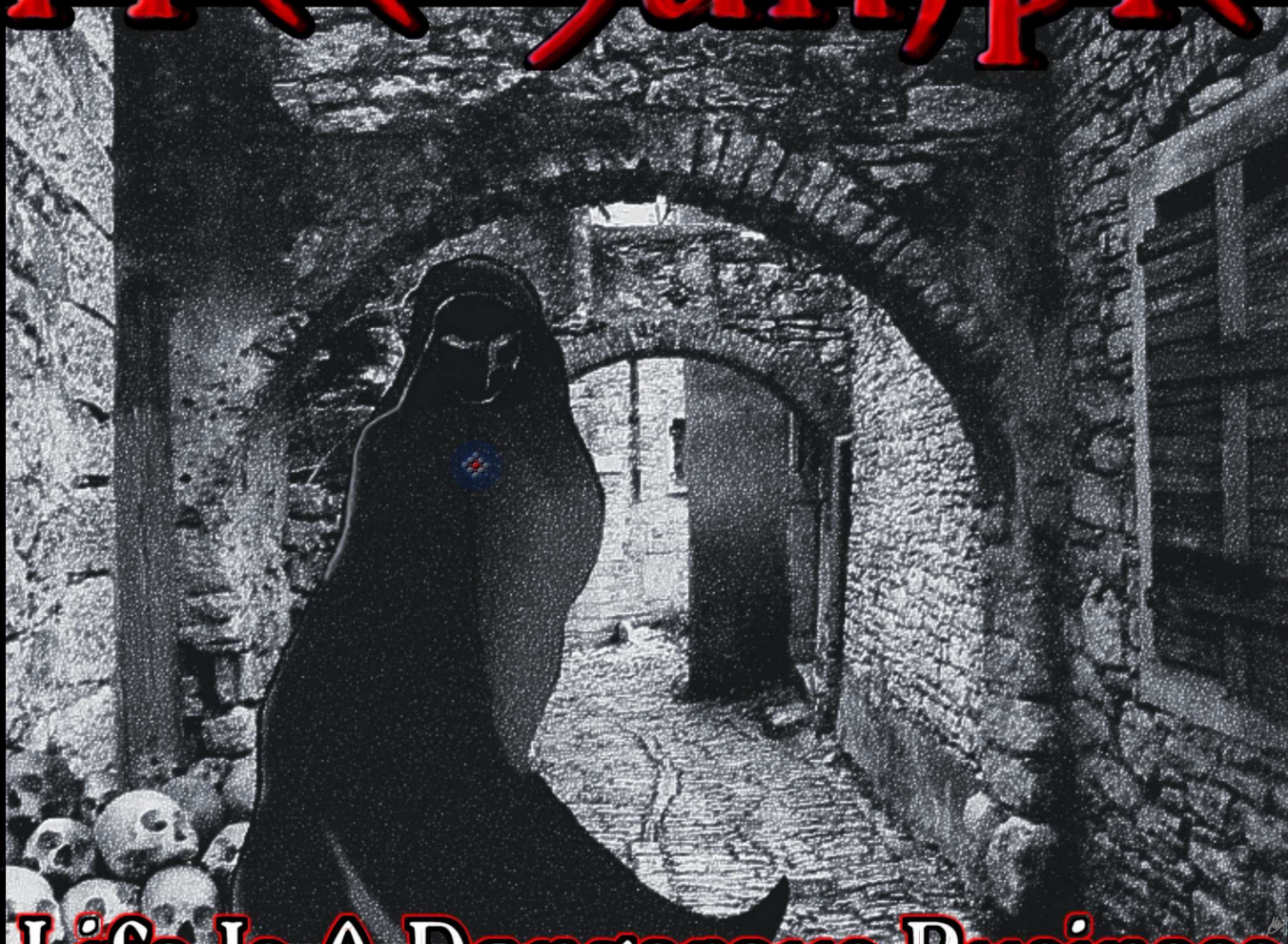


# ASSASSIN'S AMULET

## Free Sample



## Life Is A Dangerous Business

Michael K. Tumey, Mike Bourke and Johnn Four



TM



# Free Sample

## Credits

**Original Concept:** Michael K. Tumey

**Authors:** Michael K. Tumey, Mike Bourke, Johnn Four

**Contributions:** Ian Gray, Patrick Irwin

**Editing:** Johnn Four (please email me at [contact@legaciescampaignsetting.com](mailto:contact@legaciescampaignsetting.com) with any errors you find so I can produce a corrected version in the future.)

**Proofreading:** Simon Ward

**Maps:** Michael K. Tumey

**Design, Layout:** Mike Bourke, Michael K. Tumey, Johnn Four

**Cover Art:** Mike Bourke/Michael K. Tumey

**Interior Illustrations:** Mike Bourke, Michael K. Tumey

## Open Game Content

Assassin's Amulet is presented under the Open Game and D20 Licenses. All content contained within is considered Open Game Content. The mention of or reference to any company or product in this book is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

**Published by RoleplayingTips.com**

RoleplayingTips.com

#4 Racine Court, Beaumont Alberta

Canada T4X 1L4

[contact@legaciescampaignsetting.com](mailto:contact@legaciescampaignsetting.com)

Product Code: LG-1027



Compatibility with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game requires the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game from Paizo Publishing, LLC. See <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG> for more information on the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game. Paizo Publishing, LLC does not guarantee compatibility, and does not endorse this product.

# ASSASSIN'S AMULET *Special Preview*



# What's in this Special Preview Version of *Assassin's Amulet*

Credits	2
What's in this Special Preview Version of <i>Assassin's Amulet</i>	3
Introduction to the Special Preview	4
Testimonials	5
Excerpts from Chapter 0: Preliminaries:	6-13
Preface: The Story Behind <i>Assassin's Amulet</i>	7
The Legacies Series	8
Table of contents (from the full version of <i>Assassin's Amulet</i> )	9-11
What's In <i>Assassin's Amulet</i> (edited version)	12-13
About this product	13
Excerpt from Chapter 1: Maps, Floorplans, Props, & Accessories	14-15
Green Assassin	15
Excerpt from Chapter 2: Locations	16-17
Room 14 – <i>Assassin's Office</i>	17
Excerpts from Chapter 3: GM Advice	18-34
50 <i>Assassin Hooks</i>	19-24
Five Effective Combat Tactics for Assassins	24-26
How to contact and hire an Assassin	26-29
Setting up an assassination attempt without upsetting Players	29-34
Edited Excerpt from Chapter 4: NPCs	35-45
Behind-The-Scenes Bonus: The Origins Of A Deity (published at Campaign Mastery)	36-40
Cyrene, Greater Goddess	41-45
Excerpt from Chapter 5: New Items	46-59
Excerpt from "The Player's Guide To Legacy Items" (free bonus product) Part 1	47-51
Excerpt from "The Player's Guide To Legacy Items" (free bonus product) Part 2	52-58
Excerpt from "Legacy Items: The Crown Of Thorns" (free bonus product)	59
About Chapter 6: Integrating The Content	60
Bonus Content: <i>Assassin Inspiration</i> , A growing list	61-63
The Complete List of Freebies & Bonus Products for <i>Assassin's Amulet</i>	64-66
Afterword	67-68
Appendix: Legal	69-71
Links	72
Back Cover	73

# Introduction to The Special Preview

Welcome to this Special Preview version of Assassin's Amulet! We've tried very hard to give a small taste of the sort of content that you can expect to find in the 300-page main E-book, with extracts from most chapters.

Since most of these are, by necessity, only partial snapshots of the content that's available, we have reproduced completely several sections of the chapter on GM's Advice to ensure that every customer gets something of value from this preview, something that they can put to work in their games right away.

In line with our belief in offering value for money – and your time is valuable to us – we've also provided some additional content that is *exclusive* to this preview.

That same philosophy has led us to excerpt and recast – and, in some cases, expand – the content of Assassin's Amulet into subsidiary free bonus E-books, which are available free to those who buy the main book – and we've excerpted some of those in these pages as well.

We want you, the potential customer, to know exactly what we are offering for you to purchase.

At the same time, we have carefully held back a few surprises. Accompanying each item within the Preview is a small box describing the content that's been left out – hopefully listing the reasons you should take the plunge and buy a copy!

# Testimonials

“...so much good stuff in here that I can’t wait to add some of it to my home Pathfinder game...  
This is simply one of the most original assassin’s guilds I’ve ever seen.”

— From the Foreword by Robert W. Thomson  
co-founder/publisher  
4 Winds Fantasy Gaming  
<http://4windsfantasygaming.com>

“When you’re talking about a minor class like Assassins, if you found an E-book on the subject,  
you’d expect it to be 20 or 30 pages, max – not 300 pages. The size alone makes it awesome.”

— Ian Gray,  
Contributor

“Not just a good book, but a great Book.”

“Bursting at the seams.”

“Every time I thought I hit the ‘end’ the book seemed to grow like its own sort of magic item  
— The Never-Ending Book Of Pages.”

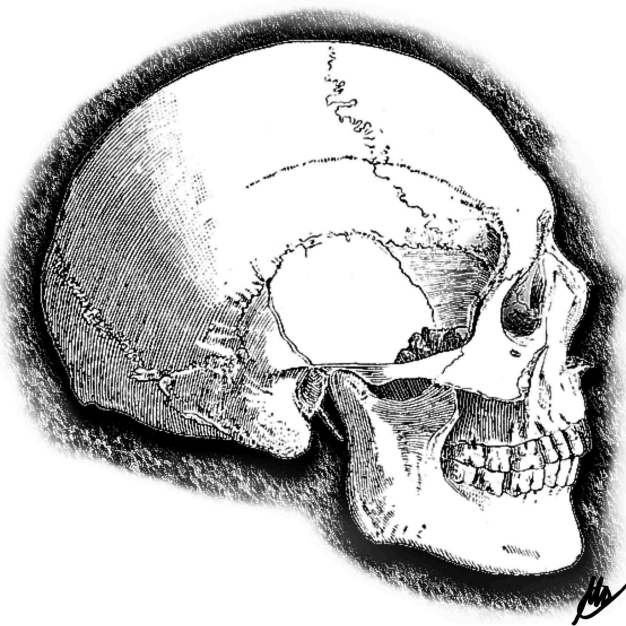
— Fitz,  
Game Knight Reviews  
Review: <http://bit.ly/uQS68F>  
Website: <http://www.gameknightreviews.com>

“What I bought the product for is the fluff and it does not disappoint.”

— Kenny Norris

## Excerpts From:

### Chapter 0: Preliminaries



Chapter 0 contains all the introductory and preface materials that underpin a project like Assassin's Amulet. It's also quite often the place to go for behind-the-scenes insights.

In this sample E-book, we're including two complete excerpts: "Preface: The Story Behind Assassin's Amulet" and "The Legacies Series". These will give you some background on how we wrote the book and the events that shaped it, and will place AA in a wider context.

We follow that with the complete Table of contents from the full version of Assassin's Amulet (so that you'll know exactly what you're missing), and conclude this section of excerpts with an edited version of "What's In Assassin's Amulet", our guide to what is included.

# Preface:

## The Story Behind Assassin's Amulet

*by Mike Bourke*

It started with the map, which Michael Tumey crafted as the winning entry in a monthly contest – more of a challenge, really – at the Cartographer's Guild website back in June 2009. When he was done, he thought, "This is too good to just throw away."

In early 2010, he contacted Johnn Four about filling the map key out with some description. Michael wanted to leverage the map and associated content to enter into the field of publishing. Johnn was taken by the quality of the map and the clever plot twist of the Amulets (no, I won't describe it here – there might be players watching). He thought, "This is too good to let get away."

If you have an assassin's lair, you need assassins to populate it. Johnn and I were already in collaboration on CampaignMastery.com and preparing to start publishing e-books together, and it was not too much of a leap to expand Michael's idea into something that would achieve our goals as well as his. That was how I became involved; one look at the quality of the map and it was clear to me it was too good to ignore, even though it would mean delaying or abandoning plans we had worked hard on over the previous year or so.

I convinced Johnn, and he told Michael we were in.

The initial concept was to provide the map, the assassins, and some GM advice on how to use assassins in a game. Over time, that concept grew until it became the map and the assassins and everything you might need to integrate them into your game, from GM advice to ready made opposition. And then grew some more. And some more after that.

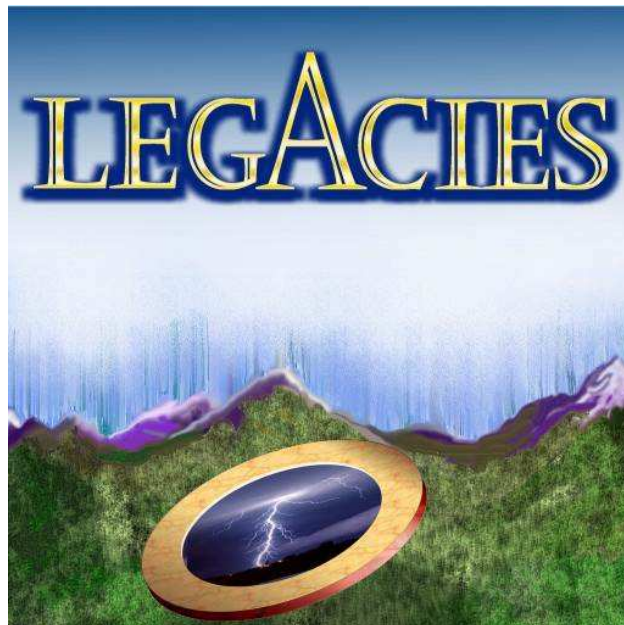
Along the journey from that time and place to this, there have been disagreements and moments of inspiration and euphoria. The result is something of which I think we can all be proud.



# The Legacies Series

**“Legacies (n., plural of Legacy):** Gifts left by Will, objects or circumstances handed down, or inherited, from a predecessor.

The observant reader may have noticed a strange icon amongst the d20 & Pathfinder compatibility notices and our shiny new OGL icon. That icon signifies that this product is part of the Legacies series.



Legacies Products revolve around the phrase, ‘The Past Is Prologue’. Long-forgotten history and lore manifest in a series of Game supplements which can stand alone as a Campaign Setting or be integrated into a GMs existing setting. Each product examines in detail, and often re-imagines, an iconic character class which it examines in detail and makes the centerpiece of a vignette of the world, incorporating advice on how to get the most from that character class, adventure seeds, and supplemental game materials.”

AA has as it’s back cover heading, ‘You’ll never look at Assassins the same way again.’ If all goes according to plan, Legacies #2 will do the same thing for Paladins, #3 for Clerics, and so on. I already have vague ideas for #4, Rangers.

*Legacy Magic Items* are the glue that binds the series together, a concept that runs throughout the setting. The plotline/adventure part of #2, Paladins, will concern the impact of one such legacy item on an order of Paladins – which will afford a window into everything that makes Paladins what they are, and how to extend the character class to focus on different aspects of that central theme.

Look for **Legacies #2** [Working Title: “*The Order Of Light*”], in 2012.



# Table of Contents

## Table of Contents

Front Cover	1
Credits	2
Chapter 0: Preliminaries	3
Foreword	4
Preface: The Story Behind Assassin's Amulet	5
The Legacies Series	6
Table of Contents	7
What's In Assassin's Amulet	10
Central Concepts of Assassin's Amulet	11
About this product	11
Chapter 1: Maps, Floorplans, Props, & Accessories	12
Maps and Floor Plans	13
Props and Accessories	17
Paper Miniatures	26
Chapter 2: Locations	31
Overview of the Holy Assassins' Lair	32
Map Key to the Assassins' Lair	32
Defending the Lair	48
Flaws in the Lairs' Design	48
Background Considerations When Designing Your Own Variations	49
Hours of Operation	50

Chapter 3: GM Advice	51
126 Assassin Hooks	52
14 Assassination Targets	71
Five Effective Combat Tactics for Assassins	75
Give Assassins a Worthy Opponent	77
How to Contact and Hire an Assassin	79
The Price of Murder	83
How to Equip an Assassin	90
Roleplaying Assassins	91
Five Unexpected Uses for Assassins	95
How to Run and Manage an Assassins' Guild	96
How to Terrify Your Opponents with Assassins	98
Using Poisons in Assassin's Amulet	103
How to Set Up an Assassination Attempt without Upsetting Your Players	104
Six Ways to Defend an Assassins' Guild	109
Using Assassins in Your Games	112
9 Quick Assassin Tips	116
Chapter 4: NPCs	118
Cyrene (Greater Deity)	119
The Language of the Gods	124
Charting a Career as a Holy Assassin	124
Acolytes of Cyrene	127
Eyes of Cyrene	131

Temple Guardsmen	134
Spirits of Cyrene	138
Grim Huntsmen	141
Ability Descriptions	144
Guildmaster NPCs	152
New Monster	157
Assassin Personalities	163
Suggestions for Epic Campaigns	168
Opposition	170
Other Opposition Suggestions	190
Chapter 5: New Items	198
New Magic Items	199
New Non-Magical Items	206
Legacy Items	207
Eight Example Legacy Items	225
Chapter 6: Integrating the Content	255
Replacing Cyrene	256
Afterword	258
Appendix: Legal	260
Appendix: High-Resolution Maps & Props	263
Additional Props	277
Final Word	297
Web Links	299

# What's In Assassin's Amulet

At the heart of this supplement is the gorgeous map by Michael Tumey. Surrounding that is a unique and original assassin's guild (1 core class and 4 prestige classes) and all manner of supporting material specifically relating to them, including new feats, a new deity, and new magic items. While intended for NPCs, there is nothing preventing you from permitting a PC assassin in a lawful good party – usually a recipe for disaster. We have deliberately stepped beyond the bounds of what is usually possible, then crafted the game resources to support the result. Resources such as a new class to provide opposition to the Hands of Cyrene and an example character presented in snapshots taken every three levels, complete and ready to run.

Loosely connected to that is a content layer containing anything else we thought might be useful in running any assassin's guild in a game, including this one – everything from assassin plot hooks, to advice on how to equip an assassin, to a system for setting prices for assassination contracts. While some of this material relates specifically to the guild created for Assassin's Amulet, most of it is independent in nature with supplementary notes where necessary to ensure compatibility with the core content.

Also contained in this layer is a system for generating a new class of magic item, capable of integrating everything from the Orb of Aldur to the One Ring into your campaigns.

Around the fringes, we offer inspirational material to help you integrate everything we have provided into your campaigns. Some of this material might be further fleshed out in future products, but most of it is presented as-is.

**Chapter 1** contains the maps of the lair, targets where assassinations might be likely to occur, and some props with instructions on how to print and use them.

**Chapter 2** is the key to the lair map, and some advice on how best to use it repeatedly in play.

**Chapter 3** holds several articles of GM advice relating to the use of assassins in games, covering everything from combat strategies to assassination targets. This material is suitable for use with any assassin's guild.

**Chapter 4** is devoted to character classes and NPCs. We start with the deity who stands behind the Assassin's Guild, Cyrene, then progress through the core class and prestige classes that make up the guild. We offer a complete stat block for a current Guildmaster (and the Spirit of a former Guildmaster, used as an encounter within the Guild Headquarters), plus a new monster. Next is advice on how to roleplay an assassin and how to adapt the material provided for epic level campaigns. We conclude with another new character class and examples with which to oppose the guild.

In **Chapter 5**, we offer new magic items for use by the assassins, some new mundane

equipment, a system for the generation of magic items that fall somewhere between a typical piece of magical equipment and an artifact, and a number of examples to illustrate the process.

**Chapter 6** considers the larger picture — how to integrate some or all of the material provided, and how to leave out the parts that do not appeal to you or do not fit your campaign. Everything in *Assassin's Amulet* is designed to be modular, and this chapter contains the blueprints to the jigsaw puzzle and how it can be reconfigured to suit your specific needs.

## About this product

The content of *Assassin's Amulet* was developed for D&D 3.x but full conversions for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game are provided throughout.

Although for convenience the masculine gender is used for all terms within this book, there are no gender restrictions within the Hands of Cyrene and its sub-orders. In addition, while most members of the Hands are portrayed herein as human, this is not a requirement.

## Excerpt From:

### Chapter 1: Maps, Floorplans, Props & Accessories



Chapter 1 holds our first serving of maps, floorplans, gaming props, and other accessories for use with Assassin's Amulet.

There is a nobleman's chambers, and carriage to serve as assassination venues. There is a blank "reward for information" poster that is fully customisable and full instructions on how to set margins to print on it. There are two wanted posters - one already made out and one without details, with instructions on printing on them, for use as props. There's a completely blank poster for you to use for notices as you see fit, and a couple of other images to use as props.

There's a set of 8 folding paper minis of Assassins (with instructions), each clothed slightly differently, and larger images of 7 of the eight - four at 25% page size and three full-page illustrations.

It is from this last set of images that we have chosen to excerpt the illustration of "The Green Assassin".



## Excerpt From:

### Chapter 2: Locations



Chapter 2 is all about the Holy Assassin's Lair that was the starting point for Assassin's Amulet. After giving an overview of the Lair, it moves on to a room-by-room description of the Lair.

"The" Lair, did we say? Each room contains variations that enable the Lair to be customised and the same map reused again and again in different locations. As an example of this, we have included the description and variations on Room 4, The Assassin's Office.

(In the Arcane Chantry, Room 6, we have detailed every book on the bookshelves and their significance – perfect colour for the next treasure hoard you emplace).

There are tactics for Defending The Lair, the Flaws in the Lair's Design, some advice on how to customise your own versions of the Lair beyond the variations we have provided, and we round out the chapter by discussing the hours of operation for the Lair. That's everything you need...

## 4. Assassin's Office

A desk and bookshelves contain all the records, maps, handbooks and other documents necessary to operate the business of the guild. This chamber and the two attached are the most sensitive areas of the lair. Should someone not wearing an assassin's amulet bypass the trapped hallway from the portal chamber, the ghost of a former Guildmaster (see Chapter 4, "Leebuk Hagan, Deceased") is summoned into the chapel chamber and begins to stalk the intruder.

Other than the furnishings described, this chamber is unadorned. Two lamps on either side of the desk provide illumination.



**Variations:** This room should reflect the Guildmaster's identity and personality. It is the first area within the lair to change in description when a new Guildmaster takes power. Decorations could include such things as a family portrait, personal keepsakes, religious icons, weapons, the skull of the first kill, deer antlers, an easel and canvas with a set of oil paints, or a bunch of wildflowers.

The documents may be in Common, or in the Language of the Gods, or in any other tongue in which the Guildmaster is adept (which can cause problems if a Guildmaster faces eternal judgment unexpectedly). Some Guildmasters employ codes and ciphers. The list of contracts accepted is the most sensitive document, followed by a master list of the local members of the guild and the locations of safe houses and other guild related sites. The loss of any one of these can bring down the local guild and may even trouble the entire guild. It is common for a Guildmaster to maintain a set of false books containing this information while artfully hiding the real documents.

Although it is unlikely any disused entrance would lead to the Guildmaster's office chamber, some Guildmasters disrupt their entire Guilds upon taking over and choose a different chamber to be their office – one that just happens to contain the (long lost, long disused) secret entrance – for whatever reason they can invent (they need some excuse to prevent speculation).

## Excerpts From:

### Chapter 3: GM Advice



What can we say? At 67 pages, these 16 articles could be two books in their own right!

In this part of the Special Preview, we have given our prospective customers several of these articles, complete, and some that are just part of the total that's on offer in the full game supplement. That's our way of saying "Thanks for your time."

We trust that they will prove valuable to you, whether you choose to buy Assassin's Amulet or not.

Just remember, there's a lot more where these came from...

---

We kick this collection off with 50 generic Assassin hooks. The full set in Assassin's Amulet totals 126, including one that's substantial enough to be the basis of a campaign in its own right, should the GM so desire.

Oh, and any generic hook that isn't quite right for the unique Assassin's Guild that we feature in AA includes a variant form that fits.

## 127 50 Assassin Hooks

Assassins make awesome NPCs. Thing is, they often have paper-thin character development. Well, you can fix this right now. Start by giving your next assassin one of the tasty hooks below.

Some hooks concern motives, others personality traits and others situations or objectives. Use your chosen or randomly selected hook as a starting place to help you run a deeper NPC.

1. A softhearted assassin takes contracts but always tries to find a way to save the victim.
2. This assassin founded a suicide cult involving family and friends but could not go through with his own death, and as the sole survivor, his twisted spirit now seeks solace in the killing of others.
3. Deeply in debt, an assassin struggles to earn enough from killing to fund his paradise getaway and retire.
4. By day, this assassin is a timid scribe; at night, wielding his intelligent sword Black Razor, he kills without mercy.
5. At three feet tall, nobody suspects this jester of being the infamous Nightstalker.
6. The assassin's day job is as the commander of the day shift of the city watch.
7. An assassin delivers fresh milk daily to the homes of the wealthy, enabling him to monitor the health and activities of those who can afford to flout the law.
8. A member of the watch paid to have a romantic rival eliminated, but he short-changed the payment. Now the assassins must punish the cheater without arousing the wrath of the watch.
9. An arrogant noble has cheated the guild and thinks he has gotten away with it by becoming a vampire and surrounding his castle with dangerous creatures. To reach him, the assassins will pose as porters for a party of adventurers (the PCs) hired by a third party (also the assassins) to rid the land of the threat of the vampire and his pets.
10. A mage who has dabbled in dark powers seeks to avoid paying his debt to a devil, which is disguised as a lay preacher, by sending the assassins' guild after him.
11. An assassin has travelled from a far land to sell a rare gem, the payment for his last commission, only to discover it is a fake. Without funds, he must start building his reputation all over again, in a land where (as a foreigner) he is already a subject of suspicion.
12. An assassination is paid for with a magic item, but the command word given seems to be wrong. The assassin has to get the (very recognizable) item identified without revealing his identity.

13. The most famous bard of the realm receives an unexpected commission to compose music to honor a particular *baker*, and becomes suspicious when the baker's income far outstrips his profits from selling bread.
14. A consignment of rare spices is purchased by a secretive party (the assassins' guild) from afar; the PCs are hired to guard the shipment.
15. Noble sons who frequently relax at the highest-priced brothel in the city are surprised when a mason and candlemaker become regular patrons of the establishment.
16. The King's pastry chef is renowned as the best cook in the kingdom, and regularly receives commissions to cater feasts for minor nobles and wealthy merchants on the side. However, he has never been asked to bake a cake with black icing before....
17. A glutton is furious when a rival outbids him for a consignment of rare Green Dragon Pate, and hires the Hands to punish the rival and retrieve the rare food.
18. The Count's son is tired of waiting to inherit his father's estate. The father suspects his son's plans and hires the Hands to stop him.
19. A Baron has many children, all of them spoilt rotten. He hires assassins to try to kill them, one by one – they will prove themselves worthy by surviving.
20. The Captain of the City Watch is a semi-retired adventurer who fears losing his edge, so he hires the Hands to stage a series of mock assassinations. One of his lieutenants wants a promotion and has paid the guild to make these attempts more real than the Captain is expecting.
21. A wealthy merchant's business is under threat from a new trading consortium. He hires assassins to disrupt the trading consortium.
22. A collector of art hires assassins to assassinate the painters of several of his pieces to increase their value.
23. The Captain of the Guard is pressing for permission to launch an official search for the rumored assassins. He secretly desires to destroy the proof that he paid to have his first wife assassinated. The assassins might leak the information to discredit him, but the contract was organized through a third party, so they do not know what they have and are puzzled by his motives.
24. A somewhat paranoid assassin out to enhance his reputation hires the PCs to scout the defenses of his next target. He poses as a member of the target's household concerned for his safety.
25. An assassin's wife is discovered having an affair. Distraught, he performs an unsanctioned kill, before fleeing, disguised as a guide or porter working for the PCs, and is now hotly pursued by the assassin's guild....

26. The merchant who supplies the hidden assassins guild with food on the side contracts the guild to watch over his son, who is a hotheaded lothario, certain to end up in a duel and get himself killed without protection. The guild assigns several of their members to watch over him and intervene as necessary, but one of the assassins falls head over heels for the amorous son.
27. An assassin's daughter, whom he loves dearly, is kidnapped by someone who then forces him to divulge guild secrets and kill on their behalf. Knowing he cannot turn to the guild for help because he has betrayed them, he hires the PCs to rescue his daughter and kill the kidnapper to protect the guild secrets he has divulged. Unknown to him, the daughter gave him up to the enemy in the first place in a bid to attempt to force him into an honorable line of work, and the kidnapping is a sham. She does not know her naivety is now being exploited by someone she trusts and confided in.
28. The enemy took his girl and he doggedly pursues her while working for a secret organization of killers.
29. Thieves' guilds and assassins guilds frequently make uncomfortable bedfellows, sharing information sources and hidden paths through the city – the sewers and rooftops. Eventually, one of the two tries to take exclusive control of these vital resources, and an underground war breaks out.
30. The wife of a guild victim becomes an amateur assassin herself and begins staging a series of murders to raise public outcry against the guild.
31. The half-crazed partner of a victim of the Hands was made penniless years ago when the trade coalition put together by the victim collapsed in the wake of his death, and was left to rebuild his fortune in a foreign land. Now armed with wealth, exotic powers and abilities, and a completely new identity and appearance, he has returned. His mission is threefold: to expose the assassins, discover who commissioned the contract on the victim, and kill them and their families in revenge.
32. The 10th anniversary of the Guildmaster's achievement of his rank approaches, and the members of the guild have begun *shopping* for appropriate *gifts* and planning a social gathering.
33. It has become traditional for the guild to gather for a celebration following the completion of a contract in a certain inn in the city. Unknown to them, their most recent victim turned the tables on his would-be killer and used magic to take his identity. The PCs just happen to be staying at the same inn as the (private) celebration gets underway....
34. The assassin was the King's champion until a setup caused his downfall; now he seeks vengeance against his foes.

*Note: this hook can be interpreted either as a member of the assassins with a preference for certain types of target, or as an assassin who is saving what the guild pays him until he can purchase contracts of his own against his enemies. If the latter, it should manifest as a subplot while the assassin is gathering funds, and the main plot should be the carnage he has purchased.*

35. The King's men killed his parents, and after years of training, the assassin is finally ready to exact revenge, but the King and his family are now more powerful than ever.
36. He founded a death cult but was converted by a paladin, so now an assassin targets the cult at every opportunity.
37. The assassin cuts an ear off every victim and keeps them at home to remind himself he will one day find and slay the torturer who sliced off both his ears years ago.
38. On a recent mission everything that could go wrong, did, and a relative *nobody* did not merely thwart the assassins, he humiliated them, without even noticing that anything was taking place. Now the assassins want to reclaim their pride and dignity by targeting the *nobody*, who has taken to hanging around a group of adventurers (the PCs).
39. Dovan the Sage, aka The Beloved of Dragons, was paid to **lie** to the guild to protect one of his customers from assassination. Dovan the Sage is now a dead man walking. However, his nickname is a bit of a worry....
40. The PCs encounter a skilled but young street urchin and pickpocket. A little later, they see an older man hand the child a small pouch of coins and lead the boy away, hand-in-hand. However, this is not what it might seem to a modern audience: the older man is an assassin, and the young boy is going to be the guild's newest recruit. Will the morals of the PCs lead to a confrontation with the bringers of death? Alternatively, if they do nothing and later encounter the young assassin on the job, will they blame themselves for what he has become?
41. A freight hand at the docks is a slow-witted but strong brawler. When a fight breaks out between a stranger and another dockworker, he intervenes in what quickly becomes a general melee that draws in all those nearby (including the PCs). In gratitude, the man – secretly a member of the assassins' guild – takes the freight hand into the guild.
42. Still an apprentice to the world's greatest assassin, a trainee secretly takes small contracts to pay for extra equipment, special herbs and magic.

43. Thinking they are chasing a would-be thief, the PCs become embroiled in a race across the rooftops as assassins are training to navigate the city this way.
44. A poisoned trainee assassin must follow a series of clues to decipher the name of the antidote he needs before it is too late. He inadvertently involves the PCs when he mistakes them for the next link in the chain.
45. After an especially messy public assassination, the guild needs a fall guy. They choose a member of their order who is suspected of taking commissions on the side. They manufacture evidence of his being the lone assassin and arrange to have it fall into the hands of the PCs. The difficult part will be ensuring he can never reveal the secrets of the guild, so another guild member poses as a long-lost relative of the deceased who is obsessed with revenge (and who can take out the fall guy at an opportune time).
46. The assassin slew the previous Guildmaster but could not hold power and now hides from his enemies and former allies; he only takes work after thoroughly investigating clients for fear of a trap.
47. A mercenary at heart, this assassin is willing to accept higher payments from victims to return and slay the one who placed the original contract; he is happy to bounce back and forth several times until somebody gets killed at the end of his bidding war.
48. The assassin specializes in *sending a message* with his killings according to his employer's wishes, but secretly he is a frustrated and under-appreciated poet who cannot make a full-time income from his books.
49. A drug addict, with skills dulled because of it, an unskilled assassin feeds his needs by taking on work from clients too poor to pay killers that are more competent.
50. A famous bard, and friend to the PCs, is known to possess a Hat of Disguise, which he uses in his role as the greatest stage actor in the kingdom. An assassin has decided he needs that hat to fulfill a difficult contract, but the bard will not give it up willingly.

In the actual game supplement, the plot hooks are organised by subject. We thought the categories might further whet your appetite:

Personalities and Motives  
Cover Occupations  
Assassins Who Have Been Cheated  
Assassins Shopping  
Assassins Enjoying Luxuries  
Assassin Employers  
Assassin Enemies  
Assassin Alliances  
Assassin Family Life  
Assassin Rivalries  
Assassin Victims  
Assassin Meetings  
Assassins Socializing  
Assassins with a Grudge  
Assassins Recruiting

...cont

Assassins in Training  
 Assassin Cover-Ups  
 Crossing the Line  
 Rogue Assassins  
 Assassins and Mages  
 Assassin Treasures  
 Assassin Material Targets  
 Assassins and Religion  
 Assassins in Politics  
 The Long Arm of the Law  
 Dealings on the Shady Side  
 Non-Humans  
 Fighters  
 Assassins in Nature  
 From the Outside  
 The Unliving  
 Inherited Enemies  
 Cooperation  
 Ducks Out Of Water  
 Home Truths  
 I Dated an Assassin  
 You Never Know What You Might See  
 Thrill Seekers  
 Prejudices  
 Unusual Assassins  
 Assassins with Style  
 Leadership and Inspiration

Some of these categories have only one hook, most have several, and some have many.

We now move on to a group of articles we have excerpted completely for this preview...

## Five Effective Combat Tactics for Assassins

**The most important lesson for Assassins: to learn concerning combat situations: avoid combat whenever possible.**

The most favorable combat situations involve fighting with allies. However, assassins tend to work alone, which causes tactical problems. In all the tactics below, hit-and-run is the only reliable method to combine with any combat tactic. Using an assassin's amulet in combination as a means of escape makes this even more reliable.

### 1. Maximize Sneak Attack Opportunities

Sneak attack is the best option for assassins in combat. Do anything you can to give NPC assassins this opportunity so they can cause damage while trying to get away. It is difficult, though not impossible, to flank an opponent without an ally – anything that removes an opponent's Dexterity bonus or causes him to become flat-footed will grant such an opportunity.

**Feint/Improved Feint:** using the feint option of the Bluff skill, the assassin spends his first round trying to cause the opponent to be off-balance or otherwise unready. This denies the opponent his Dexterity bonus to his Armor Class on the assassin's next attack, giving the killer a sneak attack. This tactic usually doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity, but use it carefully. Give the assassin the Improved Feint feat when it becomes available.

Foes defeat this tactic using Sense Motive, if they have that skill, or a raw check aided by their Wisdom modifier. Therefore, an assassin should scout out foes to determine their ability to sense others' motives or see through such tricks as feinting. The killer must know in advance if a foe can defeat feint. This saves the assassin a full round of futility plus exposure to a potential attack of opportunity.

**Invisibility:** except for class dipping with caster levels, which is not recommended, becoming invisible means using a magic item and the Use Magic Device skill. An invisible assassin initiating combat denies their opponent a Dexterity bonus to that attack, and so the foe must suffer a sneak attack.

**Blindness:** like invisibility, if the opponent is blind, the assassin is effectively invisible (see above).

Possessing the feat chain Critical Focus and Blinding Critical is helpful, though unreliable, as the NPC must engage in at least one round of combat with no advantages, and he must succeed on a critical hit, which can never be counted on.

However, use of eggshell grenades-pepper (from Oriental Adventures) is a mundane device that requires use as a thrown weapon. With a successful hit affecting a five-foot area, the opponent is blind, though he gets a save to avoid the circumstance. Any magic item that causes blindness will also do this.

## 2. Single Striking

A one shot kill relies on high Strength combined with Power Attack and using a two-handed weapon, granting half-again Strength bonus on attacks. Unfortunately, Strength is generally a tertiary stat for assassins, following Dexterity and Intelligence.

Focus on causing as much damage as possible with a single attack using magic, magic items and equipment to eke out all the extra damage you can.

Enhance this tactic with Dodge, Mobility and Spring Attack, as well as the vital strike feat chain. While this is feat intensive and takes away valuable feat slots to make an effective assassin combatant, the three feats mentioned allow him to strike without attacks of opportunity, so offer better survivability.

Having the Quick Draw feat also gets the weapon in hand quickly. Combine this with sneak attack and this could be a one shot kill.

## 3. Two Weapon Fighting

Using two weapons in combat means more opportunities for sneak attack. The assassin should possess the Weapon Finesse feat to rely on the character's Dexterity instead of Strength. While effective, this combat tactic does not cause as much damage as the single strike tactic, though it uses far fewer feat slots for combat.

## 4. Sniping—Using Ranged Weapons

If the assassin can prepare to choose a hidden spot to attack from this can be an effective combat tactic; however, it requires time unseen to prepare such an opportunity. The assassin must hide, shoot at target, and then move to another location to repeat the process. The assassin must be skilled with ranged weapons and will spend his combat feat slots doing so. This tactic does not accommodate being caught unawares and forced into melee, so the two previous combat tactics are more reliable.

Take the Arcane Trickster prestige class instead of Assassin so ranged sneak attack is possible to make this a more viable combat tactic.

## 5. Using Traps

Indirect combat offers a usable strategy, but also requires some time in preparation prior to engaging in combat. Simple is sometimes more effective — for example, tossing caltrops in areas of expected movement by oncoming combatants, or using tanglefoot bags.

Consider allowing assassins to use portable traps either mundane or arcane, where the assassin can arm, disarm, move and rearm such a device in a move and wait or move and run away tactic.

Always consider poisoning any blade, ranged weapon or traps to improve damage and escape chances, as well.



## How to Contact and Hire an Assassin

This is a game world decision you need to make to suit your desired campaign atmosphere and gameplay style. You have two contact options and two hiring options.

### Contact Options

- A. Assassins do open business. They are easy to contact
- B. Assassins are secretive and difficult to contact.

### Hiring Options

- A. Assassins have easy contractual terms and are easy to hire. Often it is just a matter of money.
- B. Assassins are choosy about what clients or targets they accept, and are difficult to hire.

The A options put employing assassins at the easy end of the spectrum, and the B options put assassins in your game at the rare or difficult end of the spectrum. You are free to make the requirements fall somewhere in between or lie at the extreme end.

For example, assassins might have a guild and front themselves with a pasta restaurant. This makes them easy to contact once the PCs gather a bit of information and learn about this place and its nature. However, during a meeting the PCs learn only evil targets are accepted, and their chosen victim is neutral. You might allow some negotiation to take place and let the assassins break their rules, but overall the hiring process is difficult.

Open and accessible assassination makes it common and frequent. Decide if you want this theme in your world. It also means assassination encounters will be more common in your campaign, especially if the PCs earn enemies willing to take a contract out on them.

If you want a one-encounter, or to have assassins play a minor role in your game, make them difficult to contact and hire. Put a number of barriers and requirements in place so it is logical that assassination happens rarely, occurs in the background in your world and is unlikely to trigger against the PCs.

## Organization or Freelancers?

Also, consider whether assassins operate as a group or individuals. Perhaps you have both modes in your game because each creates fun gameplay and world development opportunities.

In the freelance environment, there will be famous assassins who charge a lot more than the amateurs. This environment of notable NPCs oozes with flavor. However, it is a dangerous game because no guild or organization with great resources will protect freelancers from assassin-hunters and other threats.

An organization of assassins gives you great campaign options as well. Run like any other faction, with a leader, goals, enemies and resources, you have a wonderful source of plot hooks and NPC inspiration.

There is no reason you cannot do both in your game, as well.

For example, in a recent campaign of Johnn's, assassins operated as freelancers. Being individuals, there was a range of access, hiring and quality options. The freelancers had reputations ranging from thug who rendered fast and brutal service to a mysterious and elite individual known only as The Rain Dancer who only existed in rumors and legend. In addition, a group of mages formed a shadow guild leveraging a demonic ally who gave them access to

shadow demons to do their dirty work. He used a draft of Assassin's Amulet for their base and way of operations.

## Create Layers of Contact

Put up various contact barriers to weed out law enforcement, enemies and non-serious enquiries. Do this via layers of contact. The pasta restaurant, for example, might be an intermediary in all transactions. The owner meets with clients and ferries messages and payment between the assassins' guild and clients. What the restaurateur does not know is his contact is just another layer, and not a member of the actual guild. The contact watches the restaurant ongoing to ensure the owner is not betraying the guild, shaving payments or causing problems. The guild is protected because it can eliminate either contact to stop anyone from tracking the guild down.

Individuals might also employ agents and screens to keep distance for self-protection. Perhaps a private investigator has a way to make contact with one or two assassins when his clients want that type of service. A great hook might be an Urban Ranger insinuates himself as an agent so he can work out details of the guild and possibly strike its top members when the time is right.

## The Tone of Contact

While the preceding paragraphs detail the mechanics of contacting assassins, you should try to maintain the proper tone of the contact. Smoke and mirrors, shadows and shadowy figures – these should be maintained at all times. The assassins will not negotiate, either; they will either operate on a fixed price high enough to fund the occasional mission with extraordinary

requirements, or they will separate the process of commissioning an assassination with the process of setting a fee appropriate to the difficulty of the mission.

The second approach is unusual because it more than doubles the exposure of the assassins, but sufficient creativity on your part should make it plausible. It also runs the risk of the assassins alerting the target in the course of the investigations used to set a price on the assignment.

Obtaining knowledge of the target and his defenses before setting a cost compensates for these hazards, as does the opportunity to refuse a contract fully informed.

Arranging the payment poses the third risk. Again, this step can either be separate and carried out only after the mission is complete—which exposes the assassins to customers unable or unwilling to pay, and all manner of other such troubles—or it can be incorporated into another step. Perhaps an estimated price is nominated when the target is first named and the final price when the contract is accepted.

GMs should be careful to put themselves into the assassin's shoes when contemplating these arrangements. Think about what they need, what they can afford to have publicly known about the way they work and how much they would charge.

## Application to Assassin's Amulet

If you use the background material built into Assassin's Amulet, much of the decision-making discussed in previous sections has been done for you. The assassins are somewhat secretive, they have a formal organizational structure and they usually operate in small teams from one or more central locations. At the same time,

they are not especially discriminating when it comes to targets, provided their price is met, but the organization as outlined in these pages has substantial overheads, so those fees would be relatively pricy.

Remember that the contracts accepted by the Hands of Cyrene serve multiple purposes for the organization. The fees not only fund it, they also provide training and experience to the assassins, and they camouflage the contracts the Hands undertake in pursuit of their primary mission.

Two competing considerations come into play due to guild pricing of its services.

If they charge higher fees:

- Fewer outside contracts will be acceptable to both guild and customer
- The guild will attract less trouble from established authorities
- The assassins will be less skilled
- The Hands of Cyrene will have fewer resources for the pursuit of their primary mission
- Assassins will be relatively few in number

If they charge lower fees:

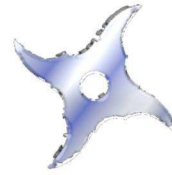
- Assassination services will be more available
- More customers can afford their services
- The organization can grow larger

- The organization will attract more trouble
- Assassins will be more skilled
- The Hands of Cyrene can devote more resources to their primary mission

Ultimately, the price assassins charge should be a reflection of how large a role you want the Hands of Cyrene to play in your campaign. The smaller that role, the smaller the organization, and the more they should charge. The larger the role, the larger the organization, and the more affordable their services should be.

This same logic dictates the solutions to other questions posed here. If the organization is widespread and takes on many contracts, the less they need to allow for the expense of completing any specific contract, and the more likely they are to simplify their problems by charging a fixed rate. Their security increases as a result, which is fortunate because of the increased trouble they will face from authorities. The more contracts they take on, the less secretive their existence is – if no one knows your organization exists, how can they use your services?

This one decision drives just about every other choice you have to make concerning the integration of the Hands of Cyrene into your campaign. Make it carefully and you are assured the best possible opportunity to integrate the Hands of Cyrene into your campaign.



## How to Set Up an Assassination Attempt without Upsetting Your Players

### Allow Players to Direct Character Actions

When the time gets close you start to get excited. Will you pull this encounter off successfully? Will your players be surprised, amazed and excited?

You want everything to work out perfectly. That is when you fall into the deadly game master trap of leading the play.

It starts with an assumption. Perhaps you decide the party order or character positions without checking with the group to avoid triggering their spidey senses. Then you dictate surprise – no rolls, character perceptions or special senses taken into account. You might even skip description and jump right into the action. You just want to make this happen, so it is

easy fall into the trap of just saying everybody is surprised and start rolling. You lay out the results, including a few more actions for the assassin than might have been possible, so he gets away or gets off another shot.

This type of GM error drives players crazy. You have directed too much and players feel like they should have been given more details and interaction opportunities. Arguments might start. Players ask questions about what the situation was like a few seconds ago. With reluctance you answer and it turns out a character should have had a skill or sense check opportunity because of some rule.

Your encounter turns into chaos. The assassin is exposed. Turning back the clock means players take action fully aware an assassin or enemy is nearby. Refusing to change how things played out makes some players angry and others frustrated.

This has happened to me (Johnn), and let me tell you it is hell. Friendships and game-equitable atmosphere are more important to me than the game, so I always go the rewind route and play things out again, this time with players directing their PCs. The assassin is screwed now, as is my great gaming moment. However, I have finally learned the hard way to not direct character actions, especially because I am working hard to achieve a specific game effect.

## By the Book

Play the game according to the rules. Do not sacrifice your game master style just to push for a special moment. Running your game the same way for an assassin encounter as you do all other encounters ensures fairness

and consistency. There are still ways to pull off an amazing assassination encounter and play by the book.

## Pick the Place, Hide the Assassin

The assassin will want to stake out the best place to make his attack and get away. As GM, you need to choose this place ahead of time and detail it. Make a list of character perceptions. This will include skills, abilities, technology and equipment, special abilities and magic. Get it all listed out.

Detail the location against this list. For each perception item, have an idea or specific description entry ready. If the perception allows a die roll so you cannot predict what gets perceived ahead of time, assume success. If the character fails their check, that is a small victory for the assassin. The detail that ended up being unnecessary only cost you a few moments of planning, but it ensured you were ready and the game was fair.

If the assassin is aware of the PCs as a threat ahead of time, have the NPC take countermeasures for each perception he knows the PCs have. Hopefully the assassin has scouted out the PCs in this case, and knows their secrets.

If the assassination will take place so the PCs are bystanders, the NPC should take precautions against all likely perceptions, but he might miss a few unusual ones. A careful or experienced assassin will put more effort into this stage to rule out all contingencies, so it is fair to have him prepare for most, if not all items on the list.

For example, Detect Evil via spell or class ability has a range. The assassin might choose to attack well outside this range. He could get a magic item that masks his alignment. He could create a diversion so the cone of detection is unlikely to fall in his direction leading up to the attack. He could hide behind cover that blocks detection.

Regardless of what tactic you have chosen, the assassin has thought about this and you are ready for it when the encounter triggers. This makes a huge difference in your confidence. If challenged by players as to why their evil-radar did not pick up the NPC, you are ready and players will appreciate the fair reply.

## Leave Time Flexible

There is a game master rule of thumb: who, where, how and why, but never when. In most cases, you can plan an encounter with all elements fixed in place except the time it triggers. Therefore, you can plan for NPCs to be at a certain place for a certain reason doing a certain thing, but you cannot make the PCs show up on time. The players control their characters. You cannot control when they travel.

You cannot control where they travel either, but if you design an encounter to trigger anytime the PCs arrive, then location is safe. In addition, a competent assassin will study his targets and learn their habitual routes. He will choose from amongst locations his targets travel regularly. Another option, after getting to know his targets, is to create a hook guaranteed to bring them to his desired location, possibly even at the most favorable time.

For the assassination, you can pick the location, the assassin, how he will attack and why, but make it so any timing is good in case the party decides to show up morning, day or night – today, tomorrow or next week.

## Plan the Attack

How will the assassin take down his target? Set up the first round – a surprise round if things go your way:

- The assassin's location. It is best the assassin attacks from his current location. If he needs to move, all kinds of risks come into play.
- The attack type. Melee, ranged or spell?

We recommend pre-rolling the attack. If you fudge as a GM, then no need to roll. If you do not fudge, then record your results, make fake rolls behind your screen, and use the pre-rolled results instead. If you roll in front of your players, then you will need to do a bit more planning, but it is not a big deal.

Based on how the attack went, plan your next action. You will not know initiative order yet unless you fudge it, so you will need to plan four scenarios:

1. Attack kills target, assassin wins initiative
2. Attack kills target, assassin is last in initiative
3. Target still alive, assassin wins initiative
4. Target lives, assassin is last in initiative

Cases #1 and #2 are success cases, and now the assassin needs to make a clean escape. #3 and #4 might mean he needs to attack again, depending on the contract and how you want to play the NPC. Remember, 'He who fights and runs away lives to assassinate another day'.

For planning purposes, landing in the middle of initiative is the same as landing last – the killer becomes exposed to potentially lethal or crippling attacks, so these four cases are all that matter.

No need to pre-roll and lay out detailed actions for all four cases unless this is fun for you and you have the time. Doing so increases the NPC's chances of success, so feel free.

Otherwise, take a piece of paper and divide it into quadrants, one for each case. Label each box (target alive/dead, initiative won/lost) and brainstorm possible tactics in each box.

Some tactics might seem like excellent ideas and prompt you to redesign part of the NPC. For example, can the assassin afford a ring of blinking because there is an awesome place nearby he can hide in or escape through if he makes it there undetected? Perhaps the assassin has excellent chances of escape if his speed was 40' or his Climb modifier was five points higher. How could you make that happen?

Keep this paper nearby when the encounter starts and let it inspire your tactics as you run the game.

## The Setup

That is about all the planning you can do, so now we move onto running the game. Wait until players tell you their characters are

headed to the place you have chosen to trigger the assassination. You cannot direct them to go there, unless this is an accepted style of gameplay (some groups jump directly from encounter to encounter like a movie directed by the GM, and others game out the moments between encounters as directed by the players).

Give the PCs all the incentive you can to travel to the encounter location without tipping your hand:

- NPC arranges meeting
- Place contains a clue or next stage of quest
- Place contains a reward
- Location is en route (and the only route) to an important destination
- PCs regularly visit location (e.g. it is a favorite store or tavern, their home base, near a contact)

## Describe the Scene

No need for initiative or battlemats yet. Give a brief overview of the encounter location and what is going on. Keep your perceptions list and those preparations handy so you do not miss describing anything the characters might have perceived and deemed important. Make your description brief. Too much detail might alert players something else is going on other than their main purpose in visiting this location. Add a few unrelated and unnecessary details to mislead the group. You have two choices here: description of something static or description of an action.

Your best bet involves something static because perceptive players with good memories will feel less manipulated after the encounter, if they put the pieces together at all. For example, you throw in mention of an exotic plant and a nice mural.

Describing an action smacks more of GM manipulation. It is also more effective at hooking players, so go ahead and use this if you need a stronger diversion in your description. For example, a hooded figure stares at the PCs from a shadowed doorway, and a child thief attempts to steal a rat on a stick from a cleaver-wielding merchant. These hooks are likely to draw the PCs in to interact. After the encounter, sharp players might accuse you of putting these coincidences in there to trick them, and if this happens too often, you will find these tricks stop working or characters get more chaotic. However, who can resist checking out the mysterious stranger or trying to stop a homeless child from being cleaved? It works.

## Give the PCs One More Action

Take a leap of faith here and let the PCs take at least one action in the scene before the assassination triggers. This gives them a sense of control and a feeling like the game is fair because they could have tried sensing other things, asked you questions to get more information, taken cover because they are paranoid and so on.

The leap of faith comes in because who knows what the characters will do. They will investigate the fake details you planted or continue with their main purpose here, with any luck. However, there is also a chance the wizard casts Detect Invisibility and aims it right at the plant where the assassin was hiding. This is the beauty of the game. Enjoy such a moment, have a

good laugh, and reward the player with required information about what they perceive.

You might be tempted to move the assassin, plant another one nearby, or react in other ways to make the encounter go off as planned. That is your choice, but do not do so out of spite because your plans were foiled. In many situations, you can get away with these reactive changes. But this is a special type of encounter because it is charged with danger and emotion. Chances are your little change would have been foiled by the perceptions list that you now don't have time to run through (unless you take a quick break) or for some other reason, and you get into the same mess as you do when directing PC actions. If you decide to make a sudden change to this encounter, be very careful. In general, avoid railroading where you make what you want to have happen occur regardless of PC actions.

## Attack

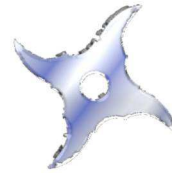
You set the scene. You gave everybody a moment to react, inquire and take action. Now is the time you have been waiting for. If the assassin has surprise, launch the attack. If not, roll for initiative and look at your paper with the four cases on it for tactical inspiration.

## Congratulations

Following this path takes a bit of time. You need to plan a bit beforehand. However, you have given everyone a fair chance, you have not forced things to happen to make players mad at you, and the assassin is given the best possible chances to carry out

his mission and survive it based on your knowledge of the rules, player styles and situation.

If things go awry do not beat yourself up. Learn from your mistakes and plan another assassination. If things went well then congratulations, your players will be talking about this encounter for some time to come.



## Excerpts From:

### Chapter 4: Non-Player Characters & New Character Classes



This chapter starts with details of the Deity Of Life in a new Pantheon developed specifically for Assassin's Amulet, and some of the trappings, myths, and legends that surround her.

In Assassin's Amulet you will also find detailed information on a unique Assassin's Guild, 6 new character classes (2 core and 4 prestige); a ready-to-run Guildmaster NPC; a new monster that lurks within the Guild Halls; advice on Assassin Personalities; Advice on opposition to the Assassins Guild; and a complete character. That character, with history, is detailed at third, sixth, ninth, twelfth, fifteenth, and eighteenth levels, so that you can pick the version that best fits your campaign.

And it's all presented for both D&D 3.x and the Pathfinder game system, ready to use.

Cyrene is central to the concepts behind Assassin's Amulet. We had to include part of the section that details her; but we also had to edit it very carefully to conceal certain plot twists to keep them away from Players!

We're actually going to preface the excerpts from this chapter with a glimpse behind-the-scenes from one of the authors of Assassin's Amulet, Mike Bourke, as he reveals the creative process that shaped the NPC Deity Of Life, Cyrene.

Originally published at Campaign Mastery on September 29, 2011, this article was part of the build-up to the release of Assassin's Amulet. It was written to introduce the excerpt, and explain its limitations to the reader. We are presenting it here in unexpurgated form.

## The Creation Of A Deity: The Origins Of Cyrene

by Mike Bourke



## Recalling the creation of a Divinity

We're continuing to build up to the big release of Assassin's Amulet, and my excitement is reaching fever pitch (I can't speak for Johnn & Michael). As part of that buildup, next week I'm going to present you with another excerpt from the book – but before I do, I wanted to tell you a bit about what you're going to read, and what you aren't – and why not – because it's relevant beyond the boundaries of this one game supplement.

## Concept Origins

Today, I'm going to be telling you about Cyrene, a Greater Goddess and part of the original Pantheon that we've created for AA. Cyrene started as a cipher, a name that Michael included in his product pitch to the two of us. Supposedly, the Assassins of the game supplement's title carried out their bloody work in the name of this being – whether she was the Guildmaster, or the Goddess, or some pretender, we had no idea.

## What's In A Name?

To confuse matters still further, in the various places where she was referred to – or he, Gender was still uncertain at this point – her name was spelt in two different ways:

- "Cerene" (rhymes with "Serene"), and
- "Cyrene" (suggestive of "Siren").

It's true that to some extent, we could use any name we wanted to, since we were

creating the concept of this entity from scratch. But we were concerned about the subtext and associations of the two names, as indicated above, and debated at length which one was more appropriate – Was “Cerene” to be a Deity of a placid, Elysian afterlife, with the suggestion of calm waters and endless late-spring days, or a more dangerous creation, who led men to their dooms (using ‘doom’ in its older sense of destiny – I was re-reading *Lord Of The Rings* at the time)?

A web search eventually settled the matter, when I discovered that “Cerene” was already in use, and was an existing and legitimate female name. But there remain aspects of Cyrene that date back to that alternative spelling; and I thought the anecdote worth sharing with our readers as an example of the logic to be used in choosing a name for significant NPCs in your games.

## No Stat Blocks

What you won’t find, either here or in *Assassin’s Amulet*, is a stat block for Cyrene. One of the greatest ongoing annoyances to me is the use of stat blocks to describe Deities in various gaming resources, going all the way back to the original version of *Deities & Demigods* by TSR, in games which permit PCs to exceed the capabilities of the Gods as shown by the Stat Blocks. – A problem that was only compounded by the incompatibility of the *Epic Level Handbook* and the 3.x version of *Deities And Demigods*. This annoyance has translated into formative influences in each of my campaigns, all seeking to address the central issue of the differences between a PC, no matter how powerful, and a Divinity.

- In my Fumanor campaigns, the Gods were granted additional character levels and additional powers based on their province and portfolio within the Pantheon. Even if a character achieves or exceeds the stated power levels of the Gods, they would lack those additional abilities; they would also lack the restrictions that apply to divine beings. Freedom of choice is a mortal burden, not a Divine one. In these campaigns, there are no such things as Demigods – but there are various other varieties of being of near-divine power or even divine-plus power, each with its own characteristic traits and limitations. One of the ongoing “jokes” within the campaign is that Lolth has spent most of her existence attempting to bridge the gap to Divine status (even claiming it when it was not so) because she perceived them as having more power than she did; having now achieved that at the end of the first Fumanor campaign, she may now be regretting that choice as she is no longer in total control over herself and what she does. Ultimately, she was better able to achieve her ambitions and goals the way she used to be; but she cannot go back, and has been hoist on her own petard. If the PCs have their way in the *Seeds Of Empire* campaign, this limitation will ultimately be her downfall – making her achievement the ultimate in Pyrrhic victories.
- A similar approach is employed in my Superhero campaign, in which Gods not only get more character points to be built on, they get various cost reductions due to their natures, and get a whole slew of

things for free that PCs have to pay good points for (and a lot of them). But, at the same time, there are restrictions imposed on Gods and the exercising of their powers, and some additional vulnerabilities that mortals don't have to worry about. Demigods and half-divine beings fall somewhere in between. Once again, the concept is that Balance is achieved through a combination of restrictions and additional abilities; but this campaign doesn't even pretend that Deities are built to the same restrictions and standards as ordinary PCs and NPCs.

- The difference between a deity and a PC of the same levels was a central theme in the Rings Of Time campaign, something that I've documented at length in the past ('A Monkey Wrench In The Deus-Ex-Machina: Limiting Divine Power'). Suffice it to say that the 'Gods' were very respectable in that campaign (just ask them) but used mortals directly to do all their dirty work, making them not very admirable. They did have some genuine awesomeness up their sleeves, but if they ever used these abilities, the other side would also be free to do so. Hamstrung by this celestial Arms Agreement and Test-ban treaty, most of their supposed power was PR hype and spin and the hard work of a few cat's paws – including the PCs. This was Erich Von Daniken meets D&D!
- The PCs have slowly been learning, in my Shards Of Divinity campaign, that the Gods are even more hamstrung by their natures than they are in my Fumanor campaign, something they didn't think was

possible. One of the PCs expressed a desire to aspire to Divinity; the others (metaphorically) battered him around the head as a condemnation of the sheer stupidity of the notion. In this campaign, the Gods are atavistic representations of primitive dreams which can never progress or improve beyond the primitive definitions which described them early in their creations. The converse of the power they grant their priests and clerics is a total subjugation to the wildest imaginings of those priests and clerics. The gods have endured this treatment (lacking an alternative) for over a millennium and are suicidally bored to tears by it; but so long as their priesthoods remain active, they have no choice but to continue. Small wonder they act like spoilt brats and slip the leash at every opportunity! Their only hope is that the priesthood – which they have no control over – will start selecting priests for secular purposes (greed and property management) and not actual religious activities, letting them experience a quiet fading into nonexistence – or that the PCs take the burdens of power off their hands.

- Although the question has never directly come up in the Adventurer's Club campaign, the implication is that since the Power Of God is real (one of the PCs can manifest it) and so are the powers of Nameless Things Man Is Not Meant To Know, God is equally real – but existing on some completely separate stratum of reality that can never be reached by mortals, because it doesn't fit the genre for it to ever happen. Whether or not belief alone is the source of power or

there actually exists some avatar with a reality external to that belief is one of those questions the campaign will never answer.

We haven't strayed from the topic; I was explaining why there are no stat blocks for Deities in Assassin's Amulet and why there will be none when I present Cyrene as an excerpt next week.

### Stat Blocks are Inadequate

Stat blocks for Deities are, quite literally, more trouble than they are worth, because they are always subjective and have to be reinterpreted every time for each different campaign. No stat block for any deity has ever been sufficient to totally describe the powers of that deity in any of my campaigns. Or the restrictions. Or the nature of the "species" (for lack of a better term).

### Stat Blocks are Straightjackets

At the same time, A stat block defines and confines and restricts the expression of the deity within the game system – so they are not only inadequate to the task at hand, they force the GM into that mould of inadequacy.

### The Absence Of Wonder

The final crime inflicted upon a game when the Gods are given Stat Blocks is that they actively discriminate against the perpetuation of a sense of wonder. Deities should have an aura of mystery, and power, and awesomeness in which they cloak their every appearance.

The mere knowledge of the existence of a stat block undermines all three of those elements. Mystery? The answers are written down somewhere, in black and white; you

just have to read the book. Power? the limitations and vulnerabilities are written down somewhere in black and white, and the players are fully capable of exploiting those restrictions and handicaps.

Awesomeness: as soon as a character is subjected to a Stat Block, they become Just Another NPC. That's not awe-inspiring to anyone.

### A conceptual approach

Instead, what we have chosen for Assassin's Amulet, and for the entire Legacies series, is to adopt a more conceptual approach. We describe the Deity, as he or she usually manifests; we describe the titles, incarnations, and offices within the Pantheon and Cosmology that the Deity possesses; we describe the concepts that drive the deity, and the personality, and the relationships; we describe the demesne of the deity.

We do everything but define the concept in hard numbers and game mechanics, because a Deity will either be above the level of game mechanics, capable of doing whatever is in their nature to do, or the GM will have his own system for devising and determining such game mechanics – or should have such a system.

For the most part, everything that we describe is written from a character point of view. These are the myths and legends and publicly-ascribed personae of the Deity; the reality may be something else entirely, and the core of Chapter 6 is how to go about replacing Cyrene to make Assassin's Amulet fit within your campaign.

What can the deity actually do, and how easy or difficult for them to actually do it?

That's up to each individual GM. Suddenly, the players cannot know the answers – Mystery is restored. They do not know the flaws and foibles and limitations, other than by hearsay that has been deliberately 'spun' in various directions – the deity can have effectively unlimited power, at least relative to the PCs. Power is restored. The final leg of the trio, Awesomeness, depends in part on the circumstances of the encounter and the GM's roleplaying abilities – but at least he has a fair shot at achieving it.

At the same time, the Gods usually work through mortal agencies, with all their shortcomings and flaws and inadequacies. PC interactions with those agencies are at a far more prosaic and mundane level. Church politics and greed and practicalities and compromises and relations with civil authorities and errors of judgment, all come into the picture – and a much darker, seamier and seedier picture it is, as a result. Gods may or may not have feet of clay; their clergies definitely do.

## Around The Periphery

At least, this is the approach that we have taken when describing a Divine figure that is central to the game materials. As a member of a pantheon, no such Deity exists in isolation; to provide context, it became necessary to offer at least thumbnail abbreviations of some of the other members of the Pantheon, and describe the relationship between them and Cyrene. Also, and quite separately, we described the relationships between the priests of Cyrene and those of other faiths, because these can quite often be completely different to the relationships between the deities.

## Deities in future Legacies products

It is our intention – but not necessarily our commitment – to detail at least one additional member of the Pantheon in each new Legacies product. Slated (at this point) to appear in detail in Legacies #2 are both Pellina, the Goddess of Mercy, and an as-yet unnamed God Of War.

As the series proceeds and expands – for however long it does – these will form pieces of a Jigsaw representing the complete Pantheon and its place within the Legacies cosmology.

When that is mostly complete, we may or may not (depending on demand, amongst other things) put out a compilation E-book excerpting each Deity and filling out their rosters with new material – descriptions of temples, temple practices, and the like. (Let us know if you would be interested in such a product, if and when it becomes a viable proposition).

While readers at Campaign Mastery had to wait a week for the promised excerpt from Assassin's Amulet, you have no such frustrations with which to contend; the promised excerpt starts on the very next page of this preview.

But if you want the full story, you'll have to get yourself a copy of Assassin's Amulet...

# Cyrene (Greater Deity)

**Titles/Incarnations:** Giver of Mercy, Weaver of Nets, Handmaiden of Death, Shelter of Travelers, Queen of Dolphins, Bringer of Rainbows, Pool of Reflection, The Final Justice, The Last Judge; member of the Celestial Tribunal (Arbiter of Life).

Cyrene is a complex deity whose worshippers derive from as many lifestyles as she has incarnations. Her province is life itself in some of its many aspects, and this makes her both feared and revered.

## The Lesser Aspects

In her aspect as the Giver of Mercy, Cyrene is believed to spare the dying from pain and suffering, and a slow death is considered a sign of her disfavor. Many with suffering relatives and loved ones will donate to her temples and pray for her to relent. Those granted quick and painless deaths are considered to have been in her favor, and it is tradition to make a token offering at her temples by surviving friends and relatives of the departed.

The Giver of Mercy aspect is considered a Handmaiden of Thanastis, God of Death. She is believed to spend her time weaving and repairing death's net, "the net that catches all in the end." This leads to Cyrene's third incarnation, as the "Weaver of nets." Since it is believed she will permit death to take none before their time, this combination has made her a popular deity for fishermen and sailors, many of whom attend services regularly when not at sea, and make offerings before every voyage—the more dangerous the journey ahead, the greater the offering.

This belief has expanded slowly through the wider community, giving rise to her newest title, the Shelter of Travelers. It is said that, on occasion, lost and weary travelers near to death (but whose time has not yet come) will stumble upon a rich estate, where the mistress of the household (a woman of great dignity and beauty, well spoken and of gentle demeanor) will offer shelter for the night.

She will heal their wounds and host a great feast. When the travelers awaken the next morning, the estate and manor house will be gone, but they will be refreshed, have had their provisions resupplied and will be on or near the path to their destination. However, should any attempt to abuse the hospitality offered, they will be trapped within the estate when it vanishes and never be seen again. Because of this legend, offerings to Cyrene are now commonplace before any journey.

Fishermen also know Cyrene as Queen of Dolphins, for they believe such creatures to be animal-form incarnations of the deity. They say she sends her subjects to protect those who would otherwise meet an untimely end at sea. Some believe that being rescued by dolphins earns a debt that must be repaid with a year's service in the temple in whatever menial capacity is necessary; some never leave this service and go on to become lay preachers.

Hathandros, God of Storms and Seas, is considered capricious, ill-tempered at best, and resentful of those who intrude upon his domain without paying the proper respect—a standard that notoriously changes with his mood. When Hathandros is in "one of his moods," only the intervention of Cyrene can save those who have angered him. Some theologians cast Hathandros and Cyrene as husband and wife, but many dispute this. Nevertheless, it

is also believed by some that Cyrene sends rainbows as a sign his ill temper has passed. Others believe Cyrene sends rainbows to mark individuals as especially blessed or in her favor to pique Hathandros's jealous nature and permit him to show off his power and manliness.

These beliefs give rise to the last of the lesser aspects of Cyrene, that of the Bringer of Rainbows. This aspect is much beloved by children, and it is believed by others that Cyrene herself is barren and can bear no children of her own, the price of some terrible struggle in the past. Some suggest she sacrificed this aspect of her femininity to acquire the power she possesses. In either regard, she is said to derive great enjoyment from the playing of children, and is believed to spend much of her life near playgrounds and parks. Certainly, this is a popular location for the establishment of temples and shrines erected in her name.

## The Pool of Reflection

### The myth

There are some who claim the Pool of Reflection is merely another of the wonders to be found on Cyrene's estate grounds. Others claim the estate exists merely to house the Pool, but the majority believes the Pool of Reflection is an inhuman aspect of the deity, and hence can appear anywhere.

Those who gaze into the pool at their reflections are able to perceive every significant moment of their past lives, recognize their contributions to life, society and history, glean a hint as to their role in the greater story of the world, and gain a sense of how much of their accorded lifespan remain.

The experience tends to humble the arrogant, educate the humble and bring about sudden changes in personality in many, as those who have achieved much (whether they knew it or not) are given recognition of those achievements by the gods, and those who have squandered their lives are given a final warning.

### The facts

GMs are free to choose the true nature of the pool:

- An artifact that wanders the world aimlessly and randomly, teleporting from place to place, a magical quality that temporarily transforms ordinary pools of water
- A magical pool located upon the estates of Cyrene
- An incarnation of the goddess herself
- Something else.

Those who look into the pool and gaze into their own reflection must make a Perception check at DC20. Success in this check imparts recognition of the true significance of the achievements of the individual's life, stripped of all ego, vanity, self-deception and bias, and permits a second Perception check at DC25. Success in this second check gives a general sense of the time-scale of the remaining years in the individual's life: none, years, decades, or centuries.

Success in the first check also confers a permanent +2 Wisdom ability score increase, while success in the second confers +2 Wisdom, in addition to any received from the first check.

The combination frequently leads individuals who experience it to make radical changes in their lives or experience radical shifts in personality.

Success at the second check also permits some individuals (at the GM's discretion) to make a third check at DC 50.

Should this succeed, the individual is accorded a glimpse of the most notable achievement to which they can aspire in the remaining time allotted to them. Success in perceiving this is worth an additional permanent +4 Wisdom ability score increase.

Failure to pursue this potential achievement, once it has been revealed, earns the enmity of the gods. We recommend you determine the substance of the possible achievement in collaboration with the player of the character responsible rather than foisting a destiny on the character that does not accord with the player's wishes. These achievements might be mundane or even seemingly trivial, such as raising a large family, marrying the perfect mate, owning a business empire, or even living a life of destitute poverty but with spiritual grace. The achievements should not be guaranteed to happen, either. The character should have to actively work at achieving the goals.

## The Final Justice

The last incarnation of Cyrene is also the most feared. As the Final Justice, Cyrene dictates whose life has run its course and whose has not. The elderly and infirm frequently make offerings at her temples. Some seek an extension of their lifespan, some a quick release from their lives and others are simply grateful for one more day. In this incarnation, God of Death Thanastis serves Cyrene, visiting those to whom she directs. This gives some indication of the complexities of their relationship.

No matter how evil or good one's life, how rich or poor, the Final Justice is meted out equally to all, and all will face judgment before the Celestial Tribunal. In oppressive regimes, it is believed the common folk attend services in Cyrene's temples to pray for the death of their ruler. The more enlightened amongst such rulers consider this a means of releasing anger and hostility that might otherwise lead to rebellions. The more shortsighted perceive this as fomenting such rebellions, and often seek to quell the worship of Cyrene, harassing her priests and burning her temples and shrines.

Both reactions misjudge the patience of the goddess. All will be at her disposal at their allotted time, regardless of rank or social status; she will neither hasten nor delay that moment without good cause. Temporal events are but trivial moments passing by in the interim, and eventually, those responsible will face judgment for their actions.

## The Unnatural Extension of Life

The greatest crime in the eyes of Cyrene is the extension of life beyond the allocated span. There are means, arcane and spiritual, those with the knowledge and power can use to forestall the appointed hour. The priests of Cyrene preach there is but a finite amount of life at any given time, and that such blasphemous actions rob another of their turn at life. Every stillborn child is a sign that someone, somewhere, has extended their lifespan beyond its allotted years, and that the individual should be sought out and overcome by those with the strength and means to do so.

It is occasionally rumored that Cyrene's followers include in their numbers a secret order who take a more direct hand in

finding those who perpetrate such blasphemies and bringing them to an end. However, nothing has ever been proven, no evidence has ever been found.

## Cyrene and Undeath

While Cyrene and her followers consider undeath to be unholy and blasphemous in its own right, they perceive this as forestalling judgment and not forestalling death itself. They will not go out of their way to destroy the undead, but feel a kinship with those who do, and will support such endeavors undertaken by others.

## The Celestial Tribunal

Cyrene is a member of the Celestial Tribunal, which judges each soul's fate after death and award it a place in what they deem an appropriate afterlife.

The other members of the Tribunal are:

- Averinis, the God of Justice (presiding and non-voting)
- Pellina, the Goddess of Virtue, and
- Lashinus, the God of Vice (who is frequently represented by his wife, Doravia, the Goddess of Temptation).

Cyrene rarely sits in judgment on the tribunal, nor argues one way or another. Her role is to report the facts of the individual's life to the tribunal, and hence remains impartial and neutral. Only in the event of tribunal deadlock will she be called upon to cast the deciding vote, which she will seldom directly do. Instead, she will place before the spirit being judged a challenge to test its worthiness.

Occasionally, she might demand an Afterlife Quest to undo some wrong or achieve some great deed in the name of the tribunal, successful completion of which will earn her favor.

The exception to this neutral posture comes when judging one who has blasphemed against life itself, either by the unnatural extension of life, or by the restoration of a life that had ended. In such cases, she is a hostile vote.

Once in awhile, one of the other members of the tribunal will abstain, and the tribunal will again be deadlocked. Since the God of Virtue and Goddess of Vice never change their votes once cast, Cyrene is the swing vote. This is the other mechanism by which an Afterlife Quest may be ordered. In effect, Cyrene demands the spirit undertake a quest to earn her forgiveness for its blasphemy against her domain—something she will not begrudge lightly.

## Temple Relationships

Priests of Hathandros, God of Storms and Seas, often bicker and dislike priests of Cyrene, though this enmity can be set aside at need.

Priests of the other members of the Celestial Tribunal in general respect Cyrene's priests, but individual personalities might overrule this broad principle.

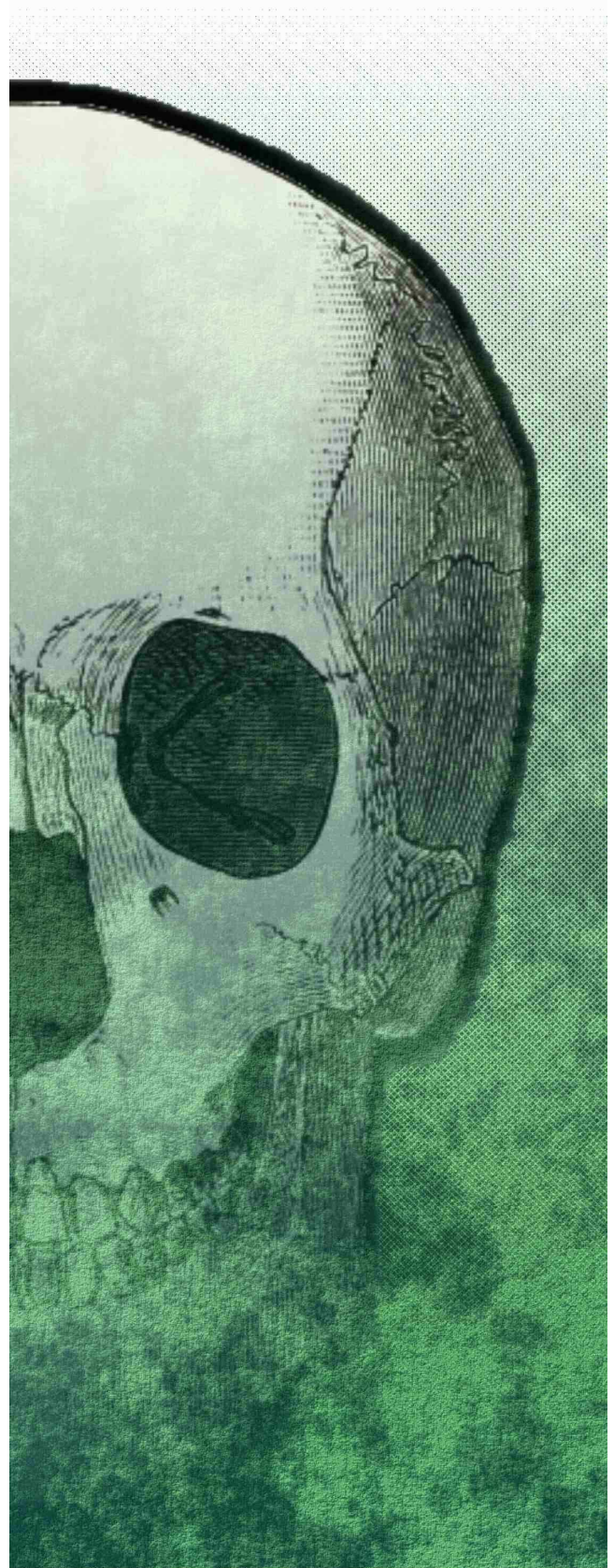
Priests of Thanastis, God of Death, consider themselves allies of the priests of Cyrene, as do priests of Lumina, Goddess of Life. Since these two temples are often opposed to each other, they frequently call upon Cyrene's followers to act as a go-between when cooperation is necessary.

Priests of Cyrene find followers of Doravia, Goddess of Temptation, manipulative and hence consider her priests unwelcome.

Priests of Calumnus, God of Knowledge and Magic, are frequently opposed to the Priests of Cyrene.

Other temple relationships are neutral unless an event occurs to change the status quo.

That's as much as we can share on the subject without compromising the secrets and plot twists within the game supplement, I'm afraid. Hopefully it's enough to inspire you, or at least give you some ideas.



## Excerpts From:

### Chapter 5: New Equipment, Magic Items & Treasures



The fifth chapter of Assassin's Amulet is all about Goodies – equipment for your PCs to use, and for your PCs to fear.

We have new magical equipment, new non-magical equipment, and then the centrepiece of the chapter: Legacy Items.

This gives us the opportunity to clue you in concerning something else you get when you buy Assassin's Amulet – extras. Lots of extras.

Because we want the content to be as useful to GMs as possible, we have organized it in multiple different ways. The version in Assassin's Amulet itself is designed to be the most comprehensive and accessible arrangement of the information for a GM. It is not the most useful for handing to a player, for all sorts of reasons, not least of which is the concealment of surprises to come. So, we have separated that material into two bonus volumes – a Player's Guide, and a GM's guide that has been extended and annotated. While the Player's Guide is expected to become publicly available as a free sample at some point, because it is going to be central to future Legacies products, the GM's Guide will only ever be available to paying customers.

This brings us to what you will see on the pages that follow. For Campaign Mastery, Mike excerpted the Players' Guide in two parts, and we are presenting both of them below, complete with introductory comments. This is still less than what is included in the full Players' Guide. So, read on...

*From Campaign Mastery, October 13, 2011:*

One of the ambitions that we have for AA is to break the content up into slices of particular value to a campaign, and to the Legacies series in general. These "Players Guides" and "GMs Guides" will be offered as free bonus publications to anyone buying the source E-book, and some may be offered as freebies and samples as well. One of the first of these, to be produced is "A player's Guide to Legacy Items", which excerpts 15 pages from the 300 that comprise Assassin's Amulet and contains everything that a Player needs to know in order to receive and use a Legacy Item in play. This has been carefully edited to remove any game mechanics that the player doesn't need to know – those will be in the "GM's Companion Guide to Legacy Items".

Because it fits the theme of this month's Blog Carnival, and because it's cool content (IMHO), I have decided to present here the first half of a two-part excerpt from the 'Player's Guide'. This won't tell anyone everything they need to know about Legacy Items, but it will speak to the concept of making the Loot Part Of The Plot, and – by way of example – illustrate how this can be done. And hopefully, it will entice a few more people to take the plunge when the time comes...

## An excerpt from 'A player's Guide to Legacy Items' – Part 1

By Mike Bourke

Legacy Items are powerful arcane and spiritual objects that occupy a middle ground between relics and artifacts on the one hand, and 'ordinary' magic items on the other. Legacy Items begin their existence in a campaign as mundane pieces of equipment, and gradually rise in power as their owner grows in ability and prestige.

### What is a Legacy Item?

Shared experiences leave a metaphysical fingerprint on the world. Some fingerprints are bound to the location of the events, and can be relived in dreams at those places. Others are bound to concepts, philosophies or personalities that resonate with those who experienced the events. This type manifests as paranormal experiences or extraordinary bonuses in support of, or more frequently in opposition to, others who represent the concepts or philosophies.

A few strong imprints can coalesce within an ideal object relevant to the source of the imprint. This transforms it into a connection that binds the Legacy of the experience to the individual who wields the item. As the object manifests greater and greater power in the hands of the individual, it subtly shapes the personality and ambitions of the possessor until they come to embody and represent those who shared the original

experience, becoming heir to their thoughts, dreams, aspirations greatness and, yes, their flaws.

When the heir passes on, the Legacy begins anew to bind itself to a new inheritor. Over time, the term Legacy comes to apply to the original imprint and the current bearer of that imprint. Such a Legacy might embody any philosophy or emotional state.

The Legacy of a group dedicated to peace might become less willing to engage in battle until all other avenues have been exhausted. If the group whose Legacy this is were betrayed by orcs, there might be an exception made in their case, where the item possessor will come to instinctively distrust the race and all its representatives, and will encourage acts of aggression and violence against them.

A Legacy can be simple, such as “Death to trolls”, or as complex as desired by the GM. However, it always represents the philosophy and ideology and traumas of some long-lost (and possibly forgotten) group whose beliefs were strong enough to survive the destruction or failure of that group, and which find themselves a new home in the Legacy Item.

## How is a Legacy Item Created?

In technical terms, a Legacy Item is a masterwork item that, unbeknownst to the creator, serves as a symbolic representation of a past group or race. Expecting the item to become enchanted, both mage and craftsman are astonished when the enchantment fails to take.

The binding of Legacy to “Home” must be complete for the potential enchantment to be consumed and bound to the Legacy, making it appear as if the enchantment has failed. If the process of enchantment is initiated prior to this binding being complete, the capacity for the binding is consumed by the enchantment, and the item becomes an ordinary magic item. This means there are few opportunities for Legacy Item creation, and even then they items are rarely recognized because this is not the only reason enchantments fail. If the enchantment is not performed correctly; if there is a hidden flaw in the item being enchanted; if there is any sort of disruption in the arcane or spiritual energies being infused in the item; if any of a dozen things go wrong, the enchantment will fail.

Sometimes, the process of the failed enchantment destroys the item. Other times the failure just mars it, leaving an ordinary and non-enchantable item. The enchantment might also become twisted and produce a cursed item. On rare occasions, the failure is the result of the intervention of an outside agency – producing a Legacy Item.

Most of the time, crafters and possessors discard Legacy Items as cursed or flawed. The items are never used long enough for others to recognize their true power and worth. And even when a Legacy Item’s powers and influence are known, they often become a closely held secret.

Legacy Items shape the user, making them the heir to everything that defined the particular group whose Legacy the item represents. Those who recognize this can use this shaping to their own benefit by inciting involuntarily reflex reactions from the Legacy and not from the wielder. As a result, wielders learn quickly to preserve the secret source of their enhanced abilities.

On rare occasions, a Legacy Item can be deliberately created by having such an idealized representation constructed at the exact location where a fingerprint resides, an echo of some great past evil or good. More frequently, though, happenstance and coincidence create them.

## How Does a Character Acquire a Legacy Item?

Any non-enchanted masterwork item might actually be a Legacy Item. The only way to know is to use the item for a period, foregoing the advantages of using an enchanted item. If the wielder's personality, motives or objective harmonizes enough with the Legacy Item, it will begin to bind itself to him.

Without sufficient common ground in these areas for the item and the character to relate to one another, the item remains seemingly inert. In these cases, the item begins to influence the character subconsciously, raising doubts and creating confusion until the character opens up to new concepts, ideas and ideologies. The item then exploits this opening to mould the character into the being the Legacy needs him to be.

If this process proceeds too slowly, or if the character proves resistant, the item will attempt to influence those around the wielder in a subtle manner. While the wielder is subject to overt and cumulative effects, those around him find their reactions and inclinations become stronger or weaker, which puts the wielder into circumstances more appropriate for the Legacy Item's perspective.

It is usually in the Legacy Item's best interests for the character to survive, so it will not go too far in these manipulations. It is also in the item's best interests to avoid having its nature discovered by the wielder before the binding is complete, so it will be as subtle as possible.

It is also worth noting that a Legacy Item is not intelligent, though it may become so as the power of the Legacy grows. The effects described above are more like instinctive prompts on the item's part, making the nature of the Legacy harder to discern.

## Legacy Items in the hands of an unbound character

When initially wielding the item, a character gains no direct benefit. However, he will find that using the item feels 'right' in some indefinable manner, that it imbues him with a sense of confidence and certainty he will be a significant individual in the future with power and influence. He will feel his destiny being shaped by circumstance into something greater.

This confidence can manifest occasionally as a minor benefit to the character: a +1 initiative, +1 on a bluff or diplomatic skill check, +1 on a Fear save, +1 to hit, +1 to damage, and so on. These benefits manifest just on occasion, perhaps one time in ten, when possible. Each such manifestation counts as one aiding of the character — a total the player needs to track for reasons explained in the next section. When an aiding occurs, the character feels the item has made the difference between success or failure, or at least, made success easier to achieve.

When confronted with an opportunity to act in accordance with the Legacy when he would normally not do so, the character should make a Will save at DC 10 to resist instinctively following the influence of the item. This is true even if the character is normally immune to, or resistant to, mind-altering effects.

If the character is actively opposed to the philosophy and objectives of the Legacy, the Legacy Item will begin subtly interfering in the judgment and reactions of those around the character. These effects are more subtle, as described above, but are also harder to resist as a result; surrounding characters are required to make Will saves at DC 15 to resist.

Note that at this point in their journey together, the item's influence is not strong enough to force the character into an alignment violation. However, it can imbue a desire to find a way to achieve a certain objective within the character's alignment restrictions.

### Binding a character to the Legacy

Ultimately, the time will come when the character makes some form of positive declaration of ownership or destiny relating to the item or the innate Legacy objectives.

**In game mechanics, this occurs involuntarily when the item has aided the character a number of times equal to the character's Wisdom score.**

The declaration signals that the process of binding the character to the Legacy that item contains, with the item serving as an intermediary, has commenced.

When the character sleeps, rests, or meditates, he will begin reliving key moments of the past that is represented by the Legacy within his dreams or reveries. When he awakens, he will have difficulty remembering specifics, no matter how much he tries.

- Recollection is vague and general: Will save DC 10
- Recollection is an overall impression: Will save DC 12
- Recollection is a specific event, bereft of context: Will save DC 15
- Recollection is fragmentary and incomplete: Will save DC 20
- Recollection is random and irrelevant to the current situation: Will save DC 22
- Recollection is specific and relevant to the current situation: Will save DC 25

Until the binding process is complete, the character can still give up the item and its Legacy, though he will usually resist doing so once the binding process has begun, perhaps to the point of violence.

At the same time, the influence of the Legacy over the character will continue to grow. This first manifests in areas about which the Legacy directly relates. For example, a revenge-obsessed Legacy of violence toward dark elves would only trigger in circumstances where a dark elf was directly involved, and the save DC to avoid the prompting of the Legacy rises from 15 to 20.

Legacy Items can influence either the possessor or those around him, but not both at the same time. The item is no longer capable of influencing those surrounding the wielder while it directs its energies towards achieving a binding between the character and the Legacy.

It will prompt the character to take a more active interest and involvement in the affairs of significance to the Legacy. Those who know the character well or observe him closely may realize he struggles with some inner battle or temptation; sometimes he wins, and sometimes he loses. They may note that he acquires an interest in subjects that were never part of his activities in the past, or spends a growing part of his time pursuing new hobbies or avocations.

Over time, the Legacy will influence the character in situations where its motivations are only indirectly related. At this point, the character may even blame those against whom the Legacy is directed for what he is experiencing.

Eventually, the Binding will be complete. **This is signaled when the character takes an action not previously within their personality, purely because of the influence of the Legacy Item.** This action is in complete violation of his normal character, beliefs and alignment.

The speed with which this process proceeds depends (in game mechanics terms) on the power of the first significant ability granted by the Legacy Item. In Game mechanics, this is a number determined by the GM by means of a process described within Assassin's Amulet.

In the interim, while the process of binding the character to a legacy remains incomplete, he will gain the benefits of an initial minor power, known as the First Inheritance. This is simply one of the unreliable benefits described previously: +1 to initiative, +1 on bluff or diplomatic skill checks, +1 on fear saves, +1 to hit, +1 to damage. However, the character can now use this power whenever he uses the Legacy Item.

### Binding the Legacy to the character

When the binding process is complete, the character becomes the guardian and last representative of the Legacy. While he remains in control of his actions and choices, he will be aware of the inclinations of the Legacy he represents and feel urgings to behave in accordance with the beliefs and attitudes he now embodies. He gains a substantial ability, referred to as the Second Inheritance.

From time to time thereafter, as he gains in character levels, he has the opportunity to unlock powers, known as Inheritances, within the Legacy Item. Should he succeed in doing so, these powers are his to call upon thereafter; should he fail to do so, the power will not be available until the character next succeeds in unlocking a power within the Legacy Item, acquiring in the process not only acquire the new ability he has just unlocked but also the power he failed to unlock previously. The greater the power, the more difficult the challenge of unlocking that power will be.

Legacy Items are one of the conceptual planks that form the infrastructure of the Legacies series.

“A player’s Guide to Legacy Items” excerpts 15 pages from the 300 that comprise AA and contains everything that a Player needs to know in order to receive and use a Legacy Item in play.

Because it fits the theme of this month’s Blog Carnival, and because it’s cool content (IMHO), today’s blog post presents the second half of a two-part excerpt from the ‘Player’s Guide’. This won’t tell anyone everything they need to know about Legacy Items, but it will speak to the concept of making the Loot Part Of The Plot, and – by way of example – illustrate how this can be done. This article will pick up right where we left off...

And yes, there will be an expanded GM’s guide offered as free to purchasers of Assassin’s Amulet – past, present, and future – in the near future.



## An excerpt from ‘A player’s Guide to Legacy Items’ – Part 2

By Mike Bourke

### The Powers of a Legacy Item

Legacy Items have multiple powers, from minor to major, that they grant to the wielder. Initially, the wielder will not even be certain the item is granting a power, so unreliable are the benefits while the character is unbound to the item. When the binding process begins, the character gains access to a more reliable ability, appropriate to the nature of the Legacy that the Legacy Item represents. This advantage is known as the **First Inheritance**.

As the wielder and Legacy Item bond together, the character levels gained mark the passage of time as the bonding experience proceeds. When sufficient time has passed, the bonding is complete and the character gains the benefits of a power referred to as The Second Inheritance. The power level of the Second Inheritance determines the number of levels to be gained before the bonding is complete, and so on.

At the GM’s discretion, the character may experience flashes of the Second Inheritance in advance of its being reliably available to the character, under circumstances especially appropriate to the Legacy. When such circumstances are present, the GM should roll a dX, where X is the number of

levels remaining before the bonding is complete; on a roll of '1' the power may be called upon, once, and immediately.

Once bound to a Legacy, the character gains the opportunity to unlock additional Inheritances as he gains additional levels, presumably while representing the Legacy. There may be many such Inheritances of a minor nature, or few of more substantial power, or some combination of these two extremes.

### Base Inheritance rankings

Inheritances are ranked on a scale of 2 to 6. Each increase in ranking indicates the Inheritance is more powerful – roughly doubling with each +1.

A table describing the ranking of specific powers is provided in Assassin's Amulet. The table offers usable examples but the list is not exhaustive. Powers and restrictions not listed are possible and acceptable, limited only to the GM's creativity.

### Inheritance ranking modifiers

The base ranking of one or more Inheritances are then adjusted by applying Ranking Modifiers, which reflect how well the power(s) express the unique nature of their Legacy.

The GM determines the ranking appropriate to each Inheritance after listing the powers he wishes the Legacy Item to confer.

### Total Legacy Ranking

The modified rankings of individual powers are then totaled to determine the

Total Legacy Ranking. Most Legacy Items have a total of 16-20 total ranking; some, suitable only for an Epic Campaign, might have as many as 40 total ranks.

The greater the total, the more powerful the Legacy Item will become when the character has mastered the powers it offers.

### Valuation of a Legacy Item

The value of a legacy item consists of two parts, which are totaled:

- 20,000 gp x the total ranking of revealed powers;
- plus, if the total ranking of revealed powers is less than 16, an additional 50,000 gp.

A Legacy Item with 8 power ranks revealed has a value of 210,000gp – mostly for the abilities it is already known to confer, plus a lump sum reflecting the certainty that there are more to come.

### Unlocking Powers

Until an Inheritance is unlocked, a power only exists as a potential – something the Legacy Item may grant in the future, but which it does not yet bestow. **The number of levels a character must gain to receive an opportunity to unlock the next Inheritance equals the modified power ranking of that Inheritance.**

For example, if the modified power ranking of the Fourth Inheritance is 3, the character must earn 3 levels before the character can attempt to unlock the Inheritance, starting from the point at which the character had his first opportunity to unlock the Third

Inheritance. The character must use the Legacy Item as the primary item of its kind throughout these levels. If the Legacy Item is a sword, for example, it must be the character's primary melee weapon.

**Players should not know how many levels they have to achieve before they get the opportunity to unlock a further inheritance. Nor should they be informed when they have unlocked the last Inheritance of an item.**

Unlocking an Inheritance Power requires more than merely achieving the character levels specified. The possessor must also complete one or more tasks, skill checks or quests specified by the GM as the key to unlocking that power. These tests are known as an Unlocking Challenge. After the possessor succeeds at the Unlocking Challenge, the power becomes unlocked and readily available to the character.

As soon as a character qualifies to attempt an Unlocking Challenge, the process of earning levels toward unlocking the next power begins.

### **Roleplaying requirements**

Unlocking Challenges are required because they encourage players to roleplay the effects of the Legacy. Legacy Items are powerful, but the price of that power is an influence shaping the character's opinions, reactions and thoughts. This manifests in game mechanics as a roleplaying requirement.

The Legacy carried by a Legacy Item is as much a part of the personality of the wielder as any other. It need not be dominant, but it must not be secondary.

The GM and the player should agree on the nature of the personality effects of the Legacy when reaching the point where character can no longer discard the Legacy Item (unlocking the Second Inheritance).

The GM should formulate background elements prior to this event to serve as the foundation for this influence, and use the binding period to give the player – and the character – fair warning in-game of what lies before them.

One of the major reasons for the binding period (during which the character is not committed to the Legacy) from a metagame perspective is to facilitate a considered decision in this matter.

**The GM defines the Legacy and the powers it grants. The player determines how that Legacy will shape the character.**

The GM must enforce these mutual decisions, and should review the actions and decisions of the character each time a character levels up to ensure the Legacy is being properly reflected in the character's behavior.

This does not grant the GM a veto over the choices of the player; however, it does require him to point out that failure to act appropriately will have consequences for the character, up to and including the possibility that the level just gained will not count toward unlocking the next Inheritance. In this respect, the Legacy is not unlike an alignment restriction or the code of behavior to which a paladin should adhere.

Unlocking a new Inheritance Power is akin to an end-of-year exam in the subject of "behavior appropriate to the Legacy." It is not enough to overcome whatever Unlocking Challenge the GM places before

the character with a skill roll or a battle; the manner of the solution is as important as the answer itself.

### Unlocking challenge difficulty

Assassin's Amulet contains a procedure for the GM to use in determining exactly how difficult a challenge the character must overcome in order to unlock an Inheritance. Unless it is important to the specific Legacy, there is no requirement for the character to solve the problem or defeat the challenge unassisted by other PCs.

In general, it is fair to say that the difficulties increase with successive Inheritances and with the power level of the Inheritance that the character is about to attempt to unlock.

The challenge should consist of a mini-adventure or subplot whose length and difficulty reflects these factors.

Depending on the player and his inclination and ability to contribute to the overall metaplot of the campaign, the GM may permit the player to assist in the design of this mini-adventure/side-quest/subplot, or may spring it on the character blind. It may form part of the ongoing plotlines within the campaign, or it may be a side-quest completely divorced from those plotlines.

GMs should bear in mind it is not enough for the character and his companions (if any) to overcome these purely mechanical challenges; the roleplay component is just as essential, and the design of the Unlocking Challenge should provide an opportunity for that roleplay.

### Impact on characters

When discussing these notions with playtesters, the question was posed whether these challenges should be real events, with substantial impact on the lives and history of the world and the affected characters, or whether they should take the form of dreams or illusions with no external effect.

Opinion on this question was divided. Some argued the training during the bonding stage had established a precedent, while others took the position that, since the Legacy and its powers were real, if metaphysical, so should the challenge be, and that enforcing some impact on the outside world of the character coming to represent the Legacy was appropriate.

While each GM is free to rule on this matter as he or she sees fit, a consensus eventually emerged in the aforementioned debate:

- Whenever possible, the GM should undertake to make the challenges real, with real impact on the game world.
- Where this is not possible, the Legacy will twist the perceptions of the possessor (but not his companions) to make events seem relevant. For example, making the population of a town appear to be bugbears, trolls or other race appropriate to trigger Legacy-derived behavior.
- If this is also not possible, only then should the challenge take place entirely within the confines of the character's mind. In this case, the GM should enlist the assistance of the other players at the table.

There is an important distinction between these options which deserves emphasizing. With the first two alternatives, there are genuine risks, and hence there should be genuine rewards and consequences, especially to the characters not wielding the Legacy Item. In the third case there is no risk – a character who is killed simply wakes up from the dream – so there should be no rewards beyond the unlocking of the Inheritance or not.

That means the character should gain no experience points for success, just as he loses nothing in the event of failure; his sole reward is the activation of the next Inheritance, his sole punishment for failure the lack of activation of the same.

Furthermore, the GM can interpret the middle ground as imposing circumstances that make an encounter more difficult. If this is the case, he may offer additional rewards.

## The Effects of a Legacy

Legacy Items are high-fantasy plot devices that have been designed to be sufficiently manageable and flexible to operate even in a low-fantasy world.

By virtue of the ‘fingerprints’ that significant actions impart onto the game world, they form a different type of connection between the campaign history and the contemporary gaming environment, a new set of plot threads the GM can weave into an existing tapestry.

GMs can use Legacy dreams as a conduit to additional game world background, revealing past events and campaign briefing material as it becomes relevant. This offers an advantage for roleplaying by sheltering

players from the omniscient awareness of the past conferred from a more substantial historical overview, while presenting the information to them when it becomes important.

The existence of Legacy Items implies a connection and cohesion to past events and primal conflicts that can serve as motivation and a source of plotlines, a metaphysical backdrop of which contemporary events are a modern consequence. They not only imply high-fantasy cosmic conflict, but they can place it at arm’s length from the campaign, permitting the GM to enjoy the best of both worlds.

The effects and implications of a Legacy Item extend far beyond the immediate consequences upon the campaign. They can provide a vehicle for a wider narrative, enriching the campaign and making possible stories that would otherwise be beyond reach.

Contemplate a vast historical conflict between two ideologically opposed forces such as Good and Evil, Order and Chaos, or even Centralized Authority versus Liberty and Independence.

For convenience, we will abbreviate all such conflicts as Left versus Right. These two forces, Left and Right, fought a war-to-end-all-wars in the distant past, with no clear winner. The extreme adherents of both causes battled each other to the point of annihilation. However, the Legacies of these ideologies lives on, forming a central spark that drives the evolution of the societies that have arisen from the ashes. This shapes those cultures, drawing those more sympathetic to one side than the other into alliances and coalitions, until two factions once again emerge, one the embodiment of Left, and the other of Right, each wielding their respective Legacy Items. Then once

again, the two sides will clash in the latest incarnation of their never-ending conflict, seeking to resolve the irresolvable, until both are again destroyed, and the cycle starts anew.

The clash between these two forces is high-fantasy. However, any other point in this cycle of never-ending conflict can serve as a background template for mid- or low-level campaigns possessing the scope of the high-fantasy concept without the baggage.

This is but one of many ways Legacy Items can connect past with present to enrich a campaign. Any philosophy, ideology or point of collective identification, if held strongly enough, can perpetuate itself beyond its history into a contemporary game era by using a Legacy Item as a vehicle.

### On a character

Legacy Items provide a method for character development in-game beyond encounters. The impact of the Legacy on the character – from a bias to an abiding influence that must be constantly battled to a complete consumption of the original personality – offers a choice to the player, in consultation with the GM.

No matter how limited the change, every character possessing a Legacy Item should be marked in some way by the burden. He will see that which no living eyes have apprehended, hear sounds from an age long past, experience events from long before his time.

These might have little relevance to the contemporary era or be directly relevant. They might reinforce character flaws or teach wisdom, or both. At best, a Legacy Item should be a mixed blessing.

There is always a downside, some price to pay, for possession of such a powerful object. The character is the focus for incomprehensible and implacable forces from a different time who sees the world in absolute terms; the character should feel the impact of these circumstances.

### Not everyone leaves a legacy

It follows from the rarity of Legacy Items that most groups do not leave a Legacy. No one knows the exact combination of obsession and circumstance that create one. Some have even speculated that an epic magic of unprecedented ability has propagated through time from the distant future (since there is no evidence such a spell has been cast in the past). Perhaps he tried to ensure the survival of a specific Legacy, and was indirectly responsible for the creation of all the others as a side effect.

### Analyzing, encountering and destroying a legacy

Legacy Items are artifacts for the purposes of Mordenkainen's Disjunction and similar spells. They are magic items with reference to Detect Magic and similar spells. Only powers that have been Unlocked, plus the next Inheritance to be unlocked, can be analyzed using Identify and similar spells.

That makes them difficult to destroy. Only unbound Legacy Items can be destroyed and it is an epic task akin to the destruction of the One Ring. The safer course is to lock the item up somewhere, place guardians and traps around it (self-sustaining ones if possible) and then try to eliminate all knowledge of where it is hidden – to create a dungeon, in other words. One could even create more such depositaries with no exceptional treasures and scatter them

around, just to make it harder for anyone searching for the Legacy Item to pick out the right one.

Nevertheless, the majority of Legacy Items encountered in a game should be encountered in the hands of an NPC. A GM should never permit a PC a Legacy Item during character creation without careful thought.

There's still more information contained in the full player's guide, which will be available free to prospective purchasers of Assassin's Amulet very shortly.

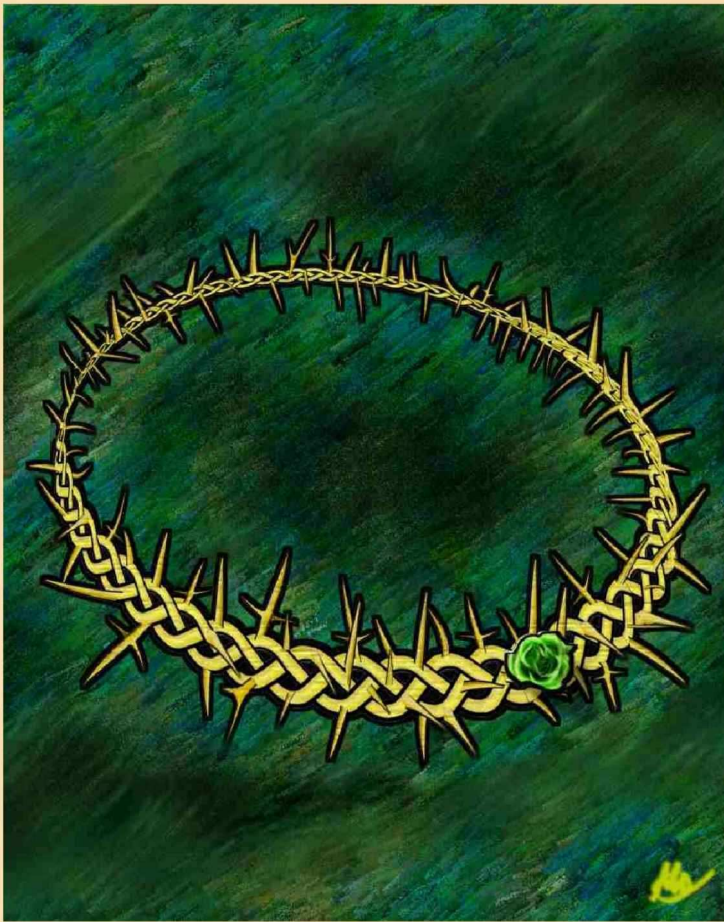
It includes rules on Reshaping and breaking bondings – something I'm sure you'll all be very interested in knowing about!



In Assassin's Amulet, the section describing the rules of Legacy Items is followed by a set of eight example legacy items, showing the power and breadth of the systems. Once again, these are presented in the format most useful to a GM, with everything in one place, and not in a manner appropriate to be presented to a player. So, we have also reorganised these examples into a series of pages that can be printed off one or two at a time and given to a player to summarise what that player knows about the Legacy Item, and replaced with other pages when the circumstances warrant. These contain clarifications and extended descriptions to make them as useful as possible.

It's difficult to excerpt this information without giving too much away, but we have provided a single page from one of our favourite examples, The Crown of Thorns. The excerpted page contains an illustration and description of the item.





## The Crown of Thorns

Three rose bush branches with thorns regularly spaced have been twisted together and woven into a Celtic knot in the shape of a circular crown, then dried to the consistence of hardwood. The ends of each branch somehow fuse into themselves; you can never find an end when following any individual branch. The crown always has a non-shiny surface, no matter how it is oiled or painted.

At the start of each season, a single miniature rose, half an inch or less in diameter, will bud and then bloom. The color of this flower varies according to the season, and always located on the part of the crown over the forehead:

- **Winter:** White with a red heart
- **Spring:** Green with a darker green heart and yellow spots
- **Summer:** Yellow-gold with a reddish-brown heart
- **Autumn:** Purplish-Blue with a black heart

The buds are visible for a week prior to the change of seasons, and the flowers bloom on the day of season change. They remain in bloom for three days, then wither overnight and crumble to dust on the morning of the fourth day.

The colour of the crown branches also varies - from a golden yellow to a yellowish green, then a mahogany brown, and finally a grayish brown, before returning to golden yellow to start the cycle anew. If the crown is washed at all, no matter what might be used to achieve this washing, the surface layer dissolves to reveal a deep green vine-like color, which will become mahogany brown after a day or two of exposure to sunlight or other non-magical light source.

About:

## Chapter 6: Assassin's Amulet In Your Campaign



There's not a lot of content in this section yet – some information on replacing Cyrene with alternatives that might already be established in a GM's campaign. That is the case for two reasons:

1. A lot of the content originally intended for this section has been placed with the relevant subject elsewhere in Assassin's Amulet; and,
2. Content for this section hasn't been written yet. Why not? Because this is where we hope to include lessons learned by our customers in the process of adding Assassin's Amulet to their campaigns.

That's right, this chapter is for *your* war stories – and anything we write in response to them. If there's something missing from Assassin's Amulet, and we write some additional content to plug the gap, this is where it will be placed.

Early adopters won't miss out, either – if we ever release an updated edition (and we certainly hope to do so), anyone who has signed up to our mailing list will be advised, and be able to download the updated text for free.

# Bonus Content:

## Assassin Inspiration

This is another section that will be completed by you, our readers and customers. We're going to start it off, but in due course we're going to be asking everyone else out there to tell us what books, movies, and gaming products you would read to gather Assassin inspiration. In a word, this content will be crowdsourced.

We don't want this to be a shopping list of appearances of killers (or even assassins) in fiction or non-fiction – we want to recommend sources that will give you ideas, inspiration, and insight.

### Movies

- “Ricochet” – “Blake Talbot” (John Lithgow)
- “The Professional” – also known as “Leon” (1994) – “Leone Montana” (Jean Reno)
- The Bourne Trilogy – “Jason Bourne” (Matt Damon)
- “Wanted” (2008) – not to be confused with a Bollywood film of the same name from 2009
- “Under Siege” – “William Strannix” (Tommy Lee Jones)
- “The World Is Not Enough” – “Renard” (Robert Carlyle)
- “The Mechanic”

### TV Shows

- “Babylon-5” (The final episode of season 2 and seasons 3 and 4)
- “La Femme Nikita”
- “Alias”
- “24” (season 1)
- “Numbr3rs” Season 1 episode “Sniper Zero”
- “Numbr3rs” Season 2 episode “The O.G.”

### Books

- Raymond E. Feist – “Silverthorn” – *the Nighthawks were a source of particular inspiration to us in writing Assassin's Amulet*
- Raymond E. Feist – “Kronodor: The Assassins”
- Raymond E. Feist & Janny Wurtz – “Servant Of The Empire”
- Raymond E. Feist & Janny Wurtz – “Mistress Of The Empire”
- Steven Brust's “Vlad Taltos” series
- Terry Pratchett – “Hogfather” – *especially Mr Jonathon Teatime*
- Robin Hobb's “Farseer Trilogy”
- Brent Week's “Night Angel” Trilogy

## Anime

- “Golgo 13: The Professional”
- “Golgo 13” - *(both available through Amazon, but are getting harder to find)*
- “The Koshi Rikdo Assassination Plot” – *search YouTube*

## Online

From the September 2011 Blog Carnival, hosted by Roleplaying Tips:

- The Assassination Game @ Lungfishopolis – How to do assassins well as PCs or NPCs.  
<http://lungfishopolis.com/2011/09/the-assassination-game/>
- My Home Brew Old Hack: What about Assassins? Need them or not? @ The Geek Life Project – Grogard talks about his OSR homebrew game and whether assassins should be a class.  
<http://www.grogard.com/?p=1234>
- Assassins in My Game @ World of Alidor – Jon says assassins are silly and explains why.  
<http://worldofalidor.com/4th-ed/2011/09/11/assassins-in-my-game/>
- Grupo de Asesinos @ El Hacedor de Dados – Talks about the assassin theme, in Spanish!  
<http://dicemakers.blogspot.com/2011/09/grupo-de-asesinos.html>
- Asesinos @ Laboratorio Friki – Another Spanish blog post about assassins.  
<http://www.laboratoriofriki.com/2011/09/asesinos.html>
- A second post from Laboratorio Friki on the subject, “Asesinos, como encajarlos en una partida”.  
<http://www.laboratoriofriki.com/2011/09/asesinos-como-encajarlos-en-una-partida.html>
- Almas Blancas/White Souls @ La Choza del Friki – Another Spanish post.  
<http://lchozadelfriki.blogspot.com/2011/09/rpg-carnival-almas-blancas-white-souls.html>
- Assassins in RPGs – Character Class or Character Type? @ Roleplaying Market – Looks at an alternate idea of what an assassin class could be.  
<http://roleplayingmarket.com/node/32>
- RPG Carnival: Gremio de Asesinos de Canalburgo @ Los chismes del Narrador – Still another Spanish blog!  
<http://posadadelnarrador.blogspot.com/2011/09/finalmente-he-decidido-sumarme-la.html>
- Assassins @ Board Enterprises – Asks what is the most useful assassin-type in games.  
<http://boardent.blogspot.com/2011/09/assassins.html>
- RPG Blog Carnival: Character Types – Part 17 – The Assassin @ Reality Refracted – Talks about running assassins as a GM and playing them as a player.  
<http://www.realityrefracted.com/2011/09/rpg-blog-carnival-character-types-part.html>

- Just a job to do @ Fame & Fortune – Offers three historical iconic assassins.  
<http://satyrelite.blogspot.com/2011/09/just-job-to-do.html>
- And STAY Dead! @ Lizard's Gaming Blog – Offers a collection of items and rituals designed to aid in killing NPCs. (Johnn says he could have used the *Oil of Eternal Silence* earlier in his Riddleport campaign).  
<http://mrlizard.com/rules-and-variants/and-stay-dead/>
- Inspirational Viewing – The Mechanic (1972) @ Sea of Stars RPG – Reviews the Bronson Classic about a professional world-weary killer.  
<http://seaofstarsrpg.wordpress.com/2011/09/05/inspirational-viewing-the-mechanic-1972/>
- Aptitud de asesino @ Detras de la Pantalla – A Spanish post that covers the assassin class plus another post about an unexpected type of killer.  
<http://detrasdelapantalla.org/2011/09/aptitud-de-asesino/>

#### Other Links

- Wikipedia entry on Fictional Assassins  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Fictional\\_assassins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Fictional_assassins)
- Wikipedia entry on Assassinations in fiction  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassinations\\_in\\_fiction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassinations_in_fiction)
- Wikipedia entry on the Assassin's Guild of Ankh-Morpork  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan\\_teatime](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_teatime)
- Alphabetical List of Assassins  
[http://www.wordiq.com/definition/List\\_of\\_assassins](http://www.wordiq.com/definition/List_of_assassins)

# The Complete List Of Freebies

## & bonus content for Assassin's Amulet (and how to get it)

We've mentioned the free content that comes with Assassin's Amulet a number of times within this preview. On this page, we have listed all those extras that we have released or are planning to release in coming weeks. There are a few items that are still speculative, such as Kindle Editions; these haven't been included, but will be added to the list when they are confirmed.

Each entry consists of the following:

- Product Code – *this is what we use to identify the products*
- Title – *the name of the product (if any)*
- Description – *a highly abbreviated summary of anything more a reader might need to know about the product*
- Status – *when we plan to release it. We may not always hit these targets, but we'll do our best!*
- Price – *this will either be "Free Product" indicating that it will be made available for free without purchasing Assassin's Amulet, or "Bonus Product" which means that it will be free to anyone who has purchased AA.*

### **LG1021: 300dpi map:**

*The assassin's lair as a single page*

(jpg, 5.27Mb)

Available immediately

Bonus Product

### **LG1022: 600dpi map:**

*A higher-resolution version of LG1021*

(jpg, 14.5Mb)

Available immediately

Bonus Product

### **LG1023: 300dpi dark:**

*The assassin's lair with everything the players can't immediately see concealed by darkness, as a single page*

(jpg, 710Kb)

Available immediately

Bonus Product

### **LG1024: A4 map**

*The Assassin's Lair, reformatted to print correctly on individual A4 pages at 300dpi*

(PDF, 6.69Mb, 16 Pages)

Available immediately

Bonus Product

### **LG1025: A Player's Guide To Legacy Items**

*Everything a player needs to know about Legacy Items*

(PDF, 1.03 Mb, 17 Pages)

Available Nov 10, 2011

Free Product

### **LG1026: The Expanded GM's Companion Guide To Legacy Items**

*Everything a GM needs to know to run a campaign with Legacy Items – revised, expanded, and annotated*

(PDF, 915Kb, 26 Pages – 33% New Content!)

Available Nov 10, 2011

Bonus Product

### **LG1027: Assassin's Amulet Special Preview**

*This E-Book!*

Available Nov 7, 2011

Free Product

### **LG1028: Legacy Item: The Shield Of Madrassias**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*

(PDF, 1Mb, 15 Page, Expanded and Clarified)

Available Nov 17, 2011

Bonus Product

### **LG1029: Legacy Item: The Mask Of Serephides**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*

(PDF, 1.33 Mb, 20 Pages, Expanded and Clarified)

Available Nov 17, 2011

Bonus Product

**LG1030: Legacy Item: The Crown Of Thorns**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*  
(PDF, 692Kb, 16 Pages, Expanded and Clarified)  
Available Nov 17, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1031: Legacy Item: The Spiked Gauntlet of B'rrastis**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*  
(PDF, 1.01Mb, 18 Pages, Expanded and Clarified)  
Available Nov 17, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1032: Legacy Item: The Cup of Dewarr**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*  
(PDF, 850Kb, 17 Pages, Expanded and Clarified)  
Available Nov 17, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1033: Legacy Item: The Armor Of Attrisses**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*  
(PDF, 1.14Mb, 17 Pages)  
Available Nov 17, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1034: Legacy Item: The Lantern Of Tevariers**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge*  
(PDF, 0.97Mb, 21 Pages)  
Available Nov 17, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1035: Legacy Item: The Shortsword of the Shahd'rah - Revised**

*A standalone workup of the Legacy Item, separating what a possessor (player) knows from GM Knowledge. Revised and extended.*  
(PDF, 1.17Mb, 20 Pages – Expanded, Clarified & Revised).  
Available Nov 17, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1043: Everyman's Knowledge Of Cyrene**

*A general introduction to the (purported) deity, some of the myths and legends that surround her, etc, for presentation to players.*  
(PDF, Still In Production).  
Available Nov 24, 2011

**LG1036: Player's Guide: Membership In The Hands Of Cyrene**

*A general introduction to this organization detailing the things that a member would know (and should believe).*  
(PDF, still in production).  
This product will also require product LG1043).  
Available Nov 24, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1037: Player's Guide: Opposing the Hands Of Cyrene**

*A general introduction to this organization detailing the things that a well-informed PC opponent would know or learn – including rumors. Warning: Content may be an unreliable basis for decisions.*  
(PDF, still in production).  
This product will also require product LG1043).  
Available Nov 24, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1038: Player's Guide: The Urban Gumshoe class**

*An extract and reformatting of this class, level by level, suitable for use by a player – sanitized to hide things the player does not Need-To-Know.*  
(PDF, still in production).  
Available Dec 1., 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1039: Player's Guide: The Acolytes of Cyrene class**

*An extract and reformatting of this class, level by level, ready for use by a player (sanitized to hide things the player does not Need-To-Know.*  
(PDF, still in production)  
This product will also require products LG1036 and LG1043.  
Available Dec 8, 2011  
Bonus Product

**LG1040: Player's Guide:  
The Eyes of Cyrene class**

*An extract and reformatting of this class, level by level, ready for use by a player (sanitized to hide things the player does not Need-To-Know. Should be coupled with LG1036*

(PDF, still in production)

This product will also require products LG1036 and LG1043.

Available Dec 15, 2011

Bonus Product

**LG1041: Player's Guide:  
The Temple Guardsman class**

*An extract and reformatting of this class, level by level, ready for use by a player (sanitized to hide things the player does not Need-To-Know. Should be coupled with LG1036*

(PDF, still in production)

This product will also require products LG1036 and LG1043.

Available Dec 22, 2011

Bonus Product

**LG1042: Player's Guide:  
The Grim Huntsman Class**

*An extract and reformatting of this class, level by level, ready for use by a player (sanitized to hide things the player does not Need-To-Know. Should be coupled with LG1036.*

(PDF, still in production)

This product will also require products LG1036 and LG1043.

Available Jan 5, 2012

Bonus Product

# Afterword



It started as such a simple idea: An assassins' guild, ready to drop into any campaign, with a selection of plot hooks and relevant GM advice to make the whole package effortless and seamless.

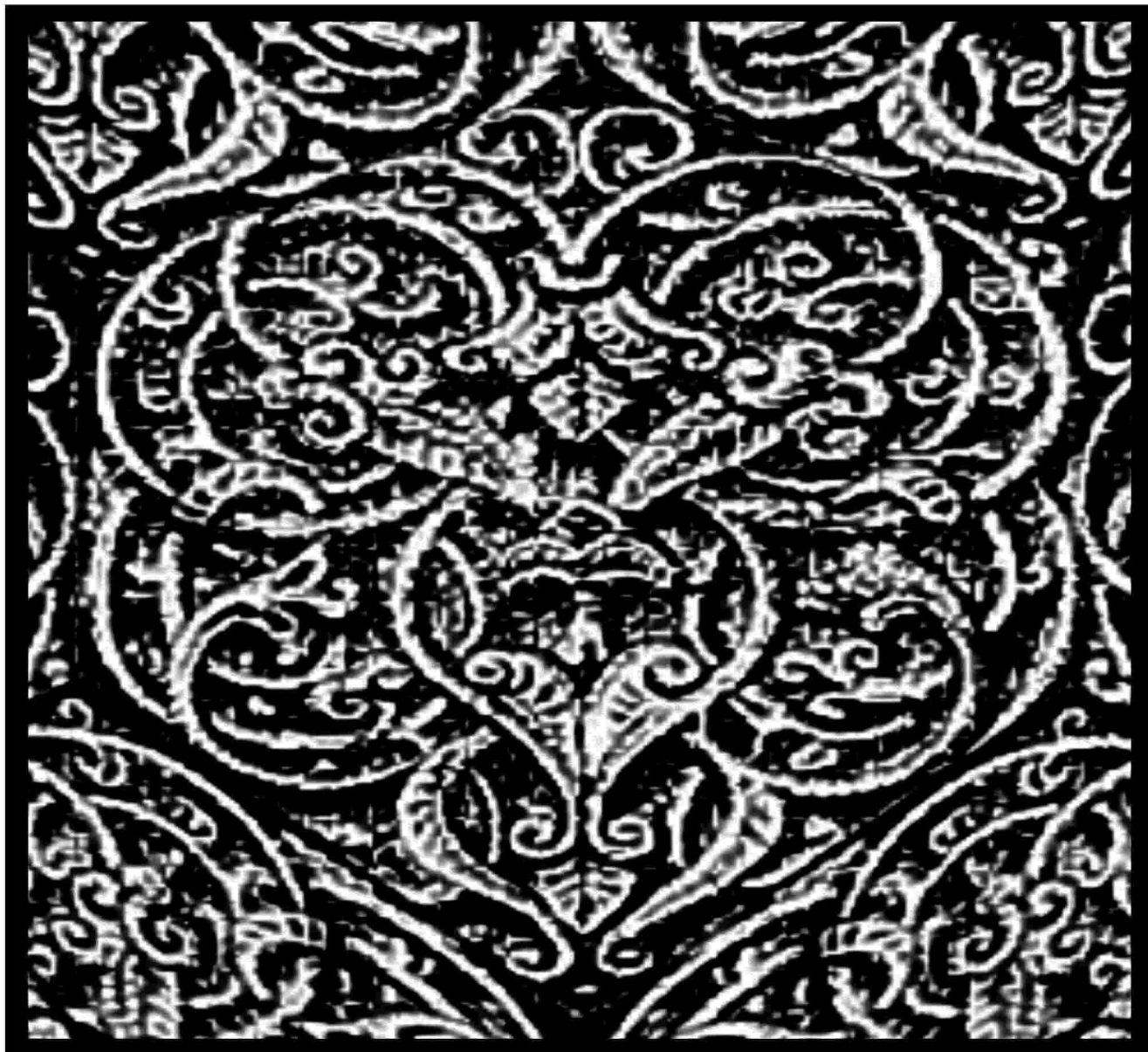
One by one, bigger possibilities were unveiled. Grander schemes, broader settings, more sweeping and original concepts emerged.

Let us be clear about this: we designed Assassin's Amulet as a modular entity. You can use everything we have provided, or ignore everything except the bits that fit your campaign. As much as possible, we have spelt out the implications of integrating the ideas within Assassin's Amulet into a campaign. There is literally and intentionally, something here for everyone.

We hope this preview has been useful, interesting, and entertaining, and that you've found something you can use in your game. We also hope we've persuaded you of how much more awaits you in the full release of Assassin's Amulet! Surely all this is worth a measly twenty bucks?



# Appendix: Legal



# OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using"

means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the

owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

#### 15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document. Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, based on material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook. Copyright 2009, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Jason Bulmahn, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, and Skip Williams.

The Book of Experimental Might. Copyright 2008, Monte J. Cook. All rights reserved.

Tome of Horrors. Copyright 2002, Necromancer Games, Inc.; Authors: Scott Greene, with Clark Peterson, Erica Balsley, Kevin Baase, Casey Christofferson, Lance Hawvermale, Travis Hawvermale, Patrick Lawinger, and Bill Webb; Based on original content from TSR.

Assassin's Amulet. Copyright 2010, RoleplayingTips.com; Authors Michael K. Tumey, Mike Bourke, John Four. All Rights Reserved

---

## Pathfinder

Pathfinder is a registered trademark of Paizo Publishing, LLC.

The Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility Logo are trademarks of Paizo Publishing, LLC, and are used under the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatibility License. See <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/compatibility> for more information on the compatibility license.

# Web Links

Legacies Website:

<http://legaciescampaignsetting.com/>

Our Other Websites:

<http://www.roleplayingtips.com>

<http://www.campaignmastery.com>

<http://www.gamer-printshop.com>

Contact Us:

[contact@legaciescampaignsetting.com](mailto:contact@legaciescampaignsetting.com)

# You'll Never Look At Assassins The Same Way Again!

A band of Assassins  
unlike any you've  
ever seen before!



The Secret Lair from  
which they venture  
forth to end  
unsuspecting lives!



Comprehensive  
advice that gives a  
GM all the tools  
needed to let a band  
of killers loose in a  
campaign!



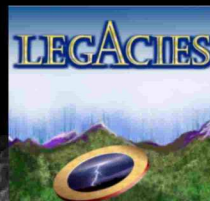
Plus: new magic  
items, new character  
classes, a unique  
pantheon, adventure  
hooks to inspire any  
GM, and everything  
else you need to spice  
up your campaign!



## *What are the secrets of the Goddess Of Life?*

Assassin's Amulet holds the answers. Do you dare put your players in the firing line?

**PATHFINDER®**  
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



**OGL**  
3.5 SYSTEM COMPATIBLE

LG-1027