nodding across a taproom.

Erastil's paternal affection for Desna is real, but distant and tinged with a slight sadness. Her independence and providence over the reliable cycles of the moon and stars could make her a trusted friend, but her distance, whimsy, and encouragement of self-indulgence makes

her too untrustworthy in all but times of direst need. He is more patient in his interactions with Shelyn, for her support of marriage and families strengthens communities. The goddess of art has, on numerous occasions, sought out the god of hunters, asking him to guide her to the most amazing vistas and unique settings in the multiverse. Erastil regularly indulges her, enjoying her company even as he argues with her over the value of art and life. They disagree on most topics, but Shelyn's congeniality and honest appreciation of Erastil's time have preserved their friendship.

Evil deities are largely of a kind to Erastil, and he has little time or interest in doing much more than contributing arrow fire to drive them away. While he views Lamashtu and Rovagug as a frontier scout might wild monsters, he reserves an especial hatred for Urgathoa. That goddess's gluttony and fostering of diseases regularly blight his people, whether in the form of deadly plagues, the tainting of game and fields, or in cultivating the sick-hearted desire for more than one's neighbors. Urgathoa is aware of the god's loathing, and goes out of her way to needle Erastil,

setting her minions upon fragile frontier communities whenever the opportunity arises.

Erastil's followers are generally friendly toward members of other good-aligned religions, but they also harbor a sense of superiority that can vary from private conviction to outright paternalism. The faith tends to be an all-or-nothing affair, and thus attracts people with somewhat black-and-white worldviews. Most of Erastil's faithful, however, have good hearts, and though they may grumble and mutter disapprovingly at those with different beliefs, they'll also help people in true need without hesitation. Many see themselves as having a parental role toward those around them. If they don't engage in outright evangelism for their faith and worldviews, they still consider it important to attempt to instill proper values in their neighbors while aiding them: they may teach local youth valuable skills while emphasizing the importance of using those skills to contribute to their families and communities, or help a newcomer fix up a house while encouraging him to use it to start a family. They are unlikely to take action against cults of evil deities unless those worshipers directly threaten their community, although any adherent of a malevolent deity who strikes up a conversation with one of Erastil's followers can expect a stern lecture on her misguided beliefs.

REALM

Erastil's pastoral domain stands on the gentle slopes of the fourth tier of Heaven.

True to his ethos, Old Deadeye's realm is filled with lush farmland punctuated by forests and rivers and populated by small, tightly knit villages of his petitioners, reunited in death. His domain contains only a few cities, mostly as a way of fostering and promoting trade, especially between the petitioners of the dwarven pantheon and the plane's archons, though a few permanent portals allow for cross-planar trade in and out of his domain. For the most part, Erastil is content to have his realm be a pleasantly rural place, where his petitioners can spend eternity in the simple pleasures of working fruitful land and hunting in bountiful forests alongside their families and friends, free from hardship and sadness. While angels, archons, and petitioners devoted to the god may take up causes of their own—acting across the multiverse to help protect faithful communities and fight the horrors of the evil planes—Erastil does not directly require such services, and sees nothing wrong with his people supporting the celestial armies and their righteous cause by staying home and keeping Heaven a stable, healthy, well-defended plane.



PLANAR ALLIES

Most of Erastil's divine servants are animals or benign forest creatures. Some of them reside permanently on the Material Plane, patrolling frontier areas and keeping an eye out for settlers in need. A few "legendary" animals known to villages are actually Old Deadeye's minions rather than true animals, making appearances once or twice a generation to protect the community. In addition to Erastil's servitor race, the stag archons (see page 287), the following allies serve Erastil, and are suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar spells.

Arangin (unique celestial heavy horse): Said to be the resurrected spirit of the paladin Jaydis Von's equally heroic and storied mount, Arangin appears when servants of Erastil most need aid, carrying the lost out of labyrinthine forests and saving the wagons of desperately stuck pioneers from hidden bogs. This ruby-toned heavy horse has an Intelligence score of 8 and understands Common but speaks no languages.

Blackfeather (unique avoral): Able to take the form of a man, an eagle, or an eagle-man hybrid, this fierce avoral archer is a skilled and deadly archer who hunts only for sustenance or to defend the innocent. Often he is content to perch on a rooftop, silently watching over a village when strangers appear, ready to aid in case there is trouble.

The Grim White Stag: This enormous stag serves as Erastil's herald. The Grim White Stag was once a powerful spirit creature, worshiped by early humans under the tutelage of druids of the Green Faith. When Erastil's religion became more prominent, it allied with Old Deadeye, respecting his wisdom, strength, and nobility. Some regional tales say that in the early days of the world, Erastil hunted the beast, seeking to make a bow of its horns, yet it proved so agile and hardy that after weeks of pursuit, the god of the hunt tired of tracking the beast. At night, as the god stopped to rest and enjoy a simple meal, the stag fearlessly approached, bowing low to the tenacious tracker. Erastil, understanding that the beast was no savage, welcomed the Grim White Stag into his camp and shared his meal with the ancient spirit of the forest. From then on, the two have understood and respected one another, sharing the same reverence for the forests and creatures there, as well as care for all who would live honestly and in peace with the denizens of the wilderness. For more information on the Grim White Stag, see page 286.

Scorchbark (unique treant): Nearly crippled in a skirmish with a barbed devil, this reckless young treant now displays his burns like a badge of honor. He is obviously wary whenever an enemy uses fire near him, but is a stalwart ally and never lets it deter him from his responsibilities or cause him to hesitate in battle.

FOR ERASTILIAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Erastil may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes	Source
Archer (fighter)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 104
Divine hunter (paladin)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 62
Sniper (rogue)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 134
Trapper (ranger)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 65
Feats	Source
Nimble Natural Summons	See page 214
Savior's Arrow	See page 215
Thicket Channel	See page 217
Magic Items	Source
<i>Altar of Erastil</i>	See page 247
<i>Bracers of archery</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 504
<i>Bronze skinning knife</i>	See page 262
<i>Cloak of elvenkind</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 507
<i>Deadeye leather</i>	See page 251
<i>Deadeye's spotter ring</i>	See page 258
<i>Efficient quiver</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 511
<i>Kinbonded bow</i>	See page 256
Spells	Source
<i>Allfood</i>	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 201
<i>Deadeye's arrow</i>	See page 232
<i>Deadeye's lore</i>	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 227
<i>Hunter's blessing</i>	See page 235
<i>Tracking mark</i>	See page 243
Traits	Source
Deadeye Bowman	See page 219
Erastil's Speaker	See page 219
Patient Optimist	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333
Wise Teacher	See page 223

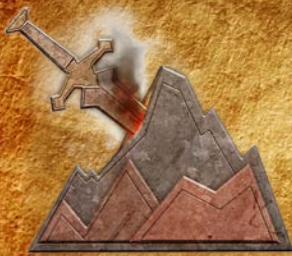
VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics, paladins, and rangers of Erastil may prepare *goodberry* as a 2nd-level spell, and druids can cast the spell on nuts or seeds as well as berries. Clerics and paladins may cast *animal messenger* as a 2nd-level spell, and all priests may use that spell on any non-hostile animal (including friendly guard animals and domesticated animals).

GORUM

THE CLASH OF SWORD ON SHIELD IS MY SONG. I AM IN YOUR ARMOR, YOUR BLADE. STRIKE AT YOUR FOES AND I WILL GUIDE YOUR HAND, FOR I THIRST ONLY FOR BATTLE.

—GORUMSKAGAT IV



OUR LORD IN IRON

God of battle, strength, and weapons

Alignment CN

Domains Chaos, Destruction, Glory, Strength, War

Favored Weapon greatsword

Centers of Worship Brevoy, Lastwall, Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Nirmathas, Numeria, Realm of the Mammoth Lords, River Kingdoms

Nationality Kellid

Obedience Dress yourself in the heaviest set of metal armor you own. Shout your oath of loyalty to Gorum at the top of your lungs, punctuating each pause for breath by smashing your weapon against a shield or against your armor-clad body. After your oath is done, kneel on one knee with your weapon resting against your shoulder. Recite your victories in battle in a sonorous voice until the time for your obedience is done. If you should be attacked while conducting your obedience, slay the creature who dared test your might. (You may be assisted by allies, but you must strike the killing blow.) Gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on Strength checks and Strength-based skill checks. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience, and this choice can't be changed.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Weaponsmith (Sp)** *crafters' fortune*^{APG} 3/day, *fox's cunning* 2/day, or *greater magic weapon* 1/day
- 2: War Mount (Ex)** If you make a full attack while mounted, your mount also attacks with great enthusiasm. You must attempt a Ride check as normal to fight with a combat-trained mount. If your Ride check succeeds, your mount can attack with a +4 bonus on its attack and damage rolls.
- 3: Chaotic Charge (Ex)** Three times per day, you can make a chaotic charge attack while mounted. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. You take an extra –2 penalty to AC in addition to the normal AC penalty for charging, but you deal an extra 2d6 points of damage to creatures of lawful alignment on a successful mounted charge. If you have the cavalier's charge, mighty charge, or supreme charge class ability, you instead deal an extra 3d6 points of damage to creatures of lawful alignment on a successful wild charge and don't take the AC penalty.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Battler (Sp)** *magic stone* 3/day, *spiritual weapon* 2/day, or *deadly juggernaut*^{UC} 1/day
- 2: Mass Strength Surge (Su)** When using the strength surge granted power from the Strength domain, you can target allies within 30 feet of you instead of having to touch a single target. You can target a maximum number of allies equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6). If you don't have access to the Strength domain, you instead gain the ability to use the strength surge granted power a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier, as listed in the strength surge description. However, you can touch only a single target when using this granted power.
- 3: Gorum's Shout (Sp)** Once per day, you can use *word of chaos* as a spell-like ability. In order to use this ability, you must shout a battle cry at top volume, ending your shout in praise to Gorum.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Mighty Warrior (Sp)** *enlarge person* 3/day, *bull's strength* 2/day, or *beast shape I* 1/day
- 2: Two-Handed Smash (Ex)** If you make a full attack while wielding a two-handed melee weapon, you may make a single unarmed strike in addition to your normal attacks. In essence, after you complete your two-handed weapon attacks, you smash with your elbow, kick out with a foot, or make some other unarmed strike against an opponent. This bonus attack is made at your highest base attack bonus, and provokes an attack of opportunity if you lack the Improved Unarmed Strike feat or a similar ability. If you're Medium, you deal 1d6 points of damage with this unarmed strike; if you're Small, you deal 1d4 points of damage. Add half your Strength bonus to the damage dealt. The attack roll for the unarmed strike is subject to the normal penalties for two-weapon fighting unless you have the feats to reduce these penalties.
- 3: Devout Rage (Ex)** You enter a holy or unholy frenzy whenever you rage, depending on your alignment. You gain a +2 bonus on your attack and damage rolls while raging. If you don't have the rage class feature, you can fly into a rage once per day as the *rage* spell, though you don't need to concentrate. Instead, the rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Hit Dice or until you choose to end it, whichever comes first.

INNER SEA GODS



GORUM

Said to have been born from the first battles between humans and orcs, Gorum appears as a suit of spiked plate armor with blazing red eyes. Though claimed by half-orcs, humans, and orcs as one of their own, the god cares nothing for these divisions except insofar as they relate to battle and strife. He believes in strength and power, the verdict of the sword, and the music of clashing iron. He does not favor good or evil, and the only right he confers upon mortals is the right to fight for their next breath. As long as people struggle against themselves and each other, Gorum's teachings live on. The greatest moments in a Gorumite's life are those spent locked in close combat, with every moment threatening annihilation—all else is dull and dreary.

When the dwarves drove the orcs upward out of the Darklands and onto the surface world in their legendary Quest for Sky, the savage hordes fought with primitive human tribes that were all that remained of the broken human empires. In an era of conflict and bloodshed, new pains and passions unknown in all the centuries before broke forth in mortal souls and carved themselves in broken flesh. Before this conflict, his name was not known,

but as human clashed with orc, Gorum rose into prominence as the divine personification of horrible, exhilarating war. Wherever war has risen throughout the world ever since, Gorum has been there to inspire mortals to greatness on the battlefield. Under his iron gaze, the worthy find glory—and those who fall are forgotten.

Gorum's priests believe that if the world ever became free of war, his spirit would abandon Golarion in disgust, but he would eagerly return should mortals ever take up arms again. Despite advances in magic, technology, and the tools of war, Our Lord in Iron is remarkably constant, for his focus is on battle itself, not the reasons for it or the types of weapons used. Whether a battle is between orcs and humans, goblins and dwarves, or elves and creatures from beyond the stars, Gorum is there to glory in the vital energy of conflict.

Gorum's entire focus is on battle and the crucible of struggle. He understands the need for archery, siege weapons, and stealth, but nothing satisfies him more than face-to-face melee combat in which sweat, blood, and fear fog the air. While Torag represents the tactical side of war, and Sarenrae its necessity as a last resort

when evil cannot be stopped in any other way, Gorum is the excitement, battle-lust, and brutality of combat. He is indifferent to whether his followers are knights in plate mail, goblins wielding dogslicers, or children armed with table knives—anyone willing to put up a fight, no matter how pathetic or pointless, is worth swinging at. He does not condone the wild slaughter of innocents and invalids, for such acts are the parlance of murderers and butchers, not of warriors. Likewise, he can be merciful, giving quarter to those who surrender, but he is quick to slay any who pretend to submit in the hope of striking while the superior opponent is unaware, and those who refuse to fight at all are barely worth a scornful beheading.

It is more pleasing to Gorum to see a soldier fight a score of battles in his lifetime than die in the first, and if compromises or truces mean warriors live on to fight again, he supports diplomacy over seeing every soldier fight to a pointless death, but he doesn't care for negotiations and quickly loses interest when tempers cool and blades are sheathed. Battles of words and wits tire him, not because he lacks the intellect for them, but because he finds them as pointless and unsatisfying as crushing ants—true challenges are those where lives are on the line and a moment's hesitation can mean blood and pain. As good and evil have little meaning for him, he may fight demons one day and noble dragons another, just to challenge himself and test his own mettle. Among other deities, Gorum is seen as warrior with few equals, but prone to rage and destruction when he grows bored.

Artistic depictions of Gorum are uncommon, as his followers prefer mighty deeds and boastful words to quieter, more permanent works of art. Of the depictions that are created, however, his image, shape, or shadow is often drawn in blood or hammered together out of scraps of metal. A few temples with forges have molds for casting weapons, and the spillover channels in the molds lead to hand-sized receptacles shaped like spiked, armored men with Gorum's symbol on their chests. These heavy, inadvertently created icons of the faith are used both as holy symbols and for focusing group prayers before battle.

Gorum shows his favor through iron armor or weapons that gleam or leak blood when touched. Certain legendary warriors are known for leaving a trail of blood and gore behind them even when not in battle, and sometimes a favored, lone warrior outnumbered by a superior force manages to survive because his enemies slip on the blood-slick bodies of the dead. Gorum's anger most often manifests in sudden patches of rust that appear to completely ruin a valued weapon or piece of armor, and he has been known to punish a cowardly warrior by causing his armor to fall apart into a pile of rusty scraps just as enemies converge on him. His holy symbol is a mountaintop with an enormous sword jutting from it.

THE CHURCH

Gorum's is an all-or-nothing faith. An individual is either brave or a coward; he either stares the enemy in the eye or drops his gaze in shame. Gorum demands only that his faithful constantly prove themselves in battle. If there's no convenient war, daily duels and other mock battles can satisfy this need for a time, but Gorumites living in a peaceful region tend to wander off in search of conflict—or start some of their own.

A typical worshiper of Gorum is a soldier, mercenary, brigand, or bloodthirsty raider, or even a smith who crafts the tools of war. His followers tend to be impulsive, violent, and prone to grabbing whatever they feel like owning; as a result, there are far more evil followers of Gorum than good. Fights between the faithful are common, though they are usually not fought to the death; they are undertaken to establish dominance or claims over treasure, to impress lovers, or just for entertainment. Among the faithful there is often a sense that those fighting on the same side are kin—comrades willing to shed blood in a ritual of violence predating civilization and even their god himself.

Gorum is popular across the Inner Sea region, but especially so in the places where war is a constant fact of life, such as Belkzen, the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, the Realm of the Mammoth Lords, and Lastwall. Holy rites among his congregants include ceremonial battles, tests of strength and bravery, beating large drums, and shouting. Most church music is based on Gorum's holy text, the *Gorumskagat*, and is suitable for marching, charging, working, or dancing that favors stomps or other loud footfalls. Gorumite bards use their magic to duplicate the sound of weapons breaking bones and the screams of the injured, giving any performance the semblance of a battlefield; evil bards of the faith may actually own disposable slaves they "play" for this purpose.

Gorum doesn't care about marriage or familial bonds. He knows such things are necessary to produce the next generation of warriors, but doesn't care whether children come from an exclusive marriage or from polygamous or random couplings. He understands that love can inspire passions that make men and women fight, and that protecting a spouse and children is often why mortals go to war, but he values these reasons no more highly than territorial claims, family honor, greed, or survival. In human communities where his faith is popular, marriage is no more or less common than in other lands, but devout worshipers of Gorum tend to have loud marriages with frequent arguments and much throwing of household items. Some of the church's stories tell of mighty warriors who swore to only take a lover who could defeat them in single combat—and how when they met their matches, the couples became even more powerful in battle together than they were alone.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Gorum's temples are more akin to fortresses than to places of worship—they are built with thick walls, iron gates, internal forges and stables, and spikes on the parapets, even in the center of an otherwise peaceful city. The priests keep them stockpiled with armor and weapons, typically harvested from dead enemies and kept clean and battle-ready by acolytes; many adventurers laden with salvaged armor head to a Gorumite temple first to sell their heavy loot. The priests don't bother to record what armor came from whom, so it is entirely possible for a young priest's first set of armor to have previously been worn by a fallen orc or a hero of the faith.

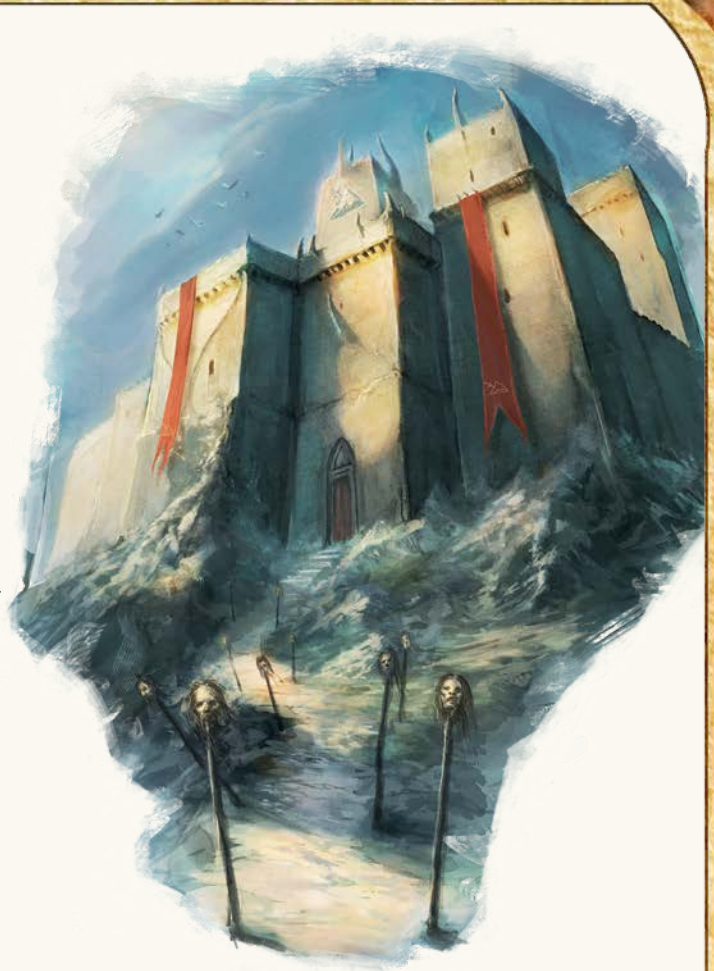
A typical shrine to Our Lord in Iron is a pile of rocks capped with a helm or a sword jammed into a crevice in a boulder. Sometimes the shrines mark the graves of fallen champions, and other times merely a battlefield where much blood was shed.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

To worship Gorum is to recognize that fame and glory are fleeting, and that all that matters is how one acquits oneself in the moment. The companionship of others can lift a priest of Gorum up for a time, but in the end she must prove her powers every day or risk coasting on past glories. Gorum's clergy may be savage, or they may be cool and calculating, yet their goal is always to know that they spent their lives pushing their limits.

The church values strength over age or knowledge, and the senior priest in any tribe or temple typically reaches that position by defeating hosts of enemies and beating down all rivals. When several leaders come together, there is usually some gruff posturing and a few brawls until a hierarchy is established. Underhanded tactics such as poison are considered dishonorable in these bouts, though spells that enhance the priest, his weapons, or armor are considered fair. The head of a particular area may be addressed as a lord or lady, or by a local military title such as "commander," "captain," or even "chief."

Priests of Gorum in aggressive warrior cultures earn fame and riches by raiding other tribes or lands. Exiles and those from more "civilized" lands seek employment as mercenaries or bodyguards, or pursue criminal endeavors, such as brigandry, that allow them to crack skulls on a regular basis. Some travel the land as "monster hunters," usually out of a desire to test their mettle against strange beasts rather than an interest in helping threatened communities. Priests try to enter combat at least once per day, even if it is only a duel. In especially lawless lands they may find themselves deputized by local guard captains to help



keep the peace—which they accept only because it gives them an excuse to fight. Priests usually have ranks in Intimidate, Heal, and Perception; those with a more tactical bent also study Knowledge (history), and the cannier ones put ranks in Sense Motive to better deal with tricky opponents. Nearly all of Gorum's priests are clerics. A few battle-druids are part of the clergy, however, lending an animalistic perspective and unusual spells to the church's battle-repertoire. Warbards and rangers serve the church in essential roles but are not considered part of the clergy.

Inquisitors of Gorum are very rare and make it their personal mission to chase down deserters and others who flee from battle, as well as soldiers who turn on their own. When they witness others fleeing, these coward-slayers prefer to finish the current battle before hunting their prey—this gives the scum a running start, makes the game more challenging, and avoids giving the impression that the inquisitor is also fleeing. When dealing with traitors who attack their own allies in battle, inquisitors immediately intervene and—assuming the perpetrator isn't being magically controlled—dispatch the offender and audibly curse his or her name.

ADVENTURERS

Adventurers in Gorum's service are relatively common, as heroes and treasure hunters can always use an ally who is good with a sword. Villainous groups learn to rely on the might of evil Gorumite priests, especially their ability to channel negative energy, inflicting bloody wounds on all nearby creatures. Gorumites venture forth to improve their battle skills, challenge particularly revered or infamous champions, to obtain famous weapons or armor, or simply to find opportunities to enjoy the sound of their blades singing against those of their opponents.

Half-orcs, humans, and orcs are the most common worshipers of Gorum, yet his reach can be felt everywhere that blood and glory are a way of life. He attracts all those who have sworn to live by the sword and suffer its judgments. Those who take up the faith of Gorum forsake

the niceties of civilized life to carry the glory of battle to their graves. They reject the idea of old age and instead make the most of the present, exercising their strength and will to display their dominance over others. Though many may call their actions evil—and may be correct to do so—worshipers see such quibbling as unworthy of a warrior. At the same time, however, they are not murderers, and they hunger only for victory through strength of arms; killing prisoners or surrendering foes is beneath them.

Gorum's followers believe that all of life's problems can be solved through martial might. They recognize the place of brains in battle, because stupid people die quickly. They appreciate tactics and the thrill of outmaneuvering an enemy—indeed, these are crucial skills—but they pale next to the blood and sweat of melee itself. They are not fools charging blindly into battle; Gorum teaches that it is better to retreat strategically to fight another day than to throw away one's life in vain. For a Gorumite, only when the stakes are highest does life have meaning.

CLOTHING

Gorumites identify themselves through their arms and armor. Many warriors of the faith carry greatswords, and the faithful garb themselves in metal armor whenever possible to emulate their lord. No matter how poor, a worshiper of Gorum will grab metal armor at the earliest opportunity, frequently claiming the armor of fallen enemies. Once they may have metal armor and weapons, they forever disdain any other kind, preferring to fight naked and barehanded rather than use anything else. The more devoted among the faith adorn their armor and shields with spikes and jagged bits of metal. The faithful are frequently heavily scarred, as even the most skilled among them suffer wounds on a regular basis due to the number of battles they fight, and they bear these scars as marks of pride. Few wear gaudy holy symbols or specialized clothing—their arms and armor are the only identification they need.

Formal raiment for priests is spiked armor, preferably full plate, though spiked armor of other types is acceptable in climates or cultures where full plate is unavailable or impractical. Some priests keep a separate set of ceremonial armor (as opposed to their functional battle armor) that bristles with additional spikes and decorations; this armor is often so heavy that it is difficult for the priest wearing it to walk. Gorum's favored weapon, the greatsword, makes the use of shields less common than in other martial faiths.



HOLY TEXT

Gorum has no sacred text, but a collection of seven heroic poems called the *Gorumskagat* explains the church's creed. Young priests quickly learn to recite these poems perfectly, as elders beat them every time they make a mistake. The poems may be spoken or sung, and each has a distinct rhythm so a familiar listener can easily recognize them when played on a drum. Though individual translations have slightly different meanings, all translations of a poem use the same rhythm (meaning that in some languages, particularly Elven and Osirian, the phrasing is awkward).

HOLIDAYS

Unlike other martial faiths, such as Iomedae's church, which records the dates of great victories and celebrates them as holy days, Gorum's church has little interest in keeping track of old battles beyond creating the occasional shrine at a battle's end. The faithful celebrate battles won today and look forward to victories in the future. Unless a war or battle's anniversary is strongly associated with a particular date, such as the first of the year or a prominent holiday, the church may forget about the specific date within a year or two, only mentioning it when it comes to mind or serves as an example to extol.

Of course, any number of events may provoke such a memory and an impromptu celebration. For example, a change in the weather may cause a twinge in the old battle scars on a priestess's knee, causing her to reminisce about that battle in a speech a few days later; likewise, as a priest repels the orcs trying to sack his town, he may exhort the town guard to be brave, drawing from memories of his first battle against orc hordes. Thus, a particular month may have no "holy days" one year and several the next.

APHORISMS

Gorumites don't have time for fancy speeches, so most of their sayings are short and to the point.

Better to Die a Warrior Than Live a Coward: While Gorum doesn't believe his followers should recklessly throw away their lives in battles they cannot win, agreeing to a fight and then fleeing a battle is the act of an unworthy cur. Surrender is honorable, for those who surrender may have a chance to redeem themselves in a later battle, but those who flee are best cut down before they shame themselves again.

Cowards Flee, Warriors Retreat: The subtle difference between these two ideas is lost on many who do not fully understand the nature of battle. Warriors retreat from battle because they want to win the next battle; cowards flee a battle because they fear death and wish to avoid the next battle. The Lord in Iron doesn't expect

his followers to be fearless, but he does expect them to swallow their fear long enough to get the job done.

Will You Fight?: This simple phrase sums up almost the entirety of Gorum's philosophy. If a spindly youth wants to join an army, the priest of Gorum asks this question. If an injured orc struggles with a wound, his chieftain asks this question. Before a particularly bloody battle, the army commander asks this question. Those who will fight are the blessed, no matter how feeble their sword arms. Note that the question is not "Can you fight?" but "Will you fight?"—a crucial distinction.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Traditionally, Gorum has little interest in the affairs of other gods, considering politics a waste of time. He has battled with most other deities, with demon lords, and with other beings of power when their interests happened to conflict with his or they opposed him directly. As such, other gods lay plans against the day when Gorum might cross their paths again. The craftier deities, knowing he is always willing to enter a battle and cares little for its purpose or the goals of either side, find ways to get him on their side of a fight, promising him the chance to leap into the most heated waves of combat, allies at his back. Many divine conflicts have been decided based on whom Gorum chose to fight beside—and that allegiance may have changed over the course of the conflict.

Gorum is generally on friendly terms with Asmodeus, not out of any common philosophy but because the Prince of Darkness often supplies his divine minions with new and more effective weapons of war. He respects Besmara for her strength and devotion to battle—both deities are more interested in the excitement of the struggle than the spoils of war or the reason for fighting. Gorum is unimpressed by and a bit contemptuous of Nethys's reliance on magic over physical might, but still feels a kinship with the other god in their mutual love of warlike power and indifference to its ethics. He even feels some admiration for Nethys's strategic prowess. There is no nuance or mitigating factor, however, for the contempt he feels for Norgorber, as assassination and murder are for cowards. He acknowledges commonalities with Szuriel, Horseman of War, as both encourage battle in general, but primarily, he sees the Horseman as a rival: Gorum's role is to stoke the hearts of mortals so they embrace the glory of war with enthusiasm and bloodlust, whereas the Horseman wants mortals to accept oblivion and cold, murderous intent.

In recent years, a conflict has gradually built between Gorum and Urgathoa. The Lord in Iron encourages his mortal champions to wage war and become more skilled



at martial endeavors, making them more difficult to kill. He believes a valorous death in battle is the proper reward for a life of devotion to such pursuits, and becomes indignant at the idea of seeing his favorite worshipers humiliated by the debilitating effects of disease. Urgathoa takes particularly keen pleasure in bringing ruin to the mightiest physique with lingering illness, or tempting the most disciplined paragon of bodily health into gluttony, and sees no reason that Gorum's faithful should be exempt from her efforts. Her interest has been piqued by the Lord in Iron's implication that his faithful should be reserved for death in battle, and a number of new Urgathoan cults have sprung up in recent years. They pose as warrior sects and challenge other fighters to contests of skill, but infect their weapons with both mundane and magical diseases. Even the lightest scratch may contaminate a fighter with a stealthy pestilence that will lie dormant for months before beginning to slowly, inexorably wither his limbs and sap his strength, until he is left too helpless to feed himself, let alone lift a blade. Gorum's frustration grows, and he may soon choose to escalate the tension between them—whether by striking at her directly or encouraging his followers to focus on seeking out and slaying her followers.

Gorum's worshipers have no particular enmity or friendship with the followers of other religions. If the others accept the superiority of Gorum's teachings, they see no need to fight them, but otherwise, they're happy to engage them at the end of a blade. Because their god has fought almost all other deities at times, and has allied with all of them at others, his faithful see no need to declare themselves for one side or another for any real duration. They admire the physical might of many of Irori's worshipers, but see the effort invested in such discipline as wasted when it is not applied to martial pursuits. A few Gorumite sects have friendly annual competitions with followers of Falayna, the empyreal lord of martial training; though their philosophies differ, they're willing to swap techniques. They respect the tactical skill of Torag's followers and the passionate charges of Iomedean or Sarenite crusaders, yet disdain their fundamental restrictions on where and when to fight.

REALM

As god of strength, battle, and weapons, Gorum makes his home a massive battlefield, devoted to the glory of these pursuits. The fortified keeps studding his kingdom face daily sieges and may crumble into rubble by the end of a battle, but reappear intact each dawn, and his rolling and bloodstained plains provide a place for

his petitioners to wage continual, disordered combat, the entirety of their existence devoted to the heat and frenzy of battle. Unlike Cayden Cailean's domain, where individual accomplishment and bravery are valued, Gorum and his souls care only for the heady rush of spilt blood and the violent glory of war.

Many might wonder why a god that cares nothing for morality would choose—or be allowed—to make his home on Elysium, a fundamentally good plane of existence. While religious scholars have long debated the possible reasons, citing previous battles in which Gorum allied with the side of justice and light, the only clue lies in the fact that the Gorum's domain is encircled by a meandering line of ancient, weathered stones, each impaled with a gleaming, untarnished azata blade. Inscribed on the blades in various languages—including Celestial—is the phrase: "Thus the pledge is sealed, and thus you are accepted, forever with our thanks, come what may."



PLANAR ALLIES

Gorum's divine servants are all clad in spiked armor or actually made of metal; even servitors of other gods who come to serve him experience a transformation to match his other minions. In addition to his servitor race, the zentragts (see page 289), the following are well-known servitors of Gorum, suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar calling spells.

Bloody Hands (unique outsider): A red-skinned, hezrou-like creature, Bloody Hands wears intricate scale mail that fits like a second skin. He enjoys the taste of potions and elixirs, especially those that augment his already formidable physical prowess. Though he cannot fly, he enjoys leaping upon opponents from high places and charging through their ranks like a slashing wheel of death.

First Blade: This giant, armor-clad creature serves as Gorum's herald. While the heralds of most deities go forth to bear the words of their divine patrons or answer the desperate summons of their gods' most pious servants, the First Blade marches endlessly to battle. Uninterested in diplomacy or subtlety, Gorum has little need for a messenger with capabilities beyond communicating in the language of the battlefield: while legends abound of the First Blade answering the call of Gorum's faithful to aid them in appropriately glorious battle, no accounts exist of the Lord in Iron's herald responding to any summons for noncombat tasks. Most accounts of the herald tell of the gory swaths it cuts through battlefields of heroes, in clashes between titanic armies, or in weeks-long battles between history's greatest warlords. Although it is a living creature, the First Blade is little more than a weapon of Gorum. It knows almost nothing beyond its lord's commands, and goes where he instructs. In many respects, the First Blade is similar to a golem, and the herald leaves but scant traces upon the lands it passes through between battles, eating little and having no need even to breathe. In war, however, its presence and passage are obvious, marked by rent bodies and blood-soaked earth. For more information, see page 288.

Saint Fang (unique silver dragon): An unusual creature resembling a silver dragon covered in spikes, Saint Fang is the dark gray of tempered iron rather than the bright silver hue common to that type of dragon. Patches of his scales appear to be rusted, but the blemishes are actually old stains from Silver Fang's habit of painting his hide with the blood of his fallen enemies.

Temperbrand (unique fire elemental): This large fire elemental is made of molten metal and is in a near-constant battle rage. She enjoys taking her enemy's weapons and melting them within her fiery form, which heals her and temporarily lends the weapon's magic to her attacks.

FOR GORUMITE CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Gorum may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Armor master (fighter)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 44
Armored hulk (barbarian)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 28
Invulnerable rager (barbarian)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 79

Feats

Channel Viciousness	See page 209
Charge Through	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 156
Furious Focus	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 161
Ironbound Master	See page 213
To the Last	See page 217

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Gorum</i>	See page 247
<i>Bloodlight</i>	See page 254
<i>Eternal iron breastplate</i>	See page 251
<i>Iron Lord's transforming slivers</i>	See page 266
<i>Maul of the titans</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 523
<i>Ring of sundering metals</i>	See page 259
<i>Shad'Gorum nugget</i>	See page 269

Spells

<i>Gorum's armor</i>	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 294
<i>Instant armor</i>	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 229
<i>Lighten object</i>	See page 236
<i>Lighten object, mass</i>	See page 236

Traits

Iron Grip	See page 220
Shield-Trained	See page 222
Strong Heart	See page 222
Veteran of Battle	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics and druids of Gorum may prepare *rage* as a 3rd-level spell and *iron body* as an 8th-level spell. Clerics may prepare *heat metal* as a 3rd-level spell. Clerics and inquisitors add *lead blades*^{APG} to their respective spell lists as a 3rd-level spell.



GOZREH

RESPECT THE SEA AND THE SKY, LEST WE BRING YOU RUIN.

—HYMNS TO THE WIND AND THE WAVES

THE WIND AND THE WAVES

God of nature, the sea, and weather

Alignment N

Domains Air, Animal, Plant, Water, Weather

Favored Weapon trident

Centers of Worship Mwangi Expanse, Sargava, The Shackles, Sodden Lands, Thuvia, Varisia

Nationality Mwangi

Obedience Hang a set of chimes where they will be stirred by either wind or water. If no suitable location exists to hang the chimes, you must hold the chimes and shake them gently to sound them throughout your obedience. Chant prayers from *Hymns to the Wind and the Waves* as you attune yourself to the sound of the chimes, then drink a mouthful of pure water and pour a handful over your head. Gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on saving throws against electricity and water spells and effects. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience, and this choice can't be changed.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Weather Watcher (Sp)** *endure elements* 3/day, *resist energy* 2/day, or *protection from energy* 1/day
- 2: Experienced Traveler (Ex)** As a free action, you can grant yourself and any allies within 30 feet of you the ability to move through undergrowth at normal speed and without taking damage or suffering any other impairment. This effect lasts 1 round for every Hit Die you possess or until you dismiss it as a free action, whichever comes first. Your allies must remain within 30 feet of you to gain the benefits. Thorns, briars, and overgrown areas that are enchanted or magically manipulated to impede motion still affect you and your allies. While using this ability, you also gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on saving throws against spells and effects that would cause such terrain-based movement impairment, such as the *entangle* spell. (Your allies do not also gain this bonus.)
- 3: Elemental Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can cast *summon monster VII* to summon a greater elemental of a type you choose. You gain telepathic communication with the elemental to a range of 100 feet, and the elemental obeys your commands perfectly.

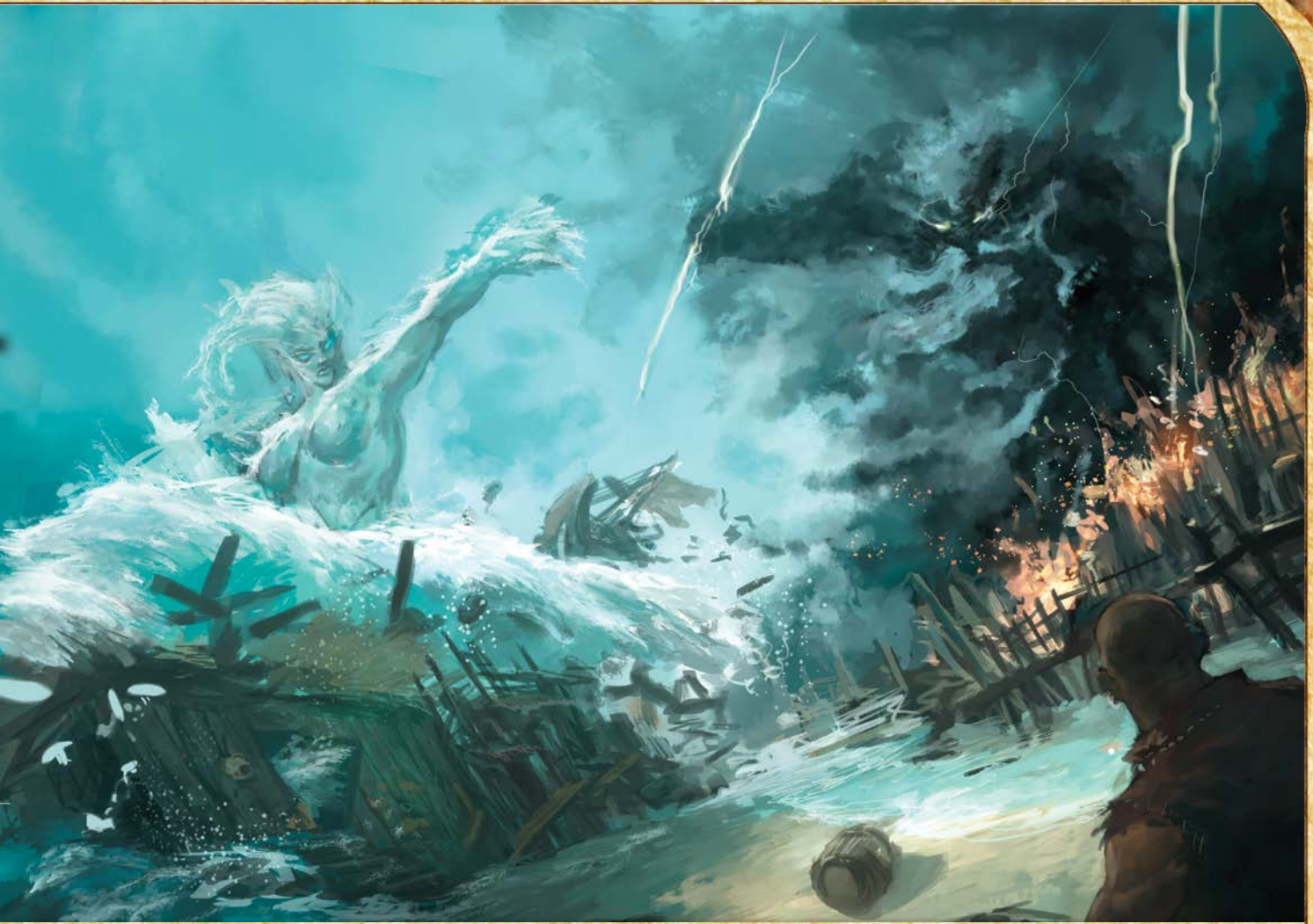
EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Green Worker (Sp)** *entangle* 3/day, *warp wood* 2/day, or *speak with plants* 1/day
- 2: Lightning Child (Su)** You become resistant to lightning and similar effects. Gain electricity resistance equal to 5 + your Hit Dice.
- 3: Nature's Companion (Ex)** Your animal companion develops greater combat prowess, mental acumen, and protection against natural elements. First, your animal companion gains a +1 bonus to its Intelligence and Wisdom scores. Second, your animal companion gains a +2 sacred or profane bonus on attack and damage rolls. Third, your animal companion gains a +4 sacred or profane bonus on all saving throws against cold, electricity, and fire spells and effects. If you don't have an animal companion, you instead gain the ability to use *summon nature's ally VII* as a spell-like ability once per day.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Sky Warrior (Sp)** *shocking grasp* 3/day, *elemental touch*^{APG} (lightning only) 2/day, or *lightning bolt* 1/day
- 2: Elemental Aura (Su)** You can create an elemental aura as a free action. When you first gain this ability, choose acid, cold, electricity, or fire—once you make this selection, it can't be changed. When you generate the elemental aura, you are surrounded by the element you chose. Anyone striking you with a melee weapon or natural attack takes 2d6 points of damage of the chosen type, plus 1 point for every 2 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 2d6+10). This aura lasts for 1 round for every Hit Die you possess. The rounds in which you manifest your elemental aura don't need to be consecutive. You can dismiss the aura as a free action.
- 3: Lightning Surge (Su)** Once per day as a standard action, you can call upon the sky to strike you with a lightning bolt that deals no damage to you but instead seems to fill you with boundless energy. You gain 2d10 temporary hit points, and any fatigued or exhausted conditions you are suffering from end. You also gain a +2 bonus to Strength, and your natural attacks and melee weapons deal an extra 1d6 points of electricity damage. These effects last for 1 round plus an additional round for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). You can call upon this lightning when you are indoors, underground, or even underwater.

INNER SEA GODS



GOZREH

Gozreh is timeless. Born when the first breeze caressed the ocean, she is ever changing, tempestuous, and unpredictable, yet also prone to periods of constancy, stillness, and routine. He is the storm cloud chased by clear skies, the spring warmth that follows winter, and the fair winds that carry seagoing ships. She is the great wave that capsizes those ships, the gentle current that deposits sailors on safe shores, and the rising and falling tides. Those who ply the waters or rely upon the rains know this better than most, and are sure to placate Gozreh and honor him when the wind and waves are favorable.

Gozreh has two aspects, equally depicted in art and sculpture. When at sea or over water, Gozreh is a woman with wild, flowing green hair, whose body transforms into endless waves. In the sky and over land, Gozreh appears as an aged man with a long white beard, emerging from a mighty storm cloud. Gozreh is moody and brooding, able to spend weeks in a glowering quiet only to explode in a fury of water, wind, and lightning. He is an elemental force, not fettered by the work of mortals; he may turn

aside his wrath when appeased with gifts and flattering words, or he may ignore mortal cries entirely. Many cargo ships throw a crate or two overboard in the deep ocean to satisfy her, so that she does not take more by force. He is the amoral side of nature, that which brings life and takes it unexpectedly. Gozreh represents both female and male facets of life, unconstrained by civilization's notions of masculinity and femininity. Grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, eternal and ever changing, the Wind and the Waves echo and shape the countless living things on Golarion.

Gozreh refers to himself or herself as "I" or "We" interchangeably. He loves to race the wind, tearing clouds in two with his passing, or sculpting them into islands and palaces for his pleasure. She hides under the waves and plummets to the crushing depths of the ocean, chasing whales and building grottoes visible only by the light of the glowing creatures that live there. He hates those who defile the sky with smoke, taint the waters with mortal filth, or abuse the bounties of land and sea. Her official church is small, but her lay worshippers

are countless. He particularly likes seabirds, flying fish, and frogs, both as living specimens and as sacrificial offerings. He is known to watch the world through the eyes of beasts, whether on the wing or under the sea, flitting from the body of a solitary bear to the countless beating hearts of a flock of starlings. He senses the day and night through green plants and pale fungi, drinking deeply through the roots of the mighty oak or clinging to a stone as the tiniest moss or lichen.

Gozreh's interests lie entirely in the realm of weather and living things. He has little interest in earth except in the form of soil or as a foundation for living works. She cares naught for fire save for how flame and ash provide opportunities for new life to grow in their wake. These materials are not taboo to her faithful, just inconsequential. Likewise, he accepts that some creatures must die so that others may survive and still others be born, but the mystical aspects of death and its cycles do not concern him—he leaves these things to entities such as Pharasma. Like nature itself, Gozreh can be cruel and indifferent, allowing a storm to ravage the land or sink a dozen ships, or a plague to wipe out an entire herd of animals or even whole settlements. Yet she also pushes trading ships across the world, multiplies animals in springtime, and brings gentle rain to thirsty fields. His way is a way beyond morals and ethics—as long as life survives in some form, and water and weather support it and keep the world itself dynamic, Gozreh is satisfied. Though her priests and priestesses may have personal ideas about which creatures should live and which should not, or visions of what Gozreh wants protected or destroyed, they accept that their beliefs are just one facet of their deity's infinite perceptions.

The Wind and the Waves may be intractable one moment and sympathetic the next. He does not do this to be deliberately contrary or mischievous, or in the interest of chaos; it is simply because he perceives everything—every living organism, every drop of water, every gust of wind—at all times. Events distant and unrelated may draw her attention, and the outcome of those events may change her mood, whether because a potential tornado disperses too soon or a rare breed of fox births a dozen healthy kits. He is a great monarch, constantly beseeched by courtiers and commoners, listening to each argument simultaneously and shifting his attention and response to each in turn. To one unaware of the cacophony, she may appear flighty or distracted, but the truth is far more complicated, in a way that mortal cannot hope to perceive.

Gozreh is usually depicted as a colossal humanoid whose lower half trails away into a mass of roiling elemental matter. In male form, he appears as a storm cloud and always remains flying—according to one old

legend, he can stretch from one horizon to the other, darkening the entire sky with his fury. In female form, Gozreh's body is usually shown blending with the water of a lake or sea. She has been known to rise from a waterspout, but sometimes gathers all the nearby water into a great wave, emerging from the top as a nymph-like shape, a crone, or a vaguely humanoid construct of pure water.

Statues of Gozreh are usually made of driftwood or lightning-scorched trees either tied together into a humanoid shapes or carved to resemble one or both incarnations; a few are chiseled from ice and either magically preserved or allowed to melt to be recreated as needed. Stone is rarely used for religious imagery, and never brick or pottery, as such things are signs of civilization's encroachment. Holy symbols and small idols may be made of coral, polished shell, lacquered wood, whalebone, and other materials that represent life in the sea and the sky that have naturally fallen.

Signs of Gozreh's favor include a sudden gentle breeze that carries the scent of flowers, the appearance of large numbers of animals, the unexplained sound of waves crashing on a distant beach, and dreams of a specific, recognizable animal (such as a white wolf, a frilled lizard with glowing blue eyes, or a ghostly raven). Omens of his displeasure include being watched and shrieked at by wild birds or beasts, sudden rainstorms localized over a specific building or individual, or an unending taste of blood in the mouth. She may foul fresh water, or afflict offenders with terrible smells or excruciating joint pain as the weather changes.

It's not unusual for zealous priests of Gozreh to remain celibate, devoting all their energy to their deity; these priests have been known to worship their deity naked in high places or shallow waters—a process referred to as becoming “sky-clad” or “sea-clad.” Priests have a habit of finding discarded things washed up or left on the shore, including infants orphaned by shipwrecks or abandoned to die from exposure; in most lands, such children are traditionally raised by the church and trained for the priesthood, which offsets the low number of children born to priests because of their high celibacy rate.

Gozreh's holy symbol is a green leaf with a drop of water pouring from the lower end. Most of Gozreh's priests are clerics, but about a tenth are druids, with a few rangers (“weather-hunters”) and adepts taking active roles in the priesthood. Inquisitors are rare; those who embrace this a path seek out folk who pollute water, clear-cut forests, and abuse the natural creatures of the world.

THE CHURCH

Gozreh's worshipers are typically sailors, merchants who ship goods between ports, and farmers. Seagoing raiders

ask her to speed them to their prey, fisherfolk pray for favorable currents to bring them heavy catches, millers ask for consistent winds to power their mills and well pumps (along with forgiveness for cutting trees), and travelers seek good weather, especially for lengthy journeys. Wise generals ask Gozreh's blessing before transporting soldiers by sea; wiser ones ask his priests whether a blessing would do any good.

Worship services include chanting, playing wind instruments, listening to chimes moved by wind or water, drinking water, and ritual use of salt, fragrant herbs, and smokeless incense. Farming communities often leave tributes of meat and grain exposed on a high rock to allow the deity's servants to claim it. Fishing communities tow the strung-together bones of their most impressive catches behind their boats, releasing them as offerings to the goddess. Some civilized folk perpetuate stories of Gozrens engaging in human sacrifice in lean times (often by burning victims encased in wicker effigies or drowning them in tidal pools), but no reliable records of this exist—at least as far as anyone knows.

The church does not have a strong preference for or against marriage, recognizing that some creatures mate for life while others unite only for a season or until offspring are mature. Priests are very tolerant of nontraditional families, including polyamorous grouping and seasonal unions, and individuals interested in such relationships often join the faith because of this tolerance—though this attitude is actually more akin to indifference, as the bonds that humanoids make between their own kind and the relationship roles they choose to play are irrelevant to the forces of nature.

Gozreh's many roles and areas of interest spark countless splinter cults. Some embrace the deity's entire area of influence; others choose one particular aspect (such as weather) or a handful of specific interests (such as birds and wind, or fish and the sea, or storms and plants). A few extreme or isolated groups develop fringe beliefs and practices not present in the more mainstream churches. Some espouse belief in beast totems or reincarnation, pursue lycanthropy, or venerate spirit animals and intelligent plants. Others follow eunuch-priests or start fertility or even crossbreeding cults. There are those that practice ritualized baptisms or dream quests, "mushroom cults" that seek to commune directly with the god by ingesting strange fungi, and sects that follow diets restricted to fruits, nuts, and leaves. Despite this wide variety of radical and

sometimes conflicting beliefs, members of these sects continue to receive spells from Gozreh, and the church as a whole makes no attempt to eliminate splinter groups or force them to return to more mainstream practices so long as they continue to foremost respect the wind, the waves, and the natural world.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Gozreh's temples are always open to the sky and generally contain some sort of pool or open water at their heart. Coastal temples are often just a driftwood wall with lean-tos on the outside rim, while a mountain temple might be a natural amphitheater where the wind howls on a mountaintop, and a desert temple a simple oasis surrounded by a half-wild garden. Some temples incorporate water wheels, windmills, lighthouses, or other structures that respectfully harness the wind and waves or are essential to a community that relies on the sky and sea for survival; for the priests who staff such temples, tending the mechanisms in the structures is a hereditary, traditional role, and many have remarkably advanced knowledge of the engineering necessary to maintain them, despite the church's general preference for wildness and nature over civilization.

Shrines are incredibly simple—often just a flat stone at a high elevation or on a secluded beach, a large whale bone jutting from a cleft on a rocky shore, or a place where the waves crash against a crevice to create high-arching spray. Some underwater shrines surface only in years with especially low tides. A few large shrines dating



from ancient times still exist on Golarion, primarily circles or triangles of standing stones (though one circle north of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings is composed of blocks of nigh-indestructible ice rather than stones). These standing stones function as calendars, tracking solstices, equinoxes, and other celestial events. Most are also burial sites for priests or particularly devout members of the faith.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Priests of Gozreh look for the deity's will in swirling water, racing clouds, and the movement of flocks of birds and schools of fish. Those associated with humanoid communities serve as diviners or provide advice about fishing, the weather, or the care of domesticated birds. Some live on ships, selling their services to pirates, navies, or merchants hoping to sail in fair weather and avoid deadly storms. Others dedicate themselves to healing and nurturing the wounded places in the world or destroying the things responsible for the wounds—battling the corruption of the Worldwound, the deadly radiation of certain locations in Numeria, and coastal pollution from large human cities.

Some Gozrens see themselves as agents of the goddess's anger at damage wrought by civilization, sending plagues of bats, crows, and locusts to ravage cities and croplands, turning schools of fish away from seaside towns, and summoning storms to drown fleets built from stolen timber. A few are explorers, determined to experience as much of the god's beauty as possible. Some good-aligned priests make it their mission to visit tiny islands and rescue any travelers lost at sea. Priests usually have ranks in Heal, Knowledge (nature), and Survival, as well as Diplomacy or Intimidate (depending on their interests and personality). Flight and swimming are common obsessions among

the priesthood, and magic items that permit flying or water-breathing are treasured. Most Gozrens avoid steel armor because it rusts, preferring wood, hide, or mithral, and some even wear armor made of hardened ice (see page 236).

Druids of Gozreh are often hermits, rarely seeing other speaking creatures and leaving their refuges only when the goddess calls or a local settlement bribes them to make rain. Most are content to live off the land, sometimes gathering treasures of the sea (such as pearls, coral, and abalone shells), or selling sea ivory or scrimshaw. Some spend their entire lives on boats; others exile themselves to remote islands to commune with their deity.

The church is decentralized, and each regional congregation tends to have periods of stability offset by sudden turmoil and reorganization, though in the long term a charismatic and powerful priest is apt to stay at the top of his temple's organization. Within the church, a respected priest is one who reacts quickly to changing circumstances, interprets portents accurately, and is good at working with plants, animals, or both (depending on the specific focus of the temple). For splinter churches, traits such as a sense of the spirit world or prophetic dreams may be considered more important.

When a high priest dies, contenders for her rank compete in ceremonies traditional to the faithful of their region, which vary widely across the entire religion. In rugged coastal regions, claimants might dive naked from tall ocean cliffs and swim to shore, with the first to return becoming the new high priest. In river settlements and along gentler coasts, retrieving heavy stones from the ocean or riverbed is a common test. In woodland regions, hopefuls might climb as far up the forest's tallest tree as they dare and throw themselves off, and the person who falls the farthest and yet survives is declared the new high priest. In harsher climes, the would-be successors must make harrowing treks and brave the dangers of the



elements; those who endure prove their commitment to the faith—a more important quality than their deity’s unpredictable favor. Inexperienced and overly ambitious priests have been known to die because of these contests, but in most cases the worst anyone suffers is injuries and severe exhaustion.

Among those races for whom it’s feasible, male priests are expected to grow long beards, and those with patchy growth often braid or knot their facial hair into tangled masses. Female priests traditionally keep long hair, and hair that nearly reaches the ground is common. The cutting of hair and beards is not forbidden, and what constitutes “long” varies from region to region. Both sexes weave dried seaweed, strands of white cloth, plant fibers, feathers, and other decorative items into their hair. When an old priest dies, snippets of this long hair are cut and given to his or her successors, who tie or weave it into their own locks. Water or sky burial is typical for priests; cremation is considered an ignoble means of disposing of a corpse.

ADVENTURERS

The worship of Gozreh spans all races and nationalities. Adventurers who worship Gozreh are usually hunters, sailors, or those who rely on the vagaries of sea and sky to reach their destinations. Farmers often petition her as well, though many find that Erastil has far more concern for their welfare than the Wind and the Waves. They might also devoutly appreciate nature, and spend a great deal of time in the outdoors to study its beauty and understand their place in it. They’re generally curt and gruff, rather than expansive, for they believe in quick reactions and moving with purpose, reading the intentions of the world around them so that they might react immediately and appropriately. They know that the world is far larger than their simple perceptions, and they strive to pass through life with this knowledge held before them. They’re willing to lash out at that which seems wrong, most often the despoiling of nature and its gifts.

CLOTHING

Formal raiment varies by temple but usually includes feathers, green or blue cloth, a rope belt, and a hoodless cloak of thin, oiled leather. In coastal areas, at least one garment is usually made of *kimlé*, a linen-like cloth made of a sea plant the church cultivates. Holy symbols are usually made of driftwood, bone, coral, or twigs.

HOLY TEXT

Gozreh’s *Hymns to the Wind and the Waves* is a collection of prayers and rules that provide guidance on showing respect for the natural world through personal behavior. The exact message varies by temple, as each tends

to preserve only the sections relevant to local needs; certain bardic colleges have large collections of church teachings, but no known temple bothers with all of them. Most excerpts from the text are carved on wood plaques or walls, as paper and parchment tend to mold and rot after decades in the vicinity of salt and water magic. Some temples carve selections of prayers onto driftwood and cast them into the sea where the currents carry them far away to wash up on foreign shores; a few sister temples have been trading prayers with each other in this way for generations.

HOLIDAYS

In addition to various regional holidays based on harvests, seasonal high and low tides, the appearance or concealment of often-submerged reefs and menhirs, and similar phenomena, most members of the church celebrate two common holidays.

Currentseve (7 Gozran): The original meaning of this holiday’s name is lost to time, as it doesn’t refer to any specific event relating to water or wind currents. In modern tradition, it is a daylong fast in anticipation of the first sprouting plants of the year (in planting and gathering communities) or the spawning season (in fishing communities). It represents the fact that feast and famine are natural cycles; by abstaining from food, worshipers redirect spiritual energy to other lives so that they may multiply and provide food when needed.

Firstbloom (Vernal Equinox): Honored primarily in farming communities, this holiday marks the start of the planting season, and is typically celebrated with dances and other fertility rites. Traditionalists of the faith consider Firstbloom the start of the year, even though the common calendar marks it 2 months earlier in Abadius.

APHORISMS

Followers of Gozreh are often curt and gruff, and their sayings reflect this tendency.

Drink Deep, Think Fast: In many ways, the church of Gozreh is a religion from a simpler time, and some of its traditions stem from the days before civilization when the humanoid races lived in hunter-gatherer tribes. The presence of water and the ability to react to unexpected predators were both vital for survival, and this phrase harkens back to those times. To the faithful, this aphorism essentially means “Gather your wits, be ready, and make the best of what you have.”

Last Gasp of the Sky/Dark Blood of the Sea: These two oaths are reserved for the direst occasions, such as seeing an entire pack of seals slaughtered for its pups’ fur or coming upon a natural spring defiled with sewage. The words come from a bleak passage (perhaps a prophecy)

in Gozreh's holy writings that talks about "civilized" races overrunning the natural world, crushing it with their metal-shod feet, poisoning the air with the smoke of burned forests, and spoiling the seas with filth and the blood of countless animals, until Gozreh creates a storm that wipes the world clean so life can start again. Worshipers tend to use the version appropriate to their favored aspect of the deity (air or water).

Storm and Salt! This is a common oath, and is used for both fortuitous and calamitous events. In most temples, when new priests join the clergy, they swear "to obey the Wind and Waves, come storm and salt, drought and flood, feather and scale, until the sky or sea claims my dead flesh."

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Gozreh is largely indifferent to other deities unless they threaten his domain or existence. She rebukes Abadar when his farms encroach too much the wilds, and the Master of the First

Vault takes it as a personal affront when one of his cities suffers because of severe weather. Gozreh hates Nethys and Rovagug for their desire to destroy the world, Gorum for the scars battles leave on the land, and Urgathoa for bringing forth unnatural, undead abominations. He is alternately affectionate and cool with Desna, for while the sky and stars are a good match, Gozreh can be jealous of travelers' prayers to the Song of the Spheres.

Gozreh is genuinely friendly with Erastil, for he believes only Old Deadeye fully appreciates all aspects of nature. Informally, Gozreh considers the beasts of the earth and crops planted by humanoids to be Erastil's, while the sky, sea, fish, birds, and wild plants belong to her. Although no specific deity heads the Green Faith, Gozreh is on good terms with the countless nature-entities who support mortals of that religion, as well as with the Eldest of the First World.

REALM

As a deity concerned entirely with nature and its fundamental forces, Gozreh makes her home on the Material Plane, wandering ceaselessly in the form of windstorms that race across the land or waves that roll across vast oceans. He cares little for the Outer Planes or the concerns of other gods, choosing instead to listen to the song of every unfurling leaf or insect wing. While she enjoys the wilds and deplors cities, there is no particular location that holds a stronger fascination for her than others, and thus she cannot really be said to truly have a realm beyond the wild places of the Material Plane. Some scholars theorize that of all the gods, Gozreh retains the most connection to the First World because of its primal life energy and wild nature, yet at least on the surface the god retains the same distance as others when it comes to that plane, perhaps because he feels that even nature needs to be governed by consistent physical laws.

PLANAR ALLIES

All of Gozreh's servitors have an air or water aspect; if a creature can neither swim nor fly, she has no use for it as a supernatural minion. Few true elementals serve Gozreh, as most of their kind feel allegiance to the elemental lords, but many cloud and storm giants are native to her planar realm. In addition to his servitor race, the xocothian (see page 291), the following are well-known servitors of Gozreh, and are suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar spells.



Hargle (unique air elemental): This easily distracted air elemental, one of only a few serving Gozreh, looks like a dark storm cloud with flickering lightning for eyes. It is equally comfortable high in the air or deep in the sea (where it becomes a roiling mass of bubbles). It strongly dislikes dwarves, offerings of metal, and speakers who take too long to get to the point, but likes potions (especially *potions of haste*), exotic incense, and the fresh blood of those who despoil nature.

Kraz'Tesh (unique giant dragonfly): This creature resembles a giant dragonfly (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 105) with icy hairs and dexterous claws that work as well as human hands. It is chatty and prone to asking inappropriate questions about mammal biology. Kraz-Tesh is immune to electricity, as is any passenger it carries, so it's frequently called upon to carry travelers in inclement weather. It enjoys eating gibbering mousers and fat larvae from buglike creatures.

Personification of Fury: This strange blend of elementals serves as Gozreh's herald. Unusual in that it is one of the few elemental creatures serving the Wind and the Waves, Personification of Fury is often courted by the elemental lords to join their ranks as a high-ranking general or advisor on the mortal world, but Fury dislikes the lords' squabbling and petty wars among their kind, seeing itself as a perfect example of how in the material realm elements should mix together without jealousy. It remains neutral in the dealings of various planar entities, and with Gozreh's permission it sometimes acts as an intermediary between rival forces—but only in a direct, blunt, and expedient way, for it is a creature of force and action, not gentle diplomacy. Its actions have attracted a small number of sycophants and refugees from the elemental wars, air and water elementals tired of battle and looking for other ways to fill their immortal lives; these creatures follow Fury and allow it to summon them, and in faithful service to it they allow mortals to summon them. When the herald is on the Material Plane and left idle (such as before a battle or while guarding a sacred place), it entertains itself by summoning dozens of Small elemental minions and sending them scurrying about, letting them explore for a few minutes and get into mischief. For more information, see page 290.

Saltbeard (unique triton): Like an old sailor, this snaggletoothed, white-bearded male triton has a foul mouth, fouler breath, and the foulest of tempers. He enjoys using his magical trident to trap ships in ice, then stabbing the landlubbers who try to chip their vessels free. Hot rum is his favorite drink, although he also enjoys magic items that give him breath weapons (such as *elixir of fire breath*) or cloud attacks (such as a *wand of stinking cloud*).

FOR GOZREN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Gozreh may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Aquatic druid (druid)

Sea singer (bard)

Storm druid (druid)

Source

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Advanced Player's Guide 84

Ultimate Magic 40

Feats

Channel Endurance

Riptide Attack

Wave Master

Source

See page 209

See page 215

See page 217

Magic Items

Altar of Gozreh

Driftwood shield

Featherscale cloak

Kimlé coat

Orb of storms

Ring of animal friendship

Rod of thunder and lightning

Stormstrike

Wayfinder of zephyrs

Windwave kilt

Source

See page 247

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Core Rulebook 524

Core Rulebook 478

Core Rulebook 489

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Spells

Call animal

Control weather

Gozreh's trident

Hydraulic torrent

Ice armor

Read weather

Sky swim

Source

Advanced Player's Guide 209

Core Rulebook 261

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Traits

Child of Nature

Natural Philosopher

Strong Swimmer

Source

See page 218

See page 221

See page 222

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics, druids, and rangers of Gozreh may prepare *whispering wind* as a 2nd-level spell, and can alter it (when preparing it) to transmit through water. Druids may prepare *water walk* as a 3rd-level spell. Rangers may prepare *create water* and *purify food and drink* as 1st-level spells.



IOMEDAE

JUSTICE AND HONOR ARE A HEAVY BURDEN FOR THE RIGHTEOUS. WE CARRY THIS WEIGHT SO THAT THE WEAK MAY GROW STRONG AND THE MEEK GROW BRAVE.

—THE ACTS OF IOMEDAE

THE INHERITOR

Goddess of honor, justice, rulership, and valor

Alignment LG

Domains Glory, Good, Law, Sun, War

Favored Weapon longsword

Centers of Worship Absalom, Andoran, Cheliox, Galt, Lastwall, Mendev, Molthune, Nirmathas, Sargava

Nationality Chelaxian

Obedience Hold your primary weapon in front of you and hang a holy symbol of Iomedae from it. Kneel while focusing on the holy symbol, pray for guidance and protection from the Inheritor, and swear to follow her teachings. Gain a +4 sacred bonus on Diplomacy and Knowledge (nobility) checks.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Courageous (Sp)** *remove fear* 3/day, *blessing of courage and life*^{APG} 2/day, or *heroism* 1/day
- 2: Demon-Feared Caster (Ex)** You are used to fighting the forces of evil. You gain a sacred bonus equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum +6) on caster level checks to overcome the spell resistance of outsiders with the chaotic or evil subtypes. These bonuses stack against outsiders who are both chaotic and evil (maximum +12). If you don't have the ability to cast spells, you instead gain the ability to use *protection from chaos/evil* as a spell-like ability three times per day.
- 3: Wrath of the Inheritor (Su)** Three times per day, you can call upon Iomedae during the casting of a spell to increase its potency. When you use this ability, you can cast any spell that deals hit point damage and has a casting time of 1 standard action as a full-round action instead. Doing so changes half the damage dealt to divine power, similar to a *flame strike* spell. For example, a wizard 5/evangelist 9 casts a *lightning bolt* as a full-round action. The spell deals 10d6 points of damage, half of which is electricity damage and the other half of which is divine energy and not subject to electricity resistance. If you can't cast spells that deal hit point damage, you instead gain the ability to imbue your weapon with holy power. Three times per day as a free action, you can grant your weapon the *holy weapon* special ability for 1 minute.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Glorious Servant (Sp)** *shield of faith* 3/day, *enthral* 2/day, or *searing light* 1/day

- 2: Righteous Strike (Sp)** Once per day, you can channel the effects of *holy smite* through your weapon. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. On a hit, the target is affected as if targeted with *holy smite*.
- 3: Just Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a shield archon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 31). The shield archon follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home in Heaven. The shield archon doesn't follow commands that would violate its alignment, however, and particularly egregious commands could cause it to attack you.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Knight of Valor (Sp)** *bless weapon* 3/day, *bull's strength* 2/day, or *magic vestment* 1/day
- 2: Valorous Smite (Su)** If you have the smite evil class feature, you gain an extra use of that ability per day. You add the levels of sentinel to your paladin levels when calculating the extra damage dealt by your smite. If you successfully deal damage with your smite, your target must succeed at a Will saving throw (with a DC equal to 10 + your Charisma modifier + 1/2 your Hit Dice) or be stunned for 1 round plus 1 round for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). Once a target saves against this stunning effect, it is immune to the stunning effect from your holy smite for 24 hours.
If you don't have the smite evil class feature, instead you can, as a free action, single out an outsider with the evil subtype or an evil-aligned dragon you plan to vanquish. Against this target, you gain a +2 sacred bonus on attack rolls and a sacred bonus equal to your sentinel level on damage rolls. The bonuses remain until the target is dead or you use this ability again, whichever comes first. If you choose a target that is not one of the listed creature types, the ability is wasted. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to your Charisma bonus (minimum once per day).
- 3: Banishing Strike (Sp)** Once per day, you can channel the effects of *banishment* through your weapon, though you don't need to cast (or even know) the spell. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. On a hit, the target is affected by a *banishment* effect. If you openly wear a holy symbol of Iomedae, you gain a +1 bonus on your caster level check to overcome the target's spell resistance (if any) and the saving throw DC increases by 2.

INNER SEA GODS



IOMEDAE

At just over 900 years old, Iomedae is the youngest of the major deities of Golarion, and has only begun to reach her full potential as an independent deity in the last century. She is a righteous knight, fearless in fighting for her beliefs, and a missionary and crusader on behalf of the benign sovereignty of good and merciful justice for evil. She would rather convince evildoers to lay down their arms in honorable surrender than cut them down, but she will wield her mighty sword against those who persist in serving evil. She loathes incorrigible evil, fiendspawn, traitors, and those who abuse good in the name of “greater” good. Now out from under the shadow of her patron, the slain human culture deity Aroden, she has proven she needs no mentor to guide her—she is valor, glory, honor, justice, and strength, and is unafraid to point her sword at the greatest evils facing the world.

Despite her youth and comparative late start, she has been instrumental in fighting evil in the world, even during her mortal lifetime as a paladin of Arazni (and, after that demigod’s death, Aroden himself). Born a

mortal in Chelias, she led the Knights of Ozem in a series of victories over the Whispering Tyrant, and participated in his imprisonment. Success in the Test of the *Starstone* a short time later granted the valiant swordswoman a spark of divinity and brought her to the attention of Aroden, who elevated her to the position of his herald, vacated by the fallen Arazni. When the Last Azlanti died, Iomedae inherited most of his remaining followers. Though born in Chelias, she is worshiped by many people outside that land, and most recently has taken up patronage of the Mendevian Crusades. Once the crusaders have succeeded in ending the expanding threat of the Worldwound, she plans to inspire them to wipe her homeland free of its diabolical taint.

Iomedae’s avatar appears as a fierce Chelish swordswoman, resplendent in gleaming battle armor with heraldic markings, and brandishing a longsword and shield. When she is roused to battle, her white cloak turns red and her white-and-gold armor turns the silver-gray of adamantine. The light from her shield blinds all evil, the force of her aura causing the corrupt to weaken

and collapse. She shows her approval of mortals by making mundane objects take on swordlike forms, bathing her chosen warriors in mysterious white or golden lights, and exerting a compass-like pull on longswords to guide her servants. Common folk pushed to defend themselves may happen upon an old, rusty blade that still has the strength of a new weapon and grows shinier the more it is used in the name of justice and honor. The Inheritor shows her displeasure by flickering lights, shattering weapons, and turning metal dull. In the rare cases where one of her paladins embraces evil, it is said that the traitor's cloak shifts to black and his shining metal armor and sword turn to dull lead.

As the major deity who was most recently mortal herself, the Inheritor has a strong empathic sense of human frailties and the costs of oppression. She ensures that her temples are havens for the weak and the overlooked, and many who initially come to her for refuge go on to become great warriors. Iomedae is both fiercely martial and adamantly feminine, and commands the respect of any deity who deals with her. She expects her mortal servants to exercise courtesy and receive the same in their dealings with one another.

The Inheritor's holy symbol is "the sword of valor," a longsword surrounded by a burst of light, whether sunlight, fire, or some other energy. She is associated with lions, horses, eagles, griffons, and hippogriffs. The primary title she uses is the Inheritor, though the Knights of Ozem call her the Light of the Sword.

THE CHURCH

While members of some other virtuous faiths take a "live and let live" approach to dealing with the rest of the world, the Inheritor's followers strongly desire justice for everyone, honorable behavior from each individual, and righteous leaders making good decisions for the welfare of all. A typical follower of Iomedae is a right-minded, hardworking person, helpful toward others and ready to accept help when it is offered. Though an Iomedean looks to church heroes to reshape the world into a better form through sword and spell, she also understands that fixing the world can be done through everyday activities like feeding one's family and friends, making one's environment cleaner and safer for oneself and others, and ensuring that the local market is a welcoming and fair place.

The church is organized into circles of 10 to 50 priests or knights of similar ability, attitude, and rank, led by a Sword Knight. The high priest or priestess is called the First Sword Knight of Iomedae; her circle is the first circle, comprised of 14 Second Sword Knights, each of whom leads a second circle, and so on. There is much competition to join circles led by a famous Sword Knights, and it is a mark of honor to be selected for such a knight's circle. The Sword Knight ranks correspond to military ranks in standard armies (general, colonel, captain, and so on). Temple music is composed to inspire courage and invigorate tired flesh, with upbeat marching tempos, repeated choruses, and simple harmonies.

It is traditional for a young priest of the Inheritor to receive a gift of a sword when she leaves the temple to enact the goddess's will; in some cases, this is a weapon once used by a senior priest or other hero of the church. Some

blades have passed through many hands, as Iomedae believes it is wasteful to bury a perfectly good weapon with the dead; the only time a fallen hero is buried with his weapon is if it was broken or if there is unusual magic tying it to him, and even in these cases the weapons have been known to turn up in moments of great need, as if plucked from the tombs by the goddess herself. It is common for the faithful to bury a small token sword (often just an inch long and usually made of copper, tin, brass, or bronze) with their dead, believing the sword will fight battles on behalf of the good soul so that person can remain at rest. In poorer communities, the dead are buried with paper or wood



stamped or branded with a sword symbol. So great is the church's fixation on swords that even wedding rings for those married in the church are usually engraved with a sword as a sign of devotion and fidelity.

Just as swords are generally kept in the hands of the living, it is rare for worshipers to be buried in armor. Most faithful who are wealthy enough to own armor usually bequeath it to close relatives or their favorite temples so that it may find use in the goddess's name even after they are gone.

Iomedaeans' preference for law and order results in strong church support for marriage, and equally strong disapproval of adultery, abuse, and other activities that threaten healthy relationships. Even if it goes against local tradition, the church teaches that spouses retain their individual rights and are not property, and temples provide shelter if necessary to individuals seeking divorce. Likewise, it insists that children must be treated with love and respect, though this does not preclude an appropriate level of discipline. The church's focus on self-discipline and honor in action and appearance lead most of the faithful to consider poorly behaved children or a family that appears unkempt or unruly a great embarrassment, both to themselves and to their community.

Of all the good churches on Golarion, Iomedae's is the most aggressive in seeking out and fighting evil. Her priests prefer to be out questing rather than doing mundane tasks in a city. Older and infirm priests who cannot handle the rigors of battle work in courtrooms and as advisors to nobles and city leaders, or else train the next generation of crusaders. Layfolk and talented acolytes staff most in-city positions, and see to the auxiliary needs of the church, helping run temple-owned farms, smithies, and shops.

The church currently devotes a great deal of its focus to the Mendevian Crusades against the horror of the Worldwound, seeing it as the greatest threat to Golarion as a whole, though it also encourages those members who seek to guard innocents against the orcs of Belkzen, the undead surrounding Gallowspire, and other threats. While the church as a whole may have to make hard choices about how to dedicate resources, it is not monolithic: individual worshipers are still encouraged to protect their own communities and fight injustice wherever they find it.

Iomedae informally enforces Aroden's teachings as well as her own, in deference both to her patron and to his followers who have been absorbed by her church, although she is more forward-looking in her goals and doesn't let herself be constrained by the events of history. Her church's sensitivity toward the legacy of Aroden is largely responsible for people accepting her as his heir and allowing her followers to take over his properties and holy artifacts.

IOMEDAE'S PALADIN CODE

The paladins of Iomedae are just and strong, crusaders who live for the joy of righteous battle. Their mission is to right wrongs and eliminate evil at its root. They serve as examples to others, and their code demands they protect the weak and innocent by eliminating sources of oppression, rather than merely the symptoms. They may back down or withdraw from a fight if they are overmatched, but if their lives will buy time for others to escape, they must give them. Their tenets include the following affirmations.

- I will learn the weight of my sword. Without my heart to guide it, it is worthless—my strength is not in my sword, but in my heart. If I lose my sword, I have lost a tool. If I betray my heart, I have died.
- I will have faith in the Inheritor. I will channel her strength through my body. I will shine in her legion, and I will not tarnish her glory through base actions.
- I am the first into battle, and the last to leave it.
- I will not be taken prisoner by my free will. I will not surrender those under my command.
- I will never abandon a companion, though I will honor sacrifice freely given.
- I will guard the honor of my fellows, both in thought and deed, and I will have faith in them.
- When in doubt, I may force my enemies to surrender, but I am responsible for their lives.
- I will never refuse a challenge from an equal. I will give honor to worthy enemies, and contempt to the rest.
- I will suffer death before dishonor.
- I will be temperate in my actions and moderate in my behavior. I will strive to emulate Iomedae's perfection.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Iomedae's temples are whitewashed buildings that double as courts and living space for holy knights. Each has at least one fortified tower or wing that is easily defensible even if the rest of the structure is razed. Arched entrances, pillared courtyards, statues of knights, high stained-glass windows, and large fountains are common decorations. Iomedae's followers also use converted churches of Aroden, slowly replacing the dead god's ornamentation with that of her faith so as to not disturb the sensibilities of the dwindling population of Aroden worshipers. While priests and knights set aside an hour per day for prayer, the church usually only holds public worship once a week for an hour or two depending on local interest.

The devout often create a shrine of stones on the site of any great battle fought in the name of Iomedae,

sometimes capping it with a broken sword thrust into the top of the pile. Flat stones carved with the goddess's symbol, sculptures of inverted swords, or simple crosses representing sword hilts mark the graves of the faith, as well as locations of miracles or sites important to saints of the church.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

All of Iomedae's priests are clerics or paladins, although she has many rangers, inquisitors, and cavaliers serving the church in important roles, as well as a wide variety of lay worshipers.

An ideal day for an Iomedaeen priest varies. For those within military organizations or entrenched in battle, ritual takes a back seat to doing whatever is necessary to further the cause of justice and light, and for a priest to stand on ceremony at the cost of the church's goals would be highly shameful. As such, priests in war zones tend to act much like chaplains or military commanders rather than city priests. If there is no sign of active villainy, priests travel, perhaps in ways that help local officials (such as transporting a criminal from a remote town to a city's jail). City priests keep their ears to the ground for news of local crime, always ready to attack a thieves' guild's headquarters, uncover an evil cult, or slay some monster fresh from the depths. To perform their duties, most priests have ranks in Diplomacy, Heal, and Knowledge (history and nobility).

In recent years, it has become customary for aspiring sword knights to travel the River Road to Mendev and serve at least a year in the crusade against the Worldwound. Sometimes a particularly heroic sword knight leads her entire circle to travel up the Sellen River and battle the demons, and the priests who survive earn much honor for themselves and go on to lead circles of their own or train others in demon-hunting. It's common for a seasoned priest to mentor an acolyte as if he were a squire, though the priest never endangers the acolyte unless the church grants permission for such activity.

Priests must act honorably, show courage in battle, uphold righteous laws, bring evildoers to justice, and generally conduct themselves like great knights. Even the most battle-wearied stand proud and tall in the presence of common folk and impressionable youths. Priests have a reputation for trustworthiness that serves them well in political affairs, and while few choose to retire to political offices such as judge or magistrate, having an Iomedaeen priest as a witness in a trial is highly advantageous. To an Iomedaeen, the quest for justice and the need to work hard for the betterment of all is never complete.

ADVENTURERS

To follow Iomedae is to tolerate neither chaos nor evil, and to vow to stamp them out wherever they arise. Her faithful travel the world to find uprisings of evil, and are willing and able to serve and to lead; they have forthright attitudes and have no patience for lying, fraud, or deceit. They believe in discipline tempered with love and respect, and still prefer the word over the sword, though they recognize that situations exist where the sword is the only answer.

CLOTHING

Formal raiment is a white cassock with gold or yellow trim and matching mitre, but this rarely sees use outside of the church. In practice, most Iomedaeen warriors are recognized by their shining armor and prominent displays of the goddess's symbol. Banners with her symbol are also popular, almost always in white and gold. Most ceremonies involve the use of a sword, and even the naming of



a child requires touching the hilt of a sword, so it's rare to find a priest without one. These weapons are always suitable for combat, though some become extensively decorated after decades of use; to the faithful, a sword that isn't serviceable as a weapon is useless.

HOLY TEXT

The one book common to all churches is *The Acts of Iomedae*, usually just called *The Acts* by the faithful. The book is a recounting of 11 miracles performed by Iomedae while she was still a mortal as demonstrations of the power of Arazni and Aroden (see the sidebar). All of these miracles happened before she became a goddess, and provide evidence and examples of the greatness within each person should they adopt the Inheritor's belief in honor, valor, and justice. Individual churches usually keep a ledger of names of local heroes and saints, important battles that took place nearby, and inspirational tales that reinforce the ideals of the faith. Given the relative newness of Iomedae's faith, there are no myths associated with her, at least none commonly accepted as fact by the entire church; the truth of the Acts takes the place of myths of the faith.

HOLIDAYS

Iomedae—and, therefore, her holy days—have been around for less than a millennium, and her church's detailed records contain accounts of the first celebrations of many of her holidays. In addition to these faith-wide events, and those inherited from the church of Aroden, the church has records of countless battles and slayings of named monsters, any of which might be mentioned in weekly sermons but aren't quite important enough to merit their own holidays.

The Inheritor's Ascendance: Originally called Herald's Day, this festival on 1 Arodus honors the day Aroden chose Iomedae as his herald, boosting her beyond the power of a fledgling goddess. It was renamed after Aroden's death.

Armasse: Observed on 16 Arodus, this is traditionally a day to train commoners in the use of simple weapons, choose squires for knights, and ordain new priests, though in recent decades it has begun to include jousts, duels, and proud celebrations. When Aroden was alive it was also a day to discuss past human wars and study the lessons of history with regard to how they shape the modern day.

Day of the Inheritor: This somber day of remembrance on 19 Rova marks the day when Iomedae formally invited all members of Aroden's failing church to join her faith. Celebration of this holiday is increasingly rare throughout the Inner Sea region, and likely to fade away entirely in another human generation.

THE ACTS OF IOMEDAE

Each of the Acts is a specific episode of heroism performed by Iomedae during her life as a champion in the service of Arazni and Aroden. Tales of valor and adventure, these stories serve as examples of Iomedae's virtues. While regional variants of the stories exist, all have the same general themes, with the goddess herself acknowledging that it is the lessons, not the particulars, that are important. The 11 Acts are as follows.

First: She slew the fell beast Nakorshor'mond and cut the still-sleeping bodies of her circle from its gullets.

Second: She defeated a coven of Garundi witches, freeing the city of Senghor from their tyranny.

Third: While riding a griffon in an aerial battle, she cut the wings from Segruchen the Iron Gargoyle, so-called King of the Barrowood, then slew him in his falling-crater before he could flee.

Fourth: With heartfelt words and a prayer to Arazni, she convinced a regiment of mortally wounded knights at the Second Battle of Encarthan to hold back a wave of wraiths long enough for reinforcements to arrive at dawn.

Fifth: She smote Erum-Hel, Lord of the Mohrgs, at the Battle of Three Sorrows (where the Whispering Tyrant returned Arazni's body to the Knights of Ozem), crippling him and causing him to flee to Orv.

Sixth: After the Whispering Tyrant used magic to break her sword, she fused it together with a prayer and an oath to bring an end to his evil, her pure heart and righteous ire reforging it in an instant.

Seventh: An image of Iomedae appeared at a shrine to Aroden in Absalom, healing anyone virtuous who touched it and burning wicked folk who came too near. When she later became a goddess, the shrine was expanded into a temple dedicated to her, named the Seventh Church.

Eighth: She convinced the graveknight known only as the Black Prince to throw himself upon his sword as punishment for his evil. This reversed his undead state, redeeming his soul and allowing him to be judged and pass into Aroden's domain on Axis.

Ninth: She gave nine drops of her blood to free nine righteous knights imprisoned by the vampire-mage Basilov; she and the knights then slew him when he attempted to recapture them.

Tenth: She ruled the city of Kantaria for a year and a day while its lord, heirless patriarch of House Narikopolous, was missing; the city prospered despite constant attacks by shape-changing horrors, which she battled personally.

Eleventh: At the Pit of the *Starstone* in Absalom, she cast her cloak before her, transforming it into a firm walkway across the gap so she could enter the cathedral and take the test.

Ascendance Day: This joyous celebration occurs on 6 Lamashan, the anniversary of the day Iomedae entered the Starstone Cathedral, and is characterized by singing, pledging of friendship, and forgiving old grievances or repentant enemies.

Remembrance Moon: This national holiday celebrated on the first full moon of Desnus in Lastwall and Ustalav commemorates those who died in the Shining Crusade against the Whispering Tyrant, and the church of Iomedae honors it as well due to the goddess's role in those events.

APHORISMS

Iomedae warriors have dozens of battle cries, some regional, with many referring to *The Acts* or the goddess's words while achieving those miracles. Outside of combat, one phrase sees frequent use among the goddess's worshipers.

For Victory, For the Heart: Whether whispered as a prayer or shouted as a challenge, this saying refers to striking at the heart to make sure a foe is slain. Knights use it in battle, priests use it when baptizing a new acolyte, and farmers use it when cutting a tree stump.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Iomedae is on good terms with Abadar, Cayden Cailean, Erastil, Sarenrae, Shelyn, and Torag, holding common interests with each of them. Of these, she particularly appreciates Abadar for civilization's formalized systems of justice, Sarenrae for her righteous fervor, and Torag for his military expertise. She does not deal with fiends of any status, has little to do with evil deities, and enlists the aid of the Empyrean Lords when appropriate, though she defers to Sarenrae if the elder goddess needs them first. Iomedae is very fond of Milani, whom she calls her sister, and is always ready to support the Everbloom when it is time to act. To all other deities she is indifferent, hoping to inspire them to great deeds but not setting her plans aside to do so.

Iomedae's faithful are eager to aid members of other good faiths in any organized attempts to stamp out evil or mediate conflicts, and while most attempt not to be overbearing about it, they are certainly willing to try to sway prospective converts to the path of the Inheritor. Privately, many find followers of Sarenrae and Torag most rewarding to work with; Sarenrae's faith includes a healthy contingent of holy crusaders, and the practical military expertise of Torag's followers comes in handy in a fight. Her church treats the remaining worshipers of Aroden with kindness, but it's leavened with a strong dose of pity such as one might feel for an elderly parent whose mind has gone.

REALM

Despite being the youngest of Heaven's gods, Iomedae has increasingly accrued more and more influence within the plane. The Inheritor's realm sits within Heaven's second tier, near the border with the first tier, a land dotted with keeps and castles echoing the styles of Aroden's former domain in Axis as well as the majestic structures common to that region of Heaven. Iomedae's role in Heaven increasingly blurs the line between having a discrete deific realm and being a part of the celestials'



military hierarchy. Certainly, the goddess holds plenty of sway with even the highest ranks of angels and archons, and those who don't share her zealous desire to actively crusade against evil grumble that Heaven itself becomes Iomedae's realm more and more with each passing year.

PLANAR ALLIES

The church is known for its many saints, all of them dead mortals granted power and sometimes a new form in the afterlife. In many cases, these saints are the patrons of particular churches or military orders, and may only be known to locals or religious scholars. In addition to her servitor race, the iophanites (see page 293), the following are well-known supernatural servitors of Iomedae, and are suitable for calling with *planar ally* or similar spells.

Hand of the Inheritor: This golden-skinned angel serves as Iomedae's herald. The Hand of the Inheritor focuses on honorable combat, the preservation of just rulers, and valorous deeds. He feels no guilt in slaying those who embrace evil, but strikes to subdue when his opponent is magically controlled or otherwise compromised in his decision-making. He enjoys battle hymns and marching music, though his voice is more suited for harmonizing with a true performer than leading a song. For more information, see page 292.

Jingh (unique iophanite): This servant appears as a white metal wheel burning with golden fire, but is able to spread the hundreds of swordlike shards that comprise his body over an area, acting much like a *blade barrier*, except that those who touch him take slashing, fire, and holy damage. He can dampen his fires in his natural state, though he complains that it is uncomfortable for him to do so. He prefers payment in the form of rare or exotic oils and magical swords, which he usually gives to deserving heroes elsewhere in the world.

Peace through Vigilance (unique celestial gold dragon): This young celestial gold dragon never sits still for more than a moment, and rarely lets his summoner get a word in edgewise. He likes to take charge in situations where his strength and magic are especially suited for a task. He refers to his patron as "Mother Iomedae," leading some to believe he is the offspring of the Inheritor and Apsu, god of good dragons. He prizes gems and is especially friendly toward mortals who offer them for his services.

Saint Lymirin (unique angel): Though this warrior-priest normally appears as a Chelish woman with white-feathered wings, her shape sometimes includes the head of an eagle, and in the heat of battle she has been known to gain talons. She is a no-nonsense sort of angel, intolerant of cruelty or injustice, and inclined to strike first and ask questions later. (In fact, she is the patron saint of first blood). She enjoys gifts or payments of feather-based magic items, often weaving them into her wings so she can use them later.

FOR IOMEDAEAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Iomedae may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Battle scout (ranger)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 66
Crusader (cleric)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 40
Shining knight (paladin)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 117
Standard bearer (cavalier)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 39

Feats

Charge of the Righteous	See page 209
Disciple of the Sword	See page 210
Hands of Valor	See page 212
Protective Channel	See page 215

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Iomedae</i>	See page 248
<i>Cloak of the Crusader</i>	See page 262
<i>Inheritor's breastplate</i>	See page 252
<i>Inheritor's gauntlet</i>	See page 265
<i>Inheritor's light</i>	See page 256
<i>Knight-inheritor's ring</i>	See page 258
<i>Knight's pennon</i>	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i> 307
<i>Lord's banner</i>	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i> 308
<i>Medal of the hero's heart</i>	See page 266

Spells

<i>Bestow grace of the champion</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 208
<i>Burst of glory</i>	See page 230
<i>Inheritor's smite</i>	See page 236
<i>Light prison</i>	See page 237
<i>Litany of righteousness</i>	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 235
<i>Spear of purity</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 240
<i>Weapons against evil</i>	See page 245

Traits

Divine Warrior	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333
Purity of Faith	See page 222
Regal Presence	See page 222
A Shining Beacon	See page 222

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Iomedae may prepare *holy sword* as an 8th-level spell; inquisitors may learn it as a 6th-level spell. Her clerics may prepare *good hope* and *mark of justice* as 4th-level spells; paladins may prepare them as 3rd-level spells.



IRORI

TO TRANSCEND YOUR FLAWS, YOU MUST KNOW YOUR INNER SELF. GAINING THIS KNOWLEDGE IS A JOURNEY, AND THE PATH MAY BE STRAIGHT OR TWISTED.
—UNBINDING THE FETTERS

MASTER OF MASTERS

God of history, knowledge, and self-perfection

Alignment LN

Domains Healing, Knowledge, Law, Rune, Strength

Favored Weapon unarmed strike

Centers of Worship Absalom, Jalmeray, Katapesh, Mana

Wastes, Nex, Osirion, Qadira

Nationality Vudrani

Obedience Over the course of 1 hour, spend an equal amount of time practicing with a weapon or your unarmed strikes, reading any text that you have never read before, and braiding a length of hair while contemplating the mysteries of the multiverse. Hang the length of hair around your neck when your obedience is complete and wear it for the rest of the day. Gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on all Knowledge checks. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience, and this choice can't be changed.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Expansive Knowledge (Sp)** *identify* 3/day, *fox's cunning* 2/day, or *secret page* 1/day
- 2: Inevitable Fist (Su)** For a number of rounds per day equal to your Hit Dice, you can infuse your limbs with the power of pure law. Your unarmed strikes deal damage as if you were one size category larger, and gain the *axiomatic* weapon special ability. Activating or dismissing this ability is a free action, and the rounds don't need to be consecutive.
- 3: Runic Form (Sp and Su)** Nine runic tattoos appear on your body, three for each of the three disciplines of Irori: mind, body, and spirit. As a standard action (unless otherwise noted) you can discharge the power stored in a tattoo. Once spent, a tattoo's power returns gradually over the course of 1 week. The tattoo powers are as follows:

Body Tattoos: Two contain *cure serious wounds*, which you can use as a spell-like ability. One contains *restoration*, which you can use as a spell-like ability.

Mind Tattoos: Two can each be discharged as a swift action to allow you to reroll a saving throw against an enchantment spell or effect. You must use this ability before you learn the result of your save, and you must take the second result, even if it is lower. The third can be discharged to grant you a +4 sacred bonus to Wisdom for 1 minute.

Spirit Tattoos: Two allow you to assume an ethereal state for 1 minute as though using the spell *ethereality*. The third allows you to gain spell resistance equal to 10 + 1 for every Hit Dice you possess for 1 minute.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Cloud the Mind of the Unwary (Sp)** *hypnotism* 3/day, *daze monster* 2/day, or *suggestion* 1/day
- 2: Repair the Damaged Body (Su)** Up to three times per day, when you can cast a conjuration (healing) spell with a range of touch, treat it as having a range of close instead.
- 3: Walk Above the Earth (Su)** You hover several inches off the ground as if levitating. This doesn't affect your speed, and makes you immune to most kinds of difficult terrain, traps triggered by pressure, and potentially other effects. You can levitate over solid surfaces only, so you fall if you step off a cliff or over a liquid. You can, however, raise or lower yourself as *levitate*. If you make an attack while hovering, you are not subject to the attack and damage penalties listed in the *levitate* spell description. However, if you move yourself higher in the air using a move action, you become subject to the attack and damage penalties until you return to the ground.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Masterful Warrior (Sp)** *true strike* 1/day, *false life* 2/day, or *haste* 3/day
- 2: Secrets of the Enemy (Ex)** The knowledge you've gained over the years regarding different creatures lets you strike your foes with unerring insight. As a standard action, you can study your opponent during combat, a task which requires you to succeed at a Knowledge check related to the enemy's type (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 99). The DC is equal to 10 + your opponent's Hit Dice. If you succeed at the check, you gain a +2 bonus on weapon attack and damage rolls against that enemy. If you fail at the Knowledge check, you may try again with another action, but all subsequent attempts to use this ability against the same enemy take a cumulative -2 penalty.
- 3: Perfection of Form (Ex)** You develop your body to such a degree of physical perfection that you become almost untouchable by the ravages of toxins and disease. You gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on saving throws against poison, magical and supernatural diseases, and spells and effects that cause ability damage, ability drain, or negative levels. You also become immune to nonmagical diseases.

INNER SEA GODS



IRORI

Irori was once a mortal man whose intense discipline allowed him to attain enlightenment and divinity through physical, mental, and spiritual perfection. He teaches that mastery of the self allows one to master the world, but paradoxically also purges one of desire to master the world. Countless others seek to follow his path, and he encourages them to challenge their minds, bodies, and souls in order to transcend their self-imposed limits. He is also a god of knowledge; his followers are keen students of history, for experience is key to understanding and there is much to be learned from the experiences of others.

Irori knows that there's no single technique that works for everyone, and that every student must experiment and practice to find the best method for her. He is patient, forgiving, and serene, welcoming all who seek perfection as brothers and sisters. He is a teacher who leads by example rather than issuing reprimands and corrections. Meanwhile, he constantly tests his own limits as a deity, expanding his awareness and control without impinging upon the interests of others. Originating from distant

Vudra, Irori has gained a diverse following across the Inner Sea region as those who seek discipline and self-perfection look to him for inspiration.

Irori's followers rarely depict him in art because they believe that no icon can hope to live up to his perfect image. They describe him in poetry and prose as a flawless man, clothed in simple robes and wooden sandals, hairless save for a long braid. Beyond the Inner Sea region, his race often changes to reflect that of the artist; artists of the Inner Sea tend to depict him in ways that emphasize his exoticism. Irori sees no need to cloak himself in mystery or augment himself with divine power, so on the rare occasions when he manifests to mortals, he appears as a physically fit man matching his followers' descriptions, often sitting, kneeling patiently, or resting in a meditative pose. He's also been known to project a portion of his awareness into a statue, animating its face and speaking through it.

The Master of Masters teaches that body, mind, and spirit are inexorably linked, and that the division between them is illusory and counterproductive. Within each

THE MASTER'S REBUS



In at least one alphabet, Irori's name is identical when reversed, and this image, when rotated, creates a starlike pattern. The faithful call this image the Master's Rebus, and say that the lines of the "star" represent knowledge and enlightenment flowing outward from the god to illuminate the Triune Selves of all mortals. The horizontal axis represents the physical self and mortal lifeline, with birth on the left and death on the right. The vertical axis represents the mind, with the lower half representing simple needs such as food, shelter, and sex, and the upper half representing enlightened concepts such as charity, ethics, fellowship, and self-sacrifice. Wise aspirants understand that the rebus has a third dimension, projecting out of and into the surface it's drawn on, representing the spirit, oscillating through positive and negative incarnations until it stabilizes at the perfect center, aligned at the point where the physical and mental rays cross. Crafting a Master's Rebus, whether by painting it on canvas, carving it from wood, or hammering it into copper, is an art form among many temples, and poorer monasteries supplement donations by selling these creations to pilgrims. Some have a tiny cup at the center to hold a small candle, lit on holy days and representing the spirit axis of the rebus. It is common for temples to have a rebus mosaic on a floor, and to have a prayer service each morning to trace its lines with sand, ash, or water; the material is allowed to drain or blow away, as a person should strive for perfection every day.

IRORI

individual is a perfect version of these three aspects, called the Triune Self, and mastering all three while understanding that they are one is the key to achieving perfection and enlightenment. As most have difficulty sensing and refining their own spirits, novices usually prioritize improving the body and the mind, allowing the control gained from these efforts to steer the growth of the spirit.

Irori believes that self-awareness leads to discipline and eventually to mastery, whereas ignorance forces the spirit to repeat its mistakes in the next life. He opposes radical action and extreme changes in habits and behavior, preferring subtle shifts over time to allow a creature to adjust to unfamiliar practices and avoid adverse reactions to extreme change, such as injuries or emotional disorders. Discipline, moderation, and temperance lead to internal balance and are the keys to creating healthy, lasting change in a person's life; radical action without proper preparation is chaotic and leads to negative outcomes.

When Irori is pleased, he eases the path toward enlightenment—soothing pain, bestowing mental clarity, and granting insight about the next step in the worshiper's journey. Especially devout followers might catch a brief glimpse of the god's serene eyes, or come across the mysterious single imprint of a sandal in the sand. He sometimes punishes transgressions with cramps, fatigue, dizziness, and obvious setbacks on the path to self-perfection. However, in most cases he refrains from these actions, as he believes that for his sincere followers, straying from the ideal path is punishment enough, and that it's best for those who are not sincere to leave the church and pursue other interests. Only in extreme cases—generally with mortals who are destined for greatness—does he afflict the person with an injury or disability to overcome, either to encourage her to look for an alternate perspective to a problem, or to encourage humility in someone especially prideful.

Irori's holy symbol is an open blue palm within a circle, though in some lands his rebus (see sidebar) is used more often than the hand.

THE CHURCH

Irori's worship is most popular in Vudra and Tian Xia, and thus the Isle of Jalmeray is its biggest center in the Inner Sea region. From there, the faith originally traveled north and west to Osirion, home of the great Monastery of Tar Kuata, and to Absalom, where the arena known as the Irorium showcases nonlethal combat and provides a strong draw in the Foreign Quarter. While the faith has spread far and wide, it most often takes the form of solitary monks and secluded monasteries, thus keeping it largely out of the daily life of common folk.

Irori's followers are a varied lot, for he teaches that there are many paths to perfection and each individual's path may be slightly different from the next. His primary worshipers are mystics, ascetics, and martial artists. Those who rise to the rank of master are said to go to his side to serve him forever when they die, while those who fall short of perfection are reincarnated to begin the journey anew. Though most of his followers worship him as the god of self-perfection, some pray to him as a god of history or knowledge, notably in regard to anatomy, medicine, philosophy, comparative studies of martial arts, and the history of combat and the Vudrani lands. This secondary aspect is more prominent among elder members of the faith and those whose health prevents the rigorous exercise needed to perfect the physical self; such worshipers often become the archivists and keepers of lore, transcribing oral traditions into lasting forms to ensure the preservation of wisdom that would otherwise be lost.

Rituals in Iroran temples usually involve a period of meditation or prayer, sometimes with ritualized

consumption of particular foods, which varies from region to region or may be unique to a particular monastery. Drums, gongs, rainsticks, and bells are common instruments used to mark time in a ceremony. Monasteries devoted to martial arts may consider practicing their combat forms a kind of ritual prayer. The church doesn't practice animal or human sacrifice. Physical offerings are usually seeds, bread, rice, sweat from the worshiper's brow, tea, or even folded paper goods shaped like useful objects (such as teapots, flowers, or animals). These objects are burned in a sacred fire that represents the god's spirit.

There is evidence that Irori was an ascetic for a portion of his mortal life, and some of his followers practice varying levels of asceticism in search of enlightenment. Known as sathu (meaning "done well"), these sages give up most material goods and ties to civilization to strengthen their connection with the divine. Some sathus live alone in forests, caves, or graveyards, while others live in temples to provide examples for aspiring monks. Some wear only rags, some go naked, some paint their flesh, some carry swords, some never cut their hair, and some shave or pluck all the hair from their bodies. Sathus are greatly respected among the faithful, even by those who do not practice asceticism, but outsiders may view them with suspicion and believe they have supernatural talents, such as cursing people or summoning ghosts.

Some enlightened members of the faith, particularly monks, are so aware of their own bodily processes that they can sense their approaching death from old age, knowing in advance the day or even the hour they will pass. A few employ a method of self-mummification, following a diet of poisonous nuts and teas that preserves their bodies after death. These masters of life and death leave behind their bodies to watch over Irori's temples, and their dried but perfectly preserved Iroran mummies may once again serve as vessels for their spirits in times of great need.

Among the most devout and powerful members of Irori's faith, a very rare few have been known to simply disappear from the world, presumably to continue their studies on another physical plane or a higher plane of consciousness. This is called "walking with the Master," as if such individuals were handpicked by Irori for a greater purpose, and such is considered a great honor. Many of these lucky individuals revisit Golarion decades or centuries later as spirit guides, and at least one is known to now be a divine servant of the god.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Iroran houses of worship are typically sprawling complexes that function as self-sufficient temples and monasteries. Some operate at near-poverty levels and depend on donations from pilgrims and layfolk, providing guidance and training to visitors in return. Others, especially those where the monks have taken vows of silence or dedicated themselves to similar extreme disciplines, are generally not open to the public; visitors must wait outside lest their presence disturb the energy of those within. Many temples devoted to Irori also train monks, and it's through these temples that the martial arts of distant lands have spread across the Inner Sea region. Such simple temples often gain footholds in oppressive lands where commoners are not allowed to use weapons, for the expert hands of a monk can show a



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peasant how to disarm a knight or use a farm implement with deadly purpose. Almost all Iroran temples feature rooms for prayer, sleep, and exercise, where Irori's faithful study and train endlessly to seek perfection.

A temple's leader is the resident closest to self-perfection, normally determined through collective meditation but sometimes through combat or some other esoteric metric. In most cases, the leader is a guide rather than a tyrant, though some temples tend to be more aggressive in their outlooks, requiring combat challenges (sometimes of a bloody or even deadly variety) to ascend to higher status. Each temple is sufficient unto itself, its masters responsible for guiding others down a path of enlightenment and opening the doors of their minds. In general, the priests within a given temple share certain viewpoints regarding the proper way to achieve mastery, and some maintain rivalries with other temples that teach competing philosophies.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

To devote oneself to service of Irori is to devote oneself to unswerving pursuit of perfection. While many are attracted to the ideals of his faith, few have the strength or rigor to pursue the path for long. The claims of the world are many and pressing, and their grasp demands that the student pull his gaze from the light of truth: families, debts, conflicts, and even old memories reach out to drag students back to their former lives. Irori understands this, and asks only that his followers continue to strive toward perfection with their body, their wits, and most of all their unquenchable spirit.

Though his clergy predominantly consists of monks and clerics, Irori welcomes all who appreciate his ideals and seek to develop their spiritual growth into his clergy. Sorcerers, wizards, and academic sages developing their mental acuity may ignore the physical aspects of his discipline, while others focus on them to the exclusion of all others. Magic-obsessed individuals, however, are regularly disappointed—most find the lore gathered by Irorans too holistic to prove practically useful, and are instead driven toward Nethys's faith. So enlightened is Irori that even good and evil have ceased to have meaning for him. The Master of Masters does not appear to care to what

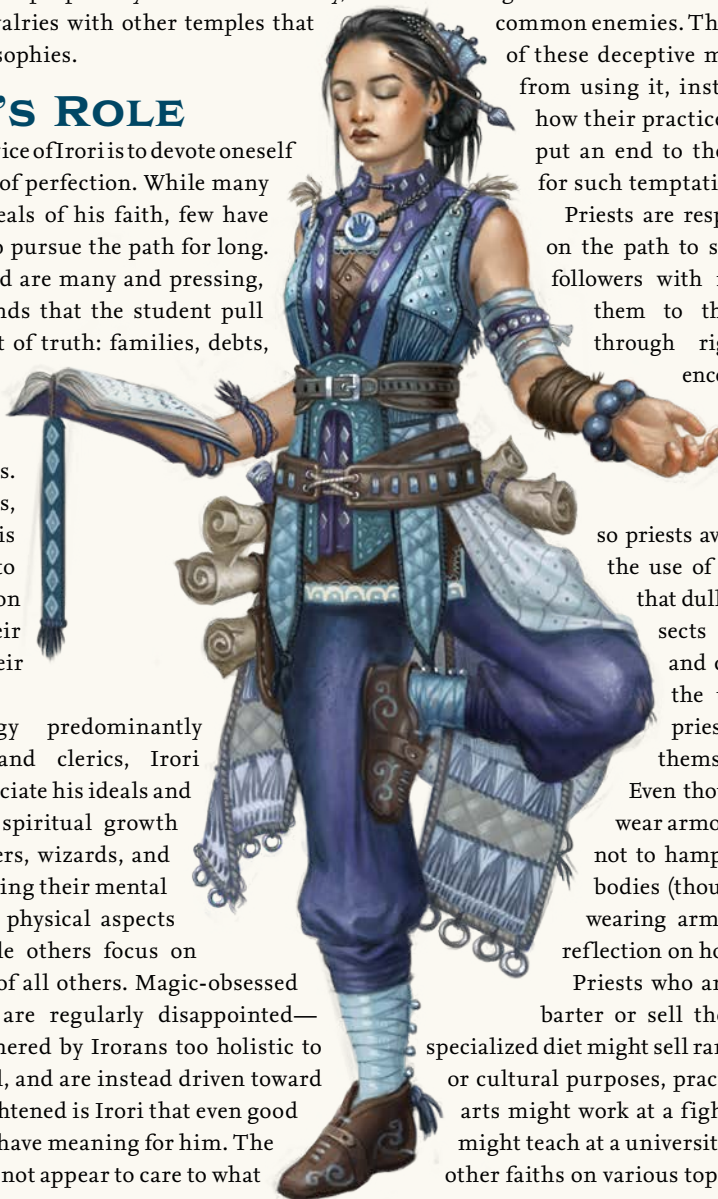
ends his teachings are used, so long as the individual continues to strive for her own concept of perfection.

The rare druid-priests of Irori help civilized folk reconnect with their natural instincts and extol the emulation of various animals as the most natural way to achieve self-perfection. Iroran priests feel a kinship for ancestor and lore oracles, particularly those cursed with blindness or lameness; though these oracles are generally not official participants in the church hierarchy, they're welcome in Irori's temples. Irori's inquisitors are a grim, protective group of stealthy investigators who track down and destroy versions of the god's teachings corrupted by minions of Asmodeus or Urgathoa, who tempt the faithful with false paths to perfection. These inquisitors are usually trained in hunting devils and undead to better deal with these common enemies. They destroy documentation of these deceptive methods to prevent others from using it, instruct misled followers on how their practices will lead to failure, and put an end to those creatures responsible for such temptation.

Priests are responsible for aiding others on the path to self-perfection, by guiding followers with insights and shepherding them to their own personal paths through rigorous questioning and encouragement. While the specifics of each person's path vary, all worshipers of Irori require good health and clear minds, so priests avoid excessive gluttony, and the use of intoxicants or other vices that dull the senses. However, some sects teach that drunkenness and certain drugs help expand the user's consciousness, and priests of these sects dose themselves on a regular basis.

Even though clerics and druids can wear armor, many choose not to so as not to hamper the movement of their bodies (though there is no stigma for wearing armor, as that is yet another reflection on how personal path differs).

Priests who aren't part of a temple may barter or sell their services: masters of a specialized diet might sell rare herbs used for medicinal or cultural purposes, practitioners of exotic martial arts might work at a fighting academy, and others might teach at a university or lecture to members of other faiths on various topics.



Irori often challenged himself both physically and mentally on his path to enlightenment, and many of his priests attempt similar trials in imitation of their master. Most trials last a year, though some Iroran priests embrace challenges that last for longer periods. Such tests of body, mind, and spirit can range from living on rice and water, taking a vow of silence, counting every waking breath, and so on.

A typical day for a priest begins with exercise, a meal, meditation, and study or debate, with these activities repeating throughout the day. Depending on priests' chosen paths, they may emphasize one of these activities more than others, or eschew certain activities entirely. Some priests meditate for days, pausing only to eat a bit of bread and water periodically, while others eat raw meat every hour and spend the rest of their time lifting heavy stones to build strength. Priests train their bodies and minds, and as such they often have ranks in Acrobatics, Climb, and Swim, along with ranks in a wealth of Knowledge skills.

Irori's faith has few taboos common to all temples, but individual paths require commitment to certain mental, physical, and dietary restrictions. If a priest fails in these things, her only punishment is to try again—she is her own taskmaster, and cutting corners only postpones her enlightenment. If she fails too many times, however, she may no longer be welcome in the temples of Irori—the point of the religion is self-control, and those who lack the willpower to manage their own excesses are encouraged to go elsewhere, though they're welcomed back if they find such inner strength.

ADVENTURERS

Those who have taken the teachings of Irori to heart are likely quiet, studious, and extraordinarily focused individuals who have a deep desire to explore the hidden talents locked within their bodies, seeking such secrets either within themselves or by exploring the world. They believe that by understanding themselves, they better understand the world. Those who follow this path see every day as a step toward a more serene center.

While Irori's followers often congregate in monasteries and other centers of learning, they may take to the adventuring life for a variety of reasons. Some seek knowledge unavailable through established channels, others seek to hone their bodies as weapons or to test themselves against the world, and still others may venture forth on missions assigned by their masters. Great are the troves of knowledge held by Irori's faith, but greater still are the secrets that have been lost or that lie undiscovered. For Irori's followers, there are few honors greater than revealing mysteries and sharing them with all who seek to learn.

CLOTHING

Serious followers of Irori's path do not usually wear flashy clothing or jewelry that easily identifies their faith. Instead, they can be recognized by their physical fitness, their serenity, and the poise with which they carry themselves. Irori's priests have no formal garb save a long rope of braided hair, usually tied in a loop and worn like a necklace. There is no specific requirement for the hair's origin; some use their own, and others use the hair of a mentor or even an exotic creature. From these braids typically hangs a symbol of Irori—the hand or the rebus.

HOLY TEXT

Irori's sacred book is *Unbinding the Fetters*, a lengthy tome describing meditation, physical exercises, diet, and other methods to cleanse the body, free the mind, purify the senses, and eventually transcend the limitations of the mortal form. The book is long and difficult, filled with aphorisms, metaphors, and riddles designed to challenge the reader's preconceptions. Each sect tends to use its own version of the book, adding chapters that clarify and expand upon its preferred path to enlightenment. Though one sect may not agree with another sect's amendments, the main sections of the book are used by the entire religion, and some scholars of the church collect different versions to compare and contrast the various practices.

HOLIDAYS

Irori recognizes many paths to enlightenment, and his diverse followers celebrate countless holidays, which vary from sect to sect. A temple espousing the invigorating power of sunlight might celebrate the summer solstice, while one promoting the health aspects of raw grains might observe the Harvest Feast; some scholars claim that any particular day of the year is a holy day for at least one sect of Irori's faith. Despite these varied practices, most churches use the Master's Rebus in their holiday celebrations—worshippers draw the rebus on thin cloth or paper and set it afloat on a lake or river to collide with others, sink, or be carried out of sight, as a metaphor for the interaction of individual lives.

APHORISMS

Although countless masters in Irori's faith have entrusted their followers with their wisdom, two quotes from the god himself are known and used by all of his faithful.

Endure and Renew: A battle is not won with a single punch or kick, and enlightenment is not reached with one bout of meditation or by reading one book. Most people spend lifetimes trying to achieve perfection. Expect setbacks. Learn from mistakes. Improve now so that another life will bring one closer to perfection.



Mastery without Form: This is the root of Irori's manifold philosophy: each person's path is unique, and while much can be learned from others, an individual must be willing to follow her own path to achieve perfection. Spending too much time trying to emulate another person's path may limit an aspirant's own potential. A follower of Irori should recognize the limits of others—physical, mental, and spiritual—while realizing that they may not also be bound by those limitations.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Irori seeks to avoid interfering with other divine beings unless they threaten his work or his people, as he respects other deities and recognizes what is correct for him may not be so for them. He frowns on those who tear down or corrupt the accomplishments of others, and has an ongoing feud with Asmodeus because the Prince of Darkness likes to taunt his followers with false shortcuts to perfection.

Unlike the Ascended, Irori became a god without the aid of a magical artifact—in effect, he considers Cayden Cailean, Iomedae, and Norgorber to have cheated in their ascension (as they used the path made by Aroden rather than finding their own), but is polite enough to keep his opinion to himself unless he feels they are behaving arrogantly. The attitude causes mild rivalry between his faith and those of the Ascended, a tension that takes the form of an ongoing feud with Norgorber—Irori seeks to share knowledge, while the god of secrets tries to hide it away and often endangers his followers. This has led to many bloody encounters between Irori's followers and secret-hoarding Norgorberites like the Anaphexia. Irori views the dispute as one more challenge to overcome.

Irori was greatly troubled by the death of Aroden; their shared status as powerful mortals who became gods resulted in a friendly relationship between them, and followers of Irori are taught to show respect for Aroden's holy sites, much as a great warrior would honor the graves of his friends and honorable enemies. This reverence doesn't inherently extend to sites that have been converted to Iomedae's service, though Irori holds no enmity toward Aroden's heir and understands the practicality of these alterations.

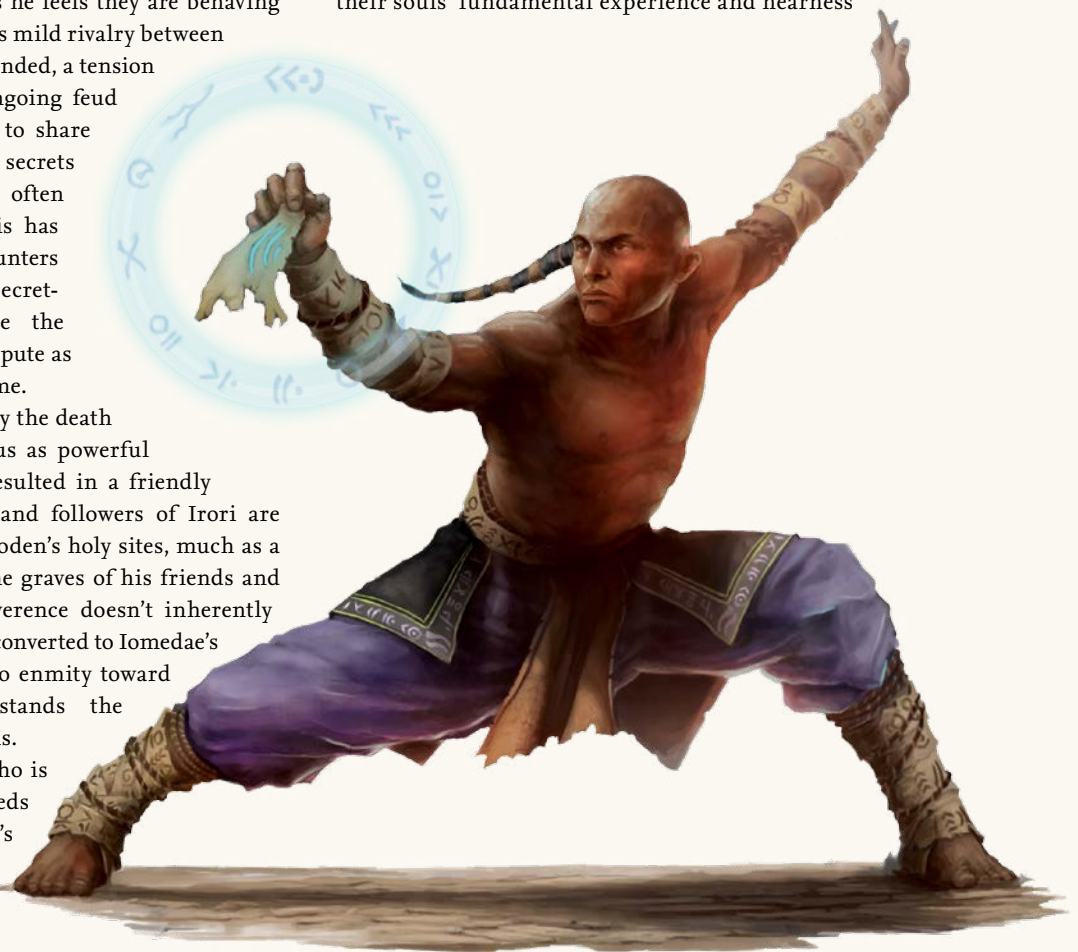
As the children of a god who is one of a pantheon of hundreds of Vudrani deities, Irori's followers largely respect other religions, even if

they disagree with their teachings. Their objectivity and devotion to perfection and balance often cause other churches to call upon them to mediate interfaith disputes, especially when temples are built in areas new to a particular faith and there are clashes with religions already long established in those locales. Irorans oblige such requests if they believe they may help lead members of those faiths closer to enlightenment, but may regret the time and focus taken away from their own pursuits if the disputants are too petty or bureaucratic to see reason.

REALM

Irori's realm in the Great Beyond is called the Serene Circle—a large, flat space within Axis, a lush garden broken by footpaths and scattered with large rock outcroppings. The few buildings typically resemble Vudrani temples, palaces, or monasteries, though the enlightened claim they can see aspects of all of these structures in each, as if the buildings appear in whatever shape is needed. The god's divine servants walk the paths, discussing philosophy and taking breaks to practice meditation, martial arts, or breathing exercises. Most have been reincarnated dozens of times, aided by Irori in experiencing life anew again and again, refining their souls' fundamental experience and nearness

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to perfection with each life. Those who choose to return to the Material Plane again and again help others find wisdom, often acting as mentors, antagonists, or martyrs. At the god's insistence, Axis's native inevitables and formians are forbidden to enter the Serene Circle, for their alien nature and constant noise are disruptive to the sense of tranquility he seeks. A few fortunate mortals may receive visions of this place, with its serenity motivating them to continue their work toward perfection.

PLANAR ALLIES

Most of Irori's divine servants are ascended or reincarnated mortals, taking steps toward perfection with each lifetime and gaining wisdom with each journey. In addition to his servitor race, the pavbaghas (see page 295), notable masters who serve Irori include the following, who answer to *planar ally* and similar calling spells from the faithful.

Cheu Chem (unique pavbagha): Not all paths to perfection require or result in a humanoid shape, and this pavbagha claims that her current form, that of a white tiger, is her fourth incarnation as an intelligent animal. She speaks nearly a dozen mortal languages and doesn't tolerate impertinence from her students, delivering chastisement with a paw to the head (though she always sheathes her claws).

The Old Man: Irori's herald, the Old Man loves to see people achieving their potential, even if it's limited by a mortal lifespan. He enjoys watching over favored students in successive lifetimes, guiding them in different ways each time. When called to Golarion by mortal magic, the Old Man is not so generous with his efforts, for he feels that anyone powerful enough to call him can afford to pay for his services. He accepts magic items that can aid young monks in their training and travels; rare books of history that contain valuable anecdotes; magic that increases Intelligence or Wisdom scores; and pledges to build or restore temples, shrines, schools, and monasteries of Irori in places that could benefit from such attention. While he often proves curt when summoned, he quickly assesses the honest needs of whoever called him and proves quick to act if their wishes parallel the will of Irori. For more information, see page 294.

Sixth Rebirth (unique resolute stone giant): This humorless stone giant's flesh bears several rough scars, as if he had scoured away tattoos from a life he wishes to forget. His name is not one he choose for himself, but rather one that was given to him by a student. He prefers secluded meditation to physical exertion, but can pulverize stone and even steel with his bare hands, if given proper cause. He can be found sitting in near-constant meditation in a shrine built high atop a rock outcropping in the Serene Circle. The Sixth Rebirth answers a follower's call if directed to do so by the Master of Masters.

FOR IRORAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Irori may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Ki mystic (monk)
Scrollmaster (wizard)
Unarmed fighter (fighter)

Source

Advanced Player's Guide 111
Ultimate Magic 89
Ultimate Combat 48

Feats

Improved Unarmed Strike
Ki Channel
Master of Knowledge
Scholar
Steady Engagement

Source

Core Rulebook 128
See page 213
See page 213
The Inner Sea World Guide 288
See page 216

Magic Items

Altar of Irori
Amulet of mighty fists
Incense of meditation
Monk's robes
Perfection leather
Perfectionist shavtoosh
Purification talisman
Ring of serene contortions
Robe of the Master of Masters

Source

See page 248
Core Rulebook 496
Core Rulebook 520
Core Rulebook 528
See page 253
See page 256
See page 268
See page 259
See page 268

Spells

Abstemiousness
Blood crow strike
Channel vigor
Replenish ki

Source

See page 228
Ultimate Magic 208
See page 231
See page 238

Traits

Centered
Eternal Understanding
Seer of Reality
Wisdom in the Flesh

Source

See page 218
See page 219
See page 222
Advanced Player's Guide 333

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Irori add *astral projection* and *moment of prescience* to their spell list as 8th-level spells; inquisitors add them to their spell list as 6th-level spells. Clerics add *transformation* to their spell list as a 6th-level spell; inquisitors add it as a 5th-level spell. Clerics and inquisitors of Irori add *haste* to their spell lists as a 4th-level spell. Additionally, clerics add *legend lore* to their spell list as a 6th-level spell; inquisitors add it as a 4th-level spell. Finally, Iroran clerics and inquisitors add *stone fist*^{MPG} to their spell list as a 1st-level spell.





LAMASHTU

“GREAT IS THE DAUGHTER OF HEAVEN WHO TORTURES INFANTS. HER HAND IS A NET, HER EMBRACE IS DEATH. SHE ROARS LIKE A LION. SHE CONSTANTLY HOWLS LIKE A DEMON-DOG.”

—LAMASHTAN PRAYER FROM OSIRION

THE MOTHER OF MONSTERS

Goddess of madness, monsters, and nightmares

Alignment CE

Domains Chaos, Evil, Madness, Strength, Trickery

Favored Weapon falchion

Centers of Worship Belkzen, Irrisen, Katapesh, Nex, Osirion, River Kingdoms, Varisia, Worldwound

Nationality demon

Obedience Sacrifice an unwilling living creature in the name of the Mother of Monsters. Draw the process out to inspire the maximum terror and suffering in your victim. The death blow you deal should be savage and destructive—do not grant your sacrifice a clean death. Once the creature is dead, remove one of its bones and sharpen it to a point. Use the bone to cut yourself deeply enough to leave a scar. Leave the sacrificed creature’s mutilated form in the open where scavengers may devour it or travelers may see it and know of Lamashtu’s power. Gain a +1 natural armor bonus to your AC.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Savage Summoner (Sp)** *summon monster I* 3/day, *summon swarm* 2/day, or *summon nature’s ally III* 1/day
- 2: Terrifying Eidolon (Su)** Your eidolon gains the frightful presence evolution for free, if you wish. Whenever you gain a new level in the summoner class (or the evangelist prestige class, if your aligned class has the eidolon class feature) and you reassign your evolution points, you can choose to assign or remove the frightful presence evolution. Once your choice has been made, it can’t be altered until the next time you gain an appropriate level. If you don’t have the eidolon class feature, you can instead use *summon monster V* once per day as a spell-like ability.
- 3: Tainted Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a baregara (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 34). The baregara follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home in the Abyss. The baregara doesn’t follow commands that would cause it to act in lawful, good, or otherwise beneficial ways. Such commands not only earn a snarl of disgust from the creature, but could cause the baregara to attack you if the command is particularly egregious.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Howling Terror (Sp)** *cause fear* 3/day, *mad hallucination*^{UM} 2/day, or *fear* 1/day
- 2: Maddening Thoughts (Su)** Your mind constantly swirls with dark whispers and disturbing thoughts. You gain a +4 profane bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting (compulsion) spells and effects and against divination spells and effects that attempt to read your thoughts. Anyone who targets you with such a spell or effect must succeed at a Will saving throw (with a DC equal to 10 + your Wisdom modifier + 1/2 your Hit Dice) or take 1d4 points of Wisdom damage.
- 3: Monstrous Transformation (Sp)** Once per day, you can use *baleful polymorph*, except you change the target into a horribly mutated form of the chosen animal. The target takes a –4 penalty on its saving throw to resist your spell (if the new form would prove fatal for the creature, it still gains a +4 bonus on its saving throw, effectively negating this penalty). In addition to the other effects of the spell, the subject is in constant pain from its twisted and disfigured form, and takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage each round. This constant agony imposes a –2 penalty on all of the target’s ability checks, skill checks, saving throws, attack rolls, and damage rolls.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Ferocious Battler (Sp)** *stone fist*^{APG} 3/day, *bear’s endurance* 2/day, or *greater magic fang* 1/day
- 2: Bestial Jaws (Ex)** Your jaw distends slightly and you grow prominent canines. You gain a bite attack that deals 1d4 points of damage if you’re Medium or 1d3 points of damage if you’re Small, plus half your Strength bonus. When part of a full attack, the bite attack is made at your full base attack bonus – 5. You can also make a bite attack as part of the action to maintain or break free from a grapple. This attack is resolved before the grapple check is attempted. If the bite attack hits, you gain a +2 bonus on your grapple check and any other grapple check against the same creature this round.
- 3: Scarred Form (Su)** An armorlike epidermis of thick scars covers you. You take a –2 penalty on Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks. You gain damage reduction 5/—. If you already had damage reduction with no method of bypass (such as from the barbarian’s damage reduction class feature), you instead increase that damage reduction by 5.



LAMASHTU

Lamashtu is the mother of monsters, devourer of infants, and source of all that is corrupted and bestial. A monstrous and terrifying deity born from the depths of madness, she is both fiendish queen and revered mother to the horrors that stalk the night. She is a fertility goddess, but though those who pray to her are certainly more likely to survive childbirth, their offspring will be inevitably tainted. Legends say that from her womb sprang many of Golarion's monstrous races: goblins, gnolls, and other foul spawn too numerous to count. Her dominion over beasts makes the wilderness a fearsome place, while her nightmares invade the peace of sleep. The endless screams of the insane are glorious hymns to her, and the destruction of all things lies within her desire.

Lamashtu's goal is to corrupt mortals and twist the entire world into her misshapen brood, an enormous monstrous family devoted to her. She's neither an empire-builder nor a conquering warlord; if her world is full of warring tribes, so much the better, for it means there will always be a need for many births to replenish the ranks of the fallen. The primitive and desperate have long sacrificed others'

newborns to protect their own, and many stories of infants stolen and replaced with wicked faerie-kind are actually Lamashtu-altered infants who appear normal and then transform overnight into monsters. Lamashtu revels in destroying the most innocent, whether defiling their flesh or tainting their minds; to her, a nursery is a banquet.

The Mother of Monsters tore out her own womb and feasted upon it to gain power over the unborn, then regenerated her own flesh by consuming a thousand stolen infants. Her milk can sustain, poison, and even transform those who drink it. Lamashtu steals seed from men while they sleep and uses that to create half-breed monsters that she later sends to shame and wound their fathers. Her touch and breath cause stillbirth and infant deformities, and those who suffer this are usually plagued by nightmares.

Lamashtu has dominion over all unintelligent monsters. She murdered the god Curchanus and stole his dominion over beasts, which is why the untamed creatures of the wild consider humanoids their enemies. Many strange and unique monsters arise from her whim, as she enjoys molding the flesh of radically different beasts to create

new terrors. Those plagued by monsters can pray to her for assistance, and in exchange for loyalty and offerings of newborns or infants (or sometimes merely breast milk or placentas, if she is in a good mood), Lamashtu sends her minions away to prey upon unbelievers. Her name can be invoked as a charm or prayer against nightmares, but using it might draw her attention and lead to monstrous births if the invoker is not a member of her cult or doesn't make the appropriate grisly sacrifices.

Lamashtu's worshipers believe that purity and perfection are temporary or illusory, while corruption and flaws are the natural and final state of things. While high-minded artists and philosophers might argue that change is a dynamic agent that prevents the stagnation of civilization, the followers of the Mother of Monsters only want to bend, tear, and break the blasphemous beauty they see in the world. Her true form is a pregnant woman with a three-eyed jackal head, taloned bird legs, and black hawk wings. The state of her pregnancy varies, but she is always visibly pregnant, and often hugely so, though this never affects her mobility. She carries two blades: one shrouded in fire called *Redlust*, and one crusted in frost called *Chillheart*. Her voice is deep and rich, and rises to a howl when enraged; her screams are like a lion's roar that can be heard for miles.

When the Mother of Beasts is angry, her victims suffer painful joints, infections, or nightmares. For her worshipers, giving birth to an untainted child is a sign of great disfavor and shame, requiring sacrifices to atone, starting with that of the unwanted newborn. Her greatest disfavor results in monstrous parents giving birth to children of a people cursed with beauty, such as elves. Worshipers asking her for signs generally undergo physical changes: a priest asking whether to pursue a vendetta against an old foe might wake to find his canine teeth elongated into fangs. Such changes tend to last only a few hours and give no significant advantage. Lamashtu may also send messages through nightmares: a hunter might receive a vivid nightmare of Lamashtu biting the head off a dwarven infant, thus directing him to kill the dwarven captain (the head, or leader of the group) to force pesky dwarven soldiers to return to their base. In rare cases, injured worshipers deep in her favor might wake to find wounds half-healed or a lost limb regrown, though she is not a healing deity, and in these cases the result is meant to stand as testament to her unnatural intervention: a man with a belly wound might have pink scarring and strange hairy growths, a human amputee might have a gnoll's leg, and so on.

Lamashtu's holy symbol is a three-eyed jackal's head. Though her favored weapon is the falchion, the *kukri*, with its murderous implications, is also valued and used by those of her faith. Most of her clergy are clerics,

though many lesser humanoid clergy are adepts, a small number are rangers, and a handful are corrupted druids. She is called the Demon Queen, the Mother of Beasts, and the Demon Mother—but despite her titles, she isn't the creator of the demon race as a whole, though many such fiends serve her and she herself once numbered among the demon lords of the Abyss. Along with numerous well-known demons, seven powerful demonic sorceresses serve her; called the Seven Witches, in some tales they are identified as her most powerful daughters.

THE CHURCH

Lamashtu's church is scattered and lacks an overall hierarchy. It is rare that two priests come into conflict, as they recognize their shared devotion as well as the hostility they face from those outside the faith. When conflict is inevitable, the priests compare scars, number of offspring, and malformations to determine which is superior. Magical power is the last element compared—a less experienced priestess with six children can have higher status than an older one with fewer surviving children. Conflict among tribes that worship Lamashtu is just as rare.

Services to Lamashtu include howling, screaming, branding, bloodletting, childbirth, and sacrificing humanoids or animals. The use of music is limited to a throbbing drumbeat that sets the tempo for the ceremony's events. Services usually take place at night or underground, though an auspicious labor or a particularly long and painful birth might inspire a ritual no matter when it occurs.

The use of intoxicants is a common part of Lamashtan rituals, which often devolve into an orgiastic excess of food, sex, hallucination, and violence. The Demon Queen's followers ritually eat hallucinogenic plants and poisonous animals to alter their perceptions of the mortal world, sometimes causing permanent mental changes and insanity—though in most cases, the substances only cause vivid dreamlike or nightmarish visions. Cultists have also been known to poison others with these materials in order to sow chaos. Though most cultists are too crude and direct to formulate complex attacks against the psyche, particularly devious members have been known to harass and demoralize opposing groups (such as monk orders and religions that espouse physical beauty) with horrifying campaigns of torture and humiliation intended to break their enemies' spirits. Communing with the Demon Queen typically involves an animal or beast for her to possess and some sort of meat sacrifice for the creature to eat.

Lamashtu's worshipers often perform ritualistic self-mutilation to prove their devotion to her, wearing their scars as trophies until the lucky day when she graces them

with some kind of deformity (which is then displayed with reverence). A rare few use primitive surgery to make these alterations, but most are just masochists with a high tolerance for pain and crippling injuries. Those that wholly abandon their original appearance to become more bestial are highly respected for their physical sacrifices, and gain power and favor in the goddess's eyes. Adventurers tell of at least one pink-skinned gnoll chieftain who speaks like a human nobleman raised in a great city.

Pregnant cultists can pray for Lamashtu's blessing, transforming their unborn into monsters that claw their way free of the womb, leaving behind horrific scarring that the faithful view as signs of devotion and piety. In these ritual births, magical healing is shunned as it prevents scarring, though nonmagical healers are typically present to give the mother a chance of surviving. Because they can bear children, female cultists rank high in Lamashtu-worshipping communities. Bearing many monstrous children is an ambitious goal for cultists, (especially as some of Lamashtu's spawn are too deformed or fragile to survive long), but success brings with it the deep respect of other worshipers. Barren women tend to have low status within any Lamashtan tribe and often try to make themselves useful to the tribe in other ways—hunting, raiding, and guarding whenever possible—lest they risk being shunned as Lamashtu's worshipers consider infertility a curse from the Demon Queen. Some male worshipers of Lamashtu, jealous of the revered position of female clergy members, go to outlandish and repulsive lengths to mimic the ability to give birth, willingly becoming the vessels for rot grubs, xill eggs, vrock swarms, and other terrible parasites.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

The Demon Queen's church operates on the outskirts of civilization. Most primitive humanoids worship her outside or underground, their gathering places simple affairs, usually with flat, bloodstained rocks suitable for sacrifices or more ornate rings of stones and idols carved with the goddess's image. Civilized folk usually cannot worship Lamashtu publicly, and thus only construct churches officially dedicated to her in the most depraved lands (such as Belkzen and the Worldwound). More commonly, her worshipers build elaborate hidden shrines beneath cities, in ruins, or in other secret redoubts. In such places, Lamashtu's faithful pay their foul mistress honor as grandly as secrecy allows.

In both cases, Lamashtu's shrines feature an altar carved with a shallow basin. Some sites built to honor the goddess and where the faithful make regular blood sacrifices to her are blessed with the

LAMASHTU'S ANTIPALADIN CODE

The leaders of Lamashtu's children are proud of their deformities and rage against civilization. They seek to tear the blinders from the eyes of the world and show them the nightmare of nature, the writhing and endlessly fecund truth. Their code is one of bloodshed and howling madness. Its tenets include the following adages.

- All things are monstrous, and only the weak hide their marks. I show the world as it is.
- I will bring the outcasts in from the cold and teach them the taste of victory.
- I fill the wombs. I birth the children. I teach our enemies why they fear the night.
- I bring madness to the cities, that in their blood and fear they may understand the chaos of the world.
- I will spread the Mother's seed. If the blind cannot be taught to see, their children can.



LAMASHTU

waters of *Lamashtu*, foul unholy fluid that bubbles up upon the altar or in specially consecrated fonts. If a creature drinks of these waters, he suffers terrible side effects. See page 297 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* for more information on the waters of *Lamashtu*.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Lamashtu's faith is ancient, yet still very primitive in its beliefs and habits. A priest must ensure the strength of his people's faith, tend to their physical injuries (especially those whose deformities are a significant hindrance), spiritually guide them through hard times by focusing on the hideous glory of the Demon Queen, and interpret signs of Lamashtu's favor and displeasure.

Her priests use magic, faith, and flesh to soothe disputes and settle arguments—a spell used for compulsion, a threat of torture in the afterlife, or an intimate encounter might be exactly what someone needs to defuse his anger, jealousy, or desire for vengeance. Promiscuity is as much a part of a cleric's role as healing, and most leave multiple children in their wakes. Marriages or lifetime pairings are exceedingly rare in the cult, especially among uncivilized humanoids; male priests usually aren't sure how many children they've sired and female priests generally can't identify their children's fathers. Lamashtu's priests learn early not to grow too attached to a particular person or thing, as sometimes the best way to settle a dispute is to murder or banish one of the parties. Exposed to deformity at an early age and taught to view it as a sign of their patroness's favor, they are unblinking in the face of horrible afflictions and willing to get close to people "civilized" folk would consider unclean or unholy—often to a fetishistic degree.

Priests are responsible for teaching the young about the Mother of Monsters and making sure they understand her importance in their lives.

They eagerly punish reluctant children either with painful physical transformations or by plaguing them with horrible nightmares.

The children among Lamashtu's worshippers often don't have identifiable parents, and her priests act as disciplinarians and harsh role models, guiding the next generations in the goddess's merciless ways. Some sects have discovered magical means of impregnating both male and female humanoids, and priests often tend the resulting monstrous offspring, which may require a specialized nursery.

Because of such intertwined relationships, most priests have strong ties to their community and are rarely encountered alone. Those traveling solo are usually on a mission or vision quest, the last survivor of a dead cult, or an exile in search of a new tribe. Sometimes these loners hide for a time among lepers and beggars, using their misshapen flesh to blend in and create new converts to the faith. Other priests use their magic and knowledge to infiltrate madhouses in the role of a healer, arranging "escapes" for those who might serve the cult's purposes.

A typical day for a priest involves waking, blessing the tribe's food, physical examination of themselves and others for new flesh or abilities, some manner of masochistic prayer, performing rites over any pregnant tribe members, and tending any monsters or beasts allied with the cult. A cleric normally prepares spells after the evening's tribal rituals. The clergy have no official ranks—all are merely priests unless they gather enough fame and power to lead their tribe. A priest with a gift in a particular area might acquire a title appropriate to that trait (prophet, war-leader, and so on), but this carries no concrete status within the church.

The cult's association with ferocious beasts often puts druids and rangers sworn to Lamashtu in prominent roles among cults; among the more primitive, they may be the head priest or war-leader. Most priests have ranks in Handle Animal, Heal, Intimidate, and an appropriate Knowledge skill relating to local monsters.

Lamashtu began her existence among the throngs of the Abyss, and she retains many connections to that fiendish realm and the perverse spellcasters who seek power from its denizens. Her church welcomes demoniacs (*Book of the Damned Volume 2: Lords of Chaos* 46), as they offer their



Quinn

patroness as much—or more—zeal as clerics. Their pacts with the goddess are businesslike exchanges of service for power, but the Mother of Monsters does not begrudge the arrangement. To most of Lamashtu's servants, the distinction between cleric and demoniac is semantic, as they fill the same roles in the goddess's cults and tribes.

ADVENTURERS

The worshipers of Lamashtu are monstrous, whether in appearance or deep in their souls. Her worshipers wish nothing less than overarching corruption, destruction, and the defilement of all that is beautiful. They are outsiders and rejects from civilized society, often from birth, and see existence as an endless bath of blood and entrails, a constant churn of life rising and falling under the teeth and blades of those stronger, smarter, or luckier. They believe in the propagation of monsters, all sorts of crossbreeds and abominations, and the hot and vicious filth of life. They are the incarnations of vile poisoned fertility.

Worshipers of Lamashtu may venture forth and even ally with those outside the faith in order to seek out monsters or great beasts to serve their cult, to blood themselves and prove their strength so that they may return to their tribe and be accorded greater status, or to find parents—willing or unwilling—for their monstrous offspring. War means birth, as the children of submission and savagery grow to loathe and replace their forefathers.

CLOTHING

Ritual garb for priests may include jackal masks made of leather or precious metal, horned headdresses, cloaks of shaggy fur or black feathers, and pairs of falchions or kukris decorated to resemble the Demon Queen's own weapons. Wealthy followers might imbue these weapons with the *flaming* or *frost* ability, though a *continual flame* spell has a similar look, and red and blue paint are satisfactory representations of the icons. Most wear her symbol as an amulet, brand, or tattoo. Brown and black are typical clothing colors, more out of convenience and availability than a preference for those shades, though they do match the goddess's fur and wings.

HOLY TEXTS

Although most Lamashtan writings are clawed in stone or painted in blood, her holiest teachings can be found in a pair of profane references.

The Four Hides of Lawm: This text is a series of three leather straps stitched together and marked with simple runes telling the history and lessons of the Demon Queen. Lawm, a hero of the faith, created this item by pulling strips of flesh from her own body, tanning them

to make leather, and painting them. Two of the strips have been torn and repaired, and legend tells of a fourth strip containing a heresy expunged from cult lore.

The Skull of Mashaag: This is the preserved skull of a yaenit champion slain by a cleric of Desna. The skull was found intact by a Lamashtan priest and empowered with the ability to speak the Demon Queen's doctrine in several different humanoid languages, as well as in Abyssal. Every few years, a number of Lamashtan cults meet to hear the skull speak, and heroes of each cult face off in contests of strength to determine which cult holds the skull until the next meeting. On these occasions, the skull makes observations as if it were its own sentient being.

HOLIDAYS

The cults of Lamashtu celebrate no known regular holidays, though they engage in debauched hedonism to celebrate births, deformities, and demonic visitations. The entire month of Lamashtan is sacred to them, not only because it is named for their goddess, but because it represents the transition from fall to winter, a time of year when the weakest offspring die from the first seasonal illnesses.

APHORISMS

Servants of Lamashtu extol the insane wisdom of the Mother of Monsters, often in the form of short mantras or savage truths.

Blessed Be the Mother: An oath to the Demon Queen and praise to mortal mothers, this invocation may be a battle cry, a plea for help, or a prayer of thanks, depending on the context. It is chanted during childbirth to link the expectant mother to Lamashtu so the goddess takes notice and brings forth a strong (though deformed) new life. In rituals where creatures are sacrificed, the victim is bled first and the blood used to spell this phrase on the ground in simple runes.

The Scars Are the Proof: Rival cultists of Lamashtu often challenge each other to a "duel of scars," in which they compare scarring to see who has been in more battles or marked himself to a greater extent; the one with the most scars is considered the victor. If the decision is too close to call, opponents may take turns branding or cutting themselves until one concedes victory. Among women, the rough belly-scars from monstrous births are proof of the goddess's favor, and are often the deciding factor in a scar duel.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Lamashtu considers all other gods her enemies, although she focuses her energy on nurturing her children and expanding the lands for them to inhabit. She knows



Desna hates her for killing the god Curchanus and stealing his power over beasts, as well as for her control of nightmares, but she treats the childless, flighty goddess as beneath her notice. She sees Urgathoa as a rival, as the Pallid Princess's deathless followers can multiply quickly and have the potential to swarm the mortal world. Lamashtu wars with Rovagug often over control of the various races and tribes of uncivilized humanoids that revere him. She has a vague interest in capturing Shelyn and transforming her into a hideous breeder of monsters, but such interests can wait until her offspring cover the mortal world.

Though she distrusts any beings that rival or approach her in power, Lamashtu does occasionally work with other deities and demigods when it serves her interests.

She created a realm in the Abyss and gifted it to the four gods now known as the Goblin Hero-Gods (see page 189) in return for their help in ensuring that goblins worship the Demon Queen above all others.

Lamashtu also makes occasional deals with demon lords, but never with Pazuzu, her former lover, for whom she brooks no quarter. Pazuzu is one of the most ancient demon lords, and his long conflict with Lamashtu has prevented him from achieving greater power or perhaps even ascending to godhood himself; this knowledge only serves as a goad for his hatred of the Demon Queen. Accounts differ as to whether the King of the Wind Demons and the Mother of Monsters began as siblings, lovers, or merely allies, but most agree that they slaughtered thousands of greater demons and claimed a large territory they ruled jointly. When the Demon Queen tore away Curchanus's power over wild beasts, her ascent to greater power and status infuriated Pazuzu. When she returned from battle, he stabbed her with a shard of cold iron snapped from the heart of a mountain, maiming her wings and casting her into an infinitely deep chasm at the edge of their shared realm. It took her centuries to recover, but upon her emergence from the pit, she wrested control of their territory from Pazuzu. She hopes to someday capture him, break his wings, and imprison him for a thousand years before finally eating his heart. To this day, his name is believed to disperse her influence, and mortals fearful of her corrupting touch put amulets with Pazuzu's name or image around the necks of pregnant women and newborns to ward her away.

Her faithful are generally hostile toward other faiths, no matter how closely aligned their goals are. The rare exception comes from worshipers of those demons like Socothbenoth or Noctacula who claim (or seek) to be the Demon Queen's servants or lovers. Particularly ambitious Lamashtans may infiltrate other faiths to corrupt them from within, sowing nightmares, suspicion, infighting, and even monstrous offspring among

them, a tactic they particularly favor against worshipers of Pharasma because of their shared interest in births.

REALM

Lamashtu claims Kurnugia, the largest layer of the Abyss, as her personal realm. Kurnugia's vast,

LAMASHTU



world-swallowing size allows it to include all known terrestrial terrains—steaming jungles, parched deserts, ice-caked mountains, vast seas, immense swamps, and more. Other decidedly nonterrestrial terrains exist here as well, violent and insane regions that only the Abyss could host. All of these realms are infested with demons, ruled by great nations of warring fiendish gnolls, or otherwise prove inimical to non-demonic life.

Lamashtu's seat or power upon the plane is the palace-city of Yanaron: a towering mass of strange spires and towers, itself the size of a world, positioned in the center of an impossibly large mesa. The diamond-shaped city that surrounds the central palace is heavily populated by Abyssal creatures handpicked by the Demon Queen for their loyalty or unique deformities, all fighting wars for positions in this legendary city. Several nascent demon lords dwell here as well—powerful minions of Lamashtu that may soon become true demon lords and rulers of Abyssal realms of their own, including many-bodied Izyagna, sulking and filthy Murnath, and shadowy Nightripper (see pages 34–35 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary* for more details on Nightripper).

PLANAR ALLIES

Along with shemhazian demons (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 280), swaithes (see page 297), and yaenits (*Pathfinder Module: Broken Chains* 29), the following outsiders serve Lamashtu and only willingly answer *planar ally* and similar calling spells from her faithful.

Bloodmaw (unique yeth hound): This beast leads a large pack in Lamashtu's realm, and stands out because of his different-colored eyes (one glows green, the other has the normal red glow). He can't use weapons that require hands and refuses to serve if offered such things as payment. He and his pack understand Abyssal and Infernal.

Yethazmari: This jackal-like beast serves as Lamashtu's herald. As much as Yethazmari delights in the war-torn devastation of the Abyss, it exalts in every opportunity to rampage upon the Material Plane. On the rare occasions what Lamashtu sends her herald to Golarion, the servants of the Mother of Monsters flock to its side—an act of dangerous fanaticism, as the beast is just as likely to prey upon allies as foes. Worshipers of Lamashtu claim that no host joined by the Demon Queen's herald has ever been defeated. Legends of Yethazmari often say that it is accompanied by a pack of powerful yeth hounds known as the Black Hunt. These yeth hounds claim direct parentage from the herald and are among the oldest and strongest of their kind. Should Yethazmari be killed on the Material Plane, it's said that his essence chooses one from among this pack to bind with, resurrecting the ancient fiend. For more information on Lamashtu's herald, see page 296.

FOR LAMASHTAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Lamashtu may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Antipaladin (paladin)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 119
Evolutionist (summoner)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 79
Beast rider (cavalier)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 36
Beast-bonded (witch)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 83
Beastmorph (alchemist)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 24
Savage warrior (fighter)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 107

Source

Feats

Destroy Identity	See page 210
Fearsome Finish	See page 212
Lamashtu's Mark	<i>Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition</i> 419
Nightmare Scars	See page 214

Source

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Lamashtu</i>	See page 248
<i>Demon Mother's mask</i>	See page 263
<i>Fanged falchion</i>	<i>Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition</i> 421
<i>Gutbite belt</i>	See page 265
<i>Pelt of the Demon Mother</i>	See page 253
<i>Redlust's daughter</i>	See page 257

Source

Spells

<i>Anthropomorphic animal</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 206
<i>Blade of dark triumph</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 208
<i>Litany of madness</i>	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 234
<i>Monstrous extremities</i>	See page 237
<i>Vision of Lamashtu</i>	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 297
<i>Waters of Lamashtu</i>	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 297

Source

Traits

Deformed	See page 219
Opportune Slayer	See page 221
Unhinged Mentality	See page 223

Source

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Lamashtu may prepare *nightmare* as a 6th-level spell; those with the Madness domain gain access to this spell earlier. Clerics and druids may prepare *baleful polymorph* as a 5th-level spell. Druids and rangers can use *summon nature's ally* spells to summon fiendish animals from the same level *summon monster* list.





NETHYS

MAGIC IS ALL THINGS, AND IN ALL THINGS. IT IS IN THE AIR, THE STONE, THE FLAME, THE WATER. IT IS TIME, SPACE, AND THE VOID. IT WILL NURTURE YOU, IT WILL CONSUME YOU, AND ALWAYS WILL IT BE YOUR MASTER.
—THE BOOK OF MAGIC

THE ALL-SEEING EYE

God of magic

Alignment N

Domains Destruction, Knowledge, Magic, Protection, Rune

Favored Weapon quarterstaff

Centers of Worship Absalom, Geb, Katapesh, Kyonin, Nex, Numeria, Osirion, Thuvia

Nationality Garundi

Obedience Inscribe blessings to Nethys, arcane formulae, and lines of prayer on a blank parchment. Don't inscribe a complete spell—only notations sufficient to potentially spur a reader to study magic in an effort to complete the incantation. At the culmination of your obedience, cast any spell or spell-like ability or activate a spell completion or spell trigger magic item. Gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on concentration checks. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience, and this choice can't be changed.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Arcane Essence (Sp)** *mage armor* 3/day, *mirror image* 2/day, or *fly* 1/day
- 2: Arcane Eye (Sp)** You can use *arcane eye* three times per day as a spell-like ability. The *arcane eye* you summon functions as if you had cast *arcane sight* and were able to view its information through the *arcane eye*. This allows you to see magical auras through the *arcane eye*, and potentially identify the schools of magic involved. You can also potentially determine the spellcasting or spell-like abilities of viewed creatures, as noted in the spell description.
- 3: Robes of Nethys (Su)** You can manifest an illusory robe that absorbs hostile spells for a number of rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). These rounds don't need to be consecutive, and you can activate or deactivate the robe as a free action. The robe functions as a *lesser globe of invulnerability* except that it only excludes hostile spell effects of 3rd level or lower. Any spell that would force you to attempt a saving throw; cause you to take hit point damage, negative levels, ability drain, or ability damage; or end your life is considered hostile for the purposes of this effect. Unlike a *lesser globe of invulnerability*, you can move normally while cloaked in the robes.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Magical Essences (Sp)** *magic aura* 3/day, *misdirection* 2/day, or *arcane sight* 1/day
- 2: Staff Channel (Su)** You can deliver touch spells with a casting time of one standard action or longer through a quarterstaff. Using this ability doesn't change the casting time or other qualities of the spell, but you must make a melee attack with your quarterstaff against the target's AC rather than a touch attack against its touch AC. If you hit the target, you deal quarterstaff damage as well as discharge the spell effect. You can hold the charge as normal when delivering a touch spell through a quarterstaff.
- 3: Pure Magic Aura (Su)** You radiate an aura of the pure essence of magic. You can use this ability a number of rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). These rounds don't need to be consecutive, and you can activate and deactivate your aura as a free action. You and any allies within 20 feet of you increase your caster levels by 1d4. Roll this die when you activate this ability and use the same value for all who gain this benefit. The increase affects spell qualities (such as duration and number of targets) that rely on caster level, as well as caster level checks made to overcome spell resistance. The bonus caster levels don't grant higher-level spell slots or cause the recipients to learn new spells.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Magical Enhancer (Sp)** *magic weapon* 3/day, *arrow eruption*^{APG} 2/day, or *keen edge* 1/day
- 2: Disrupt Defenses (Su)** You have attuned yourself to the essence within magic weapons, and can conjure up that same aura within any weapon you hold. Any weapon attacks you make are considered magic for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction, regardless of the composition or special qualities (or lack thereof) of the weapon you hold.
- 3: Nethys's Protection (Su)** A complex arcane sigil manifests on your skin. The location of this sigil varies by individual, but always appears in a place easily displayed. (Most commonly, the sigil resembles a third eye.) While the sigil remains uncovered, you gain a deflection bonus to AC equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum +6). You lose the deflection bonus if the sigil becomes obscured, but it returns once the sigil is made visible once again.

INNER SEA GODS



NETHYS

Ancient Osirian legends speak of the god-king Nethys, a man whose monomaniacal pursuit of magic opened the fabric of reality to his probing vision, revealing to him the secrets of creation in this world and in the Great Beyond. The sight catapulted him to godhood and tore apart his sanity, creating two minds in one body. Now his fractured mind seeks both to cleanse the world through its destruction and to guard and heal it, to bend and preserve it, to conquer and free it. Nethys is a god of two warring personalities, prone to sudden and unexpected mood swings. He teaches that the use of magic for its own sake is the highest calling of mortals, for it is only through magic that one can change reality itself, and he embraces all who take up magical study. He does not care about the type of magic involved or the ends to which people turn it, only that they honor it and exult in its gifts. He represents all magic, from the most benign healing spells to the vilest necromancy, and mortal spellcasters of all alignments ask for his blessing.

Nethys's only concern is magic—its use, creation, and innovation. He is aware of his mortal worshipers and

rewards their devotion with divine power, but not for their use of magic alone. When some mortal tyrant outlaws the use of magic, Nethys expects his followers to intervene, though he issues no call to crusade. Likewise, those who perceive new avenues of magic and pursue them gain his favor, regardless of the nature or purpose of the magic. His total awareness means he sees every success and every failure, from the first cantrip learned by a fledgling hedge wizard to the rudiments of star-exploding magic developed on the farthest-flung planet.

Other gods may take parental roles toward their churches, but Nethys acts more like the volatile but dispassionate guardian of an estate, unconcerned about individual heirs as long as the vast legacy of the family continues. Queries made of the All-Seeing Eye via *commune* and similar spells always give accurate information, but his tone might range from amused to cold to disappointed to enraged, seemingly without rhyme or reason. Other deities have tried to stabilize or cure his shattered mind and violent mood swings, but he inevitably perceives any progress as a depletion of his energy and negates their efforts.

His allies have learned to tolerate his ever-changing nature, keeping him at a respectful arm's length for the sake of his knowledge.

Nethys is a proponent of magic for all purposes, even frivolous or wasteful ones. Magic is an infinite resource that permeates all dimensions, and thus he insists there is no need to limit its use for fear of its eventual depletion. He sees magic-drained places like the Mana Wastes as aberrations, tumors in the world that can be excised, though dealing with them is not a high priority unless they begin to grow and threaten the healthy flow of magic elsewhere. Nethys isn't averse to technology unless it interferes with or supplants magic; indeed, he relishes the blending of technology and magic.

Nethys normally appears as a male human crackling with power, one side of him burned and broken, the other half calm and serene. This duality is usually emphasized in artwork, which often depicts the god releasing terrible magic from his broken side even as he casts spells from his good side to heal the wounds he just caused. Though he is generally depicted as Garundi, some regional temples deviate from this by showing him as a member of a prominent local race or as an Azlanti.

Outside of promoting the use of magic and embracing those who engage in it, Nethys is supremely indifferent to both mortals and other deities. Pleas for mercy or justice, incitements to violence, and invocations of fairness or the balance of power have no effect on him; he acts in the interest of increasing magical knowledge or according to his whim, but is otherwise unpredictable and unreliable. He is not known for showing favor or wrath to his followers or enemies in the form of divine intervention, a fact that many of his worshipers note with some pride. Layfolk, especially peasants, believe that invoking his name may help to ward off curses, hexes, the evil eye, and other superstitions, though his utter disregard for those who do not practice magic means these invocations fall on deaf ears. The devout believe that zones of unpredictable magic manifest where Nethys passes close to the Material Plane, though there is no confirmation of this from the god himself. Likewise, his church teaches that the manifestation of zones of "empty magic" (where magic simply doesn't function) are indications of his anger at someone or something in that area, though there is no evidence that this is true.

His holy symbol is his face, half black and half white, which might be highly detailed or abstracted to little more than a two-tone, shield-shaped mask without holes.

THE CHURCH

The worship of Nethys attracts those who wish to explore the limits of reality and move beyond the mundane patterns of everyday life. The only common characteristic

of Nethys's followers is an absolute love of magic, and to join his church is to unite with fellow practitioners—if not in an alliance, then at least in a shared goal. Though some of his worshipers seek rewards through magic, for most, magic itself is the reward, and the power and wealth that it could bring are only a means to increase their understanding of the arcane arts. Some love the physical act of using magic; others appreciate it as a tool of the highest quality. Some are generous and willing to teach what they know; others are jealous and paranoid practitioners who seclude themselves and guard their secrets from potential rivals. Nethys's followers are likely to experiment with their knowledge, and brandish it like a banner of faith, since Nethys teaches that using magic is a sign of refinement, and that conserving it is foolish. A true worshiper revels at the opportunity to use magic and show others its glory.

Worship services vary from temple to temple, but usually include a weekly meeting involving chanting and spellcasting demonstrations. In many cases, the hymns are phonetic transcriptions of verbal components of spells favored by that temple, allowing the faithful to chant a representation of the magical words, but with a few key syllables removed so that someone who actually knows that spell or has it prepared doesn't risk accidentally casting it. Musical instruments are rarely part of services unless the temple has a bardic priest, though limited percussion involving the tapping of wands or staves is not unusual.

Crossbreeding and mutating animals and magical creatures is a common practice at many churches, reinforcing the "mad wizard" stereotype and often scaring nonmagical folk away from the temples. From time to time this experimentation creates a useful creature with magical powers that breeds true to create more of its kind, and the temple shares this information or the offspring with other allied temples or spellcasters. Once a year, the church demands that each priest tithe a minor magic item—such as a scroll or potion—to the temple for use or sale. Many adventuring priests use this as an opportunity to get rid of lower-powered items that have been superseded by other magic. Other priests have the option—in hierarchical order—to purchase them before the sale is opened to the public. Though temple leaders are usually willing to take money from outsiders to fund their research, few want their holy places to become marketplaces sullied by the feet of the unworthy.

Those without magical ability may work for the church, but are treated as second-class citizens at best and expendable guardians or experimental subjects at worst. In the church of Nethys, even a lowly apprentice who has mastered nothing beyond a few cantrips has higher status than a master rogue or talented fighter.



NETHYS

Most senior temple guards have at least one level in a magical class or have acquired (via a feat or special ritual) the ability to cast a few spells in order to gain some respect in the eyes of the priests and establish a firm seniority over the common guards. The newest recruits are first trained in Spellcraft so they recognize and do not needlessly fear magic. Though the church does not go out of its way to teach magic to laypeople, neither does it attempt to prevent them from learning or hold their former mundane status against them if they do manage to learn. After all, few people are born knowing how to cast spells, and those who manage to persevere and learn the magical arts are to be commended and respected above non-casters, regardless of how long it takes them to unlock that first flicker of ability.

Worshippers of Nethys can be found almost anywhere. The best-known temples are those in places of strong magic, such as Nex, Geb, Absalom, Kyonin, Thuvia, and Osirion, for the most powerful spellcasters converge on major cities in these regions to demonstrate their skills or display their knowledge. As Nethys himself is believed to have been Osirian in life, his worship is most prominent there, and many of his most ardent believers have been lost to the sands while seeking the site where vision transformed him into a god.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Nethys is both guardian and destroyer, and overall his church tries to balance his two aspects. Individual temples, however, often focus on one type of magical study, philosophy, or application in order to draw worshippers similarly inclined.

A few temples alternate between the god's aspects or directly oppose the actions of other temples purely to keep the balance. Opposing temples might even war against each other for supremacy, while good temples might work together to siphon magic from evil items, lock the items away, or convert the items to a more benign use. Specialized temples are usually named in an identifying way so visitors are fully aware of their natures. For example, a Numerian temple devoted to deciphering the magical properties of skymetals might be called the Church of Skysteel, whereas a Gebbite temple studying necromancy might be called the Bone Cathedral.

Each temple usually has its own colors, which tend to be a range of similar hues, such as scarlet, deep red, and dark wine. Every one has at least one wall containing some or all of the text of *The Book of Magic*, and daily prayers usually take place near this wall. Significant or long-established temples set aside at least one chamber for the practice of the branch of magic favored by their inhabitants: a temple focusing on conjuration usually has a summoning circle, a temple of healing keeps an

infirmary, and so on. Sometimes the true nature of a temple is a secret kept from the public, and this special chamber is hidden away so that no outsiders see it. A few temples, primarily those focused on healing, are specifically built to serve the public interest, but most are not open to layfolk or casual visitors, and function more like exclusive private clubs than places for commoners to pray and seek solace.

Shrines to Nethys are uncommon, because the faithful are more inclined to build grand structures at noteworthy sites—almost always with the help of magic—in order to make comfortable quarters for long-term study, rather than simply mark a place and move on. Actual shrines



NETHYS

tend to be unusual, and guarded with dangerous curses to encourage the unworthy to stay away. For example, a wizard who wins a duel by turning her enemy to stone might declare his shattered remains to be a shrine to Nethys, casting spells that explain what happened and warn of the rotting curse that will befall anyone who disturbs the site.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Any spellcaster can join Nethys's priesthood: whether divine or arcane, academy-trained wizard or wild shaman, all who call upon magical power are welcome. Divine casters are valued, but must be able to defend their positions with magical knowledge or brute power. Even alchemists, paladins, adepts, and rangers can become priests, although advancement within the church is based on magical ability and knowledge, which means that most practitioners of simpler magic never ascend past the church's lower ranks.

Temple-trained clergy are polite to adherents of other faiths as long as they have either magical ability of their own or proper deference toward those who possess it. Such priests are used to magical folk being in charge, and have difficulty hiding their contempt for the benighted non-spellcasters who lack such deference. They often make the mistake of barking orders in more egalitarian groups such as adventuring parties, making their companions wary of their god's mercurial nature and the priests' disdain for those without magical aptitude. Independent priests tend to be a bit more accommodating in their dealings with non-Nethysians, although they still consider themselves superior to nonmagical folk and comport themselves with pride often seen as arrogance.

Nethys doesn't care what his priests do with their magic any more than he cares about their souls. Many of his followers take pride in the fact that their god mostly ignores them, believing that any power they achieve is thus fundamentally their own. Most take a mercenary attitude toward those benefitting from their services: priests craft and sell magical goods, advise nobles and merchants on how magic can improve their stations,

hire themselves as bodyguards for ships or caravans, or act as battle-casters for armies or adventuring companies. Some tithe service to a lord in exchange for property and a retinue of servants so that they can focus on research. Others use their magic to entertain or swindle others.

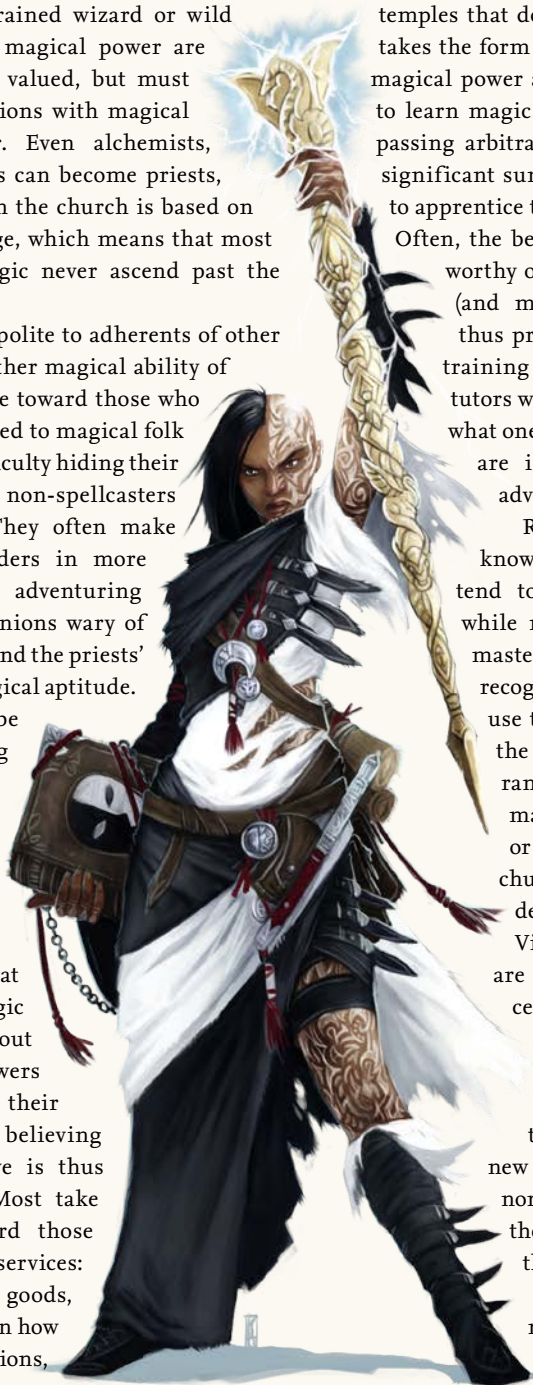
Priests evangelize as the mood strikes them, or remain within their towers seeking knowledge divorced from the outside world. As long as the direction they choose points toward greater magical knowledge and power, they may worship however they choose. For those priests and

temples that do decide to evangelize, this generally takes the form of displaying the obvious benefits of magical power and then waiting for those who wish to learn magic to prove their worthiness, either by passing arbitrary and arduous tests or by fronting significant sums of money, before they are allowed to apprentice to a priest or be tutored by the temple.

Often, the best way to convince the temple you're worthy of magical training is to take the first (and most laborious) steps on your own, thus proving your dedication. Most magical training consists of helping the Nethysian tutors with their own researches and learning what one can in the process, as few Nethysians are interested in teaching except as it advances their own goals.

Rank in the church is based on magical knowledge and power. Benign temples tend to weight the former more heavily, while malevolent ones value the latter. As masters of magic, priests are trained to recognize spell levels and caster levels and use them to assess where someone fits in the pecking order. Individuals of higher rank often acquire apprentices—these may be neophyte members of the faith or individuals who have no status in the church whatsoever until their masters declare them sufficiently trained. Visitors from other Nethysian temples are welcome to participate in temple ceremonies unannounced, and many young spellcasters who show up are recently graduated apprentices—or those whose masters died or cast them out—hoping to gain a place in a new temple where the clergy neither knows nor cares about their history, and where they can attain rank based purely on their power.

Nethysian priests have a limited role in most rural communities, unless they focus on animals,



crops, healing, or some other area that gives them reason to interact with common folk. Urban priests have stronger ties to locals, particularly those connected to construction, trade, and the exotic interests of nobles. Temple priests always have ranks in Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft, and depending on the temple's focus, they may also have ranks in Appraise, Heal, Intimidate, and Use Magic Device. Temple priests are addressed as "disciple," "priest," "brother," or "sister," depending on the speaker's familiarity with the priest. The head of a temple is usually just called "high priest," though individual temples may use unique titles. Members of the faith who are not associated with a temple are usually called "acolyte," "disciple," or "master," depending on their apparent skill with magic. While it's not considered an insult to mistake a stranger's rank if she doesn't give any indication of her magical prowess, persisting in this error after a correction is made is considered rude, and is often taken as a challenge.

ADVENTURERS

Anyone with a passion for magic is welcome to worship Nethys. Though he is believed to have once been human, his worship is strong among all races that employ magic. Though Nethys's teachings appeal to those who seek to manipulate reality, to enter his church is to join a community of fellow practitioners—at least in a shared goal and passion if not a true alliance.

Nethys's worshipers have no built-in moral compass of any sort. He doesn't care what his faithful do with magic, just that they seek out power with full intent to use it. Small wonder, then, that many power-hungry adventurers would turn to his calling. One might worship the All-Seeing Eye so that she can dominate your village or raze a city with a word. Another might worship him so that she can save her dear friends' souls from torment at the hands of demons in the Abyss. Still more simply desire knowledge, the more esoteric the better. Nethys cares about deeds and motivations as little as he cares about his followers' soul, and many in Nethys's flock take pride in the fact that their god generally ignores them, for it means the power they achieve is fundamentally their own.

CLOTHING

Individual temples of Nethys have great latitude both in terms of members' behavior and dress code, though formal ceremonies require an elaborate robe, skullcap, mozzetta, and hood in the temple's colors. A two-colored face may be included as an insignia, or the mozzetta itself may be dark on one side and light on the other. Priests of the All-Seeing Eye tend to focus their energies on the pursuit of knowledge rather than fashion, and are just as likely to don their ceremonial robes to honor the god

as they are to use it as daily wear because they're too distracted to find other appropriate clothing or otherwise oblivious to "insignificant social mores." Many priests tattoo their faces and hands on one side to match their god's image; darker-skinned priests rub white ash or other irritants into their fresh tattoos or cuts to create white scars.

HOLY TEXT

The official text of the church is *The Book of Magic*, a comprehensive guide for casting spells and channeling magic, as well as a treatise on the moral ramifications of its use and misuse. As might be expected from a Nethysian text, the book often comes down squarely on one side of certain issues, only to contradict itself a few paragraphs later. Most scholars consider it useless as an ethical guide, since these inconsistencies put forth a worldview fractured to the point of insanity—temples of Nethys tend to adopt whichever codicils are most convenient for their particular needs. The information within the book is detailed enough that someone with a proclivity for wizardry can often eventually come to understand the basics of a few cantrips by reading it from cover to cover, and more than one great wizard has started out by reading a stolen copy of this book and using it as the foundation for decades of study and innovation. Likewise, some latent sorcerers see their power blossom after sleeping (sometimes unknowingly) near a copy of the book.

APHORISMS

Nethys knows more about magic than any being in the Outer Sphere, and his faithful recite aphorisms that require intimate knowledge of the arcane to decipher. A few even rely on wordplay through phonetic pronunciations of certain magical runes that take on additional meaning in key languages. Two examples of this are as follows.

The Cube Is the Red Is the Sphere: This phrase refers to an esoteric intellectual test between three wizards, in which one realizes the answer to a puzzle precisely because the other two haven't answered it. In casual use, the aphorism exhorts the faithful to find an answer to a problem based on the failures of others, as well as to transform something worthless into something useful or valuable.

Point with the Finger of the Scorched Black Hand: Nethys's hand, blasted with raw magic, reveals his will, directing his followers to the path of learning in a phrase with many layers of meaning. The saying also refers to the somatic component of spellcasting—though in the Draconic tongue, the words for "point with the finger" sound similar to a related phrase which means "seek the greater knowledge." (When certain syllables are



stressed, it also translates to a vulgar suggestion, a fact that delights many snickering apprentices.) Members of the faith sometimes use this as a written catchphrase to indicate their divine allegiance.

HOLIDAYS

The month of Neth is named for the All-Seeing Eye. The church has three holidays shared by all temples.

Abjurant Day: On 8 Neth, the faithful work together to shore up mutual defenses and train friends and children in defensive magic. It's also traditionally a day for testing possible apprentices; some evil casters do so by performing deadly tests upon kidnapped subjects to find promising students and eliminate potential rivals.

Evoking Day: 18 Neth is a day of magical fireworks displays, dueling (both mock and real), and trading spells. Among the Garundi, even commoners celebrate helpful magic by dancing with bright streamers and wearing black-and-white flowing robes designed to flare out around the waist when the wearers spin.

Transmutatum: 28 Neth is a day of reflection and self-improvement. Some traditionalists believe it is fortuitous to begin researching spells or crafting difficult magic items on this day.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Nethys's shattered mind makes him an uncertain ally in long-term plans, but he is able to negotiate with other deities, and doesn't turn on them unless his omniscient senses reveal threats or imminent betrayals. Much like his martial counterpart, Gorum, with whom he shares a mutual appreciation for power and strategy, he is indifferent to the ethics of an engagement: many deities rely on his aid from time to time, and he might ally with anyone in the pantheon, supplying spells, magic items, or even raw magical power. Of course, he knows better than to provide more than minor spells and items to agents of Rovagug; despite his destructive aspect, he does not wish the entire world ruined.

Nethys and Irori were both mortals who ascended to godhood without use of the *Starstone*. Irori's perfection of his physical self transcends the divide between the extraordinary and supernatural, something that both intrigues and vexes Nethys. He simultaneously wants to both praise Irori for his achievement and tear him apart to figure out how he did it.

REALM

Golarion's god of magic resides in a domain of thousands of wizards' towers perched atop a massive shelf of stone drifting within the deep Maelstrom. Given the All-Seeing Eye's nature and dual personality, the plane and its natives readily embrace its presence. The domain's stable base and its elaborate, often madly designed and precariously perched towers exist in a state of constant growth and destruction, reflecting the god's twin aspects. Additionally, the domain has the wild magic planar trait, operating according to Nethys's whimsy, something that the surrounding depths often mirror for hundreds of miles around it. Surrounding the domain is a hurricane of magical energy formed by the Maelstrom as a frenzied and constant reflection of the turmoil within the realm. Beautiful, hazardous, and wondrous, the hurricane sometimes spins off cyclones with similarly wild magical effects, which experienced travelers use as a warning that they are near the mad god's realm.



PLANAR ALLIES

The All-Seeing Eye's divine servants are ascended mortals (whom Nethys has lifted to near-divine status) and magical beings. Mirroring his many aspects, some are as nurturing as the most benign angels, while others are as murderous as the vilest fiends. Mortals seeking their advice or assistance had best ensure they summon one with compatible goals. In addition to his servitor race, the burleevs (see page 299), the following creatures serve Nethys and only answer the calls of his worshippers.

Arcanotheign: Appearing as a woman-shaped cloud of swirling energy, this creature serves as the herald of Nethys. As a supernatural creature created in a moment of lucidity by an insane, omniscient god, the Arcanotheign is often left to her own devices when her master does not need her, and wanders Golarion and the planes searching for new sensations and meaning to her existence and that of the multiverse. She is a lonely creature and welcomes those who would speak to her as part of a normal conversation rather than an attempt to get information from her. Her affection for animals is related to this; they are simple creatures who make no demands of her, and her habit of animating giant bears, lions, and other animals out of earth, stone, or wood represents her respect for animals she has known in the past ages. The Arcanotheign understands she is foreign to mortal life and mortal needs. She enjoys experiencing new aromas and tastes; someone wishing to get on her good side should bring her strongly scented flowers, a tasty meal, or some other physical object that may be new to her experience, even if humans would think it stinks or is inedible. For more information, see page 298.

Bard (unique female trumpet archon): Perhaps the noblest of Nethys's servants, this neutral good being resembles a trumpet archon wearing a silvery mask. Skilled with any magic relating to sound, music, or rhythm, she uses the mask in place of a trumpet, projecting bolts of pure sonic energy with the power of her voice.

Takara! (unique male lich): Other than his all-white eyes and skeletal forearms, this neutral evil lich could pass as fully human, though the scope of his knowledge of arcane magic—especially necromancy—is greater than could be amassed in most mortal lifetimes. He carries a strange, semispherical device that allows him to shield places, and allies within them, from the effects of his spells.

Yamasha (unique succubus): Sinfully beautiful, this hawk-winged neutral succubus-like creature is a master of conjuration and enchantment magic. When she answers a summons, she insists on an oath of service from the mortal conjurer, and offers him a single feather from her wing as a token of their agreement.

FOR NETHYSIAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Nethys may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Cloistered cleric (cleric)
Magician (bard)

Staff magus (magus)

Source

Ultimate Magic 31
Advanced Player's Guide 82
Ultimate Magic 49

Feats

Arcane Insight
Forceful Channel
Magical Epiphany

Source

See page 207
See page 212
See page 213

Magic Items

All-seeing armor
Altar of Nethys
Mask of conflicting energies
Nethysian ring of minor spell storing
Quarterstaff of entwined serpents
Ring of wizardry
Spellsight bracers

Source

See page 250
See page 248
See page 266
See page 259
See page 256
Core Rulebook 484
See page 269

Spells

Channel the gift
Fractions of heal and harm
Spell gauge
Spell scourge

Source

See page 230
See page 234
See page 242
See page 243

Traits

Arcane Depth
Magic is Life

Source

See page 218
Advanced Player's Guide 333
See page 223
See page 223

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Priests of Nethys use *imbue with spell ability* to teach apprentices how powerful magic feels; sorcerers and wizards who worship Nethys may learn it as a 4th-level spell, and bards may do so as a 3rd-level spell. Nethys's followers are, however, forbidden to use spells that grant spellcasting to share magic with those normally unable to cast spells or use spell-like abilities. Clerics may prepare *arcane mark* as an orison, *arcane lock* and *fox's cunning* as 2nd-level spells, and *permanency* as a 5th-level spell. Bards can learn *arcane lock* as a 2nd-level spell and *permanency* as a 4th-level spell.



NETHYS



NORGORBER

THERE IS VALUE IN THE THINGS THAT OTHERS SHUN OR CONCEAL. A SECRET IS AN INTANGIBLE COIN WORTH MORE THAN A NOBLE'S MURDER.

—THE WORDS BEHIND THE MASK

THE REAPER OF REPUTATION

God of greed, murder, poison, and secrets

Alignment NE

Domains Charm, Death, Evil, Knowledge, Trickery

Favored Weapon short sword

Centers of Worship Absalom, Galt, Nex, Osirion, River Kingdoms, The Shackles, Taldor, Varisia

Nationality Taldan

Obedience While moving through a crowd of people (at least six individuals), whisper a prayer to Norgorber so quietly that no one hears you. If you suspect a member of the crowd heard you, you must follow that individual and prick her with a poisoned needle or other sharp implement. If you can't locate a suitable crowd, dig a hole at least 6 inches deep in the ground, whisper your prayers into the hole, and bury the sound. At the end of your obedience, dip a needle in poison and leave it on a road, jutting from a windowsill, or anywhere else a passerby might inadvertently prick herself. Gain a +3 profane bonus on Bluff checks and on Diplomacy checks to gather information.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Secrets and Lies (Sp)** *comprehend languages* 3/day, *detect thoughts* 2/day, or *clairaudience/clairvoyance* 1/day
- 2: Noxious Bomb (Ex)** As a full-round action, you can combine a vial of poison with a thrown alchemist bomb. The bomb deals normal direct hit and splash damage, plus the target of the direct hit must save successfully or suffer the effects of the poison. Only contact and injury poisons can be used this way. Creatures hit by the bomb's splash damage are unaffected by the poison. If you don't have the bomb class feature, this boon instead functions the same as poison expertise, the second divine boon for sentinels of Norgorber.
- 3: Secret Self (Sp)** Once per day, you can use *greater invisibility* on yourself as a spell-like ability. When you use this spell-like ability, you gain certain gifts from Norgorber in addition to the spell effects. You gain a +4 profane bonus on Perception checks while invisible. You gain a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls made with thrown weapons, ranged weapons, and short swords while invisible as well. These bonuses apply only when you're using this spell-like ability, not when you're affected by any other spell or effect that

grants *greater invisibility*. In addition, the invisibility effect lasts for 1 minute/level instead of the normal 1 round/level.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Poison Tongue (Sp)** *command* 3/day, *distressing tone*^{UM} 2/day, or *suggestion* 1/day
- 2: Masterful Poisoner (Ex)** You know the best techniques for storing and applying poisons. Your knowledge of the proper methods of handling and applying poisons grants them additional potency. The saving throw DC of any poison you use increases by 2. This effect applies only to poisons you administer directly, including applying the poison to a weapon you use. Giving the weapon to another person reduces the poison's efficacy back to normal, as the weapon's new owner does not have your skill at storing and using the poisoned item.
- 3: Virulent Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a piscodaemon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 72) to serve you. The piscodaemon follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home in Abaddon. The piscodaemon doesn't follow commands that would cause it to act in altruistically good ways, and could attack you if a command is particularly egregious.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Virulence (Sp)** *poisoned egg*^S 3/day, *delay poison* 2/day, *poison* 1/day
- 2: Poison Expertise (Ex)** Long practice has taught you how to deftly apply poison during combat. You can apply poison to a weapon or a single piece of ammunition as a move action. You never risk exposing yourself to the effects of the poison when applying it to the weapon, nor do you run the risk of poisoning yourself if you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll with a poisoned weapon.
- 3: Death Strike (Ex)** Once per day, you can make a death strike with a melee weapon. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. You gain a +4 bonus on your attack roll and deal an extra 1d6 points of damage for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 5d6). If your death strike reduces the target to negative hit points but doesn't kill it outright, the target immediately drops to a negative hit point total equal to its Constitution score - 1 (one point away from death).

INNER SEA GODS



NORGORBER

Norgorber is one of the Ascended, a mortal who triumphed in the Test of the *Starstone* and took the mantle of the god of killers and spies. Little is known of his life as a mortal, for he has concealed this information so others can't use it against him—possibly murdering those who knew him. He has wiped knowledge of his past from even the memories of the other gods, becoming an enigma to all. Only his most favored worshipers know enough about his goals to help bring his plans to fruition in the world, and sometimes he wipes the knowledge from their minds when their tasks are done to better preserve his secrets. Some sages believe that if Norgorber's true nature were discovered, he would be undone—perhaps as a side effect of his passing the Test of the *Starstone*, or perhaps as fallout from some sacrifice he made for greater power. He is subtle, devious, and cunning, a cold killer who hides in shadows and trades on his power and information. He is a master of secrets, a true gamesman, and he welcomes all into his church—for eventually, all have secrets for which they would kill.

In artwork, Norgorber is most often represented only by his holy symbol: a featureless black mask, often polished to a mirror sheen. Some artists evoke his presence with a black masklike badge or an empty black glove, and worshipers have been known to nail a black glove to a door as a warning to someone who has offended the cult. He is sometimes shown as an invisible man dressed in the garb of a thief, or a hooded, spectre-like figure with an obscured face and sinister black gloves. Those who try to paint or sculpt him as a recognizable figure, even if the image is purely from the artist's imagination and not based on any knowledge or insight, find their hands fumbling and their work increasingly erratic. If they persist, their motor control is often permanently afflicted. Wiser priests of his church say this is because if the god blotted out only accurate depictions of him, mortals could deduce his true appearance by determining what they are not allowed to paint, so instead he hinders all attempts to portray his visage. When he manifests to mortals, he appears to be a normal human dressed in brown and black, of average height and build, always with his face concealed

or entirely invisible, and vaguely threatening even when speaking pleasantly.

Norgorber treasures secrets like a merchant loves gold, whether the secret is his own or belongs to a mortal or supernatural creature. He trades them for more valuable secrets, gives them away if such knowledge serves his long-term goals, and takes them from volunteers who can't trust themselves not to speak of what they know. He modifies memories or kills to preserve secrets. He is not a god of lies, but will use them to protect the truth of the matter or make it more valuable, though he dislikes altering knowledge to change truth into falsehood. Norgorber understands that controlling something is having power over that thing, and having power leads to the desire for more. He knows there may be negative consequences for acting openly, and instead uses deceptive, circumspect, and insidious efforts like blackmail and poison. Of course, some poisons are merely an inconvenience to the target, while some targets are easier to eliminate than to threaten or persuade. Together, these ideas make Norgorber the god of secrets, greed, poison, and murder—four pernicious traits interwoven to create a treacherous whole.

Norgorber's realm in the Great Beyond is a network of sprawling tunnels and caverns beneath the perfect city of Axis. Its shadows and dark inhabitants hum silently with secret intent, bending the letter and spirit of Axis's laws but never going so far as to disrupt its perfect order. The domain connects to various points in Axis, sometimes in defiance of normal perceptions of time and space. Norgorber's presence and that of his followers is like the grease in a complex mechanism: messy and hidden away, but crucial to its overall function.

The god of secrets is subtle in his interventions. When he is pleased, a pickpocket finds a gold coin in an otherwise poor man's purse, a spy overhears a juicy bit of information from an unexpected source, a poisoned weapon retains its coating for a second attack, or a guard dies with only a quiet gurgle. When he's roused to anger, his ire is carefully measured. A thief finds she's lost the jewel she was supposed to steal, a speaker completely forgets whatever important topic he was talking about, an envenomed blade nicks the hand of a master assassin, or a skilled murderer finds himself downed by a lucky blow from an alley thug. Norgorber is disinclined to kill followers who fail him, provided they're still useful, and prefers to instead punish them with humiliation, sickness, or a crippling injury for a time, wiping key information from their minds to preserve his master plan. However, he has been known to dispose of those who are of no further use to him, especially those whose lives could be a threat to his objectives and whose deaths can serve as a lesson to surviving members of the cult.

THE FOUR ASPECTS

Norgorber has four aspects, all of them sinister. He is the Reaper of Reputation, god of secrets; the Gray Master, god of thieves; Blackfingers, god of poisons; and Father Skinsaw, god of murder. Members of Norgorber's cult usually align themselves with one of his four aspects, though some temples venerate all of them. The faithful are all Sons and Daughters of the Mask, and the different branches of the church might work together toward some secret plan orchestrated by the god and his direct agents, though in many respects they operate like four distinct churches of different deities. The faithful mask themselves and hide their identities from their fellow congregants as scrupulously as they do from their victims.

Blackfingers: In his alchemist and poisoner aspect, Norgorber represents unethical experimentation for the sake of knowledge and the harmful use of alchemy. While plenty of good- and neutral-inclined alchemists worship other gods, all have at least heard of the secrets taught by Blackfingers. His alchemists breed spiders and scorpions with stronger venom, invent paralytics and memory-fogging drugs to aid criminal activity, and practice vivisection and surgery without anesthetic to discover secrets of the flesh or create hybrid monsters. His assassins engineer exotic drugs and toxins that duplicate the effects of food poisoning, dropsy, and dyspepsia, or are otherwise untraceable. The god's followers prefer masks of smoked glass, ostensibly to protect the wearers' faces from chemical spatters.

Father Skinsaw: The most dangerous branch of Norgorber's church is the Skinsaw Cult. Both good or neutral folk and those whose honest work is killing (such as executioners, mercenaries, or soldiers) normally serve deities like Abadar, Gorum, and Iomedae; the Skinsaw Cult attracts only the sociopaths and the dangerously insane, from bloodthirsty bandits to unabashed serial killers, for whom every murder is a prayer to their dark god and a step toward completing his mysterious plan. To them, each murder has a ripple effect that echoes down through the centuries, incrementally guiding the world toward a particular dark future, though only Norgorber knows what the end goal might be. Their killings are not clean or gentle; the bodies are mutilated and the scene of the crime is left bloody. Many cult members wear magical masks made of human skin that allow them to detect the most vulnerable parts of their targets (see page 426 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path: Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition*).

The Gray Master: Just as a predator hunts the weakest animal in a herd, worshipers of Norgorber's thieving aspect target the most vulnerable citizens in their society. Neutral and evil thieves often worship the Gray Master; good individuals who like the idea of liberating

wealth from evil folk usually prefer Cayden Cailean or Desna instead. Burglary, gambling, extortion, blackmail, or selling illegal materials all provide the Gray Master's guild with profits at the expense of others and usually outside the allowances of the law. Individual thieves' guilds vary, from thugs who would disfigure a merchant or her family members if she fell behind on protection payments to nearly legitimate organizations that don't allow drugs or wanton violence in their territory. The cult's masks are usually simple strips of gray or black cloth that create anonymity by concealing the face below the eyes, and are easily discarded after a crime.

The Reaper of Reputation: Norgorber's least malevolent aspect is concerned with guarding hidden information, which makes him a favorite of politicians and spies. Secrets and manipulation are bread and butter to these folk, and even the most amiable politician or good-hearted spy masters their use. Despite this, however, few goodly folk follow the Reaper, and his faithful usually have selfish interests at heart, and use their knowledge or influence for personal gain—though their actions may incidentally benefit others as well. For example, the guildmaster of a crafting guild who manipulates market prices to drive out foreign competition might increase the wealth of the artisans he represents as well as his own. Yet most of the Reaper's followers are simply corrupt politicians and informants for powerful tyrants or despots. Some followers of the Reaper take a more aggressive route to gathering information; most notoriously, the mysterious Ustalavic assassins known as the Anaphexia collect esoteric secrets and slay all others who possess such knowledge. A typical mask for a worshiper of the Reaper is a domino or masquerade mask or a spiral that covers the mouth.

THE CHURCH

Norgorber's faith is outlawed or at least persecuted in most civilized lands, but its main centers are urban nonetheless, as his followers require a substantial population on which to practice their arts. Fortunately, the cult's affinity for secrecy allows it to thrive under these conditions: congregations operate behind facades of legitimate business or literally work underground with lairs and meeting-places in a city's sewers and basements. Many city-dwelling members of the cult lead double lives, reputable by day and shady or even murderous at night. A few—particularly the crazed worshipers of Father Skinsaw—take this habitual dual identity to such an extreme that they develop a form of

psychosis, living two lives separated by nightfall and sunrise, completely forgetting the existence of the other self except for brief moments of transition.

Common folk are rightfully suspicious of any known or thought to worship Norgorber, believing them thieves and liars at best and assassins or serial killers at worst. Indeed, most of Norgorber's cults are associated with or double as thieves' guilds, and the guildlike traditions of worshipers of the Gray Master have carried over into temple practices, even for the other three aspects of the god. Once a new member of the cult has established competency at basic tasks, she must complete a mission relating to the cult's more nefarious activities to be promoted to full (journeyman) status within the organization. A cult of the Gray Master may require the cult member to steal goods amounting to a certain value, get a gambler into a specified amount of debt, or extort protection payments from a merchant. In the cult of Blackfingers, members gain full status by synthesizing a particular poison, reverse-engineering a drug's components from its final product, or discovering a new alchemical use for an animal gland. For followers of the Reaper of Reputation, typical initiations involve liberating a choice secret, defaming or defeating a key rival outside the organization, or accomplishing a political goal of value to the cult. Unsurprisingly, the challenges of the cult of Father Skinsaw involve murder,



NORGORBER'S ANTIPALADIN CODE

Antipaladins who serve Norgorber are secretive and cunning. They prefer to strike from the shadows, even when the odds are already in their favor. They rely on traps, tricks, ambushes, and poison to weaken their foes. Their code reflects a cold and honest assessment of the human condition, and its tenets include the following adages.

- Innocence is ignorance, and ignorance is weakness. I will seek to shed my own ignorance, and encourage ignorance in my enemies.
- I do not take credit, nor do I accept blame. I work always in the shadows.
- A fair fight is not worth fighting. I will take every advantage I can. No tool is beneath me.
- Cold eyes, cold heart. My enemies can expect no mercy from me.
- Everyone is expendable, and I will sacrifice them all as necessary.
- Each life I take shapes the future to my lord's desires.

NORGORBER

either of a high-profile target or a specific number of people in a short period of time.

Ceremonies to Norgorber are quiet, even in cities where his faith is not banned. Typically, a masked senior priest leads a prayer, pausing for murmured assent from the faithful. Ceremonies avoid singing or using musical instruments, though the shaking of coins in a cup or the whetting of blades accompanies some rituals.

The greatest taboo in the Reaper's faith is revealing secrets—specifically the secrets of the faith. Escalating punishments for this offense include lashings, being administered a painful but not fatal poison, having one's civilian identity suffer debilitating setbacks, and murder. Along the same lines, revealing the identity of another member to someone outside the faith—especially to someone in law enforcement—might also earn a visit from the Skinsaw Men, as most members prefer to handle any internecine conflicts from within the secret shrouds of their society.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Norgorber's temples are organized like thieves' guilds and are often housed in legitimate businesses that serve as fronts for more disreputable activities. Alternatively, worshipers may use temporary meeting places in basements or sewers to avoid suspicion centering on a single location. A guildmaster (usually a rogue, assassin, or cleric) runs each temple, with lieutenants and lesser bosses in charge of various plans and teams of followers. Temples to Blackfingers sometimes operate more like

a merchant's guild, selling exotic substances through legitimate fronts, though many of those substances can be combined with others into deadly poisons.

Shrines are uncommon in the faith. Any place with a large populace supports a temple that operates in secrecy, leaving little need for other locations that only increase the chance of discovery. The Skinsaw Cult may, however, bury the remains of murdered victims in public places and treat such sites as secret shrines, and followers of Blackfingers might designate one place in town as a dumping-ground for dangerous alchemical leftovers, creating a blighted space where nothing grows, then visiting it as a tribute to the god's secrets.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

To serve Norgorber is to operate in the shadows, where the sharpest minds survive through their knowledge, skill, and coolness under pressure. Rogues, assassins, alchemists, and shadowdancers make up the bulk of Norgorber's clergy, though spellcasters and even more specialized types also serve him. Thieves and burglars venerate him as the Gray Master, and those who choose to devote themselves to his service tend to be the most greedy and covetous. Bookish alchemists, herbalists, and assassins worship him as Blackfingers, and even a few druids and witches are drawn to this aspect's patronage of poisonous creatures. The Reaper of Reputation uses secretive spies and politicians, as well as assassins, as his operatives. Norgorber is most terrifying in his aspect as Father Skinsaw—insane and sociopathic murderers and barbarians slaughter in this aspect's name. Of course, these traits color rather than define a worshiper, and while some are caricatures of these qualities, most have the good sense to rein in their urges and present a normal demeanor to the outside world.

Priests train in a number of skills to hide their identity. They often maintain some sort of profession as a cover and have ranks in that skill. Thievery, whether common or elaborate, is a standard profession for priests, as are forgery and blackmail, leading them to have ranks in Bluff, Linguistics, and Stealth. Some of the clergy are master imitators, stealing others' identities and using them to cover up dark deeds or infiltrate clandestine meetings to collect their secrets. Others use their knowledge of alchemy, poisons, and potions to keep villains supplied with deadly goods while maintaining public personas as harmless apothecaries. More sociable priests work as diplomats, spies, or negotiators, buying and selling information and contracts. Spellcasters in his service may be skilled in illusion spells to misdirect foes, divination magic to discover secrets, enchantments to twist the minds of those who oppose them, or destructive evocations to destroy enemies utterly.

ADVENTURERS

Those who worship Norgorber live in a world of lies, deceit, and mortal danger. His followers work constantly to protect their identities, and trust no one outside of the mask, but they know that when the faithful gather, they are a force that can shape history. They may disdain those in authority for their pettiness, or may simply have no need for the constricting bonds of law. Likewise, they don't particularly care about chaos and the reign of the individual. They seek the power of secrets, the strength that lies in terror and misdirection, the might of uncertainty and betrayal; they live double lives, always on guard. Though the faith accepts all kinds, those who worship the Reaper tend to be secretive, while the acolytes of Blackfingers are bookish, students of the Gray Master are greedy and covetous, and followers of Father Skinsaw are antisocial or sociopathic.

CLOTHING

Norgorber's adherents tend to keep their worship secret, and even in a metropolis like Absalom, where his faith is marginally tolerated out of respect for his place of ascension, it can be dangerous for a worshiper to identify herself in public. Thus, the churches within most cities develop specific identifiers known only to members. Followers of Norgorber may wear simple masks when they wish to hide their identity, and carry a variety of secondary masks that they can hold up to send messages to members of their faith. Cult members prefer clothing cut to the latest fashion to avoid drawing attention, and containing plenty of hidden pockets for poisons, weapons, and other surprises. Ceremonial clothing varies, but is black and brown for those temples that worship all four aspects of Norgorber, and always involves masks or other identity-shielding precautions.

HOLY TEXT

At least 17 short texts, all given innocuous code names and often disguised as mundane books or encoded to prevent easy scrutiny, comprise *The Words Behind the Mask*, though any two cults may have very different ideas about how the chapters are organized, the specific wording of certain phrases, or which sections are the most important. Within these slim tomes lie precepts for organizing guilds, maintaining secrecy, finding suitable work sites, conducting blackmail and extortion, and worming one's way into a victim's confidence. Most are written as parables.

HOLIDAYS

Norgorber's followers often commemorate his ascension in midwinter by snatching a random person from the street, bringing him to their temple, quietly poisoning him, then hiding the body where it will never be found. Cults that avoid killing might plant incriminating evidence on a victim, drug a target and place her in a compromising position, or steal something valuable in a way that embarrasses its owner. Individual cults may also celebrate the anniversaries of successful schemes, killing sprees, or the invention of unusual drugs or poisons.

APHORISMS

With four different aspects, countless individual organizations scattered across Golarion, and a love of secrecy and coded messages, the cult has few



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unifying phrases. His faithful in each region use a unique mix of regional slang, doublespeak, inverted syllables, similar-sounding words borrowed from other languages, rhyming words substituted for key phrases, and hand signals to pass secret messages. In a city where the cult of Norgorber has been a fixture for a decade or more, this system often effectively becomes the local thieves' cant, even if there is no active guild there. Despite all these differences, however, two lines from Norgorber's scripture regularly crop up among cultists.

With One Hand I Give: Used as a salutation, this is also a warning—the speaker's true motivations remain secret, and a gift in one hand may be offset by a threat in the other.

I Wait for a Fair Price: Something of little apparent value may have great worth in the right hands or

whispered in the proper ear. A person who says this possesses some item or knows some secret that has not yet been deployed to its full potential.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Norgorber is careful to maintain civil relations with most deities and is scrupulous in covering his tracks when he must act against them, working through intermediaries and obscuring his involvement. Only six major deities refuse to speak with Norgorber. Abadar objects to the way Norgorber's thievery undermines the idea of law and the honest acquisition of wealth. Cayden Cailean considers him a coward and a villain. Erastil has seen his criminal activity and family-damaging secrets—and those of his followers—damage too many lives. Iomedae steadfastly believes Norgorber has evaded justice for far too long, and thinks the dark god was somehow involved in the death of Aroden. Sarenrae has given him enough chances to redeem himself, only to see his false repentance further some evil plot. Torag sees him as the cancer that destroys a city from within, despite walls mighty enough to keep out the most dangerous foes. Yet despite their enmity, even these deities have dealt with Norgorber in the past through intermediaries in order to obtain valuable secrets. Father Skinsaw shares with Achaekek the love of conceiving, planning, and executing murder, and the two cults sometimes work together. He has been known to consort with Gyronna and Sivanah as well, calling upon their aid directly or manipulating them for his own purposes, and withdrawing in silent amusement when they manage to manipulate him in turn.

Like Norgorber himself, members of his church make a point of working well with members of other faiths—especially if such outsiders are willing to pay for the unique skills cultivated by Norgorber's followers. They are darkly amused when representatives of those faiths that despise them come to them for help in times of grief or need. Though the faith is not welcome or even tolerated in many places, the secretive power its members carry allows them to make inroads of friendship (or at least alliances of convenience) with others. In the end, however, Norgorber's worshipers will likely show them why they cannot be trusted.

REALM

As with all cities, no matter how lawful, Axis has its own dark underbelly, an illicit underworld populated by thieves and predators. While some might be surprised to find criminal activity in a realm of perfect law, they forget that the concept of lawfulness doesn't mean solely governmental laws, and Axis itself cares nothing for good or evil. The best example of this is Norgorber's domain,

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a literal underground of sewers and tunnels filled with thieves and murderers that connects disparate points across Axis. Far from purging this sprawling network of its shady inhabitants, most Axiomites and other residents accept it as a necessary part of what makes a city run smoothly, like grease in a machine. While Norgorber and his servants may not always follow the letter or spirit of the laws to which they agree (laws that theoretically bind all of Axis's inhabitants), their unreliability is anticipated and planned for—they can be trusted to be untrustworthy. The utility provided by the god of thieves (and his role as the head of what is functionally the largest thieves' guild in the cosmos) allows most of Axis to turn a blind eye to his activities in the name of pragmatism.

PLANAR ALLIES

Norgorber has few divine servants who are known by name to the faithful, and those who do give names may serve multiple aspects under alternate designations. In addition to Norgorber's servitor race, the karumzeks (see page 301), the following beings sometimes answer the call of his faithful.

Secret Shade (unique fiendish shadow): Secret Shade was once a human master assassin, but its recollection is spotty, perhaps from centuries of mental fragmentation intended to preserve the god's secrets. This incorporeal figure has all the powers of an undead shadow with the fiendish creature template, and responds favorably to gifts of valuable history books and biographical stories. It excels at spying and assassination.

The Stabbing Beast: This monstrous killer serves as Norgorber's herald. The Stabbing Beast does not believe that anything other than its master can kill it, despite mortal records that show it has been killed in the past; Norgorber wiped its memory of these failures when he resurrected his herald. When the cult of Norgorber summons the Stabbing Beast, the mortals may present it with several choice targets to hunt and slay, though predicting its interests is difficult. The beast keeps trophies of its kills by covering the corpses in a preservative bile, swallowing them in its scorpion form, and regurgitating them when it returns to its lair deep beneath the planar metropolis of Axis. For more information on the Stabbing Beast, see page 300.

Venomfist (unique water elemental): A greenish water elemental, Venomfist is infused with poison; the type varies according to its whim. The priest who conjures this divine servant may be able to convince it to use a particular toxin by offering it a sample of a deadly concoction, whether animal venom, a potion of poison, or something purely alchemical. It loves to drown creatures in its own body, especially if the victims are naturally poisonous or have been poisoned for this purpose.

FOR NORGORBERITE CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Norgorber may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes	Source
Infiltrator (inquisitor)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 45
Poisoner (rogue)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 134
Vivisectionist (alchemist)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 20
Feats	Source
Poisoner's Channel	See page 215
Reject Poison	See page 215
Shadow Dodge	See page 216
Magic Items	Source
<i>Altar of Norgorber</i>	See page 248
<i>Assassin's dagger</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 472
<i>Black alibi</i>	See page 254
<i>Blackfingers apron</i>	See page 250
<i>Dust of disappearance</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 510
<i>Flask of the Reaper</i>	See page 264
<i>Gray Master's leathers</i>	See page 251
<i>Hat of disguise</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 516
<i>Poison gum</i>	See page 267
<i>Skinsaw mask</i>	<i>Rise of the Runelords</i> <i>Anniversary Edition</i> 246
Spells	Source
<i>False alibi</i>	See page 234
<i>Lose the trail</i>	See page 236
<i>Modify memory</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 315
<i>Night of blades</i>	See page 237
<i>Poisoned egg</i>	See page 238
Traits	Source
Poisonous Slayer	See page 221
Practiced Deception	See page 221
Secret Knowledge	See page 222

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

The unique magical abilities of a priest of Norgorber depend on which aspect of the god the priest serves. Clerics serving Blackfingers may prepare *pernicious poison*^{UM} as a 2nd-level spell. Clerics of the Reaper of Reputation may prepare *nondetection* as a 3rd-level spell. Clerics of Father Skinsaw may prepare *circle of death* as a 6th-level spell. Clerics of the Gray Master may prepare *clairaudience/clairvoyance* as a 3rd-level spell, and antipaladins of the Gray Master may prepare it as a 2nd-level spell.





PHARASMA

BIRTH AND DEATH ARE WRITTEN IN THE BONES, BUT BONES CAN BE BROKEN.

—THE BONES LAND IN A SPIRAL

LADY OF GRAVES

Goddess of birth, death, fate, and prophecy

Alignment N

Domains Death, Healing, Knowledge, Repose, Water

Favored Weapon dagger

Centers of Worship Brevoy, Nex, Osirion, The Shackles, Thuvia, Ustalav, Varisia

Nationality Garundi

Obedience Collect small bones whenever it is convenient and respectful to do so. When it comes time to perform your obedience, lay out the bones in a spiral. At one end of the spiral lay a slip of parchment on which you have written the name of someone newly born. At the other end of the spiral, lay a slip of parchment on which you have written the name of someone newly deceased. Chant hymns from *The Bones Land in a Spiral* while proceeding solemnly around the spiral, trailing a black scarf on the ground behind you. Gain a +2 profane or sacred bonus on attack rolls made with daggers. The type of bonus depends on your alignment—if you're neither good nor evil, you must choose either sacred or profane the first time you perform your obedience, and this choice can't be changed.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Preserver (Sp)** *sanctuary* 3/day, *gentle repose* 2/day, or *speak with dead* 1/day
- 2: Decomposition (Su)** You can ensure the final rest of a creature. As a standard action, you can touch a corpse and cause it to dissolve into black ash. A corpse dissolved this way cannot be raised as an undead creature by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish*. The black ash left behind can, however, be used as the "corpse" for spells that return the dead to true life—such as *raise dead*—as long as the entire collection of ash is kept together.
- 3: The Veil Is Drawn Aside (Su)** You gain the Extra Revelation feat, choosing a revelation from either your chosen mystery or the Bones mystery. If you don't have the revelation class feature, you instead gain a +4 sacred or profane bonus on saving throws against necromancy spells and death effects.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Quietude (Sp)** *forced quiet*^{UM} 3/day, *silence* 2/day, or *hold person* 1/day
- 2: Strike the Unrestful (Su)** As a free action, you can grant the *ghost touch* weapon special ability to a weapon that you

hold. If that weapon is not magical, it is considered magical while under the effect of this ability. This ability affects only weapons held in your hand; if you drop the weapon or give it away, the effect ends on that weapon. You can affect a weapon in this way a number of rounds each day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). These rounds don't need to be consecutive.

- 3: Ally from the Tomb (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a pair of vanth psychopomps (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 221) and gain telepathy with them to a range of 100 feet. The vanths follow your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to their home in the Boneyard. The vanths don't follow commands that would cause them to aid or permit the existence of undead, and they could attack you if the command is particularly egregious.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Undead Slayer (Sp)** *hide from undead* 3/day, *defending bone** 2/day, or *halt undead* 1/day
- 2: Disrupting Strike (Su)** Three times per day, you can channel disruptive energy through your weapon against an undead creature. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. If your attack hits an undead creature, you deal an extra 1d6 points of damage plus 1d6 points of damage for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6d6). If your attack misses or your target was not an undead creature, the use of the ability is wasted.
- 3: Tethered to the Material (Ex)** You cling ferociously to life—you will go to Pharasma's realm when she calls you and no sooner. Once per day, you can send yourself into a determined state that lasts for 1 minute. While in this determined state, you can fall to a number of negative hit points equal to 10 + your Constitution score before you die. If you drop to negative hit points while in this determined state, you can continue to act normally, and do not bleed each round due to taking actions. If your determined state ends while you still have a number of negative hit points equal to or greater than your Constitution score, you die instantly. If your determined state ends while you still have negative hit points, but the number of negative hit points is not equal to or greater than your Constitution score, you fall unconscious and gain the dying condition as normal.



PHARASMA

Pharasma is the stern observer of life and death, scrutinizing the tangled webs of fate and prophecy, mercilessly cold in the administration of her duties. Having seen infants die, the righteous fall too soon, and tyrants live to advanced age, she makes no judgment about the justness of a particular death, and welcomes each birth with equal severity. At the moment of a mortal's birth, she knows the many possible paths each soul could follow, but reserves her official verdict until the last possible moment. Legends claim that Pharasma saw Aroden's death approaching—and even judged him as she does for all those born as mortals—but did nothing to warn even her own followers, many of whom were driven mad by the event. Though prophecy is no longer reliable, prophets continue to be born, and most of them are rendered insane by their confusing and contradictory visions.

In art, Pharasma is depicted as a midwife, a mad prophet, or a reaper of the dead, depending upon her role. Her visage usually has gray skin, white eyes, and white hair. As the midwife, she is efficient and severe, hair pulled back and arms bare from hands to the elbows. Pregnant women often

carry tokens of this image on long necklaces to protect their unborn children and grant them good lives. As the prophet, Pharasma is wild-eyed and tangle-haired, and her words echo like thunder. As the reaper, she is tall and gaunt, with a hooded black gown and an hourglass with fast-flowing red sand, and is often shown seated on her throne and passing judgment on mortal souls.

Situated atop an impossibly tall spire, Pharasma's realm in the afterworld—the Boneyard—looms over the perfectly ordered city-plane of Axis. When mortals die, their souls join the vast River of Souls that flows through the Astral Plane, and eventually deposits them in Pharasma's Boneyard at the top of her spire. Once there, they stand in a great line, filtered through several courts according to their alignment and supposed planar destination. Those who die before experiencing their full fate might be lucky enough to return in this life or the next, either spontaneously or by getting called home by resurrection magic, but more often those who feel that they've met an untimely end discover that their destiny was in fact always leading them to their particular moment of death, however unjust or ignoble.

THE PHARASMIN PENITENCE

In Ustalav, a popular sect called the Pharasmin Penitence teaches that when Pharasma judges a soul, she counterbalances the pains and trials of life with rewards in the afterlife. Most who share this belief take on ascetic restrictions in their diet and allow themselves only meager pleasures in life, but some sacrifice more by wearing hair shirts, or even by blinding, deafening, or flagellating themselves, hoping to guarantee greater rewards in the afterlife. In some counties, extremists view enduring pain as a condemnation of pleasure and change, and hunt those who alter the world to satisfy mere mortal whims—by which they mean users of arcane magic.

Though she allows resurrection, the Lady of Graves opposes undeath as a desecration of the memory of the flesh and a corruption of a soul's path on its journey to her judgment. She encourages her followers to hunt undead, as the souls of the destroyed undead will then reach her for judgment.

At the heart of the Boneyard is Pharasma's Palace, a gothic structure built over the exact center of the Spire. Psychopomps walk its pathways and quietly fly above its walls, performing the administration of souls, and Pharasma's faithful are housed within. Despite its light color and mood, the Palace is obviously a creation of the goddess. It's unknown whether she made the Spire itself.

Pharasma manifests her favor through the appearance of scarab beetles and whippoorwills, both of which function as psychopomps (both in the figurative sense as guides for dead souls, as well as in the literal sense as manifestations of the outsiders called psychopomps). Black roses are thought to invite her favor and good luck, especially if the stems sport no thorns. Her displeasure is often signified by cold chills down the spine, bleeding from the nose or under the fingernails, an unexplained taste of rich soil, the discovery of a dead whippoorwill, or the feeling that something important has been forgotten. Pharasma also sometimes allows the spirits of those who have died under mysterious conditions to transmit short messages to their living kin to comfort them, expose a murderer, or haunt an enemy.

Pharasma's holy symbol is a spiral of light, representing a soul, its journey from birth to death to the afterlife, and the confusing path of deciphering prophecy.

THE CHURCH

Pharasma's church is a somber and structured organization, and staunchly neutral in matters unrelated to its tripartite roles—as stewards of life and death, most priests see

nationalism and other petty concerns as beneath them. Traditions passed down by the goddess and her prophets are followed stringently, though the various branches of the church differ with respect to which rituals and practices they assign the most weight. These differences are never severe enough to force different factions to open conflict, but may make it easy for worshipers to distinguish between members of their sect and other adherents.

Most members of Pharasma's priesthood are clerics, though a significant number are diviners, oracles, and adepts. Roughly two-thirds of her clergy are women, though the gender mix varies regionally, and worldly details like gender and species matter little to most Pharasmins. Pharasma's followers are expectant mothers, midwives, morticians, and so-called "white necromancers" who study other applications of the magic than undead creation. Harrowers, palmists, oneiromancers, cloud-readers, and others who use nonmagical forms of divination also call upon her, although their allegiance has dropped off dramatically since Aroden's death and the end of reliable prophecy. In smaller communities, a Pharasmin priest may assume several of these roles, or a team of spouses might split the duties between them. Prophets often go mad in this age of conflicting omens, and the church has taken it upon itself to care for these poor souls, devoting portions of major temples to be sanitariums, which are operated by the goddess's clerics. Of course, as the goddess of birth and death, Pharasma has many lay followers as well, and even in lands where her faith is not large or organized, commoners pray to her for guidance or protection, much as farmers everywhere pray to Erastil for good crops.

Pharasma encourages her followers to procreate, whether they're married or in less formalized partnerships; she also supports childless couples adopting and orphanages taking care of those who have no living parents. Church weddings may be simple or ornate, depending on the social status and wealth of the participants. Though she is the goddess of birth, she does not oppose contraception. Her temples are known to provide assistance to women dealing with pregnancies that would inevitably end in the death of both mother and child, or to end the torment of a mother whose child is already dead in the womb, but on the whole she believes killing the unborn is an abomination, for it sends the infant soul to the afterlife before it has a chance to fulfill its destiny. The goddess's midwives take all the precautions they can to reduce the risk of pregnancy and childbirth; some church midwives, called *casarmetzes*, are so skilled in a combination of medicine, magic, and surgery that in dire circumstances they can cut a living child from its mother's womb and save both.

On the third day after a child's birth, families devoted to Pharasma call a gathering to welcome its soul into

the world. The child must be given a name before this gathering, else superstition holds that it will be unlucky. Visitors bring small cakes, seeds, salted peas, and watered beer to share with the family and other guests. A priest or family elder lists the names of a girl's maternal ancestors or a boy's paternal forefathers, calling for the child to be named publicly and grow up with good health, and for the parents to live to see grandchildren born.

Worshippers of Pharasma—as well as commoners in many regions—trace the goddess's spiral symbol on their chests, typically as a form of prayer when hearing ill news or witnessing blasphemy, and before or during dangerous events or events with uncertain outcomes. Different lands perform this gesture differently—in Ustalav, it is often done with a closed fist, while in Osirion it is with the first two fingers extended. Especially devout folk repeat this gesture in everyday activities, such as stirring soup or scrubbing a floor.

Prayer services to Pharasma are a mixture of somber chants, stirring ritualized sermons, and joyous song, often based upon regional music, and usually end on an uplifting note—for while death comes to all, new generations stride forth in its wake. During celebrations, the goddess's followers often eat kolash, bread braided into a tight spiral and topped or filled with diced fruit or sweet cheese. During the winter feast, the center portion of the spiral is left open and a wax candle is placed within; the candle is lit at the start of the meal and extinguished when the bread is to be eaten. Each temple keeps a record of births and deaths of its members, and on the anniversaries of death dates, priests speak the names of the departed while those close to the deceased honor them by lighting votive candles that burn for an entire day and night. Many tombstones have niches to protect soul candles from the wind.

When a member of the faith dies, the body is cleaned, immersed in water, and dressed in a special multi-part shroud consisting of five pieces for a male or nine for a female. A prayer written on parchment, bark, cloth, or stone is tucked into the shroud, and the corpse is sealed in a casket if local custom calls for one. A guardian sits with the body the night before the burial—to honor the deceased, to guard against body thieves, and to watch that the body does not rise as an undead. Mourners (typically the immediate family) traditionally mark their eyelids with black ash or an herbal paste for 5 days after the burial. Curiously, the church does not frown upon suicide, though individual priests may debate whether taking one's own life is the natural fate of some souls or a means to return to the goddess for a chance at a different life.

Those who can afford it usually pay to have their remains interred on holy ground by priests. Wealthy merchants and nobles are laid to rest in room-sized private tombs, while those with fewer resources rest

in shared burial cells in catacombs or ossuaries. The church allows the dead to be cremated, though burial in earth is preferred; disposing of a corpse at sea, sky burial, and funerary cannibalism are generally considered disrespectful. Exhuming a buried corpse is considered a violation of the dead, and the church normally refuses to do this—even when a city government seeks to break ground for a sewer, aqueduct, or other vital construction. However, if a priest discovers a worshiper's corpse that has been buried improperly or accidentally exposed, he or she usually arranges for a proper burial in accordance with church teachings. The church does not mourn apostates, and while priests do not withhold services from those of other faiths, they flatly refuse to give rites to former Pharasmins who turn their back on the church.

PHARASMA



TEMPLES AND SHRINES

In heavily populated areas, Pharasma's temples tend to be grand, gothic cathedrals adjacent to graveyards, although in smaller towns they might be humble structures with artistic flourishes meant to echo the great cathedrals, and even a single bleak stone in an empty field or graveyard can serve as a shrine. Large temples usually have catacombs underneath, filled with corpses of the wealthy and of former members of the priesthood, as burial under the goddess's temple is believed to soften her judgment of the deceased. Even a remote Pharasmin monastery has ample cemetery space, and might be the final resting place of generations of wealthy and influential folk—as well as an uncountable accumulation of tomb treasures.

Many local temples have only one ranking priest, but the largest temples have a high priest or priestess for each aspect of the faith—birth, death, and fate. In theory these high priests are all equal, though the high priest of prophecy has assumed a lesser role in recent decades, and the person holding that position is often strange or unstable. Temples that include crypts also have a cryptmaster in charge of that facility. Rank within a temple is based on seniority, as well as on knowledge of the faith, magical power, and personal achievements (such as the destruction of powerful undead). Hierarchy between churches depends on the size of the populations they serve; a large city's temple has greater influence than a small town's temple.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Priests of Pharasma take responsibility for all three of her concerns in the mortal world. Priests (of any gender) who are skilled in midwifery assist at births, and the presence of a Pharasmin priest during childbirth almost always ensures that both mother and child will live. Priests focused on prophecy bear its questionable gift, or record and interpret the ravings of those who do. And all priests of Pharasma are stewards of the dead, familiar with both local funerary customs and those of neighboring lands. They protect graveyards from robbers and necromancers, and the memory of the deceased from the ravages of time, memorizing or recording what they know about anyone who dies in their presence. Pharasmin inquisitors hunt down the undead and those who seek to create such monstrosities, but all priests have a solemn duty to oppose such abominations when they find them. Creating undead is forbidden, and controlling existing undead is frowned upon, even by evil members of the faith. Most priests are highly skilled in Heal, but often have ranks in Diplomacy and Knowledge (religion) as well.

A typical priest earns her living tending to women in labor, acting as a mortician, digging graves, selling spellcasting services, or building and blessing tombs for wealthy patrons. An adventuring priest will not violate the sanctity of a tomb simply for the purpose of looting it, and if she enters a burial place to fight abominations, she still opposes desecrating any non-undead corpses encountered during the hunt. Followers of Pharasma tend to be brusque; some people attribute this to haughtiness, but more often it's simply due to the fact that most of a Pharasmin's interactions are with the dead or dying, mad prophets, or women in labor—groups who rarely care about social niceties. When their services are needed, Pharasmins give orders and expect to be obeyed, as a mortal soul (either recently departed or about to arrive) is usually at stake.

All priests carry a skane—a double-edged ceremonial dagger with a dull gray blade, often with a stylized depiction of the goddess's face and hair on the pommel. They use these daggers to hold open prayer scrolls, to touch parts of a corpse when performing death rites, to cut shrouds for the dead, and to sever the umbilical cords of newborns. It is not forbidden for a priest to use a skane to draw blood or take a life, but some refuse to do so and carry



a different item to use in combat. A casarmetzes carries a special skane bearing Pharamasma's likeness on one side of the pommel and a crying child on the other, and uses this to perform her surgeries.

Though Pharasmin priests worship the death goddess, they have no taboo against preventing death through healing, either mundane or magical. Pharasmin priests who sign on with adventuring parties usually act as healers—if not particularly gentle or sympathetic ones—and most temples raise money by selling healing and other spellcasting services. Even spells like *raise dead*, *reincarnate*, and *resurrection* are not forbidden, though churches usually charge a great deal for these.

ADVENTURERS

Many adventurers follow Pharamasma because they believe in fate, and in the inescapable path of destiny. Everyone worships the goddess to some extent, for not even the most hubristic of mortals or gods can deny that hers is the hand that shepherds souls into the afterlife, sending those bound to other gods to their rightful destinations. It's said that even gods are judged after their death by the Lady of Graves.

For those who worship Pharamasma above all others, the most important things in life are birth, death, and prophecy. When they adventure in her name, it is often to destroy undead or to seek out and attempt to understand strange prophecies. They might seek to protect the dead from disgrace, and be exceedingly uncomfortable with the standard adventurers' practice of tomb robbing—though they have no problem rooting out whatever abominations may have taken up residence in such places, provided the innocent dead are treated with respect.

CLOTHING

Pharasmin clothing takes two different routes. For many traditionalist or more ascetic priests, the only acceptable color for formal garments is black, sometimes accented with silver (such as spiral brooches or amulets) and tiny vials of holy water. In recent generations, however, there has been a movement in many temples away from such dour fashions. Pointing out that the solemnity of death is only part of their concern, such iconoclasts celebrate the birth of new life by wearing more colorful and fancifully designed raiment. Instead of traditional black robes, they gravitate toward silver, gray, purple, and the iridescent blue of the goddess's spiral. In addition to color, these iconoclast priests often add highly artistic elements to their clothing, designing their own unique outfits as a reflection of their unique threads in Pharamasma's great tapestry. While outright conflict is rare, the two camps of Pharasmins have strong opinions regarding each other's clothing choices.

HOLY TEXT

Pharamasma's holy book, *The Bones Land in a Spiral*, mostly consists of the words of an ancient prophet. The faithful debate which events its predictions foretell, and whether the prophesied days have already passed. Later sections dispense advice on facilitating safe childbirth, properly disposing of the dead to prevent undeath, and other relevant topics.

In older temples, the holy book consists of collections of scrolls illuminated with rare inks and bound in metal filigree, each held in a gray silk mantle to protect it from wear and mishaps. Some of these collections are historical artifacts worth thousands of gold pieces, and priests bring only the scrolls they need to temple services, leaving the remainder in a safe place. Church doctrine mandates that worn-out protective mantles can't simply be discarded, so used mantles are either walled up in tiny compartments within temples or sewn into a burial shroud for a priest or other notable member of the faith. Corpses fortunate enough to bear a Pharasmin mantle as part of their shrouds are said to be especially resistant to the power of undeath, including being animated or turned into spawn.

HOLIDAYS

The first month of spring, Pharast, is named for the Lady of Graves—a month of new life and renewal for the world. The church has two common holidays shared by all temples.

Day of Bones: On the fifth day of Pharast, priests carry the enshrouded corpses of the recent dead through the streets of the city in an honored procession. These corpses are interred at no cost in a church graveyard, tomb, or sepulcher, which is considered a great honor to the departed.

Procession of Unforgotten Souls: In lands where the Lady of Graves is a prominent deity, this ceremony is held nightly in the weeks leading up to the harvest feast, during which the faithful ask the goddess to delay when she takes them to the afterlife. Priests wear thin, black robes over their festival clothes, and carry lit candles in a procession into a large fountain, pool, lake, or quiet river. As they enter the deeper water, the candles go out, but as the priests reach the other side, the candles re-light, and the water makes the black robes transparent, revealing the festival colors beneath.

APHORISMS

Along with its abundance of rituals, ritual objects, and ritual clothing, the church has developed many habitual phrases. In most cases, a member of the faith makes the sign of the spiral over the heart when speaking one of these locutions. Three of the most common are as follows.

Not This Year, Not Yet: This is a brief prayer, spoken in response to hearing a tragedy or bad rumor, asking that Pharamasma delay when believers are sent to her realm, for they have much to do before that time. The devout speak it at each morning's prayers and when they pray before bed.

All Who Live Must Face Her Judgment: This is a promise that another person—typically an enemy, but possibly just a flippant or disrespectful person—will suffer whatever fate is in store for them, even if it takes longer than the speaker would like.

The Lady Shall Keep It: This is an oath to bear a secret to the grave, swearing that only Pharasma shall hear it in person (and only once the oath-maker has died), or that she will claim the oath-maker early if he breaks his promise of secrecy.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

All deities deal peaceably with Pharasma, for their agents must have access to her realm to escort souls under their protection to their respective homes. While she approves of some actions and disapproves of others, she remains aloof

and distant, with no true friends or enemies. She detests entities like Urgathoa and Orcus, who actively disrupt the cycle of souls by creating undead, as well as daemons who prey on the River of Souls, yet she leaves direct conflict to her minions, and does not demean the honor of her role as judge by withholding souls rightfully bound for such patrons. Most of the other gods understand and appreciate her impartiality, though Iomedae views her with some resentment for keeping Aroden's approaching death a secret. Pharasma's relationship with the enigmatic Groetus, who floats above the Spire, is a mystery.

Like their goddess, the followers of Pharasma detest Urgathoa, Orcus, and all those who exult in undeath, for they represent both a corruption of natural existence and a vile bending of the will of Pharasma. Pharasmins oppose these foes whenever they encounter them, and vehemently counter their attempts at evangelism. If they learn that such cults are planning to raise undead, Pharasmins recruit allies and spend resources without hesitation to stop the abomination. Otherwise, Pharasmins are free—but not compelled—to make alliances and enmities with anyone they choose, on an individual level or as a temple, just as the Lady of Graves works with all the gods to guide mortal souls into their realms.

Pharasmin priests are renowned for their impartial natures, and regularly minister to both sides in a given conflict, caring foremost for the proper treatment of the dead and newborns. Followers of the Pharasmin Penitence might clash with the faithful of deities who focus on alleviating or preventing suffering, but are more likely to simply view them with cold distrust. A few fanatics take it upon themselves to pursue wizards, sorcerers, and other magic-users who attempt to improve the world through magical means; the fanatics see these attempts as defying the will of Pharasma.

REALM

Pharasma's realm is enormous, and layered like an onion. The whole of the Spire is hers, with no other god disputing her claim on the thin mesa that rises far above the city of Axis and supports her Boneyard. At the same time, however, the Boneyard is split into several different regions, with the most notable being the various courts where souls with obvious destinations are divided up and sent on to their just rewards. Particularly complicated cases, however—such as those who sell their souls and then genuinely repent and work toward redemption—end up judged by Pharasma herself within her palace, with representatives from the planes involved arguing the matter. Pharasma's Palace is also the eventual home of those who worship the goddess directly. A soaring gothic edifice,



the palace stands in contrast to Pharama's often somber and dour nature. Constructed of white marble glowing with an inner light and with floors paved in onyx, it represents the goddess's dualistic power over birth and death.

PLANAR ALLIES

Pharama's divine servants are usually psychopomps (see page 303 and *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 217), though spirits whose destinies were especially bright or unusually dark may visit the mortal world to carry a message on her behalf, even if they went to another deity or realm as part of their final judgment. The appearance of such a spirit usually relates to its activities in life or the god it served. For example, to warn her followers of a bloody battle, Pharama may call forth the spirit of a mighty warrior of Gorum. In addition to her psychopomps, some of Pharama's servitors include the following, which answer to *planar ally* and similar calling spells from the faithful.

Birthered-in-Sorrow (unique linnorm): Resembling a gaunt, gray, wyvern-sized linnorm, this creature can channel positive energy like a cleric and can animate objects, forcing them to serve her. She loathes undead, and often blasts and grapples packs of them, reducing them to dust and vapor. She prefers offerings of magic items useful for destroying undead or healing the living.

Echo of Lost Divinity (unique ghost): This spectral Azlanti soldier wears fine clothes in green and gold. When his face is visible, he resembles depictions of Aroden as a god. As he has only appeared in Pharama's service since the death of the Last Azlanti, some believe he is a remnant of that god. Echo of Lost Divinity denies this, however. He prefers to heal and support those who call him rather than attacking their foes directly.

Steward of the Skein: This skull-adorned, armor-clad, winged woman is Pharama's herald. The Steward is a loner, and has little interest in the desires of mortals. She is personable with other planar servitors of her creator, but her unique role places her above them in the religious hierarchy, and she does not like fraternizing too much with her underlings lest she distract them from what Pharama has planned for them. Conversely, she is extremely interested when one of the goddess's other servants is due to give birth or die. Though the Steward has no interest in procreating on her own, she arrives at the moment of celestial and half-celestial births to witness them with great interest—perhaps as a proxy for Pharama herself, whose presence would certainly overwhelm the newborn and confuse its role in the tapestry of fate. Likewise, the Steward has an almost morbid curiosity about one of her fellow servitors dying, and has an almost precognitive sense for such things, making her sudden appearance next to other servants of Pharama in the Material Plane slightly worrisome. For more information, see page 302.

FOR PHARASMIN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Pharama may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Exorcist (inquisitor)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 44
Seer (oracle)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 59

Feats

Eerie Sense	See page 211
Fateful Channel	See page 212
Messenger of Fate	See page 214

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Pharama</i>	See page 249
<i>Crystal ball</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 507
<i>Fate blade</i>	See page 255
<i>Fate's shears</i>	See page 263
<i>Ghost battling ring</i>	See page 258
<i>Gravewatcher chainmail</i>	See page 251
<i>Icon of the midwife</i>	See page 265

Spells

<i>Defending bone</i>	See page 232
<i>Early judgment</i>	See page 233
<i>Smite abomination</i>	See page 241

Traits

Corpse Hunter	See page 219
Spirit Guide	See page 222
Stabilizing Touch	See page 222
Undead Slayer	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Pharasmin adepts, bards, rangers, sorcerers, and wizards add to their spell lists *augury* as a 2nd-level spell, *death knell* as a 2nd-level spell, and *speak with dead* as a 3rd-level spell. Inquisitors may learn *augury* as a 2nd-level spell. Clerics and oracles who serve Pharama may prepare *false life* as a 2nd-level spell, *clairaudience/clairvoyance* as a 3rd-level spell, and *moment of prescience* as an 8th-level spell; inquisitors may learn these as 2nd-, 3rd-, and 6th-level spells, respectively.

Since Pharama despises undead, Pharasmin clerics with the Death domain replace the *animate dead* domain spell with *speak with dead*, replace *create undead* with *antilife shell*, and replace *create greater undead* with *symbol of death*. Clerics with the Souls subdomain (*Advanced Player's Guide* 96) replace the *animate dead* domain spell with *speak with dead*.



ROVAGUG

THE DARKNESS BOUND AT THE WORLD'S HEART IS REAL, AND ITS NAME IS ROVAGUG. HOW LONG OUR WORLD CAN WITHSTAND HIS TIRELESS THRASHING, NONE CAN TELL.

—*CHRONICLES OF THE DARKLANDS*

THE ROUGH BEAST

God of destruction, disaster, and wrath

Alignment CE

Domains Chaos, Destruction, Evil, War, Weather

Favored Weapon greataxe

Centers of Worship Belkzen, Darklands, Katapesh, Realm of the Mammoth Lords, Osirion, Qadira

Nationality monster

Obedience Smash an assortment of items worth at least 10 gp, preferably something fragile, aesthetically beautiful, or with significance to a good-aligned deity (particularly Sarenrae). The more devout servants of Rovagug seek out and hoard particularly expensive, artistic, or rare items, such as fine bottles of wine or delicate curios, to smash during their obedience. Roll in the shards of the destroyed items, howling and shouting praises and curses invoking the Rough Beast, until the shards draw blood and your lungs ache. Gain a +4 bonus on attack and damage rolls against objects.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Agent of the Beast (Sp)** *protection from good* 3/day, *align weapon* (evil only) 2/day, or *magic circle against good* 1/day
- 2: Destructive Spell (Su)** By calling on the rage of the Rough Beast, you gain the ability to deal terrific damage with your spells. You can use this ability when casting a spell that deals hit point damage and has a casting time of 1 standard action or less. You can choose to cast the spell as a full-round action to gain a +4 bonus to its save DC. In addition, you treat all 1s rolled on your damage dice for the spell as 2s instead.
- 3: The Destroyer's Gifts (Su)** You feel the touch of an alien presence at the corner of your mind, as if something hungry and hateful had taken root and now holds a measure of dominion over your thoughts. You gain an extra spell slot of the highest spell level you can cast. If you prepare spells, you can prepare one spell in this spell slot every day from the Chaos or Destruction domain spell lists. You may choose any spell from the lists even if you are an arcane spellcaster, and you can change this spell selection every time you prepare spells. If you are a spontaneous spellcaster, you can cast one spell from either of the domain spell lists as if it was on your known spells list. You can cast this spell only once per day, though you can choose a different spell to cast each time you regain your spells for the day.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Destructive Force (Sp)** *break*^{APG} 3/day, *bull's strength* 2/day, or *shatter* 1/day
- 2: Bestow Destructive Smite (Su)** You can bestow the Destruction domain's destructive smite granted power upon an ally. As a standard action, you can spend one use of your destructive smite to grant its power to any ally within 30 feet, channeling into him the erratic force of Rovagug's rage. Your ally must make the destructive smite within 1 round of being granted the power or its use is wasted. Your ally uses your level to calculate the power of the destructive smite. If you don't have access to the Destruction domain, you instead gain access to the destructive smite granted power but only for your personal use, as normal.
- 3: Apocalyptic Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can tear a violent breach between your location and the Outer Rifts—the deepest, foulest pits of the Abyss—and summon forth a pair of nyogoth qliphoth (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 224). You gain telepathy with the creatures to a range of 100 feet, and they follow your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back into the Abyss. The qliphoth don't follow commands that would cause them to act in overtly good or lawful ways. Such commands not only earn terrifying roars from the creatures, but could cause the nyogoths to attack you if the command is particularly egregious.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Inexorable Death (Sp)** *doom* 3/day, *death knell* 2/day, or *inflict serious wounds* 1/day
- 2: Wicked Claws (Ex)** Your fingernails grow into thick, jagged talons, unevenly matched and vaguely resembling the spurs of a giant insect or the fangs of some unspeakable beast. You gain a pair of claw attacks. These are primary natural attacks that deal 1d8 points of slashing damage if you're Medium or 1d6 points of damage if you're Small.
- 3: Disintegrating Blow (Sp)** Once per day, you can channel a glimpse of Rovagug's hatred through your weapon, recreating the effects of *disintegrate*. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. On a hit, the target is affected as if targeted by *disintegrate* cast by a wizard of a level equal to your Hit Dice (maximum CL 20th). If your attack misses, the *disintegrate* effect is wasted.

INNER SEA GODS



ROVAGUG

Spawned to destroy worlds, Rovagug tore into existence while the cosmos was still young, devouring and destroying everything he touched and laying waste to the careful creations of the gods. Trapped by a union of desperate deities, Rovagug shudders in anguish and impotent rage, causing the earth to shake and mountains to crumble. He bellows and clouds of toxic gas billow from rents in the ground. He births monstrosities that clamber from the rotted depths of the world to ravage and destroy in their creator's place. Rovagug does not dream of glory or wonders. He dreams of the end of existence, shoveling all that lives into his devouring maw and crushing all that does not beneath his terrifying form. His ruin is not slow entropy but rather destructive fire. All rational beings, divine and mortal, hate and fear him, for he is the hastener of the end, the Unmaker, enemy of the gods and of life itself.

Upon Rovagug's arrival from somewhere beyond the depths of space and time, he launched a vicious war that eventually prompted an unprecedented alliance among all the gods as they sought to defend all they had created.

While wily Calistria distracted the terror and countless now-forgotten gods gave their lives to aid her, Torag and Golarion, and Asmodeus and Pharasma drew upon the power of the planes to fit it with potent magical locks and wards. When the sign was given that the work was complete, the great angel Sarenrae challenged Rovagug directly, taunting him with holy fire. His profane howls of rage and anguish shook the void as the Dawnflower lured him close to the world that would be his prison, and with her blazing sword, sliced a great rift deep into the land's heart. Power beyond mortal comprehension, born of the toil of dozens of gods and paid for with the lives of dozens more, lashed out and ensnared the destroyer, drawing him into the god-forged prison. As the cell quaked and threatened to buckle around its furious captive, Asmodeus used his Hell-forged key to lock the Rough Beast away for all time.

Bound for millennia, the Rough Beast has nursed his rage, believing that one day he will break free and feast upon Sarenrae, the fragments of the world, and the cooling flesh of all the other gods. He sleeps fitfully for centuries at

ROVAGUG'S ANTIPALADIN CODE

The antipaladins of Rovagug seek their master's Great Awakening, and bend all their efforts toward the eventual decay of the prison that holds their god. Their code is simple, brutal, and direct, and its tenets include the following adages.

- All things must be destroyed, but the tools of destruction will be destroyed last.
- The beautiful die first. Their loss wreaks havoc in the hearts of those who love.
- All is vanity before the tide of destruction.
- The world is a lie. The only truth is oblivion, born of storm and horror.
- Torture is needless delay. I give the gift of a quick death.
- I will die standing.

a time, comforted by dreams of annihilation. Rovagug is the cancer at Golarion's heart, straining and struggling against his bonds until the day when he will consume all life.

There is nothing beneficent about the Rough Beast, no creation to offset his destruction. He has no friends or allies; once he has devoured the world, he will surely turn on even his own spawn and devour them in a cannibalistic orgy. The Rough Beast is indifferent to the petty things mortals do in his honor, or whether they speak his name with adoration or loathing. He requires no special rituals and demands no heartfelt devotion as a channel for his divine energy—he wishes only to be set free, and to know that he is not forgotten. Though some of his faithful may believe otherwise, he promises no honored place at his side or immunity from his destruction. The lucky ones may ride in his wake for a time, reveling in unbridled obliteration, but eventually they too will be consumed by their god's terrible hunger.

Rovagug's imprisonment limits his interaction with both mortal and immortal beings. His intervention in the world must be through his violent priests and, more infamously, through his titanic spawn, which act as his host of catastrophic heralds. Few civilized cultures attempt to depict the Rough Beast as anything more than a wormlike creature with a great toothy maw, and the primitive tribes and mad cultists who worship him are satisfied with simple depictions painted in blood on walls, banners, and shields. His symbol is a fanged mouth surrounded by spider legs, though individual cults might use slightly different symbols such as a crab with a mouth on its back, a maw surrounded by scorpion stingers, or a crude drawing of a claw encircled by a spiral. He has many names used by various tribes and cults,

including the Tide of Fangs, the Imprisoned King, and the Worldbreaker. Rovagug's true form is maddening: a miles-long worm with countless limbs stretching along his length and grasping from within his mouth. Various parasitic creatures cling to his skin and spill forth from his wounds; some of them are sluglike or insectile, many are swarms of thousand-legged vermin, and others take more unspeakable shapes. These parasites voraciously consume those foolish enough to be caught in the wake of Rovagug's spilled blood, then die, unable to sustain their own existence apart from the god's flesh.

After earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur, Rovagug's cultists pray and make sacrifices to wake him, believing such events are manifestations of his restless slumber. They see storms and toxic gas vents as his breath coursing up from the dark places in the world. If these things afflict the enemies of the cult, the faithful take it as a sign of their god's favor; he is clearly displeased if such natural disasters harm his worshipers.

THE CHURCH

Of all the gods of evil and corruption, the most hated is Rovagug, and his congregation revels in this hatred. Those who truly follow in the Rough Beast do not care about love, honor, loyalty, or material gain. They do not care about remaking the world in their own image. The only thing they seek is utter destruction. They cannot be reasoned with, nor can they be trusted. They are almost always a little bit insane; as they worship the act of destruction with no real expectation of reward, they are generally a damaged and criminal lot, maniacs and berserkers who destroy not for personal gain, but for the thrill of the act itself.

Many of Rovagug's worshipers are orcs, ogres, and similar creatures who howl prayers to him as they cleave their opponents limb from limb. His faith is forbidden in nearly every center of civilization, no matter how liberal the populace might otherwise be. Most of his followers in cities are mad: psychopaths without the discipline to serve Norgorber or to practice the aesthetic mutilations of Zon-Kuthon, or who lack the morbid cunning of Urgathoa's cultists. Some embrace fire and arson as tools of their terrible god, while others stand naked amid great storms or hurl themselves into volcanoes. Often mistaken for the morbid priests of Groetus, Rovagug's prophets preach and scream at passersby, proclaiming that the world will soon end—though some are wise enough to avoid invoking the Rough Beast's name in their rants, lest they rouse the ire of soft, civilized people. Among his more misguided cultists, Rovagug is seen as a deity of cleansing and enlightenment, destroying the old world to make room for a new one in which the faithful will be made into

gods and taught to kill and destroy in strange new ways for the pure pleasure of annihilation.

Sacred rites are simple; most involve sacrificing slaves or prisoners, shouting, foot-stomping, breaking valuable items, and perhaps banging the occasional gong. However, these practices are all things invented by mortals. All that is truly required to contact Rovagug is prayer. The acts associated with prayer are irrelevant, though the god enjoys the gleeful enjoyment of destruction that accompanies them. This means two different cults might have very different ceremonies that have evolved over generations and are dependent upon their local circumstances and preferences. One might burn offerings or sacrifice them to a volcano in a dance-like procession, while another hurls offerings down upon jagged rocks and emit keening wails.

While Rovagug's worshipers are predominantly savages and lunatics, he also has a significant following among several other groups. Most gnolls worship Lamashtu, but a few tribes with territory near civilization take up arms in the Rough Beast's name, jealously trying to bring ruin upon their settled neighbors. Some Kellids who live near the Worldwound, having seen the power of chaos sear their flesh and mutate their children, willingly embrace the taint to make themselves more formidable combatants, and Rovagug's thoughts echo more easily in their clouded minds. Ropers see Rovagug as their creator or patron, and welcome the opportunity to instruct visitors to the Darklands in their particular philosophies about the worship of the Rough Beast, usually as they slowly chew away their audience's limbs. Even a few fearsome Ulfen raiders organize themselves into murderous bands devoted to the lord of destruction; scarred and painted, they are considered bloodthirsty and insane even by their warlike kin.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Rovagug's worship is banned in most major cities, and any building discovered to be dedicated to him is usually promptly torn down by appalled neighbors. Thus, most worship is private and most shrines to him are secret, often no more than an alcove painted with a fanged mouth or clawed hand surrounded by a spiraling line. Most of his true temples are located in caves, dungeons, or fortresses held by orcs or other vicious humanoids. These temples usually hold a monster—such as a roper, a grick, or an immature purple worm—as a proxy for

the god, hand-fed by the priesthood and used as a focus for worship. Typically, the temple contains a large pit, representing the Rough Beast's prison and containing a bonfire, scuttling vermin, and the remnants of sacrifices.

Though any cave near a geothermal vent is holy to the faithful of Rovagug, two places in particular capture their imagination. One is the Pyramid of Kamaria, near the city of An in Osirion; this pyramid caps the tomb of a pharaoh who worshiped Rovagug openly. The central shaft of the pyramid extends into the Darklands, and is used by cultists to trade with the monsters of the deep. The primary holy site of the faith, though, is the vast Pit of Gormuz in Casmaron, from which the Spawn of Rovagug have clawed forth and which the faithful believe leads to the prison of their terrible god. The ruins surrounding the pit teem with degenerate tribes who offer living sacrifices to the depths (see pages 28–31 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Mythic Realms* for more details on the Pit of Gormuz).



ROVAGUG

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Rovagug's only goals are destruction and slaughter, and the same is true of his honest believers. They destroy the idols of others, break works of art, and tear down the illusions that protect others from the Rough Beast's truths: that life comes to nothing, and that craftsmanship and artistry can't stave off the inevitable. They want to see civilization fall and its leaders die. Many also seek the deaths of children so that the future too will perish. They believe that acts of destruction loosen the chains that bind their god, and work tirelessly toward the day when their combined atrocities will release the Rough Beast and bring the end at last. The more deluded and naive among Rovagug's worshipers believe that they are the elect of the Worldbreaker, and that Rovagug's freedom will mean an end to the old shackles and the rise of a new order in which his faithful will reign triumphant over their bloodied enemies. Yet those who venture far enough into the god's faith to become his priests know the truth: achieving their goals will bring only destruction, and those who eventually free their god will receive no reward except the right to be consumed first in Rovagug's final rampage.

Priests evangelize a litany of rage, ruin, and misery, teaching that there is honor in destruction, that building things is for those too weak to destroy, and that every act of bloodletting and breaking loosens Rovagug's chains. His clergy make no useful contribution to normal society; at best they are mercenaries, though most are better suited for banditry and raiding. Even as criminals, they are unreliable at best, having little interest in gold unless they can use it to purchase tools of destruction.

The Rough Beast welcomes all who promise to destroy in his name, and his "priesthood" is a disorganized mix of doomsaying zealots, maniacs, and savages who epitomize destruction—some but not all of these are granted divine magic. The rigorous study required to master the arcane arts tends to keep Rovagug's faithful from taking up most forms of arcane magic use.

Rovagug's clergy see the creation of useful things as contrary to their god's will and break what they cannot use—magic scrolls are used to start bonfires, works of art are defiled, and other items are sacrificed to the pit or the flame. The spiritual leaders of a cult or tribe sworn to Rovagug see building and crafting as fit only for slaves, and rely on raiding others for usable weapons and armor. Thus, they are responsible for the slow decline and degradation of their people's wealth and welfare. Outnumbered or suicidal priests have been known to break an enemy's weapons and armor as a last act of defiance, and most would rather see a fine suit of mithral chainmail broken into its component links than profane themselves by wearing it, believing finely crafted things to be an affront to their god.

Occasionally, after scratching or marring such items, they may ask Rovagug's permission to use these tools to better destroy their enemies, but such elaborate rituals of asking permission are a farce—the god doesn't care what weapons his worshipers use.

Cult leaders are usually strong-willed and physically tough individuals, and their hierarchies are based solely on physical strength and ruthlessness. Among orcs, a tribal leader might nominally be a priest of Rovagug, though most tribes traditionally have a martial leader with a spiritual advisor. Challenges are common, and while the victor may spare the loser to humiliate him further, the loser is most often sacrificed to gain Rovagug's favor. If the monstrous proxy of a cult cell or tribe is an intelligent, powerful creature, it may be the power behind the throne, a rival to the chief, or even the leader of the group after making a successful challenge.

On a typical day, a priest hunts in the name of her crazed lord, alone or at the head of her ravaging tribe, hoping to find some living thing to kill or crafted items to ceremonially destroy. A zealous priest can whip the faithful into a destructive frenzy, ignoring hunger and overwhelming odds to bring glory and freedom to their monstrous god. Caring for little than destruction, priests focus their skill ranks on Intimidate and physical skills like Climb and Swim.

ADVENTURERS

Those vicious adventurers who truly follow in the footsteps of the Rough Beast do not care about love, honor, loyalty, or material gain. They may be scouts for orc warbands, lunatics seeking hidden knowledge about how to free Rovagug, or fighters so damaged by what they've seen and done in battle that all that is left to them is the nihilism of destruction. Whatever their backgrounds may be, they don't care about remaking the world in their own image. The only thing they seek is utter destruction.

CLOTHING

The particulars of Rovagug's worship vary from region to region, and even his holy symbol differs, depicted alternately as a worm with great teeth, a crab with a mouth on its back, a terrible spider-legged maw, or a claw encircled by a spiral. Priests usually dress in shaggy coats dyed in strange colors—the more unusual the source of the hide, the better. Hideous animal masks and masks depicting melted faces are popular among the clergy, and some are so strange and distorted it's hard to tell what creature the mask is supposed to represent. Priests in particularly successful tribes possess a variety of masks for different purposes, such as those worn when blessing the tribe for an upcoming battle, those designed to bring good luck for a hunt, or those donned when sacrificing a living creature.

HOLY TEXT

Rovagug's chaotic and constantly warring followers do not agree on a single holy text, and many tribes prefer to pass down their particular beliefs and teachings in stories and songs. Noted here are two such "unholy writings" used by sizable cults of the Worldbreaker, though hundreds of other such texts likely exist.

Cycle of the Beast: For the past 20 years, a resident of Havenguard Asylum in Caliphass, the insane prophet Chalmus Col, has scrawled these rambling passages hearkening back to myths of Rovagug and his terrible spawn. They make a dubious but impassioned claim that all creation causes destruction and all the multiverse trends toward annihilation. Both worshipers of Rovagug and a small number of scholars find Col's observations shockingly insightful, and transcriptions are widely popular among them, though the madman has not been granted visitors for many years.

The Red Mark of Xhor: Known among many orc tribes, this mark looks like little more than a spiraling symbol of Rovagug with its legs randomly twisted. While the image itself holds no mystical power, the superstitious among Rovagug's worshipers claim looking at it draws the Rough Beast's ire down upon the viewer, cursing the viewer as bad luck or marking her for impending consumption by hungry beasts.

HOLIDAYS

Although the harvest month of Rova is named for Rovagug, during which the mowing of wide swaths of cropland mirrors the destruction the Rough Beast would bring to the entire world, he is in no way a harvest or fertility deity and common folk do not invoke his name as part of their work. Individual tribes or cults have their own unique holidays, deciphered from remnants of old books or fragments of god-inspired dreams; only two are common among many tribes, and some do not acknowledge even these events.

Lastday: This holiday is based on conjunctions of the sun with certain stars and planets, which align in early fall during most years. Every few decades, the alignment occurs during another part of the year, with occasional intervals during which the event isn't celebrated at all. The Rough Beast's followers believe these alignments indicate a weakening of the god's prison, a swell in his power, or a moment where stellar divination allows them to accurately predict the end of the world.

The Waking: When the *Starstone* crashed into Golarion, the force of the impact jostled Rovagug in his prison, rousing him from centuries of hibernation. Overwhelmed by the equivalent of a massive telepathic roar from the Rough Beast, bloodthirsty orc shamans all

over Golarion drove their comrades, still confined to the Darklands, forward against their tribal enemies. The orcs commemorate this event annually with the ceremony of the Waking, usually held in early spring; they don't know the exact day, month, or year when Starfall occurred, and tribes are known to war over their beliefs as to the correct date. The tribes have become superstitious about the holiday, believing Rovagug will abandon them or go back to sleep if they don't offer him the correct prayers and sacrifices.



ROVAGUG

APHORISMS

With no centralized religion, no standard holy book, and worshipers who consist mostly of oft-battling rival tribes, Rovagug's faith has no set adages. Most sayings among his cults are joyous exclamations uttered at an enemy's injury or death, or wry curses hissed when a necessary item breaks. Still, a few invocations are popular among Rovagug's followers.

The End Is Now: This battle cry derives from the belief that, since the Rough Beast's imprisonment, Golarion has been slowly sickening and dying. This declaration is a favorite of maniacal savages and mad doomsayers proselytizing the inevitable coming of the end times.

I Am What Gods Fear: A dramatic exaggeration savored by warriors who serve Rovagug, this boast evokes the divine battles once fought between the other deities and the Rough Beast. Tales abound of the monstrous deity's most notorious followers shouting this unlikely battle cry in the midst of combat, believing themselves to be Rovagug's favored champions.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

The deities responsible for Rovagug's imprisonment lack the ability to destroy him; they were forced to settle for binding him, and all fear what would happen should he throw off his chains. Cayden Cailean, Milani, Zyphus, and other gods too young to have played a role in his fettering either heeded elder deities' warnings about Rovagug or reached the same conclusions after visiting the edge of his prison. Rovagug's greatest hatred is reserved for Sarenrae, for it was she who dared to strike him, and her fiery sword that drove him into his oubliette. He has sworn that when he is free he will tear her apart, feast on her still-living remains, and only then return to his task of sundering the world.

While Groetus is often described as the God of the End Times, he and Rovagug display none of the animosity one would expect of competing deities. Some sages speculate the two may not actually be at odds, and that while Rovagug's purpose is to destroy the physical world, Groetus will feast upon spirits and the energies of the dead.

REALM

When Sarenrae, Asmodeus, and dozens of other deities defeated Rovagug in the early days of the multiverse, the Rough Beast and his foulest servitors were trapped within a demiplane thrust down through Golarion's crust—buried and sealed, it was said, at the planet's very core. Known as the Dead Vault, this plane is a thing of awesome power, its exterior carefully crafted to combine Sarenrae's burning fury, the dark pragmatism of Asmodeus, and the binding power of dozens of other deities. It appears as a massive globe of cut and faceted golden topaz, a chunk of yellow stone fossilized around a deific insect, with rings of black iron coiling around its periphery and embossed with a terrible litany of binding runes. Any person attempting to physically reach the demiplane's exterior experiences a strange warping of space that pushes the offending party away from the apparent physical boundary. Rarely, such an attempt may be successful, though the only reward for such perseverance is for the Vault to swallow the intruders whole, trapping them inside as well.

Despite their majesty, the seals that hold Rovagug were crafted in haste, and at the time of their construction the gods did not yet truly understand the full scope of Rovagug's abilities. Thus, like a great sieve, the barriers block Rovagug's escape but cannot fully prevent the god's influence from leaking out into



the surrounding Darklands. This escaped energy builds up until it manages to find a creature to infuse, twisting and corrupting the unfortunate victim (or eager cultist) into a horrifying monstrosity and sending the new child of the god out to wreak havoc.

PLANAR ALLIES

Unlike other deities, Rovagug does not have a single herald. Rather, an entire host of extraordinarily rare but catastrophically destructive beasts known as the Spawn of Rovagug serve as his ruinous emissaries upon Golarion (see page 48 of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #24* and page 46 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary* for details on his most infamous spawn), as well as strange and unique qlipthoth and other planar allies. In addition to the thognorok qlipthoth (see page 305), the following creatures can be summoned only by worshippers of the Rough Beast.

Galulab'daa (unique outsider): Some say Galulab'daa was an angel—or perhaps a whole host of angels—who stood among Sarenrae's army and were sacrificed when she imprisoned Rovagug, locked within the mad god's prison. Galulab'daa seems to be in a constant, insane rage, prone to attacking anything near it, even allies, as if under the effects of a *confusion* spell. This horrifying amalgam of broken wings and melted steel resembles and has all the abilities of a gibbering mouter. Lore passed mostly by word of mouth among priests who survived summoning it recommends simply conjuring it into the midst of enemies, as attempts to bargain with it prove fatal. Despite its apparent madness, it recognizes the symbol of Sarenrae and preferentially attacks her followers before any others.

Spawn of Rovagug: Rovagug doesn't have a herald like the other gods. Instead, over the ages, the Rough Beast has gradually vomited forth a horde of titanic monstrosities that embody his unrestrained disaster and destruction. Though these beasts can't be summoned with *planar ally* or other such spells that allow the faithful to call the heralds of their gods, it is whispered that strange and elaborate rituals exist that can attract their attention or wake them from millennia-old hibernation. Among Rovagug's spawn are such creatures as Ulunat, who crawled from the Pit of Gormuz and whose shell still stands in Sothis; the Armageddon Engine, better known as the Tarrasque; the destructive Xotani the Firebleeder, Kothogaz, who terrorized Vudra; the dread burrower Chemnosit the Monarch Worm; and the flying terror Volnagur the End Singer. Thankfully the emergence of the Spawn of Rovagug is rare to the extreme. For more information on the abilities all Spawn of Rovagug possess, see page 275, and see page 304 for details on one of Rovagug's spawn, the Tarrasque.

FOR ROVAGUG CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Rovagug may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Antipaladin (paladin)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 118
Blight druid (druid)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 98
Breaker (barbarian)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 78
Iconoclast (inquisitor)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 52
Two-handed fighter (fighter)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 108
Wild rager (barbarian)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 31

Source

Feats

Breaker of Barriers	See page 208
Gory Finish	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 102
Merciless Rush	See page 214
Oath of the Unbound	See page 214
Squash Flat	See page 216
Sundering Strike	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 171
Warrior Priest	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 159

Source

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Rovagug</i>	See page 249
<i>Broken chain of the beast</i>	See page 261
<i>Fangtide scale mail</i>	See page 251
<i>Gauntlet of rust</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 514
<i>Maul of the titans</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 523
<i>Rusting teeth of the Rough Beast</i>	See page 257

Source

Spells

<i>Break</i>	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 207
<i>Brittle portal</i>	See page 230
<i>Deadly juggernaut</i>	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 226
<i>Destruction</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 266
<i>Face of the devourer</i>	See page 233
<i>Rage</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 329
<i>Rovagug's fury</i>	See page 239
<i>Spawn calling</i>	See page 241

Source

Traits

Bestial Wrath	See page 218
Destructive Blows	See page 219
Hatred of the Gods	See page 220

Source

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Adepts, antipaladins, clerics, druids, and inquisitors of Rovagug add *baleful polymorph* to their respective spell lists as a 4th-level spell.





SARENRAE

LET THE HEALING LIGHT OF THE SUN BURN OUT THE DARKNESS WITHIN YOU. LET YOUR INNER LIGHT BE A GUIDE FOR OTHERS, AND A SEARING FLAME AGAINST UNREPENTANT EVIL.

—THE BIRTH OF LIGHT AND TRUTH

THE DAWNFLOWER

Goddess of healing, honesty, redemption, and the sun

Alignment NG

Domains Fire, Glory, Good, Healing, Sun

Favored Weapon scimitar

Centers of Worship Absalom, Katapesh, Osirion, Qadira, Taldor, Thuvia

Nationality Keleshite

Obedience The Dawnflower values the redemptive powers of compassion and patience, and extends them to all who might be capable of good. Offer to heal a stranger of his wounds, either by using the powers granted to you by Sarenrae or with a potion, scroll, or other item you possess. Tell the stranger it is by the will of Sarenrae that you share your healing gifts. You may also use your Heal skill to perform this act of healing service. If you can't find a stranger who will accept your offer, stand beneath the open sky during the daylight hours. Blindfold yourself with a red-and-gold scarf and try to locate the sun in the sky through the layers of fabric. Gain a +2 sacred bonus on Perception checks.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Healing Spirit (Sp)** *cure light wounds* 3/day, *aid* 2/day, or *remove curse* 1/day
- 2: Fiery Spirit (Su)** You have spent so much time in the sun, reveling in Sarenrae's power and meditating on her glory, that its fiery rays have soaked into your very soul. You gain fire resistance 10.
- 3: Holy Brand of the Sun (Su)** Your devotion to the Dawnflower allows you to wrap your weapon in her cleansing flames to better bring justice to her foes. For a number of rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds), you can cause flames to wreath your weapon. Any weapon you hold while this ability is active becomes a +1 *flaming burst* weapon. (You can use this ability on a ranged weapon, but can't apply it directly to a piece of ammunition.) If you drop the weapon or give it away, the flame effect on that weapon immediately ends. If the weapon you hold has an enhancement bonus greater than +1, use the higher bonus. Activating or deactivating this ability is a free action, and the rounds in which you use the ability don't need to be consecutive.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Brightness (Sp)** *dancing lantern*^{APG} 3/day, *continual flame* 2/day, or *daylight* 1/day
- 2: Healing Sunburst (Su)** You can transmute the sun's burning rays into brilliant, healing fire. You can add your exalted levels to any cleric levels you have to calculate the power of your channel energy ability. In addition, you can spend three of your daily uses of your channel energy ability to channel an especially powerful burst of healing that manifests as a bright burst of sunlight around you. Anyone healed by your channeled energy sunburst who is currently suffering from poison or a nonmagical disease can immediately attempt a new saving throw with a +2 sacred bonus to end the poison or disease effect.
- 3: Angelic Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a movanic deva (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 28) to aid you. You gain telepathy with the movanic deva to a range of 100 feet. The deva follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home. The deva doesn't follow commands that would cause it to violate its alignment by committing evil acts, and it could even attack you if the command is particularly egregious.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Firebrand (Sp)** *produce flame* 3/day, *fire breath*^{APG} 2/day, or *fireball* 1/day
- 2: Channel Efficiency (Su)** You are a talented healer, and have honed your ability so that you can preserve your resources while you provide aid to the wounded. You can channel positive energy by consuming a single use of your lay on hands ability instead of two uses. If you don't have the lay on hands class feature (or if you have lay on hands but can't use it to channel positive energy), you instead gain a +4 sacred bonus on Heal checks.
- 3: Sunburst Strike (Sp)** Once per day, you can channel the effects of *sunburst* through your weapon. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. On a hit, the target is affected as if you had cast *sunburst*, as well as taking normal weapon damage. The *sunburst* effect you generate affects only the target you have struck, not an area of effect as it would normally. If you miss with your attack, the *sunburst* ability is wasted.

INNER SEA GODS



SARENRAE

Sarenrae is one of the most popular deities on Golarion, and followers of many other faiths respect her power, dedication, and generosity. Once a powerful angel known as an empyreal lord, Sarenrae led the heavenly hosts in the charge against the Rough Beast, Rovagug, and it was she who dealt him the great blow that led to his chaining. Now a goddess in her own right, Sarenrae is kind and loving, a figure of light, guidance, and healing, and has great patience with those who choose to be blind but may one day see. Yet for all her compassion, Sarenrae is also a powerful force against evil, and strikes down the irredeemable without mercy. Her faith is ancient; it first became popular among Keleshite humans, then spread to the Garundi in ancient Osirion and into other human and nonhuman civilizations as well.

Eons ago, Sarenrae was an angel guiding the energies of the sun and battling evil beings that sought to plunge the newborn world of Golarion and its sister planets into eternal darkness. Other angels lent her their support and turned to her for leadership in these battles, and

eventually gods joined them as she grew in power to become one of the mighty empyreal lords. Sarenrae was the first to stand against Rovagug's attempts to unmake Golarion, and she faced the Rough Beast personally when the other forces of creation were engaged with his hideous spawn. The exact circumstances of the battle are a mystery to mortals, but it is believed that her willingness to sacrifice herself for the good of all inspired her flagging comrades to new hope and courage, and elevated her from one of the greatest angels to a full goddess. With this influx of power, she smote Rovagug and hurled his broken body deep into the earth. As the gods healed the planet's scars and intelligent life appeared on its surface, mortals turned their eyes upward to thank the life-giving sun, and her faith took root among primitive peoples.

Sarenrae is a goddess of boundless love and exquisite kindness, a caring friend, mother, sister, and protector of all in need. She delights in healing the sick, lifting up the fallen, and shining a guiding light into the darkest hearts and lands. She brushes off insults and deflects attacks, patiently trying to convince those who perceive her as

THE CULT OF THE DAWNFLOWER

As might be expected in a religion that teaches its followers to speak out and take action, not all Sarenites agree on her teachings, or even get along. The most prominent example of this is in Qadira, where a militant sect known as the Cult of the Dawnflower has risen to become the dominant faith.

As tribal nomads say, "There are no second chances in the desert," and the Cult of the Dawnflower has taken this moral to heart. These hard-edged priests offer mercy once and only once to their opponents, and if refused, they are ruthless in battle, ignoring offers to parley or surrender, and unafraid to judge neutral opponents as if they were black-hearted evildoers. This severe stance only applies to enemies of the faith and sinful folk—among their friends, family, and other respectable members of the community, members of the Cult of the Dawnflower are kind, generous, and forgiving.

In a large part, the Cult of the Dawnflower has risen out of a close alliance between elements of the Qadiran government and certain temple leaders. Members of the cult believe Taldor is in need of a cleansing with blade and fire, and continuing border tensions with Taldor are often exacerbated by members of the Cult of the Dawnflower. Never one to turn their back on a good deity, the nation of Taldor supports a number of temples devoted to Sarenrae.

While the Cult of the Dawnflower tends to fall much closer to neutral than neutral good, its spellcasters are never actually evil, as Sarenrae revokes her gifts from those who commit evil acts. Along with its relative bloodthirstiness, the Cult of the Dawnflower differs ethically from the larger church in that it tolerates slavery, as long as the slaves are not mistreated; free folk can sell themselves into slavery for a span of years to pay off debts or provide for their families, and some habitual criminals are sentenced to a term of slavery to pay their debt to society.

an enemy that their belief is false. For all her patience and gentleness, however, she is no victim: if it becomes clear that her efforts are wasted, she responds to violence and predations upon the innocent with cleansing fire and scorching light. She dislikes cruelty, lies, needless suffering, and thoughtless destruction. Ancient and timeless, she stands fearlessly against the full tide of darkness, promising that the dawn will always come, and with it, hope, truth, and kindness will triumph.

Religious art depicts the sun goddess as a woman with bronze skin and hair of dancing flame; in some cases this flame trails behind her for a dozen or more yards. One of her hands offers the light of the sun, while the

other wields a scimitar against those who would spread darkness, hatred, and pain. The church does not teach that Sarenrae is the sun itself; rather, she is its guardian and conduit for its power, and while fanciful art may show her face in place of the sun, the mainstream faithful recognize the difference between the star and the goddess.

The Dawnflower's faith is a broad one, and the majority of her worshipers are everyday folk who recognize the power of the sun, take comfort in the idea of a deity's love and compassion, and believe strongly in both redemption and righteous action. Her faith attracts those with kind hearts who are nevertheless willing to harden them when kindness is a dangerous weakness. The faith makes few demands of its everyday adherents beyond these tenets, and its clergy are usually seen as valiant protectors and enlightened teachers.

Sarenrae indicates her favor with sightings of doves, rays of dawn or dusk sunlight that last far longer than they should, the discovery of yellow stones or gems, or the sudden soothing of aches and pains. Her displeasure is most often made apparent through unexplained sunburns or periods of blindness that can last anywhere from only a few moments for minor transgressions to a lifetime for mortal sins. Her holy symbol is an ankh, though more stylized versions show a winged ankh or a winged female figure with arms outstretched and a halo of flame. Her titles include the Dawnflower and the Cleansing Light—to her enemies, she is the Warrior of Fire.

THE CHURCH

During the Age of Enthronement, missionaries from the Padishah Empire of Kelesh, where worship of Sarenrae is the state religion, began spreading her faith into the Inner Sea region, where it quickly took root. Today, the church of Sarenrae is common across the region, with good communication between temples and amiable relationships with most non-oppressive governments.

The church is strongest in Absalom, Katapesh, Osirion, Qadira, Taldor, and Thuvia, in which great gold-adorned open-air temples rise tall and white into the skies, though the church's emphasis on kindness, healing, joy, and redemption makes it popular across the continents, and shrines to the Dawnflower dot countrysides in most nations. The desert flavor imbued by the church's Keleshite origins remains noticeable in larger and more traditional temples, though smaller and more rural congregations often let regional traditions and aesthetics shape their worship and their conception of the goddess.

Services are joyous events incorporating singing and dancing, accompanied by upbeat music; they always take place outside and during daylight hours. The church is very supportive of marriage, and a wedding in a temple is always cause for celebration. There is no stigma attached

to divorce, and the delight over a second or third marriage is just as heartfelt as for a person's first. Worshipers in many regions reconsecrate their vows every 10 years.

For Sarenrae's congregations, faith is not merely a theory, but an active force that underpins their actions; they try to see things in her light, which reveals the hope and potential for goodness in the people they encounter. Sarenrae encourages her faithful to speak out and take stands for what's right—a practice that leads many to characterize Sarenites as fiery zealots. In truth, however, the other half of Sarenrae's teachings—that one should always seek first to understand and redeem foes rather than immediately write them off—means that while Sarenites may be passionate and outspoken, their finely honed sense of right and wrong is tempered by compassion.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Temples are open to the sky, though larger temples may be enclosed buildings surrounding an open central courtyard where worship is held. Most hang large brass or gold mirrors on high points to reflect more sunlight toward the altar, though they are carefully positioned so as not to blind worshipers. Sun motifs are common decorations, as are white or metallic wings and images of doves. Most temples have a sundial, and gold decorations are often set against light blue silk hangings that evoke sunny skies.

Sunflowers and other plants with large golden flowers surround many of Sarenrae's sanctuaries. In poorer communities, these sunflowers' seeds are often eaten, either whole or as a nutritious paste, or are dried and ground into flour to make bread. Believing in charity and supporting the community, churches often bake small loaves of filling, nutritious bread marked with an ankh on top, known as "Dawnflower bread," to distribute to the needy.

Sarenrae has many shrines, typically a single stone marker with a sun-ankh, though trios of carved standing stones may mark the summer and winter solstices. Shrines may have niches for candles or small handwritten prayers, and visiting pilgrims typically scatter sunflowers or seeds at the base. In hotter lands, the stone might be part of a small shelter or have an overhang to create a bit of shade for weary travelers.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Sarenrae's faith is one of kindness, healing, honesty, peace, and forgiveness. Her clergy believe wholeheartedly in redemption, and are patient and compassionate in attempting to persuade evildoers to mend their ways. Hers is not a passive faith; the Dawnflower's servants teach that goodness is more than simply not doing harm. They see no point in punishment for its own sake—loving kindness and acceptance draw the lost back to the path of goodness far more effectively than threats or pain—but they do not confuse patience with allowing evil to work its will unopposed. Force may be a last resort for a priest of the Dawnflower, but when she draws her scimitar, her justice will be swift, implacable, and complete. Those who wage war in Sarenrae's name attempt to ensure that it is as clean as they can make it, and that it ends as quickly as possible.

Sarenrae's acceptance of all who strive toward virtue attracts a diverse clergy: clerics, inquisitors, rangers, sundruids, paladins, monks, and bards are common, as are any spellcasters or warriors who wield magic to defeat evil, bring light and hope to the beleaguered, and aid the sick, poor, and downtrodden. Her paladins tend to be adventure-seekers, many of them searching out downtrodden innocents to defend or questing as penance for past failures or perceived flaws. Sarenrae's status as an angel who ascended to full godhood makes her church an attractive choice for those with celestial heritage, and clergy so blessed are often a source of pride for their congregations. The church's message of redemption for all also makes it a compelling choice for those struggling to remain virtuous despite fiendish blood. Whatever their origins and skills, those priests who devote their lives to Sarenrae's service rarely seem to sunburn, even if



they have fair complexions, and they tend to tolerate heat easily, even if they hail from cold climates.

Sarenrae's clergy are devoted to serving their communities, administering to their flocks with a gentle hand and wise words. They provide healing and counsel to those who need it, listen to the confessions of those who wish to bare the wounds of their souls to Sarenrae's healing light, expose injustice where they find it, arbitrate disputes, and rehabilitate criminals. They promote law and order as long as these benefit everyone, but are not afraid to help organize communities against unjust rulers. Priests view casual cruelty or thoughtlessness as genuinely harmful, and if they accidentally engage in one of these behaviors themselves, they seek out the wronged person and attempt to obtain his forgiveness. They understand that goodness takes practice, and regular daily acts of kindness and virtue aid one in building the moral strength to do what is right when one's goodness is challenged in more serious ways.

Such kindness vanishes, however, when the church is stirred to action against an evil that cannot be redeemed. At such times, Sarenrae's priests become dervishes, dancing among foes while their scimitars mete out final justice, and even lay worshipers may take up arms. Swordplay, particularly with the scimitar, is considered an art form among Sarenrae's priests, and martial-minded priests train rigorously in its intricacies. The church sometimes uses spells like *lesser geas* and *mark of justice* to help guide malcontents toward goodness; while they don't wish to take away free will, they aren't averse to providing extra encouragement to help others choose the correct path.

Most non-adventuring priests live on donations from their congregations. Nobles and wealthy merchants sometimes sponsor or hire priests as healers and peacekeepers. By tradition, most priests will not refuse someone in need of healing even if the person cannot pay, but they are quick to assess who urgently needs medical attention and who will recover naturally, which prevents most exploitation and allows priests to focus their magic on those who really need it.

The Dawnflower's church allows its priests a great deal of mobility between temples—a legacy of its early popularity among the nomadic tribes. This practice helps diffuse pressure from personal feuds, as one priest can relocate to another temple until tempers cool. The head of a particular temple is called the Dawnfather or Dawnmother; members of the temple are expected to follow the decisions of the leader, though normally he or she encourages input from junior members.

Priests of Sarenrae are usually skilled at Diplomacy and Heal. Many also learn Knowledge (nature) or Profession (herbalist) to better understand medicinal plants. Those who make a habit of confronting evil usually learn Intimidate, as they prefer for foes to surrender, so they need not beat all their enemies into submission.

A priest normally wakes around dawn and salutes the rising sun with a prayer to her goddess. A quick meal follows, as does a short period of introspective prayer, no longer than an hour, after which the priest goes about her work. Priests pause to pray for a few minutes when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky and again shortly before sundown—priests who cannot see the sun, such as those in a dungeon or cave, estimate the appropriate time for these prayers.

ADVENTURERS

Sarenrae's faithful are united by their desire to make the world a better place. They believe wholeheartedly in redemption, yet this should not be mistaken for weakness. They are equal parts healers and crusaders, and seek to stand up to evil in all its myriad forms.

Followers of Sarenrae may engage in relatively peaceful pursuits such as tending the sick, arbitrating disputes, and rehabilitating criminals, or they might hunt down abominations and bring justice to any unrepentant evildoers. Whatever drives them, the end result should be bringing the light—or sword—of Sarenrae to hearts that have been dark for too long.

CLOTHING

The Keleshite robes of desert dervishes have become



synonymous with the faith in many worshipers' minds, as have sunburst symbols and the colors of white, red, sky blue, and gold. The devout often wear ankhs or stylized doves, and even in cold northern climes far from the deserts of Osirion and Qadira, they may carry scimitars in homage to the Dawnflower. Scimitars inlaid with gold sunbursts or golden gems are common ceremonial implements. Rose gold (a mix of copper and gold) is popular among the faithful, because its color reminds them of the dawn's light, and gold earrings and other piercings are common.

HOLY TEXT

The one book common to all churches of Sarenrae is *The Birth of Light and Truth*. This ancient text includes stories that date from before Sarenrae's ascension to a true goddess, describing the creatures she faced and including a long list of fiends and horrors she destroyed long before mortals learned writing. The rest of the book is more practical than historical, explaining the beliefs of the church, offering advice on dealing with sin and temptation, and providing parables of evil creatures turning to the light of the Dawnflower and living good, productive lives thereafter. The book also contains simple folk remedies for common illnesses and injuries, suggestions for dealing with undead and other evil creatures, and advice to aid those who wish to return to a virtuous path.

Most copies contain extra pages for the owner to record his own experiences or uplifting stories he hears so that he can repeat them to others, and any copy containing a firsthand anecdote from a great priest or paladin is especially prized as a family or church heirloom. It is customary for a hero of the church who performs some great deed for a person or temple to write a brief account in or at least sign a local's copy of *Light and Truth* (as it is commonly known) as a memento and historical record.

HOLIDAYS

Sarenrae is the patron goddess of summer, and the high summer month of Sarenith is named for her. The church has several universal holidays, though regional temples may hold additional holidays to celebrate local events, such as the appearance of a saint.

Burning Blades: This holiday takes place on 10 Sarenith, although technically it is the apex of a summer-long celebration in the Dawnflower's name. The holiday represents the light of Sarenrae and her power to heal both physical and spiritual injuries and malaise. It is named for the dance of the burning blades, a performance in which the faithful coat ceremonial weapons in slow-burning pitch and dance with them.

Candlemark: This is a personal holiday for members of the faith, a remembrance of when and why they joined the church. By tradition it is held at the winter solstice,

SARENRAE'S PALADIN CODE

The paladins of the Dawnflower are fierce warriors, like their goddess. They provide hope to the weak and support to the righteous. Their tenets include the following adages.

- I will protect my allies with my life. They are my light and my strength, as I am their light and their strength. We rise together.
- I will seek out and destroy the spawn of the Rough Beast. If I cannot defeat them, I will give my life trying. If my life would be wasted in the attempt, I will find allies. If any fall because of my inaction, their deaths lie upon my soul, and I will atone for each.
- I am fair to others. I expect nothing for myself but that which I need to survive.
- The best battle is a battle I win. If I die, I can no longer fight. I will fight fairly when the fight is fair, and I will strike quickly and without mercy when it is not.
- I will redeem the ignorant with my words and my actions. If they will not turn toward the light, I will redeem them by the sword.
- I will not abide evil, and will combat it with steel when words are not enough. I do not flinch from my faith, and do not fear embarrassment. My soul cannot be bought for all the stars in the sky.
- I will show the less fortunate the light of the Dawnflower. I will live my life as her mortal blade, shining with the light of truth.
- Each day is another step toward perfection. I will not turn back into the dark.

representing that even during the sun's weakest day, Sarenrae's power to heal and redeem is still with her faithful. In most human cultures, children may declare themselves members of the church on the first Candlemark after their fifteenth birthday. How they celebrate is a matter of personal taste; some hold a feast, some go on a pilgrimage, and some spend the day in prayer. This holiday is particularly meaningful to redeemed evil folk who have found forgiveness in the light of Sarenrae.

Sunwrought Festival: The summer solstice celebration honors the longest day of the year. Worshipers dance, give each other small gifts, light fireworks, and sell or trade their finest crafts in a market-like gathering. Fireworks, paper streamers, and simple kites are popular amusements. Many celebrations feature a reenactment of the battle between Sarenrae and Rovagug, with the goddess represented by a young woman and the evil god represented as a large frame-and-cloth costume that can exceed 20 feet in length and require four or more people to operate.





APHORISMS

Sarenrae's faithful often swear oaths on her name to demonstrate their honesty, and certain other phrases are also common.

The Dawn Brings New Light: Often used as a litany against evil and despair, this phrase reassures the faithful that each day is a new opportunity, a promise from Sarenrae that things will get better, even if only in the afterlife. It is also used to welcome and bless good things in life, such as the birth of a child, an unexpected monetary gain, or a delicious meal.

For the Sun and the Fury: This battle cry calls upon the light of Sarenrae and her righteous anger at unrepentant evil. Paladins like to shout it when they smite fiends, and clerics trumpet it when they invoke holy fire. Traditionally, it is painted or carved on the cornerstones of temples to Sarenrae.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

The goddess is warm and welcoming toward all nonevil deities. She is also gracious to most of the evil ones, hoping to convince them to turn to the light, and none of them

doubt that she honestly wants their redemption—and even their friendship, whether or not they reciprocate that feeling. Though it is rare for either of them to speak of it, her rivalry with Asmodeus is passionate, and goes far deeper than their constant battle for mortals' souls. The Dawnflower restrains her disgust for Urgathoa's actions in the interest of trying to find a way to help the other goddess become whole again. Only Rovagug and his mindless destruction are exempt from Sarenrae's generosity of spirit—she still remembers the sting of his attacks as she battled to imprison him ages ago. Once an empyreal lord herself, she often lends the others support in their causes, and in some lands, empyreal lords are worshiped as saints of the Dawnflower's church, though Sarenrae herself makes no such claims.

Sarenrae's faithful try to mirror her open-armed generosity of spirit and compassion. They teach that redemption is rarely a swift process, and those who would worship her must learn to hold their tempers and patiently guide others to the path of righteousness. They deny only the followers of Rovagug the open hand of friendship, for to embrace the nihilism of complete destruction is to reject the opportunity for salvation.

REALM

Sarenrae's domain within Nirvana stands on the far side of the Sea of No Shadows, a crystal-clear inland ocean whose visibility extends down to its sandy bottom, perpetually illuminated by the brilliant golden light of the goddess's realm. Sarenrae's personal holdings are largely sealed except to petitioners, her divine servants, and the native celestials who willingly serve her as a way of accomplishing shared goals. Even those who do not serve her treat her with great respect and admiration, for she was once an angel. To all others, her seat of power is simply an outline of golden watchtowers visible on the horizon, a sight tantalizingly out of reach to ships on the sea regardless of how far they sail.

Yet Sarenrae is not unwelcoming. In addition to her exclusive realm, the goddess also presides over the city of High Ninshabur on the far side of the inland sea, perpetually drenched in the sunlight of its patron. The city is one of the largest in Nirvana, and is populated by mortal worshipers of the Dawnflower and the descendants of her worshipers from an ancient Keleshite nation destroyed by the Spawn of Rovagug known as the Tarrasque. It does not bar entry to other faiths, and remains a popular place to buy and sell magical implements of healing.

PLANAR ALLIES

In addition to Sarenrae's servitor race, the yhohms (see page 307), the following creatures are well-known supernatural servitors of the Dawnflower, and are suitable for conjuring with *planar ally* or similar spells. Most straddle the line between holy warriors and bringers of divine mercy.

Bryla (unique half-celestial fire elemental): Appearing as a wheel of burning sunlight, this energetic and friendly angel watches over good folk, pilgrims, children, and cats, and relishes the opportunity for conversation. She usually manifests as a neutral good Large half-celestial fire elemental with a fly speed of 50 feet and perfect maneuverability, though she can shrink herself down to Tiny size to appear as a halo behind the head of the priest who summoned her. When negotiating payment for her services, she prefers sparkling gems, carved figurines of lions and other lion-shaped items, and hot pastries.

Charlabu (unique hound archon): This golden-haired hound archon prefers to take the form of a friendly dog when interacting with mortals, and has been known to masquerade as a regular dog to look after people in need (though his alignment spoils the ruse for those who can detect such things).

Mystmorning (intelligent magic sword): Religious scholars debate whether Mystmorning is a celestial unicorn in the shape of a blade or a blade with the powers of a celestial unicorn. She always appears as a fine sword or scimitar, inlaid with rose gold markings and set with two gray gems on the pommel. She rarely speaks and prefers to take a passive role as a weapon in the hands of a hero.

Sunlord Thalachos: This angelic being serves as Sarenrae's herald. Before the Age of Lost Omens, he often delivered prophecies on behalf of Sarenrae, and several stories in *The Birth of Light and Truth* were penned by oracles whom he personally escorted through Sarenrae's realm. Now he appears at auspicious births, and the goddess of the sun has tasked him with standing orders to guard her realm against fiendish—particularly infernal—inursions, stop any who would attempt to free Rovagug from his prison, and defend against those who would tamper with the sun itself. Some chapters of Sarenrae's faith claim that Thalachos is reborn every day. Certainly he has died in battle and appeared unharmed at a later time, though there is insufficient evidence to answer whether he actually rises again at the dawn. Some sects call him Saint Thalachos and explain that he was the first human priest of Sarenrae, though again there is no historical evidence for this claim and the angel has never said he was ever anything other than an angel. For more information, see page 306.

FOR SARENITE CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Sarenrae may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Dervish dancer (bard)
Merciful healer (cleric)
Undead scourge (paladin)

Source

Ultimate Combat 32
Ultimate Combat 41
Advanced Player's Guide 117

Feats

Bestow Hope
Dervish Dance

Glorious Heat
Sun Striker

Source

See page 207
The Inner Sea World Guide 286
See page 212
See page 217

Magic Items

Altar of Sarenrae
Dawnfire
Dawnflower chain vest
Dawnflower lantern
Dawnflower sash
Glorious flame ring

Source

See page 249
See page 254
See page 250
See page 262
See page 262
See page 258

Spells

Daybreak arrow
Shield of the Dawnflower

Shield of the Dawnflower, greater
Sun metal
Unwelcome halo

Source

Ultimate Combat 226
The Inner Sea World Guide 296
See page 240
Ultimate Combat 245
See page 244

Traits

Cleansing Light
Flame of the Dawnflower

Illuminator
Light-Bringer

Source

See page 218
Advanced Player's Guide 333
See page 220
See page 221

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Sarenrae's clerics can prepare *sunbeam* as a 7th-level spell, paladins and rangers can prepare it as a 4th-level spell, and inquisitors can learn it as a 5th-level spell. Her clerics can prepare *sunburst* as an 8th-level spell, and inquisitors can learn it as a 6th-level spell. Her inquisitors can learn *sun metal*^{lc} as a 1st-level spell. Her rangers can prepare *daylight* as a 3rd-level spell. Her clerics can prepare *flame blade* as a 3rd-level spell, paladins and rangers can prepare it as a 2nd-level spell, and inquisitors may learn it as a 3rd-level spell.



SARENRAE



SHELYN

FILL YOUR HEART, EYES, AND MIND WITH THE BEAUTY OF THE WORLD. WITHOUT BEAUTY AND LOVE, WE ARE NOTHING.

—MELODIES OF INNER BEAUTY

THE ETERNAL ROSE

Goddess of art, beauty, love, and music

Alignment NG

Domains Air, Charm, Good, Luck, Protection

Favored Weapon glaive

Centers of Worship Absalom, Galt, Sargava, Taldor

Nationality Taldan

Obedience Paint a small picture, compose a short poem or song, dance a scene from a ballet, or create another work of art, whispering praise to Shelyn's beauty and grace as you do so. The art piece need be neither large nor complex, but heartfelt and made to the best of your ability. Gift the piece of art to a stranger and pay her a sincere compliment as you do so. If there are no suitable individuals around to receive the gift, leave it in an obvious place with a note praising Shelyn and asking whoever finds it to take it with your warmest wishes. Gain a +4 sacred bonus on Craft and Perform checks.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Fiction Weaver (Sp)** *silent image* 3/day, *minor image* 2/day, or *major image* 1/day
- 2: Versatile Artist (Ex)** Drawing on Shelyn's divine inspiration, you can substitute your bonus in a specific Perform skill for your bonus in another related skill, as the versatile performance class feature. Select one type of Perform skill which you can substitute for its associated skills. If you already have the versatile performance class feature when you obtain this boon, choose an additional Perform skill to substitute; you gain a +2 bonus on checks with this additional Perform skill.
- 3: Persuasive Aesthetic (Sp)** You learned to pour your soul into works of art. Once per week, you can use *symbol of persuasion* as a spell-like ability. Instead of inscribing a symbol, you can cast this spell using a piece of art worth 5,000 gp or more as an arcane focus. Unlike the material components of *symbol of persuasion*, the artwork is not consumed during casting. Each creature within 60 feet of the artwork must succeed at a Will saving throw or be charmed by you (as the *charm monster* spell) for 1 hour for every Hit Die you possess. Covering or hiding the artwork renders its persuasive effect inactive until it is uncovered again. The persuasive effect lasts until the symbol is triggered or until you use this ability again, whichever comes first. You may choose a different piece of art every time you use this ability.

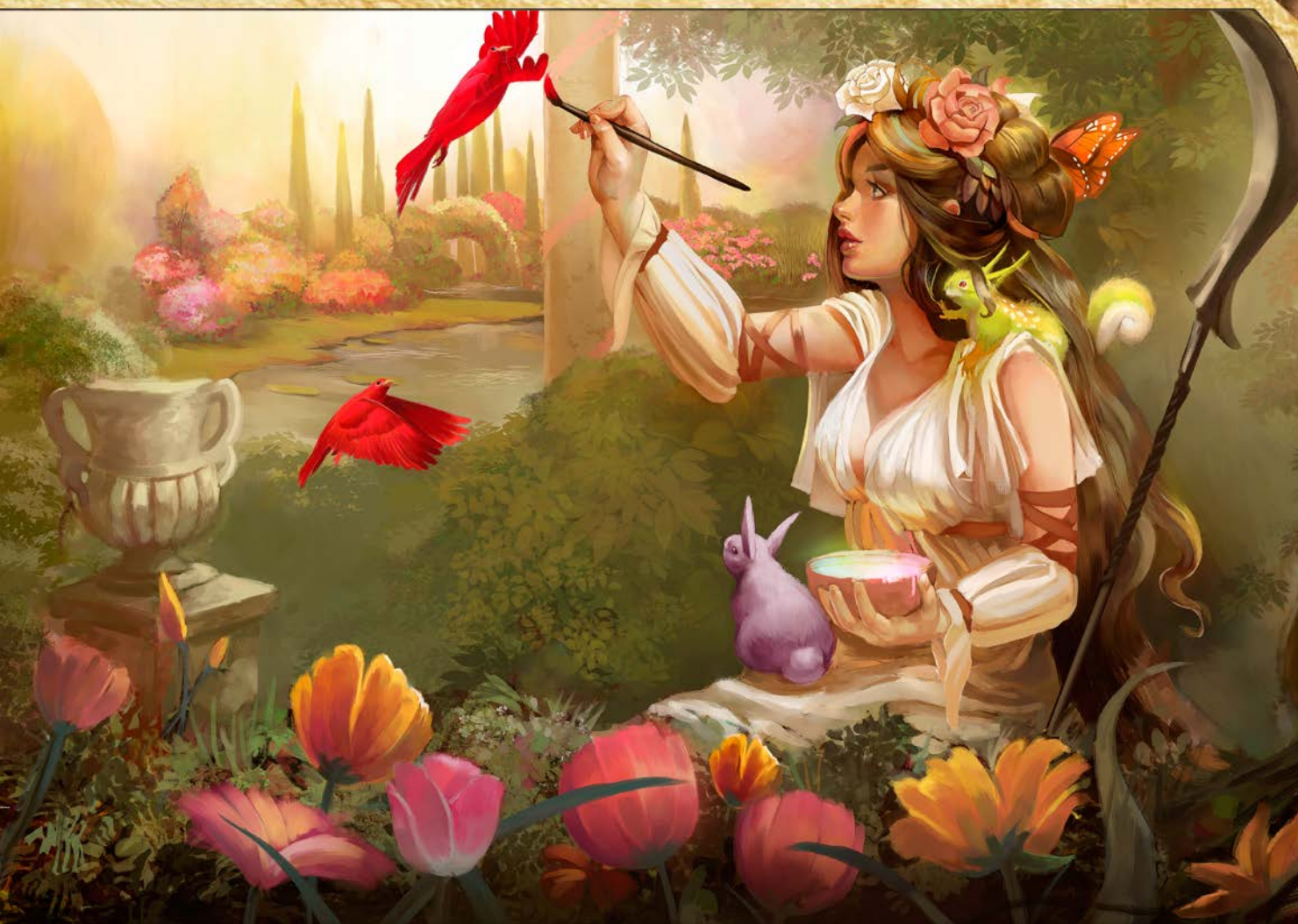
EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Devotionals (Sp)** *unbreakable heart** 3/day, *calm emotions* 2/day, or *good hope* 1/day
- 2: Joyous Ally (Sp)** Your sense of beauty and the loyalty you bear your goddess have attracted the notice of her celestial servants. Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a lillend azata from Shelyn's divine realm in Nirvana to aid you. You gain telepathy with the lillend to a range of 100 feet. The lillend follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home on Elysium. The lillend doesn't follow any commands that would cause it to commit evil acts or destroy works of art, and the creature could even attack you if the command is particularly egregious.
- 3: Plumed Blade (Su)** Even in battle, you partake of the beauty and joy with which Shelyn graces her devoted followers. As a free action, you can cause an illusion of brightly colored feathers to follow every swipe and motion of your weapon. When you do so, a single weapon you hold gains the *holy* and *shock* weapon special abilities. (You can use this ability on a ranged weapon, but can't apply it directly to a piece of ammunition.) If you drop the weapon or give it away, this ability's effects immediately end. You can grant weapons this ability for a number of rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). The rounds don't need to be consecutive.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Graceful Warrior (Sp)** *animate rope* 3/day, *cat's grace* 2/day, or *haste* 1/day
- 2: Glorious Might (Su)** Your passionate devotion to Shelyn grants you extra prowess in your battles against evil, allowing you to see and root out the ugliness at the heart of your foe. When you use your smite evil class feature, you gain double your Charisma bonus on attack rolls and your Charisma bonus + your paladin level on damage rolls. This replaces the normal bonuses for using smite evil. If you don't have access to smite evil, you instead gain a +2 bonus on weapon attack rolls against evil targets.
- 3: Cloak of Feathers (Su)** An aura of colorful features, glowing with Shelyn's holy grace, shields you against electricity attacks with a measure of the protection enjoyed by the azatas who serve her. You gain electricity resistance 15.

INNER SEA GODS



SHELYN

Shelyn has watched over the multiverse with a gentle heart and generous eye since the beginnings of sentience, encouraging mortals in peace and love and reveling in even their crudest artistic awakenings. A passionate and creative artist in both matters of the heart and works of beauty, she teaches that true beauty takes many forms, that kindness is its own form of strength, that no force is more powerful than love, and that every person is beautiful in some way. She has experienced enough pain herself to recognize the sting of sacrifice, and has soothed enough broken hearts to know that love and beauty are not easy things. Yet despite the realities of pain and loss, she remains an eternal optimist, helping to mend the deepest pains and turn the coldest hearts toward love and light. No mortal, monster, or deity is immune to her power.

Shelyn represents all aspects of love, whether a parent's devotion to his child, companionship with a beloved pet, the steady tenderness of an old couple, the chaste adoration of a paladin for a deity, or the passion of new lovers. She prefers relationships based on more

than just carnal desire; while she does not oppose such relationships, she hopes that such physical trysts blossom into something deeper. Likewise, she does not consider greed or craving true love, whether directed toward riches or an uninterested person.

Shelyn is always shown as a young woman with eyes of blue or silver (or sometimes one eye of each color) and ankle-length hair adorned with colorful strands. She is usually depicted as a human, though other races often illustrate her as one of their own, from elves to half-orcs. Shelyn always wears tasteful clothing and jewelry that accentuate her beauty without revealing too much of it. Her physical proportions vary depending on the artist and regional standards for beauty: she is strong and sturdy in some depictions, voluptuous in others, and slender in still others. When she chooses to appear to mortals, it's usually as a brown-haired Taldan woman of average proportions and exceptional beauty, dressed in attractive but comfortable clothing. Her avatar is the embodiment of passion, energy, and devotion, and nearby objects and even the air and light themselves bend toward her as if in ecstasy.

SHELYN'S PALADIN CODE

The paladins of Shelyn are peaceable promoters of art and beauty. They see the ugliness in evil, even when cloaked in the form of beauty, and their mission is to defend those who devote their lives to the creation of beauty, bring it forth themselves, and prevent the weak and foolish from being seduced by false promises. Their tenets include the following adages.

- I see beauty in others. As a rough stone hides a diamond, a drab face may hide the heart of a saint.
- I am peaceful. I come first with a rose rather than a weapon, and act to prevent conflict before it blossoms. I never strike first, unless it is the only way to protect the innocent.
- I accept surrender if my opponent can be redeemed—and I never assume that they cannot be. All things that live love beauty, and I will show beauty's answer to them.
- I live my life as art. I will choose an art and perfect it. When I have mastered it, I will choose another. The works I leave behind make life richer for those who follow.
- I will never destroy a work of art, nor allow one to come to harm, unless greater art arises from its loss. I will only sacrifice art if doing so allows me to save a life, for untold beauty can arise from an awakened soul.
- I lead by example, not with my blade. Where my blade passes, a life is cut short, and the world's potential for beauty is lessened.

Shelyn is the daughter of an unknown mother and the spirit-wolf Thron, the Prince That Howls. In primordial times, Thron roamed the mountains, forests and skies, singing his feral ode to life, song, and love. From his many unions came two children greater than he: his daughter Shelyn and his son Dou-Bral, who as the only close relatives among the major deities of Golarion shared the divine portfolio of love, beauty, art, and music. Ages ago, the siblings quarreled, and Dou-Bral departed to regions past the edge of the Great Beyond, abandoning his divine interests and responsibilities. When he returned, he was transformed into the dark god Zon-Kuthon, twisted by the things he'd experienced beyond the borders of existence into a dark mirror of his former self. His devotion to beauty had become mastery of mutilation, love had become misery, music had become screams, and the art of creation had become the craft of torture. He mutilated and reshaped his own father into his herald, a thing of pain and horror (see page 314). When Shelyn reached out to greet her lost brother, he pierced her hand with his black nails, and responded to her tears

and pleading with violence. The siblings battled again, and eventually the goddess wrested his glaive from him (thinking it was the source of his corruption). The two declared a truce, a tenuous peace of silence and avoidance. Despite the hurts he has caused, Shelyn believes that her brother still exists within the twisted thing that he has become, and hopes to someday redeem him. Her story of love and devotion despite sorrow inspires mortal friends and lovers to persevere in adverse circumstances, bards to craft epic songs and tragedies, and artists to create works that touch the soul.

Shelyn sometimes contacts her faithful directly, but she prefers to work through reassuring thoughts, reminders of loved ones, or memories of favored music. Songbirds are sacred to her church, their presence being considered good luck. Most of her temples include feeders on the roof or in nearby trees to encourage birds to visit and nest nearby. Especially blessed artists may receive visions of Shelyn's realm to inspire their works, and bereaved lovers may experience dreams of walks in the realm's rose gardens with their deceased loves. Shelyn's displeasure manifests in a number of ways, such as a brief glimpse of a repellent reflection in a mirror, a lover's quarrel, a bird singing off-key, or wilted roses. She is greatly saddened by those who betray the ones they love, and haunts such folk within her congregation with guilt and the subtle sounds of those they betrayed until they either genuinely ask for forgiveness or abandon her faith entirely.

Shelyn's holy symbol is a songbird with rainbow feathers, and her weapon is the glaive *Whisperer of Souls*, seized from her brother Zon-Kuthon and claimed as her own. She keeps the weapon as a reminder of her brother's transformation and to show her worshipers that it is sometimes necessary to fight for the things you love.

THE CHURCH

People of all alignments and social status are moved by beauty and long for love. Good and neutral folk seek Shelyn's counsel in finding love or inspiration, or reuniting with a strayed love or lost muse. Evil folk turn to her when they realize their lives are empty without love and beauty: many scoff at her faith as being full of weaklings, dandies, dreamers, and fools—but in her presence, they cannot help but love her, for all things are subject to her power. In truth, many who call on Shelyn in the moment are drunk on love or beauty; they believe these things are sword, shield, food, and drink. Most of her lifelong followers, however, know that while love is intangible, a journey, and a source of inspiration, it must be tempered with common sense. Her faithful strive to be open to love when it offers itself, honest in mourning a broken heart, and courageous enough to risk love again when they have healed.

The intensity of the love struck is mirrored in the intensity of artists. The musician who forsakes all other pursuits to craft the perfect song and the dancer who practices for hours on blistered feet both honor Shelyn, obeying the obsessive urge to create something that will inspire others for generations. The goddess doesn't ask mortals to attempt this level of devotion, but she understands and respects the heartfelt desire to create, whether out of love, grief, the desire for fame, or the edge of madness. At the same time, however, she is aware of the dark side of obsession, and how easily the blessings of love and passion can be twisted to jealousy and unhealthy compulsion. Equally important to her followers is correcting those who would cite Shelyn's name to justify unworthy actions or covetousness.

Among Shelyn's worshipers are artists, actors, musicians, young lovers, romantics of all stripes, and enchanters and illusionists who strive for beauty above all else. The broken-hearted weep her name, and those participating in arranged marriages petition her in hopes that love will blossom in their union.

Marriage for love pleases her, as does finding love outside a marriage when doing so does not hurt the spouse. Shelyn does not require fidelity, but teaches that you should not be reckless with other peoples' hearts, nor should you tolerate those who are reckless with your heart, for an oft-broken heart is slow to heal. Parental love is powerful and usually the first love any creature knows, and therefore she supports both reproduction and adoption no matter the organization of the family unit, as long as loving parents raise the children. Though she considers divorce a sad thing, she understands that hearts may change, and it's sometimes better to end a marriage than to fight too hard to save something doomed to fail.

Worship services for Shelyn may be quiet and slow-paced or loud and upbeat, but they are always heartfelt; dance and music are central to any ritual. Food, particularly large group meals where every person or family contributes a different dish, is common at evening ceremonies, and is often used to welcome new members of the community to the faith.

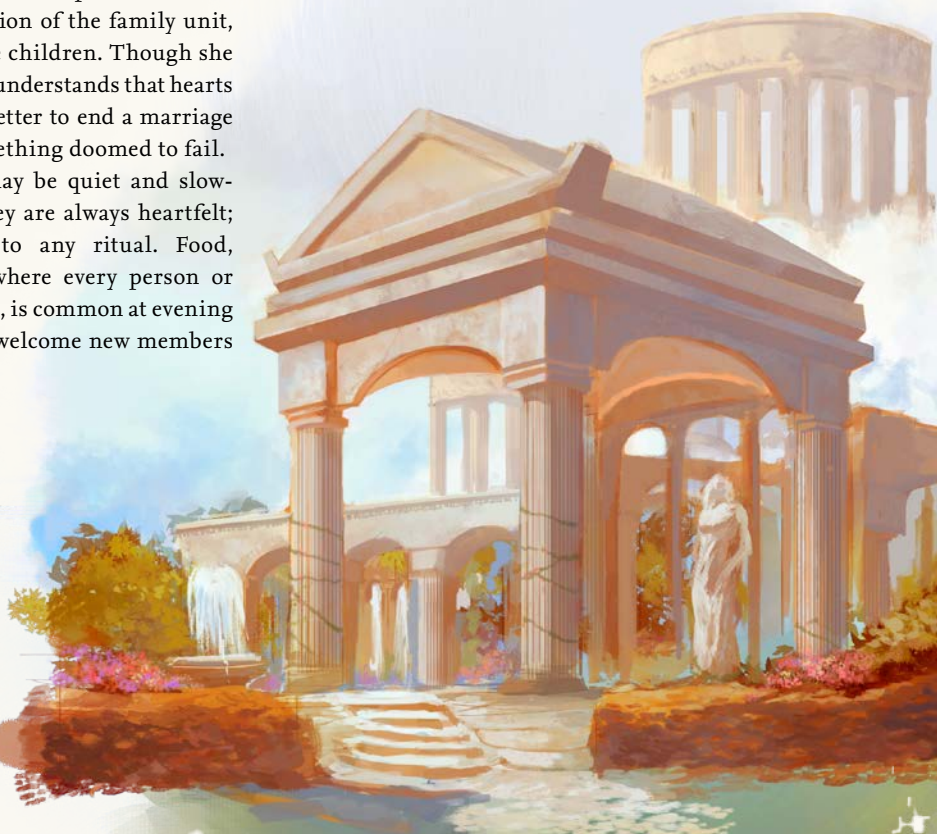
TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Shelyn's roomy temples are surrounded by gardens (most with at least one rosebush) with romantic statues and gorgeous views that serve as havens for lovers, as well as popular wedding locations. Inside, the temples are filled with music and adorned with paintings,

sculpture, and framed calligraphy of poems from her holy book. Many of these works are available for purchase, and are considered a prestigious gift when presented to loved ones. Often the temple art was donated, created, or sponsored by those who found love and approval from the church when all others opposed them; priests of the temple usually create the rest.

Individual Shelynite temples may focus on one type of art, such as painting or dancing or a type of musical instrument, particularly if the temple is small. Larger ones are often multidisciplinary, with an emphasis on orchestral performance or theater, particularly in Taldor. The Temple of the Upheld and Golden Rose in Oppara, Taldor's capital, is the oldest known temple of Shelyn. The grand cathedral is an intricate affair, fluted and open to the sky. Bright birds roost around its central courtyard, and talented musicians play exquisite tunes appropriate to the hour and the weather throughout the year. It is said that once a year, the goddess herself walks hidden among the faithful here, personally blessing those who best embody her qualities. However, no one knows exactly which day it is that this occurs, and so the temple sees a constant flow of worshipers.

Many temples are associated with one or more agathions, and these temples usually have iconography and art relating to their agathions and the noble animals they resemble. For example, a temple associated with a notable leonal might be decorated with lion artwork, and



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might even be home to many friendly cats. Even temples that don't have a patron agathion still usually have an unusual number of songbirds living nearby.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Shelyn motivates her followers to inspire creativity, teach others to see beauty, and encourage love and devotion between deserving individuals. Natural peacemakers and mediators, Shelynites recognize that the world contains ugliness and evil, and are not afraid to fight to change it so that everyone can appreciate the beauty and joy of existence. Her clergy treasure wisdom and talent, and prefer informal organization and decisions made as a community, but they also recognize that great art is rarely created by committee. If an individual disagrees with a decision, she is free to follow her own path.

Most of Shelyn's clergy are clerics or bards, serving as artists and teachers, as well as healers of both body and

soul. Her clergy do not use their magic to seduce, but may use it to intervene in conflicts or prevent evil from being done, to ease the hurt of a broken heart. Those paladins who serve Shelyn often focus on courtly love and seek to shield beauty from forces that would consume or destroy it. The rare inquisitors of her church hunt cultists of Zon-Kuthon, redeeming them if possible but preventing them from spreading their poison at all costs.

Priests endeavor to create something of beauty each day, usually by composing music or painting, though some may choose less conventional means of artistic cultivation such as gardening, mentoring others in dance or other arts, or aiding a local theater. Among more militant priests, beauty may come from the perfection of acrobatic and aesthetically appealing martial arts and weapons routines. Those less entranced by the creative process may instead care for artists, scout for upcoming talent, or arrange patronages between nobles and young geniuses. Wealthier priests often own theaters, concert halls, art galleries, or their own schools. Priests serve as matchmakers, counsel those with broken hearts or relationship problems, and preside over weddings.

While devoted to beauty, Shelyn's followers recognize that mortals can be superficial about physical attractiveness, and that individuals' appearances can be a source of pain and despair. Her temples often counsel supplicants on how to recognize and enhance their own unique beauty, teaching them to move with grace that celebrates their bodies, aiding them in learning to speak with eloquence and confidence, helping them to select clothes and hairstyles that express the qualities in which they take pride, and highlighting positive aspects of their personalities. The most respected practitioners of these arts believe they can see their goddess's qualities in each person they encounter, and the delight with which they gaze upon each new face makes any who approach them feel beautiful in their presence.

Training for clergy involves instruction in the appreciation, history, and theory of the performing and visual arts to better understand and value them, as well as education in deportment, fashion, and rhetoric. As such, all priests have at least a rank in a Craft or Perform skill. Before initiation into the priesthood can be considered complete, a new acolyte must perform three acts of beauty: uncovering beauty in something not generally seen as beautiful, restoring a piece of artwork that has been defaced or neglected, and creating a new and lasting work of beauty in their surroundings. They must also perform three acts of love: getting a family or community to recognize love that its members have rejected, undoing a misunderstanding that has gotten in the way of love, and introducing two people who fall in love. Most aspiring priests labor for years to complete these works to a standard they believe worthy of their goddess.

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ADVENTURERS

Those adventurers who follow Shelyn are motivated by gentleness, peace, and beauty. They know the world contains ugliness and evil and they want to change it so that everyone can appreciate the finer points of existence. Her servants seek to inspire creativity, to teach people to see beauty, and to inspire love and devotion—not necessarily toward themselves, but between deserving others. They strive to promote the general good, to help people trapped in ruts, and to free those under the thrall of evil. Adventuring Shelynites are natural peacemakers and go-betweens, yet when push comes to shove, they're not afraid to shed blood on behalf of beauty and those they love. Adventurers devoted to Shelyn often carry gold-plated glaives in her honor.

CLOTHING

Formal garb within the church is designed to emphasize the wearer's beauty, although the level of modesty varies greatly depending on the individual's preferences. Makeup and jewelry are often used to highlight attractive features, and it is common for worshipers to wear brooches or pendants bearing Shelyn's long-tailed bird sigil. Bright green, red, and gold are popular colors, and white accents such as vests, belts, and scarves are common. Many ceremonial outfits include the image of a rose in one of these four colors, and rose-adorned regalia are part of many religious ceremonies.

HOLY TEXT

Shelyn's holy book is *Melodies of Inner Beauty*, and as its name suggests, it's more a hymnal and collection of poetry than a prayer book. Stories about the goddess, her family, her history, and her doctrine are expressed through songs, epic verses, and dramas to be performed and enjoyed among the faithful. The book glosses over the ugly parts of the stories (particularly about Zon-Kuthon), though other divinely inspired documents of the church reveal more details of Shelyn's deeds and relationships.

HOLIDAYS

The church of the Eternal Rose has no universal holidays except Crystalhue. However, vow renewals between loving couples are often celebrated by an entire temple, as are any other anniversaries of loving relationships. For a temple associated with a specific patron agathion, that celestial's birthday, wedding anniversary, or confirmation in the church may be a local holiday.

Crystalhue (Winter Solstice): This day of artistic creation is traditionally a time for courtship and romantic proposals. During the day, people hang crystal prisms and glass baubles in order to spread light and scatter rainbows in the streets. Celebrants exchange small gifts,

typically handmade, as tokens of appreciation or as peace offerings to those they feel they wronged during the year. Worshipers often dye colored streaks in their hair or wear colorful patchwork coats called melaros to which they add new patches every year. In the evenings, celebrants place lanterns on porches and in windows to line the streets with communal light. Town squares or other community gathering spaces host feasts around bonfires, and these gatherings are a popular time to perform marriage ceremonies, especially for worshipers without the means to throw such elaborate celebrations for themselves.

The sole dark note of Crystalhue is the zonzon doll. In some Shelynite congregations, a child chosen to be the "sibling" passes this strange little doll, made from scraps of leather and cloth and sewn with red thread, among neighbors. The townsfolk give it symbolic gifts and tell the doll happy memories or whisper apologies for those they've wronged during the year. The "sibling" child then casts it into the wilderness or sets it afloat to drift down a river, in the hope that it will find its way to the Midnight Lord and relate his sister's kindness, mercy, and goodwill in the face of the dark place he now resides.

APHORISMS

There are innumerable poems and songs inspired by love, yet most followers hold three sayings as Shelyn's most important messages.

The Creation of Beauty Is the Highest Art: Anything done to make the world more beautiful is a blessing. Visual art, music, or even simple enhancements like clever makeup or a good haircut all create beauty, and even the smallest change can transform the mundane into the intriguing.

Love Is Never Born of Evil: Love is a positive, fulfilling energy. It protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. Possessiveness and jealousy stem from evil, and are not love. An enemy's punishment may be deserved, but a loving heart does not rejoice in hatred and vengeance.

Love Is the Greatest of All Things: Knowledge, language, and ambitions all pass in time, but love and kindness toward others persist, their repercussions felt down through the generations, in this world and the next. Even when love is barely more than a flickering candle, it can ignite the heart and soul into a raging flame that defies time, death, war, fate, and nature.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Shelyn's nature is to be loved, and no deity is immune to her charm. However, the gods' responses vary in accord with their natures: Asmodeus would use her to seduce the incorruptible, while Rovagug would place her within his eye to watch as he gloriously destroys all creation. The Eternal Rose has loved many minor and major deities,



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but refuses to bind herself to any of them and has borne no children. Calistria and Shelyn amuse each other and understand the need for both lust and love in a passionate relationship. Cayden Cailean, similarly, amuses her with his heartfelt and often inebriated attempts to woo her, but most believe her love for the god of freedom to be that of a patient older sister. Iomedae, Sarenrae, and other deities who actively crusade against evil often see her as naive or a bit frivolous, but such objections tend to melt away in her presence as she reminds them that the eradication of evil is meaningless if crusaders forget what they are fighting to preserve.

Shelyn has a close friendship with Bolka, the dwarven goddess of love and beauty, although both recognize

that their worshipers have different views of these qualities. She counts many empyreal lords among her friends and allies as well: she shares mutual admiration with Arshea, whose message of freedom as beauty she finds a refreshing contrast to many mortals' rigid views of physical aesthetics, and she occasionally shares a moonlit dance with Ashava or an intense discussion of musical composition with Seramaydiel. Shelyn is the only deity who has any regular contact with her brother Zon-Kuthon, and it has been ages since he attacked her, though she remains wary that whatever evil force controls him might one day change its mind. She also recognizes the longing in his eyes when he sees her glaive, and suspects that somehow the alien thoughts that emanate from the weapon are the key to freeing her brother from the shadow that consumes him.

The goddess's broken relationship with Naderi, her former divine servant, remains her second great sorrow. Naderi became a goddess after a pair of her mortal wards chose to kill themselves rather than live apart. In fear and confusion, the neophyte goddess fled from Shelyn and has since adopted a darker worldview (see page 180). She also has a strained relationship with Urgathoa, not just because of Urgathoa's spiritual ugliness, but also because of some offense she committed against the goddess of undeath in centuries past. Neither goddess is willing to speak of the friction between them.

In general, the faithful of Shelyn have excellent relations with all of the other good and neutral religions, and even the servants of evil gods find much to love about the goddess and her followers. Like their deities, followers of crusading gods may sometimes dismiss Shelynites as out of touch with reality or hampered by artistic temperament, until they stumble into a Shelynite temple, battle-weary and heartsore, and find peace, healing, and renewed faith among its comforts. On rare occasions, Shelynites' suggestions that this faith's temple would be much improved by a bit of redecorating or that faith's ceremonial robes could be adjusted to be more flattering irritate their neighbors, but most recognize the impulse as the genuine desire to share beauty, and a minor flaw compared with Shelynites' bounty of attractive qualities.

REALM

Shelyn makes her deific realm within a vast and remote valley high in the Dragonmane Mountains of Nirvana—so named for the jagged peaks' resemblance to the spikes along the ridge of a great dragon's back and tail. Within the amphitheaters and green glens of the pastoral valley, Shelyn's petitioners celebrate her dogma of selfless love and her appreciation for acts and creations of beauty, and in this respect she and

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her faithful find ready collaboration with the native agathions. Crowning the mountains that overlook her realm stand dozens of avoral keeps and monasteries, their sweeping walls and gravity-defying buttresses pushing past the edges of architectural imagination into pure artistic expression.

Concealed from most, a second, equally idyllic valley exists adjacent to Shelyn's domain, standing in wait for Shelyn's half-brother, the mad god Zon-Kuthon, in hopes of his eventual redemption.

PLANAR ALLIES

Shelyn's divine servants are mostly transformed petitioners or supernatural beings she has created. In addition to her servitor race, the beautiful dapsaras (see page 309), the following are three of her most blessed minions, who answer *planar ally* and similar calling spells from the faithful.

Dancing Petal (unique air elemental): This giddy creature is alight with affection for every living thing and excitement about every experience. It wraps itself around interesting people, plays music on available instruments, makes leaves and debris dance elaborate tarantellas, and helps children pretend to fly. It loves to juggle fruits, candies, and small pieces of jewelry in elaborate patterns, and carves clouds into laughing faces on joyous occasions. It likes to be paid in small items it can juggle or offer to others.

Phoenix Tail (unique avoral): This brilliantly plumed avoral (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 16) bard is a master calligrapher and painter, whose periods of mania and romantic despair both fuel his art and devotion to the goddess. He uses his own feathers as quills for writing, and crafts magic items out of his plumes (particularly bird and swan boat *feather tokens*) to gift to mortals pursuing art, music, or love. He prefers payment in the form of original paintings and fine inks and paints.

Spirit of Adoration: This armored woman looks like a living statue and serves as Shelyn's herald. She is generous, compassionate, and tolerant, and those who meet her under pleasant circumstances can't help but agree that she is one of the nicest creatures they've ever met. When some great love or beautiful work of art is in danger, her eyes burn with the fire of true love threatened, and her face becomes the stern mask of an artist lost in the moment of finishing her masterpiece. Her hands wield glaive, spell, and ray in a beautiful and enthralling dance, as though they move to the very music of creation. Though she is not a gossip, she listens to her fellow celestials and is aware of whom they've helped in the mortal world; she keeps tabs on those who have benefited from the goddess's favor in the past and, if necessary, might be willing to repay a past favor. For more information, see page 308.

FOR SHELYNITE CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Shelyn may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes	Source
Sin eater (inquisitor)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 46
Songhealer (bard)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 27
Feats	Source
Clarifying Channel	See page 209
Divine Expression	See page 211
Persuasive Performer	See page 215
Magic Items	Source
<i>Altar of Shelyn</i>	See page 249
<i>Beautiful war paint</i>	See page 260
<i>Blade of three fancies</i>	See page 254
<i>Boots of the Eternal Rose</i>	See page 261
<i>Bracelet of friends</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 504
<i>Harp of charming</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 516
<i>Marvelous pigments</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 523
<i>Perfect tuning fork</i>	See page 267
<i>Ring of seven lovely colors</i>	See page 259
<i>Rosy hauberk</i>	See page 253
<i>Zonzon doll of forgiveness</i>	See page 271
Spells	Source
<i>Adoration</i>	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 222
<i>Aspect of the nightingale</i>	See page 228
<i>Joyful rapture</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 225
<i>Tap inner beauty</i>	See page 243
<i>Unbreakable heart</i>	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 296
<i>Waves of ecstasy</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 249
Traits	Source
Ear for Music	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333
Inner Beauty	See page 220
Intense Artist	See page 220
Unswaying Love	See page 223

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics and paladins of Shelyn may prepare *charm person* as a 1st-level spell and *good hope* as a 4th-level spell; inquisitors may learn these spells at the same levels. Shelynite clerics may prepare *sympathy* as an 8th-level spell, but can cast it on works of art only. All priests of Shelyn treat *charm animal* as if it were a 2nd-level spell on their class spell list.





TORAG

AIM HIGH, PLAN WELL, AND STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT, FOR UNPREPARED METAL SHATTERS FROM A HAMMER'S BLOW.

—HAMMER AND TONGS: THE FORGING OF METAL AND OTHER GOOD WORKS

FATHER OF CREATION

God of the forge, protection, and strategy

Alignment LG

Domains Artifice, Earth, Good, Law, Protection

Favored Weapon warhammer

Centers of Worship Druma, Five Kings Mountains, Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Mana Wastes

Nationality dwarf

Obedience After reciting a traditional prayer to Torag, either work at a forge or strike a small replica of an anvil or a sizable flat stone with a hammer for at least 10 minutes. If the sound of your hammer draws a creature near, encourage it to join in your worship of the Father of Creation. If hostilities become inevitable, leap into the fray with a battle shout in praise of Torag. Perform some small act toward maintaining your weapon, such as sharpening or polishing it, as you conclude your obedience with another prayer to Torag's might and wisdom. Alternatively, if you have created something through this effort, grant it to the next person you meet who strikes you as fair and honorable. Gain a +1 sacred bonus on all attack rolls made with warhammers.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Strategic Warrior (Sp)** *anticipate peril*^{lum} 3/day, *status* 2/day, *glyph of warding* 1/day
- 2: Sensibility of Crafting (Su)** Your understanding of the inner workings of magical crafting has won you a protective boon from your ancestors and from Torag himself, allowing you to better avoid powers drawn from magical items. You gain a +4 sacred bonus on any saving throw against an effect generated by a magic item. This includes spells cast from scrolls, staves, or wands.
- 3: Sacred Crafting (Ex)** You are granted insight into the finest techniques for crafting magic items, glimpsing secrets of forgotten master smiths and glimpsing the revelations of ancient dwarven masters. When calculating the base cost for creating an item, perform all the calculations and then reduce the base cost by 10%. This discount affects the crafting time as well as the final price of the item. In addition, you can use *fabricate* once per day as a spell-like ability. Though you can't create magic items with the *fabricate* spell, you may use it to create items that you later enhance magically.

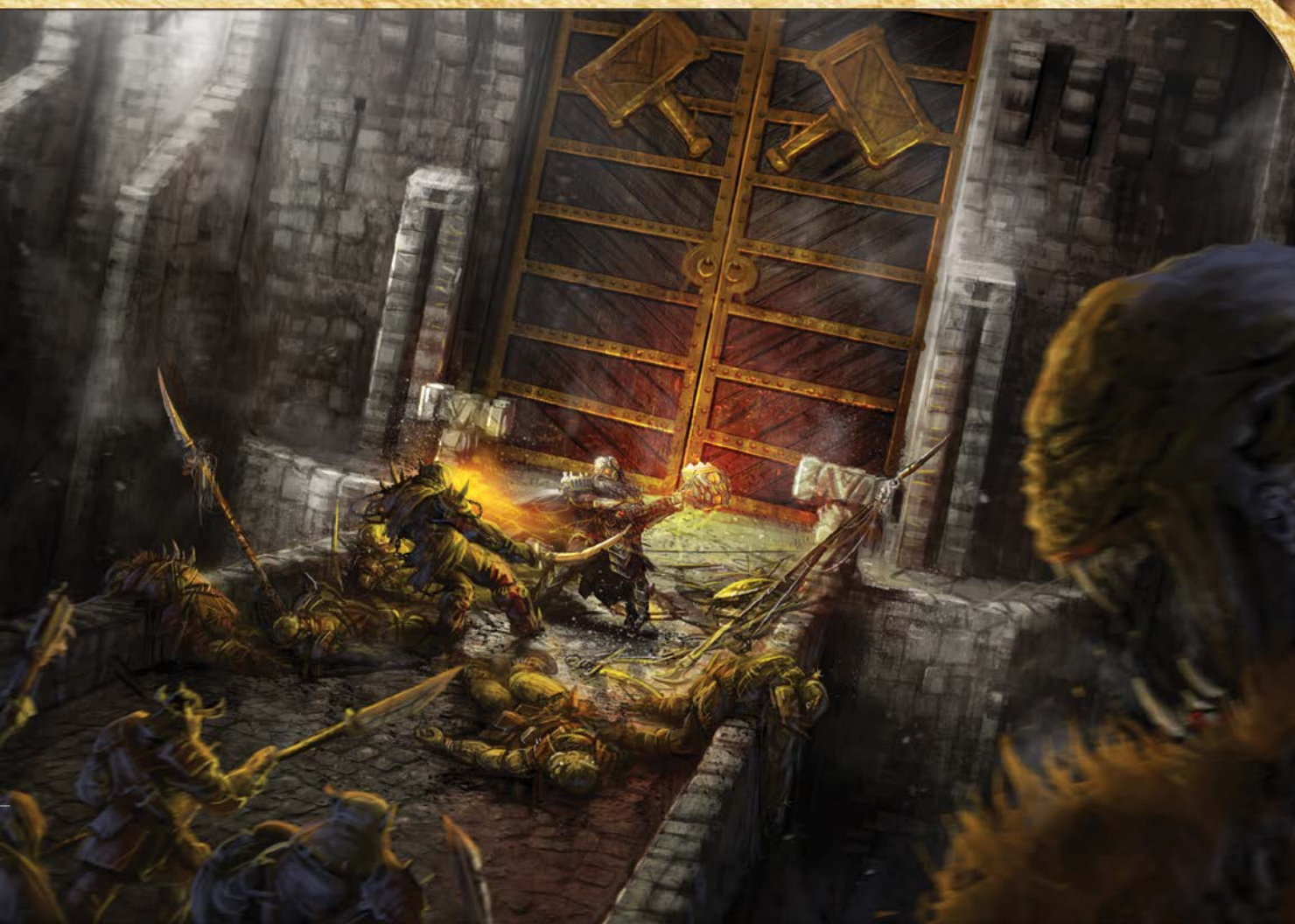
EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Forgcrafter (Sp)** *crafters fortune*^{APG} 3/day, *fox's cunning* 2/day, or *greater magic weapon* 1/day
- 2: Ironskin (Ex)** Your skin is as thick and tough as that of a dwarf who's worked the forge for 50 years, every scratch and burn associated with the memory of a masterpiece you've realized in stone or steel. As a free action, you can toughen your skin further, gaining DR 10/chaotic and evil. Dismissing this ability is also a free action. This ability lasts a number rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 for every 4 Hit Dice you possess (maximum 6 rounds). The rounds don't need to be consecutive.
- 3: Hammerfist Ally (Sp)** You can bring forth an ancient stone construct forged specifically to protect the beloved followers of the Father of Creation. Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a stone golem to aid you. You gain telepathy with the golem to a range of 100 feet. The golem follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home. The golem takes the form of a sculpted dwarf hero wielding two massive warhammers, the holy symbol of Torag hanging prominently around its neck. Its statistics remain unchanged despite these cosmetic alterations.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Battlefield Protector (Sp)** *sanctuary* 3/day, *shield of faith* 2/day, *prayer* 1/day
- 2: Holy Artificer (Su)** The spirit of an ancient warrior or artisan guides your hand when you set your mind toward creation, inspiring you and helping you perfect your craft. You gain the artificer's touch granted power from the Artifice domain if you don't already have access to it. Use your character level instead of cleric level to determine the power of your artificer's touch.
- 3: Earthen Smite (Su)** You call upon your connection with the earth and its hidden strength to levy it behind your holy attacks. Whenever you use your smite evil ability, you can choose to add 2d6 points of acid damage to your damage roll. If you don't have access to smite evil, you can instead add 2d6 points of acid damage to a single attack against an evil opponent three times per day. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack. If you miss or if the target is not evil, the use is wasted.

INNER SEA GODS



TORAG

Torag is an ancient god, and his dwarven followers credit him with the creation of the world at his great forge, striking his new work again and again with his hammer to get the shape he desired. As the rocks tumbled and the sparks flew, the dwarves were born—beings made of stone and with bellies full of fire. Even with setbacks over the millennia, under his stern eye the dwarves found prosperity. Torag is a hard and proud patriarch, a distant but loving father. Though every dwarf who falls in battle pains his heart, he keeps his eye on the future and the countless dwarven lives extending forward into eternity, like golden links in a mighty coat of mail. He is often thought of as a purely dwarven god, yet continues to gain traction among humans.

Torag loves the dwarven race, and has come to love his non-dwarven worshippers, but withholds most direct aid and affection from both, for he sees life as a hard journey, and if he sheltered his children from all hardship, they would not know the value of their own hard work or the satisfaction of their achievements. He created the dwarves to be tough, stubborn, wise, and creative—traits they would

need to persevere and overcome all obstacles—and expects all his worshippers of all races and walks of life to seek to embody those traits. He opposes those who act without thinking, rebel, or place their community at risk.

As god of the forge, the Father of Creation concerns himself with the art of creating and shaping metal. He believes that shoddy workmanship insults not only the crafter and the wielder of a tool or weapon, but the item itself, and pushes his followers to continually refine and improve their craft. A devout worshiper makes weapons that don't fail in battle and tools that don't wear quickly under heavy use. Torag opposes the destruction of well-crafted things, and frowns on burying armor and weapons with the dead, as these items can help protect a vulnerable community or bring needed coin to an impoverished one.

Torag is a shrewd planner, a great advocate of contingencies, and he holds forethought as one of the principal gifts of living well. However, he knows there are times when a dwarf needs to abandon a failing strategy and think on her feet, so Torag respects officers, soldiers, and wardens who demonstrate this quality. He prefers

TORAG'S PALADIN CODE

Paladins of Torag are dedicated to protecting not just the lives but the way of life for those under their charge, and hold the ways of their chosen people as holy, especially when they are the centuries-old works and traditions of an entire race. Their tenets include the following affirmations.

- My word is my bond. When I give my word formally, I defend my oath to my death. Traps lie in idle banter or thoughtless talk, and so I watch my tongue.
- I am at all times truthful, honorable, and forthright, but my allegiance is to my people. I will do what is necessary to serve them, including misleading others if need be.
- I respect the forge, and never sully it with half-hearted work. My creations reflect the depth of my faith, and I will not allow flaws save in direst need.
- Against my people's enemies, I will show no mercy. I will not allow their surrender, except when strategy warrants. I will defeat them, yet even in the direst struggle, I will act in a way that brings honor to Torag.

organized defenses to tactical assaults, and tactical assaults over reckless charges. He does not believe there is glory in martyrdom, but honors those who sacrifice their own lives to save others. He is a stout fighter, rarely given to rage, but when his anger awakens, the earth shakes and cities fall.

When Torag appears to his worshipers, he's an older but hearty dwarf clad in heavy plate armor, with eyes glowing like molten gold. His hair and beard may be any common dwarven hair color, often with streaks of gray, and his hands are worn and scarred from centuries of hard work. He exudes a palpable aura of power, wisdom, and safety. In art, he's always depicted in intricate armor, and typically shown busy at his forge hammering out a weapon or shield. Some images depict him as a mighty guardian, shielding dwarven children with his body as he clears away orcs and trolls with mighty sweeps of his warhammer *Kaglemros*.

Torag shows his approval through reflections of his face on polished metal, preparations happening smoothly and ahead of schedule, excellence at the forge, and the discovery of mushrooms or stone fragments that match the shape of his hammer. He sometimes sends messages as cryptic riddles that appear on stone surfaces for a short period of time. When angered, forges grow cold, shields crack, and even the simplest plan carries a feeling of impending doom. Earthquakes (whether localized or expansive) are the ultimate indication of his displeasure, yet those who survive a deadly quake are considered blessed. His holy symbol is his warhammer. He is called the Father of Creation, the Father of Dwarvenkind, and the Forgefather.

THE CHURCH

Most of Torag's worshipers are dwarves, but he has human followers as well; he's particularly venerated in Druma, where overlap with dwarven culture from the Five Kings Mountains is common, and in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, where community cohesion is vital for survival in a severe environment. Larger communities are served by dwarven priests, though some smaller settlements make do with human priests.

Priests create and maintain the armor and weapons of the faithful, build defenses for their settlements, and instruct militias in the use of weaponry and tactics for proper civil defense. Lay artisans garner respect within the church, especially skilled smiths. Likewise, tactically minded laity of the community are welcome to give their suggestions to the temple priests, though they are not conventionally given any sort of official role in the religious hierarchy.

Typical worshipers of Torag include smiths, soldiers, officers, rulers, and scouts. They craft tools and weapons for the community, watch territorial borders, keep streets safe, plan and build defenses, and train others to forge and to protect their people. They're stable, dependable, conservative, loyal, and diligent.

Temple worship services take place at the central forge, with the high priest leading the ceremony and other priests assisting at the anvils. Services consist of long chants, punctuated by the din of hammers and bellows to keep time. These services might incorporate actual crafting, the products of which may be sold to traveling merchants to support the temple or given to needy members of the community.

The faithful of Torag consider burrowing animals and those that dwell in caves and mountainous areas sacred, and eat them only when starvation is the only other choice. Flying creatures that live underground, however—in particular, bats, mobats, and skavelings—are seen as unclean abominations, and many members of the faith insist on performing ablutions or conducting a minor purification ritual after touching or being touched by such creatures.

Torag strongly encourages his followers to marry, and it's common for his servants to marry other priests from the same temple in unions arranged by the high priest. He also encourages his followers to have (or adopt) children, but given that dwarven couples might go decades without conceiving, his plan is long-term—like much of the god's work. In some communities, it is traditional for an unmarried priest (especially an older one uninterested in a physical marriage or far past reproductive age) to be “spiritually betrothed” to a named celestial servitor associated with that community, such as a chalkost (see page 311).

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Every act of smelting and smithing is considered a prayer to Torag, and even his smallest temple includes at least one anvil. Most temples are circular, built around a large, central forge, fully functional and with satellite anvils throughout. The devout use all these workspaces at various times of the day, and the noise from early morning prayer-work makes it almost impossible to sleep in at a temple—though some churches have a remote chamber, such as an infirmary, for when quiet is needed. Many settlements build their temples into the outer defensive wall to keep the noise away from residences and to allow the priests to monitor the city's defenses. Priests enlarge temples to meet the needs of their communities, and older settlements usually have grand cathedrals built around or over the original temples. Many contain mausoleums, though most dwarves prefer to be buried in their family tombs. Every temple is stocked with arms and foodstuffs so it can be used as a fortress and rallying point if the community comes under attack.

A typical shrine—whether public or in a home—is an alcove with an anvil-shaped altar. In dwarven communities, temples and shrines include a shelf to hold statuettes of Torag and the other dwarven deities so the priests can invoke prayers to them. (For more on the rest of the dwarven pantheon, see page 182.) Miners and explorers may place a small statue of Torag—or sometimes a stone bearing his hammer symbol—in an alcove or niche so the god may watch over them; it is customary to leave the statue in place for others to see, rather than to bring the statue with you when you leave, and therefore devoted explorers carry several statues with them or quickly carve one when needed. The most sacred places are those that have been retaken from orcs and other enemies, and shrines may be built there to commemorate their return to dwarven control.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Torag is not a god of half-measures. Priests either accept his doctrine as it is or come up against the unyielding wall of dwarven tradition. They're expected to remain orthodox in all ways, and offer every action they take in service of their goals: the safety of their people, the defeat of their enemies, and the production of useful and sturdy tools for civilization. Life is a precious gift, and every breath taken should have purpose to it, even if that purpose is simply enjoying the company of friends and a mug of ale.

Though most of Torag's followers are clerics, fighters, cavaliers, or paladins, the church also

welcomes bards, as the faithful need someone to remind them of dwarven history and heroes, so they can emulate their examples. There are a few unarmed monasteries dedicated to Torag, though monks are rare among the clergy—most dwarves believe the Father of Creation favors the hammer and axe over the naked fist. Barbarians often approve of Torag's black-and-white worldview and may devote themselves to his service in order to tame their rage or channel it to serve their people, although they often have difficulty dealing with the strict hierarchies and precise tactics of the church. Torag's inquisitors search for weaknesses in the walls and other defenses, root out cheats and thieves that undermine safety and prosperity, and watch for the influence of Droskar (see page 182). They remain alert for the presence of kobolds, goblins, and orcs, and also train common folk in the best tactics for defeating these common enemies. Every priest undergoes at least a small amount of training in some



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kind of smithing, as well as Knowledge (engineering) to better construct defenses and Knowledge (history) to learn the battle tactics of famous leaders.

Several military orders pledge themselves to Torag's service. Whether human or dwarven, these knights have little use for the needless ceremony common to other knightly orders, and speak only when necessary, though they usually still relax and allow themselves to laugh in the company of friends and family. When the time comes to act, they do so without hesitation, placing themselves between their people and danger, warhammers at the ready.

Each morning, a priest rises early to stoke the coals of a temple forge, and then prepares breakfast while the forge reaches a suitable temperature. After eating, the priest does a little short-term work at the forge or anvil as a morning prayer, such as smelting a few chunks of ore or hammering a metal bar into a more useful shape for an apprentice or another priest to use. The priest prepares spells during this meditative, repetitive activity. After morning prayers, the priest leaves to pursue his assigned duties, which may be at the forge or anvil or elsewhere in the settlement. Acolytes assist smiths when equipment runs short, aid in drilling new soldiers in military maneuvers and weapon training, and carry orders from generals to military outposts (often relying on spells like *sanctuary* to keep them safe).

Most priests work as smiths for governmental or military organizations. They understand the practical needs of crafting as a necessary trade rather than as a form of artistic expression, and a weapon or piece of armor with Torag's symbol on the smith-mark might not be ornate or even overly pretty, but it was surely tested for quality and durability. Priests who aren't inclined to work at a forge, anvil, or architect's desk all day gravitate toward leadership positions where they can use their knowledge to direct others on the battlefield or city walls, whipping them into shape and maintaining discipline. In a fortress with a priest of Torag serving as the steward, guards never sleep on duty.

Torag's clergy take their responsibilities seriously, and are deeply involved with their communities. When they take up adventuring, it is with the goal of bettering

their communities in some way. They expect to lead, or at the very least to be consulted on decisions, and can be expected to have a contingency plan ready at all times. This need for everything to be properly planned may lead them to act like judgmental parents, or bark at their companions about how a careless act could endanger everyone, but few can argue with the quality of their preparation and organization. They don't like being idle, and prefer to keep their hands busy even while resting, braiding leather cords into thicker strands (perhaps for use as a cover for a weapon hilt) or inspecting a bag of crossbow bolt heads for flawed units in need of reforging. A typical adventuring priest is familiar with crafting, military hierarchy, and basic troop defense strategies.

The church is organized like an army, with clear ranks and a chain of command. The High Defender is the leader of the overall church, presiding over the faithful from the fortress-temple known as the Forge of Torag in Highhelm; the heads of individual temples serve collectively as his military council, though in practice this means his council is usually composed of temple leaders from the nearest settlements. The church grants promotions and awards for excellent strategic ideas; heroic acts of defense in battle; and innovations in forging, smelting, and other crafting. Many settlements make the priesthood an official part of the city guard, though priests are only required to follow orders from lay officers in times of civil defense.

ADVENTURERS

When one adventures in the service of Torag, she does so not to seek glory or honor, but because she that as her true place in life. Her god is a warrior god as well as a creator, and he respects those who develop strength and power from within. Followers of Torag might go on quests for their home temples, seek rare metals for their forges, or hope to learn at the feet of a master general, but every journey they undertake is ultimately with the end goal of bettering their communities. This might mean questing for sites or masterpieces spoken of in the legends of their people but lost to the modern world, or seeking out the tools and materials necessary to bring some new, unmatched masterpiece



into being. They also eagerly seek to lend aid to peoples and lands under siege from one hardship or another, whether that be invaders, disease, famine, or other strife. While they don't balk at entering battle, especially to recover something that was unrightfully taken, they view themselves as guardians and defenders first, and a force for attacking second.

Torag's followers expect to lead their parties, or at least to advise the leaders. If their parties' leaders don't make adequate plans, then Torag's followers will provide contingency plans, as Torag would expect nothing less. They seek peace within the groups they exist, even if they must be the hammer that forges that peace from stubborn steel. As such, they have little patience for selfishness or greed, believing that if any member of the band or community suffers all the members suffer.

CLOTHING

Most dwarves follow Torag, but the particularly devoted wear rings on their fingers, in their beards, or in their ears, and every ring tells a story. Each is marked with Torag's symbol as well as with indications of how the bearer earned it: service to a friend, fealty to a lord, discovery of a new metal vein, and so on. Formal dress for clergy is work-worn and knee-length leather smithing aprons. Many priests do not decorate this garment, but some burn symbols into the leather or adorn it with studs, rivets, plates, or badges of steel or precious metal to commemorate significant events—such as marriage, the birth of a child, or the completion of the priest's first set of full plate. Priests also often carry large blacksmithing hammers during ceremonies; such a hammer may be plain or engraved, and is quite functional as a weapon. Most wear their hair long, growing elaborate braids or facial hair to emulate their god's mighty beard. As a result, even many non-dwarven priests have a distinctly dwarven appearance.

HOLY TEXT

The official holy book of the church is *Hammer and Tongs: The Forging of Metal and Other Good Works*. As it's meant to be used for reference near forges and in other situations where lesser books might catch fire, it's usually bound in metal, and its leather pages are coated in flame-resistant lacquer. It includes prayers and the stories of the creation and early days of the dwarven race, the destinies they have forged, the Quest for Sky, and the simple need for community that binds dwarves together. It also gives instructions on how to shape stone, build walls, smelt base metals, and forge iron and steel, as well as basic information about various predatory monsters and how to defend against them. The oldest copy of the book in a particular community (typically the one used in the main temple) includes a record of when the settlement

was founded, which families or clans were involved in its founding, and other notable events in its history.

HOLIDAYS

Dwarves call the ninth month of the year Torawsh instead of Rova, believing it foolish to name a month for an evil, imprisoned god of destruction. The church celebrates anniversaries of successful battles, including the breaking of sieges.

Skylost: Dwarven communities with ancestral ties to one of the lost Sky Citadels, such as those who can trace family lineages back to a citadel's founders, mournfully mark the date of its loss. However, each of these daughter communities might have its own specific date for that event, depending on how much information is still known and what those who recorded it considered the most significant date, such as when the last walls were breached, when the order to evacuate was given, or when the community's founders fled that citadel to establish a new home. Therefore, two towns founded by exiles from Koldukar (now Urgir in the Hold of Belkzen) might honor Skylost on different days because their patron clans evacuated the city on different days. On Skylost, dwarves reflect on the lives and accomplishments of slain ancestors. Non-dwarven temples (and those founded by clans from surviving citadels) usually do not observe this holiday.

APHORISMS

Since Torag is a teacher of craft and strategy, over thousands of years his mortal students have created phrases to impart his wisdom to the next generation. Among these instructive and practical phrases, the following are most common.

The Hand with the Hammer Shapes the Future: Craft and invention allowed dwarves and other civilized races to expand across the world. The artisan's mind thought up the first spear and hammer, the smelting of bronze and steel, and the construction of castles, clockworks, and even gunworks. Without these inventions, the civilized races would be like goblins: huddling in the mud, fearing knowledge, and worshiping simple concepts like fire and rocks.

Hops and Water Is Not Beer: Inferior workmanship and anything less than one's best effort are unacceptable to followers of Torag. No self-respecting dwarf would call a cup of water and hops "beer," as such a thing is unfinished and unpalatable, and so no skilled weaponsmith would consider a poorly made hammer a true weapon. Apprentices call unfinished items by nicknames (for example, a hammerhead is a "slug") to avoid their teachers' reprimands, and an apprentice known for making frequent mistakes is often called



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a “hopswater” in reference to this phrase. Among some, this phrase is altered to “Hope and water is not beer.”

Let Them Break upon Our Shields: Though Torag is a war god, he would rather protect his followers than seek and destroy their enemies, and encourages his people to always have a safe retreat. The power of a strong defensive position has forced countless armies to give up after besieging an impenetrable fortress. In some clans, this phrase is rendered as “against our walls” instead of “upon our shields.”

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Torag has battled destructive deities and their minions since the dawn of the world. In particular, Rovagug’s spawn have long seethed and squirmed in the deeper corners of the earth, drawing Torag’s ire. Despite their shared loathing for the Rough Beast, however, Torag’s followers find Sarenrae’s worshipers too forgiving and too devoted to the sun, both of which are seen as weaknesses by the long-lived, underground-dwelling dwarves. The Father of Creation and his craft-inclined

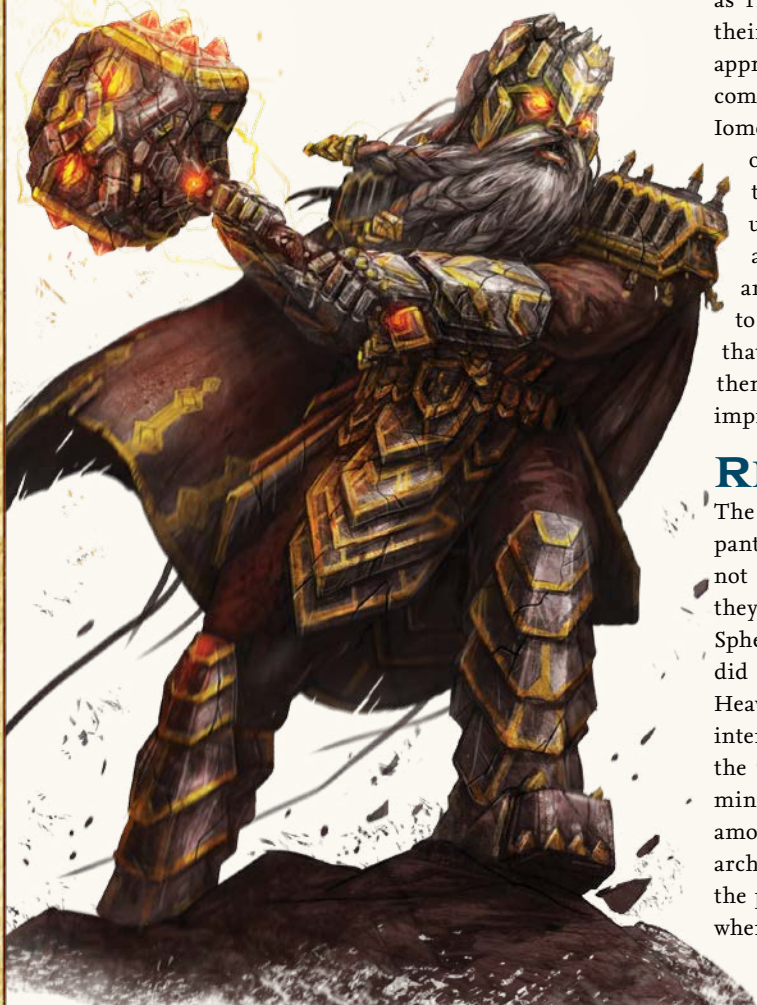
worshipers respect Abadar for his adherence to law and commerce, and Irori for his discipline. Torag likes Cayden Cailean’s humor and love of ale, and respects Iomedae’s martial prowess and devotion to order and good. He gets along well with Erastil, perhaps the only deity more curmudgeonly than he is.

Torag is the head of the dwarven pantheon (see page 182), an extended family of gods and goddesses largely unknown outside of dwarven communities, and which are rarely worshiped individually. Rather than praying directly to these other deities, dwarves ask Torag to intercede with the other gods on their behalf, as the other members of the pantheon defer to him except in matters that lie entirely in their jurisdiction. Of the dwarven gods, only bitter Droskar, Torag’s former student turned duergar god of toil and slavery (see page 182), holds no allegiance to the Father of Creation; the two deities are engaged in a slow-burning cold war.

Torag’s focus on dwarves allows his faith to be more insular than most, and his followers largely keep to themselves enough that they need neither know nor care much about other faiths. When they do come in contact with other religions, they see the followers of other faiths as flighty, frivolous, and prone to waste too much of their time on nonessential works. They are most likely to appreciate the attitudes of Erastil’s worshipers, who value community and family, and they salute the discipline of Iomedae’s followers. Like their god, they find the faithful of Cayden Cailean relaxing—there’s something about their geniality that loosens the stiff followers of Torag up a bit. Of course, the Caydenites can take it too far, and affection for them can quickly turn paternalistic and dismissive. Followers of the Father of Creation like to keep busy, and though they’d never admit it, those that do regularly interact with other faiths often find themselves glad of the opportunity to be useful as they improve allies’ tools and capabilities.

REALM

The way that the Father of Creation tells it, the dwarven pantheon has always called Heaven home. They did not arrive from elsewhere like other gods; rather when they first chiseled their way to the surface of the Outer Sphere—much in the same way as their mortal children did on the Material Plane—they found themselves in Heaven, having already been inhabiting the mountain’s interior. Operating much like a mortal dwarven family, the various dwarven gods instruct their petitioners in mining and craftsmanship, providing a truly massive amount of raw materials and finished works to the archons and angels on the surface. They also defend the plane from below, guarding against those occasions when Abyssal hordes attempt to burrow up into the plane.



PLANAR ALLIES

The Father of Creation's divine servants are skilled metalworkers and powerful creatures with no time for nonsense. When summoned, they prefer to begin planning or take action immediately, and do not take kindly to those who act rashly or succumb to pressure from reckless or chaotic allies. In addition to his servitor race, the chalkost (see page 311), the following servitors of Torag answer to *planar ally* and similar calling spells from the faithful.

Ambassador Zurin (unique azer noble): Clad in blazing brass armor, this imposing azer noble sports rippling muscles and a broad, flame-red beard. He enjoys studying tactics, whether on the battlefield or at the diplomat's table, and uses his knowledge to outmaneuver forces of superior numbers or magical power. He is on good terms with various fire elementals of note, but dislikes efreet. He will negotiate with them if necessary, but gets a wicked glint in his eye if the offered payment includes a contract for their services.

Hrilga Shield-Maiden (unique celestial werebear): A skilled cavalier, this yellow-haired dwarf has bright metallic gold fur in her hybrid and bear forms. Though comfortable giving orders to soldiers, she prefers to lead the charge, relying on her martial skill, supernatural resilience, and tactical knowledge to carry her allies to victory.

Grand Defender: Appearing like a massive dwarven golem crafted from iron, this creature serves as Torag's herald. The construct is animated by the spirits of dozens of great dwarven heroes who consider it an honor to serve their creator in defense of the mortal world. The spirits within the Grand Defender retain all their mortal memories and knowledge, and when in the mortal world they have been known to call out through the herald to old friends, relatives, or offspring with an unexpected familiarity and affection. Mortal dwarves have been known to ask the Grand Defender for lost secrets of forging and engineering, and the hero spirits have Torag's permission to pass on this lore as long as doing so doesn't hinder his herald's purpose for that visit. Other dwarves hope to speak with a dead ancestor in order to pay their respects, apologize for some old offense, or recount a descendant's achievement. For more information, see page 310.

Stoneriver (unique bulette): This beefy brute of a bulette is only marginally smarter than others of its kind, but it obeys Torag's will and has a ruthless cunning that lets it function like an expert hunter and tracker. It is immune to fire, and can burrow through lava as easily as it does earth. Its favorite activity is crunching duergar bones, but it would love to be offered an evil halfling for a meal.

FOR TORAGDAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Torag may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Divine strategist (cleric)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 40
Holy tactician (paladin)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 64
Monk of the sacred mountain (monk)	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 114
Strategist (cavalier)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 39
Tactician (fighter)	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 47

Feats

Blessed Hammer	See page 207
Rebuffing Reduction	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 115
Shrewd Tactician	<i>The Inner Sea World Guide</i> 289
Stalwart	<i>Ultimate Combat</i> 121
Steelskin Channel	See page 216
Stone Strider	See page 216

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Torag</i>	See page 249
<i>Belt of dwarvenkind</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 501
<i>Belt of stonewood</i>	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i> 210
<i>Boots of the earth</i>	See page 261
<i>Dwarfbond hammer</i>	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i> 154
<i>Father's forgehammer</i>	See page 264
<i>Forgefather's half-plate</i>	See page 251
<i>Forgefather's sledge</i>	See page 255

Spells

<i>Crafter's fortune</i>	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 213
<i>Fallback strategy</i>	See page 233
<i>Firebelly</i>	See page 234
<i>Hairline fractures</i>	See page 235
<i>Hammer of mending</i>	See page 235

Traits

Defensive Strategist	See page 219
Eye of the Father	See page 220
Guardian of the Forge	<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i> 333
Protective Faith	See page 222

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Torag may prepare *fabricate* and *major creation* as 5th-level spells; his inquisitors may learn them as 3rd-level spells, and his paladins may prepare them as 3rd-level spells. Inquisitors of Torag may learn *mending* as an orison; paladins may prepare it as a 1st-level spell.



TORAG



URGATHOA

SEIZE WHAT YOU CAN, TEAR IT APART, AND SAVOR ITS SWEET, BLOODY TASTE, FOR EXISTENCE IS DULL WITHOUT THE BLESSING OF SENSATION.

—SERVING YOUR HUNGER

THE PALLID PRINCESS

Goddess of disease, gluttony, and undeath

Alignment NE

Domains Death, Evil, Magic, Strength, War

Favored Weapon scythe

Centers of Worship Darklands, Geb, Osirion, Ustalav, Varisia

Nationality Varisian

Obedience Cover a table (or suitable flat surface) with a black velvet cloth and spread a feast atop it. If you are in the wilderness or another area where fine food is not readily available, load the table with the best quality food you can find in whatever amount you have. Eat to the point of painful fullness, sipping wine between dishes and reciting a prayer to Urgathoa. At the end of the hour, consume a piece of rotten fruit, rancid meat, moldy cheese, or other spoiled bit of food. Trust in Urgathoa to protect you from any sickness or disease that might follow. Treat your caster level as 1 higher when casting necromancy spells.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Pestilent Penitent (Sp)** *curse water* 3/day, *feast of ashes*^{APG} 2/day, or *contagion* 1/day
- 2: Death Knowledge (Su)** Your knowledge of the arcane workings of death increases. Your familiar can teach you one new spell from either the Death or Magic domain spell list. The spell must be of a level you can cast, and once you choose the spell, your selection can't be changed. If you cast spells from a spellbook, you learn a new spell in the same manner, though it appears magically in your spellbook. If you cast spells spontaneously, you can choose one spell to add to your list of spells known, but you gain no additional spell slots.
- 3: Blight of Ruin (Su)** Your blight hex gains power from Urgathoa's favor. If you use your blight hex on a plot of land, you can affect an area whose radius is equal to 20 × your combined witch and evangelist levels. If you blight a creature of the animal or plant type, increase the saving throw DC by 4 and the curse's effect to 2 points of Constitution damage per day. If the target successfully saves against your blight hex, it instead takes 3d6 points of negative energy damage. If you don't have access to the blight hex, you instead gain the ability to use *mass fester*^{APG} once per day as a spell-like ability.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Mistress of Undeath (Sp)** *inflict light wounds* 3/day, *desecrate* 2/day, or *animate dead* 1/day
- 2: Bolstering Channel (Su)** When you channel negative energy to heal undead creatures, you infuse the targets with negative energy made more powerful by Urgathoa's influence. Any undead creatures healed by your channeled energy increase their movement speed by 10 feet for 1 round for every Hit Die you possess.
- 3: Ally from the Grave (Sp)** The Pallid Princess's servants have taken notice of your deeds and answer your call. Once per day as a standard action, you can summon a bhuta (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 41) to serve you. You gain telepathy with the bhuta to a range of 100 feet. The bhuta follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before vanishing back to its home. It doesn't obey commands that would make it perform overly good acts, and such instructions could cause it to attack you if they are particularly egregious.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Glutton for Slaughter (Sp)** *magic missile* 3/day, *acid arrow* 2/day, or *fireball* 1/day
- 2: Scythe Wielder (Ex)** You have trained extensively with Urgathoa's deadly favored weapon and with many related weapons, and you wield them with the skill of the Pallid Princess's most favored undead champions. If you selected the heavy blades group for your weapon training class feature, increase your attack and damage bonuses with heavy blades by 1. If you don't have the weapon training class feature, you instead gain a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls with the scythe only.
- 3: Fearless in the Face of Undeath (Ex)** You have spent too much time among the unliving to be taken in by their tricks and abilities, and you are proof against many of their powers. Increase your bravery saving throw bonus by 1. This bonus now applies to saving throws against any spells and effects generated by undead creatures, as well as against fear effects. The bonus also applies to nonmagical effects generated by undead creatures, such as a deathweb's poison. If you don't have the bravery class feature, you instead gain a +2 profane bonus on saving throws against spells and effects generated by undead.

INNER SEA GODS



URGATHOA

Urgathoa is an utterly amoral, hedonistic goddess, concerned only with satiating her own desires regardless of the consequences others suffer. Like Desna, she strives for experience and a full appreciation of the world—but her appreciation is utterly selfish. She was once a mortal woman with a tremendous appetite for life, one who rebelled against the notion of being judged by Pharasma and losing the joys of living. Somehow in death she found the strength to tear herself from Pharasma's endless line of souls and return to Golarion, becoming a divine being and the world's first undead creature. Her existence is a corruption of the natural order; some say her first divine footprints upon the soil of the Material Plane birthed plague and infection, and that the first shadows and wraiths were born of her breath.

The goddess's half-rotted form limits the sensations she can experience, so she makes up for this lack with gluttonous depravity—she's tasted the brains of human infants to savor their innocence, torn the heart from the last living member of a race just to feel the sensation of its hot blood on her hands, and inflicted boils and leprosy

upon handsome princes just to see the unique patterns they form on royal flesh. To her, the dull existence of a dead soul is pointless and tedious compared to the vibrant intensity of mortal or undead sensation, and creatures should cram as much sensation into existence as possible. Asceticism is repugnant to her, and she particularly loathes those who follow the strict taboos of the Prophecies of Kalistrade.

Urgathoa is usually depicted as a beautiful, raven-haired woman from the waist up—much like her mortal self, though she's as pale as a hungry vampire. Her lower half is rotted and withered, decaying farther down until only blood-covered bones remain at her feet. When she walks, she leaves bloody, skeletal footprints. Although she sometimes manifests nude in the faithful's visions, she usually appears wearing a sheer red or black gown. From neck to toe, the gown is stained with hideous patches of black, brown, and red. On rare occasions, she assumes a monstrous shape similar to those of the hideous undead creatures known as daughters of Urgathoa (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 309), with one huge arm covered in fanged mouths and a tail made of multiple fused spinal columns.

URGATHOA'S ANTIPALADIN CODE

The antipaladins of Urgathoa are creatures of the night, plague-bearers and bringers of death. They seek to spread Urgathoa's gifts by the sword and by emulating their goddess. Their tenets include the following affirmations.

- The grave opens to us all. We hasten the living on their inevitable path.
- The deathless are the true expression of existence, for they are beyond life and death. I will emulate their ways and destroy those who would defile their timeless perfection.
- I have no duty but to my hunger and my goddess.
- Existence is hunger. Both life and death feed on life. I am an instrument of transition.

Urgathoa's realm in the Great Beyond is a cluster of cities in a wasteland part of Abaddon, filled with undead residents indulging all of their mortal vices in great excess. The daemons of that realm observe Urgathoa and her followers, but leave them alone and untouched—the main threat to her realm is attacks from Pharasma's minions, who intend to repatriate undead souls to the Boneyard and restore them to their proper destination in the afterlife.

Though the Pallid Princess's church is interested primarily in undeath, some cults focus on her gluttonous aspect, indulging in decadent feasts of food, alcohol, and drugs, as well as lavish orgies. Unfortunately, in many cases these "dilettante" cults decline into more depraved practices, eventually embracing necromantic profanities and conversion to ghouls, vampires, and similar creatures.

When Urgathoa is pleased, common food tastes delicious, water turns to fine wine, and meals are never so filling that the diner feels uncomfortable. There are also stories of starving worshipers unexpectedly finding injured or freshly killed meat (in some stories, the meat is humanoid). She rarely uses animals as messengers, but sometimes sends a death's head moth to lead a devout worshiper to a reward, or clouds of biting flies to warn away or punish a mortal. Female clerics who serve her particularly well may be transformed into daughters of Urgathoa. When she's angry, food and water taste like ash and fill the belly with gnawing hunger that cannot be sated, and the target of her ire may be afflicted with rotting or swelling diseases that make it difficult to eat or speak. She has been known to paralyze an offender's legs so the victim must crawl, or reverse the taste of his food so that garbage and sewage are the only things he can bear to swallow. The afflicted can alleviate the condition by making a large sacrifice to Urgathoa, either

at a temple or by providing some gluttonous feast, drug experience, or other orgiastic excess in her name. On rare occasions, the only way to alleviate the curse is by willingly engaging in cannibalism, an act that taints the offender's soul and all but guarantees eternal allegiance to the Pallid Princess.

Urgathoa's holy symbol is a death's head moth, often drawn so the skull-markings are exaggerated, or even depicted as a skull with a moth's wings, legs, and head.

THE CHURCH

Those who worship death, revere disease, and are insatiable gluttons who demand experience without repercussion are the primary followers of Urgathoa. Her worshipers care less about spreading her faith than they do about increasing their pleasure in her name. They may start at one of the gateway churches—a place devoted to pure sensation, in which life is an orgy of feasts and flesh, drugs and stimulants—but most discover that ordinary delights soon begin to pall, and seek to satisfy ever-darker hungers.

Most of Urgathoa's worshipers are dark necromancers, undead, or those who hope to become undead (such as servants of vampires, spellcasters pursuing the path of the lich, and so on). Her faith is illegal in most lands, and shunned in most societies that do not ban it outright. Occasionally, a gluttonous prince or merchant may secretly keep a shrine in the goddess's name, praying for bounties of food, drink, sex, or other physical pleasures. In some lands, desperate folk pray to Urgathoa to relieve symptoms of plague, and necromancers who prove themselves useful by putting undead to rest or controlling them so that they do not harass the living may find a measure of tolerance from mortal communities.

In Geb, the Pallid Princess is worshiped openly, and her faith is practically an official religion. Vampire barons, ghouls, and various undead nobility pray to her in chapels at midnight, requesting that she keep them safe from the bright day, peasant uprisings, and abominations from the Mana Wastes. Most pray to the Harlot Queen as a saint or proxy for the Pallid Princess—though the reanimated ruler has no divine tie to Urgathoa, the goddess accepts this as a quirk of her favored nation. Public temples are often guarded by bloody skeletons—usually called "sons of Urgathoa" because like her they leave bloody footprints where they walk—who act as counterparts to the powerful, intelligent daughters of Urgathoa.

The church is organized as a matriarchy, with a powerful cleric, usually female, at the head of each temple; if the priestess is a daughter of Urgathoa, the entire temple is considered especially blessed. Priests who can create undead, either through magic or through the passing of their own undead taint, are called Necro-Lords, and receive extra privileges. Congregants are



divided into two castes. The higher caste is known as the ghula, which consists of privileged members who may or may not be members of the priesthood. They are served by the famished: initiate members attempting to prove themselves worthy of recognition by the church. Rank inside the congregation may sometimes be an inversion of rank outside it, and if one of the famished is of higher social status outside the church than a ghula, the ghula treats the famished respectfully in public to preserve the church's secrecy. Like most evil cults, the secret church is scattered and cell-based, and contact between congregations is infrequent.

Prayer services to Urgathoa consist of susurrant whispers, quiet chants, and eerie moans. Drums may be used to announce visitors and mealtimes, but otherwise music is rarely a part of the proceedings. Worshipers usually consume a ritual meal—which could be anything from a sweetmeat to bread and gravy to human flesh, depending on the congregation. Wealthier churches provide lavish feasts for the faithful (sponsored by wealthy patrons or paid for by selling spells or undead labor), and it's not unheard of for a priest to move to a starving village and offer intoxicating foods to layfolk to gain followers.

Marriages within the church do not include vowing “until death parts us,” as the undead members stand as proof that vows can persist beyond death. The Pallid Princess supports the institution of marriage and other long-term romantic commitments, as sharing pleasures can enhance them, and she blesses even unions between the living and the undead, as long as the living partner plans to follow his spouse into undeath, or the undead partner plans to extend the living partner's life somehow. Urgathoa cares not about procreation or the genders of the people involved, only that the commitment is true. Divorce is frowned upon, as it shows disrespect to the partner and to the goddess herself. Murdering a spouse is an acceptable alternative, however, especially if the dead spouse remains in or near the home as a skeleton, zombie, or mummy.

The Pallid Princess also supports adoption, particularly by predatory undead who kill living parents and raise the offspring as their own; this increases the number of creatures worshipping the goddess. Many temples keep a “blood mother,” a woman whose role is to bear children, either to raise them as members of the church or to offer them as sacrifices. The church allows contraception among its living members to keep pregnancy from interfering with hedonistic pursuits, and has no opinion on abortion or infanticide.

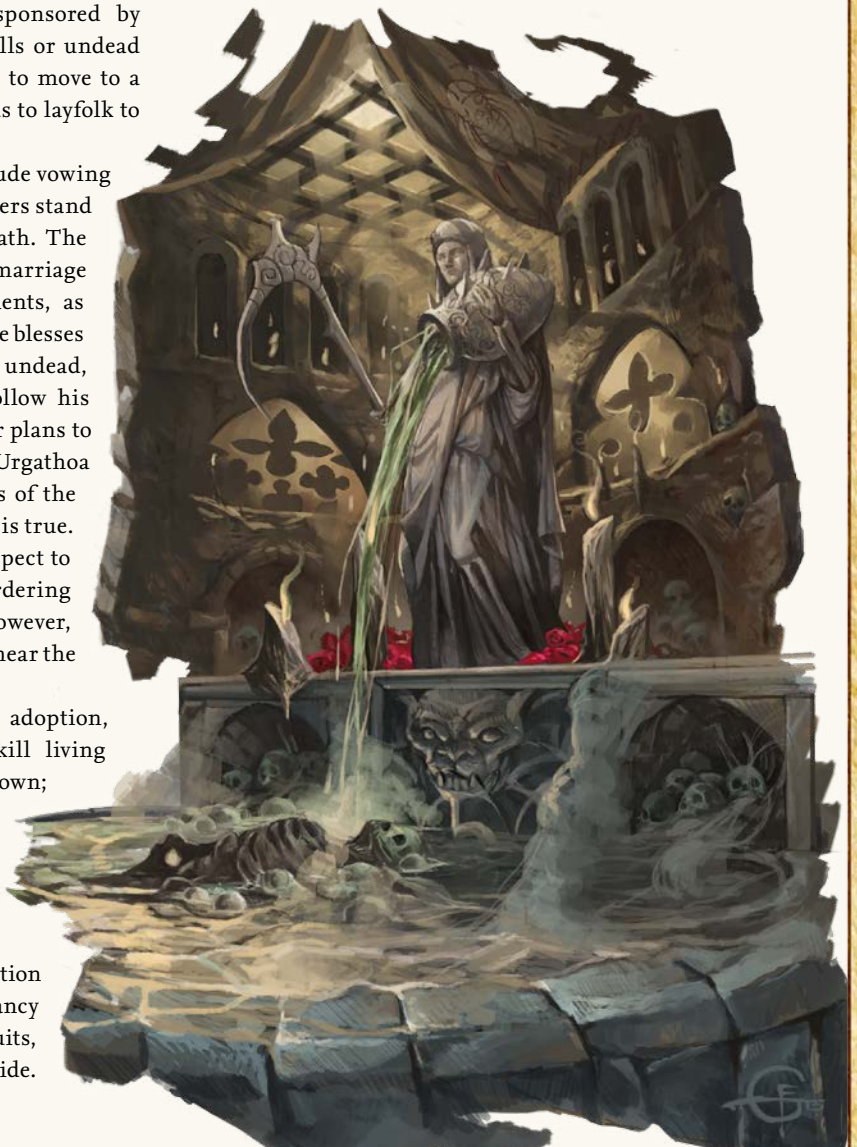
Urgathoa's rivalry with Pharasma has made the goddess of undeath particularly spiteful toward expectant mothers of that faith, and she teaches her priests minor curses and hexes that can harm or kill a fetus or birthing mother.

The church does not prohibit suicide, and old priests with no means to turn themselves into undead may offer their spirits to the goddess while offering their flesh to the living. Though suicides are usually the purview of the minor goddess Naderi (see page 180), this ritualistic self-sacrifice invokes the power of Urgathoa. Devout worshipers expect to be raised as undead of some kind, either at their own expense or as a reward for their service.

The date on which a worshiper becomes undead is called ashemorn, and is commemorated annually like a birthday. For many, it's the last time that they will see daylight. Ashemorn is a solemn day of lone personal reflection, though a particularly sentimental undead who



URGATHOA



can create spawn may choose to convert a loyal minion on her own ashennorn as a gesture of affection.

In theory, Urgathoa's faith is about breaking and surpassing taboos, and thus nothing is ever forbidden. In practice, however, turning one's back on the church, renouncing the path of undeath, and exercising asceticism and altruism instead of gluttony are sure ways to draw the ire of the Pallid Princess.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Each of the Pallid Princess's temples is built like a feast hall, with a large central table serving as an altar and numerous chairs surrounding it; her hidden temples use this same setup, but with a less ambitious scale. Most temples are adjacent to a private graveyard or built over a crypt, and they're often inhabited by ghouls (which embody all three of the goddess's interests). Though the goddess does not use daemons as minions in her own realm, it is not unusual to find daemon servants and guardians in Urgathoa's most powerful temples. Urgathoa's largest temple in Mechitar, the capital of Geb, is the Cathedral of Epiphenomena; the priests who staff it include both the living and the undead.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Urgathoa's faith attracts creatures of passion and vice who believe that the world is their playground, who want experience without limits and repercussions, and who perpetually chase hedonistic sensation. The vices of those who serve her tend to become ever stranger and more demanding as these servants advance in the faith; even if a particular cleric begins by venerating only the goddess's gluttony aspect, her willingness to help her adherents achieve immortality via undeath speaks to the most basic desires of mortals. As a cleric grows more powerful and increasingly associates with the undead, she may come to feel outraged that something as trivial as death could end her pursuit of experiences. And as the chill of age begins to wither her, serving or allying with a powerful vampire or lich may seem an

ever smaller and smaller price to pay for a cold eternity in which she may seek to sate her various pleasures with immortal abandon.

Most of Urgathoa's priests are clerics or necromancers (particularly sorcerers with the undead bloodline), as well as a few similarly inclined witches. Antipaladins are also drawn to her faith, as are barbarians prone to excess, bards seeking sophisticated channels for their primal appetites, warriors who wish to command respect from beyond the grave, and miscellaneous undead who rise to positions of power in the church regardless of magical ability. Most priests are skilled in Diplomacy, Heal, and Knowledge (religion). A slight majority of her followers are women, and the proportion is closer to three-quarters in cultures and lands where women's paths to power are otherwise limited.

Priests generally have few official duties beyond mutual protection and aiding aspiring undead, for Urgathoa is satisfied when mortals excessively consume in her name, and she is content with the slow rate at which undead propagate.

Occasionally, though, her cults concoct aggressive plans such as converting entire towns to zombie slaves or feeding grounds for undead. Clergy often conceal their allegiance and find employment that allows them frequent access to dead bodies, such as working as gravediggers, mercenaries, or butchers. A priest with strong culinary skills might find work as a chef at a noble's manor, in a general's retinue, or even in a restaurant. The luckiest find a wealthy patron, giving them the luxury to create rich, fattening, delicious meals that encourage gluttony in those who consume them. Only in undead-controlled lands such as Geb do Urgathoa's priests practice their faith openly. There they serve in traditional clerical roles, such as spiritual advisors, healers, government officials, and so on.



Commoners usually avoid priests of Urgathoa, fearing their association with vice and undeath, but may seek them out for advice on how to bury a corpse to prevent it from rising as an undead on its own and how to protect it from predators. Clergy may pose as clerics of Pharasma, offering blessings and funeral rites to communities lacking a true priest of the Lady of Graves, and malicious members use this ruse to provide commoners with “newly invented” wards against the undead that prove useless after the priests direct undead allies to these communities for easy hunting. In lands suffering from plague, they may pass themselves off as knowledgeable healers, treating some of the sick and leaving others to die, or perhaps curing uncomfortable but harmless illnesses while infecting patients with quiet and deadly diseases. Urgathoa’s priests rarely make demands in return for their services, preferring to use people’s own desires to drive them to depravity.

ADVENTURERS

Those who choose Urgathoa believe that the world is their playground, and that their wants and appetites come first. They understand pain, and even appreciate it in certain instances, but their desires are broader than that. They want experience without limits, and if something so pedestrian as death stands in their way, they overcome it—as did the Pallid Princess—and return to the life of pleasure. They may offer services to powerful undead in exchange for aid, and associate with the unliving in an effort to eventually join their ranks.

CLOTHING

Ceremonial clothing for a priest consists of a loose, gray, floor-length gown or tunic with a bone-white or dark gray shoulder-cape fastened at the front, often with a brooch or clasp in the likeness of a death’s head moth. Traditionally, the garment is increasingly shredded or tasseled as it approaches the floor, echoing the decay of the goddess’s lower body. Some of these garments are heavily embroidered with tiny skulls and bones, and carefully slashed to reveal glimpses of hidden layers of red and white garments beneath. Clergy may wear corsets under their clothing, either to emulate Urgathoa’s unnatural gauntness or to conceal their growing girth, though some prefer clothes that can accommodate an engorged or pregnant belly. Lay worshipers, or clergy in places where the faith is hunted, may limit themselves to wearing pants or skirts that are unusually shredded and torn, or wear small bone necklaces or death’s head moth pendants.

HOLY TEXT

Crafted by Urgathoa’s first antipaladin, Dason, *Serving Your Hunger* is an extended meditation on the greatness to be found by sacrificing all for sensation. It’s a cookbook

filled with decadent recipes and instructions for dressing and preparing various humanoid races. It also serves as a primer for taking a conciliatory approach to dealing with the undead, as well as for transitioning into an intelligent form of undead oneself, and focuses mainly on vampires, ghouls, and wights.

HOLIDAYS

As a goddess who believes existence should be a continual celebration of one’s own power and urges, Urgathoa places no additional significance on particular dates. Her followers have attached special meaning to moonless nights and celestial conjunctions with the undead-filled world of Eox, believing they mark times of the Negative Energy Plane’s greatest influence on Golarion, and on those nights they hold great candlelit feasts to honor the goddess and her divine presence and will.

APHORISMS

Urgathoa cares more for gratification than for words, and the members of the countless cells of her faith—living and dead—have created many different sayings about her tenets. The two most common aphorisms of the church are the following.

By the Blood and the Mouth: This is an oath to keep a secret, with the expectation of punishment should the oath be broken. It is usually accompanied by touching a finger and thumb to the sides of the neck (as if choking), followed by kissing or licking the first two fingers of that hand.

Feed Your Pain: The faithful recognize that eating fills a physical and emotional need, even for undead that don’t need to consume anything to survive—it’s the act of eating, of consuming and satisfying an urge, that’s the reward. This phrase normally indicates the start of a meal, but priests sometimes say it to encourage layfolk to distract themselves from their problems with food or other excesses.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Urgathoa is largely content to indulge her own needs and desires, and most other powerful entities leave her alone to do that; as a result, she has fewer enemies than most evil gods. Pharasma, however, considers undeath an abomination, and pursues Urgathoa and her kind whenever they are found. Good-hearted Sarenrae seeks to “heal” the goddess and her followers, which naturally strains relations between them.

The Pallid Princess appreciates Abadar’s cities for the plagues they foster, and sometimes operates side by side with Calistria, as the lust goddess’s portfolio is similar without overlapping. She often allies with the Four Horsemen, and daemons are popular servants and allies in her church. Zyphus, the Grim Harvestman



(see page 181), keeps his divine realm within Urgathoa's territory, though he does not belong to her—she makes no claim on him, though she appreciates that his priests often rise as undead to continue their work. The young goddess Naderi, the patron of romantic suicides, believes that love endures beyond death, and Urgathoa is currently trying to take the Lost Maiden under her wing, as she supports this sentiment. Shelyn, Naderi's former sovereign, objects, and some priests also make vague claims that the goddess of art has taken and hidden something from the goddess of the undead, intensifying their enmity. Urgathoa's relationships with the ghoul demon lord Kabriri and vampire demon lord Zura are strained—sometimes they are allies, sometimes enemies, and undead worshipers tend to drift between these cults.

Urgathoa's contempt for ascetics would put her at odds with the patron of Druma's *Prophecies of Kalistrade* had they come from an actual deity; instead, she directs mild annoyance at Irori's strict discipline. Her ire is tempered by his devotion to moderation rather than abstinence, however, and she is intrigued by the idea of tasting his physical perfection. The goddess supports the Whispering Way for its promotion of undeath, but allows her priests to form their own opinions of it, as those adherents who focus on her gluttony aspect may object to it. Urgathoan vampires and ghouls, for example, must feed on the living, and if the cult manages to convert the entire world to undeath, these undead would starve, so they shun the cultists or even work to keep them from becoming too successful.

Urgathoa's church has little desire to crusade against other faiths, even those like Pharasma's and Sarenrae's who actively hunt its congregants, as members would rather spend their time indulging themselves than fighting others. That said, they aren't above undermining those faiths when opportunities present themselves, and take particular satisfaction in raising members of those faiths as undead when possible. They generally go out of their way to avoid antagonizing Abadar's church, as cities serve many of Urgathoa's interests, and work amiably with servants of Calistria when their interests align.

Urgathoans are open to friendly relations with cultists of those Empyrean Lords who revel in swaying their followers to embrace pleasure for its own sake, though followers of virtuous outsiders rarely return

the cultists' overtures. They are occasionally roused to ally with other congregations against ascetic reformers who operate in what they consider their territories. For the most part, however, they prefer to ignore other faiths and their adherents, though if outsiders play some part in satisfying the urges of the faithful, members of the church can become extremely charming and friendly.

REALM

Through some unknown arrangements with the Four Horsemen, Urgathoa makes her home on Abaddon, but separate from the daemonic hierarchy. Her realm sits on the far side of Szuriel's domain, surrounded by unclaimed wasteland and the holdings of various minor daemonic nobles. Shrouded in cold fog, the goddess's realm is filled with cities of the undead engaged in a perverse extension of their own worldly excesses, worshiping their patron's desires as the indulge their own. Strangely, Urgathoa's home actually contains that of another god—Zyphus, whose domain consists of a massive field of open tombs crafted in mockery of Pharasma's Graveyard of Souls, and which is entirely enclosed by Urgathoa's borders in an apparently amicable arrangement.

Long ago, Urgathoa and Zyphus both had domains on the Material Plane, but at some point—unprompted and unexpectedly—the fiends of Abaddon set aside a domain for each of them and offered to let them stay. Seeing this as a beneficial arrangement, the deities willingly (if warily) accepted. Urgathoa's influence ends at the boundaries of her deific domain, yet since most of her focus is on the mortal world, she accepts this caveat and makes no attempts to expand her holdings within the blasted wastes of Abaddon.

In return, no soul destined for Urgathoa or Zyphus has ever been devoured by the native daemons, and their clergy are allowed to travel the River Styx unmolested. While no one can truly say what the daemons' motivations are, the fact that lines of daemons sit motionlessly along the borders, staring inward at the gods and their worshipers, indicate that there's likely more to this arrangement than even the gods know.



PLANAR ALLIES

Urgathoa's divine servants are usually undead creatures infused with her power, though some are more outsider than undead. In addition to her servitor race, the sarcovalts (see page 313), the following creatures serve her as blessed minions, and answer to *planar ally* and similar calling spells from the faithful.

Barasthngas (unique devourer): This pale devourer's undead flesh is so thin and tight that her white bones and gray connective tissues are visible. In addition to the normal abilities of a devourer, she can expend essence points to cast *contagion* (3rd), *gaseous form* (3rd), and *waves of fatigue* (5th). Her price for service is a suitably powerful creature whose soul she can devour.

Ejarn (unique ghastr): This burly Ulfen man is corpse-gray and has an unnerving rictus smile. Once a proud Linnorm King, he was forced to kill and eat his own honor guard following a series of personal tragedies. After killing himself out of shame, he rose as a ghastr in the service of Urgathoa. He still retains his barbarian powers, and likes to eat his fallen foes.

Mother's Maw: This vile giant skull surrounded with buzzing flies serves as Urgathoa's herald. Mother's Maw has little interest in the desires of mortals (or of the undead in the mortal world) except insofar as they intersect with Urgathoa's orders. If it is necessary to eat a hundred members of her cult or to drive an entire city of ghouls into a lava pit, the Maw does it. It can speak but finds little worth talking about, so many assume it is mindless. However, when not on a mission of death, disease, or gluttony, it is a font of knowledge about food, wine, exotic scents, and other strange experiences, and is quite willing to speak on these matters to an interested party—assuming the sight of the enormous talking, winged skull isn't a distraction to listeners. Because of its innate ability to create undead, the herald is sometimes accompanied by skeletons, zombies, and ghouls, which caper about it, endlessly adoring the emissary of the goddess of undeath. It has been known to ferry allies into battle, or (rarely) to rescue a powerful undead creature, spiriting its passenger away to safety with its bony gullet, and relying on its own defenses to keep its passenger safe. It's particularly fond of raveners and vampires, and has gone out of its way to aid them when given the choice of several allies. For more information, see page 312.

Olix (unique fiendish vampire): Conceived during an Urgathoan new moon ritual and transformed into a fiendish vampire before his twentieth year, this priest transforms into shadow rather than smoke, can appear in two places at once, and hates any light brighter than candlelight. He prefers to carry messages or cast supporting magic on his mortal allies rather than engage enemies directly.

FOR URGATHOAN CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Urgathoa may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Dirge bard (bard)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 26
Gravewalker (witch)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 84
Undead lord (cleric)	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 32

Feats

Bolster Undead	See page 208
Potion Glutton	See page 215
Shatter Resolve	See page 216
Thanatopic Spell	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 157
Threnodic Spell	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 157
Undead Master	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 158

Magic Items

<i>Altar of Urgathoa</i>	See page 249
<i>Darkskull</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 508
<i>Gloves of bony power</i>	See page 264
<i>Gluttonous feasting ring</i>	See page 258
<i>Mask of the skull</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 523
<i>Nail of the princess</i>	See page 256
<i>Pallid chain</i>	See page 252
<i>Pallid crystal</i>	See page 267
<i>Robe of bones</i>	<i>Core Rulebook</i> 527

Spells

<i>Epidemic</i>	<i>Ultimate Magic</i> 158
<i>Ghoul hunger</i>	See page 234
<i>Plague bearer</i>	See page 238

Traits

Deathspeaker	See page 219
Denial of Fate	See page 219
Inoculated	See page 220

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics and antipaladins of Urgathoa may prepare *ghoul touch* as a 2nd-level spell; inquisitors may learn it as a 2nd-level spell. Her inquisitors can learn *purify food and drink* as a 0-level spell; antipaladins can prepare it as a 1st-level spell. Her necromancers and sorcerers may learn or prepare 3rd-level arcane versions of *contagion* and *remove disease*. Priests who cast *remove disease* may draw diseases into themselves as they heal their targets; they become carriers without suffering ill effects. *Contagion* spells cast by Urgathoa's priests always use the caster's spell DC for the disease's secondary saves.





ZON-KUTHON

EMBRACE MISERY IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT, FORGET ALL THAT IS NOT SUFFERING, AND TUNE YOUR MIND SO YOU UNDERSTAND THE PLEASURES OF PAIN.
—UMBRAL LEAVES

THE MIDNIGHT LORD

God of darkness, envy, loss, and pain

Alignment LE

Domains Darkness, Death, Destruction, Evil, Law

Favored Weapon spiked chain

Centers of Worship Belkzen, Cheliox, Geb, Irrisen, Nidal, Varisia

Nationality alien

Obedience Persuade a creature to allow you to inflict a small amount of pain on it. This can be as subtle as thin needles under the skin or as overt as a lashing with a whip—whatever the subject agrees to. If you can legally procure an individual, such as through legalized slavery, you may use a purchased subject instead. If no suitable individuals can be located, coil a spiked chain into a nest and kneel on it, letting your weight sink your knees into the spikes. Whip your own back while chanting praises to Zon-Kuthon. Gain a +2 sacred bonus on saving throws against spells that deal hit point damage.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Unbending Faith (Sp)** *protection from chaos* 3/day, *arrow of law*^{UM} 2/day, or *pain strike*^{APG} 1/day
- 2: Strike of the Endless (Ex)** Three times per day, you can make a strike of the endless against an opponent. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack, and if your attack misses, the strike is wasted. You make an unarmed strike against your target, and if you hit, your target must succeed at a Fortitude save (with a DC equal to 10 + 1/2 your Hit Dice + your Wisdom modifier) or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. This ability doesn't work against creatures without eyes or who see by means other than vision (such as with blindsight or tremorsense). If you have a ki pool, you may spend 1 point from it to increase the saving throw DC of this ability by 4.
- 3: Agonizing Blow (Ex)** Once per day, you can make an unarmed strike that deals agonizing pain to a single target. You must declare your use of this ability before you roll your attack, and if your attack misses, the strike is wasted. You make an unarmed strike against your target, and if you hit, your target must succeed at a Will save (with a DC equal to 10 + 1/2 your Hit Dice + your Wisdom modifier) or take 2d6 points of nonlethal damage each round for the next 10 rounds as terrible pain rips through its body. Additionally,

during those 10 rounds, your target is nauseated, and you gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks against it. If the target succeeds at its saving throw, it instead takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per round for the next 10 rounds, and is sickened for those 10 rounds. If you have a ki pool, you may spend 1 point from it to increase the saving throw DC of this ability by 4.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Obscurement (Sp)** *obscuring mist* 3/day, *invisibility* 2/day, or *deeper darkness* 1/day
- 2: Path of Darkness (Sp)** Once per day, you can use *shadow walk* as a spell-like ability. When you reach your desired endpoint along the shadow path, you materialize directly where you desire instead of being shunted in a random direction as you normally would. Furthermore, if you use this ability on an unwilling creature, the creature takes a –2 penalty on its saving throw.
- 3: Fleshrending Ally (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can summon an interlocutor kyton (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 174) to serve you. You gain telepathy with the interlocutor to a range of 100 feet. The kyton follows your commands perfectly for 1 minute for every Hit Die you possess before it vanishes back to its home on the Plane of Shadow. The interlocutor refuses to follow any commands that would cause it to act in an overly good or chaotic way. Such commands earn a spiky snarl of disapproval, or could even cause the kyton to attack you if the command is particularly egregious.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Envious Death (Sp)** *compel hostility*^{UC} 3/day, *touch of bloodletting*^{*} 2/day, or *vampiric touch* 1/day
- 2: Rending Trip (Ex)** When you successfully trip an opponent using a spiked chain, your tripped opponent immediately provokes an attack of opportunity from you. In addition, you gain a +2 bonus on any attacks of opportunity you make against opponents you have tripped with a spiked chain within the last round.
- 3: Sight of Perfect Night (Ex)** All the training you have done in perfect darkness has left you with the uncanny ability to sense your surroundings even in the blackest night. You gain blindsense with a range of 20 feet. If you already have blindsense with a range of 20 feet or greater, instead increase the range of your blindsense by 10 feet.

INNER SEA GODS



ZON-KUTHON

Zon-Kuthon is a twisted, cruel, jealous god who defiles flesh to bring pain and misery. He represents ever-present pain, emotional darkness, consuming envy, and debilitating loss. Unrepentantly evil, he finds only brief joy in the pain he causes others. His very existence is a corruption and parasite upon the world. His alien mind constantly seeks new ways to oppress, humiliate, demoralize, and destroy others. While his true goals are incomprehensible, his stated desire is to flay every living thing until the entire world is an intertwined mass of bleeding flesh writhing in pain-wracked ecstasy. He whips the minds of serial killers, guides the hands of torturers, and plays the nerves of the suffering like a master bard.

Zon-Kuthon offers no great wisdoms, no promises of universal truth, no guarantee of rewards in the afterlife. His strange mind sees little difference between this life and the next, and he tortures living flesh and dead souls alike with hideous pleasure and delicious pain. It's possible that this bleak nihilism may be part of some more elaborate master plan incomprehensible to even his greatest priests,

but so far the method and message is that existence itself is pain. His faith is lawful, following the natural hierarchy of the strong preying upon the weak, whether for food, entertainment, sex, or proof of dominance.

Zon-Kuthon's direct intervention in the lives of mortals is usually brief and ambiguous, with the price often outweighing the benefit. A slave under the whip who prays for relief might experience sexual pleasure but find the pain is heightened. A craftsman who seeks perfection in his work achieves it only after his obsession drives away all he loves. A count who prays for help against invading orcs may gain the help of a cruel warlord who takes over the orc lands as his own and becomes an even greater menace. Despite these hidden poisons, depraved or despairing mortals continue to pray to Zon-Kuthon for help, and he has countless minions devoted to listening for these requests, watchful for those who might be tempted by the Dark Prince's umbral embrace.

Zon-Kuthon's true appearance varies, and there is no consistent depiction of him, but the overall image is easily recognizable. His flesh is pale and bloodless and

NIDAL

While most of this section describes Zon-Kuthon's faith as one of small, secret cells and cults, there is one place on Golarion where the opposite is true. In the nation of Nidal, the catastrophe of Earthfall caused widespread famine and death as the world suffered under a thousand years of darkness. Rather than die off, Nidal's terrified human populace dedicated itself to the Midnight Lord in exchange for survival. Today, the church of Zon-Kuthon is as established and byzantine in that nation as those of lawful gods in other societies, and integrally tied to the government, with imposing cathedrals in population centers like Pangolais and Nisroch. Perhaps the most recognizable agents of the faith, shadowcallers trained in the infamous Dusk Hall of Pangolais are chosen as children via magic items called *nightglasses*, then trained into elite weapons which the Umbral Court can use to keep order within the nation or loan to Cheliax as part of the Midnight Guard. For a look inside the Dusk Hall and the lives of shadowcallers, see the Pathfinder Tales novel *Nightglass* by Liane Merciel.

usually hairless, though he sometimes has wispy blond hair on his scalp. Contrasting with the pale skin are bloody red wounds, many of which are held open with hooks, straps, or splints, some appearing partially healed and reopened. Sometimes his skin is completely gone in places, revealing bare muscle or even bone. He frequently has piercings, sometimes through muscle and bone, with bits of jewelry or remnants of his victims dangling from them. Even his face doesn't escape this attention, with spikes and hooked straps pulling it into strange configurations, his lips removed to show bloody teeth, one eye removed and replaced with a strange crystal, or the entire back of his head gone, revealing skull and brains. He is usually shown wearing a vertical metal crown that pulls his flesh back into an obscene sunburst halo. Parts of his body that lack wounds are usually covered in blood-soaked black leather, often sexualized or used to manipulate the wounds in an obscene manner. Absent this orchestra of mutilation, Zon-Kuthon might appear human, but brief glimpses of his unaltered parts set the maimings into sharp, horrifying contrast. Mortal representations of him are usually simplified to a pale man in black with one significant wound. Different cults of the church may venerate one version of his image over others (going so far as to duplicate that image in their own flesh), but these cosmetic differences are irrelevant in the faith's pursuit of pain and darkness.

Zon-Kuthon's favored weapon is the spiked chain, a versatile tool both in battle and in the deepest dungeon, and as a result his symbol is a skull with a spiked chain threaded through the eye sockets. Most of his priests are clerics, but there are several orders of corrupted paladins who inflict pain in his name, and certain primitive tribes worship him under the tutelage of adepts. In Nidal, where the church of Zon-Kuthon is the state religion, the clergy are often shadowcallers, government agents raised to the worship of Zon-Kuthon since childhood and trained to use both arcane and divine magic in his service. Zon-Kuthon is called the Midnight Lord and the Dark Prince. His most recognizable servants are erinyes, kytons, and hellcats comprised of unfathomable darkness.

THE CHURCH

The god's horrid affection attracts evil sadists, demented masochists, and those whose spirits are so wounded that only overwhelming pain distracts them from their sorrows. When prisoners left to starve in oubliettes cut their own flesh just to remind themselves that they exist, the Dark Prince is there. Jilted lovers who make sick plans to avenge themselves or plot petty cruelties for their unfaithful mate feel his touch upon their souls. Every mother that starves herself because of her dead child, every cult that requires an initiation of pain as proof of sincerity, every teamster who lashes his animals harder to work them faster—all are watched by Zon-Kuthon's gouged eye.

Fighters turn to Zon-Kuthon to help manage their pain in the midst of battle, and battlefield healers fascinated by vivisection use the god's power to save lives at the cost of their patients' agony. Monks and rogues study vital spots that let them incapacitate opponents silently with intense pain. Assassins learn the most painful nonlethal poisons in order to send a strong message to political rivals. Slavemasters learn how to motivate slaves to their maximum output with proper use of the lash. Constables and inquisitors use torture to extract information and confessions. Though it's rarely wise for them to advertise it, Zon-Kuthon's faith plays a role in the lives of all these people.

Services to Zon-Kuthon always involve torture, whether performed on slaves, prisoners, or willing members of the cult. The more exquisite the agony, the greater the offering to the Midnight Lord, and particularly skilled torturers can keep a victim just shy of passing out for days at a time, using magic or drugs to keep themselves awake for these extended "prayer sessions." Clever members choose poetic tortures for members of rival faiths, such as putting golden splints under the nails of Abadaran priests, hatching moth larvae in the eyes of Desnan wanderers, or affixing red-hot iron shoes to the feet of Torag's smiths (called the Dance of Death). Larger temples may have a "scream choir" of alchemically or



surgically altered slaves who can only sing or scream a single note when “played” by a torturer-conductor. Many cult rituals involve the blurring of pleasure and pain, and encourage dangerous or humiliating sex, whether with other cult members or unwilling parties. Necrophilia is not frowned on but is not common, as the undead do not feel pain in the same way that the living do.

Zon-Kuthon’s church has no overarching organizational tenets. Each cell or temple has an understood hierarchy, based on physical or magical power, ingenuity, willingness and ability to endure pain, and similar elements related to church practices. Rather than standard duels, rivals within the church often engage in rites of escalating self-inflicted injuries until one party concedes, can no longer perform, or perishes—these contests also escalate the status of the participants in the eyes of witnesses. There is usually little reason for different congregations to cooperate, as the church rarely has large-scale goals requiring united effort. Rather, the church of Zon-Kuthon seeks to fuel a single tide of horror and bloodshed, content to lap at the edges of society, breaking off pieces and slowly weakening it.

In the church, a superior priest is generally called “master” or “mistress,” and equals and inferiors are addressed by name without a title, though in places like Nidal where the church is prevalent, additional titles such as “over-diocesan” are more common.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Zon-Kuthon’s temples look like torture chambers, and many are actual torture chambers converted for church use. Any typical instrument of torture is a fixture, and sputtering torches or dim smoky candles are the norm for illumination. When worshipers are secretly using a site for rituals, they either bring a representation of the Dark Prince as a centerpiece (often a preserved corpse dressed as the god or a victim to ritualistically disfigure into such an icon), or pray to an empty iron maiden as a representation of his presence. If the church controls the place outright, it has more permanent decorations, such as obscene mosaics that both represent and inflict pain, perhaps with living creatures bound into grotesque tableaux. In smaller locales, the church might be a secret cave or basement where the cultists meet, littered with surgical and torture instruments that can reasonably pass as farm tools or craftsman’s tools in case the lair is discovered.

Given the specialized interests of the cult, there are few remote shrines, though any place where someone was deliberately brutalized

might attract the attention of a Kuthite, even for “justified” violence like burning an evil necromancer at the stake. The faithful may leave offerings at these sites, such as a few drops of blood, an animal skull, a bit of sharpened metal, and so on, until the place gains a subtle atmosphere of suffering and evil.

A PRIEST’S ROLE

Aside from rare church-demanded duties, clerics of the Dark Prince have a single goal: bringing pain to the world. In the absence of moral or immoral guidance from their patron, most choose their own paths and use Zon-Kuthon’s gifts to serve their own desires. Their deity is largely indifferent to mortal affairs, but still grants spells in response to the proper prayers. Many clerics of Zon-Kuthon seek power without responsibility and aren’t particularly zealous. In other words, being a priest is a secondary calling to them, leaving them most of their time to focus on their obsessions with conquest, wealth, magical power, and so on. Some join the church because they tire of the conventional delights of a decadent lifestyle and seek the thrill of darker indulgences. Those who zealously join the church are usually mad or



ZON-KUTHON



damaged individuals with a history of torturing animals. Such unbalanced sadists tend to rise to the highest ranks in the Kuthite church because of their innate lust and desire for pain.

Because the church's use of torture relies on suffering as a measure of devotion, most clerics have many ranks in Heal. They can withstand torture for hours without screaming (though they might do so just for the glory of it) and are experts in preserving life in the face of mortal injury. In remote areas or places where magic is scarce, a Kuthite (cleric or otherwise) might gain a reputation as a skilled surgeon, though his gleeful leer as he performs his services without mind for the patient's pain can be unnerving. With their access to divine magic and mundane skills, a Kuthite is a miracle worker on the battlefield, though the patients might regret the attention. A Kuthite priest living in secret in a community might feel protective toward the people in it, seeing them as his toys and brutally retaliating against anyone who threatens them. For example, if bandits attack a village, the resident Kuthite might hunt down the bandit leader, torture him to death, and leave his body parts as grisly trophies in a circle surrounding the bandit camp.

In places where the darker side of society is tolerated, Kuthites might act more openly and gain a measure of reluctant acceptance. Much as undertakers perform a necessary function that most choose not to think about, representatives of the Dark Prince's more socially acceptable aspects occasionally appear in civilized areas and might even work significant good, but even these congregations are merely fronts meant to lead the weak toward the true excruciating majesty of Zon-Kuthon.

Aside from the faith's crusade of pain, high-ranking members of the church of Zon-Kuthon occasionally set their subordinates to specific goals. Murdering individuals whose death is sure to cause widespread grieving, the recovery of artifacts holy to Zon-Kuthon—or that the Dark Prince merely desires—and the provocation of wars and other calamities are not beyond the opportunistic church's plotting.

Fallen paladins that serve Zon-Kuthon usually do so as the result of continuous torture at the hands of talented priests; it is a rare few that become disillusioned with good on their own and slowly take the heavy-footed path to damnation. Breaking

a paladin with torture is a long process, and many such victims manage to call upon a spark of divine power to martyr themselves rather than abandon their faith. Those who survive and fall gain a twisted sort of devotion to their tormentor, a sick, fawning sort of love that is the antithesis of chivalrous devotion. Those priests within the church who manage to turn paladins are highly respected, and thus many low-ranking Kuthites dream of breaking a holy warrior despite the low success rate.

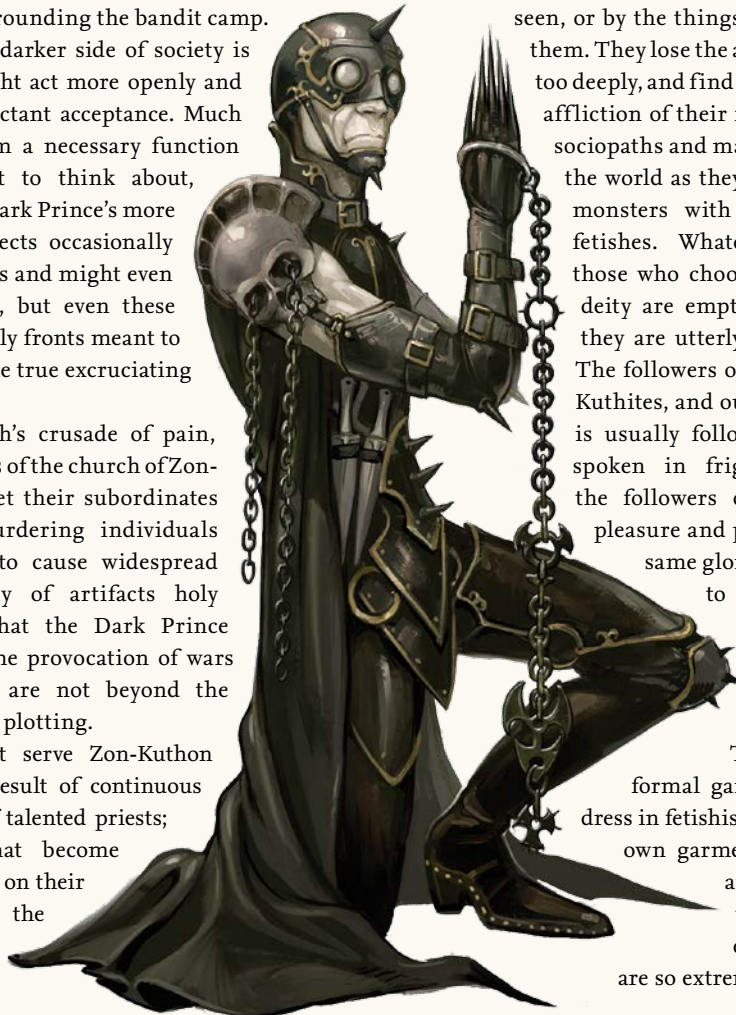
In Nidal, where fallen paladins of Zon-Kuthon are most common, many keep an interest in what they call their Dark Lineage. This stems from three sources: what god they served before joining the army of the Midnight Lord, what paladin order they joined (if any), and which torturer turned them from their former path. The more connections two fallen paladins share, the greater their sense of kinship. There is no animosity between the various levels of Lineage, though in conflicts a fallen paladin tends to side with one whose Lineage is closest.

ADVENTURERS

Some people have been scarred by the things they have seen, or by the things that have been done to them. They lose the ability to feel, or they feel too deeply, and find release through physical affliction of their flesh. Others are simply sociopaths and madmen, full of hatred for the world as they see it, or else decadent monsters with a penchant for cruel fetishes. Whatever their motivation, those who choose Zon-Kuthon as their deity are empty of pity and empathy; they are utterly amoral and merciless. The followers of Zon-Kuthon are called Kuthites, and outside the faith the word is usually followed by spat curses, or spoken in frightened whispers. For the followers of the Midnight Lord, pleasure and pain are two sides of the same glorious coin, and they seek to enrich themselves and others by granting both freely.

CLOTHING

The church has no official formal garb, though most priests dress in fetishistic versions of their god's own garments. Body modification and self-mutilation are the norm, and in some cases these experiments are so extreme that worshipers' flesh



interweaves with their clothing to the point that removing it can kill them. Members of the church quickly learn how to keep wounds clean and free of infection, as well as how to conceal them from the public eye. Those whose alterations are severe and cannot pass as normal often disguise themselves as lepers or monstrous half-breeds. Particularly skilled and clever members of the cult have been known to skin their victims, tan them into supple leather, and wear the skin as a disguising garment over their own wounds. Many of the church's flesh-artists are known for their ability to preserve facial skin so it can be worn like a mask, allowing wearers to pass inconspicuously for short periods of time even under close scrutiny.

HOLY TEXT

Zon-Kuthon's holy book is *Umbral Leaves*, and is usually bound in and made of flayed human skin. It contains all known fragments of lore and prophecy spoken by the god's prophets. The words are scratched into the surface of the leather and stained with blood to make them readable (rather than being painted or inked onto a flat surface). Older copies may have notes trying to interpret some of the more ambiguous phrases. The collection of quotes is extremely disjointed, and no two copies have the exact same order, sorting them by date, topic, or seemingly at random. Through the ravings of madmen, these comments tell the god's story from his own perspective, speaking of the exhilarating knowledge he discovered beyond the stars.

HOLIDAYS

Zon-Kuthon's church has few holidays, but regular meetings usually take place on the night of the new moon.

The Joymaking: One bizarre cult belief is that the less flesh a person has, the more concentrated the sensation of pain and pleasure is in that remaining flesh—supposedly a legless man experiences greater pain and pleasure than one with two good legs. Privileged members of the church can arrange to have all their limbs amputated and all unnecessary flesh removed (eyes, ears, tongue, lips, and so on), leaving only a writhing head and torso that must be fed and cleaned by others. These “Joyful Things” are the most envied of the faith, as their entire existence is devoted to limitless pain and pleasure. They are normally kept in secure places belonging to the church, where any member of the faith can torture and violate them. The Joymaking holiday has no set date or frequency—a member of the cult who has enough privilege and wealth to deserve and afford this attention may call for the Joymaking ceremony at any point. All available members of the congregation then eagerly convene to assist in the removal of the honored member's limbs and nonessentials in sections over the course of one night. Often the removed pieces are eaten

by the others present in the hopes of gaining an echo of the Joyful Thing's luck and sensation.

The Eternal Kiss: This holiday takes place on the first new moon of the year. A victim is chosen—usually an enemy of the church but sometimes a favored member of the cult—and pampered luxuriously for a period of 11 days with exotic comforts, fine food, erotic companionship, and so on. The eleventh night's attention begins as normal, and then suddenly shifts to physical and emotional torture using whatever creative methods the cultists can devise, from fire to blades to poison to drowning and countless others. The cultists use magic to keep the victim alive as long as possible, often pulling the victim's entrails out and using them for divination (called anthropomancy), looking for signs of Zon-Kuthon's will. Very rarely, the suffering victim speaks in tongues, conveying phrases in other languages that can be pieced together into a prophecy.

APHORISMS

In the face of their master's endless darkness, Zon-Kuthon's worshipers gird themselves with simple affirmations of hopelessness.

Abandon Your Tears: In a cult that worships pain, tears are evidence of weakness. When tortured victims cry, it shows they have not embraced their pain, and thus are unenlightened. When cultists are tortured, they love their pain and refuse to shed tears, focusing their energy on savoring the broad bloody line between agony and ecstasy. This aphorism is an admonition to the victim and advice to the faithful.

Experience Without Limits: This phrase has two meanings. It indicates that the cult seeks physical sensation beyond the normal limitations of mortals, mixing pleasure and pain to reach an experience on a new level. It also means that a Kuthite should not let the rules of normal society dictate limitations to her goals and desires—if she wants to taste her sister's blood, or open her neighbor's chest to kiss the beating heart, so be it. There is an unspoken acknowledgment that everyone has this right, and thus the aggressor may later become the victim, for it is only natural that the strong dominate the weak.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

Ages ago, Zon-Kuthon was Dou-Bral, half-brother to Shelyn. Little is known of his original powers or the extent of their relationship, but at some point they argued, and Dou-Bral abandoned Golarion for the far dark places between the planes. Shelyn grieved for her lost brother, but was more horrified by his return. The church of Shelyn contends that before he left, the siblings shared custody over what is now her portfolio, yet during his travels in



the void, some unfathomable entity found and possessed the young god, driving his original self into a tiny prison within his own essence. This alien presence filled the void of Dou-Bral's godly power with twisted versions of the things he used to watch over and protect—beauty became mutilation, love became misery, music became screams, and the art of creation became the craft of torture. When Shelyn reached out to her lost brother, he pierced her hand with his black nails. Again the siblings quarreled, and he responded with violence to her tears and pleading. Only after she wrested Dou-Bral's weapon, a golden glaive, away from Zon-Kuthon did they reach a tenuous peace of silence and avoidance. For countless centuries, Shelyn has tried to find ways to make her brother remember who he is—all with little effect. Zon-Kuthon acknowledges that he and Shelyn were once siblings but has nothing else to say on the matter.

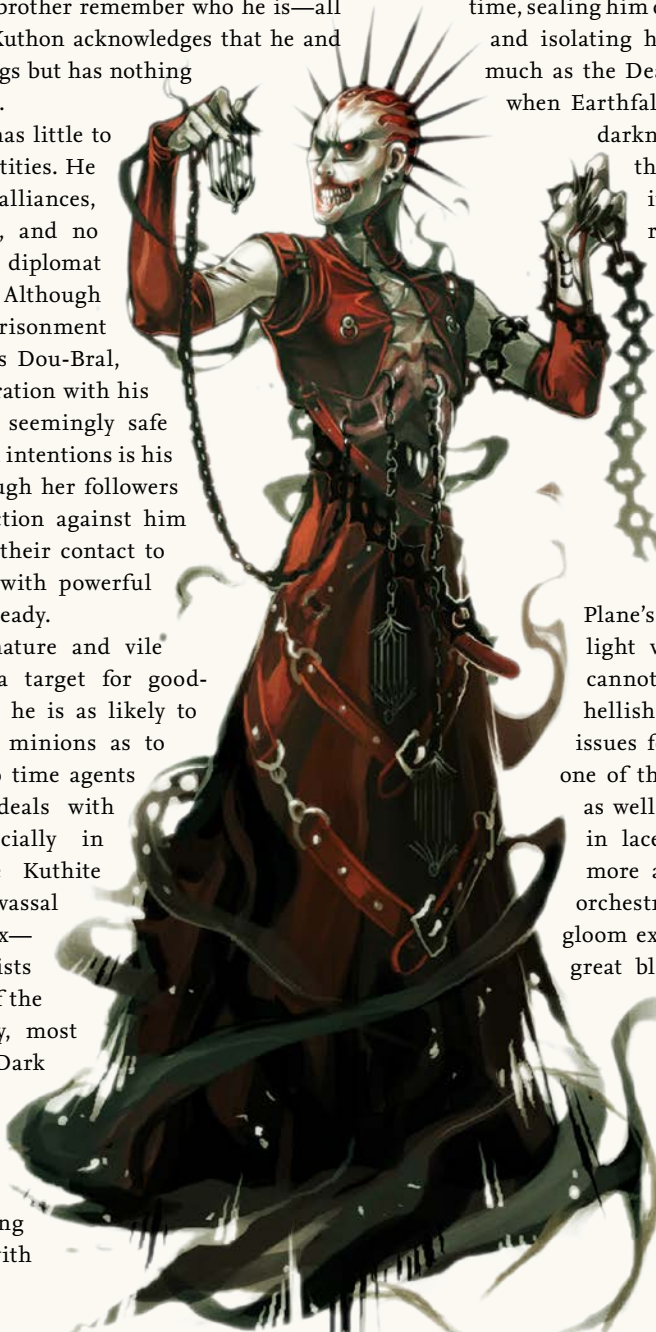
Today, Zon-Kuthon has little to do with other deific entities. He has no desire to create alliances, no need to wage war, and no interest in playing diplomat between rival powers. Although he aided in the imprisonment of Rovagug in youth as Dou-Bral, this was his last cooperation with his peers. The only deity seemingly safe from Zon-Kuthon's sick intentions is his half-sister Shelyn, though her followers have no special protection against him or his, and she limits their contact to brief visits in person with powerful defensive magic at the ready.

Zon-Kuthon's evil nature and vile practices make him a target for good-minded faiths, though he is as likely to ignore attacks on his minions as to retaliate. From time to time agents of Asmodeus strike deals with his lieutenants—especially in Nidal, in which the Kuthite government acts as a vassal of Hell-allied Cheliax—yet while the diabolists may see this as proof of the Archfiend's superiority, most Kuthites believe the Dark Prince is simply biding time and laying a trap. The hordes of Lamashtu also engage in buying and selling knowledge and slaves with

the Midnight Lord's faithful, but their interactions are always at arm's length because of his people's propensity to experiment on their allies. His faithful see those who follow other gods as insects, and scoff at their pitiful attempts to prove their lives have meaning and purpose. While their lord may refrain from attempting to harm Shelyn, his followers see no need to extend that courtesy to her faithful, and may especially enjoy creating canvases from the stretched skins of the Eternal Rose's worshippers.

REALM

Warped and corrupted by his presence, Zon-Kuthon's prison realm of Xovaikain was supposed to last for all time, sealing him deep within the Plane of Shadow and isolating him from the rest of creation, much as the Dead Vault does for Rovagug. Yet when Earthfall cast Golarion into an age of darkness, a technicality within the god's binding ended his imprisonment, allowing him to reenter the world. Rather than abandon his prison, however, Zon-Kuthon displayed his returned power by remaking it. Today, the god of darkness's domain exists as a region of complete and utter blackness, seen from the outside like a great obsidian wall rising from the ground and piercing the clouds above, dominating the Shadow Plane's landscape for miles. While no light violates its borders, the same cannot be said of the screams, as a hellish, wailing cacophony endlessly issues forth from the domain. Rarely, one of the god's petitioners bursts free as well, usually panicked and covered in lacerations, only to scream even more as his momentary—and likely orchestrated—freedom ends with the gloom extending out like the arms of a great black kraken, wrapping around him and dragging him back to his torment. Virtually nothing is known of the domain's interior, even by the god's followers, as with exceedingly rare exceptions, only Zon-Kuthon's deific servitors enter and exit the domain.



PLANAR ALLIES

In addition to Zon-Kuthon's servitor race, the lampadariuses (see page 315), the following outsiders serve the Midnight Lord and eagerly answer *planar ally* spells and similar calling spells from her faithful.

Dominik the Unquenchable (human vampire): Once a rapacious Kuthite lieutenant, Dominik fell prey to a vampire and rose as an undead predator. Members of his own church captured and tortured him. He is a handsome middle-aged man with stark blond hair, prominent canines, and long elegant hands lacking fingernails. His entire abdomen is ripped open and empty—a wound his formidable regeneration has strangely never healed. When he drinks blood, it drains just as quickly out of his wounds. As a result, he is continually ravenous, and is prone to falling upon helpless foes to drink them dry. If conjured, he appreciates creatures he can feed on, large supplies of blood, or magic that can temporarily sate his hunger. He is a lawful evil human vampire fighter 5.

The Prince in Chains: This horrid amalgam of exposed flesh and writhing chains shaped like a wolf serves as Zon-Kuthon's herald. Originally a noble spirit-wolf who, according to legend, sired Dou-Bral, the Prince in Chains has been reduced to a travesty of its former self by the attentions of the Midnight Lord. Once noble, the Prince in Chains seems to revel only in pain—its infliction and its receipt—and sees in it a fundamental truth of life's very existence. It delights in the pain experienced by sentient beings more so than the sufferings of dumb animals, but is not above torturing and slaying a beloved pet or animal companion for the nourishing reward of anguish caused to its owner. The Prince in Chains wanders the depths of the Plane of Shadow and patrols the lightless steel labyrinths of Xovaikain, seeking others with whom to share its epiphanies of pain. If summoned to the Material Plane by a servant of Zon-Kuthon, the Prince in Chains enjoys given human flesh to consume after a bit of playful torture. Kuthite clerics view a wound bestowed by the Prince of Chains as a near unparalleled blessing, though few can hope to survive such an honor. For more information, see page 314.

Vreet-Hall (unique kyton evangelist): Also known as the Fiend Whose Wounds Are Like Wombs, this creature is an unnaturally tall and lithe kyton evangelist (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 185) whose weapons continually abrade and slice its own flesh to reveal half-formed eyes, wagging tongues, and cysts that drop living maggots. This elflike thing never touches the ground with its feet, wrapping itself tightly from the calf down so that its pallid flesh never touches bare earth or stone. Vreet-Hall speaks through a permanent wound in its throat. It has a fondness for wines, exotic drugs, and living slaves. Nobody knows its gender, and it may have surgically removed any evidence long ago.

FOR KUTHITE CHARACTERS

Characters who worship Zon-Kuthon may find the following rules elements thematically appropriate.

Archetypes

Scarred rager (barbarian)
Vivisectionist (alchemist)

Source

Ultimate Combat 29
Ultimate Magic 20

Feats

Bloodletting
Cruelty
Flagellant
Shade of the Uskwood

Source

See page 208
See page 209
See page 212
The Inner Sea World Guide 288

Magic Items

Altar of Zon-Kuthon
Bloodthirst dagger
Mask of cutting flesh
Painspike armor
Rod of shadows
Scabbard of pain
Staff of hungry shadows
Umbral chain

Source

See page 249
Ultimate Equipment 152
See page 266
See page 252
Ultimate Equipment 184
See page 269
Ultimate Equipment 197
See page 257

Spells

Eyebite
Instrument of agony
Maddening oubliette
Pain strike

Protective penumbra
Sadomasochism
Shadow walk
Symbol of pain
Touch of bloodletting

Source

Core Rulebook 280
Ultimate Combat 232
See page 237
Advanced Player's Guide 234
Ultimate Magic 233
See page 239
Core Rulebook 341
Core Rulebook 356
See page 243

Traits

Battlefield Surgeon
Demoralizing Presence
Kuthite Caster

Source

See page 218
See page 219
See page 220

VARIANT SPELLCASTING

Clerics of Zon-Kuthon may prepare *symbol of pain* as a 4th-level spell; inquisitors may learn it as a 4th-level spell. A Kuthite priest's inflict spells always cause visible open wounds that look as though they were caused by slashing damage, though the actual cause of the damage is still negative energy.

