

OBSIDIAN APOCALYPSE: ELDER GODS RETURN



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HISTORY

THE GODS LIED

To understand the events following the meteor impact, we must first understand the ancient history of Abaddon. Alas, understanding it sooner would not have allowed us to prepare or to stop what happened.

Ours is not the first age of Abaddon, though it may feel like the last. The gods of Abaddon did not create this world—or this universe.

Our universe was born from swirling, abysmal chaos. Our world is an accident, born of some unknowable act of the deities that came before. These Star Gods, as we now know them, are from a place of chaos and madness. They seem to be more energy than matter.

We cannot even begin to understand why such beings might cause any semblance of order to form from the primordial chaos.

THE FIRST AGE

Perhaps the Star Gods created the first life on Abaddon because they enjoyed seeing creatures suffer. Perhaps they wanted to be worshipped and adored. Perhaps it was merely whimsy.

In any event, this life was invertebrate, radial, and more like plants than animals.

COMING OF THE ELDER GODS

Records from this First Age are fragmentary. Most seem like the ravings of lunatics, or of seers driven mad by gazing into the gulf of eons.

What we believe happened was a war among the gods. What we now call the Elder Gods found some interest in the Material Plane; this interest caused a rift among the gods. What resulted was less a war and more a mutual cosmic temper tantrum. Stars erupted. Worlds evaporated.

THE SECOND AGE

When the cataclysms ended, the Star Gods vanished into the infinite gulfs behind the stars. We do not know how or why. What we do know is that the Elder Gods had Abaddon to themselves.

The first mortal rulers of Abaddon were gone. The cataclysms buried all evidence of their existence, and a new world replaced theirs. Only the upheavals of the last century revealed any sign of their strange and advanced world.

In their place rose a submarine civilization. While reptiles, the ancient ancestors of the dragons, ruled the land, an

aquatic civilization grew in the depths of the seas. Unlike civilization as we know it, this one needed no light, and never developed fire. They knew about metals, but did not forge them.

Instead, this bizarre undersea world relied on manipulating life. In the deepest trenches, aboleths ruled. They created sightless amphibious servants whose mindless forms crawled ashore and conducted the business of their awful masters.

The reptilian titans of the land attacked these servitor creatures, and unknowingly infected themselves with the mutative chaos within the submarine life forms. Numerous oozes, slimes, and aberrations were birthed from these interactions.

THE THIRD AGE

The Star Gods were cast out of this reality; no one knows—or can know—how, why, or even if they struggled against this expulsion. We only know that our ancestors suddenly discovered that they could access a new source of power, the power of the Star Gods, who found a rift or window into our universe through which their power leaked.

Our primitive ancestors experimented with rituals and forms of worship, increasing their access to the power of the Star Gods. Though they could not return to our universe, the Star Gods could wage war with the Elder Gods of Abaddon through these rites.

These rites allowed our ancestors to war with the Elder Gods and imprison them within Abaddon, causing a great upheaval. Much was lost among the aboleths and the lost reptilian civilizations of the surface.

Once the war was over, the Star Gods receded from our ancestors' affairs. Perhaps they had expended too much power and needed to rest. We cannot know.

What we do know is that those granted power by the Star Gods ascended to become the New Gods we know. Others descended into Hell or the Abyss, becoming archdevils or archdemons.

Our very existence comes from the power of the Star Gods. As our ancestors built their first hovels, they traded with the survivors of the fallen civilizations. We learned magic from dragons. We learned druidic magic from the sahuagin and skum survivors of the aboleth kingdoms.

We lived, we grew, and millennia passed.

100 YEARS AGE

The meteor came. Through some malign influence, some twist of fate, or some predestined course initiated in the Second Age, the meteor struck in a way that unlocked the chthonic prison of the Elder Gods. In addition to the physical

upheavals caused by the meteor, the Elder Gods unleashed their own fury upon the surface of Abaddon.

Then came the Pandemic of Ash and the Cold Black Winter.

THE HEAVENS FALL

The Elder Gods declared war on the New Gods, the recipients of the Star Gods' power. With most all of the worshippers on Abaddon dead, only the return of the Star Gods protected our New Gods. Shocked out of their slumber by the awakening of the Elder Gods, the Star Gods threw their full might to the New Gods. Thus, most of our deities survived.

However, their planar palaces are gone. No longer have they any safe haven. Now they roam the Outer Planes, trying to gather their strength again.

50 YEARS AGO

Maq'thurlia, lord of the Elder Gods, raised his city of N'qrel from beneath the limitless depths of the Black Sea. The displaced seawaters formed the Entropic Marshes, a vast wasteland surrounding the city.

The land is nothing like what it was before. Mountains rise where plains once rolled. Seafloors have risen. Hills have sunk into new gulfs. Mountains now surround former metropolises, cutting them off from the rest of the land and leaving them to the carniphites who survive by eating the flesh of the dead. Whole territories now rest atop misty plateaus.

THE CALL

At first, some citizens of Abaddon complained of hearing the whistling of pipes, imperceivable by many others. The piping grew louder and louder, until those who heard it grew mad and ran from their homes in a frenetic dance. Slowly, we learned that this was the piping of an Elder God, the Piper, who led the Mad Dancers to N'qrel, to serve Maq'thurlia.

Now

We live like rats in the walls of what was once our world. The Elder Gods stride across Abaddon apparently at random, sowing madness and destruction in their wake.

We scabble in the rubble of our old cities, struggling to survive, while we search for the secrets of the lost Second Age. It was during that time that the Elder Gods were forced into their millennia-long slumber within Abaddon. If we can learn how our ancestors sealed them away, and if the stars align to share the Star Gods' power, perhaps we can imprison the Elder Gods once again.

RULES

Rules changes for the rebirth of the Elder Gods

FEATS AND TRAITS

Character options for the rebirth of the Elder Gods

DIVINE DIVINATION

Because of the Elder Gods' attacks against the usurper gods of Abaddon, the homes and sanctuaries of those New Gods were destroyed. Thus, clerical divination spells (such as *commune* or *divination*) now require success on an Intelligence (Religion) check with a DC equal to 20 + the spell level to succeed.

TRAITS

The following are campaign traits for characters after the rebirth of the Elder Gods.

For more information on introducing character traits, see **Obsidian Apocalypse Chapter 4: Infernus Risen**. In brief, a character can choose up to two traits at 1st level as part of character creation. The GM has final say as to whether characters may gain character traits and, if so, how many.

BORN UNDER ELDER INFLUENCE

You were born within twenty miles of an Elder God.

- You have advantage on Constitution checks made to maintain concentration on a spell while within 20 miles of an Elder God.
- If you are of lawful alignment, you do not suffer the -1 penalty to Charisma ability checks while within twenty miles of an Elder God.

BORN UNDER ELDER PRESENCE

You were born within five miles of an Elder God.

- You gain a +1 bonus to avoid wild magic effects while casting spells (see below).
- If you are lawful in alignment, your penalty to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma ability checks is -1 instead of -2 when you are within 5 miles of an Elder God.
- You possess an innate sense of time. You always know how much time has passed for you, even if asleep, unconscious, or dying.

BORN UNDER THE NEW GODS

You are more than a century old, placing your birth before the return of the Elder Gods.

As a one-time benefit, you may cast any single cleric divination spell, such as *commune*, *legend lore*, or *divination*. You may cast any such spell available to a caster of your total character level, and you do not need to succeed on a concentration check to succeed at casting the spell. You must be at least 100 years old to select this trait.

THE STARS WERE RIGHT

You were raised under an ancient and almost completely forgotten tradition of worshipping the Star Gods.



You may never be a cleric of any Elder or New God. Your alignment must be chaotic. You gain a +1 bonus on saving throws against any cast against you by a creature of lawful alignment.

FEATS

The following are feats for characters after the rebirth of the Elder Gods.

ELDRITCH EDUCATION

You spend time as a pupil under the tutelage of a master of forbidden lore and dark secrets.

- Increase your Intelligence score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- You gain advantage on Forbidden Lore checks.

RESISTANT SANITY

Your sense of reality resists unexpected shocks and horrors.

- Your Sanity point maximum increases by 5.
- You ignore 3 points of sanity loss caused by creatures or severe shocks. This does not reduce the sanity loss caused by gaining ranks in Intelligence (Arcana) related to forbidden lore.

You may take this feat multiple times. The benefit of this feat stacks with itself and with any Sanity resistance the character might possess (see the Sanity rules, below).

UNCOMPROMISING SANITY

You were raised in a strictly rational setting.

- Increase your Wisdom score by 1, to a maximum of 20.
- Your Sanity point maximum increases by 5.

UNSHAKEABLE SANITY

Your mind is flexible and adapts quickly.

When you roll a percentile dice for a Sanity check, subtract 10 from the result before comparing it to your current Sanity.

NEW SKILL

There are ruinous secrets and dark mysteries mortals were not meant to learn—mind-blasting truths that destroy our underlying assumptions about reality. These secrets, including a number of potent spells and rituals, can bring tremendous power but at the cost of eroding one's sanity. Once gained, this horrible knowledge is never forgotten, and the character consequently surrenders mental equilibrium. A character's sanity weakens as his comprehension of these hidden truths increases—such is the way of the universe. To represent this eldritch knowledge, there is a new skill available to characters.

FORBIDDEN LORE

You know That Which Should Not Be Known. Your Intelligence (Forbidden Lore) check measures your knowledge of sinister secrets, eldritch mysteries, forbidden magic, and other things mortals were never meant to discover. You possess insights into the symbols and rituals practiced by worshippers of the Elder Gods. You have undergone horrible supernatural experiences and read forbidden tomes.

Forbidden Lore is available to you if Arcana is offered as one of the proficiencies for your class (bard, druid, sorcerer, warlock, and wizard in the core rules), background, or with a feat. Once you choose to become proficient in Forbidden

Lore, you cannot reverse your decision. Simply put, you have opened your mind (and your sense of reality) to an entirely new—and often terrifying—level of existence.

The Forbidden Lore skill works differently than other skills. For one thing, you never add your proficiency bonus to the skill. You also do not add your Intelligence modifier to the skill until you have gained at least a +1 in it from some source (see below). Once you gain at least +1 to this skill, then you start including your Intelligence modifier in the total bonus. This skill only increases after you have read forbidden tomes or encountered horrible, psyche-scarring creatures or other supernatural horrors.

The first time you suffer a bout of short-term or long-term insanity (see the Sanity rules, below), your Forbidden Lore bonus increases by +1. Each time you fail a Sanity check or endure another episode of madness, you gain an additional +1 in this skill. Of note, your knowledge of Forbidden Lore reduces your maximum Sanity points (see the Sanity rules, below).

For example, Winston Edmund, a 1st-level wizard with an Intelligence of 16, takes Forbidden Lore as one of his proficiencies. At this point, he has no bonus to the skill—he doesn't get his proficiency bonus, and he doesn't add his Intelligence modifier. During his first adventure, he witnesses a pack of ghouls devouring one of his friends and narrowly escapes. He succumbs to short-term madness. At this point, he gains +2 to his Forbidden Lore skill, which also means he now adds his Intelligence modifier of +3, giving him a total skill bonus of +5. Later, when he reaches 4th level and increases his Intelligence to 18, his Forbidden Lore bonus increases to +6.

If you are not proficient in Forbidden Lore, you gain no bonus to this skill from suffering a bout of madness or failing a Sanity check.

SANITY

In this campaign, characters experience events, encounter beings, and uncover knowledge beyond what mortal minds are equipped to process. These Sanity rules reflect the effects of those horrors on the mind and the psyche.

SANITY POINTS

Sanity points measure the stability of a character's mind. These points define a character's inherent sanity, including the most stability a character can ever have, and the current level of rationality that a character possesses, even after numerous shocks and horrid revelations. Creatures with more Sanity points are more mentally resilient and grounded. Those with fewer Sanity points are more easily unnerved or broken.

In some ways, Sanity points are similar to hit points. When you experience a sudden shock or learn horrific knowledge, you might lose Sanity points, whereas rest and magic can

restore lost Sanity points. Unlike hit points, however, Sanity points are slower and more difficult to recover.

Sanity is measured in two ways: Sanity point maximum and current Sanity. Your current Sanity cannot exceed your maximum Sanity points.

SANITY POINT MAXIMUM

You begin play with a Sanity point maximum equal to your Wisdom score multiplied by 5. This number can be increased or reduced through events, either temporarily or permanently. You can never have more Sanity points than your maximum. When you learn dark, forbidden secrets, it permanently lowers your Sanity point maximum—you can never regain your lost innocence. No matter what, no character can have a Sanity point maximum greater than 99.

For each point you increase your Wisdom score, your maximum Sanity increases by 5.

CURRENT SANITY

When you start at 1st level, your current Sanity equals your Sanity point maximum. Your current Sanity total will fall when you suffer shocks, surprises, and experience the horrors of the world. You will also recover some of these lost points through rest, recuperation, and by the aid of restorative magic such as *lesser restoration*. Your current Sanity points cannot exceed your Sanity point maximum.

If you experience a permanent loss to your Sanity point maximum such that it falls below your current Sanity point total, then your Sanity points decrease to equal your Sanity point maximum.

EFFECTS OF FORBIDDEN LORE

Learning dark secrets and ancient lore brings power and information but at a price. The more of these hidden truths you uncover, the weaker your grip on reality becomes.

To simulate the effects of this forbidden knowledge, if you are proficient in Intelligence (Forbidden Lore), you permanently reduce your Sanity point maximum by *double* your total bonus in this skill. (Recall that, unlike other skills, you never include your proficiency bonus in the total.)

Let's return to our example wizard, Winston Edmund. He has a Wisdom score of 12, giving him a Sanity point maximum of 60 to begin with. After his first adventure (see the example above), his bonus in Intelligence (Forbidden Lore) becomes +5. This permanently reduces his Sanity point maximum by 10 points, down to 50. Later, when he reaches 4th level and increases his Intelligence to 18, his Forbidden Lore bonus increases to +6, further reducing his Sanity point maximum by 4 points, down to 48. Each time his Forbidden Lore bonus increases by a point, his Sanity point maximum falls another two points. The more lore that poor Winston knows, the more tentative his grip on reality becomes.

MAKING A SANITY CHECK

When you encounter a gruesome, unnatural, or supernatural situation, the GM may require you to make a Sanity check using percentile dice (d%). The check succeeds if the result is *equal to or less than* your current Sanity—unlike other checks in the game where you want a result equal to or greater than the target number.

On a successful check, you either lose no Sanity points or you lose only a minimal amount. Potential Sanity loss is usually shown as two numbers or die rolls separated by a slash, such as 0/1d4. The number before the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if you succeed at the Sanity check (in this case, none); the number after the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if your Sanity check fails (in this case, 1 to 4 points).

You also put your Sanity at risk when you read certain dangerous books, learn eldritch spells, or attempt to cast those spells. Sanity losses from these sources are usually automatic (i.e., no Sanity check is allowed); if you choose to undertake such a dangerous activity, you automatically forfeit the indicated number of Sanity points.

In most cases, a new Sanity-shaking confrontation requires a new Sanity check. However, the GM can always decide when a character must a Sanity check. Confronting several horribly mangled corpses at one time or in rapid succession may call for just one Sanity check, while the same corpses encountered individually over the course of several game hours may require separate checks.

GOING INSANE

Losing more than a few Sanity points may cause you to go insane, as described below. If your current Sanity score drops to zero, you suffer short-term madness (see the optional core rules for short-term madness, as well as a table to roll upon for the results).

Each minute thereafter you remain at 0 Sanity points, you must make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw. If you fail this saving throw three times without regaining at least one Sanity point, you become afflicted with long-term madness (see the optional core rules for madness for a description, as well as a table to roll upon for the results).

Once you suffer long-term madness, each day you must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. If you fail this save, you become hopelessly and incurably insane; hopelessly insane characters revert to the GM's control.

A Wisdom (Medicine) check can stabilize a character suffering from short- or long-term madness (see below for details).

A GM's description of a Sanity-shaking situation should justify the threat to a character's well-being. Thus, a horde of frothing rats is horrifying, while a single ordinary rat usually

is not (unless the character has an appropriate phobia, of course).

LOSING SANITY

Characters ordinarily lose Sanity in a few types of circumstances: when encountering something unimaginable, when suffering a severe shock, after casting a spell or when learning a new spell, when being affected by a certain type of magic or a particular spell, or when reading a forbidden tome.

SANITY RESISTANCE

Since characters live in a world of magic and monsters, the GM might want to make them less susceptible to Sanity loss caused by encountering strange creatures (see Table: Sanity Loss from Creatures) by allowing them to have a measure of Sanity resistance, which is tied to one of two attributes.

Each character can be allowed to have Sanity resistance equal to his proficiency bonus or Wisdom modifier, at the discretion of the GM. Sanity resistance is the amount of Sanity loss a character can ignore each time he encounters a creature that requires a Sanity check. For example, a character with a proficiency bonus of +3 ignores that many points of Sanity loss when he fails a Sanity check.

The GM may decide that Sanity resistance also applies to certain kinds of severe shocks (although it might not apply to personally horrific experiences, such as seeing a close friend die) and to casting or learning spells.

ENCOUNTERING THE UNIMAGINABLE

When people encounter creatures or entities of unspeakable horror, this inflicts mental trauma and costs them some portion of their minds. This instinctive reaction is common among humans, elves, dwarves, and other humanoid races.

Table: Sanity Loss from Creatures provides some default Sanity loss values for encountering creatures, based on their type and size. These are only default values—the GM can and should adjust individual monsters he deems more or less horrible than others of their size. An aasimar, for instance, hardly presents a Sanity-shaking sight, and should probably be treated as a humanoid rather than a celestial. On the other hand, a vargouille—a Small fiend appearing much like a flying, bat-winged head—might provoke a more visceral reaction than other Small fiendish creatures.

Table: Sanity Loss from Creatures by Monster Type & Size

In addition, certain types of monstrous behavior might force additional Sanity checks, much like those described under Severe Shocks, below. For instance, an aboleth is an unnerving sight all by itself, but watching one transform your best friend with its tentacle slime should certainly force another check, with losses appropriate to the situation.



In *Obsidian Apocalypse*, no character should need to make a Sanity check when encountering an elf, dwarf, or other standard humanoid race, or when encountering domesticated or commonplace animals. In some cases, even humanoid races such as orcs and goblins might be so common as to not cause Sanity loss.

SPECIFIC MONSTERS AND SANITY

Some monsters might possess additional or variant special abilities when using the Sanity variant, such as inflicting Sanity loss instead of causing psychic damage—or perhaps both. For example, consider the allip (an insane undead spirit). The allip's whispers of madness ability causes the loss of 7 (1d8 + 3) Sanity points instead of psychic damage.

Most animals and humanoids should not cause Sanity loss. However, the GM may require it if the creature is particularly fearsome or upsetting.

SEVERE SHOCKS

A shocking sight of a more mundane nature can also cost Sanity points. Severe shocks include witnessing an untimely or violent death, experiencing personal mutilation, losing social position, being the victim of treachery, or whatever other situation the Game Master decides is suitably extreme.

The following list gives some examples of severe shocks and the Sanity loss each one provokes.

INSANITY

Character insanity is induced by a swift succession of shocking experiences or ghastly revelations, events usually connected with dark gods, creatures from the Outer Planes, or powerful spellcasting.

Horror encounters can cause one of three mentally unbalanced states: short-term madness, long-term madness, or permanent insanity.

Short- and long-term insanity can be cured, while permanent insanity cannot.

SHORT-TERM MADNESS

Whenever a character loses Sanity points equal to one-half their Wisdom score (round up) from a single episode of Sanity loss, they have experienced enough of a shock to prompt a Sanity check. If the check fails, the character realizes the full significance of what they saw or experienced and suffers short-term madness. If the check succeeds, the character does not suffer madness, but they may not clearly remember what they experienced—a trick the mind plays to protect itself.

Short-term madness lasts 1d10 minutes. If the amount of Sanity lost exceeds the character's current Wisdom score, the short-term madness lasts 1d10 x 10 hours. The GM can call for a roll on the short-term madness table (see the optional core rules) to determine the effects.

Short-term madness ends when the rolled duration ends, unless the GM considers it appropriate for it to end sooner. Likewise, any curative or other effect (such as successful application of the Medicine skill) that raises the character's Sanity point total above 0 ends the bout of short-term madness.

After an episode of short-term madness ends, traces or even profound evidence of the experience should remain. No reason exists why, for instance, a phobia should depart from someone's mind as quickly as a warrior draws his sword.

Monster Type	Up to Tiny	Small	Medium	Large	Huge	Gargantuan
Aberration	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d6/1d10
Beast	0/0	0/1	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d4	0/1d4
Celestial	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d4	1d4/1d6	1d6/1d10	1d10/2d10
Construct	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d6	1/1d6	2/2d6	3/3d6
Dragon	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d6/1d10
Elemental	0/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d8	1/1d10	1d4/1d10
Fey	0/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d8	1/1d10	1d4/1d10
Fiend	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d6/1d10
Giant	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d6	1/1d6	2/2d6	2/2d6
Humanoid	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d6
Monstrosity	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d6	1/1d6	2/2d6	2/2d6
Ooze	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d6/1d10
Plant	0/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d8	1/1d10	1d4/1d10
Undead	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d6/1d10

What remains after even a brief episode of short-term madness should exert a pervasive influence on the character. The character may still be a bit batty, but their conscious mind once again runs the show. The GM may wish to have the character roll on the indefinite madness table (see the optional core rules) to determine the new flaw caused by their bout of madness.

LONG-TERM MADNESS

If a character loses 20% (one-fifth) or more of their current Sanity points in the space of 1 hour, they suffer long-term madness. The GM judges when the impact of events calls for such a measure. Some GMs never apply the concept to more than the result of a single roll, since this state can remove characters from play for extended periods of time. An episode of long-term madness lasts 1d6 game months (or as the GM dictates). Symptoms of long-term madness may not be immediately apparent, which may give the GM additional time to decide what the effects of such a bout of madness might be. The GM can also roll on the long-term madness table (see the optional core rules for these results) to determine the effects.

The state of long-term madness is encompassing and incapacitating. Someone suffering from long-term madness may be able to walk the streets while babbling and gesticulating, find rudimentary shelter, and beg for enough food to survive, but most of the business of the mind has departed into itself: They cannot fully interact with friends, family, and acquaintances. Conversation, cooperation, and all sense of personal regard have vanished from their psyche.

It is possible for a character with long-term madness to continue to be played as an active character, depending on the form their madness takes. The character may still attempt to stumble madly through the rest of an adventure. However,

with their weakened grasp on reality, the creature is most likely a danger to themselves and others.

If the effects of a character's long-term madness are severe enough, the character might need to be removed from active play until they recover. At the GM's discretion, the player of the character might be allowed to use a temporary character until the end of the story. Whether this "stand-in" character is an incidental NPC in the adventure, a character of the same level as the rest of the group, one or two levels below the rest of the characters, or even a 1st-level character, is up to the GM. Different GMs have different ways of handling this transition.

If a character succumbs to long-term madness near the end of an adventure, the GM may decide to set the next adventure to begin after the insane character has recovered.

Characters suffering from long-term madness are in limbo, unable to help themselves or others. Wisdom (Medicine) can be used to restore Sanity points during this period, but the underlying insanity remains even if they recover all their Sanity points (see Long-Term Care, below).

Even after recovery and the end of the long-term madness, the sufferer retains definite traces of madness. For example, even though a character knows they are no longer insane, they might be deathly afraid of going to sleep if their insanity manifested itself in the form of terrifying nightmares. The character is in control of their actions, but the experience of insanity has changed them, perhaps forever.

PERMANENT INSANITY

Once a character becomes permanently insane, they become an NPC under control of the Game Master.

A character with permanent insanity may be reduced to a raving lunatic or may be outwardly indistinguishable from

a normal person; either way, they are inwardly corrupted by the pursuit of knowledge and power. Some of the most dangerous cultists in the world are characters who have become permanently insane, been corrupted by forbidden knowledge, and “gone over to the other side.”

A character might be driven permanently insane by forces other than dark gods or forbidden knowledge. In such cases, moral corruption need not necessarily occur.

A character who has gone permanently insane can never be normal again (in some campaigns, a permanently insane character can be cured with the aid of powerful magic). They are forever lost in their own world. This need not mean a lifetime locked away from society, merely that the character has retreated so far from reality that normal mental functions can never be restored. They might be able to lead, within restricted bounds, a more-or-less normal life if kept away from the stimulus that triggers strong responses in their individual case. Even so, a relapse may come quickly. Their calm façade can be destroyed in seconds if even the smallest reminder of what drove them mad disturbs their fragile equilibrium.

In any event, the eventual fate of a permanently insane character is a matter for individual Game Masters and players to decide.

GAINING & RECOVERING SANITY

There are numerous ways that a character’s maximum Sanity score can increase during the events of a campaign. However, a character’s Sanity score can never exceed 99 minus their bonus in the Forbidden Lore skill.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Whenever you gain a new level, rolls 1d6 and add the result to your Sanity point maximum.

STORY AWARDS

The GM may decide to award increases to your current Sanity points or even your Sanity point maximum if you help foil a great horror, a demonic plan, or some other nefarious enterprise.

RESTORING SANITY WITH MAGIC

Magic can easily cure Sanity loss, in which case Sanity becomes little more than a specialized version of “mental hit points” that includes some neat side effects (insanity). Characters can usually restore themselves to full Sanity with a day or two of rest and spellcasting.

- *Ceremony* (atonement). Although this spell does not usually restore Sanity, it can be used in those rare cases when a character’s own actions inadvertently led to an evil act that caused the character to lose Sanity points. If a quest or *geas* is combined with the *ceremony* spell, Sanity points are not restored until the task is completed. A successful use of this spell can restore all

Sanity lost from the evil acts for which the character atones.

- *Calm emotions*. This spell cannot restore Sanity directly, but it can temporarily mitigate the effects of short-term or long-term madness. While this spell is in effect, the targets act calmly and ignore behavior changes caused by Sanity loss.
- *Heal*. In addition to its normal effects, *heal* restores 20 Sanity points and removes all forms of short-term insanity.
- *Mind Blank*. While this spell is in effect, the subject is immune to Sanity loss.
- *Lesser restoration*. If the caster chooses, restoration can immediately cure short-term madness and restore 3d6 Sanity points instead of having its normal effect.
- *Greater restoration*. If the caster chooses, greater restoration can restore the target creature to its maximum Sanity and cures short-term madness instead of having its normal effect.
- *Wish*. This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity. *Wish* cures short-term as well as long-term madness, and even heals permanent insanity.

SKILLS

This section presents a new skill and variant rules for the Medicine skill.

THE HEAL SKILL & MENTAL TREATMENT

The Sanity rules presented here provide a new use for the Medicine skill, allowing trained healers to help characters recover lost Sanity points. The DC and effect of a Wisdom (Medicine) check made to restore lost Sanity depend on whether the healer is trying to offer immediate care or long-term care.

IMMEDIATE CARE

When someone suffers an episode of short-term madness, a healer can bring them out of it—calming their terror, snapping them out of their stupor, or doing whatever else is needed to restore the patient to the state they were in before the short-term madness—by making a DC 15 Wisdom (Medicine) check as an action. A successful check restores 1 Sanity point and ends the bout of short-term madness.

LONG-TERM CARE

Providing long-term care means treating a mentally disturbed person for a day or more in a place away from stress and distractions. The healer must spend 1d4 hours per day doing nothing but talking to the patient.

At the end of this time on each day of therapy, the healer makes a DC 20 Medicine check, with success restoring 1 Sanity point to the patient. A healer can tend up to six patients at a time; each patient beyond the first adds 1 hour to the total time per day that must be devoted to treatment. The check must be made each day for each patient.

A roll of 1 on any of these Heal checks indicates that the patient loses 1 point of Sanity that day, as they regress mentally due to horrors suddenly remembered.

Once a patient's Sanity score equals their Sanity point maximum, they can make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw, with success ending long-term madness. They can attempt this save once per day following a long rest.

Regardless of any success with using Medicine to treat madness, it cannot raise or otherwise improve a creature's Sanity point maximum.

SETTLEMENTS

A few places that survived the rebirth of the Elder Gods

PLANAR ZONES

The presence of the Elder Gods has warped the very fabric of reality. What is more, these changes become more severe with proximity to any of the Elder Gods.

THE NEW NORMAL

The return of the Elder Gods and their inherent chaos to Abaddon has warped reality to the extent where lawful creatures take a -1 penalty on Charisma ability checks.

ELDER INFLUENCE

Once you approach within twenty miles of any Elder God, the warping effects of their chaos become more pronounced, as described below:

- *Erratic Time.* Each day in this zone, roll a percentile die. 1-10, a day passes for every minute in this zone; 11-20, a day passes for every hour in this zone; 21-60, time passes normally; 61-70, a week passes for every day in this zone; 71-80, a month passes for every week in this zone; 81-90, a month passes for every day in this zone; 91-100, a year passes for every month in this zone.
- *Mildly Chaotic-Aligned.* Lawful creatures take a -1 penalty on all Charisma ability checks.

ELDER PRESENCE

Finally, once you come within five miles of any Elder God, the changes to reality become even more blatant, as described here:

- *Erratic Time.* Each day in this zone, roll a percentile die. 1-10, a day passes for every minute in this zone; 11-20, a day passes for every hour in this zone; 21-60, time passes normally; 61-70, a week passes for every day in this zone; 71-80, a month passes for every week in this zone; 81-90, a month passes for every day in this zone; 91-100, a year passes for every month in this zone.
- *Strongly Chaotic-Aligned.* Lawful creatures suffer a -2 penalty on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma checks.
- *Wild Magic.* Spells and spell-like abilities function in radically different and sometimes dangerous ways. Any spell or spell-like ability used on a wild magic plane may

go awry. The caster must make a spell attack roll against a DC of 8 + the level of the spell being cast for the magic to function normally. Failure means that something strange happens. Roll percentile dice and consult the following table:

D%	Effect
01-19	The spell rebounds on its caster with normal effect. If the spell cannot affect the caster, it simply fails
20-23	A circular pit 15 feet wide opens beneath the caster's feet; it is 10 feet deep per level of the caster.
24-27	The spell fails, but the target or targets of the spell are pelted with a rain of small objects (anything from flowers to rotten fruit), which disappear upon striking. The barrage continues for one round. During this time, the targets are blinded and must make Constitution checks (DC 10 + the spell level) to cast a spell.
28-31	The spell affects a random target or area. Randomly choose a different target from among those in range of the spell or center the spell at a random place within range of the spell. To generate direction randomly, roll 1d8 and count clockwise around the compass, starting with south. To generate range randomly, roll 3d6. Multiply the result by 5 feet.
32-35	The spell functions normally, but material components are not consumed. The spell slot is not expended. An item used to cast the spell does not lose charges, and the effect does not count against that item's use limit.
36-39	The spell does not function. Instead, everyone (friend or foe) within 30 feet of the caster receives the effect of a <i>heal</i> spell.
40-43	The spell does not function. Instead, a <i>darkness</i> effect and a <i>silence</i> effect cover a 30-foot radius around the caster for 2d4 rounds.
44-47	The spell does not function. Instead, a <i>reverse gravity</i> effect covers a 30-foot radius area around the caster for one round.
48-59	The spell functions, but shimmering colors swirl around the caster for 1d4 rounds. Treat this as a <i>enthrall</i> effect with a save of DC 8 + the level of the spell that generated this result.
60-71	Nothing happens. The spell does not function, and material components are not consumed. The spell slot is not expended. An item used to cast the spell does not lose charges, and the effect does not count against that item's use limit.
72-98	The spell functions normally.

99-00 The spell functions strongly. Targets of the spell suffer disadvantage on saving throws. The spell has the maximum possible effect.

THE SETTLEMENTS

BLACKHEATH

NE Small Town

Qualities: City of the Dead, Resettled Ruins

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government: Overlord

Population: 350 (300 carniphites [see the Monsters of the Elder Gods section], 20 orcs, 10 various undead)

NOTABLE NPCs

- Imperator Aracallaba (NE male orc-carniphite fighter 9)
- Necrite Irikaina (NE female human-carniphite cleric 7)
- Enforcer Mogullaia (NE male dwarf-carniphite fighter 6)
- Enforcer Blanualla (NE male orc-carniphite fighter 6)
- Enforcer Dringencha (NE female human-carniphite fighter 5)

Blackheath was once a metropolis, but when the Elder Gods returned the resulting upheaval of geography killed most of the population. Newly risen mountains cut Blackheath off from the rest of the world. Those who survived the cataclysm had to eat the dead to survive.

Explorers and adventurers have now mapped paths through the mountains to Blackheath. A small clan of orcs lives among the carniphites there and pays tributes of dead bodies to the Imperator in order to stay off the menu.

The carniphites have little use for magic or art, so Blackheath is still full of the wealth of its former glory. That alone is enough to draw those willing to risk becoming the carniphites' next meal.

GOAT'S HOLLOW

CN Thorp

Qualities: Insular

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government: Dynasty

Population: 15 humans

NOTABLE NPCs

- Matriarch Ruth Cain (CE female human)
- Father Virgil Cain (CE male human)
- Aunt Sarah Cain (blind CN female human cleric 2)
- Elder Sister Abigail Cain (CE female human fighter 3)
- Elder Brother Ezekiel Cain (CE male human fighter 2)

The Elder Gods were not completely forgotten while they lay dreaming in their chthonic prisons. Some families preserved and even revered the ancient legends of a time before the gods were gods. One of these is the Cain family of Goat's Hollow.

Cain family legend has it that they are descended from creatures that remained loyal to the Elder Gods at the end of the Second Age, when the Star Gods were building the rebellion against the masters of Abaddon. Over the millennia since the beginning of the Third Age, the Cains learned to conceal their secret. They chose to keep their blood "pure," by breeding only within their extended family.

Goat's Hollow was never more than a hamlet, and today is just a thorp. Located in temperate wooded hills, Goat's Hollow appears only on local maps.

Whether the Cains are inbred psychopaths or blood-related cultists maintaining a secret ancient tradition is entirely up to the GM. GMs should feel free to give higher-level items to members items defend Goat's Hollow and the family.

GRAYWHARF

NE Village

Qualities: Eldritch, Free City

Disadvantages: Soul Crushing (anyone who spends at least 24 hours within the settlement suffers disadvantage on Will saves for as long as they remain in the area and for 24 hours after leaving the area)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government: Secret Syndicate

Population: 75 (30 human elder hybrids [see the Monsters of the Elder Gods section]; 25 elf elder hybrids; 10 dwarf elder hybrids; 10 humans)

NOTABLE NPCs

- Mayor Cairath Chorster (LE female human rogue 7, member of the secret syndicate)
- Constable Zanfire Trickfoot (NE male halfling fighter 6)
- Seasinger Nerisvyre Demoneye (NE female tiefling druid 9, leader of the secret syndicate)
- Syndicate Xangretor Under-the-Veil (NE male human-elder hybrid, runs the general store)
- Syndicate Zinathanna Goblinfoe (NE female gnome-elder hybrid rogue 7)
- Syndicate Janlyassa Gladomain (NE male orc-elder hybrid fighter 3, deputy of Zanfire Trickfoot)

Graywharf is a coastal village, blanketed by fog nearly every night and by a miserable drizzle almost every day. Fungus grows on the sides of the rotting wooden buildings. If it were not so grim and wet, it might manage to be quaint.

Graywharf is always under Elder Influence, unless an Elder God is close enough to put it under Elder Presence.

Reasons to come to Graywharf include hunting for people kidnapped by elder hybrids and sahuagin for breeding, tracking rumors of strange relics brought up from the sea, or a chance to trade with an aboleth for Second Age magic.

N'GREL

CE Small City

Qualities: God Ruled, Magical Polyglot, Morally Permissive, Notorious, Unholy Site

Disadvantages: Treat N'grel as if permanently within an Elder Presence, regardless of where Maq'thurlia is at that moment.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government: Theocracy

Population: 7,500 (5,000 human; 1,000 orcs; 500 dwarves; 500 elves; 500 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

- The Master Maq'thurlia (CE Elder God)
- Unholy Fool Lady Alucaryn the Chosen (CE female human wizard 15)
- Voice of the Master Petlamin Hawksdeath (CE male orc bard 10)
- Leader of the Mad Dance The Piper (CN Elder God)

N'grel is a mass of non-Euclidean structures, as if a city designed by M.C. Escher sprung to mind-shattering life.

Sanity checks in N'grel are the rule rather than the exception. Constant exposure to the erratic time, wild magic, and unleashed entropy requires a Sanity check every hour at minimum.

Reasons to come to N'grel include searching for ways to translate Second Age artifacts, learning about the Elder Gods, rescuing slaves taken by the Mad Dance, or stealing a First Age relic.

RED HAVEN

CN Village

Qualities: Asylum, Eldritch

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government: Theocracy

Population: 85 (45 humans; 20 elves; 10 gnomes; 5 halflings; 5 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

- Hierophant Quohorn Nightsong (CN male human cleric 5)
- Psychist Gurora Dryadskin (CN female elf rogue 5)
- Orderly Brelove Huntmaster (CN female dwarf ranger 3)
- Orderly Aragwen Souleye (CN male human fighter 5)
- Head Keeper Nurioyas Macehand (CN female human wizard 10, see the Lorekeepers in the Organizations chapter for more on the Head Keeper)

Red Haven was once a small city and home to a prison for the criminally insane. When the return of the Elder Gods brought a new, cataclysmic age to Abaddon, law and order broke down. The cells and walls of the prison cracked and fell open. The inmates escaped. Blood ran in the streets of the city.

Those who could, fled. Those who could not flee either died or bargained for their lives with the escapees. Over

time, however, this willingness to comprise caused a schism between the escaped inmates. The most rational became less violent and more organized and drove off the residents they saw as dangerous or erratic. Thus, Red Haven shrank to the size it is today.

Now, everyone in Red Haven is at least slightly insane. Those who are born sane lose their minds as they mature in the madness-infested society of the village. Some obviously have broken psyches, but many simply seem to have some quirk or odd figure of speech, which may lull visitors into a false sense of security.

The entire village is devoted to the Piper, an Elder God and leader of the Mad Dance. When not in N'Grel, the Piper is often dancing with the villagers in a vast chamber beneath the center of the village. The villagers kill outsider who witnesses their rites, and often offer up blood sacrifices to their Elder God.

The madness of the villagers may give them some true insight into the Elder Gods but getting them to share it could be very difficult and extremely dangerous.

ORGANIZATIONS

Allies and adversaries after the Rebirth of the Elder Gods

LOREKEEPERS

Alignment: CN

Headquarters: Red Haven

Leader: Head Keeper Nurioyas Macehand (CN female human wizard 10)

Prominent Members: Kevgeon Seaskipper, Vicfalcon Stalkingwolf, Shaward Clayheart

Structure: Academic

Scope: Regional

Resources: Poverty-level

The Lorekeepers are a group of arcane scholars who believe that madness often provides insight.

Ten years ago, Nurioyas Macehand traveled to Red Haven in search of lore lost after the Rebirth of the Elder Gods. While in the village, she realized that several of the inhabitants were acting out rituals from the Second Age. They could not possibly have discovered the rituals on their own, so Nurioyas reasoned that their madness gave them insight.

She told her fellow arcane scholars of her theory. Many scoffed, but a few accompanied her to Red Haven for further studies.

STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

The Lorekeepers determine standing within their cabal by presenting their research. Those who have uncovered the

most startling or useful revelations stand above their peers. The turnover is constant and the competition is fierce.

GOALS

The Lorekeepers prize knowledge above all else. They do not prize practical information over the abstract. Their goal is simply to learn as much as possible about this new world.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

The residents of Red Haven consider the Lorekeepers vaguely useful. Occasionally they know of lore lost in the madness and flight from the escaped inmates.

Beyond Red Haven, the few who know of the Lorekeepers consider them frustrating. The Lorekeepers could spread their knowledge of the Elder Gods and the Star Gods, but they do not. They do not care about returning Abaddon to the way it was before the Elder Gods returned.

LOYAL ORDER OF CARTOGRAPHERS

Alignment: LN

Headquarters: Whitewalls (a small city in the New Normal zone)

Leaders: Chief Cartographer Thoaver Hazelglow (LG human ranger 12)

Prominent Members: Chief Geometer Graaver Shortankard, Chief Geographer Rictiln Demoneye, Chief Surveyor Thalfan Quicksilver

Structure: Business

Scope: National

Resources: Moderate wealth, plus government support among lawful and neutral communities

When the Elder Gods rose from their subterranean slumber, the ensuing chaos smeared borders large and small. Natural landmarks vanished or were transformed. A group of mapmakers resolved to rediscover who owned which pieces of land and became a spark in the darkness of this new world.

STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

The Chief Cartographer is the boss of the Loyal Order. The other chiefs work for him. Thoaver Hazelglow and his staff make maps based on information provided by the other divisions of the Loyal Order.

The Geometer division handles education and training. Under Graaver Shortankard, they teach how to translate notes into maps, along with geometry and trigonometry.

The Geographer division explores the new Abaddon, identifying new landmarks and determining the fate of past landmarks.

The Surveyor division goes out into the world, maps the locations of landmarks, and measures borders and property lines from those landmarks.

GOALS

The initial goal of the Loyal Order was to resolve property and border disputes peacefully and amicably, using math, maps, and reason.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Because its resolution process tends to increase law and order, the Loyal Order has become a rallying point for all those confused and longing for a more rational, less random existence.

MAD DANCERS

Alignment: CN

Headquarters: N'Grel

Leader: The Piper (CN Elder God)

Prominent Members: None

Structure: None

Scope: Global

Resources: The powers of an Elder God, and the wealth and equipment of all who fall prey to the dance

The Mad Dancers are a loose group of people who succumbed to the Piper's Call and must dance their way to N'Grel to serve Maq'thurlia.

STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Structure and leadership are completely antithetical to the Mad Dancers and the Piper. The only true thing that can be said is that the Piper, being an Elder God, is the most powerful member of the group.

GOALS

Most people assume that the goal of the Mad Dance is to provide slaves for Maq'thurlia. The truth is that Maq'thurlia has no need for slaves. In fact, he pays no attention to mortals at all. His effect on their sanity is just part of who and what he is. His colossal size makes the death of smaller creatures inevitable unless they dodge his steps. Maq'thurlia is evil. His goals, however, only coincidentally involve Abaddon. The Piper, on the other hand, seems very interested in

mortals. He does not care about them as we understand caring and compassion, but he is interested. The Call seems to be a byproduct of the Piper's existence, and not something that he does on purpose. The Piper directs mortals to maintain N'Grel, as he spends most of his time in medium humanoid form and needs the shelter and facilities provided by the city.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

The Mad Dance is a curse. Only evil people try to take advantage of it by putting the weak and the unwanted in its path.

THE CALL

The GM should treat the Call as if it were a psychic disease. Exposure occurs when a creature comes within five miles of the Mad Dance. The Mad Dance is always considered part of the Piper's domain. The Piper is always aware of the Mad Dance and what is happening to those suffering the effects of the Call.

When a character first approaches within 5 miles of a Mad Dance, they must make a DC 5 Wisdom saving throw. If they fail, they become afflicted with the Mad Dance, with success allowing the character to avoid the effects for that day. Each day the character remains within this 5-mile radius, they must roll another saving throw with the DC increasing by 2 each day. There is a 1-in-1000 chance that the Piper is leading a particular Mad Dance, in which case the base DC increases to 15.

A creature that fails this save becomes twitchy, makes random, jerky movements, and undergoes sudden outbursts of giggling. The creature suffers disadvantage on all Intelligence ability checks and saving throws. In addition, a spellcaster must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution check to cast any spell, and they suffer disadvantage on their Constitution check to maintain concentration on a spell if they take damage. A character afflicted by the Call suffers disadvantage on Stealth checks.

Once a creature affected by the Call fails five saving throws (they need not be consecutive), they fall under the effects of a *geas* spell that requires them to follow the Mad Dance to N'Grel. Even worse, that creature becomes a new center for the five-mile radius range of the Call and its effects.

Succeeding on a saving throw delays the inevitable but does render the creature immune to the Call. Only powerful spells such as *wish* can reverse the effects of the Call once they have begun, and even that spell only resets the DC of the Wisdom saving throw to 5. The only permanent cure is to stay away from the Mad Dance.

THE MAD DANCE

Those dancing under the full effect of the Call caper and prance as they move. The dancing creature suffers disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws and attack rolls. The creature gains no benefit to its AC from wearing a shield. The dancing subject provokes opportunity attacks each round on its turn. Dancers must use all their actions to follow the Dance.

Dancers do not cease dancing for food, water, or rest. Treat this as a forced march that ends at N'Grel or when the dancer becomes unconscious. Note that it is entirely possible for a dancer to lose consciousness from dancing and wake up outside the five-mile radius of the Call. Such a character, no longer under the influence of the Call, can simply walk away, confused and fatigued.

TYPICAL MAD DANCE

A typical Mad Dance consists of 5d20 people. 90% of these are normal individuals (aristocrats, artisans, laborers, guards, etc.). The remaining 10% are adventurers unlucky enough to fall under the Call's influence. Typically, each member of the dance has 1d6 levels.

STARSPAWN

Alignment: CN

Headquarters: The Plateau of N'chrinn

Leader: Archpriest Seamorn Arcanscape (CN male elf cleric 15)

Prominent Members: Olatrynn Lemureslayer, Syrolin Gearguts, Lorasadi Jacksalt, Hollydiana Glorygem

Structure: Loose religious organization

Scope: Regional

Resources: Limited to those of the members

The Starspawn are a religious faction that broke off from worshipping the New Gods about fifty years ago. When Maq'thurlia raised N'Grel from the depths of the Black Sea, it was obvious that the Elder Gods' victory over the New Gods completely restructured religious power in Abaddon. A few ecclesiastical scholars knew of the Elder Gods and their opponents, the Star Gods. These scholars became the seeds of the Starspawn and worked together to contact the ancient foes of the Elder Gods.

Their successes were limited at first, as the Starspawn focused on defending the New Gods. However, more recently the Starspawn have begun sending a trickle of power to their mortal celebrants.

STRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Below the Archpriest is the Congress of Archbishops. The members of the Congress elect the Archpriest from among the most learned Starspawn.

In turn, the bishops of the Starspawn elect the Archbishops from among their own numbers.

Congregations of Starspawn elect their own bishops from those who demonstrate the most knowledge, wisdom, and divine power.

If the organization were larger, there would be synods, groups of congregations, electing bishops and an archdeacon elected by the congregation would run each congregation. Seamorn Arcanscape is old at 260 years. The Starspawn treasure him because his memories keep the time before the Rebirth of the Elder Gods alive. However, he will not live forever, and there is much discussion among the Archbishops of who is worthy to succeed Arcanscape as Archpriest.

GOALS

Ultimately, the Starspawn would like to destroy the Elder Gods. Failing that, they want to imprison the Elder Gods again.

Beyond those goals, the Starspawn are divided. Some would like to return the Star Gods to Abaddon. Others think that would be just as bad as having the Elder Gods walking Abaddon and want to keep the Starspawn locked in the black depths behind the stars.

PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Nothing succeeds like success, and the more power the Starspawn wield against the Elder Gods, the more powerful they become. However, beyond their isolated plateau they are barely known.

Any Intelligence check to possess or recall information related to the Starspawn should be at least DC 15. A character with the campaign trait *The Stars Were Right* (see above) gains a +5 bonus on these checks.

MONSTERS OF THE ELDER GODS

Two templates for use after the Rebirth of the Elder Gods

ABOLETH SERVITORS

If you want your player characters to encounter the genetically manufactured slaves of the aboleths of the Second Age, we encourage you to use the intruder's get from the *Plague World* chapter.

CARNIPHITES

When the Elder Gods returned, some settlements were cut off from the rest of the world. The inhabitants struggled against cannibalism for as long as they could, but eventually had to succumb, digging up graves and devouring the rotting remains within. Over time, the flesh of dead humanoids became their only sustenance, transforming them into carniphites.

Carniphites retain many of the physical features of their original form. Their eyes become completely black. Their nails harden and blacken, becoming vicious claws. Their teeth become pointed and razor sharp. The bones in their jaws thicken, and their jaw muscles become stronger, giving carniphites a sort of muzzle. They have no external ears and are hairless and pale.

Most carniphites are miserable, shame-filled beings who shun contact with other races. They only become aggressive when they run out of corpses and have to make more.

TEMPLATE

Carniphite is a simple template that can be applied to any corporeal humanoid except Harrowed or Khymer. Alignment changes to evil. In addition, make the following changes:

- Increase the creature's attack bonus and damage by +1.
- The creature's AC increases to no lower than 15.
- Increase the creature's hit points by +1 per Hit Die.
- Increase the creature's abilities as follows: Strength +2, Constitution +2, Intelligence -6 (minimum of 2), and Charisma +2
- A carniphite gains two claw attacks and a bite attack appropriate to their size and gains Multiattack.

ELDER HYBRIDS

Over the last century, as order broke down, many of the old servants of the aboleths were able to come ashore and, meeting no resistance, combined their blood lines with those of the land-dwellers.

The resulting hybrid offspring have pale, fish-belly-white skin; large, glassy eyes; and rudimentary ears and noses.

TEMPLATE

Elder hybrid is a simple template that can be applied to any corporeal humanoid. Alignment changes to neutral evil. In addition, make the following changes:

- Increase the creature's attack bonus and damage by +1.
- The creature's AC increases to no lower than 17.
- If it does not already possess it, the creature gains darkvision to a distance of 60 feet.
- The elder hybrid gains a swim speed of 40 feet and has advantage on all Strength (Athletics) checks made in the water.
- The creature gains light sensitivity. While in bright light, the hybrid has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.
- Increase the creature's abilities as follows: Strength +2, Constitution +2.
- The elder hybrid gains two claw attacks and a bite attack appropriate to their size, but prefers to use weapons, however.
- All elder hybrids can speak and understand Primordial.

CLAW AND BITE DAMAGE BY SIZE

Size	Claw	Bite
Fine	-	1
Diminutive	1	1d2
Tiny	1d2	1d3
Small	1d3	1d4
Medium	1d4	1d6
Large	1d6	1d8
Huge	1d8	2d6
Gargantuan	2d6	2d8
Colossal	2d8	4d6