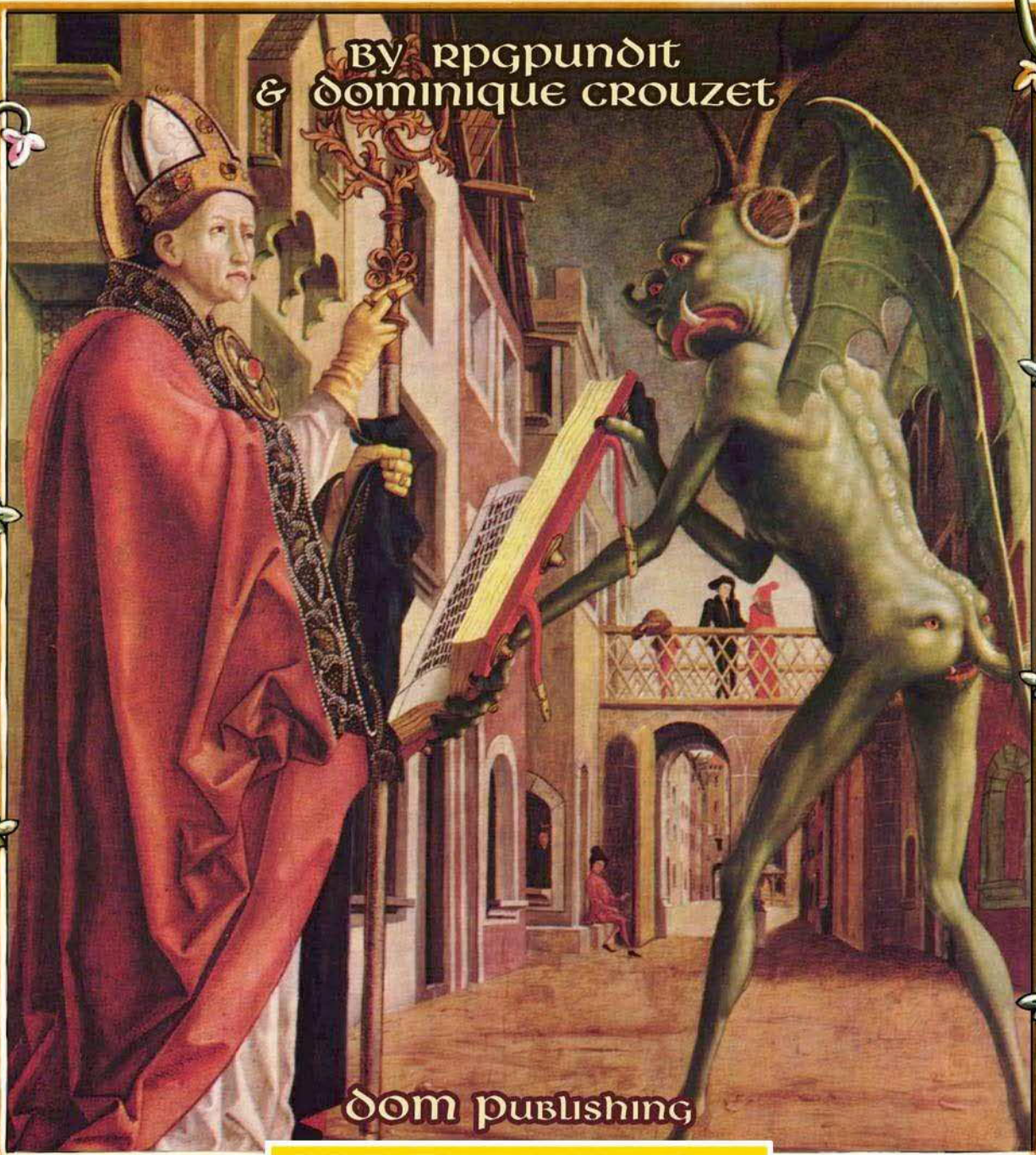




Dark Albion

☆ Cults of Chaos

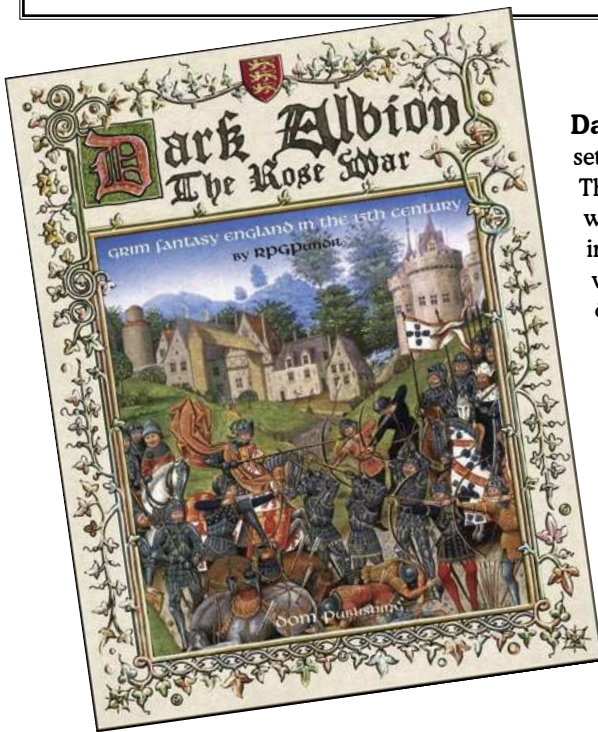
BY rpgpundit
& dominique crouzet



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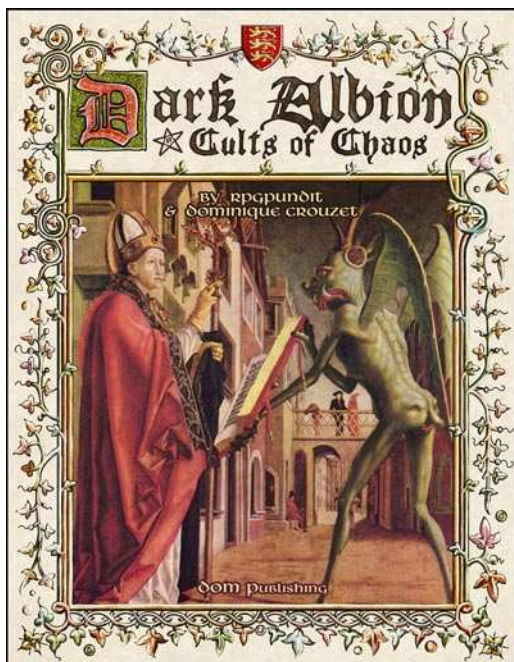
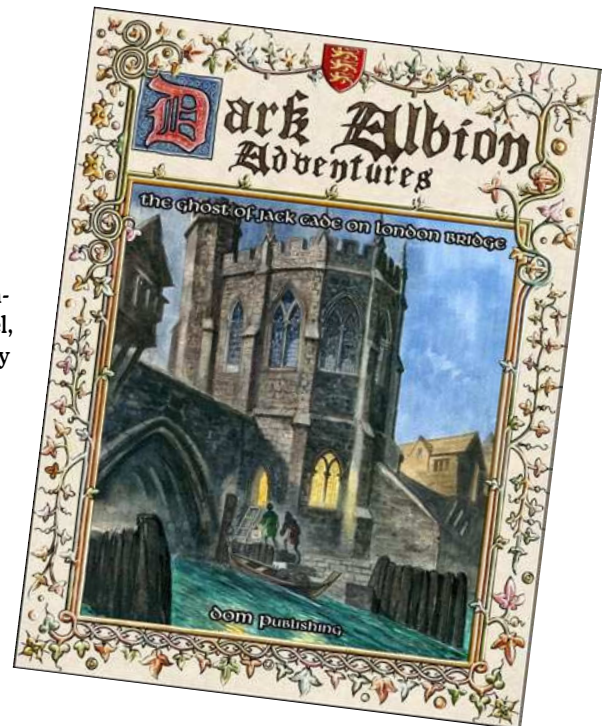


Dark Albion: The Rose War is a 275 pages long, OSR RPG campaign setting, set in a fantasy medieval England during the War of the Roses (15th century). Think England + sorcery + demons and fairies + some fantasy twists to the world. 80% of the book is system neutral, so can be used with most role-playing games. Nonetheless, this book is designed with OSR games in mind, and will run best with such games as *Fantastic Heroes & Witchery*, *Osric*, *Swords & Wizardry*, etc. Note lastly that layout and art have been given great care to make the most visually pleasing book as possible: this means 10 maps, and two illustrations per pages on most of the 275 pages!

Available in bookmarked PDF on RPGnow.com, and as a printed book on demand on Amazon.com (softcover only) and Lulu.com (softcover and hard-cover, including with a cover variant).

Dark Albion Adventures: The Ghost of Jack Cade on London Bridge, is a 22 pages long fantasy RPG adventure for the Dark Albion: The Rose War campaign setting. This is a low level introductory adventure (i.e. intended for 1st level, probably newly created, characters), that occurs on London Bridge. This is mostly an investigation adventure, without dungeon crawls (though several buildings may be explored). It would be typically run in a single 4-5 hours gaming session.

Available in PDF on RPGnow.com, and as a printed book on demand on Amazon.com and Lulu.com (softcover only).



Dark Albion: Cults of Chaos is a 87 pages long gaming supplement for Dark Albion, as well as most OSR fantasy-horror role-playing games. It will help you generate various Chaos Cults in detail (many tables provided). It then describes the most common Chaos cults found in Albion (those worshipping demons, and others), gives advice on how running Chaos cults adventures (several tables provided), and proposes three ready-to-use dungeons (i.e.: maps plus descriptions of contents of three dungeons that would be perfect for cultists lairs). This supplement is usable with any RPG of the OSR movement, such as *Fantastic Heroes & Witchery*, *Osric*, *Labyrinth Lord*, etc.

Available in PDF on RPGnow.com, and as a printed book on demand on Amazon.com and Lulu.com (softcover only).

Dark Albion

★ Cults of Chaos ★

by RPGPundit



Dark Albion: The Rose War is a campaign setting primarily designed for use with OSR games, such as *Fantastic Heroes & Witchery*. This supplement is for use with *Dark Albion* and is OSR compatible (i.e.: it's usable with most OSR games).

Authors: RPGPundit and Dominique Crouzet (see detail p.92)

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Interior art: Dominique Crouzet, plus several stock-art and public domain illustrations.

Download free supplements at DOM Publishing: <http://www.drouzet.net/heroes-witchery/>
Ask questions about *Dark Albion* to RPGPundit on his website: <http://www.therpgsite.com/>

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dark albion: cults of chaos

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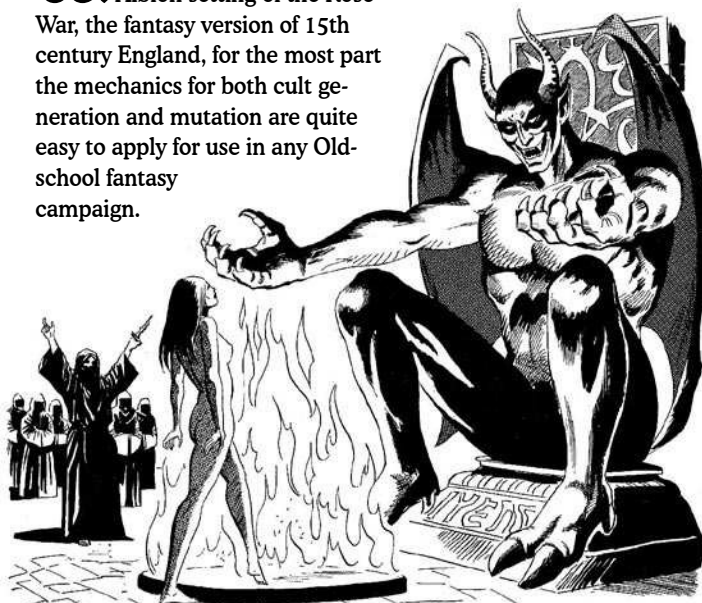
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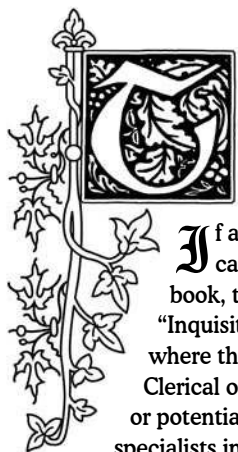
Dark Albion: Cults of Chaos is a supplement to the OSR setting-book *Dark Albion*. Like the former, it is designed in a system-neutral fashion, easily applicable to any OSR rule-set you may wish to use (and indeed, relatively easy to apply to any other fantasy RPG you might prefer).

There are two main sections in the supplement: the first presents rules on generating a chaos-worshipping cult, usable to create a wide variety of possible secret sects and conspiracies in the service of Chaos through multiple groups and social classes. The emphasis of these sects is on having a degree of 'medieval authenticity', presenting the cults with fantasy elements but with direct inspiration from real-world medieval ideas on witch-craft, heresies, priestly corruption, aristocratic hedonism, etc., many derived directly from either real history or medieval folk-beliefs.

The second section presents rules on Chaos mutations: transformations to a character's mind, body or spirit which come about as a result of some form of exposure to the warping power of raw Chaos. There have been many excellent rules in other products (both OSR and other fantasy games) on corruption or mutation for fantasy games, to say nothing of post-apocalyptic games; but these mutation rules are somewhat distinct on account of their being based, again, on real medieval ideas and folklore about witches, monsters and curses. This includes witch-marks, madness-inducing spirits, and rules on familiars which change familiars back from the RPG standard of 'friendly magic animal companion' into a powerful but corrupting demon-spawned animal link to the infernal.

While this book is clearly oriented to be run in the Dark Albion setting of the Rose War, the fantasy version of 15th century England, for the most part the mechanics for both cult generation and mutation are quite easy to apply for use in any Old-school fantasy campaign.





he “Inquisitors” campaign

If a GM wishes to focus a Dark Albion campaign on the material found in this book, the ideal campaign for it would be an “Inquisitors” campaign. This is a campaign where the Player Characters are agents of the Clerical order, or alternately of an Archbishop, or potentially of the Crown itself, treated as specialists in charge of investigating reports of Chaos Cult activity.

Until the establishment of the more formalized Clerical Order of Inquisition late in the campaign period, the process of investigating Chaos Cult activity was quite haphazard. The influx of Chaos was a major concern to both the Church and the local government, because of the risk of destabilization these cults represented (and the memory of the horrific example of the fall of the Frankland crown to the Frogmen, which largely occurred due to the aristocracy and other sectors of society being effectively subverted by agents of chaos promoting heresy and hedonism). While investigating, rooting out and purging Chaos was a high priority, there were sometimes conflicting interests among the ruling classes in this pursuit: the Crown did not wish to give too much power and influence to the Church. And within the Church, the Clerical order felt that they were the proper champions of the Unconquered Sun divinely ordained to seek out and fight Chaos at the risk of their very lives, but the non-clerical priestly hierarchy (led in Albion by the various Bishops, Archbishops and the Archbishop—later Cardinal—of Canterbury) saw themselves as the true administrators of the faith. The priestly hierarchy owned enormous tracts of land in Albion (almost one-third of all populated territory) and often felt resentful of the intrusion of Clerics (who are not subject to obedience to ordinary prelates, but only to their own commanders and the Pontifex himself) on their affairs.

If a Player Character group has one or more Clerics among them, the most logical structure of such a campaign would be to have the group work for the Clerical order, with the Cleric PC(s) acting as commanders of the group while the other PCs are specialists who have been hired, induced, or perhaps sometimes obliged to work with the Clerics in their investigations. A group without Clerics might instead work for a local Archbishop (or the Archbishop of Canterbury, who would have jurisdiction over all Albion), or for the Crown.

An “Inquisitor” campaign would generally involve the PCs operating either within a certain ‘sandbox’ area (for example, a given county) or wandering throughout Albion, answering summons from their patron regarding rumors of witchcraft, monsters or heresy to be investigated. They would most likely have a certain amount of authority backing them, but would still be bound by rule of law, and may have to face local authorities, clergy, officers or Lords who would be less than co-operative at times. They may also run into other investigators from time to time, sent by some rival patron; these NPC group might



sometimes be cooperative with the PCs for the sake of fighting Chaos, but at other times might consider them intruders or upstarts and make things difficult for them.

Finally, in a Dark Albion campaign it is worthwhile to keep careful check of the ongoing passage of time and how this tracks to the chronology of the setting. In a sandbox campaign, the GM should keep note of times when the events of the timeline (and in particular, the unfolding of the Rose War) might interfere with events in the area the campaign is set. In a campaign played on the larger scale where PCs wander to different areas of Albion, the GM may sometimes wish to time missions to certain areas with important events that will take place in that area, to present added twists to an adventure.

Given the particularly dangerous nature of a career dedicated to hunting Chaos, it is very likely that an Inquisitor Campaign will have a high mortality rate for PCs. The GM may wish to give each player two or three PCs at a time, allowing them to choose which they play in any given session, in order to help maintain the continuity of the campaign in the events of PCs deaths (or worse, ‘total party kills’!). When one of player’s characters die, they will still have one or two other PCs already introduced to the campaign, and will also create a new level 0 or level 1 character to replenish their pool.

chaos cults

Cults of Chaos do not come in generic forms in the world of Dark Albion. They are almost always fairly different from one another. There is no great coherent conspiracy or an organized chaos-worshipping religion in Albion or anywhere on the Continent outside of Frogland (or the Pict highlands, if that counts). As such, a GM should feel free to make his chaos cult as unique as he may want to.

However, there can be some generalities about chaos cults in very broad terms. Thus, the following method for generation will serve as a guideline for when a GM wants to make a quick and fairly generic kind of Chaos Cult.

chaos cult generation system

STEP 1: DETERMINE THE SOCIAL CLASS OF THE CULT

Roll or select the class level of the cult:

d20	Social Class
1-10	Peasant: countryside cult
11-14	Villain: city cult of lower and middle urban classes
15-16	Burgher: cult composed of rich merchant families or city rulers
17-18	Priestly: cult centered in a monastery/nunnery or in the priesthood
19	Noble: one or more members of a noble family
20	Mixed: of varied social class. Roll again twice (ignoring this result). Cult has a leadership of the first of the two results and followers of the second.

STEP 2: DETERMINE THE SIZE OF THE CULT

Roll or select the size of the cult:

d20	Size Category
1-6	1-2 cultists: One single person acting alone, or with an apprentice
7-11	1d4+1 cultists: A very small sect
12-15	2d6 cultists: A small sect
16-18	4d6 cultists: A large sect
19-20	2d6 + 1d100 cultists: A tiny inner circle who know the truth, plus a large number of people who are being somehow deceived, thinking the cult leader(s) to be a holy person, saint, good magician, crime lord, rebel leader, or some other form of non-cultist.

STEP 3: DETERMINE IF THE CULT IS EXPOSED

There is a chance that people in the area the cult operates will at least have some idea that the cult is present. The chance that there is some knowledge of the cult is determined by rolling a d20 and adding the number of members the cult has. The total is the percentage chance that the cult's presence is known. If the percentage check fails, no one in the area has any information about the cult, though they may know of 'strange goings on'. If the percentage check succeeds, then people in the area are convinced that there is a Chaos cult responsible for these goings-on, and may have some idea of the nature of this cult. If the percentage check succeeded by 10 or more, then there is at least one person in the area who is not a cult member that has witnessed or could identify at least one cultist by name.

STEP 4: DETERMINE THE CULT'S FORM

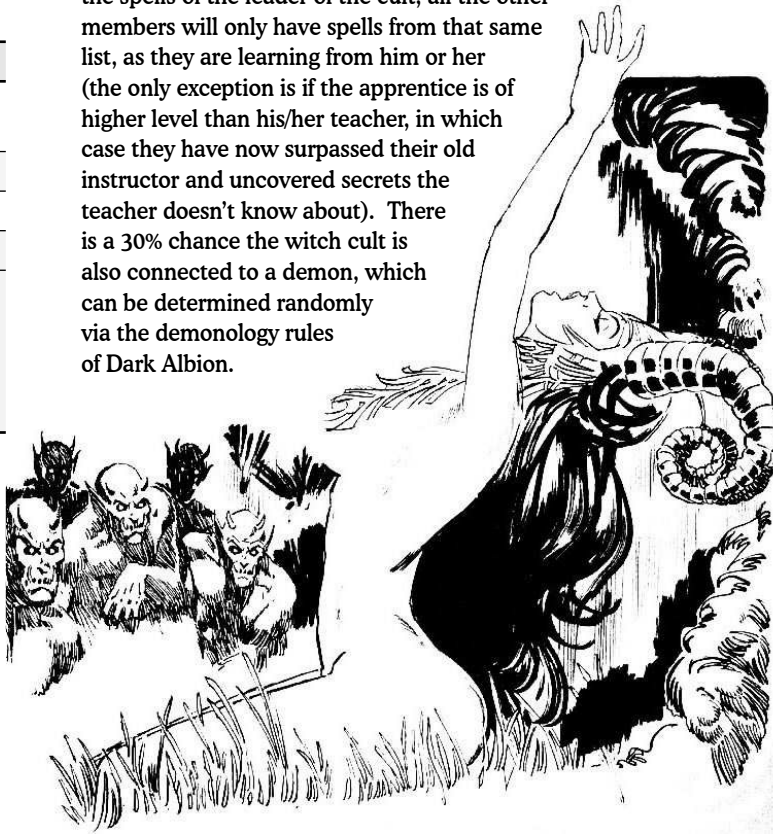
Roll or select options for the Cult's basic form based on its social class.

PEASANT CULT (1d20)

1-6	Fake Cult	18	Elf-Cult
7-10	Witchcraft	19	Object Cult
11-14	Old Religion	20	Frog-Cult
15-17	Heresy		

• **Fake Cult:** The cult has no actual magic or chaos connection. Roll or select from one of the other six options as to what the cult claims to be, but the leadership are in fact either frauds or insanely deluded. They have no chaos magic, no demon patrons, no connections to anything of chaotic power at all. This does not mean that they are not dangerous, however. A fake cult could still cause a great deal of (non-magical) murder or mayhem, and could if left unchecked eventually stumble their way into real power.

• **Witchcraft:** The cult is run by a hedge witch, a magic-user trained outside the magisterial system. He or she is of level 1-6. The chief witch possibly has an apprentice of level 1-4. Every other member of the cult is a magician of level 1. Roll or select the spells of the leader of the cult; all the other members will only have spells from that same list, as they are learning from him or her (the only exception is if the apprentice is of higher level than his/her teacher, in which case they have now surpassed their old instructor and uncovered secrets the teacher doesn't know about). There is a 30% chance the witch cult is also connected to a demon, which can be determined randomly via the demonology rules of Dark Albion.



• **Old Religion:** The cult is a recreation of some heathen faith that was popular in the region prior to the conversion of Albion to the faith of the Unconquered Sun. Roll 1d6 to determine which deity they venerate:

- 1) *The Blood God:* a chief god of the Northmen; he demands blood-sacrifice in battle.
- 2) *The Hawk:* a chief god of the Scots' Men.
- 3) *The Green Man:* the old English god of the woods
- 4) *Hecate:* an Arcadian witch-goddess whose sect has lingered since Arcadian times.
- 5) *Mananan:* the Cymric Sea-God

6) *The Wolf God*: a god of wolves worshiped by old English and Northmen alike.

Most of these deities in their original form are Neutral, but there is an 80% chance that the sect has warped the faith into a veneration of Chaos powers, and have taken to performing human sacrifice (in a form appropriate to the cult's veneration; e.g. drowning for Mananan, child-sacrifice to Hecate, etc). There's a 30% chance that the leader is in contact with a Demon who is masquerading as the cult's deity. A cult of the Blood God will have at least half the sect as berserker warriors of lv.2-5. A cult of Hecate will be run by a 1-3 (magic-user) "priestesses" of level 2-5. There is a 40% chance the Wolf God's cult will be run by 1-6 werewolves.

• **Heresy**: The cult claims to be a populist peasant devotional movement of the Unconquered Sun. However, the sect has been corrupted into Chaos and hold beliefs that exact a corrupting influence on the local population. Roll 1d6 to determine the nature of the heresy:

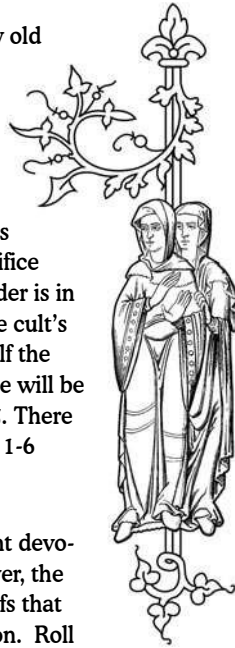
1) *Cathari*: the sect is run by a self-styled "perfecti"; they advocate extreme asceticism and their leader is considered so pure as to be free of any ability to sin. This sect believes in rejecting most of the ways of the world, seeing all life as sinful. There's a 60% chance the "perfecti" is a lv.1-4 magic-user; otherwise he is either a former Cleric fallen into the service of Chaos (who has no access to Cleric spells but has made a bond with a Demon) or a human agent of the Frogmen (assisted by some frogman magic items and his knowledge of poisons to cause apparent 'divine' deaths of those who question him).

2) *Charismatic*: the ruler of the sect is a 'holy man' (or woman) who claims to be especially ordained with gifts of healing and blessing. He/she makes a pretense of being a "new Apollonius" and that they will create a new Clerical order among their faithful, possibly claiming that the existing clerics and the Church have become corrupt. The cult leader may be (40% chance) a magic-user of level 1-4, but whether or not, they are making use of either (50/50 chance) a chaos artifact or a demon patron. The 'healings' being performed are likely to end in mutations.

3) *Donatist*: the sect is rabidly against the corruption of the priesthood, arguing that the Church must be (violently) purified of sinners in its ranks. There is a 50% chance that the sect has no direct Chaos patron, power or influence, but even so they are contributing to the service of Chaos. Otherwise, the sect is run by either a magic-user (1-60%), a disguised Cymri seeking revenge against the Church (61-80%) or a defrocked priest or cleric who has now made a pact with a demon (81-100%).

4) *Gnostic*: the sect believes that each of its initiates has the potential to eventually become gods in their own right, ascending to the heavens after a series of purifications. The truth of the sect is either that they are being run by a demon-worshiper seeking to open a gate to hell, a mad magician of lv.2-8 seeking to open a magic circle and summon forth Elves, or an Undeath Cult that will slowly "purify" the initiates into Wraiths or other incorporeal undead.

5) *Manichean*: this sect believes in achieving a kind of state of perfect Neutrality. They think that through certain rites and meditations they can become 'unattached' to either Law or



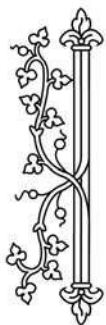
Chaos, beyond good or evil. They have strict disciplines and on the outside look like an ascetic movement (preaching poverty, chastity, rigorous prayer, etc). But their sect practices ritualized taboo-breaking to reach the state of 'equanimity' they seek; and in their secret rites will commit all sorts of atrocities and perversions to seek to 'prove' they have gone beyond human boundaries. They may be led by a demon-worshiping priest (possibly still holding priestly office, or perhaps defrocked), a fallen former cleric, a wizard masquerading as a holy man, or a frogman agent.

6) *Prophetic*: this sect's leader claims to be able to receive revelations directly from the Unconquered Sun. These will sometimes reveal truths about congregants or members of the community, at other times will make claims about local magistrates, or even the fates of kings. But ultimately, the sect believes that an Apocalypse is coming, where the holy ones will be preserved by the Unconquered Sun in creating a New Heliopolis, while the sinners will burn in a lake of fire. This sinister prophecy is actually part of the agenda of the cult leader, who is either a magic-user of level 3-6 with the ESP spell, or a thief (lv.1-4) with an artifact that allows them glimpses of the future or into people's minds. Their visions are being guided by a demonic force, either the magic-user's patron or a demon bound to the artifact.

• **Elf Cult**: This cult venerates the Elves; usually basing themselves around a stone circle. There is a 50% chance they are being run by an opportunistic Cymri pulling a type of con-game but playing with some Elven magic that is potentially very dangerous. Otherwise, there is an equal chance that the sect is being influenced by a demon lord pretending to be the elves speaking 'from the other side', or are really in contact with a group of Elves in their reality trying to re-open the link between their worlds so that they can cross through (to take human slaves, recover some dark artifact, cause chaos for its own sake, or even try to take over the world of men once more).



• **Object Cult**: The cult began when a peasant found a powerful chaos artifact in some hole, cave, mine, or small cairn. This magical item may grant them power to kill, heal, control minds, cause mutations, summon monsters, or make some other wondrous effects. The cult leader has gained followers through intimidation, promises of power, or magical control. There is a 60% chance that the artifact is intelligent and imbued with or linked to the spirit of a demon. Otherwise, the item is only very powerful and has a corrupting influence on those around it.



• **Frog-Cult:** In these dark times, most Englishmen live in fear that the instability of the kingdom may lead to an opportunistic Frogman invasion. While most would assume this to be the worst possible scenario and would die to defend Albion's freedom, a few have come to believe that it would be better to venerate the Frogmen and their dark Frog-God ahead of time in the hopes of becoming favored human servants in the new regime they believe will come. There is a 40% chance a frog-cult is being promoted by one or more human agents

of the frogmen, who will be lv.1-4 fighters or thieves with access to frogman wealth and some magic items. Otherwise there is a 1-70% chance that the cult is run by a magic-user (lv.2-5) who is hoping to gain magical and political power in an eventual Frogman invasion, or (71-00% chance) that the cult is being run by a group of degenerate local frogmen (probably from The Fens, at least originally) who are connected to the Frog-God and have been gifted with powers (including Chaos Slime that will induce mutations in humans to turn them into mindless warriors for the Frog cause).

VILLAIN CULT (1d20)

1-6	Fake Cult	14-18	Rogue Magisters
7-10	Heresy	19-20	Rat Cult
11-13	Death Cult		

• **Fake Cult:** As in peasant cults, above. A fake cult will take the form of one of the other villain cults but have no actual chaos influence.

• **Heresy:** As in peasant cults, above.

• **Death Cult:** A cult that follows the late-Elven-period Death God. It will usually take the form of a street gang of lower class thugs, rogues, fighters, and Cymri (1-70%) or sometimes as a secret fraternal-aid society of small shop-owners (71-00%), with some hired thugs. The death god demands human sacrifice in veneration; in the former sect it will be in the form of assassinations, while in the latter as ritual sacrifice (of street urchins, most likely). There is a 70% chance the leader of the cult will be a lv.2-5 Cymri or Magic-user. There is a 40% chance the cult has tapped into the power of the Death God, in which case sacrificial victims will rise as zombies, and the leader of the cult will rise as a wight if slain, or may be able to intentionally transform himself into a mummy.

• **Rogue Magisters:** One or more magisters, probably trained in the Collegium but who either quit or was thrown out before graduation, or has not found meaningful employment, are now teaching magic and working magic on their own. There is a 60% chance they are not actually Chaos worshipers but are using magic to commit crimes and possibly run a gang. Otherwise,

they are engaging in making pacts with demons, while also committing a variety of other crimes. Their leader is a magic-user of level 2-5, other members will be of level 1-3.

• **Rat Cult:** The lycanthrope were-rat worshipers of the Rat-God live in the sewers or catacombs of the larger cities of Albion. This cult serves them, and worships their patron demon, who spreads plague. Followers will be serving 2d6 were-rats who are guiding the cult to spread Chaos. These may have magic items or rituals that can cause mutation (as well as, obviously, the power to create subservient lycanthropes, which they may grant to their closest followers).

BURGHER CULT (1d20)

1-6	Fake Cult	15-16	Guild Conspiracy
7-9	Heresy	17-18	Merchant Cult
10-12	Rogue Magisters	19-20	Frog Cult
13-14	Hedonists		

• **Fake Cult:** As entry for peasants, above. A fake cult will take the form of one of the other cults on this table but will have no true Chaos power behind them. There is a 70% chance the leader of the cult is intentionally defrauding his membership out of their considerable wealth.

• **Heresy:** As entry for peasants, above.

• **Rogue Magisters:** As in the villains entry, above, but instead of petty crime these Magisters of more means will be trying to recruit, control or defraud the upper classes; promising them power, or threatening them, or stealing from/defrauding them.



• **Hedonists:** A sect of a demon, probably (90% chance) masquerading as one of the heathen gods of the ancient Arcadians (Bacchus, Venus, Eros, etc.) whose leader (a Cymri or Magister of lv.2-5) has organized in the form of a pleasure-sect. The cult may gather for orgies, bacchanal feasts of eating and drinking, drug use (Lotus powder may be used, with all the risks involved of weird magical effects, visions, addiction, death, or mutation), perverse art, etc. This may be of great appeal to bored gentry or as liberating for the bored wives and daughters of the merchant classes. But where do these parties lead? Roll 1d6 :

- 1) Nowhere, except for the corruption and ruin of many fine sirs and ladies.
- 2) Madness, the rites eventually turning participants into psychopaths.
- 3) Human sacrifice, as the feast culminates in ritual murder.
- 4) Summoning a demon through dark rites to physical manifestation.
- 5) Mutation, as cultists are changed by their rites.
- 6) Dark conception, as the rites lead to one participant (or

the perhaps innocent wife or daughter of one of them) being impregnated with a demon-spawn.

- **Guild Conspiracy:** All guilds have secret ceremonies, usually fairly mundane, to initiate new apprentices and craftsmen (where secret words and signs are taught by which they can distinguish a true guildsman and thus safely share trade secrets). Sometimes, guilds are subverted by an internal conspiracy that incorporate chaos sorcery into these rituals and secrets. They will try to take over the guild, and then use it to push the dark agenda of a demon lord. There is only a 20% chance that the leader of the conspiracy is a magic-user. Otherwise they are a thief, fighter or sage who may have found a way to contact a demon through some source in the library, treasury, or catacombs of the guild.

- **Merchant Cult:** A sect within a merchant company, small businesses, or a guild, which is mainly concerned with material wealth. The leader is either an alchemist-sage (1-80% chance) or a Cymri/Magister (81-00% chance), of lv.2-5. There's a 60% chance they are engaged in an alchemical counterfeiting operation, making false gold. They are mainly concerned, however, with the creation of true gold through alchemical/magical means. A "fake sect" merchant cult might just be engaged in fraud or risk blowing themselves up in a lab, but a Chaos Merchant Cult's leader has resorted to trying to contact outer intelligences (elves, extraplanar beings, etc.) or demons, to try to be taught the secret of true gold. Besides disrupting local economy, they may also end up engaging in murder, corpse-stealing or organ-harvesting for their experiments.

- **Frog Cult:** See the same entry on the peasant table, above. A burgher frog cult is most likely run by a merchant with trading contacts on the Continent, who is himself acting as a spy or agent for the Frog-men in Albion.

PRIESTLY CULT (1d20)

1-4	Fake Cult	15-16	Ancient Gods
5-10	Heresy	17-18	Star Cult
11-12	Wizard-Priests	19-20	Collectors
13-14	Sex Cult		

- **Fake Cult:** As the same entry for 'peasant cult', above. Fake Priestly cults will take on the form of one of the other cults from the Priestly Cult table, but will have no true connection to Chaos.

- **Heresy:** As the same entry for 'peasant cult', above. Monasteries and ecclesiastical colleges are particularly rich grounds for heresy.

- **Wizard-Priests:** Many priests, monks or nuns, becoming resentful of not having been blessed with clerical magic, take up forbidden studies of magic instead. This sect will be led by a single priest, nun or monk who is actually a lv.2-5 magic-user. It is possible they will have 1-3 apprentices of level 1-4, while any other cult members will be level 1. All of the apprentices will have

only spells identical to those known by the leader, unless an apprentice has actually risen to a level higher than the leader, in which case he will have spells of his own. It is 80% likely that their studies have led them to engaging in the summoning of demons, particularly to obtain more magical knowledge. Otherwise, they may be using a chaos artifact meant to enhance their magic or to increase their ability to obtain new spells.

• Sex-Cults:

Monasteries and nunneries are hotbeds of illicit sex in most cases. Monks in many monasteries are infamous for engaging in romances with one another, or with young men, maidens or even children under their care; nuns will likewise engage in romances with one another, seduce maidens sent to study at their convent, or in

some egregious cases even prostitute themselves to local gentry. Usually, these carnal activities are not inherently involved with

Chaos worship; but sometimes a group of monks or nuns will ritualize their proclivities into the worship of Eros or Venus or some other heathen deity; there is a 75% chance that none but the leader of the cult are aware that they are actually venerating a Demon. In any case they will be willing to do almost anything to keep their practices secret. There's a 70% chance the leader of the cult may be a lv.2-5 magic-user. There's a 20% chance the cult has degenerated to the point that their orgies culminate in ritual murder. There is also a 30% chance that their worship of the flesh will involve rituals that cause mutation.

- **Ancient Gods:** Many monasteries or temples are built over ancient heathen sites. In some cases, a priest, deacon or bishop may discover (hidden in crypts or catacombs under the temple) ancient documents of magic or chaos-artifacts, as well as shrines to these deities. The cult will be established secretly worshipping these old gods in exchange for promises of power or illumination. Popular choices of priestly old-god worship are Jupiter (god of rulers), Gaia (the goddess of nature), Mercury (god of knowledge), Woden (the Northman god of magic), Mananan (the Cymric god of the sea), or Nodens (Cymric god of healing). There is an 80% chance that the sect has warped the faith into a veneration of Chaos powers, and have taken to performing human sacrifice (in a form appropriate to the cult's veneration; e.g. drowning for Mananan, impaling for Wodens, etc). There's a 30% chance that the leader is in contact with a Demon who is masquerading as the cult's deity. A cult of Mercury will be run by a 1-3 magic-users of level 2-5.



- **Star Cult:** Monasteries engage in a variety of studies, not only theology but also calligraphy and, in some cases, astronomy/astrology. Astrology is not forbidden by the church, although fortune-telling of the more popular sort is seen as highly unreliable. In some cases, a monk who is a (usually secret) magic-user may uncover rituals that done at certain times and conjunctions of the planets or stars will allow them to make contact with extra-planar entities. These entities are creature of Chaos, similar to elves, which may grant power or magic items to followers who venerate them; in exchange for which they demand that human victims be given to them, to be taken to the native plane of these entities for some terrible fate. The leader of a star cult will always be a magic-user monk of level 1-6.

- **Collectors:** Certain priests or higher authorities (bishops) will find their position grants them access to ancient tombs, treasuries and the like, which will sometimes have long-forgotten artifacts of magic. Certain corrupt church authorities may decide to take up collecting magic items; in a few cases, they end up in possession of objects of Chaos, which corrupt them and bring them under the influence of demonic forces. There is a 30% chance the leader of a Collector cult is a magic-user of level 1-4, otherwise he is an ordinary priest (though if he is a priest of some prestige, or a bishop, he will have access to significant resources and political influence). The other members of the 'cult' will in fact be fighters, thieves or Cymri who are employed by the priest to seek out more such magic items, by robbery or murder if necessary.

NOBLE CULT (1d20)			
1-8	Fake Cult	15-16	Ladies' Cult
9-10	Immortality Cult	17-18	Collectors
11-12	Political Cult	19-20	Menagerie
13-14	Poisoners		

- **Fake Cult:** As above (see entry in peasant section). Fake cults among nobles will appear to be like one of the other six entries in the noble table but will have no true connection to Chaos. In this situation, the leader of the fake cult is almost certainly a fraud who is intentionally trying to manipulate an aristocrat with false promises and cheap tricks, in exchange for money, possibly with the plan of later trapping the aristocrats in blackmail. There is a 10% chance that any given fake cult is a secret plot of agents of the crown seeking to potentially entrap political enemies.

- **Immortality Cult:** Many aristocrats, knowing they can't take it with them, attempt to spend fortunes on physicians and alchemists to preserve their life. In some cases they will go a step further and try to combine magic with alchemy in pursuit of the Elixir of Life. The aristocrats will seek out any means possible to obtain immortality. There is a 90% chance that the leader of this cult is an alchemist sage who has also got a talent for demonology. Otherwise, the leader would be a magic-user of level 2-5. However, the 'leader' in this case is certainly being bankrolled, and to a certain extent operating under the orders of, one or more wealthy aristocrat. Other members of the cult



will be more aristocratic patrons, or agents meant to acquire ingredients, texts, or experimental subjects. This sect differs from normal alchemical dabbling in that the leader is incorporating Chaos, in the form of demonic advice, or Chaos items or substances in their potion-making. They are making concoctions with ingredients like rare herbs and minerals (especially mercury), but also chaos slimes or the blood of long-lived chaos monsters. Any elixir is ultimately a great question of trial and error, but mainly error as there is no true way that Chaos (which is constant flux) could lead to true immortality (which is perfect preservation from flux). Even so, some truly great Chaos-alchemists could achieve a kind of partial immortality, more than enough to entice mortal men, though always at some price. If the GM wishes to mechanically govern the creation of a Chaos-Alchemy Elixir of Life, the character would first need to obtain the various ingredients (often expensive, dangerous, and difficult to find) as well as having access to teachers (possibly some great alchemist, but more often a demon guide) and/or ancient texts (most of these coming from the lands of Araby or even further away in the mythical east). An alchemist would need to spend weeks or months (3d100 days) and great expense (3d100 L) in trying to carefully prepare a tiny amount of elixir, with every attempt to make a new formula requiring a skill check. Failure would result in poison, where failing a save vs. poison results in death in 1d6 rounds! Success in the save would still leave them permanently debilitated, losing 1d4 points of CON, and will further have one of the following terrible effects(1d6):

- 1) Brain Damage: lose 1d4 points of INT
- 2) Neurological Damage: lose 1d4 points of DEX
- 3) Muscle Damage: lose 1d4 points of STR
- 4) Hideous tumors: lose 1d4 points of CHA

5) **Insanity:** the character goes mad, becoming a raving lunatic

6) **Mutation:** roll on the mutation tables (see p.00)

On the other hand, if the alchemy check succeeded the result is still highly unstable. For any single dose, roll 1d100 and add the Alchemist's level, to see the effect of the potion:

2-10) Becomes 1d10 years younger but ages back to normal after 1d10 weeks.

11-20) Stops aging for the next 1d10 years but then ages the full period all at once!

21-30) Appears to stop aging but their actual state of health continues to deteriorate from aging as normal.

31-40) Can no longer die of old age, but keeps getting ever weaker and more venerable until becoming like a living husk.

41-50) Becomes immortal but can no longer heal naturally from injury; will become a wraith upon reaching 0 hp.

51-60) Becomes immortal in consciousness but not in body, doomed after death to become a corporeal or incorporeal undead.

61-70) **Vampirism!** Grants immortality but as a blood-drinking undead.

71-76) Stops aging for the next 1d10 years.

77-82) Immediately loses 1d10 years of age.

83-85) Immediately loses 2d20 years of age (note: death by de-aging IS possible).

86-88) Stops aging for the next 2d20 years.

89-91) Permanently reduces aging rate by 50%.

92-94) Grants immortality but skin-contact exposure to a common substance will immediately undo effects. Roll for substance, 1d12: 1-dirt, 2-rain, 3-running water, 4-fire, 5-human touch, 6-gold, 7-bones, 8-sunlight, 9-garlic, 10-salt, 11-sulfur, 12-mercury.

95-97) Grants immortality but the character will need to drink the same potion every month or they will instantly age all the intervening time they have lived.

98-100) Grants immortality but the drinker can no longer grow or change; no further gain of experience, new skills or abilities is possible.

101+) **TRUE** potion of Immortality: the character who drinks this ceases aging, although they can still die from injury, poison, accident or disease.

• **Political Cult:** There are many grimoires which list the names and sigils of demons which promise that they can grant influence over lords and magistrates or the favors of kings. To those in the lesser ranks of the aristocracy, this sort of promise (especially in troubled and unstable times) can be an incredible temptation. A political cult is dedicated to utilizing demonology to get undue influence in the courts and increase the power of their aristocratic members. The cult is run 70% of the time by a magister of lv.2-5 in the employ of a lord; the rest of the time by a sage with skill in demonology. The membership will consist of aristocrats and their most trusted knights; and the cult will also have access to thugs and rogues that may act on behalf of the lords without knowing the full implications of what is going on.



• **Poisoners:** This cult is organized around either an alchemist/apothecary (70% chance) or otherwise a local wise-woman or Cymri spellcaster of levels 1-4 who also have skill in herbalism. The most important membership will be one or more younger members of an aristocratic family, seeking to poison their way to a title they otherwise have little to no chance of inheriting. A regular poisoner is already committing a capital offense, but as most poisons in Albion are detectable or treatable if discovered quickly by a skilled doctor, some ambitious nobles will rely on the creation of special poisons, using chaotic alchemy or calling on dark powers to insure success.

• **Ladies' Cults:** Most women of the aristocracy are in their own way as oppressed as all but a very few women in this world are, but have the added fortune or misfortune of a great deal of idle time that a commoner woman could never dream of in their drudgery. Boredom, unhappy domestic lives, frustration or abuse can all combine in different measure to bring together groups of women (within one family or in several) to form their own conspiratorial secret societies. Many of these will begin innocently but turn to heresy and from there to the worship of Chaos. The leader of such a cult will either be a noblewoman (1-60% chance) or a nun (61-80% chance) or a local wise-woman (81-00% chance) who has secretly learned sorcery and is a magic-user of lv.1-4. They will also use demonology for more power. Roll to determine the cult's goals (1d6): 1 = to further the ambitions of their husband or children; 2 = to gain revenge on the men who have harmed or spurned them; 3 = to gain personal influence in politics through magical control of powerful men; 4 = following a heretical prophecy that claims the church will be replaced by a matriarchal religion; 5 = to obtain eternal youth; 6 = to engage in orgiastic worship of a demon lover.



• **Collectors:** See the entry in priest cults, above. A Noble Collector Cult is centered around a powerful lord, assisted by his magister (level 2-5). It is otherwise identical to the entry in the priest's section.

• **Menagerie:** In the last century it has become popular for the nobility to construct 'menageries', essentially zoos. The poorer

ones will contain regular fauna of Albion, fancier ones will bring in animals from distant lands or rarer creatures. The very wealthy and powerful will have menageries of monsters and magical beasts (griffons are a common highlight of these, and nobles will pay small fortunes to monster-hunters who can bring them a live griffon). None of this is forbidden by law. But some nobles go further than this, wanting to possess more terrible and dangerous creatures: goblins, the undead, mutants, slimes or other abominations, or even elves or demons. The leader of the 'cult' will be a wealthy noble who seeks to fill his menagerie; he will be assisted by his Magister (lv. 1-4) and possibly by one or more Cymri (also lv.1-4). Other members of the cult will be family members of the noble, or knights or adventurers who pursue monsters for the noble. There is a 30% chance that the noble will have been corrupted into the worship of Chaos by one of the intelligent creatures in his zoo.



STEP 5: DETERMINE CULT'S SECRET LAIR (OPTIONAL)

The location of the cult's main hideout, temple or meeting place can be rolled or chosen by the GM. Roll according to the social class of the cult:

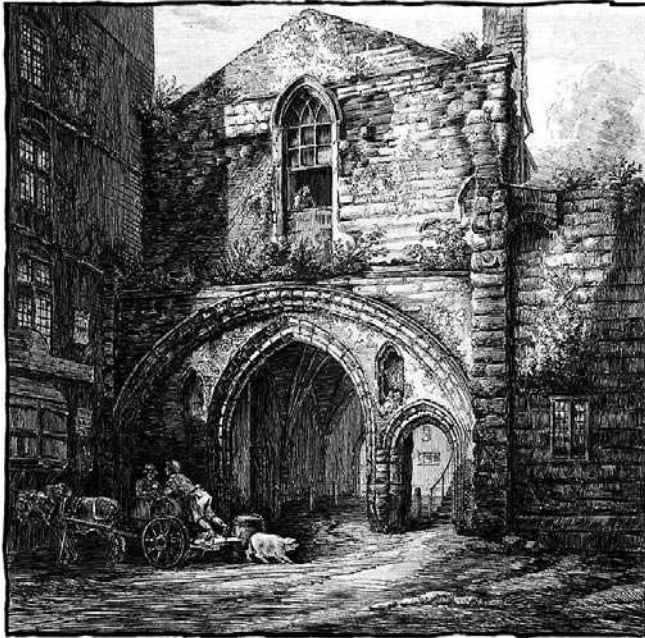
d20	Peasant Cult Location
1-2	Nearby woods or forest
3-4	Nearby cave or mines
5-6	An abandoned farmhouse
7-8	The farmhouse of one of its members

9-10	The village temple (this would suggest the parish priest is a member, or otherwise subverted)
11-12	Nearby standing stone or ancient stone circle
13-14	Nearby ancient barrow mound
15-16	Nearby cross-road
17-18	The town's public house, after hours
19-20	The sea-shore or by a local river

d20	Villain Cult Location
1-2	The home of one of its members
3-4	An area of the city sewers
5-6	The back-room of a trade shop of one of its members
7-8	An area of catacombs
9-10	The riverbank or beach near the town
11-12	A local whore-house
13-14	A local Free House, after hours
15-16	The hideout of a local gang
17-18	The store-house of a local merchant
19-20	A local temple (the parish priest will be a member of the sect, or otherwise subverted)

d20	Burgher Cult Location
1-2	The home of one of its members in town
3-4	The manor of a wealthy member just outside the town
5-6	An unoccupied house owned by a member but not their residence
7-8	A whore-house owned by one of the members
9-10	A gang's hideout in the employ of a member
11-12	The private chapel of a member
13-14	A guildhall
15-16	A warehouse belonging to a guild connected to a member
17-18	An area of catacombs under a member's home
19-20	A ship or merchant store-house owned by a member

d20	Priest Cult Location
1-10	A temple
11	A temple's or monastery's crypt
12	A monastery's scriptorium, after hours
13	A monastery's temple, after hours
14	A monastery's barn or observatory
15	A nunnery's offices
16	A nunnery's school
17	The bishop's manor (the bishop may be a member, or unaware of his underlings' activities)
18	A farmhouse on church land
19-20	Nearby woods



d20	Noble Cult Location
1-2	A noble's main manor
3-4	A noble's secondary or summer manor
5-6	A city apartment owned by a noble
7-8	The home or manor of a vassal or servant
9-10	A noble's family chapel
11-12	An abandoned farmhouse on a noble's land
13-14	Woods or forest on a noble's land
15-16	A barn on the manor grounds
17-18	The wine cellar of a manor
19-20	A cavern on noble territory



STEP 6: DETERMINE THE CULT'S SPECIAL RESOURCES (OPTIONAL)

If the GM wishes, the cult may have access to certain special resources; this is aside from what common sense dictates a cult should have in terms of money, manpower, armaments, etc. The GM could roll or select a special resource from the following tables, based on the social class of the cult:

d20	Peasant Cult Resources
1-4	Veteran: one or more members is an experienced soldier with 1d4+1 levels of experience as a warrior; he/they have leather armor, shields, longbows and spears.
5-6	Protection: the sect leader is favored by a local lord; who is not aware of the cult's true activities.
7	Magic item: the cult is in possession of a non-chaos magical item.

8-9	Business: the cult is involved with a local business, possibly illicit. Examples: a forge, brewery, smuggling, poaching, etc.
10-11	Dogs: one of the cult members is in charge of the local squire's hunting dogs, who are trained to guard or attack.
12-13	Cymri: the cult is connected to a group of Cymri travelers, some of whom will be magic-users.
14-15	Bandits/Rebels: the cult is connected to a local group of bandits or rebels.
16-17	Priest: the cult has recruited or subverted (through intimidation or blackmail) the local priest.
18-19	Woodsmen: the cult has one or more members with skills at hunting, tracking and trapping.
20	Monster: the cult has a controlled/trained monster under its control.

d20	Villain Cult Resources
1-2	Gang: the cult has connections with a local street gang.
3-4	Urchins: the cult has a group of street children in its employ as spies.
5-8	Thief: one or more of the cult members is a trained thief of 1d4+1 levels.
9-12	Veteran: one or more cult members has experience as a soldier, with 1d4+1 levels as a warrior; he/they have chain mail, longswords, shields, and crossbows.
13	Tunnel Rat: one or more members has thorough experience with the town's catacombs.
14-15	Second Hideout: the cult has a second cult location which they will use in emergencies.
16	Magic Item: the cult leader has a non-chaos magical item.
17-18	Protection: the cult is favored by a local guardsman, magistrate or guild leader.
19	Extra Wealth: the cult has a treasury of extra resources beyond their social class.
20	Network: the cult has a contact/member in another city or town.



d20	Burgher Cult Resources
1-2	Weapons Cache: the cult has a warehouse full of arms and armors that were destined for sale in the Rose War (or some conflict on the Continent), but could be used by the cult instead.
3-4	Guildmaster: the master of a guild is either a member or has been subverted (by threat or blackmail).
5-6	City Guard: the leaders of the city guard have been subverted to the cult, their commander either a member or somehow under the cult's thumb.
7-8	Extensive Property: an entire city block or more is owned by the cult.
9-10	Crime Ring: the cult has control of a major street gang. This includes two dozen or more lv.1 thieves and several of levels 2-4.
11-12	Mercenaries: a company of mercenaries, 20 or more, all lv.1 warriors with two or more lv.2 sergeants, two or more lv.3 lieutenants and one lv.4 captain, are in the employ of the cult. The captain may be a member.
13-14	Ships: the cult owns 1-3 ships, either at the cult's home base or at the nearest seaport.
15	Gunpowder: the cult has imported rifles and pistols (enough for all its members), and several barrels of gunpowder (which could be rigged as bombs).
16-17	Pleasure Dome: the cult controls a high-end brothel. They could be using this to obtain blackmail from high-status customers.
18-19	Court Influence: the cult members have influence and favor with the local nobility or in the royal court.
20	Magic Treasury: the cult has a collection of 1d6 non-chaos magical items.



d20	Priest Cult Resources
1-5	Local Fanatics: the peasantry in the area are full of religious devotion and blind loyalty, they will not look kindly on outsiders causing trouble for their clergy.
6	Magic Items: the cult has access to 1d4 non-chaos magic items.
7-8	Large Treasury: the parish has a large collection of funds, beyond the norm. Half of this is in religious valuables, however.
9-10	Noble Support: the local nobility have strong connections to certain cult members. They will potentially protect them and hamper investigation.

11-13	Church Influence: the cult's leader is someone who has influential friends in the church hierarchy (they are perhaps promising up-and-comers, or have a network of favors and secrets). The church authorities will make it extremely difficult to investigate the cult.
14-15	Clerical Connections: a cult member has a friendship with a highly-placed member of the Clerical order. Unless PCs include a cleric, the Clerical order will be highly unlikely to take seriously any claims made about the cult.
16-18	Merchant Patron: Wealthy merchants are cult followers or innocent friends of the cult members. They would potentially contribute their resources and contacts to the cult.
19	Undead: the cult has a stable of undead they have collected. There is a 80% chance these are skeletons or zombies (3d12), if not there's a 10% chance they also have 2d6 ghouls, or a 10% chance of having 1d4 wights.
20	Ancient Unholy Site: The cult has an active location of unholy power. It may have been hidden beneath a church or monastery or in a nearby area. It may have lain dormant for a long time but been reactivated by the cult's rites. The site has one of the following powers (1d6): 1 = mutagenic slime pool; 2 = enhances all magic-user spell effects by one level; 3 = any Lawful characters in the site have a -4 to all rolls; 4 = checks to summon a demon automatically succeed, 5 = Gate to Elven Realms; 6 = Gate to Infernal Realms.

d20	Noble Cult Resources
1	Magic Items: the cult has a prized collection of 1d6 non-chaos magical items.
2-5	Popular Support: one or more cult member is greatly loved by the local commoners, who will not take kindly to any harassment of their hero.
6-8	Army: a cult member has a battle-ready army under his command. Without absolute proof of Chaos worship, the army commanders will follow even orders to act in revolt of the Crown.
9-10	Spy Network: the cult has an extensive network of spies, informants, and assassins.
11-12	Political Influence: the cult has a member with extensive influence among the nobility. They could cause trouble and thwart the political ambitions of a noble PC's family, or of the PC's patrons.
13-14	Crown Authority: a cult member is a sheriff or warden, with power of arrest in the territory, and/or of the judiciary in the territory.
15-16	Royal Favor: one or more cultists is a favorite at court with a member of the royal family (one of the royal families, that is).
17-18	Foreign Connection: the cult has contacts with a kingdom on the Continent, and possibly a branch of the cult there.
19-20	Church Influence: one or more cultist has connections and favor with the Church hierarchy.



STEP 7: CHAOS CULT COMPLICATIONS (OPTIONAL)

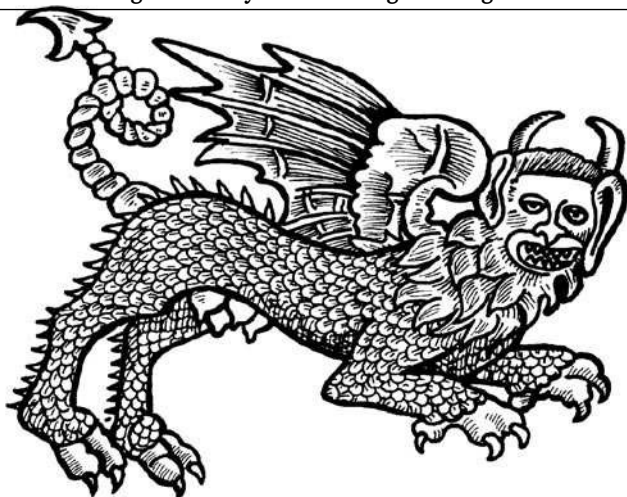
The GM may wish to roll for an added complication; a twist to the situation that involves the chaos cult. Alternately, he may choose an option without rolling.

1-4	The cult is seeking a particular item it needs for a ritual.
5	One member of the cult has fled from it and is being hunted.
6	There is growing discontent with the cult leader.
7	The cult is due to perform a great ritual at an astrologically appropriate time in 2d6 days.
8	There is a second cult nearby that has conflicting interests with the first (generate a second cult!).
9	There is a schism within the cult regarding opposing goals.
10-11	The cult is planning the murder of an important local individual standing in the way of their agenda.
12	The cult was discovered by a cleric who they then murdered, they've tried to cover up the death.
13	A member of the cult has been arrested on unrelated charges.
14	The cult has accidentally unleashed a demon in the local area.
15-16	Evidence of cult activities has led the local authorities into a wave of fanatical witch-hunting, making it difficult to discern the cult's real membership from false accusations against innocents.

17	A lone psychopath is active in the area, kidnapping and murdering people; the cult has nothing to do with him.
18	The cult's activities has drawn the attention of local chaos creatures (goblins, elves, ratmen, fishmen, intelligent undead, etc.), they may seek to join or aid the cultists or they may oppose or attack them for their own purposes.
19-20	A passing caravan of Cymri travelers have been blamed for cult activities; they are innocent, and some may be very interested in trying to uncover the truth.
21-22	A local fair, tourney or religious festival has drawn large numbers of people to the area.
23	A group of criminals (a gang, rebels, or bandits) has targeted cult resources, without realizing the nature of their targets.
24-25	Cult magical activities have accidentally affected the region, spawning undead or mutations.
26-27	The cult's activities or resources may be disrupted by an ongoing local conflict in the Rose War.
28	A thief has stolen something of importance to the cult, or something that could expose them.
29-30	The cult's leader has been driven insane by his actions and is now engaging in a megalomaniacal agenda that is bound to expose the cult (and could cause great harm in the area).
31	A local plague has struck; the cult is not responsible for it but may be affected by or take advantage of it.
32	A cult member is of great importance to local authorities or an important lord; their exposure as a cultist would be politically harmful to them.
33	The cult has kidnapped one or more children of local people in authority, either as hostages or for more nefarious purposes.
34	A cult member has begun to engage in occult practices apart from the rest of the group, and has obtained a pact with a demon not affiliated with the cult.



35	One cult member or agent is actually a spy for the Crown, Church, or an important Lord, infiltrating the cult to expose it, and deal with it according to their patron's agenda. The PCs' own activities may interfere with that.
36	The cult itself is engineering false evidence of witchcraft on its enemies.
37	The spouse, child or servant of a cult member has discovered the truth, and are horrified by it, but their love for the person in question makes protecting that person the highest priority to them.
38	A fanatical religious vigilante (who may have suffered great personal loss at the hands of Chaos) has heard of cult activity in the area and is acting above the law to kill anyone he/she believes to be associated with the cult. The vigilante is highly skilled; a Fighter, Thief or Magic-user of level 2-5.
39	A cult member has died unexpectedly of natural causes; their estate may have evidence of cult activities and the cult is in a panic to get to and destroy the evidence.
40-41	Cult activities has affected the local wildlife; roll for effects (1d6): 1 = local dogs or wolves are maliciously attacking humans; 2 = local crows are attacking humans; 3 = a plague of insects has attacked the area; 4 = local livestock are producing deformed offspring; 5 = a supernatural monster has been drawn to the region; 6 = a horse has begun to speak, in Burgundian, making vague prophecies of doom.
42-43	Cult activity has affected the local climate; roll for effects (1d6): 1 = unseasonably warm or cold; 2 = torrential rains or snows; 3 = faerie lights seen in the sky at night; 4 = mists have covered the local area; 5 = rain of frogs, 6 = rain of blood.
44-45	The cult is targeting the local temple, either to kill its priest, to steal something they need from it, to desecrate it in service to their demon or cause, or to destroy the building itself.
46-47	Cult activity is threatening the local crops or spoiling market produce.
48	Cult activity has made thin the barrier between this world and the realm of elves. Elves have been sighted at night and may be murdering or killing humans.



49	A local merchant (or passing merchant caravan) has defrauded the cult without realizing their true nature.
50-51	The cult has become paranoid, convinced (whether true or not) that Clerics have become aware of their activities. They are seeking to protect themselves, magically or by force.
52	The cult has become aware of the location of an ancient Elven tomb or complex, and are seeking to obtain powerful magic from it.
53	The cult is planning to resettle in a new center of operations, either because of changing goals or due to fear they are close to being uncovered. To do this they will need to make appropriate preparations and risk exposure.
54-56	There is an agent of whichever side of the Rose War is not dominant in the region, seeking to engage in espionage or recruitment for his cause.
57-58	The locals have become highly distrustful and hostile to outsiders, in part due to careful cult manipulation.
59	Thieves or highwaymen have accidentally intercepted a cult message. They are reluctant to go to authorities because of their own criminal status.
60	The cult is trying to encourage conflicts between Yorkists and Lancastrians in their area, to increase instability (and cover for their own activities).
61	One of the cult members is not actually human (but rather a shapechanger or a chaos creature concealed through magic), but the rest of the cult is not aware of this.
62	The cult is being fooled by a demon (directly or indirectly) into opening a gateway to the Infernal Realms.
63-65	The cult has scouts that will inform on newcomers to the area, and will intercept any attempts to send word out of it.
66	There is a disgraced magister in the area, of lv.1-4, posing as an old hermit or beggar. He may (66%) want to oppose the cult, otherwise he wants to take it over.
67	The sect will seek to capture someone who's interacted with the PCs to find out who they are and what they know. Alternately, they'll kidnap their retainers if they have any. If the PCs are local, the cult will try to kidnap friends or family of the PCs to threaten them.
68	The sect or one of its members has made contact with Morrighaine, ancient Witch-Queen of the Orkneys. This has the potential to add the cult to her secret force of agents of chaos.
69	The cult has encountered a creature in the nearby wilderness (woods, river, hills, coast or mountain), in some area no sane Sun-fearing man would go, which attacked some of their membership. The creature now has a taste for human flesh.
70	A passing tinker has seen evidence of the cult's activity, now they are seeking him out before he can warn anyone.
71-72	One member of the sect is using poison on imagined enemies.

73-74	A recently-deceased member returned to life as a zombie. This causes great alarm and suspicion in the area.
75	The cult location recently caught fire (by accident), requiring an emergency evacuation.
76	The cult has broken out into an open gang-fight with a group of chaos-aligned Cymri they'd tried to recruit or hire, but relations went sour.
77-78	The cult is actively engaged in strong recruitment of new members.
79-80	Cult members have gone out of their way to do favors and charity with local non-members.
81-82	The cult has engaged in networking and elevating its members through favoritism to high positions in the area.
83	A former (now deceased) member of the cult gambled away most of the cult's immediate funds. Now they need to raise or shift money quickly.
84	The cult has been creating false rumors of a cult or monster in a neighboring locale, to distract investigators.
85	A member of the cult has kidnapped a fair young maid or lad, obsessed with them and believing themselves to be above all laws of decency.
86-87	The cult is trying to make inroads with finding new recruits from the next higher social class (or, in the case of a Noble cult, one of the royal families).
88	A vicious lightning-storm causes fires or floods in the area. (Might stem or not from the cult's doings.)
89	An entire family has vanished from their home or farm. They may have been taken by the cult, or by some other cause.
90	A group of Cymri have been seducing local girls to bring them into a life of infamy. One of these girls is the daughter or sister of a cultist.
91	A cultist is facing a lawsuit from another local over a land or property dispute.
92	A lycanthrope is rumored to be assaulting people at night in the locality.
93	A troupe of actors has arrived in the area, and the cult may have some use for them.
94	One of the cultists is severely ill and requiring the aid of a doctor or wise-woman.
95-96	The locality is engaged in a vicious rivalry with their neighbouring community (next village, or neighbourhood in a town, or a feud with a neighbouring lord).
97	A group of 1d6+1 rogues are in the area, searching for the buried/hidden treasure of a dead companion.
98	A magister (level 1-4) and his assistants (a manservant, a lv.1 fighter bodyguard, and a young apprentice) are in the area as the magister is investigating some local legend.
99-00	A crowner is in the area, eager to look for means to gain money for the crown.



chaos cult's life

Once you have determined the cult's type of followers and organization, you may also want to determine the cult's practices. This will be especially useful when portraying the cult's life, if the PCs are to infiltrate the sect and see how it operates. The following tables have thus been designed to help the GM portray and differentiate various chaos-cults. Note however, that if you use the material presented in appendix 2 (p.59-81), the daily practices and rituals described for the more common cults supersede the suggestions proposed below.

HOW CULTISTS DO RECOGNISE EACH OTHERS

Sometimes the PCs will want to infiltrate a cult, posing as some of its members. Often a cult is of small size and all the members know each others, so this won't be possible. However, some cults may cultivate secrecy, their members wearing masks and such, and thus infiltration becomes possible. Yet, many cults will have a method to identify its regular members from impostors. Choose 1d3 of such methods (or determine them in rolling 1d12):

d12	Recognition Method
1-2	Cultists know each others very well. Even if wearing a mask, they would discern a voice that doesn't belong to a member of the cult.
3-4	Cultists must wear (and show to the other cultists) the cult's (un)holy symbol.
5-6	Cultists use a password or recognition phrase to ascertain each others and enter the cult's location. (In some case it might also be used to pass a <i>Glyph of Warding</i> without triggering it.)
7-8	Cultists have a mark or tattoo on their body (normally a hidden part), used to recognise each other and enter the cult's location.
9	Cultists are attuned to a certain magical item, that recognises those who genuinely belong to the cult from those who don't. Impostors (and all non-members) who touch this item will be subject to a detrimental spell effect (typically 2d4 points of burning damage; with a saving throw allowed for half).

10	Whether the cultists know each others, wear a mask, use a password, or what not, when they enter the cult's location they are controlled by a guardian. The guardian might be a cultist who knows all the members, or a supernatural creature (usually a demon, sometimes a spirit or undead) that magically discerns who is a genuine cultist from who isn't.
11	Whether it's easy or difficult to infiltrate the cult, during the ceremony the cult's leader is magically warned of the presence of intruders among the cultists present around him/her. At GM's discretion this might be automatic, or allow the PCs to make a saving throw to escape discovery.
12	A magical effect permeates all the cult's location. Genuine members of the cult are not affected by it. All others, whether they successfully impersonate real cultists or not, know passwords or not, etc., suffer a detrimental effect, such as feeling bad and getting a -2 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks and saving throws. Alternately, this effect would affect every creature (be it a cultist or not) who doesn't wear a magical (un)holy symbol of the cult.

EXAMPLES OF CULTISTS TABOOS AND OBLIGATIONS

All cultists may have a few taboos or obligations (which are normally the same for all the cult's members) that they must abide to. These are in addition to basic requirements such as keeping the cult secret, attending to the rituals, and contributing to the cult's monetary expenses. Below are a few examples and suggestions. Choose 1d3 of them, or roll 1d12 for a random determination.

The GM should also remember that when NPCs are assumed to abide by these taboos and obligations, they might become a source of clues for the PCs to unveil the cultists, as either the PCs or non-cultists (who would report to the PCs) might witness them.

d12	Taboos & Obligations
1	Cultists are forbidden any benevolent or altruistic actions, so they must never help others, perform charity or say kind words to people (their own family included).
2	At least six times per day cultists must say hateful things related to the entity their worship (e.g. "Praise our Lord Nakrush, may he devour the king and all his bastards," then "Our Lord Nakrush will eat your souls petty rabble," etc.). Of course, cultists are advised to say such phrases when nobody listens.
3	At least once per week cultists must perform an act of gratuitous malfeasance such as beating a beggar, killing a neighbor's pet animal, destroying someone's property, spreading defaming rumors about someone, etc.
4	Cultists must kill someone to prove their loyalty to the cult (and for some cults this must be one of their family members). If they fail to do this within one month, the cult will target them as their next sacrificial victim during their awful rituals.



5	At least once per week cultists must have sexual relationships that are normally frowned upon (or outright reviled) by society, such as zoophilia. As they are subjected to the cult's corruption, cultists eventually crave such relationships and soon don't want any other.
6	At least once per week cultists must go to a specific shrine or sacred place (that is not necessarily the cult's temple/headquarters) make some offerings and recite a short prayer.
7	Cultists must have a captive animal or human that they keep alive but regularly abuse and torture in the name of the foul entity they worship.
8	Cultists are addicted to a certain drug. The type of drug should be determined by the GM, but typical drugs include (roll 1d6): 1 = alters state of consciousness and sends the cultist's spirit on the lower planes; 2-3 = induces hallucinations; 4-5 = numbs the mind so the cultist can better cope with the horrors he/she regularly witnesses (and performs); 6 = cultist feels more confident and powerful, gaining a +1 bonus to hit and a +4 bonus to morale check and saving throws against fear, but also becoming arrogant and suffering a -4 penalty to all checks and saving throws made to assert danger.
9	Cultists must wear at all time a small (un)holy symbol of their cult on their body. It is generally hidden, such as sewn into their clothes.
10	Cultists have a small tattoo of their cult's (un)holy symbol, on some hidden part of their body. At least once per day (but preferably when nobody is watching) they must expose it to the sun in a symbolic act of defiance to the Unconquered Sun.
11	Cultists may never kill or hurt an animal related to their cult (e.g., wolves if the cult worships the wolf god).
12	Cultists have a duty to find and kill any other cult member who would have betrayed the cult. Such cultists spend their time spying on each others.

EXAMPLES OF CULT RITUALS

Any self-respecting adventure involving a chaos cult will let the PCs observe and/or interrupt some cult ceremony. Generally, the cliché is to have cultists in black hooded robes bowing down before some hideous idol, or chanting around a pentagram to summon a demon. There is nothing wrong with that mind you, but if it is always the same, cult after cult, it is wont to become boring. The three tables below should help you come up with different ideas:

d12	A – When the Ceremony is Held
1-3	Once per month during the night of the full moon.
4	Once or twice per month, during a night with a particularly harsh weather (typically a storm). If no such night happens during a month, it will be assumed to be due to some cultist's misconduct (even if none of them actually misbehaved). This is the perfect opportunity for the cult's leader to chastise some cultist whom he personally dislikes.
5-6	Once per week, or every nine days, etc.
7-8	Date is determined through some complicated (and maybe totally ludicrous) method, generally involving astrology. In effect the ceremony seems to happen at random dates.
9-11	There is no set period for performing the ritual, which is held when there is an opportunity, most cultists can attend, there is no authorities in the vicinity, they have got a victim to sacrifice, etc. In effect the ceremony seems to happen at random dates.
12	Ceremonies are held as ordered to the cult's leader by the demon or deity he/she serves. In effect the ceremony seems to happen at random dates.

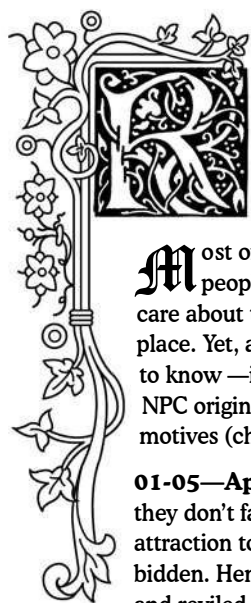
d12	B – Cultists Garb to Attend to the Ritual
1	Nothing special, they wear their normal clothing.
2	They must wear foul smelling rags.
3-4	Normal clothing, but they also wear a specific necklace with their (un)holy symbol.
5-6	Normal clothing, but they also wear a mask. This mask could be simple or elaborate, and in some case might just be a piece of clothing of one of their sacrificial victims, worn over the head.
7	Normal clothing, but with a cloak of a specific color (usually gray or black).
8	Normal clothing under a hooded robe of a specific color (usually gray or black).
9	Naked under a hooded robe of a specific color (usually gray or black).
10	Just naked. Possibly (1-3/d6 chance) with their body smeared in (roll 1d6): 1-2 = ashes; 3 = blood; 4 = urine and/or excrements; 5-6 = wine.
11	Equipped as if for war, with weapons and armor.
12	Men wear women's (normal) clothing, and women wear men's (normal) clothing.



d12	D – Typical Ceremonies
1	Ceremony revolves around the ritual murder of an innocent victim (usually a traveler, vagabond, etc.) or an animal. Once killed, the victim's remains may be eaten by the cultists, or eaten by a summoned demon; alternately the victim may be raised as a zombie or ghoul.
2	Cultists (who are usually naked) enter into a trance, then wriggle and moan in some abject and grotesque manner, as if possessed by invisible entities.
3	Cultists breath green fumes and fall into a coma; their minds are then filled with hallucinations and visions. Intruders (i.e., PCs) who breath these fumes must succeed a saving throw against poison, or likewise fall into a coma and have horrific visions that may affect their sanity. (See p.85 for examples of visions induced by drugs and such.)
4	Cultists chant while one of them is chosen for trans-mogrification. Cultists are deceived into believing that the chosen one becomes immortal, powerful, or what not, while he/she is actually possessed by a demon or turned into an undead.
5	Cultists scream words of hate toward the king, nobility, church, etc., and implore the entities they worship to slay them all.
6	One of the cultists (either chosen randomly, or selected for not serving the cult properly, or just for being the newest inducted member) is humiliated and abused by the others. (Of course the cult's leader is never chosen for this, unless having direly angered the cult's supernatural patron.)
7	Cultists must one after the other perform a short simulacra of sexual relationship with a statue representing the entity worshipped.
8	Cultists are temporarily, magically turned into beast-men and partake into an orgy.
9	Cultists chant softly and calmly while whipping themselves, under the supervision of their leader.



10	Cultists all lick (one after the other) the ass of the cult's leader or of a demon.
11	Cultists look fixedly at some unnatural light, unaware of what happens around them. Once they get out of this trance they don't remember what happened, but seem disoriented. The following nights they often have nightmares, and sometimes have violent crisis during which they will generally hurt someone.
12	Cultists chant or pray while holding each others' hands and forming a circle around a bonfire, tree, altar or pentagram. In most cases nothing special happens, but sometimes a demon might be summoned into the pentagram, a forest spirit may descend from the tree's foliage, a hideous visage may appear in the bonfire, etc.



Reasons for joining a cult

Most of the time cultists are just assumed to be vile people that deserve to die. Players and GMs rarely care about their motives for joining the cult in the first place. Yet, a few players and GMs might be interested to know—if only for role-playing purposes—why some NPC originally became a cultist. Here is a list of typical motives (choose or roll 1d100):

01-05—Appealed by the Forbidden: For reasons they don't fathom themselves, some people feel a strong attraction to what is socially frowned upon or outright forbidden. Hence, since chaos cults are universally banned and reviled, they had to join one.

06-08—Blackmail: The cult knew about this person's wrongdoings or terrible secret, and coerced to reveal it to the right people if he/she would not join. This cultist is always a person that had wealth, a position, influence, and/or particular skills that would be useful to the cult.

09-10—Coercion: Similar to blackmail, except these cultists had no secret that could be revealed by the cult. Instead, these cultists joined under threat of something horrendous that may

be done to them (or their family), be it a real intent or just a bluff (e.g., harm done to their children, their souls being sold to demonic entities, etc.).

11-13—Conformist: These cultists had no real interest in the cult itself, but joined because most others around them (or their family) already belonged to it. They simply didn't want to be different.

14-17—Converted Fanatic: When these cultists were exposed to the cult's doctrine (be it the cult's real aims, or a deceptive dogma), they saw it as the cause / religion that their whole life would revolve around. Such cultists are the most irredeemable of all, and will die for their cult.

18-24—Criminally Minded: A few cultists were already vile people with flawed personalities; typically a sociopath who has cravings reviled by most (such as a pyromaniac or paedophile). For them, joining an evil cult was just the logical thing to do.

25-28—Deception: The cult is led by a priest and falsely proclaims to be servants of Law, or to teach a secret doctrine of the Unconquered Sun or whatever. So the normal followers joined this chaos cult believing it was a perfectly acceptable religion, maybe believing that it is the regular cult of the Unconquered Sun. It's just that the ignorant, misinformed, and maybe also dumb cultist has been deceived by the cult's leader(s) who secretly serves Chaos.

29-33—Delusional: The nobles, the Church: they are all liars who want the common people to toil as slaves for their benefit without any idea of revolt. They pretend to ban the cults, but themselves secretly adhere to their own cults. There is a reason for this: here also they want to monopolise the benefits for themselves. The cults are not evil; all the contrary it's the nobles and the Church who are evil, where the cults can truly offer comfort and salvation for the common people.

34-37—Family Tradition: These cultists belong to the cult because their parents belonged to it before them. They were raised in this peculiar tradition, and don't want to renounce it.

38—Fashion Victim: This cultist joined because it seemed to be the cool thing to do. Some of his/her friends already belonged to the cult, and what they did in secret appeared all the more exciting as it was so mysterious. Afterwards, even if the cult's activities revealed to be appalling, it was too late to leave.

39-41—Fear: Some cultists joined to not be (they or their families) the cult's next victims. All in all they prefer to be those who perform its atrocities than those who must endure them. Incentive to join will be stronger if the cult is widespread and has nobles and/or ecclesiastics as leaders. Fear is also what might decide them to flee or betray the cult.

42-47—Great Promise: These cultists joined after having been promised extraordinary rewards (e.g., being granted nobility title and domain, having deceased lover brought back to life, becoming immortal, becoming a powerful demon, etc.).

48-52—Greed: Cultist hopes that joining the cult will help him/her make money by whatever means (contacts network, extortion, robbery, supernatural means, etc.).

53-58—Hateful: These cultists hold a grudge against life in general. They hate most people, but primarily those who seem to have more and be happier than themselves. Such cult-

ists serve the cult in the hope that the demons it reveres will eventually conquer and destroy all of those hated people, and preferably in much horrific ways.

59-61—Idiocy: Some cultists have a hard time putting their brain to use. They don't know why they joined the cult. They were given the opportunity and accepted; it's as simple as that. They didn't think about it much; it's probable that at the time it may have seemed like a good idea. Since then these idiots don't question themselves about the implications of what they are doing in the cult.

62-66—Insane: These cultists were always deranged anyway. They had strange ways of thinking, said things that didn't make sense, saw things that nobody else perceived, etc. They joined the cult because it fitted with their insanity.

67-69—Magical Event: Some cultists were magically compelled to join the cult. They might have touched a demonic idol bearing a powerful enchantment, been subject to a powerful curse, be possessed by an evil spirit, etc. In this case they will remain loyal to the cult until freed by any appropriate (and successfully cast) spell: *Atonement*, *Break Enchantment*, *Dispel Evil*, *Dispel Magic*, *Remove Curse*, etc.

70—Mutation: Some people were accidentally warped by Chaos and suffered a mutation despite they never were interested in demons and chaos cults before. As they had suddenly become hated and outlawed by society, they saw no other choice but to join a chaos cult, both to find a community of like warped individuals who would accept them, and to belong to a group that would help them survive in this unforgiving world.

71-76—Power Deficient: In their everyday life some cultists are just poor people, considered as socially inferior by most, without particular talents, and denied any authority or influence in society. They joined the cult because it gives them a sense of being part of a powerful and feared group.

77-82—Power Hungry: Some cultists joined mostly in the hope that the cult would help them achieve political objectives and get the advantage over their rivals and enemies.

83-88—Self Aggrandisement: The cultist sees himself as someone special (and thus more important than the common people) for belonging to a secretive organisation and not abiding by the law. (After all, it's usually a noble's prerogative to not abide by the law, and nobles are above the common people.)

89-92—Sense of Belonging: Cultist formerly was an outcast without any family, friends, or connections. He joined in order to get that; to be part of a group.

93-94—Trojan Horse: This cultist wanted to infiltrate the cult, not belong to it. He/she might be a spy, or someone wanting to exact a vengeance on the cult or some of its members, or maybe just seeks a certain information that the cult is supposed to know.

95-00—Vengeance: Some cultists joined with a vengeance in mind. After having suffered some (real or imagined) humiliation and/or prejudice at the hand of people they could not reach or affect, these cultists joined in the hope that the cult would help them exact a dire vengeance on them.

Mutation

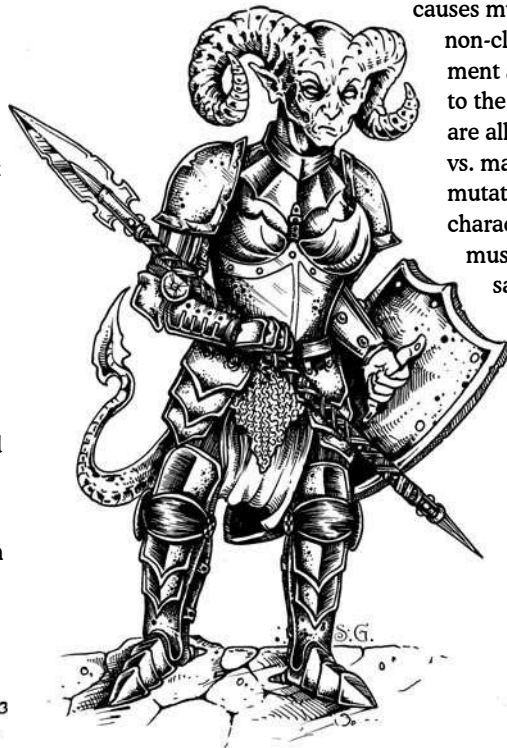
In Dark Albion, mutation can occur due to intense exposure to Chaos. It does NOT happen just due to the casual use of spells or normal magic items; if it did, all magic would undoubtedly be outlawed in Albion. Fortunately, it only happens due to conditions of direct contact with particularly powerful reality-warping forces of dark magic (such as sacrifices done to Chaos demons specifically meant to generate mutations), demons, chaos artifacts, some chaos entities or substances (certain slimes, for example) or cursed places.

The GM should use his own judgment in deciding when a risk of chaos exposure occurs. Some typical cases could be:

- An artifact of Chaos bound to a demon lord, that has beneficial uses, but each use of the item by the same person has a cumulative risk of 1% of causing a mutation. If a mutation occurs, the risk is set back to 0% and proceeds normally.
- When someone makes a pact with a demon, if they allow the demon to lay hands on them, to give them his dark gift. A demon's 'gift' to a willing servant may be rolled at random, or may be chosen by the demon (if the Demon is a Lord or higher in rank) to suit the demon's intentions for the character.
- The dark demonic Worm God of the Picts demands ritual sacrifices, for which the Picts will go into the lowlands and capture prisoners (usually Scots Men, but anyone non-Pict will do). Virgins are sacrificed to their dire god; but anyone who is not a virgin is instead slathered in the vile ooze of the Worm-God, which causes mutation. Clerics, and

non-clerics of Lawful alignment and strong religiosity to the Unconquered Sun, are allowed a saving throw vs. magic, but for all others mutation is automatic. Any character who is mutated must make a second saving throw vs. magic, and failure causes them to also lose their minds and become mutant slave-fighters for the Picts.

- Elves, being creatures of chaos, are immune to mutation. However, non-elves exposed to Elven places or substances can risk mutation. Most



Elven magical items are not so tainted by the chaos-reality of elves as to cause mutation, but certain very powerful magic items might be (for example, the mighty black, red or white armor that Elven wizard-princes wear, or their soul-stealing swords). The powder of the alien lotus that the elves became addicted to causes strange effects on humans, and mutation may be one of them. Anyone who slips through into the world of the Elves runs a risk of mutation for every 24 hours they spend in that surreal dream-like universe; exposure to such raw chaos as exists everywhere there requires a saving throw vs. magic every 24 hours to avoid being mutated.

MUTATION AND CLERICS

Any Cleric who is accidentally or unknowingly (and not intentionally of their own free will) exposed to potential mutation will always be entitled to a saving throw vs. magic to resist mutation, even in situations where mutation would otherwise be automatic.

However, any Cleric that does receive a mutation immediately loses the ability to cast any Cleric miracles. The Unconquered Sun has forsaken them.

MUTATION AND THE CHURCH

It is known that some poor unfortunates are mutated by mishap or due to the evil of others. However, to the Church of the Unconquered Sun there is no pardon even for these poor souls. The evil and danger of mutation is considered so vile that it must be stamped out. It is also considered that anyone who succumbed to mutation, even if they did not appear to want it, must have been deemed unworthy in some way by the Unconquered Sun, if only for other sins or insufficient faith.

As such, any mutant is treated in the same way as any willful worshiper of chaos: the penalty is death. The most common form of execution is by fire, at the stake. Faithful common folk who worship the Unconquered Sun will often take matters into their own hands in this regard, and slay a suspected mutant without waiting for any official inquiry or judgment. The Church, however, strongly discourages this, as they do not wish for anyone who is truly innocent to be executed incorrectly. Thus, whenever a case of mutation is reported, they will send one or more Clerics to act as judges in a trial to determine if the mutation is genuine. In many cases

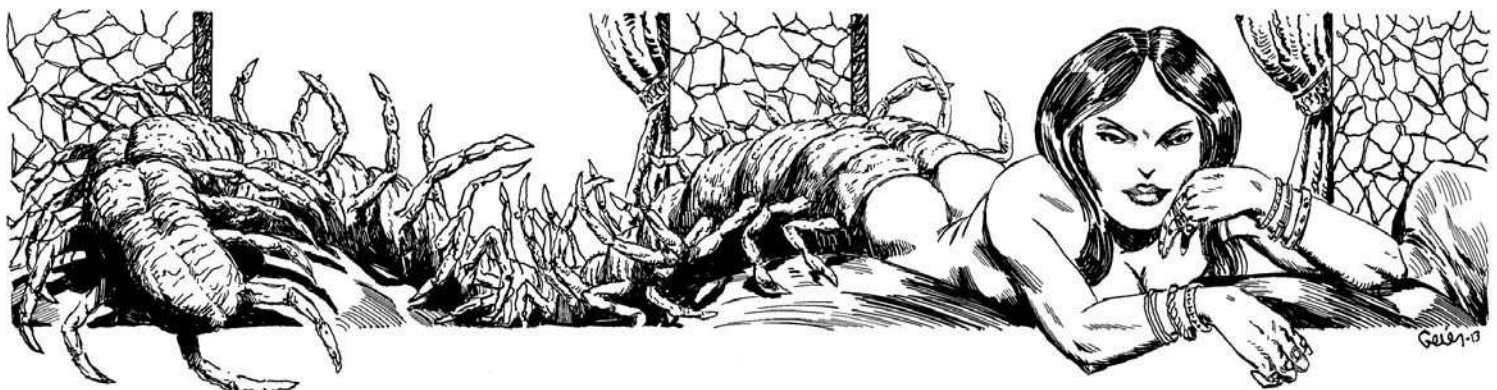
this will be physically obvious and judgment is swiftly reached, but in other cases of more subtle mutations a Cleric is obliged to be meticulous in determining the truth. However, the assumption in such cases is always toward guilt if there is not an overwhelming preponderance of evidence that the charges of mutation are false or that the case otherwise lacks merit.

It should be noted that outside the lands of the Church, most human cultures will take a similarly stern view toward Mutation. The Scots Men and Eire Men both despise it and will kill anyone who shows mutation, as will the North-men, and the followers of the Crescent Moon in the lands of the Turk and other such lands will proceed in a fashion quite similar to that of the Church, conducting an inquiry and slaying any judged guilty by stoning or beheading. Only in places ruled by Chaos, such as Frogland, will mutants be tolerated (and sometimes even venerated as 'blessed' by the forces of Chaos).

REVERSING MUTATION

It is almost impossible in most cases to undo mutation. Except in a few cases explicitly stated in the description of mutations below, where one may be able to expel the demonic influence that has manifested as the mutation, any mutation listed is permanent. The miracles of *Remove Curse*, *Dispel Magic*, healing magic, or even *Dispel Evil* (in most cases) will not remove the mark of chaos (it should also be noted that after the initial exposure that causes mutation, a mutation will not in and of itself detect as magic via *Detect Magic* spells, though magic that detects Chaos will identify a mutant as such).

The only very slim hope that exists for victims of mutation is that certain very powerful relics or holy places of Law could potentially reverse mutation. The sacred waters at Bath, for example, may have some chance of reversing mutation if the victim of a mutation is a Cleric or a Lawful-aligned character who showed particular devotion to the Unconquered Sun; entitling the victim to a new saving throw vs. magic to be cured of the mutation's effect. If this fails, however, there is no salvation from the purifying flames of the stake. The Clerical order will always grant such an opportunity to a brother or sister Cleric (so long as it is assumed that the Cleric did not willingly choose to be mutated!), and will grant this test to any other person who has a known history of piety and witnesses who will stand to attest to the character's devotion.



DETERMINING MUTATIONS

As they stem from Chaos, mutations should probably come at random, first using a d6 to determine the mutation's gravity, then a d100 to see what particular mutation is gained.

Roll 1d6 for gravity of mutation

1-3 = Minor 4-5 = Moderate 6 = Severe

(Note when rolling for multiple mutations, that a PC can have more than one witch-mark, haunting intelligence, or familiar at a time. In most other results, if the PC already had this mutation the GM should roll again from the same table.)



Minor Mutations (1d100)

01-28	Witch Mark	65-68	Infestation
29-32	Animal Repulsion	69-72	Obese
33-36	Blood Sweat & Tears	73-76	Poison Kiss
37-40	Blood Thirst	77-80	Porcupine
41-44	Chilling	81-84	Rot
45-48	Enlarged Nose	85-88	Small Wings
49-52	Forked Tongue	89-92	Stench
53-56	Hairless	93-96	Tumor
57-60	Hairy	97-00	Wasting
61-64	Horns, small		

• **Witch Mark:** The character obtains a small mark or blemish. There is a 70% chance that it will be on an area of the body that will be concealed by the regular clothing one would wear or under the hair. If not, there is a 50% chance it will be on the face and impossible to conceal without a mask or heavy make-up. Otherwise, it is on the hands or neck and can be concealed by wearing gloves or collars/scarves which will on some occasions and climates seem quite conspicuous, but not at other times.

The appearance of the witch-mark will always be somewhat odd, but there is a 1-70% chance that it will not appear worse than a notable wart, freckle, superfluous nipple, or liver-spot. That is to say, its only curious quality will be that people who were previously familiar with the character will know the character didn't use to have that mark. If accused of mutation the prosecution will need to demonstrate that this was not a natural mark that the character always held. In the other 71-00% of the time, the mark will be particularly grotesque, of an odd colour, bulge or hideousness that most people will assume to be a sure sign of corruption. This hideous sort of mark, if visible, will cause penalties to any reaction roll that might be influenced by physical appearance.

A witch mark can always be removed surgically by a trained surgeon (with the usual risks for things like infection, but nothing out of the ordinary), leaving a scar in its place. However, there is a 50% chance that if a witch-mark is removed that a new witch-mark will appear in or very near its place within 1d8 weeks of the operation; this new witch-mark will always be larger than the previous one and of the more grotesque sort that

will not pass for a common wart. This one can also be removed but every time such a mark is removed the odds of a new one appearing in its place increases by 10% (and each new mark will be larger and uglier than the previous one).

• **Blood Sweat & Tears:** The character sweats and cries blood instead of perspiration or tears. This mutation would be terrifying to anyone who saw it, but a character thus exposed might be able to save himself from the stake if they successfully pretended it was a disease. Such a successful subterfuge would undoubtedly cause a local plague-panic, however.

• **Animal Repulsion:** All normal non-intelligent animals are afraid of the character. The character will no longer be able to ride on a horse (though they could still go on a wagon or carriage), and any variety of dog, cat, livestock or wild animal will fear them. Any wild natural animal that comes within 10' of the character must make a morale check or immediately flee; even if they succeed they will be reluctant to dare attacking the character, choosing to attack any other opponent that they can first.

• **Blood Thirst:** The character can no longer eat normal food, and can only sustain themselves on fresh blood (animal or human).

• **Chilling:** The character's body is icy cold; their touch is cold enough that it causes discomfort but not enough to cause damage. Anyone who becomes aware of this will realize that it is unnatural. The character only takes half-damage from any cold-based attack but double damage from any heat-based attack.

• **Enlarged Nose:** The character's nose grows comically large, though not strictly impossible in size.

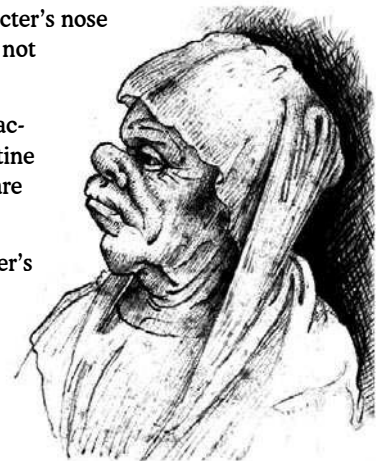
• **Forked Tongue:** The character's tongue takes on a serpentine appearance, requiring great care not to be noticed.

• **Hairless:** All of the character's body hair falls off, including eyebrows. Their appearance is clearly shocking but may be explained as illness.

• **Hairy:** The character begins to grow thick hair out of their entire body. This hair can be cut and shaved off but will grow back at a quick rate; to avoid detection a character would need to spend about an hour a day shaving.

• **Horns, small:** The character grows two small (one inch) horns at the top of his temples. These are a clear sign of chaos, but could be concealed under a helm, hat, or hood. The horns are blunt and serve no purpose. They could be surgically removed, but only at serious risk of death in the operation.

• **Infestation:** The character attracts all varieties of worms, beetles, centipedes or maggots (any crawling insects). The character is constantly infested with such things, causing a -4 to any reaction rolls from anyone who is not a chaos cultist. Any place where the character remains for more than 8 hours at a time will likewise become thus infested for at least 1d6 days after the character leaves. Other animals (horses, dogs, etc.) will not tolerate being near the character for any length of time. It will be extremely difficult to conceal this mutation for very long;



even full-immersion bathing and complete changes of clothing will only alleviate the situation for no more than 1d6 hours.

- **Obese:** The character's weight doubles. The character cannot lose the weight by any normal means.

- **Poison Kiss:** The character's saliva has become intensely poisonous. Anyone they kiss, or who shares the same cup with them, must immediately make a saving throw versus poison or die in 1d6 rounds. This mutation will not be immediately apparent to the character, meaning that the discovery of their transformation can often come in the form of tragedy.

- **Porcupine:** The character develops small (1cm) barbs or quills on his skin. Roll a d100 to determine how much percentage of the character's body is covered in these quills. These quills are pointed and can hurt if they catch on someone's skin; unarmed attacks using the quills would do +1 damage. They have a tendency to snag on clothing or other objects which makes life very difficult. They can be cut with sharp blades or decent shears, but will grow back within 24 hours.

- **Rot:** Injuries no longer heal naturally for the character. Instead, wounds will gradually take on a necrotic appearance, and a seriously injured character will potentially be mistaken for one of the living dead. Magical healing will still heal damage in the usual fashion, but any cleric who has reason to believe that the character's inability to heal is due to Chaos mutation will be obliged by their vows to either take the character down or bring them to a Clerical inquisition.

- **Small Wings:** The character grows a pair of small wings on their back; they are not large enough to allow flight, but can be folded and thus concealed under clothing or armor.

- **Stench:** The character takes on a nauseatingly terrible odor. It is so strong that it is virtually impossible to mask, and makes those around them physically ill (giving a -1 to attack rolls and many skill checks). Bathing will not remove the smell, nor will most perfumes conceal it. The only good side to this mutation is that it is possibly the least likely to set the character apart as chaos-touched, since most people in Albion have some level of malodorousness to them.



- **Tumor:** The character grows a hideous tumor on their body; there is a 75% chance it will be on their torso, making the wearing of any non-tailored armor impossible. The tumor is mildly

painful, and cannot be surgically removed without killing the patient.

- **Wasting:** The character becomes frighteningly thin, losing half their normal weight. They cannot regain the lost weight by any normal means.



Moderate Mutations (1d100)

1-30	Haunting Intelligence	66-70	Horns, large
31-35	Canines	71-75	Draining Touch
36-40	Color Change	76-80	Lost Limb
41-45	Crazy Nails	81-85	Satyr Legs
46-50	Gigantism	86-90	Shrunken
51-55	Gibberish	91-95	Stone Hand
56-60	Hermaphrodite	96-00	The Evil Eye
61-65	Hideous Regeneration		

- **Haunting Intelligence:** The PC will begin to see and be connected to a spirit of Chaotic nature that is invisible to anyone else. This is a kind of incorporeal minor demon, which will try to goad the PC into pursuing some ambition that will serve the ultimate purpose of Chaos. This spirit has no body and cannot be detected by any ordinary means, including ESP, but magic that allows one to see invisible things will detect it. The spirit cannot directly affect anything material; it cannot physically manipulate or harm anything. They will be in possession of power or lore on certain subjects (depending on the type of spirit) and will be willing to share it to the degree that the PC is serving the spirit's interest. The Intelligence will have great skill in its areas of interest but will have almost no useful understanding of anything else; it will view all things in life through the lens of its subject area. Its goal is always to corrupt the PC into obsession with what the spirit's own Intelligence rules.

The spirit has a power rating, determined by rolling 2d6+2. If this power level is higher than the values of the PC's INT and WIS, then the spirit will be able to attempt to possess and control the PC, if the PC fails a saving throw vs. magic. The control can be done up to once a day for up to 1d12 hours. During this time the Spirit's power level will replace the PC's INT and WIS in all respects (for modifiers or checks), and the PC will usually be aware of what they are doing but unable to stop what is happening in any way.

The spirit will always remain, invisible, by the PC's side, frequently interjecting with its suggestions and demands; it will seek to keep the PC alive if possible, only because the PC is its link to the material world. But if the PC is not a voluntary participant in the spirit's goals, it will become more insistent and demanding, speaking all day and night in the PC's mind. If this occurs, the PC will begin to suffer from mental exhaustion: after 1 week of such harassment, the PC will begin to have a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill/spell checks. After 2 weeks this will increase to a -4 penalty and hit point loss will heal at half the normal rate. After 3 weeks the PC will have to start making a saving throw each day (with the aforementioned penalty) or suffer a temporary loss of 1 point

each day of WIS and INT. This may allow the spirit to begin to take direct possession of the PC's mind. The spirit can stop this harassment at any time if it wishes, usually if the PC starts to cooperate or if the spirit wishes to avoid the PC becoming completely mad (which will happen if the PC's WIS or INT drop to 2 or less). When the harassment ceases, the PC will begin to recover ability score loss at the normal rate of 1 per day, and the penalties to checks will after this reduce at a rate of -1 per day until the PC recovers to full health.

The Haunting Intelligence does not usually serve a specific demon lord, but is likely to know the names and sigils of one or more demon lords whose powers relate to the Intelligence's area of interest/obsession. It will gladly give the PC the knowledge of summoning such a creature if they think it will serve their obsession.

The Haunting Intelligence is not undead and cannot be affected by any magic that works against the undead. It cannot be dispelled by *Remove Curse* or *Dispel Magic*; only *Dispel Evil* will have a chance of getting rid of it.

Roll 1d6 for the nature of the spirit and its area of interest:

- 1) *Mercurial*: the spirit will have a vast knowledge of lore in a particular knowledge subject (doing lore checks at a +5 bonus). The subject could be occultism, mythology, history, poetry or art, mathematics or natural sciences, or any other lore the GM desires. The Intelligence will be obsessed with the acquisition of new or obscure lore on its subject, to the point of being willing to do anything to obtain it.
- 2) *Venusian*: the spirit will be obsessed with the pleasures of the flesh. Its understanding of human seduction and manipulation lets it advise the PC in what to say or do to get its way, granting it a +2 to reaction rolls when trying to seduce, impress, convince or negotiate. It will also have great knowledge of food, drink, music and dance. It will seek to drive the PC to corrupt men and women to hedonism, gluttony and debauchery.
- 3) *Lunar*: the spirit is a master of deceit and subterfuge. Its assistance grants the PC a +2 to all checks related to sneaking and hiding, and to social/reaction checks involving deception. It will be obsessed with the acquisition of material wealth and increasing crime, trying to drive the PC to criminal enterprises.
- 4) *Martial*: the spirit is an expert in all matters of bloodshed. It will grant the PC a +2 to-hit and +1 to damage in combat whenever the PC allows it to possess his body. Its tactical advice will also grant an equivalent bonus in commanding men in war and in the morale rating of men under the PC's command if the PC follows the spirit's advice. The spirit will be obsessed with battle and killing, though it will not act in a berserker fashion. It will want the PC to stay alive so that the spirit can keep on killing through them.
- 5) *Jupiterian*: the spirit is an expert in statecraft. It has great knowledge (equivalent to a +5 bonus to lore checks) in all matters of law and politics. Its advice will grant the PC a +2 bonus to reaction rolls to impress lords and officials of all kinds. It is obsessed with obtaining power: if the PC is of noble birth it will try to guide the PC to obtaining ever greater positions of power, even to take the crown if possible. If the PC is not noble, it will try to guide the PC to become

an adviser to a suitably corrupt lord, to help them grow in power. It will always seek to encourage tyranny.

6) *Saturnine*: the spirit is obsessed with death. It will have great knowledge of anatomy, poisons (being able to guide the PC in the making and application thereof) and murder (granting a PC who obeys it a +4 bonus to surprise attacks, and an increase in backstab level if they are of a class that has that ability; when it is directly possessing the PC, it will be able to backstab for triple damage if the PC does not already have a backstab ability at this level). It will also have lore (+5) of the undead. The spirit will encourage the PC to acts of murder, and will ultimately try to guide the PC to becoming an intelligent undead.



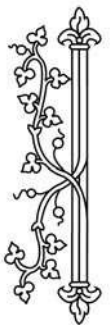
• **Canines**: The character grows sharp wolf-like teeth. These could theoretically be used to do 1d3 damage in combat. Unless the character was very careful in concealing it, this mutation would either expose the character as touched by Chaos, or incorrectly identified as a lycanthrope. Either way burning at the stake would be the prescribed solution.

• **Color Change**: The character's skin changes color. Roll randomly on a d8 : 1 = reddish; 2 = yellowish; 3 = golden; 4 = greenish; 5 = bluish; 6 = purplish; 7 = jet black; 8 = pale white. In some cases, the character might be able to claim to be ill or a foreigner from very distant lands, but anyone who knew him will find the change in skin tone blatantly obvious.

• **Crazy Nails**: The character's fingernails and toenails grow at an alarming rate, about 5 inches a day! If unmanaged they will twist and coil and make the wearing of footwear impossible and the handling of objects extremely difficult. The nails can be clipped in a normal fashion but the character would need to do this some ten times a day to curtail the growth.

• **Gibberish**: The character can no longer speak any recognized language. While the character can still understand and think in any language they know, when they speak, the words come out in what seems like a strange foreign tongue or nonsense-words. This mutation doesn't affect their ability to write. The character's mutation may be mistaken for some form of disease, or of possession or madness. There is a 20% chance that the 'gibberish' is actually the Demon Tongue, and sages with knowledge of that language may recognize it.

• **Gigantism**: The character becomes mutated to the size of about 9' tall, with a particularly disproportionately large head



and arms. This growth increases the character's Strength attribute by +2, but he will be unable to wear regular sized clothing or armor. In encounters with people who did not previously know him the character may be able to pretend they were born this way, and only deformed rather than a chaos mutant, but to any who knew the character beforehand it would be clear the character was either cursed or mutated.

- **Hermaphrodite:** The character develops the sexual organs of the opposite sex, while retaining their previous ones.

- **Hideous Regeneration:** The character will regenerate at a rate of 1hp/hour. However, this regeneration takes the form of hideous pulsating slimy flesh. Only magically healing one's self before the regeneration can take hold will avoid this situation. For every point of regeneration, the character will become progressively more horrific to human visage; after 10 such points have been regenerated (cumulatively) the character will have a -1 to reaction rolls. After 30 such points, a -2 to reactions, after 60 such points a -3, after 100 such points a -4, and by 150 points of regeneration have taken place the character will not appear human at all, but more closely resemble a Troll. Of course, it is likely the character will have been hunted down and burnt as a monstrosity long before that.

- **Horns, large:** The character grows a pair of large (1 ft.) horns on the front of her head. These are extremely difficult to conceal. They could be used in combat, doing 1d6 damage (+STR bonus).

- **Draining Touch:** The character's bare skin will drain the life-force of any living thing he touches, doing 1d8 damage. The character has no control over this. His touch will not affect any inanimate object, construct, or the undead.

- **Lost Limb:** One of the character's limbs falls off. There is an equal chance of losing the left leg, right leg, left arm or right arm. The character is otherwise unharmed.

- **Satyr Legs:** The character's legs become goatlike, complete with cloven hooves in place of feet. This could be theoretically concealed but only with tailor-made leggings or armor and special boots.

- **Shrunken:** The character's body shrinks to half its previous size (with effects as per a reversed *Enlarge* spell). The character may be able to pass for a midget among people who did not previously know them.

- **Stone Hand:** One of the character's hands (roll to see if left or right) becomes petrified. It can no longer be used for any standard purpose, but can do 1d4 damage in unarmed combat.

- **Tail:** The character grows a long tail (either bushy like a dog's or thin and leathery black like a classical image of a demon's tail). It serves no useful purpose and he cannot control it.

- **The Evil Eye:** Once per day, the character gains the ability to lay a curse on someone just by looking at them. Anyone they try to lay the evil eye upon must make a saving throw versus magic or become cursed with a -2 penalty to attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws. The effect is permanent but can be lifted by the *Remove Curse* spell.

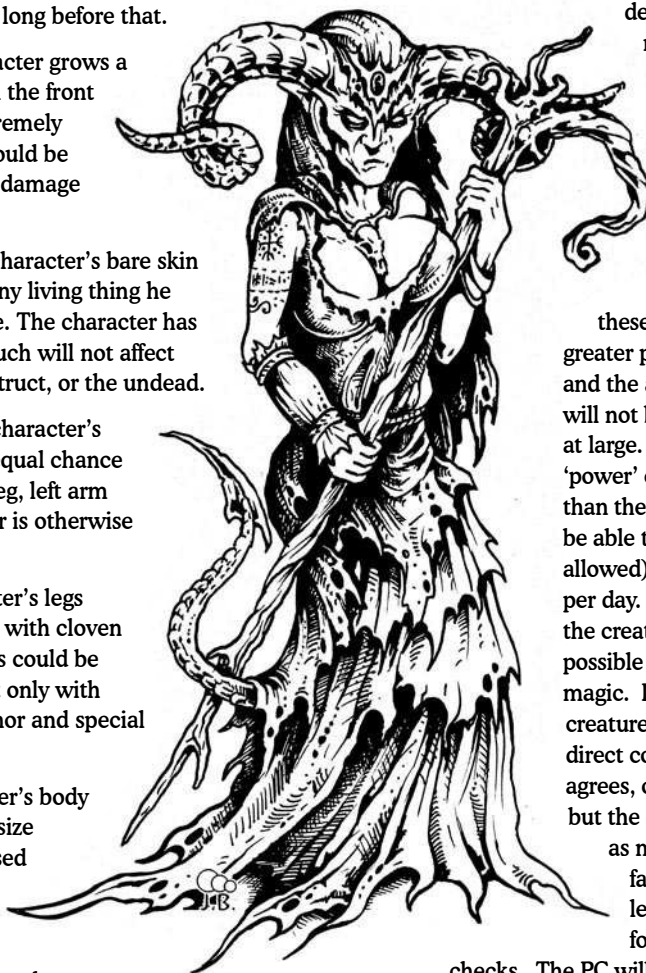


Severe Mutations (1d100)

1-45	Familiar	71-75	Fish Man
46-50	Cat Eyes	76-80	Green Man
51-55	Extra Arms	81-85	Pheromones
56-60	Extra Eye(s)	86-90	Pincer
61-65	Extra Head	91-95	Serpent Hair
66-70	Extra Mouth	96-00	Wings

- **Familiar:** The character will find themselves bonded to a demonic animal. This animal will appear no more than 24 hours after the mutation occurs. It will be able to speak to the character, though no one else will hear the creature doing so. The animal will appear to be helpful and wish to assist the character, trying to make itself useful to him. However, the creature is of Chaotic alignment and will try to direct the character to commit acts of evil; these will usually be subtle acts that will serve the greater purpose of Chaos and not just wanton malice, and the animal will try to ensure that the character will not be revealed to be corrupted by the public at large. The GM should roll 3d6 to determine the 'power' of the creature; if this number is greater than the PC's INT and WIS scores, the creature will be able to directly control the PC's actions (no save allowed) for a period of up to 1d12 hours a day, once per day. If one of the two ability scores is higher than the creature's power, then this control will only be possible if the character fails a saving throw versus magic. If both INT and WIS are greater than the creature's power level, then the creature cannot take direct control of the character unless the PC willingly agrees, or at least one of these scores are reduced; but the creature will continue to try to tempt the PC as much as possible. When the PC is under the familiar's direct control, the familiar's power level replaces the PC's INT and WIS scores for the purpose of any ability modifiers or checks. The PC will usually be aware of what is happening (but with no ability to stop any of it), but if the familiar wishes, it can make the PC's awareness go dark and the PC will not remember anything he did at the time he was controlled.

The familiar will be connected to a specific demon, who will be of at least Lord rank or higher, and may share the name and sigil of the demon and encourage the PC to summon and enter the service of this demon.



The familiar will try to avoid being seen by people other than the PC, and will always act like a normal animal when other people are present. The familiar is magically linked to the PC, and can thus appear at the PC's side, wherever the PC is, regardless of distance, so long as the PC is in a place where there is some normal way to enter (so for example, a familiar cannot appear in a room with no open doors or windows). The familiar will never enter into a temple of the Unconquered Sun or any other place magically sanctified to the service of Law.

Being bound to the familiar will immediately grant the PC a permanent increase in hit points equal to the familiar's (which is almost always 1d8, unless otherwise stated, see below). However, if the familiar is slain, the PC will immediately and permanently lose double the hit point value of the familiar; if this loss kills the PC (either because it is more than the PC's current hit points or more than their hit point total) the PC will return to life within 24 hours as a zombie, wight or wraith if their corpse is not given a proper religious burial by a sanctified priest or cleric within that time period.

Other than by being slain, a familiar is difficult to get rid of. It cannot be affected by *Remove Curse*. A clerical *Dispel Magic* effect will not remove it, but will free a PC from direct control by the familiar if the PC is under such control at the time. Only a clerical *Dispel Evil* will have a chance of banishing away the familiar, sending it back to the hells, in which case the PC will lose all connection to the familiar and the hit point bonus it provided.

Roll to determine the type of animal and the special qualities the familiar has (all special abilities transfer to PC while the familiar possesses them):

d20	Type of Familiar
1	Bat: can hear noise +5
2-3	Cat: sneak +5, when possessing has +2 to-hit in melee combat.
4	Chicken: produces 1 special egg per day (see below).
5-6	Dog, black: extra +2hp, can track by scents.
7	Falcon: keen vision +4, can spot up to twice the regular distance.
8	Frog: poison skin (1d100: 1-50% hallucinatory poison, 51-100% deadly poison).
9	Horse, black: 3d8+1hp, can be ridden and moves at twice the speed of a normal steed.
10	Lizard: +5 climb, regeneration 1hp/10 minutes.
11	Owl: full night vision (owl power level is 3d6+2).
12	Rabbit: AC17 +4 to hit 1d8+2 damage.
13	Rat: transmits disease, see below.
14-15	Raven: can speak to other characters, not just PC (Raven power level is 3d6+1).
16	Snake: poison bite (save or die in 1d6 rounds).
17	Spider: can climb as per <i>Spider Climb</i> , poison bite (save or die in 1d6 rounds), only has 1d4hp.



18	Squirrel: +4 climb, can avoid being surprised on 4/6.
19	Swine: transmits disease (see below), can <i>Charm Person</i> 1/day.
20	Worm: only has 1hp, makes prophetic visions of the future 1/day (accurate only 75% of the time).



(a) *Chicken egg type* (1d6): 1 = gold (worth 1d6L); 2 = copper (worth 1d6x10p); 3 = sustenance (egg is only needed meal of the day); 4 = poison (ingested, sv. vs. poison or die after 1d6 hours); 5 = rotted (generates a *Stinking Cloud* 10' radius when thrown/broken); 6 = magic (simulates a random potion if eaten raw). (All egg effects other than 1-2 will be lost if the egg is not used in 24 hours)

(b) *Rat disease:* anyone in 10' area of rat other than PC must make a saving throw or become infected with a disease that has a 1d6 day incubation period; after which they will need to make a saving throw each day or lose 2 points of STR and CON. The disease lasts for 3d6 days after which the character begins to recover normally if they survived. The *Cure Disease* spell will function normally.

(c) *Swine disease:* anyone the in 5' area of the swine other than the PC must make a saving throw or become infected with a disease that has a 1d6 hours incubation period. The disease causes hideous skin infection and odor that reduces CHA by 1d6 points permanently unless magically healed.

• **Cat Eyes:** The character's eyes change to look like a cat's. They gain night vision. Alternately, the eyes remain human like but become bulging and hideously large with a slightly frog-like appearance.

• **Extra Arms:** The character grows two extra arms. These can be used with full effect (though it will take a few days after

mutation for the character to get used to using them), allowing the wielding of extra objects, etc. It also means the character will not be able to slip into many types of regular armor. 1-90% of the time these extra arms will be on the sides of the torso, but 91-100% of the time they will instead appear with one growing out of the chest and the other out of the back.

- **Extra Eye(s):** The character grows 1d4 additional eyes in random areas of their body. For each eye roll 1d8 : 1 = leg; 2 = arm; 3-4 = torso (front); 5-6 = torso (back); 7 = head (front); 8 = head (back). The extra eyes are functional and will cause extreme confusion for the first 48 hours after mutation; after this, characters gain a +1 bonus to perception checks for every extra eye.

- **Extra Head:** The character grows a second head, which cannot control the character's body but has a mind and personality of its own. It will always be chaotic, but for personality roll 1d6: 1 = insulting and foul-mouthed; 2 = insane babbling; 3 = devious and sadistic; 4 = cowardly and traitorous; 5 = cynical and argumentative; 6 = vain and boasting. The head cannot be removed without killing the character. This extra head will



usually grow out of the neck, but there is a 30% chance that it will grow out of the chest or shoulder instead. There is also a 30% chance that instead of looking human, it will be some kind of animal head (doglike, catlike, goatlike, froglike, etc.).

- **Extra Mouth:** The character grows another mouth; roll 1d4 for location: 1-hand, 2-forehead, 3-neck, 4-torso. The extra mouth is not under the character's control; roll 1d6 for what it says: 1-nothing, 2-quotes poetry in a foreign language, 3-utters frequent blasphemies against Law, 4-frequent insults, 5-offers useful advice, 6-reveals the character's innermost thoughts and secrets.

- **Fish Man:** The character grows gills, scales, and webbing between the fingers and toes. They can now breathe water as well as air and can see underwater without difficulty, and have a +4 to any swim checks if unarmored. However, they must keep their body moist with at least one liter of water every six hours or they will lose 1 point of CON for every six hours that they do not moisten themselves.

- **Green Man:** The character grows leaves over any area of his body that previously had hair, and his skin takes on a bark-like tendency (this grants a +4 bonus to AC but makes the use of any regular armor impossible).

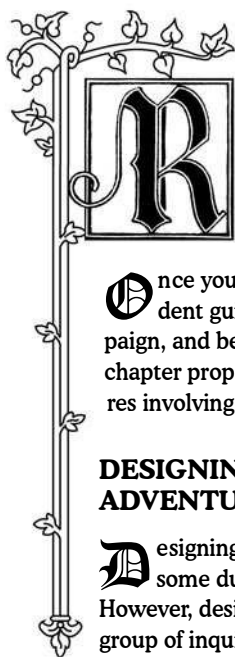
- **Pheromones:** The character lets out a scent in their body's sweat that makes them almost irresistibly attractive to anyone who would normally be attracted to their gender. The character gets a +4 bonus to reaction rolls with any character who would be attracted to their gender, and a +1 bonus even among those who would not. However, 10% of people who experience this strong attraction will become all but crazed, becoming romantically obsessed with the character to the point of dangerous liaisons.

- **Pincer:** The forearm and hand of the character (50% chance of either the right or left arm) is mutated into a hideous fleshy claw. This deformity will be extremely difficult to conceal and will make that hand useless to any kind of fine manipulation or wielding weapons, but can do 1d6 damage in combat.

- **Serpent Hair:** The character's hair transforms into a mass of snakes. The character gets a second melee attack each round, with a successful hit doing 1 point of damage and requiring a saving throw versus poison; failure means the victim will die in 1d6 rounds.

- **Wings:** The character grows a pair of full-sized leathery wings out of their back. They can no longer wear most regular forms of armor not tailor-made for them. The wings allow them to fly at a speed of 60' per round.





Running chaos-cults adventures

Once you have created a chaos cult as per the precedent guidelines, it still must be inserted in the campaign, and become an opportunity for adventuring. This chapter proposes aids and suggestions to create adventures involving the investigation of chaos cults.

DESIGNING INVESTIGATION ADVENTURES

Designing an adventure where the PCs are headed to some dungeon to loot and explore, is relatively easy. However, designing adventures of investigation where a group of inquisitors must discover chaos cults which, by definition, strive to remain secret, is more difficult. It becomes even more difficult when you want to run an Inquisition campaign where the PCs go after various chaos cults, sessions after sessions (as you must be able to bring variety). This chapter proposes guidelines and tables to create such adventures more easily.

The first general guideline regarding investigation adventures would be this:

Don't try to determine in advance what the PCs should have to do to reach a certain conclusion. Players almost always do something else than what the GM expected them to do when he/she designed the adventure. Thus, only determine in advance what the cultists will do if nobody interferes with their plans, and what they will do if they feel threatened. Then, be flexible when the PCs begin to interact with the various situations you have designed; let them try and succeed in ways you had not anticipated. Lastly, be generous with clues: for each fact the PCs should discover to progress toward the cult's eradication, prepare at least three clues in advance (e.g.: to locate the temple's secret entrance prepare three different sources of information: let the PCs follow the cultists' tracks toward it; have an old book in the library tell about the ancient temple's location; and also have a poacher know that some people lurk there at night). This should take care of players having a tendency of missing or ignoring the GM's clues.

Then prepare the adventure in this way:

- **Step 1:** You create a chaos cult (as described in the previous pages).
- **Step 2:** You not only give stats to the most important cultists, but you should also know how they generally behave and react.
- **Step 3:** You determine what are the current objectives of the cult. This is not necessarily directly related to their religious/occult practices. For example, they could be trying to kill someone who might denounce them, or acquire a new building in which to settle their headquarters. This will produce events with which the PCs will be able to interact. [See next column for suggestions]

- **Step 4:** You determine how the PCs will get involved in the adventure / investigation. [See p.28 for suggestions]
- **Step 5:** You determine a set of revelations (e.g.: the baron is not a victim but the cult's leader; the cultists regularly meet in the old ruined tower; etc.) that the PCs should have if they are to progress toward the adventure's conclusion. And to be reasonably certain that the PCs will get them, each revelation should have three different clues leading to it. [See p.30-34 for suggestions, including tables for running the questioning of NPCs p.34-36.]
- **Step 6:** You prepare a few events and encounters. Some of them will happen if the PCs don't progress fast enough (e.g.: more people die from a magical curse; another child disappears; etc.); others will happen in reaction to the PCs actions (e.g.: cultists try to kill the PCs who cannot conduct their investigations discreetly enough). [See p.38 for suggestions of appropriate encounters]
- **Step 7:** You can prepare a "dungeon" for the cult's headquarter or temple. [Three examples are provided p.44-56 that you can tailor to your needs.]



CULT'S CURRENT OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Often, the cult's current objectives and activities will be easily inferred from the cult's description, particularly if they have got a complication as suggested p.13-15. Otherwise you may choose one (or two) below, or roll a d12.

1. The cultists are searching for a specific person they don't know yet, but is expected to bear a certain mark, or corresponds to an obscure prophecy.
2. The cultists must recover a magical item that was stolen from them. This is typically an item related to summoning demons or supernatural creatures, or a sacrificial weapon.
3. The cultists are searching for some special ingredients (e.g.: the bones of a sorcerer buried a century earlier) to conduct a ceremony that will have supernatural consequences.
4. The cultists are preparing a giant pentagram, so need to secure five places at miles of distances each, in precise locations, where to put magical items that will serve as the pentagram's apexes.

5. The cultists want to acquire a special place (farmstead, chapel, castle, ruined tower, etc.) because they believe there is a demon imprisoned below that will reward them if they free it.

6. The cultists are searching for a member of the cult that betrayed them and risks to denounce their activities. They want to kill him/her, but preferably as a sacrificial victim during their next ritual.

7. The cultists are regularly kidnapping victims for their murderous sacrifices. However, they need to remain discreet. As such, they generally only abduct vagabonds that nobody cares for.

8. The cultists have summoned a demon that escaped their control, then disappeared, but is now slowly killing them all, one by one. They must find it and stop it before they are all slain.

9. The cultists want to corrupt/taint the local Unconquered Sun priest in order to eventually convert him to the cult. They use witchcraft to try fill his mind with bad thoughts, put hallucinatory drugs in his food, send prostitutes to him, etc. Whether they might succeed or not is unknown.

10. The cultists are trying to scare the villagers (i.e.: the non-cultists), ruin their crops and kill their cattle through witchcraft, so that they would eventually leave the area.

11. The cultists are in the process of kidnapping seven virgin maiden with red hair for a ritual of demon summoning. Three have already been found and captured.

12. The cultists are putting many small symbols of their cult (or small statues of some demon) in various places in the village, for some foul magical purpose.

GETTING INVOLVED IN THE ADVENTURE

The following are a few suggestions of adventure-hooks to help the GM introduce cult adventures. Either choose or roll 1d12 (plus 1d6 for entry #1, and 1d3 for entry #2):

1—Abduction: A local child or damsel recently disappeared. His/her family, who suspected the presence of something blasphemous nearby (but didn't want to do anything about it until then), believes he/she was kidnapped, and thus asks the PCs to rescue him/her. As the PCs find and (hopefully) destroy the cultists, they discover that:

- (1) Victim died and was turned into a zombie or ghoul.
- (2) Victim has become a fervent cultist ready to kill to protect the cult.
- (3) Victim is possessed by an evil spirit or demon.
- (4) Victim was corrupted by the cult's meddling with chaos, thus getting a mutation.
- (5) Victim has always been someone else under a magical disguise (or polymorph), be it an older family member with expanded lifespan, an elf, or a demon.
- (6) Victim never met the cult in any way. His/her disappearance is due to a very different cause (e.g., maybe he/she was killed by the one who accused the cult of kidnapping).

2—Ambush: The cultists don't prey on the local population, but on some unfortunate travelers. The PCs are thus lured into a trap to become the cultists' next sacrificial victims.

(1) As they stop by the tavern, they are served a drugged wine that puts them to profound sleep. They awake in an obscure room with a locked door, without their equipment. Probably in the cult's secret lair.

(2) Someone tells the PCs that a cult is operating nearby. They are then led to a dungeon's entrance in the forest: this is but a big trap intended to kill them slowly, after making them suffer harshly. In fact a regular dungeon full of nasty monsters and traps destined to finish badly (rather than finish in a treasure chamber).

(3) The PCs are invited to spend the night in a noble's castle. Then, one or all of them are tricked into going explore the castle's catacombs, that are but a trap as described above.



3—Chaos Infestation: Animals within a particular area are becoming monstrous and mutated. It may have also affected a few humans, but those probably hide for fear of being accused of chaos dealings and end up being burned at the stake. Such humans would prove a valuable source of information about what happened, otherwise the PCs will have to find the area with the most mutated animals, to have a chance to find the cultists' lair.

4—Cult Conspiracy: A scared priest has discreetly called upon the PCs for help, as he is convinced that his village is slowly and secretly converting to a chaos cult. Finding any evidence corroborating this fear proves to be impossible, but investigating the priest's body would reveal a well hidden mutation (at least a witch mark). In fact it's the priest who converted to a local chaos cult. However, he now suffers from a sort of schizophrenia, repressing the truth from his mind, and instead accusing others to alleviate his unconscious feelings of guilt.

5—Denunciation: The Church got a message from someone claiming to know about (or at least suspecting) chaos activities where he lives. The PCs are sent to investigate. Unfortunately, when they arrive the author of the denunciation is dead, slain by the cultists (whether by natural or supernatural means). Hence, those who might know something about the cult are now afraid to speak, and the PCs' presence is probably known to the cult.

6—Framed: A chaos cult made a few errors (e.g., too many villagers disappeared mysteriously, demons were spotted in the woods, etc.) that led to its presence being now suspected. The cult's leader thinks of using illusion magic to divert the suspicion on other people. Hence, when the PCs arrive, they are arrested by a mob of local people (who have been deceived by someone acting for the cult) under false charges of diabolism. [Note that if the PCs are clerics/inquisitors, some innocent NPC strangers are arrested instead.] Then, during the night they are freed in a dramatic fashion involving (illusory) manifestations of glowing demons, hideous sounds, and huge blue flames. Of course, many villagers (who had been tasked to keep watch on the prisoners' location) witness it all. As such, everybody is now convinced that the PCs (or arrested NPCs) are the cultists, and will be hunted down, and then quickly slain once caught. That way the local population (and the Clerical order) should believe that the cult has been eradicated.

7—Hell's Fire: A magical fire in town (or village) resists all efforts to extinguish it. It has an obvious supernatural origin, since it is of a bright green color, and after having burnt a house to ashes, has kept burning without combustible (though with much smaller flames), yet strangely didn't spread to adjacent buildings. Water is ineffective against this fire; only a *Dispel Evil* cast on it could extinguish it, or if the PCs can find its origin and put an end to it: a demonic ritual held in a cultists lair. So far the fire has destroyed the house of someone who was suspecting a cult's presence and asking about investigating it. Since then, those who know have become afraid to speak or act openly.

8—Item Search: The PCs have been searching for an item (be it for themselves or for someone else). This might be a known magical item, but not necessarily; it might as well be a piece of information (inscribed on a book, scroll or tablet), or a specific object of symbolic significance (e.g.: a noble's signet ring, a Church ritual item, etc.). In any case, the only clues they have would be a person's name. However, unknowingly to them, this person is a cultist, and the item sought is held in the cult's location.

9—Stupid Mistake: As the PCs are travelling, they briefly encounter a group of other people heading in the same direction. One of these travelers fortuitously happens to be wearing something distinctive almost identical



to something worn by one of the PCs. (For example, if one of the PCs has a nice red cloak bordered with black fur, one of the travelers will be wearing a much similar cloak.) Later, the PCs are contacted by a cultist who mistakenly believes them to be those travelers, whom he was told to recognize by this distinctive thing (i.e., such as this red cloak). The PCs are then led to a meeting place (different from the cult's location) where some cultists are waiting for the travelers, and realize their mistake (e.g., by asking passwords the PCs cannot know; as the PCs don't have a specific mutation to show; etc.).

10—Suspicious Events: The PCs are in a backward town or village, probably resting in a tavern, when hideous screams are heard. However, the local population reacts strangely: people but remain mute while looking down apathetically. After inquiry, it appears that either the locals don't want to tell to strangers what is happening, or that they suffer from a strange enchantment that lets them accept what happens without reacting nor thinking about it.

11—Vile Desecration: A chapel (to the Unconquered Sun) was found desecrated, with chaos/satanic inscriptions and occult symbols written on the walls, and the chapel's holy symbols (or statue of Mithras, etc.) destroyed and covered in excrement. The PCs are called to investigate.

12—Weird Welcome: The PCs arrive in the most friendly and happiest community they ever saw, though also the poorest. All people here, appear elated and smiling happily, just as if something truly nice happened to them a few minutes ago (although if asked, they will answer that nothing special happened). Yet, they are nonetheless miserable, wearing ragged clothes, eating but rancid food, and living in slums. If questioned, these people will but suggest the PCs to ask the old hermit in the woods' clearing, telling them that he will answer all of their questions.

When the PCs arrive in the clearing, a character in hooded robe stands in the middle, apparently waiting for them. Come closer and it appears to have a skull with flames burning in its eye sockets instead of a human head. This apparition won't speak, and if stroke will just dissipate and vanish. Then, upon returning to the village, the PCs discover that all the happy inhabitants have fled.



CLUES AND REVELATIONS

When the PCs begin the adventure, they will probably be the witnesses or victims of foul events, but won't know what is happening yet. They must investigate, that is: ask questions, search for evidence, etc., thus getting clues that lead to revelations. A revelation is to learn:

- Who is the cult leader.
- That the local lord is a cultist.
- Where is located the cult's temple or headquarter.
- When (and/or where) will be performed the ritual that will summon a demon.
- That the cultists have discovered a powerful and dangerous artifact of sorcery.
- Etc.

Of course, a revelation cannot be determined by a random roll, but should be decided by the GM and pertain to the adventure. Likewise for clues, that cannot be obtained from a table, though the examples below should help the GM invent their own.

Inventing Clues:

The best way to invent clues, is to imagine what the cult's members would have to do to achieve their objectives (according to their resources). Once you know how they proceed, you know if they will leave tracks, evidence, witnesses, and such, that can be turned into clues for the PCs. It is also a good idea to leave clues leading to the same revelation in different places and of a different nature. For example: you will learn about the temple's secret entrance through following tracks and finding a secret door (skill checks); or in reading about the temple's existence in a dusty book in the church's library; or from speaking with a captured cultist; or using a detection spell that might be found on a scroll during the adventure; etc.

Examples of Revelations (and the clues leading to them):

1. *The mayor (or any other important local authority figure) has become the puppet of a coven of witches.*

- **Clue #1:** He has become somewhat different, like more nervous, often neglecting his duties, being seemingly lost in his thoughts, and often mentioning a mysterious "will of the Norns."
- **Clue #2:** He has bought the barren ground around the old mound (or ruined tower, etc.), and forbidden anyone to go there. He doesn't make anything of that useless piece of land, but will rudely tell anyone who asks about it, to mind their own business.

- **Clue #3:** There are some rumors about three strange women having been seen near the old mound (or ruined tower, etc.). They had a creepy appearance and avoided any contact with those who saw them.
- **Clue #4:** A peasant once noticed a ghostly fire burning on the old mound (or ruined tower, etc.), during a night of the full moon.

2. *The new parish priest is not an ordained clergyman of the Unconquered Sun.*

- **Clue #1:** He came to the village but a few days after the former priest mysteriously died. Then, if the PCs ask the Church's hierarchy, it will appear that it wasn't informed of the former priest's death, and knows nothing about the one who replaced him.
- **Clue #2:** He insists on praying to an obscure saint instead of the Unconquered Sun. A knowledgeable PC (e.g.: cleric, theologian, etc.) will know that this saint doesn't exist, but worse, that his name looks suspiciously similar to that of a demon prince.
- **Clue #3:** His knowledge of the liturgy and scriptures seems very limited.
- **Clue #4:** All the ritual objects and holy symbols have been subtly desecrated (realizing it would require to be knowledgeable in religious rituals, and also to succeed a Detection check). Then, a small statue of a demon is hidden under the altar.

3. *The local priest is in fact a werewolf.*

- **Clue #1:** If the PCs follow the tracks of the wolf that killed the unfortunate maiden, they will eventually see them being suddenly replaced by human footsteps that lead to the church.



- **Clue #2:** A captured wolf that growled threateningly at all people who would approach its cage, became suddenly submissive and quiet when the priest came to look at it. Note also that on the following day the cage appeared open, and the wolf gone.

- **Clue #3:** Each month the priest leaves the village for a few days, coincidentally at the period of the full moon. He pretends to go to a distant hermitage for a few days of spiritual contemplation. Tales of people hideously murdered by wolves have been heard to occur in nearby villages during the same periods.

4. *Several graves in the cemetery have gone empty (i.e.: the corpses disappeared), though this isn't obvious, so the graves would have to be opened to ascertain it.*

- **Clue #1:** The two precedent grave diggers have disappeared, and the current one seems to be a little strange, always chuckling evilly when doing his work. The priest's servant will tell that the second grave-digger looked afraid and wanted to speak to the priest without delay, but it was impossible since the latter was absent. Then, the grave-digger (as the first one before him) was never seen again.

- **Clue #2:** A shepherd pretends to have seen old Jack walking on the road at night, with a strange gait and fixed expression. Shortly afterward the shepherd learned that old Jack had died and been buried three days before he saw him walking on the road. Old Jack had been buried in the cemetery, and his grave is of course now empty.

- **Clue #3:** The dog of a farm/house/etc. close to the cemetery, would often bark angrily at night, until it was found dead, its corpse thrown into a ditch. (This happened during the same period when the grave diggers disappeared.)

5. *Before they were found gruesomely assassinated on a wharf, the ship's captain and his crew made money in transporting people afflicted with chaos-mutations to Frogland, except they robbed them of their possessions and threw them overboard in the open sea.*

- **Clue #1:** The captain appeared unusually wealthy compared to other sailors with similar ships. His wife had a shop where she sold all manners of used goods, though the shop remained closed since her husband's death.

- **Clue #2:** The captain sailed people to Frogland several times, often returning much earlier than he should have for such a trip.

- **Clue #3:** Some weird people were seen boarding on the captain's ship at night, walking as if infirm, and wearing cloaks and hoods entirely covering their bodies.

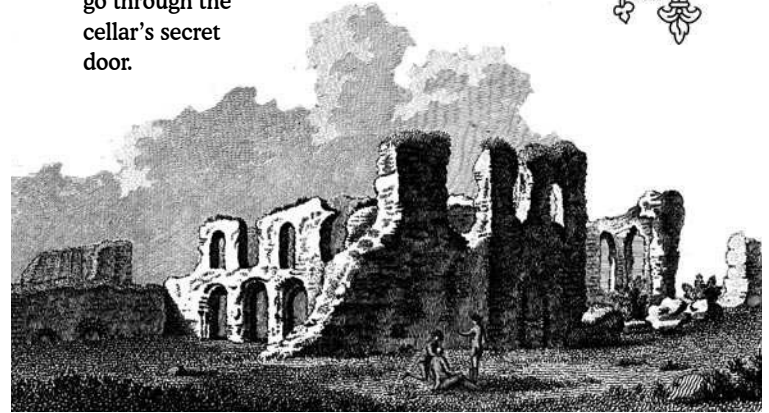
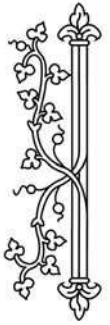
- **Clue #4:** The captain was strangely wary of clerics.

6. *The cultists have an underground lair under the ruined castle on the hill.*

- **Clue #1:** There are historical accounts that when the castle was breached and invaded after a long siege, the lord and his family were never found, despite they could not have escaped it (i.e.: by normal means).

- **Clue #2:** Tracks reveal that some people regularly walk to the castle, specifically to what remains of the keep within, but nobody is ever seen going there during the day, and nobody is ever found inside the castle.

- **Clue #3:** Following someone suspected of being a cultist would eventually lead to the keep's cellar. Surprisingly, the cellar would appear to have been recently cleaned up and repaired, but would be found empty (without possibility of the followed person to have gone out of it without being noticed). Yet, waiting there (hidden) for long enough, someone else would show up and go through the cellar's secret door.



MORE EXAMPLES OF CHAOS-CULTS CLUES

The GM could roll 1d100 to randomly get one (or more) of the 50 following clues about something awful going on nearby. Yet, it's worth repeating that they are primarily intended to fuel the imagination when designing an adventure. Read them to get ideas and flesh out a scenario; don't use them to improvise an adventure on the fly or you will quickly run into inconsistencies.

01-02. There appears to be much less street urchins and beggars in the quarter's streets as there formerly used to be. The local inhabitants are certainly glad about it, but they don't know and don't care for what happened to the destitute people who no more prowl the area.

03-04. An hermit settled in an abandoned chapel on the hill last year. Apparently some villagers have been seen paying him a visit at times. When asked they told they were just curious and went to make sure this wasn't a vagabond or bandit (or some other like-response). However, several of these people seem to have become somewhat verbally vindictive, now often making angry and disparaging comments about the authorities, clergy, and nobles who are said to be liars and exploiters.

05-06. The cemetery seems abandoned. The tombs are normal, only they have been neglected for years, nobody apparently ever coming here to clean them and bring flowers. If carefully observed, it would appear that none of the family names on the tombs may be currently found among the community. Most locals would claim to have lived there for generations, yet their family names cannot be found on the tombs.

07-08. A group of wandering monks (on account of their clothing) recently stopped by the village/town/etc., and gave food and alms to the poor, much more than what priests and other charitable people usually do. A few days later these poor people were never, ever seen again. A witness will say that these poor men and women seemed strangely elated and left in groups on their own accord, without telling anyone of their destination.



09-10. Several children have been born with birth defects lately. In two instances, their fathers have suspected their wives of infidelity, saying they would remain absent for longer than usual, and seemed to have gone far in the woods, though the wives would never admit it.

11-12. Recently, a whole group of clerics (except one) got ill, and had terrible nightmares during the following night. In addition, during that same night the bartender went mad and murdered someone. After questioning, it appears that the clerics (except the one who wasn't affected, and cured his comrades) and the bartender all drank from the same bottle of wine. That bottle had been graciously offered to them by a mysterious customer who has not been seen again.

13-14. When approaching a certain area, the daylight seems to falter, the sky appears hazy and of a dull color. The temperature seems wetter and colder. As soon as one goes away enough from that place, everything returns to normal.

15-16. There have been unusually large flocks of crows and raven gathering in a certain area, and when they are there, remain surprisingly silent instead of croaking loudly as is normal.

17-18. Food and drink suddenly spoils when passing near a certain location. After someone tells the PCs, they should be able to verify it by themselves.

19-20. Priests, clerics and law-aligned characters in the area, regularly have nightmares and awaken fatigued in the morning. This won't happen to the PCs so long as they remain incognito.

21-22. Children often come back home covered in blood despite not being hurt, and are incapable of explaining where the blood comes from. If followed and observed it would be discovered that they go to play in an abandoned house where they kill and torture pet animals in a cruel way. When they go out of the house they have forgotten what they did inside it.

23-24. Pet animals, birds, rats and vermin seem to have deserted the area. If an animal (such as a dog or a horse) is brought in this area, it will become nervous and try to flee at the first opportunity (and Animal Handling skill checks are made at a -4 or -20% penalty).

25-26. There are no visible holy symbols of the Unconquered Sun in the area. Every time one is brought in there, 1d20 minutes later it suddenly breaks for no reason.

27-28. In this area, whenever one watches a reflective surface like polished metal or a mirror (though note that mirrors are exceedingly rare in the middle ages), one will briefly see the fleeting image of a weird and terrifying creature apparently lurking nearby. Nonetheless, if this creature really exists nearby, it is invisible to the eye and even to magical detection.

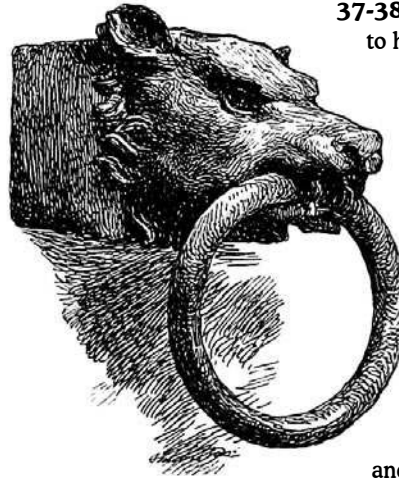
29-30. It will take time to notice, but nobody seems to ever say mundane and usual phrases such as "long life to the King" or "may the Sun bless you." (This could be either because people are cultists, or are afraid of what cultists or nasty infernal creatures might do to them if they said such phrases...)

31-32. There is this dull gray bird perching on the church's rooftop. It never croaks, is always there, and rarely if ever flies

around, except for sometimes moving a few feet on the same rooftop. It seems to observe the PCs, even at night (provided the PCs could see in the dark). Locals will pretend there is nothing special about this bird, that PCs see suspicious events where there isn't any. The locals might be lying... or be sincere.

33-34. Though not apparent at first, it would eventually appear like every wife seems to be a witch and that every man seems to dabble in the occult. People wear protective charms, make strange signs with their hands when they believe that nobody is watching them, invoke the good will of strange names, have small carvings of occult symbols on their carts, doors, weapons, etc. Except all of this will clearly appear useless superstitions to any true magic-user. The locals will first deny delving in witchcraft. However, if pressed they will pretend that an old hermit taught them to protect themselves from occult influence with the use of sorcery. (Whether they are sincere or not, is up to the GM. They might all be cultists striving to become sorcerers...)

35-36. Nobody ever speaks about the ruined tower on the hill, and if they are asked, the locals will tell that it has been abandoned a long time ago, and is ready to collapse. Yet, streaks of lightning sometimes fall upon it at night, even during quiet nights without storms, and the tower never breaks down. The locals will try to dissuade at all costs the PCs to go there, and will become angry if they nonetheless pretend to do it. (And chances are that they will know even if the PCs did it discreetly.)



37-38. A few buildings appear to have the same distinctive sign somewhere, visible yet relatively discreet. This is neither a known (un)holy symbol, nor a rune or esoteric sign. It might rather be a crow/dagger/unicorn/etc. appearing as a door knob here, a weathercock there, or carved on a beam, painted on a shutter, etc. The house owners will always pretend it's but decorative and without meaning.

39-40. Locals often softly chant or whistle the same little tune, though never in front of strangers (including the PCs). Even bards and troubadours won't recognize it. Those who sing or whistle, do it for one minute, then stop to chuckle in a most unpleasant manner.

41-42. There is a black hooded robe plus a strange (non-magical) amulet with an unknown symbol carved on it, hidden in one of the suspects' house. Of course the suspect will deny owning it, instead proposing a lame explanation such as he/she once found it in the forest.

43-44. The PCs notice several villagers who limp on their right (or left) leg. What appeared inconspicuous the first (and even the second) time, looks dubious when a dozen people suffer from the same exact affliction. Nonetheless, if the leg is carefully observed and touched, it won't seem to be particularly unnatural.

45-46. Several women of different age in the community, all became pregnant and later gave birth to their child the same day.

47-48. A mysterious vagabond has been asking for and buying any birth defects among farm and pet animals.

49-50. Several people have been complaining lately, that they no longer recognize one of their relatives (child, spouse, co-worker, etc.). They pretend that despite being apparently the same persons, they have changed in ways they cannot truly point out. One of those complainers even wanted his wife to be exorcised, but died in a stupid accident shortly afterwards.

51-52. Some hideous and grotesque visage (always the same), often seems to briefly appear in the clouds, on the bark of a gnarled tree, on some dung heap, in the smoke pouring from a chimney, etc.

53-54. Some people have reported seeing flies of red color and twice the size of normal flies. A witness even pretends having been attacked by such a fly after putting her hand on the holy symbol (of the Unconquered Sun) hanging around her neck.

55-56. Some villagers claim to have had dreams in which their ancestors or deceased loved ones came to warn them about some nearby danger. One of them even says that the danger was (in his dream) coming from the forest / mortuary mound / ruined tower / etc.

57-58. Some villagers tell to have awakened in the middle of the night, paralyzed and sensing like an evil presence nearby. Yet, they couldn't find any trace of this presence in the morning. If the PCs spend the night in the village, there is a 1 on a d6 chance (1-2 if a cleric) this also happens to them.

59-60. The local priest complains that some of the villagers seem to no longer (or more rarely) attend to the Sunday mass.

61-62. The local lord's family all died in a terrible accident (e.g.: from eating the same poisoned food, catching the same disease, being caught in the burning of their house, or inside the coach that fell from the cliff, etc.). Then, shortly afterward the lord told the population that he was renouncing his wealth, domain and title to retire in a monastery. He was giving it all to a son of his, whom nobody had ever heard about, but who would be there very soon. The son came one day later after the lord's departure, and resembled him so much that he could only be his son indeed. Rumors tell that unfortunately the lord never reached the monastery, and was never seen again afterwards.

63-64. There is a house in town (or ruined castle, etc.) where shadows never recede, even at noon under a bright clear sky.

65-66. If discreetly eavesdropping in the community, the PCs should hear several people mentioning a certain Brazhul in casual conversation, but generally in ushered tones and evasive terms, so it's always unclear, if not mysterious. Now, if these people were asked who Brazhul is, they would pretend to have never heard this name, and that the PCs mistook what they said, because they never said this word.

67-68. When the wind suddenly gets up, which happens much more often than anywhere else, but also never lasts for long, all villagers stop what

they were doing, to listen silently and intently, with often an air of anxious expectation on their faces. They will be reluctant to give any explanation (except for a lame one) about this strange behavior.

69-70. Sometimes, sudden and brief gusts of wind bring a faint, yet sickly stench of rotting flesh, as well as distant screams of terror. This wind always originates from the same direction. It also appears that birds sometimes come from, but never fly toward that direction.

71-72. There are much more people afflicted with insanity in this area, than anywhere else. Trying to make them speak will give bits of incoherent tales about cultists, demons, scary ruins, lugubrious temples and such.

73-74. The river flowing from the hill sometimes stink of sulfur, and at other times is red as if tainted by blood. While the ancestors were used to catch fish in this river, it is now devoid of any life forms (whether fish, frogs, etc.).

75-76. Clerics will have difficulty to pray and meditate, including to recover their spells in the morning. Strange thoughts suddenly invade their mind, gloomy ideas and premonitions of disaster disrupt their concentration. Make a Charisma save [or vs. Spell], or one spell cannot be prepared, or a prayer/meditation is ruined.

77-78. A forester/hunter/poacher will tell that he once followed human tracks into the woods, that led all to a heavy thorn covered bush. Inside, barely visible, was a pagan idol, maybe the statue of a demon. Yet, if the PCs want to see it, they will discover that the idol was recently removed, though nobody will claim to have done it.

79-80. Shortly after arriving in the community, one of the PCs (normally a cleric or magic-user, or the one with the highest Wisdom score) is making every night the same nightmare where foreboding shadows dance around a fire of green flames. For some reason this dream is startling enough so the PC must make a Charisma save [or vs. Spell], or one spell cannot be prepared.

81-82. The village's idiot has been screaming incoherent phrases about a great sorcerer, demons, and the god that will slay the Unconquered Sun, plunging the world in eternal darkness. The nearest villager will quickly come, slap him in the face and order him to stop that nonsense. Then the idiot is brought away and locked in some place while the PCs remain in the village. If questioned the idiot reveals to be indeed a moron, and the villagers saying he only tells idiotic nonsense.

83-84. As the PCs move around and investigate in town for a few days, they will eventually notice someone always watching them carefully, but then turning away and leaving as soon as a PC faces him/her.

85-86. People in the community are clothed and garbed as everywhere else. Nonetheless, when night comes, they all don the same gray cloak to go outdoors. Upon investigation, these cloaks all have the same strange and unknown symbol sewn inside it.



People will of course have a mundane explanation to justify it (e.g.: “they come from a whole stock of identical cloaks that were bought from a travelling merchant for cheap”; or “our priest ordered us to never go outside of our homes at night without this cloak”).

87-88. All animals (whether birds, pets, livestock, or wild animals) entirely of white color are eventually found savagely slaughtered, with the same occult symbol burned on their cadaver.

89-90. Despite wearing hats, hoods, and such, all the villagers (whether men, women or children) will appear to be entirely bald. They will pretend it was necessary to get rid of an epidemic of louse. However, the village's idiot (who is also bald) claims that it's because removing the hair also removes the strange and ugly thoughts that become louder in their heads as their hair grow thicker on them.

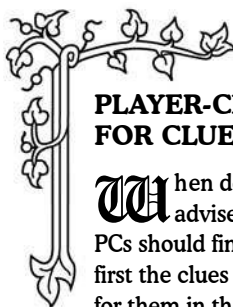
91-92. Some people who were alive and healthy the day before, are now found in the morning, their rotting corpse half eaten by rats and full of maggots, as if they had been dead for many days. So far it only happened to people who were alone outside, such as beggars or prostitutes waiting for a client.

93-94. Strange traces of claws that hunters cannot identify, have been found not only on the ground, but also on wooden doors and dead animals. Nobody ever saw who or what made them, but one person whose front door bears such a track, had a nightmare where he was pursued by a horrid monster, the night before his door got it. If followed, the tracks all vanish in the forest (or on the nearby mound, etc.).

95-96. At the local inn/tavern, a barmaid keeps asking many questions to the PCs and other strangers in the community, such as their age, if they have some family, if they ever heard of the old hermit on the hill, etc. If the PCs become suspicious, she will apologize and just tell them that she is naturally curious and gossiping.

97-98. The PCs will at times notice disgusting swarm of flies, of varying sizes. Oddly enough, they seem to plague only certain individuals (who strangely don't seem to care about them) and certain locations. In particular, one of these individuals and one of these locations seem to attract larger swarms of these flies.

99-00. There are many tracks and evidence of recent activities on a site of standing stones, though nobody is supposed to ever come here, and nobody will admit having done so. If followed, some of the tracks would lead in the direction of a lonely farm before fading away.



PLAYER-CHARACTERS SEARCHING FOR CLUES

When designing a chaos-cult adventure, the GM is advised to prepare in advance the clues that the PCs should find if they are to understand the plot. There is first the clues that will be found if the PCs actually search for them in the right place. They typically are: if the PCs ask the young shepherd they will learn this, and if they read the books in the monastery's library they will learn that. But the GM should also have clues that the PCs may learn (or miss) if they go around searching for rumors, witnesses, etc. The GM only needs the clues, not how exactly they may be found. Then, as the PCs go into taverns and such, speaking with the local population, eavesdropping on discussions, etc., use the following table to determine what they may learn.

Each PC who investigates makes a d20 roll to which is added any relevant modifier. Make one roll per evening of investigation, whatever may be the result of the precedent day. (Note: this table only applies to generic situations in which the cultists represent a hidden minority among the local population. Specific cases such as all of a village's inhabitants being cultists, would require a special treatment.)

d20	Result of Investigation
1	Retaliation
2-4	Dramatic event
5-8	Nothing (people are wary of strangers, or of the PCs)
9-12	Nothing (people don't know, or don't speak openly)*
13-16	Minor clue (1d4)*
17-19	Major clue (1)*
20	Major clue (1) + minor clues (1d4)

(*: Plus also gets 1d3 false rumors, if has failed a Wisdom saving throw [or vs. Spells].)

• **Modifier:** The various modifiers below can be added (or subtracted) to the roll, yet note that a natural roll of 1 on the d20 should be treated as a 1 (i.e., retaliation) despite any bonus, and a natural roll of 20 on the d20 should be treated as a 20 (i.e., get major and minor clues) despite any penalty. The modifiers are:

- 1) Charisma modifier.
- 2) Class: +2 bonus for cleric, bard, and thief; -2 penalty for barbarian.
- 3) Xenophobia: -4 penalty for obvious stranger (e.g. Cymri or Scot outside of their native lands).
- 4) Reputation: if any, the PC's local renown or infamy can bring a +2 to -2 modifier at GM's discretion.
- 5) Wrong allegiance: PCs who are known to be of the wrong allegiance (i.e., Yorkists vs. Lancastrians) suffer a -4 penalty, but only in places where this really counts.
- 6) Retry: +1 cumulative bonus per additional evening of investigation, though subject to particular limits: any roll of 5-8 cancels this bonus (as the locals are reluctant to speak); and the community's size will then cap this bonus (hamlet at +1, village at +3, town at +6, city at +9).

7) Good role-playing and clever ideas could be rewarded with a +1 to +4 bonus at GM's determination.

- **Retaliation:** The PC doesn't learn anything, but has furthermore angered some people. The PC is thus attacked 1d4 hours after s/he began investigating. This is most probably cultists who retaliate, or it stems from people who don't want the PC meddle in their business. The GM should have determined in advance what form it will take: assassins (or bandits), mercenaries, a group of cultists, some demon, a poisoning attempt, a supernatural attack, a local noble who doesn't want people making trouble on his domain, etc.

Note: The longer the PCs search, the chance for some retaliation augments: +1 per additional day and per PC who searched. So three PCs searching and asking, have a 1-9 chance of retaliation on the third day of search. This might be reduced or even cancelled, if the PCs were particularly discreet.

- **Dramatic event:** The PC doesn't learn anything, except that the cult has done something nasty again (e.g.: another victim found, another tomb desecrated, etc.). Alternately, the PC learns of another case that already happened, but that they were unaware of.

Note: A clever PC might try to use the event to find clues nonetheless, even if it isn't meant to. In such a case, finding clues would require to make a few successful dice rolls (e.g., Detection or Tracking skill checks), and use the Questioning NPCs part to interact with witnesses.

- **Nothing (people wary of the PCs):** The PC doesn't learn anything, either because s/he was particularly tactless in his/her communication attempts, or because people in this community are just distrustful of strangers and won't tell them anything (even if they are plagued by a chaos-cult). In any case, this will

make further communication attempts difficult, hence canceling any bonus stemming from investigating several days in a row (i.e.: see retry above).

- **Nothing (people don't know):** The PC doesn't learn anything of value; it might have been the wrong times and the wrong persons, and the PC might have been inefficient as well. Whatever the reason, the PC nonetheless heard some useless and probably misleading rumors (see below).

- **Clues (minor):** The PC gets a minor clue; that is: a secondary information that in itself cannot help the PCs discover the truth, but would complement another information, or could confirm an information that the PCs don't necessarily trust. Alternately, it would send the PC toward a GM predetermined clue (e.g.: "ask the shepherd as he certainly knows something"; or "go to the monastery's library as they have books that might tell you something").

- **Clues (major):** The PC learns an important information. This is typically some NPC who knows (or strongly and justly suspects) that someone is a cultist; who has seen some monsters or strange people go out of a location that actually happens to be the cult's headquarter; etc. Note unfortunately, that the major clue may also come with useless rumors.

- **False rumors:** If the population is willing to talk, the PCs will inevitably hear idiocies in addition to useful information. On a roll of 9 to 19, the PC has heard a few of them: s/he must make a Wisdom saving throw [or vs. Spell]. If successful the PC was wise enough to discern their uselessness and automatically discard (and probably forget) them; if failed, give 1d3 of the petty and useless rumors from the list p.37 to the player (who nonetheless remains free to believe them or not, even though the save was failed).





QUESTIONING NPCs (REACTION ROLLS AND ANSWERS)

When the PCs want to question particular individuals, the GM may use the following tables if said NPCs weren't created in advance. They will help the GM determine on the spot who will say what and to whom. So, if a PC picks-up a random peasant, bandit, etc., for questioning, the GM should first roll to determine if this NPC is a cultist or not. Then, for both cultists and non-cultists, there are two tables: Tables B1 and B2 indicate how cultists (or their allies) react (i.e., how well they deny being cultists) and then answer (i.e., what they exactly tell). Tables C1 and C2 indicate how non-cultists react (i.e., individual modifiers according to whom they talk to) and then answer (i.e., what they know and thus can tell). Note lastly that none of these tables are subject to any Charisma modifier (it is always but a straight 1d20 roll).

A. Is random NPC a cultist or not?

This table assumes that in most cases only a minority of people in a community are cultists. If an entire village's population would be members of a chaos-cult, of course don't roll.

d20	Cultist or non-cultist?
1	Is indeed a cultist. (Roll again 1d20: 1 = cultist has an obvious chaos mutation that cannot be hidden; 2-5 = cultist has a chaos mutation that could be noticed with an appropriate detection check; 6-11 = cultist has a chaos mutation that may be discovered only if carefully examined; 12-20 = cultist has no chaos mutation.)

2-3	Is not a cultist but is nonetheless one of their allies.
4-20	Is neither a cultist nor one of their allies.

B1. How a cultist (or cult ally) will react?

No reaction roll is necessary, as cultists will normally be hostile and/or fearful of those who hunt them down (especially clerics). Just they don't necessarily respond in a hostile manner. In fact they will generally try to lie as best they can, but are not always consummate liars.

d20	Cultist way of answering
1-3	Is so stupid that will betray him/herself despite trying to deny any cult association (e.g.: slips of the tongue, contradictory statements, etc.).
4-7	Is not a skillful liar, thus appears nervous, somewhat evasive, etc. (On a successful Wisdom save [or vs. Spell] the PCs might notice that their interlocutor doesn't tell the truth or at least hides something.)
8-12	Lies calmly and convincingly.
13-16	Appears aggressive, pretending to be offended or not having any time to lose with such questions; yet is not fool enough to suggest cult threats.
17-19	Is overtly hostile, suggesting threats for delving in matters better left alone, or wanting to put one's nose where it doesn't belong. But still denies any cult association or knowledge.
20	In an instant of panic will physically attack the PCs, screaming in the cult's deity's name.

B2. What a cultist (or cult ally) will tell?

d20	Cultist's answer
1	Unexpectedly confesses being a cultist, probably because membership has become intolerable, or maybe has become half insane, aggressively arrogant, etc.
2-10	Pretends to know nothing (and not listen to rumors).
11-16	Says that rumors are lies, and that there is no nearby chaos cult.
17-20	Proposes some false information to mislead the PCs.

C1. How a non-cultist will react?

Questioned NPCs might trust or distrust, or dislike those who would question them. Hence, make a reaction roll to determine the NPC's reaction. Yet, not all NPCs will react the same; some are distrustful of authorities, when others are more than willing to say anything to a cleric. Thus roll 1d20 below to know about specific factors that would influence the NPC's response:

d20	Non-cultist reaction modifier
1-4	Is afraid to speak. (Any official, churchman or cleric gets a -2 penalty to their reaction roll; then, other people are never told anything.)
5-8	Even if not a cultist has a profound distrust of authorities. (Any official, churchman or cleric gets a -4 penalty to their reaction roll; then, crownors are never told anything.)

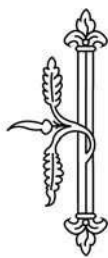
9-12	Can speak, but doesn't speak lightly to whomever would ask (i.e., make a normal roll).
13-16	Will only speak to the rightful authorities. (Non-religious officials get a +2 bonus to their reaction roll; churchmen get a +4 bonus; and clerics are immediately spoken to.)
17-20	Will only speak in exchange for money. (If paid sufficiently will tell anything s/he knows.)

C2. What a non-cultist will tell?

d20	Non-cultist answer
1	False information (deliberate lie). NPC typically wants to accuse someone he/she doesn't like for vengeance purposes, hence will try to convince that this person is a cultist.
2-3	False information (mistake). NPC doesn't remember well, or misunderstood what was said by someone else, etc., yet sincerely believes it. (This is a real information, but with a false component; unlike a useless and unrelated rumor.)
4-9	Petty and useless rumor. NPC repeats what he has heard, which is either but vague or just idiotic.
10-14	Knows nothing. NPC has no idea and didn't hear anything about a cult and its members.
14-19	Minor useful clue. NPC knows of a secondary information that in itself cannot help the PCs discover the truth, but would complement another information, or could confirm an information that the PCs don't necessarily trust.
20	Major information. NPC knows (or strongly and justly suspects) that someone is a cultist; has seen some monsters or strange people go out of a location that actually happens to be the cult's headquarter; etc.



PETTY AND USELESS RUMORS



When the PCs investigate, they hopefully will get some genuine and useful information. Unfortunately, there are always some people who will tell but idiocies for whatever reason (e.g.: are stupid and superstitious, attempt at misleading, mistook a gnarled tree in the forest for a demon, etc.). If the GM is short of ideas, the list below may be of use (roll 1d20):

1. An important person in the community whose name I cannot reveal, has made a pact with a werewolf. *[And indeed s/he cannot name the person, as in fact s/he doesn't know who it is, and likewise doesn't know what sort of pact it may be.]*

2. I know someone who has seen blue lights dancing over the cemetery during the full moon last month. *[That person in fact never saw it by him/herself, just heard it from someone else.]*

3. There are 32 sinners in the village, who will have to answer to the Unconquered Sun for their deeds before they leave this world. I don't know who they are, but old John does. *[Old John will tell that there are only 17 sinners, and also that he doesn't know their name, though Aunt Marcy probably knows...]*

4. Maureen, she is not a bad person, but she speaks of things she doesn't know about, out of fear. She has spoken about demons that would lurk in the woods nearby. And now people are afraid, and they are thinking and speaking about demons. This is why demons are now prowling the village's outskirts, you know, because when people think too much about demons, they eventually come to them.

5. This was ten years ago. When her husband died, Alice *[i.e., a widow recently deceased from an illness]...* well she could not stay alone you know. But she was not pretty if you understand what I mean, and she smelled bad too. She went frolicking in the woods. And then she had these children. And now they are adults. You know: those born from the devil, they grow twice as fast as normal people! They lurk in the nearby woods, near the lake. Jacob *[who actually is a drunkard with bad eyesight]* told me that he saw them: they have a yellow skin and long teeth, and their feet are dogs' paws! They are up to no good I can tell you!

6. Our priest, he doesn't want to admit it to not scare the village, but he has been performing rituals of protection and exorcisms at night. He knows! He knows what is happening but doesn't want to tell us. This began just after Edwin's horse died two weeks ago. *[The priest will deny this tale.]*

7. It is said that an old witch came to the village twice lately. First disguised as this minstrel who spent a week here last month; and then again two days ago, the monk who was heading to the north... well, he wasn't a monk: it was her. She is searching for a pure child to abduct and turn into another witch before she dies! *[If pressed cannot tell how s/he got this information; then if pressed harder will admit that s/he doesn't like strangers and witches...]*

8. The smith's wife: her baby didn't die of natural causes. You should dig up his cadaver. You would see the "mark" on his body... I would have denounced her, but the smith: he is a violent man. After all, all of this is not my business. *[The baby died of an unfortunate, yet natural malformation, not from a chaos mutation.]*

9. Everyone knows, though they don't want to speak. What do they know? Well, they never told me, but I know that they know...

10. When Martin returned from war, he told me that the sheriff's son should have never returned. He was impaled by a lance during a combat, and his body fell into the river. But then, two days later he was there again, in perfect health. He was accompanied by a huge black dog who smelled of fire. He didn't bring the dog with him in the castle, but regularly brings him food at night behind the old ruined tower. *[Martin will indeed recount the story, unless asked by a cleric or some such, in which case he will provide a lame explanation about the story told to him by someone else...]*

11. In ancient times a druid uttered a curse on the village. All the woes that happened lately are due to this curse. *[Yet note that the village didn't exist back then.]*

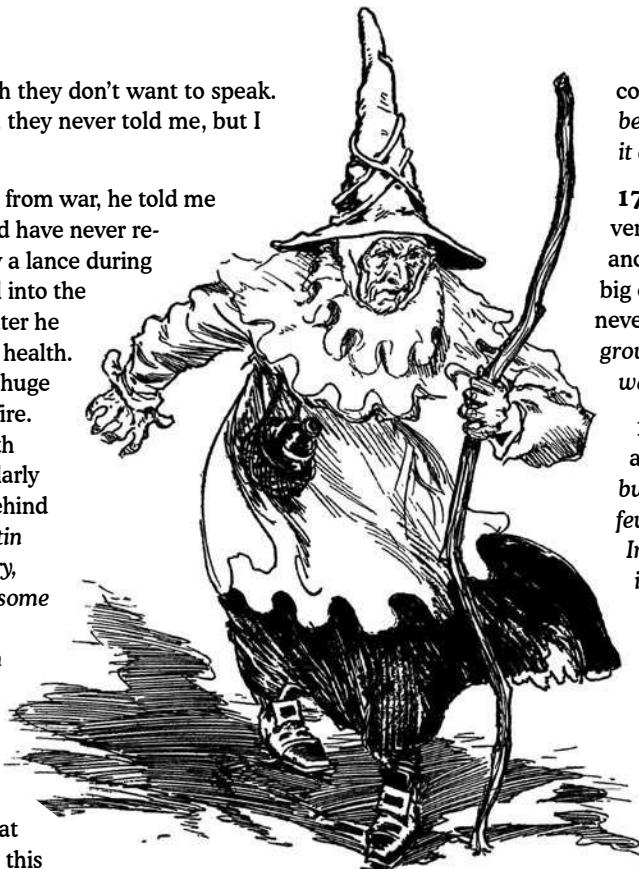
12. Uncle Jack has seen a ghost in the woods. *[Uncle Jack never told this, but he told aunt Jenny that he saw a vagabond there.]*

13. The men of Ravensbridge *[a village 12 miles to the north]* have made a pact with the devil to get better crops and more milk from their cows. *[Information coming from a notoriously jealous member of the community.]*

14. I have heard that the ghost of King Arthur is claiming Albi-on again, with the help of twelve knights raised from the grave. *[A minstrel's tale that turned into frightening news of impending doom in the minds of dumb idiots.]*

15. There is a band of brigands that hides in the forest south to the vale of Harling. Their chief is in league with a demon. In fact, during their ceremonies he dresses up in yellow garb and pretends to be the king of outlaws and that he will someday overthrow the king and establish a reign of terror for a thousands years. *[S/he just heard it from a mentally deranged individual that is in the care of the local priest. This individual's condition has gone worse lately, so nobody can communicate with him any longer. It is unlikely that this person is/was a cultist though...]*

16. People have forgotten it, but there used to be a demon terrorizing the region in former times. Saint Ignatius locked it in a magical prison 20 feet deep under the church. So long as people pray and remain pious, the demon won't be able to escape. However, nowadays people have bad thoughts and only pay lip service to the Unconquered Sun. So the demon has awakened in its prison, and is working to get free. He is sending more thoughts of evil deeds to those who would be prone to listen to them. This is why all of these things are happening. At least, I continue to pray faithfully and will not allow this demon to



corrupt me. *[A few people share this ludicrous belief, and nobody knows from where or whom it originated. The priest will refute it however.]*

17. They used to say that Samuel had inadvertently awakened a ghost from its grave. An ancient grave he had found in his field, under a big old oak. But Samuel is dead now. But ghosts never die as they said. *[“They” is a reference to a group of farmers who met at the tavern when he was young, hence a long time ago.]*

18. Irina is a witch, and she certainly knows a lot more about all of this. *[Irina is no witch, but did seduce (for money) the husbands of a few women who eventually learned about it. Irina threatened to cast the evil eye at them if they would dare do something against her. Apparently these women believed her and subsequently left her alone. This didn't discourage them of gossiping though...]*

19. Some monstrously deformed animals have been seen in the hills. A man-sized bat with a human face and red eyes was even spotted near the old standing stone. *[Another petty tale of terror born in the tavern from unknown parents.]*

20. I don't know if it is related or not, but there used to be some dead gone out of their grave near the village of Barnsfield some thirty years ago. *[Heard it once in a tavern, long ago, and s/he just doesn't know where the village of Barnsfield is located anyway.]*



EVENTS AND ENCOUNTERS

The GM should prepare a few encounters and combats. Some of them will happen no matter what; others will happen (or not) as a consequence to the PCs' investigations. Here are suggestions for the GMs who are short of ideas:

- Attacked by animals possessed by a demon or evil spirit.
- Attacked by undead, fiends or lycanthropes.
- Attacked by the cult's pet monster (e.g.: a troll).
- Attacked by assassins / bandits in league with the cult.
- Attacked by mercenaries hired by the cultists.
- Attacked by the cultists themselves.
- Attacked by a manipulated mob of peasants.
- Attacked by supernatural means (e.g.: needles in a witchcraft wax doll) which origin remains out of reach.
- A suspect surreptitiously disappears (is either killed or flees if given the opportunity).
- Encounter with a forester / old hermit / poacher / etc. who has seen things.
- Encounter with a former victim who seemed to have disappeared, but in fact remained hidden out of fear of the cultists.
- The villagers begin to suspect the PCs of being the cultists (after having been manipulated).

- Yet another cadaver of a sacrificial victim is discovered.
- Yet another person turns insane.
- Yet another holy place, tomb, etc., is desecrated.

Note that it is often better to describe a specific environment and flesh out the situation, when running an encounter, especially if the adventure is not going to feature any “dungeon crawl.” Lets say for example, that the PCs have been drawn to a back alley by people who want to ambush or scare them. You might just tell the players that when their PCs reach the back alley’s end, they are attacked by people who were waiting in ambush. Or you might want to dress up the encounter: First, upon entering the back alley they notice an open window on some house’s second floor, and a woman looking down through it. If they try to speak to the woman, she behaves as if she hadn’t seen nor heard them, and closes the window. Then, the GM should describe the alley and the walls, buildings, etc., indicating shut windows, nooks, barrels, rats, etc. Then, when the PCs reach its end, they see a scroll tied to a stone in the middle of the alley, seemingly waiting for them. This a threatening message (and badly written at that) addressed to the PCs and telling them that they should flee or die. Whether they read it or not is beyond the point; you are trying to build an atmosphere before the foes attack.

SOME NPC CULTISTS

Generally, when designing a chaos-cult adventure the GM will but create the cult’s leader(s) and a couple of important, secondary NPCs. All other cultists are then hand-waved, getting but the same generic basic statistics (such as all of them being zero level commoners). Nonetheless, you never know what might happen during an adventure. Sometimes the PCs will want to get in touch with a couple of those insignificant cultists, for whatever reason. If this happens, the descriptions and stat-blocks provided below will help you generate on the fly any such cultist. For each category (Peasants, Villains, Burghers, Priests, and Nobles)

only four NPCs are provided, so only use them when

important interactions and lengthy questionings with a basic cultist are considered.

Necessary Disclaimer: The portraits presented below are strictly fictitious! They are not meant to disparage any real person. Names were mostly taken from the list proposed in the Dark Albion rulebook (p.130). If per chance, someone of that name truly exists(ed) in real life, it must be understood that it would be purely coincidental (and involuntary)!

1—PEASANTS

• **Edwin One Arm:** A sturdy man in his mid-twenties, with brown hair and but a plain visage with a slightly brutish expression. Edwin was conscripted in the local noble’s army for some time. He was gravely wounded to the left arm during a battle, despite having made proper prayers and pious vows to the Unconquered Sun before going to war. As he went back home Edwin thought that the Unconquered Sun was probably

not deserving his worship if He could not protect him in battle. Thus, when a few months later he got the opportunity to join a chaos cult, he didn’t hesitate. He then lost his left arm as due to a chaos mutation suffered during his ceremony of initiation. Edwin was told that he must prove he is willing to sacrifice to the deity/demon-god, before being granted stupendous gifts when he will have served well. Edwin keeps telling that he lost his arm on the battlefield, and tries to convince himself that it is indeed the case. The man makes a poor living as a shepherd, and cannot but wonder if belonging to the cult will ever grant him what he was promised by its leader.

• **Gruf:** A 24 years old, tough and smelly guy dressed in rags, skilled in woodcraft and who survives mostly through petty theft and poaching. A short-sighted dude of low ambitions, Gruf joined the cult because he was given the opportunity and thought it would get him “some advantages.” Fear of what could befall him if he betrayed the cult has kept him in line so far, but Gruf is only truly loyal to himself, and doesn’t care for anybody else. This selfish man of unpleasant temperament has little interest in the cult’s beliefs, and probably doesn’t care about the deity worshipped. However, his evil bent certainly makes him fit in the cult perfectly.

• **Lowry:** A mid forties plump woman with tattered clothes, she always worked hard on the farm, so the cult is her only escape from a dull daily life. She was inducted into the cult by her older sister (now deceased) when she was sixteen. She always remained extremely careful with everything pertaining to the cult, so only got a witch mark (on her neck, that is thus always covered in some way, not just by her long hair), and nobody would suspect her of being a cultist. Now, if the cult’s existence was to be threatened in some way, she would do everything in her power to protect it, though she would be more prone to use poison on enemies than attacking them up front. Lowry has but contempt for the Church and its “lazy” priests who live off the hard-working classes.



• **Vlof the Mad:** A rather young man with a wild unkempt appearance and an everlasting stupid grin on his face. He wanted to be called “Wolf” but was never able to speak clearly, so whenever he says his name, it sounds as “Vlof.” And thus, everybody took on the habit of calling him Vlof. This idiot has a very limited intellect, never says anything unless asked, and most of the time is only able to chuckle daftly rather than give any intelligible answer. He can understand simple orders though, and never speaks about the cult (although it’s doubtful he could say anything comprehensible about it). In fact, it’s not even sure that he truly understands the implications of belonging to the cult. Vlof has not yet gained any mutation. In his daily life he is a farm-labourer, helping his employer in various (though always simple) tasks; he has no more family of his own.

2—VILLAINS

• **Bones:** A hideous man of indeterminate age, full of mutations: totally hairless, skinny, with a chalky gray skin, and icy cold to the touch. This abomination was born amidst the cult from a lineage of incestuous cultists. Three older brothers and sisters were born so flawed, that they had to be killed at birth. A fourth was so beautiful that it was considered a better idea to sacrifice her on the altar to please their dark patron, than let her live. Bones was the only one to be spared. He got his name from his cadaverous aspect. As he would be quickly slain if discovered, Bones had to spend his whole life hidden in the cult's lair, and never saw the light of the sun (which for these insane people, is considered a blessing). Bones is furthermore mentally unstable, and knows almost nothing of the ways of the world. He will remain but a menial servant and cultist all of his life.

• **Jordan:** A modest cobbler in his early forties, with average physique and poor clothing, and who is always scratching himself because of fleas. When he was a child, he was raped by a paedophile priest. Jordan told his parents who then complained to the Church hierarchy. As a result Jordan was direly punished for having uttered such infamous lies about a respected ecclesiastic. Needless to say that Jordan kept a strong resentment toward the Church all of his life after that. Yet, what could the poor man do against them, and what could he do against the priest who died before Jordan could exact a vengeance? Nothing. Hate toward the Church and "its foul lackeys" is what eventually made Jordan join the chaos cult years later. He is a dedicated cultist and firm believer entirely due to this hate.

• **Joyce the Harlot:** An ageing prostitute, probably in her late forties under the heavy make-up, and whose average beauty is but withering. Fortunately, Joyce has got the Pheromones chaos mutation, so men still find her attractive, where they wouldn't otherwise. This cultist doesn't appear evil nor threatening at first sight, yet every time she gives birth to a child, she then throws it in the nearest river without any remorse. The cult's leader regularly abuses Joyce, and confiscates most of the money she earns with her body. She doesn't dare opposing him however, and will transfer her anger on whomever may threaten the cult, reproaching them the abuses suffered at the hand of the cult's leader as if they were the actual perpetrators.

• **Kreck Nasty Fingers:** A petty thug born twenty years ago from a prostitute in a nearby brothel. He grew up in the town's streets partaking in criminal activities. Three years ago he was caught by the authorities and was due to be hanged. But then a hooded man visited him before his execution, proposing him to join a secret organisation in exchange for his freedom (plus promises of riches

and power). Of course Kreck accepted, and thus joined the organisation for which he performed nasty deeds. Then, as he eventually proved loyal to the organisation, Kreck was inducted into the chaos cult. As a result for joining it, he got a Lunar spirit (see moderate mutation: Haunting Intelligence) during a most awful ceremony. Kreck always remains quiet and silent, but vice and wickedness can be clearly seen in his eyes (especially as it is intensified by the spirit haunting him).

3—BURGHERS

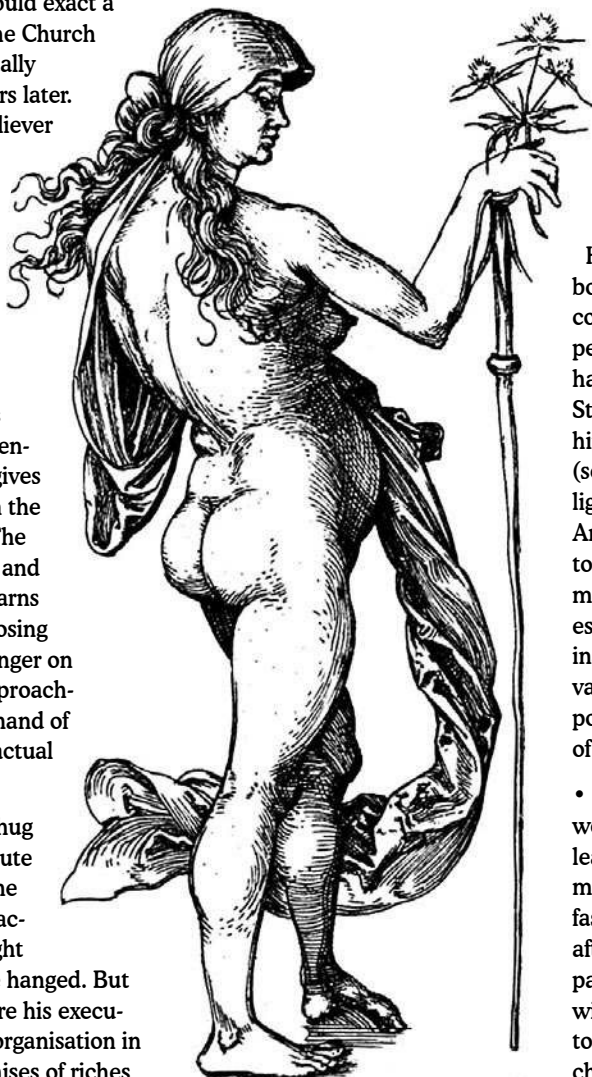
• **Gillian Strackley:** A totally vain woman in her thirties, who has a viper's tongue both figuratively speaking and as a chaos mutation. Rather tall with long blonde hair, she could be considered physically attractive if it were not for a permanent expression of disdain and disgust on her face. The only thing she really cares for, is to constantly gossip and criticize/disparage others (including her husband and so-called friends), except for the cult's leader, as she still retains some sense of self-preservation. Her husband is a rich merchant who totally neglects her, as she is so tiresome to listen to. Her husband is not himself a cultist, but has regular business dealings with the cult (it's unclear whether he knows about the cult's real nature).

• **Peter Layton:** A pathetic-looking man in his mid-forties, slightly malodorous, with a crooked nose and pale skin. When he was young Peter strongly desired to go to Cambridge to

become a magister. Unfortunately, his father preferred to use his excess money to build a beautiful tomb for his future death rather than pay the tuition of an expensive university. Hence, Peter had no other choice but to forfeit his dreams of magical powers, and get a job to make a living.

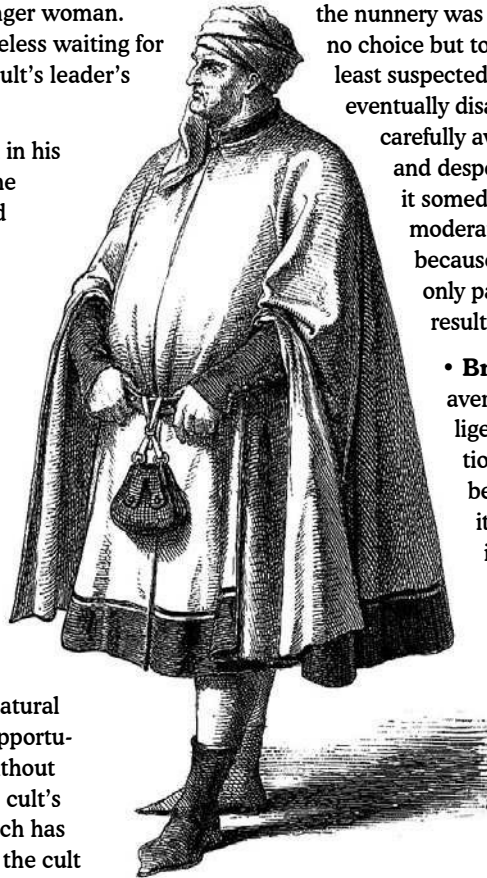
He thus found a modest employment in a bookshop, hoping that someday he might come by occult books. It eventually happened many years later when he got his hands on a dark treatise of demonology. Study and use of this book eventually got him to be possessed by a Mercurial spirit (see moderate mutations: Haunting Intelligence) obsessing him over occultism. And then, the spirit eventually led him to join the chaos cult. Peter likes nothing more than speak at length about dark esoteric subjects, and generally sounds inane and insane. He also sees himself as vastly superior to the common rabble (i.e., populace) who is uneducated and devoid of intellectual ambitions.

• **Joanna Hartwell:** This fair-looking woman in her late thirties, outwardly leads but a normal life as a spouse and mother. Yet, she has a secret vice of being fascinated by evil and transgression. Thus, after her marriage she quickly began to partake into adultery, until becoming the wicked mistress of a man who revealed to be the cult's leader. In fact, of her three children, only one was fathered by her



husband, the other two were sired by the cult's leader. Joanna then got the stimulating idea of having her husband being murdered, so she could become the cult's leader's wife. However, in the meantime the latter lost any interest in Joanna, turning his attention toward another, younger woman. Joanna renounced her plan, but is nonetheless waiting for an opportunity of avenging herself of the cult's leader's new lover.

• **Bertram Pierce:** This nondescript man in his mid-thirties, is a self-serving merchant of the basest sort. Saying of Bertram that he could sell his mother for money, is but an understatement. He first poisoned his parents to inherit their business, maneuvering so his younger brother and his sisters wouldn't get anything. Unfortunately, Bertram proved to be an incompetent merchant who furthermore constantly tried to cheat his customers, which eventually led him into bankruptcy. He thus poisoned his brother and his family, so he could inherit their shop. However, this didn't improve Bertram's business skills in any way, and it appeared that he would soon face bankruptcy again. This was when Bertram thought of praying to unknown demons in the hope of getting their supernatural assistance. As a result, fate gave him the opportunity to join the chaos cult, which he did without hesitation. Bertram is now in charge of the cult's business dealings, and this ungrateful wretch has quickly taken on the habit of stealing from the cult too (although he does it cautiously).



• **Sister Jane:** A fat woman of forty with a greasy skin, she was repudiated by her husband under pretext of an alleged infidelity, and thereafter sent to a nunnery against her will.

Unknown to her and those who had sent them here however, the nunnery was secretly converted to a chaos cult. Jane had no choice but to eventually join, when she realized (or at least suspected) that the nuns who didn't want to convert eventually disappeared mysteriously. Jane thus converted, carefully avoiding to ask herself any moral questions, and desperately hoping she would not have to regret it someday. Jane is now a self-effacing cultist, with moderate commitment to the cult, but following it because she sees no other alternative. In fact she only pays lip service to the cult, and maybe as a result, has suffered no chaos mutation so far.

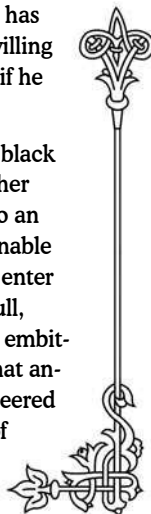
• **Brother Lionel:** A mid-thirties bald man of average size and look, of much limited intelligence but incredible and insufferable pretentiousness. He entered a monastery, intent on becoming a scholar and theologian. However, it quickly appeared that Lionel had little interest in studying and learning, instead preferring to revel in his own ludicrous ideas and superstitions. He believed that he already knew better than whatever his teachers would tell him. He finally decided to flee the monastery after having been punished several times for his arrogance and laziness. He then traveled across Albion, posing as a sage and boring people to death with his idiocies. This until he met with the cult's leader, whose

revelations fascinated him. Lionel had found his vocation: he has become a staunch student and defender of the cult's doctrine since then.

4—PRIESTS

• **Father John:** This fifty years old man with gray hair, an unpleasant smile and a foul breath, is a former priest who has an addiction to both alcohol and sex. After a terrible scandal when he was younger, the Church sent him to a remote monastery to live in penitence. There, as he was unable to satiate his urges, Father John finally implored "any god" that would grant him wine and women. As he tirelessly (and secretly) implored "whomever would hear and answer" times and again, he eventually got vivid dreams in which a spirit gave him advice for leaving the monastery and join the cult. Father John has got the hermaphrodite mutation, and as a result is willing to have sex with any gender (and then with animals if he can't have it with humans).

• **Sister Helena:** Helena is a 35 years old nun with black hair and average traits. There is a witch mark under her right arm. Helena was to be married by her parents to an old merchant that disgusted her. She fled, but then unable to take care of herself in this harsh world, decided to enter a convent. Life there proved soon to be intolerably dull, notwithstanding the abuse suffered at the hand of an embittered mother superior. So when Helena discovered that another nun belonged to a secret chaos cult, she volunteered to join. She now slightly regrets her choice because of what she has come to do in the cult's name, but it's too late to desist.



5—NOBLES

• **Marianna:** A most suave and charming lady with red curly hair, in her early thirties. She is witty and well educated. Men usually feel attracted to her, and she knows how to repel those she doesn't like in a respectful and kind way. This woman has two faces however. When attending the cult's ceremonies, she becomes an odious and merciless psychopath who revels in cruelty and baseness. She never speaks about the cult and its atrocities, even to other members, but is nonetheless a fervent fanatic driven by a desire for evil. Yet, outside of the cult nobody could tell (although her aura strongly radiates of chaos). Marianna has got two small horns at the top of her temples, but manages to keep them well hidden under her thick, beautiful hair.

• **Humphrey Dranford:** A tall and thin man in his mid thirties, with well trimmed brown hair and beard, and a haughty demeanor. Born the third son of a minor noble, Humphrey wouldn't inherit land and title, and wouldn't get any upper position within the priesthood. He was condemned to fend off for himself. However, Humphrey was vain and lazy, and thus remained in his father's (then brother's) castle with little opportunities to make a fortune. He joined the chaos cult as a mean to become rich, but the only thing the cult helped him achieve, was to get two persons who had offended him to be

sacrificed on the cult's altar. Yet, belonging to a chaos cult gives Humphrey a sense of superiority that helps him alleviate his frustration at remaining poor and subservient to his older brother. Note otherwise that Humphrey has been attributed a demonic familiar (i.e., see severe mutations: Familiar) in the form of a black stallion (i.e., horse).

• **Mildred Trumpington:** An old embittered woman, mean and ugly. Mildred seems to be jealous of everybody, and spends most of her time trying to make others' lives miserable (especially young and fair women). Almost everybody hates Mildred, but as she is the current lord's mother, people wisely prefer to wait for her natural death than go for a more expeditious method of getting rid of her. When her son (the current lord) was younger, he was in love with a beautiful damsel (of noble origin). Of course this triggered Mildred's jealousy and wickedness, so she secretly poisoned her, and then arranged for her son to marry a much less attractive woman from another noble family. Mildred's body has suffered various mutations (goat legs, scaly skin, feathers on the ass, various tumors, etc.), but she can easily conceal them under her clothing.

• **Gerard Morecotte:** An average man in his mid twenties, with short black hair and a thin mustache. Gerard is a minor knight of mediocre skills but insufferable arrogance. He is obnoxious with all people who are of a lesser social station than himself (thus with practically everybody), and incredibly obsequious with all the nobles from whom he could expect a favor, promotion, etc. Then, another aspect of Gerard's personality is his untrustworthiness: his only loyalty goes to himself, and with the rose war going on will change sides and alliances as soon as will appear convenient. He could likewise betray the cult easily, if he wasn't afraid of supernatural retributions.



NPC STAT-BLOCKS

Just in case the GM would prefer to roll dice to determine a cultist's class and level, some tables are proposed below. The five classes are drawn from FH&W, but these NPC classes are generic enough so the stat-blocks given afterwards could be used with most OSR games very easily. Even if they don't follow the same TaAC0 or saving-throws progressions as the classes from other OSR games, this shouldn't disturb anything and the players probably won't notice.

These NPC classes are: cultist (i.e., a demon's servant who begins to get spells at 2nd level), fighting-man, magic-user, professional (i.e., a skill oriented class), and thug (i.e., a cross between a thief and warrior). Then, a zero-level NPC doesn't have any class, but might have a couple of professional skills. Note that in the context of this book, a cultist (i.e., a follower of a chaos-cult) is not necessarily of the Cultist class.

PEASANTS Classes & Levels (1d100)

01-50	Zero-level commoner	83-88	Professional* (2nd lvl.)
51-55	Cultist (1st lvl.)	89-91	Professional* (3rd lvl.)
56-65	Fighting-man (1st lvl.)	92-97	Thug (1st lvl.)
66-70	Fighting-man (2nd lvl.)	98-00	Thug (2nd lvl.)
71-82	Professional* (1st lvl.)	(*: farmer, forester, etc.)	

VILLAINS Classes & Levels (1d100)

01-50	Zero-level commoner	80-83	Professional* (2nd lvl.)
51-55	Cultist (1st lvl.)	84-92	Thug (1st lvl.)
56-65	Fighting-man (1st lvl.)	93-97	Thug (2nd lvl.)
66-70	Fighting-man (2nd lvl.)	98-00	Thug (3rd lvl.)
71-79	Professional* (1st lvl.)	(*: laborer, scoundrel, etc.)	

BURGHERS Classes & Levels (1d100)

01-50	Zero-level commoner	74-76	Magic-user (2nd lvl.)
51-55	Cultist (1st lvl.)	77-88	Professional* (1st lvl.)
56-63	Fighting-man (1st lvl.)	89-96	Professional* (2nd lvl.)
64-68	Fighting-man (2nd lvl.)	97-00	Professional* (3rd lvl.)
69-73	Magic-user (1st lvl.)	(*: artisan, merchant, etc.)	

PRIESTS Classes & Levels (1d100)

01-48	Zero-level commoner	78-82	Magic-user (1st lvl.)
49-60	Cultist (1st lvl.)	83-91	Professional* (1st lvl.)
61-68	Cultist (2nd lvl.)	92-87	Professional* (2nd lvl.)
69-72	Cultist (3rd lvl.)	98-00	Professional* (3rd lvl.)
73-77	Fighting-man (1st lvl.)	(*: ecclesiastic, scholar)	

NOBLES Classes & Levels (1d100)

01-40	Zero-level commoner	77-80	Magic-user (2nd lvl.)
41-46	Cultist (1st lvl.)	81-82	Magic-user (3rd lvl.)
47-58	Fighting-man (1st lvl.)	83-91	Professional* (1st lvl.)
59-66	Fighting-man (2nd lvl.)	92-97	Professional* (2nd lvl.)
67-70	Fighting-man (3rd lvl.)	98-00	Professional* (3rd lvl.)
71-76	Magic-user (1st lvl.)	(*: courtier, magistrate)	

ZERO-LEVEL COMMONER (0 lvl.)

1 HD (d4) [Hit-points: avg.: 2; max.: 4]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Skills = +2 [or 40%] in 1 to 4 skills; Saves = 18; [Str9, Dex11, Con11, Int9, Wis9, Cha9]; Morale 7; XP = 14.

CULTIST (1st lvl.)

1 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 4; max.: 6]; AC= 12 [or AC 8]; Initiative = 1d6+4 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d6 (weapon); No spells yet; Saves = 17; [Str9, Dex10, Con11, Int10, Wis10, Cha10]; Morale 9; XP = 28.

- spells: none.

CULTIST (2nd lvl.)

2 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 7; max.: 12]; AC= 12 [or AC 8]; Initiative = 1d6+4 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d6 (weapon); Spells of 2nd lvl cultist; Saves = 16; [Str9, Dex10, Con11, Int10, Wis11, Cha10]; Morale 10; XP = 78.

- spells (1): 1st—*Cause fear* (or *Command*).

CULTIST (3rd lvl.)

3 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 11; max.: 18]; AC= 13 [or AC 7]; Initiative = 1d6+4 [or +0]; BtH: +1 [or TaAC0 19]; Attack = 1d6 (weapon); Spells of 3rd lvl cultist; Saves = 15; [Str10, Dex10, Con11, Int11, Wis12, Cha11]; Morale 11; XP = 140.

- spells (2): 1st—*Cause fear*, *Cause light wounds*.

FIGHTING-MAN (1st lvl.)

1 HD (d8) [Hit-points: avg.: 6; max.: 9]; AC= 15 [or AC 5]; Initiative = 1d6+5 [or +0]; BtH: +2 [or TaAC0 18]; Attack = 1d8+2 (weapon + specialization); Saves = 17; [Str12, Dex10, Con13, Int9, Wis10, Cha9]; Morale 11; XP = 37.

FIGHTING-MAN (2nd lvl.)

2 HD (d8) [Hit-points: avg.: 11; max.: 18]; AC= 15 [or AC 5]; Initiative = 1d6+5 [or +0]; BtH: +4 [or TaAC0 16]; Attack = 1d8+3 (weapon + specialization); Saves = 16; [Str13, Dex11, Con13, Int10, Wis11, Cha10]; Morale 12; XP = 102.

FIGHTING-MAN (3rd lvl.)

3 HD (d8) [Hit-points: avg.: 17; max.: 27]; AC= 15 [or AC 5]; Initiative = 1d6+5 [or +0]; BtH: +5 [or TaAC0 15]; Attack = 1d8+3 (weapon + specialization); Saves = 15; [Str14, Dex12, Con13, Int10, Wis11, Cha12]; Morale 13; XP = 185.

MAGIC-USER (1st lvl.)

1 HD (d4) [Hit-points: avg.: 2; max.: 4]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Spells of 1st lvl mage; Saves = 17; [Str9, Dex11, Con11, Int13, Wis11, Cha10]; Morale 7; XP = 27.

- Spells (1): 1st—*Charm person* (or *Magic-missile*, or *Sleep*).

MAGIC-USER (2nd lvl.)

2 HD (d4) [Hit-points: avg.: 5; max.: 8]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Spells of 2nd lvl mage; Saves = 16; [Str9, Dex11, Con11, Int13, Wis12, Cha10]; Morale 7; XP = 72.

- Spells (2): 1st—*Charm person* (or *Magic-missile*, *Sleep*).

MAGIC-USER (3rd lvl.)

3 HD (d4) [Hit-points: avg.: 7; max.: 12]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Spells of 3rd lvl mage; Saves = 15; [Str9, Dex11, Con11, Int14, Wis13, Cha11]; Morale 7; XP = 130.

- Spells (2/1): 1st—*Charm person* (or *Magic-missile*), *Sleep*; 2nd—*Invisibility* (or *Web*).

PROFESSIONAL (1st lvl.)

1 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 4; max.: 6]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Skills = +3 [or 45%] in 2 to 8 skills; Saves = 17; [Str9, Dex10, Con11, Int10, Wis11, Cha10]; Morale 8; XP = 28.

PROFESSIONAL (2nd lvl.)

2 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 7; max.: 12]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Skills = +4 [or 50%] in 2 to 8 skills; Saves = 16; [Str9, Dex10, Con11, Int12, Wis11, Cha11]; Morale 9; XP = 78.

PROFESSIONAL (3rd lvl.)

3 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 11; max.: 18]; AC= 10 [or AC 10]; Initiative = 1d6+2 [or +0]; BtH: +1 [or TaAC0 19]; Attack = 1d4 (weapon); Skills = +6 [or 60%] in 2 to 8 skills; Saves = 15; [Str9, Dex10, Con11, Int13, Wis12, Cha12]; Morale 9; XP = 140.

THUG (1st lvl.)

1 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 4; max.: 6]; AC= 13 [or AC 7]; Initiative = 1d6+5 [or +0]; BtH: +0 [or TaAC0 20]; Attack = 1d8 (weapon); Backstab +4/x2; Skills = +3 [or 45%] to Climb and Stealth; Saves = 17; [Str11, Dex12, Con11, Int9, Wis11, Cha6]; Morale 9; XP = 28.

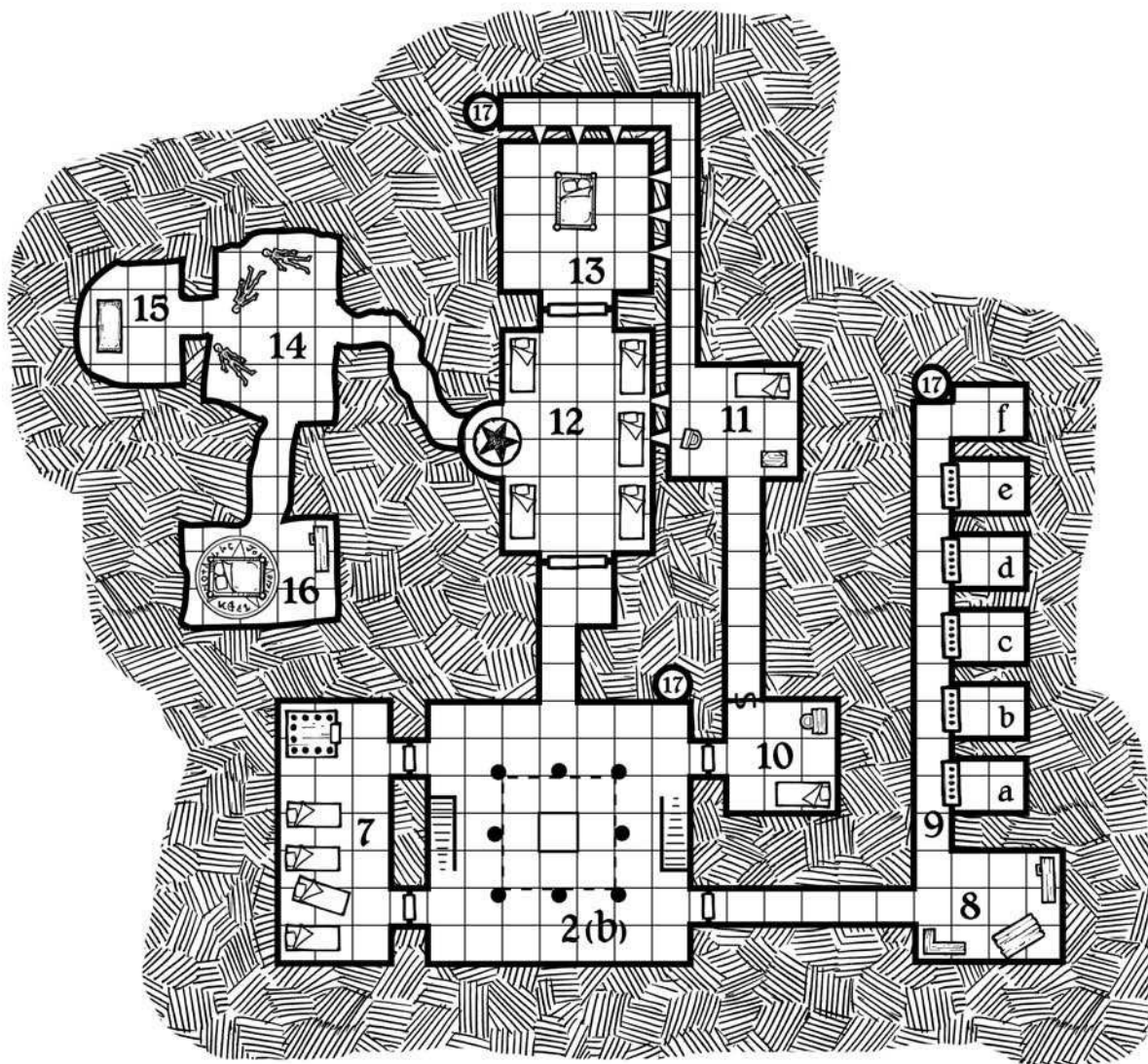
THUG (2nd lvl.)

2 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 7; max.: 12]; AC= 13 [or AC 7]; Initiative = 1d6+5 [or +0]; BtH: +1 [or TaAC0 19]; Attack = 1d8 (weapon); Backstab +4/x2; Skills = +4 [or 50%] to Climb and Stealth; Saves = 16; [Str12, Dex13, Con11, Int9, Wis11, Cha8]; Morale 10; XP = 78.

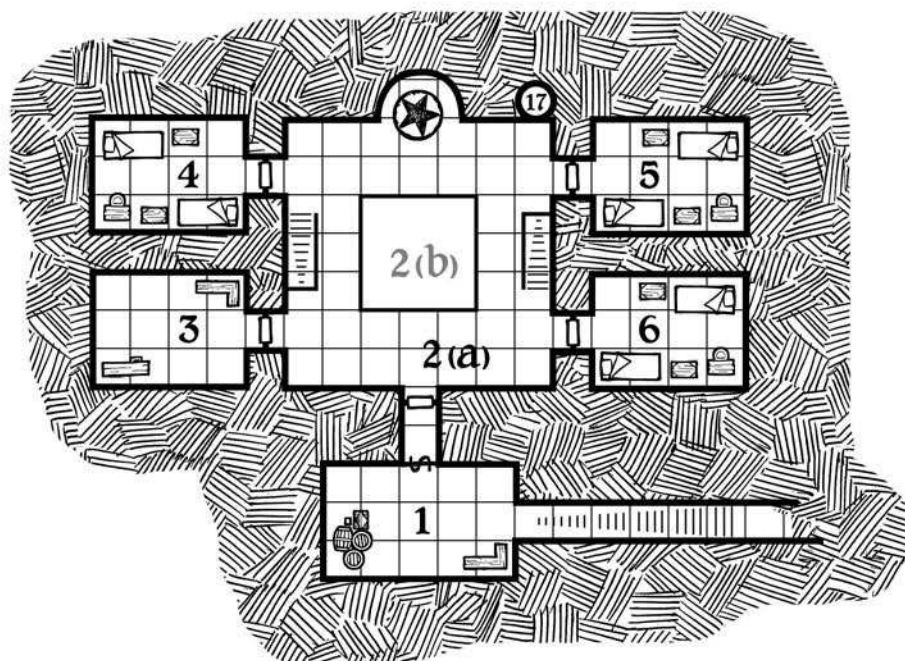
THUG (3rd lvl.)

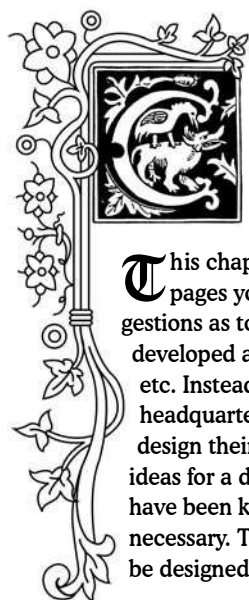
3 HD (d6) [Hit-points: avg.: 11; max.: 18]; AC= 14 [or AC 6]; Initiative = 1d6+4 [or +1]; BtH: +3 [or TaAC0 17]; Attack = 1d8+1 (weapon); Backstab +4/x2; Skills = +6 [or 60%] to Climb and Stealth; Saves = 15; [Str13, Dex13, Con11, Int9, Wis11, Cha10]; Morale 10; XP = 140.





— 5 ft.





Chaos-cults and dungeons

This chapter is not an adventure module. In these pages you will find three dungeons maps, plus suggestions as to their content. However, they are not fully developed adventures with a scenario, intrigue, NPCs, etc. Instead, they are suggestions of cultists' temples and headquarters, that could be used by the GM who want to design their own chaos-cults adventures, but lack time or ideas for a dungeon part. Hence, descriptions of context have been kept minimal, and should be easy to change as necessary. Then, the cults, cultists, and plots will have to be designed by the GM as best fit with the campaign.

low-level dungeon / chaos-cult of debauchery

This dungeon is primarily intended for a cult focusing on lust/debauchery, or at least one that tries to pervert followers in manifesting their basest instincts. It would be ideally situated under a brothel in some disreputable urban area. But of course nothing forbids to put it under a monastery or castle, or even some road inn. This is otherwise meant to be a low-level adventure, thus it proposes a minimum of supernatural elements (i.e., no magical traps and items, few supernatural creatures, etc.).

This is a rather small dungeon with cultists regularly moving through it. With that in mind, there is basically two ways of going into it. The first one consists in getting there clad in armor, weapons in hand, and kill every cultist encountered. In this case, the cult's leader would quickly flee to room #16 and summon a succubus. Since this is intended to be a rather low-level dungeon, the PCs might well be slain by the demon. The second method consists in entering stealthily, so as to not attract attention until meeting with the cult's leader. But in this case note that to be convincingly disguised, the PCs should be naked under a hooded robe (these are found in room #3), which would make for a rather funny adventure (as well as making the PCs more vulnerable to physical attacks, though cultists might be mostly zero-level characters)... Of course, if the PCs are meant to rescue someone, it's obvious that they should enter the dungeon discreetly, with the appropriate disguise.

1—Cellar: The cellar of some building above that belongs to the cult, has a secret door which is the dungeon's entrance. With a successful Wisdom save [or vs. Spell] the PCs will notice that this cellar is particularly clean, which should appear odd for a cellar. The cultists in fact keep it clean so tracks would not be seen on a dusty floor leading to the part of the wall where the secret door is located.

2—Hall: This large room is 35x35 feet, for a height of 25 feet.

The upper level (i.e.: 2a) is a 10 feet wide wooden balcony standing (on pillars) 15 feet above the room's stone floor (i.e.: 2b). Facing the entrance door on this level is a stone statue in a

niche, representing an obscene demon-like figure of debauchery. When cultists pass in front of it, they usually stop and touch it in some lewd manner. Then, two wooden doors on each side lead to 15x20 ft. (10 ft. high) chambers. Note: just before the PCs enter, they should hear screams of anguish and insults coming from room #5, then see two cultists leave this room and go downstairs.

On the lower level (i.e.: 2b) are five more doors, with the one under the obscene statue being painted of bright green color. Then, the room's center (a 15x15 ft. zone between the pillars) is a slight slope covered with grease and leading to a pit in the middle. (Note: walking on this room's center: make a Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapon] or slip and fall into the pit). The pit is 20 feet deep, with its wall also covered with grease, and ending into a small room where resides a ghoul (or a wight if the GM needs a stronger undead). Those who die in falling there end up eaten by the undead; those who survive typically become undead themselves (hence the GM may put more than one undead there).

From the upper level (i.e.: 2a) it is possible to observe what happens below (i.e.: 2b), but likewise being noticed (or heard if treading the wooden balcony and stairs in heavy armor). Each turn there is a 40% chance of cultists passing below (i.e.: 2b), only 20% on the balcony (i.e.: 2a). The cultists all appear to be naked under a hooded robe. They generally enter or exit the room behind the green door. The pit in the center is where some people who displeased the cult are sometimes thrown. Cultists discovering the PCs would certainly try to push them into the center of the room.

Quick rules for throwing people into the pit.

To push someone in the room's center, first make a successful Touch Attack roll (i.e.: vs. AC10 + Dex-dodge-magic bonus, but not armor and shield); then, if the attacker wasn't charging, the target is allowed a Strength save [or vs. Paralysis] to resist it. A character who tries to pull the target, and throw him/her behind instead of just pushing him/her ahead, gets a -4 penalty to the attack roll, and must also make the save to not be brought on the slippery slope. No save is allowed to not fall when violently pushed or pulled on this slope. Then, slipping into the pit is automatic.



3—Changing Room: The PCs will find a lot of clothing in this room, plus 1d4+1 hooded robes of the type worn by the cultists (or 3d6 robes if most cultists were absent). Some items and/or clothing of value (of nobles for example) are locked inside chests. When the cultists enter, they get undressed and then don one of these robes. Note that these hooded robes have been designed in such a way that when someone moves wearing them, they open at random on various parts of the body. Hence, if a PC wanted to remain clothed under the robe, it would be noticed.

4—Abandoned Room: Contrary to the other doors, the one leading to this room is locked. Inside, everything is covered with dust. Obviously nobody came here for a long time. It's up to the GM to decide why this room is closed and not used anymore. Maybe the cult's leader lost the key; or maybe the room is haunted (by a poltergeist of a former victim of the cult). In any case, no cultist will ever come into this room unless the door appears opened or broken.

5—Occupied Room: Two naked persons are chained to their bed by a collar, and remain still in a humiliating position. They are abused and tormented by the cultists who sometimes come here (Note: the PCs should have already seen two cultists leaving the room after having heard screams coming from it). The PCs might be tempted to rescue these persons... Except, they are not victims: one is a newly inducted cult member who must pass some sort of test, and the other is a cultist who must suffer some kind of punishment for misbehavior. Hence, when those two understand that the PCs are intruders, they will scream to alert others (cumulative 10% chance per round of indeed having some cultists come to investigate).

6—Unoccupied Room: There are some people's belongings and clothing in this room; their owners are obviously in the dungeon, naked and wearing a hooded robe. They will eventually return in the room if the PCs wait long enough. They came from a distant place to attend a special ceremony. The PCs could find some money, clothes, weapons, and clues about these people. It's up to the GM to decide who they are, as would best fit the campaign.

7—Mutants' Dormitory: Some cultists who got mutations that cannot be hidden anymore, and would be quickly arrested and questioned as a result, have taken permanent residence in this room. The PCs may recognize two of them as being missing people believed to have been victims of whatever unfortunate, yet unknown events. Nobody knew that they in fact were cultists who now must hide from normal people. One of these mutants is held prisoner in a cage in a corner of the room. The obvious reason for this cultist being held there is for being mad and ravening. However, the mutant might also have a dangerous mutation such as a poisonous touch.

8—Torture Chamber: This room contains several torture devices, many of them being used for sexual sadomasochist purposes. Worse, there are some grisly remains of a young woman's corpse in jars filled with alcohol. There is some evidence that parts of this cadaver have been eaten (e.g., gnawed bones in

the trash). There is a 30% chance that a hideously mutated cultist (i.e., from room #7) is here performing whatever atrocities his insane mind may imagine in this place. If there is nobody, roll this 30% chance every turn the PCs remain here, that this cultist will enter the room.

9—Cells: There are six cells along this corridor that stinks of sweat, blood, excrements and fear. All doors are barred from the outside (so are easy to open from the corridor, but almost impossible from the cell), except the last one (i.e., #f) which door was blasted from within, the shattered pieces still lying around. Cells' current occupants:

- **Cell #a** holds two children who are terrorized, but have not been hurt yet. They have no idea about why they have been kidnapped and brought here, but fear for the worse.

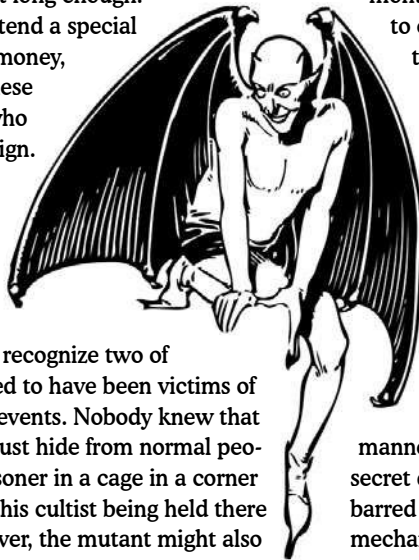
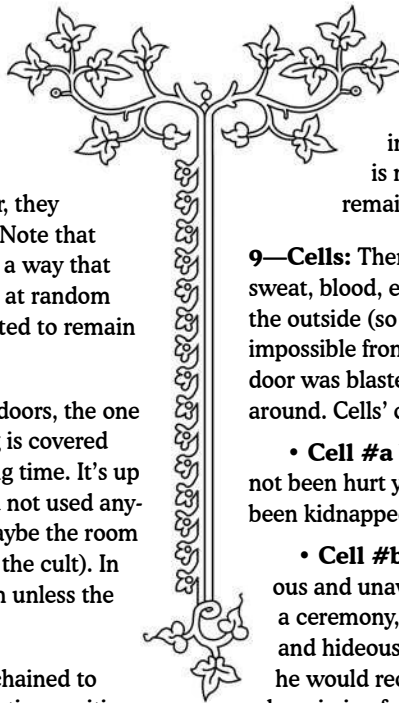
- **Cell #b** contains a cultist bound to a cot. He is delirious and unaware of his surrounding. He became mad during a ceremony, and his mind is now filled with nightmares and hideous visions. The other cultists put him there, until he would recover his mind. Note that this person might be missing from the community, and be rumored to have been kidnapped by the cultists (in case their existence would be suspected); except truth is, that he is one of them. If a healer manages to administer appropriate calmatives (or healing magic) to this man, he might become semi-conscious and tell information about the cult. If freed from his affliction, he might be convinced (will require appropriate role-playing and incentives, along a successful skill check) to betray the cult and cooperate with the PCs.

- **Cells #c/d** are empty.

- **Cell #e** holds a pregnant cultist who is close to giving birth to a demonic spawn. This is a male cultist though, who got pregnant as resulting from a chaos mutation. He is naked, insane and foaming at the mouth. (Note: he has the belly of a 9 months pregnant woman, but this could merely be attributed to obesity, until a PC observing his belly witnesses something moving inside it...) The cultist will attack whoever enters the cell except the cult's leader. If he is killed by slashing weapons, a small demon (e.g., an imp) will crawl out of his cut belly. (Note: this demon having been sired rather than summoned, is thus impervious to banishment magic such as *Protection from Evil*).

10—Cult's Leader Private Chamber: Behind a locked door is the cult's leader private chamber. There is nothing of real value here (nor books describing the chaos cult, etc.), as such things would be found in room #11. There is a small obscene statue fixed on the wall left to the door; touching it in an utterly vulgar manner (GM decides the exact method) is what opens the secret door leading to room #11. Note: this secret door can be barred from the corridor, in which case the PCs activating the mechanism would understand there is a secret door, but would not be able to open it normally.

11—Peep-Show Room & Corridor: Various things of interest and value to the cult are stored in this room. Books of demonology, cult records, and whatever treasure the GM wants to give to his players should be found here (maybe in a locked and trapped chest). But there is more: small holes have been



carved into the room's and next corridor's wall, to allow the cult's leader to discreetly observe what happens in rooms #12 and #13. Needless to say that he could cast spells through these holes if necessary.

12—Debauchery Chapel: The doors leading to this room are painted in green and decorated with obscene carvings; they are not locked. The room is filled with carpets and couches, and lit with candles. The walls are covered in frescos mostly representing demons copulating with humans. If the PCs carefully observe the fresco, they could notice (i.e., with a successful Detection check) on the right wall, that some demons' eyes are in fact holes. The cult's leader (plus maybe some of his assistants) peer through these holes when orgies and rituals are held in the room. A statue of the being worshipped by the cult stands in a recess on the left wall. If the PCs remain close to the statue long enough, they could smell a faint odor of rotting flesh. This odor comes from the base of the statue that can be moved aside to reveal a pit (with a ladder) leading to room #14 below.



13—False Succubus' Chamber: This is a richly decorated chamber of vice: there is a large canopy bed with bright red sheets in the middle of the room, thick carpets, and various stuffed animal heads on the walls. Some heavy incense burns in this room, basking it in an odoriferous haze. Then, on the bed lies a nude woman with a tail, long painted nails, red hair, and a pair of bat-like wings in her back. This is not a succubus though, but a female cultist with several chaos mutations, who masquerades as a succubus.

Those who would suddenly run into the room (usually screaming), weapon in hand, in order to quickly strike the "demon," will have to succeed a Dexterity save (or check) or fall prone like idiots, for having tripped on the many carpets and objects lying on the floor. Otherwise, those who enter the room and breathe the incense must make a Constitution save [or vs. Poison] or be affected by its hypnotic effects. Afflicted subjects suffer a -2 penalty to all their saving throws against enchantment-charm and illusion spells; they are also likely to mistake their own phantasms for reality, so really believe that the woman lying on the bed is truly a succubus (and she believes it too).

What will happen there is left at GM's discretion. The false succubus might be a zero level commoner, or she might know a couple of spells (e.g., *Charm Person*, *Friends*, etc.). She might probably try to seduce the PCs (and then inflict them with some lesser chaos mutation if they fail a save) rather than physically fight them; of course she can also scream for help.

Note lastly that there is a secret corridor behind two of the walls, from where the cult's leader often watches into the room using holes in the eyes of the stuffed animals.

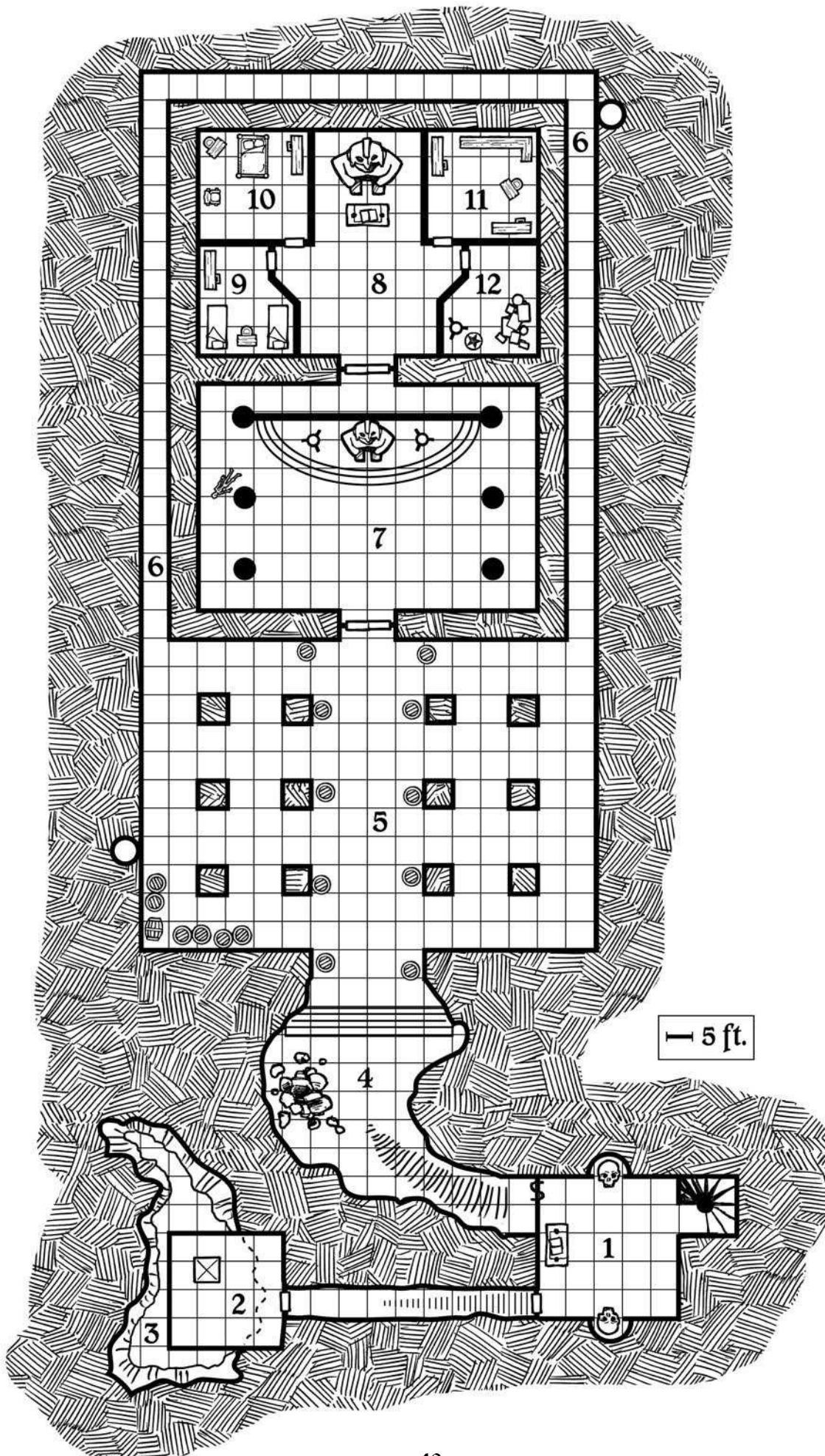
14—Mass Grave: This area (i.e., rooms #14, #15 and #16) is much older than the dungeon above. These chambers were dug a very long time ago, appearing to be crudely carved into the rock. Everywhere it reeks of decaying flesh, as the corpses of dead mutants and other victims are found in room #14. One of the latest victims (who might be someone the PCs had to rescue) could still be alive among the corpses, though in a very bad shape. If he/she is not killed by the PCs believing it to be a zombie trying to rise from the floor, he/she will quickly require appropriate healing skill checks or magic, or will soon die. Of course this victim would also have interesting information regarding the chaos cult.

15—Ancient Crypt: There is a dust-covered stone coffin in this room. Opening it triggers a *Glyph of Warding* (i.e., deals 16 points of fire damage, with a Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapons] allowed for half), but otherwise the coffin contains nothing of value and no monster, only a rotten skeleton.

16—Real Succubus' Chamber: This room contains a few rotten furniture plus a canopy bed entirely painted in black, with black sheets. The place generates an atmosphere of baseness and dread, and may grant a +1 bonus to all demon-summoning checks. The bed is set in the middle of a magic circle of summoning. There is an old (non-magical) parchment in a bedside table, along black candles and other things necessary to perform a demon-summoning ritual. All of this is meant to summon a real succubus. There is no evidence of it already having been successfully performed however.

• *Note:* if the cult's leader is attacked and cannot flee through the normal entrance or through the air pipe at end of corridor from room #11, he will probably get down to this summoning room and try to summon a succubus. In this case the PCs may arrive shortly before he completes the ritual. If he manages to complete the ritual, there is a sudden flash of violet light, smell of sulfur, and the sacrificial (female) victim falls to the ground... and then nothing. Then, the victim awakens and asks the PCs what has just happened. Unknown to them however, her body and soul are gone. In her place there is the succubus, currently in the victim's exact guise...

17—Air Pipes: The dungeon gets air from three chimneys that emerge on the rooftops of the surface buildings. The chimneys are integrated into these buildings so as to not attract attention and look like normal chimneys. Except no fumes ever go out of them. The buildings belong to the cult or some cultists, so nobody will ever try to investigate them. There is a ladder in each of these chimneys, but since they are rather narrow, no obese or armored person could go through them. If someone were to go on the rooftops to the chimneys and listen carefully (assuming they would have a reason to notice and suspect them), they might hear sounds of obscene activities down below. At the dungeon level, the chimneys end in locked bars; only the cult's leader has the keys. He will of course try to use them as an escape route if things go awry.



mid-level dungeon / antique arcadian temple

For some reason, an ancient Arcadian temple was intentionally buried under tons of earth and rocks, until it appeared like a small natural hill. Or maybe it was covered (without being destroyed) by a landslide or mud flood that eventually dried up and turned into soft stone. In any case, although the former temple's presence was eventually forgotten, the information had been recorded on some Arcadian scrolls, and eventually read by a would-be cultist. That person built a house above (or a manor, chapel, etc.), then discreetly dug his cellar until he found the entrance to this temple.

This dungeon is primarily intended for a cult focusing on death, undead, and entropy. The main idea is that the temple itself saps life energy and eventually turns living creatures within into undead. Hence, there is no need for high level necromancers or powerful magical items to explain the presence of many undead within it. This is meant to be a mid-level adventure, with some undead and lesser magic, but nothing over the top.

Unlike the precedent dungeon, disguises would be of little use when entering this temple. Either the PCs will carry the appropriate unholy item around their neck, so the residing undead won't attack them, but such unholy items will have detrimental side effects on their health. Or they enter intent on destroying everything in their path, but this could prove lethal for them. Of course living cultists won't be fooled by a mere stolen unholy symbol.

1—Crypt: Under the surface building is found a simple crypt with an altar and two statues of demons or of the foul deity worshipped. Newly inducted members are initiated in this crypt, and at first only attend ceremonies held there; they are not told about the underground temple accessed via a secret door. Then, for quite some time these members are carefully observed and assessed by the other cultists, until they decide (generally based on ludicrous and unfair reasons) if these persons are worthy of becoming real members of the cult. If they are deemed "worthy" they will get a special unholy symbol, and will be brought to the temple. If not, they will be treacherously asked to pass a higher initiation in the room accessed by the door on the crypt's far wall (i.e., room #2 and #3). This is unfortunately but a short trip to certain death. Note otherwise that PCs questioning cultists would be sent there too, maybe with mentions of a treasure hidden in area #3, to be more enticing.

2—Empty Room: As this room was dug, it unexpectedly opened into a natural cavern, hence masonry walls and a wooden floor had to be added to keep it square. So it appears as a kind of cellar with a wooden floor, and some parts of its walls being made of bricks. Then, there is a heavily barred, reinforced trapdoor in one corner of the room, with occult sigils carved all around it. A magister should recognize the written signs of a magical warding (i.e., of *Protection from Evil* if succeeding a knowledge skill check). Note also that the floor tends to creak suspiciously when several characters walk on it. Then, if they remain still, they may hear that something is scratching at the wood from below.

3—Treacherous Cavern: This small natural cavern is in fact a cramped and jagged space, with a height of merely 5 to 6 feet below the wooden floor. Fighting there is difficult (even without mentioning the total darkness), incurring a -4 penalty to attack and damage rolls, and requiring a Dexterity save/check each round of combat to not hurt oneself for 1d3 points of damage. The cavern occupants however, do not suffer this penalty. They are one or more ghouls that cannot go into room #2 above, because of the magical warding. The cavern's bottom is otherwise littered with the bones of unfortunate "unworthy" cultists who were sent there. There is probably no treasure to be found, despite what some cultists might have said to send the PCs into this place.

4—Entrance Cavern: Behind the secret door a tunnel with crude steps was carved in the soil and goes down below, into a cavern full of rubble. It ends with a marble stair and huge bronze doors that have been partly excavated. It clearly appears that there is an ancient buried Arcadian temple there. As the PCs approach the temple's doors, they can feel a sort of unpleasant chill pervading the place. It's even more unpleasant for clerics and Law-aligned characters. In fact, what the PCs unknowingly sense, are the life-sapping energies that fill the temple.

5—Main Hall: This large area is 20 feet high, with thick columns, and everything is covered in decorated marble (in geometric Arcadian style). Then, 17 barrels have been set against the walls and columns, and several cultists can be seen wandering the place slowly and aimlessly:

- First of all, the life-sapping energies that pervade the temple impose a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks and saving throws made by living creatures. Note that being the recipient of a *Negative Plane Protection* spell negates this debilitating effect.
- Upon close examination, the cultists who walk around aimlessly are zombies. They attack every creature (including other such zombies) they see within 20 feet, that is not wearing a necklace with the cult's unholy symbol. This is a somewhat cursed magical item that cannot be faked. In fact, all cultists (whether still living or zombies) wear such a necklace. When people are wearing that unholy symbol, all the temple's undead ignore them (as the undead sense/recognize them as other cultists). Unfortunately, this is truly an unholy item: it increases the penalty suffered in this place to -2, and prevents clerics to cast their spells. Then, if such an unholy symbol is brought under the bright light of the sun, it shatters and loses all of its powers.
- *Note:* The cultists don't become zombies after having been raised by a necromancer. Instead, their undead state results from a progressive chaos mutation process. At first they



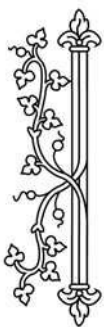
become skinny, icy cold, etc., and then ultimately cease to be living but have become mindless zombies. At this stage they disappear from the surface world, and don't take part anymore in the cult's activities; they merely aimlessly wander the temple forever.

- The many wooden barrels are obviously recent additions. They are all engraved with occult symbols (i.e., appearing to pertain to necromancy, if successfully identified by a magic-user). A third of them are empty (i.e., empty on a 1-2 on d6 roll); the other two thirds contain human remains in a fluid. This fluid is either wood alcohol (which is flammable!) or some alchemical liquid that preserves flesh and bones from rotting. The cadavers may be those of sacrificial victims, or former cult members, or both. The persons they were in life may only be identified by close friends and relatives.

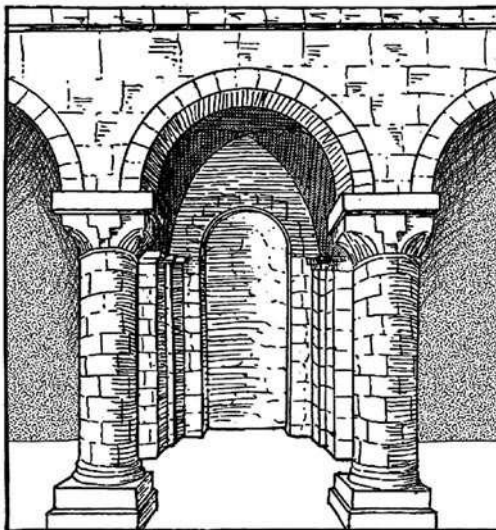
Roll on a d6 to determine what happens when opening a barrel:
 1 = nothing special; 2-3 = cadaver emerges as a zombie; 4-5 = a wraith emerges from the barrel and attacks; 6 = no monster attacks, but the barrel shatters, its foul fluid spreading everywhere and soaking the PCs within 15 feet (either this liquid is acidic or highly flammable).

6—Corridor: More zombies could be found in this useless corridor. The cultists dug two air conduits, on opposite locations (as shown on the map). The opening are on the ceiling, 20 feet above. However, they could be found as secret doors from clues such as rubble on the floor, a faint light above, etc. It's possible (though difficult) for slim and/or unarmored characters to climb to the surface through these shafts.

7—Worship Room: This is a large room with columns and a huge stone statue of the deity, where the cultists gather (usually once per month) to perform their vile rituals. There is some dried blood and grisly remains scattered on the statue and all around it. During their foul ceremonies the cultists either torture and kill a human if they can afford it, or at least some animal. They of course prefer to sacrifice humans, but note that when they do so, they all get a chaos mutation. These mutations invariably let them appear paler, ill, thin, icy cold to the touch, etc., so in effect looking more and more like a living cadaver, until they actually turn into an undead (zero level cultists become mindless zombies, but leaders with class levels become ghouls, wights, etc.).



If the PCs carefully search the room, they will see fleeting shadows (i.e.: 1d4+1 undead shadows) and have visions of these beings performing odious ritual murders. These shadows will of course attack the PCs unless the latter wear the cultists' unholy symbol. Then, the PCs will discover a cultist lying behind a column, apparently agonizing. This man is in the last stage of the chaos mutations that will soon turn him into a zombie. If spoken to, he will beg for being slain to escape his terrible fate, that he understood much too late. The cultist may also reveal that



the cult's leader seemed terminally ill when he last saw him, then was very recently replaced by a young boy. The young boy had been kidnapped and brought there to be sacrificed, but all of a sudden became different and was the new cult leader. (Note: this might be a boy that the PCs were asked to rescue...)

In the back of the room is a corridor behind a wall, leading to the inner sanctum behind a double bronze door. The place is forbidden to the cultists, and even the undead avoid it (though there is no magical trap). These doors are in fact barred from the inside. If the PCs try to open the doors noisily (i.e., by force), they will soon hear the

voice of a boy behind, asking them what they want.

- *Who is this boy?* Recently (i.e.: 2-3 weeks ago?) the cult's leader summoned the dead spirit of the cult's founder to help him in his aims. Unfortunately however, the cult's founder (who returned as a ghost) had no interest in helping the cult's leader, but seized the opportunity to escape hell and do whatever would be possible to resume life in this world. Since the cult's leader wasn't a good vessel for possession (as he was in bad physical shape and close to becoming an undead), the ghost convinced him to bring him a young boy. He then possessed the boy's body, and tricked the cult's leader, imprisoning him in his headquarters (i.e.: room #10). Afterwards, the ghost/boy began to study all the books in the library (i.e.: room #11), searching for information about what sorcery could help it take definitive possession of the boy's body. So long as it is in the boy's body, the ghost will lie to the PCs, telling them he is the boy who had to study the books in the library to get rid of the cult's leader, etc. If the boy is killed, the ghost will rise from the body and attack the PCs.

8—Inner Sanctum: The double bronze door leading into this room is barred from the inside. Two juju zombies guard it, and open or close the door on the boy's orders. Inside, an even larger statue of the deity stands in the back of the room, behind an altar. There are also four doors: one of them is wide open (i.e., #9), and three are closed (with the door leading to room #10 being chained, barred and trapped; plus the one leading to #11 being locked). Note that when the PCs enter, if they are wearing the unholy symbol, they feel it become suddenly colder, the penalty it induces increases to -3, and the wearer must succeed a Constitution save [or vs. Death] or lose 1d4 hit-points (of life energy draining); roll the save again each round. This is due to the life sapping energies in this area being stronger. Of course, the two juju zombies will attack the PCs who no longer wear their unholy symbol.

- *What causes the life sapping energies?* It's up to the GM to decide and to determine if it may be cancelled. Otherwise, the cause is unknown and impossible to remove; in fact the temple might have been buried in an attempt to put this effect out of reach.

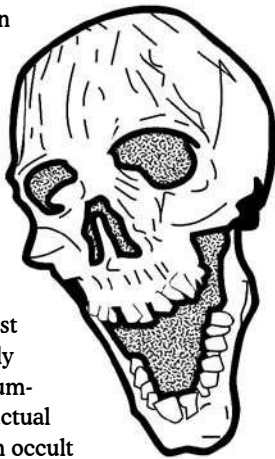
9—Acolytes Chamber: The door to this room is wide open. This is the two acolytes' personal quarter, and has not been

used for many days. The two acolytes are now the juju zombies that guard the bronze door in area #8. As zombies they have no more use for this room. It may be possible to find the acolytes' identities in this room.

10—Cult's Leader Chamber: The door to this room has been barred and chained from the outside (so the cult's leader would remain imprisoned in it); it has furthermore got a magical ward (Explosive Runes variant triggered by touch; 6d4+6 of eldritch damage in a 10ft radius; Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapons] allowed for half) cast by the ghost/boy. Inside, the cult's leader has become an undead (probably a wight; in any case a corporeal undead). He is full of hate toward the cult's founder (i.e.: the ghost inside the boy) that betrayed him. Hence, it might be possible to get information from him, to banish the ghost back to hell (e.g.: find and destroy a certain item that was used to summon the ghost, and that is now in the ghost's possession and hidden in room #11). But once this is done, the cult's leader won't thank the PCs but attack them. Other than that, any treasure that might be found in this room, is left at the GM's determination.

11—Library: The door to this room is locked. The place contains shelves full of Arcadian scrolls regarding various religious subjects, plus a few books about demonology and chaos that were brought there by the cultists. The ghost/boy spends most of its time here, perusing and trying to make sense of the material found in the library; so far he hasn't found any way of definitely removing the boy's soul (without killing the body) and taking his place. The boy appears authoritative and confident when possessed by the ghost, but disoriented and scared when the ghost leaves it. The ghost of the cult's founder is no more interested in the cult, and only wants to escape hell in resuming life in the boy's body. The ghost can otherwise probably cast a few spells (including *Glyph of Warding*), but only when possessing a body.

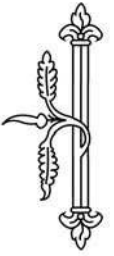
• *Note:* As for all other NPCs hinted at in these dungeons, the cult's leader and cult's founder are not given game statistics. They are left at the GM's determination, as would best suit the campaign's overall level and actual set of rules used. For example, the ghost might be the undead monster of that name, or an incorporeal demon invented by the GM. It is likewise left at GM's determination whether the ghost could be banished back to hell by merely destroying an object that was used to summon it on the material plane (e.g., the actual skull of the cult's founder engraved with occult symbols), or not.



12—Vestry: The door is closed but not locked. The room contains various objects and pieces of clothing that were used during religious ceremonies when the temple was built. They pre-date the chaos cult, and weren't used by it. Most of these objects are rotten and covered with dust. At GM's discretion, there might be a magical spear +1 in the shape of the Lance of Mithras, probably held by a man-size statue of Mithras, hidden behind some rotting furniture. The spear could be of use to combat the undead present in this dungeon.

high-level dungeon / ancient elves' secret chapel

A very long time ago an elven fortress stood there. It eventually fell apart and disappeared, but not its dungeon below. Much later humans built a manor, farm, village, castle, or temple on this location. Then, someone had vivid dreams that led him to dig his cellar until he found the entrance to this elven dungeon. This person became the first leader of the cult.

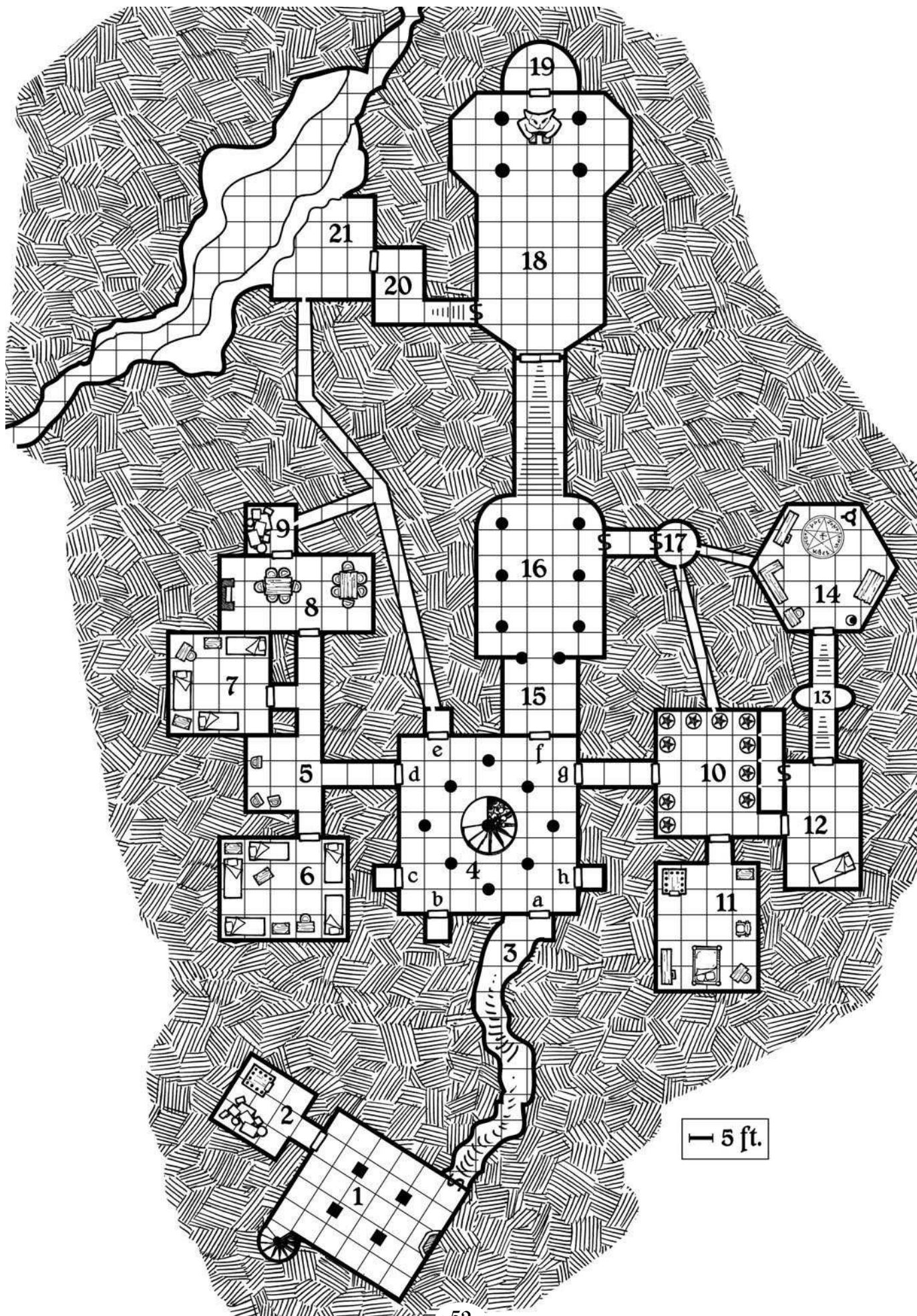


This dungeon would work best with the cult's leader being a rogue magic-user dealing with ancient elves or some demon/deity of sorcery, to acquire (usually forbidden) magical power. The cult's leader will thus be a magic-user of respectable skill (e.g.: 5th to 8th level), and will probably have 1d3 assistants of 1st to 3rd level. The followers might be witches and petty magic-users, or they might be deceived as to their leader's real intent, believing that they worship the ancient elves (probably described as their benevolent forefathers) or some Faery Queen goddess, etc.

This is meant to be a relatively high-level adventure, in a dungeon filled with various magical traps and features. Note otherwise that there is a planar gate to the realms of the Fae in room #19. If the GM only sees it as an adventure trick (a kind of weird trap if you will), just let the players have the normal chance of finding it if they search for secret doors behind the temple's statue. However, if it is meant to be something important in the ongoing campaign (especially if next adventure is meant to occur in this alternate dimension), the GM should leave a few clues here and there as to its presence. Let's say that some text designates the statue as the guardian of the otherworld gate; then a cultist once saw elves appear from behind the statue; etc. That way, the PCs should know that there is something important to search in this place...

1—Deceptive Crypt: This room looks like a crypt and chapel devoted to the Unconquered Sun, with nothing obvious or hidden that would reveal the cult's true nature. This is in fact meant to deceive unwanted visitors. Also, newly inducted members who are not yet fully trusted by the cult, are only allowed to attend cult ceremonies that are held there, without being told about the secret door in the back of the room. The door leading into #2 is locked.

2—Cellar: This small room contains various mundane items (barrels, etc.) as well as a cage in which is currently imprisoned a traveling merchant. He was meant to become the cult's next sacrificial victim, but convinced the cultists to spare him in exchange for a ransom. A cultist was thus sent with a message to a far away town, where the merchant's brother supposedly lives. However, all of this is a lie; the merchant has no more family of his own, and no money to buy his freedom. He well knows this, and fears the time when the cultists will come in anger ready to torture and sacrifice him. When the PCs enter, the merchant believes them to be cultists, and thus tries another lie to save his life. He pretends wanting to convert to the cult, and proposes his own daughter (though he has none) as a sacrificial victim as proof of his sincerity. This is but a desperate lie, yet one that should appall the PCs. Note that if the PCs



question the merchant, they would learn that he was meant to be sacrificed by the cult, and he has heard people come and go in room #1 rather often.

3—Tunnel: A tunnel was dug into the rock, with crudely carved grimacing visages of elves and demons on its walls. It goes down 20 feet below, to a door guarded by a supernatural hound. The beast knows and lets pass regular cultists, as well as strangers who are accompanied by such cultists. It will attack all intruders. Those who are caught by the hound while running away from it up the stairs, must succeed a Dexterity save [or vs. Paralysis] or trip and fall, suffering 1d2 points of damage from the fall on the stairs. The hound's barking has a 30% chance of attracting 1d4 cultists.

4—Entrance Hall: This large room is 35x35 feet large, for a 12 feet height. There are two doors on each wall, eight columns, and a spiral staircase in its center. The room is illumined by a soft magical blue light. When the dungeon was built, people entered it via the central staircase. However, it long ago collapsed, so a few feet above the ceiling it is definitely blocked.

The eight doors are all identical and mostly intended to harm intruders. As such only three of them (i.e., #d-f-g) actually lead somewhere; the other five are traps (though #a lost its trap when the tunnel emerged in this room). So, the doors are:

#a) This door is closed, but not trapped. Most of the time (i.e.: 3-6 on a d6 chance) it is locked; the cult's leader and a few trusted cultists have a key.

#b) Opening this door triggers a mechanical trap that releases a cloud of poisonous gas in a 7 ft. radius around the door. This is a one time effect until the poison is recharged. It kills in 2d4 rounds (or any other effect determined by the GM) any living creature that breathes it. The cloud is visible however, thus can be avoided with a successful Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapons]; standing behind the door while opening it grants a +2 bonus to the save; wearing something on the mouth might grant a +1 to +4 bonus.

#c) Opening this door triggers a *Phantasmal Killer* spell (that targets the one who opened the door). This trap can only be activated once every 12 hours though. Behind the door is an empty space.

#d) This door is closed, but not locked nor trapped. It leads into room #5.

#e) This door is trapped with a magical ward (*Explosive Runes* variant triggered by touch; 6d4+6 of eldritch damage in a 10ft radius; Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapons] allowed for half). Once discharged it will have to be cast again. A cultist (who knows the ward's password) regularly opens this door so fresh air could fill the place from the conduit leading to room #21. Crawling into this conduit is possible but dangerous: only slim and unarmored persons are allowed, and then must succeed a Dexterity save [or vs. Paralysis] or remain stuck in it.

#f) This door is closed, but not locked nor trapped. It leads into room #15.

#g) This door is closed and locked, but not trapped. The same key that opens door #a also opens it. It leads into room #10.

#h) Behind this door waits a guardian that attacks the first creature it sees, then everybody else in the room until slain. It doesn't distinguish between cultists and intruders, yet doesn't attack elves. This guardian is left at GM's discretion, but cannot be a living creature (it's typically an undead or some lesser type of golem).



5—Waiting Room: There are a bench, a desk and a couple of chairs in this room. There is a 1 on d6 chance of 1d3+1 cultists being present and discussing. Note that if the PCs were noisy in any adjacent room, these cultists would be waiting in ambush.

6—Dormitory: The door to this room can be barred from the inside if necessary, but usually isn't. Half of the time it is slightly opened, so as to let "fresh" air enter the room. There are some beds and furniture. There is a 1-3 on d6 chance of finding 1d6 cultists, usually lying on their beds, and sleeping half of the time (unless the PCs were noisy before coming there).

7—Guest Room: Similar to #6 this room is used for guests. It is currently occupied by a noble and two of his bodyguards. The noble came here incognito, with intent of either converting to the cult or making an alliance with it for some devious and treacherous political purpose. When the PCs enter, he has no real way of knowing if they are cultists or not. If the PCs are clever enough, they might learn about the noble's intents. Otherwise, the noble will tell them a lie of his own to explain that he was lured there, and is an enemy of the cult. Of course, if the situation later allows it, the noble could find an opportunity to betray the PCs who would have been foolish enough to trust him.

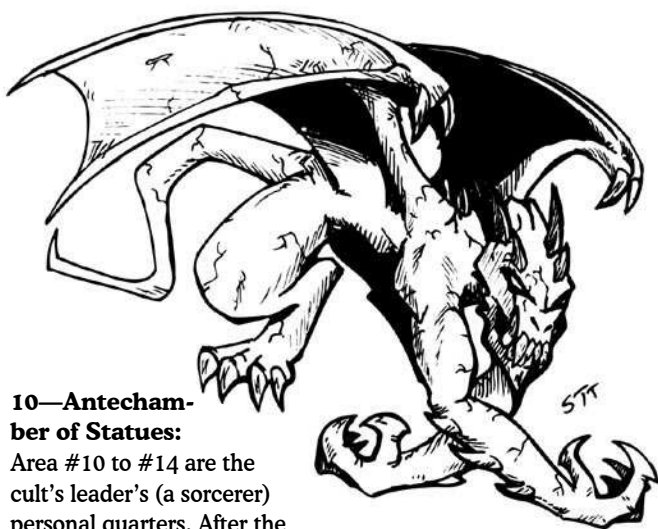
• *Who is this noble?* It is suggested that the GM uses (or creates) a NPC whose presence would make sense in relation to the campaign (such as an envoy of a noble family that the PCs have been opposing, or suspected of treacherous behavior and malevolent activities). Otherwise let him be Sir Thomas Fitzalan (3rd level knight), a cousin of the Earl of Arundel (of Yorkist allegiance), accompanied by two bodyguards (2nd level fighters), who seeks the magic of the ancient elves to help him steal away the Earldom from his cousin.



8—Refectory: There are a few benches and tables, plus a chimney and kitchen utensils in the back of the room. (Note by the way that the chimney eventually joins that of a house on the surface, so smoke seems to come from that house rather than emerge from the ground.) Then, there is a piglet chained to the wall next to the chimney, seemingly waiting for being cooked. However, this is not a true pig, but an unfortunate child (or goblin) that was polymorphed into this animal. If subjected to a successful *Dispel Magic* (against 8th level caster) he would revert to his original natural form; if he is killed he will also revert to his natural form, but still dead.

There is a 1-3 on d6 chance of finding 1d6 cultists, usually playing cards, and a 1-5 on d6 chance of finding the cook, an ugly obese woman cultist. The latter has remained there for many years (a visible chaos mutation dissuades her to tread the surface world), and thus knows a great deal about the dungeon (though nothing pertaining to room #19).

9—Storeroom: This small place contains some barrels of ale, bottles of wine, cheese and smoked ham. Then, behind is a small barrel with human remains kept in alcohol. There is also a hidden bottle of some hallucinatory drug. There is otherwise a grille in the wall, behind which a conduit leads to room #21, from where comes fresh air. The storeroom's door usually remains wide open, to refresh the refectory's atmosphere.



10—Antechamber of Statues:

Area #10 to #14 are the cult's leader's (a sorcerer) personal quarters. After the locked door in room #4 (only the cult's leader and his assistants have the key), there is a second door that remains open most of the time (i.e.: 1-4 on d6 chance); it is closed when the cult's leader really wants to remain undisturbed, as it is enchanted with a *Wizard Lock* spell.

This room contains 10 stone statues lined against the wall, representing either exquisitely crafted elves, or crude demonic figures. There is also some dried blood on the floor, and a faint breeze coming from a grille behind the left wall (with a narrow conduit behind leading to a well, see #17). There is a locked door (i.e., *Wizard Lock* spell plus key) on the right wall, and the wall facing the entrance door (which is 1 foot thick) has three windows of 8x12 inches veiled under a permanent illusion of the continuing wall. Note lastly that one of the statues is not what it seems to be, but a Gargoyle waiting totally immobile for a prey to come by. The gargoyle won't immediately attack, but observes the PCs and waits for the best opportunity (and thus

gets a bonus to surprise them). As such, 1d4+2 rounds after they have entered the room, the PCs should make a Wisdom save [or vs. Spell], and if successful get the unpleasant impression of being watched.

• **Room's Purpose:** After a period during which they never go beyond the room #1, new members of the cult are brought in this room for an examination. There may be one or two cultists at a time, without weapons and armors, who are left here unable to escape (because of the *Wizard Locked* doors). Then, they hear a solemn voice apparently originating from the statues, but in fact coming from the cult's leader hidden in the corridor behind the wall facing the entrance. If they answer and behave in a way that the cult's leader finds satisfactory, they are then accepted in the cult, otherwise they are slaughtered by the gargoyle. Normally the gargoyle waits of being ordered by the cult's leader to attack, but in case of obvious intruders will attack them on its own.

11—Cult's Leader Chamber: The reinforced door to this room is closed both by a key and a *Wizard Lock* spell. The place is full of carpets and luxurious furniture, plus a hidden chest containing some money and jewelry. However, nothing of a magical nature is kept in this room (it is in room #14).

There is a naked and bruised slave both chained to the wall and imprisoned in a cage. When the cult's leader is no more interested in her, he gives her to the savage murderer in room #12, then searches for another slave. The slave has no useful information pertaining to the cult's leader, but could tell about his domineering and cruel character; she doesn't know about the gargoyle, but already heard hideous screams of terror coming from room #10; then, she is sometimes brought to room #12 to clean it (so she knows about the mad brute and the demon-looking weapon attached to his hand).

12—Possessed Mercenary's Room: A mostly bare room which two doors are *Wizard Locked*. There is a secret door leading to the corridor from where the cult's leader can discreetly observe what happens in room #10. There is otherwise a disgusting couch on which sleeps a dirty brute, who has an awful weapon attached to his hand. This is a sentient and intelligent demon-weapon that totally dominates the mercenary, and is in turn under control of the cult's leader (provided he is within sight and within 30 feet of the weapon). The mercenary is sleeping but not the weapon, that will sense any presence and can tell between the cult's leader, his assistants, and other people. Hence, the weapon will awaken its wielder and order it to attack the PCs.

Note that clever PCs could trick the gargoyle into attacking the mercenary, but this would require exceptional role-playing and probably also magic.

Statistics of the mercenary and the demon-weapon are of course left at GM's discretion. Otherwise, he is probably a 3rd to 6th level fighter, rendered insane by the weapon: a +2 elven scythe-blade of living metal that feasts on the souls of those it slays (it has sentience and intelligence, thus some special magical powers, and maybe an ability to speak). This awful weapon should not be destined to become a PC weapon, unless the PC would want to go into serious problems...

13—Magical Barrier: There is an arch carved into the rock, and engraved with occult symbols. A *Detect Magic* spell would reveal a magical barrier, otherwise nothing is seen nor felt. Yet, there is a powerful abjuration barrier that forbids any enchanted and extra-planar creature to go across it (similar to a *Protection from Evil* spell). The barrier cannot be circumvented in any way, whether using magic (e.g.: *Teleportation*) or crawling through the conduit from the well (i.e.: room #17). Either the creature cannot go out of room #14 (and the tunnel portion), or cannot go inside it. The only exception will be in using a magical key (a ring of obsidian mounted with a ruby) currently held by the cult's leader. Normal creatures (i.e., native from the material plane) are not affected by this magical ward.

14—Alchemy Laboratory: This tall hexagonal room has smooth walls engraved with occult symbols (of obvious elven origin) that radiate a soft blue light. There is a summoning pentagram carved into the floor, plus an alchemy laboratory, a bookcase filled with old books and tablets, a desk and a chair, plus a heavy chest. Various strange, rare and foul substances can be found in this room, as well as grisly human remains (e.g., eyes, hearts, human fetuses, etc.), and odious things such as demon blood in a red bottle engraved with runes. Anything of real value to the PCs (occult books, etc.) will have to be determined by the GM. Then, the cult's leader spellbook should be found in the chest, and magical items probably worn by him (ready to be used against intruders).

Provided the GM has not decided that the cult's leader is elsewhere (e.g., performing a ritual in the temple), he will be found here half of the time (i.e.: 1-3 on d6 chance). Along any spell he could cast, he can also throw a jug of acid at the PCs (this is a ranged touch attack vs. AC 10 + Dex-dodge-magic bonus; armor is not counted, though it grants a +2 bonus to the save; a successful attack deals 3d6 points of acid damage, with a Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapon] allowed for half). The cult's leader might also have some magical potions that he could use against the PCs (e.g., potion of invisibility, philter of persuasiveness, and/or potion of super heroism).

Note otherwise that this room would be a perfect place for the PCs to recover information pertaining to occult subjects, as well as special sorcery stuff difficult to come by, in an ongoing campaign.

15—Vestibule: This small empty room opens into another larger room through an archway on which a few phrases are inscribed. The same text appears in both English (or any common language) and Elf (or maybe demonic). It is a short praise and prayer to the deity worshipped by the cult; it wasn't there originally, but was added much later by the cult. Whenever a cultist reaches that point, he stops to read them aloud before going any farther. This has no



particular effect in itself (i.e.: the arch bears no magical enchantment), but is a cult obligation. Hence, if some PCs masquerading as cultists were seen going past them without stopping and reciting this short prayer aloud, they would be known for not being true cultists. Note that most cultists cannot read the elven language, so those who can read them will appear as higher ranking cultists versed in occult knowledge.

16—Hallway: This room is beautifully ornate, with marble columns, frescos, etc., in ancient intricate elven style. This is normally an antechamber to the temple beyond, down the stairs at the end of the room. However, except for the cult's leader and his assistants, the cultists are not allowed inside the temple proper, except during the important cult ceremonies, and even not always, as attending the vile rituals is meant to be a reward for faithful followers. Hence, cultists regularly come in this room, where they pray and meditate, usually in an obvious and truly grotesque manner. Therefore, if PCs masquerading as cultists were seen going through this room without behaving in a similar way, and worse would go down the stairs, they would be known for being impostors. Yet, there is but a 1-2 on d6 chance of 1d6+2 cultists being present in this room at any time, unless the PCs come to attend a ceremony.

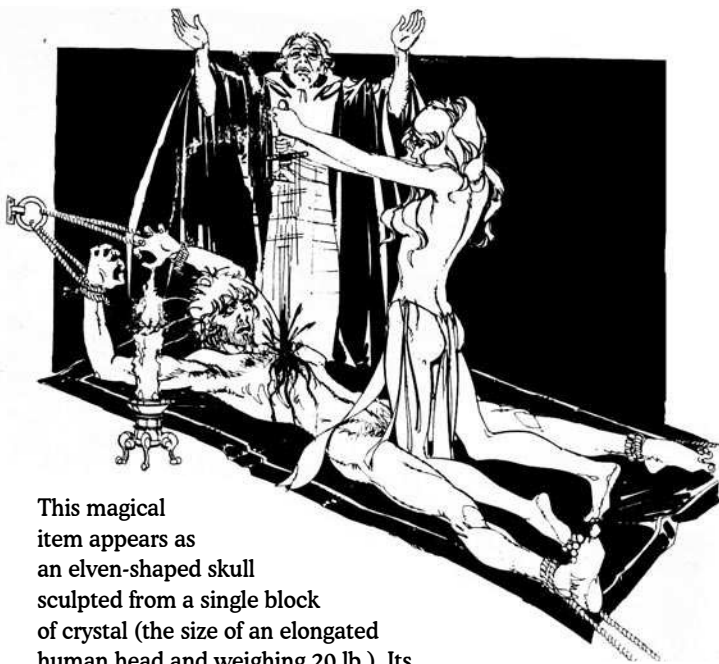
17—Well: There is a well here, with the surface being some 35 feet above, and the water 15 feet below (i.e., relative to the secret passage). At this level a permanent illusion covers the wall, and masks the tunnel's entrance and the two grilles (behind which two conduits bring fresh air into the dungeon). Nonetheless, the illusion was set when the well was built, which was a long time ago. Hence, as time passed the wall slowly deteriorated and was covered with moss, while the illusion still shows a clean and new wall. This should be a clue that something strange is going on here.

The two grilles are rusted, hence grant a +1 bonus to any attempt at dislodging/breaking them. The door (right behind the illusion), is locked but also molded and rusted, so likewise granting a +1 bonus to break it. On the other hand, the mechanisms are rusted, so the door doesn't open anymore and will have to be broken. Then, the second secret door can only be opened (i.e., activated) from room #16. Trying to break through this door is done with a -2 penalty.

On the surface the well is in fact hidden from view, as best fit with what the GM would set there. It's probable that no cultist is aware of the well's connection to the dungeon. The cult's leader might be aware of the well, but in this case believes that it is connected to the watery cave found beyond room #21. Note lastly that if the PCs descended into the well and were noisy, they would be heard by anyone in rooms #10 and #14 (though the listeners might not understand what is exactly happening).



18—Temple Hall: In this formerly elven, beautiful temple are performed the cult's odious rituals of sacrifice and sorcery. When people enter in this room, they feel weary, subconsciously sensing a heavy atmosphere of dread and despair (which would incur a -2 penalty to any morale checks and saving throws against fear); only the cult's totally perverse leader feels elated by it (which gives him a +1 bonus to attack rolls and saving throws). This atmosphere is in fact generated by the crystal skull resting in a niche, inside the deity's statue behind the altar.



This magical item appears as an elven-shaped skull sculpted from a single block of crystal (the size of an elongated human head and weighing 20 lb.). Its primary property is to memorize (i.e.: record) what happens in the room, and then continuously radiate it at a subconscious telepathic level. Anyone touching it must succeed a Wisdom save [or vs. Spell], or be so shocked by the horrendous visions it imparts in their mind, that they are feebleminded (as per *Feeblemind* spell) for 2d4 turns. On a successful save and keeping the hand on the skull, one can see what happened there in the past. It then requires an Intelligence save [or vs. Spell] to find precise information, such as what happened at a certain date, or seeing if a certain person was sacrificed there, etc. Each such information is found and observed in one turn. Doing this is mentally draining, so one can only do this a maximum of 1d6 turns per day (2d4 if a spellcaster). Furthermore, on the following night the user gets nightmares and awakens in the morning much fatigued (specific effects at GM's discretion). The usefulness of this item is for summoning demons: the cult's leader who performed many odious sacrifices in front of it gets a +4 bonus to all his checks and saving throws to summon demons; others get only a +2 bonus. A successful *Dispel Magic* (against level 11) specifically cast onto the skull, cleans it of all its awful memories (and thus cancels any bonus to summon demons); a *Dispel Evil* would shatter the skull to bits.

19—Gate Room: This small semi-circular room has plastered walls entirely painted with a grand fresco representing all man-

ners of creatures and scenes related to the ancient elves (or at least to the entity worshipped by the cult). The room is otherwise empty, and might be a sort of meditation chamber. Nonetheless, since the walls are plastered and the fresco is blasphemous to the Church, the PCs might get the idea of destroying it. Striking at the walls will make the plaster fall, and reveal walls of black stone engraved with magical runes underneath. One could also see the runes glow (and being readable) through the plaster, if using a *Detect Magic* spell (radiates of Transmutation magic). This of course comes from ancient elves, as the current cultists would be totally unable to create something like this.

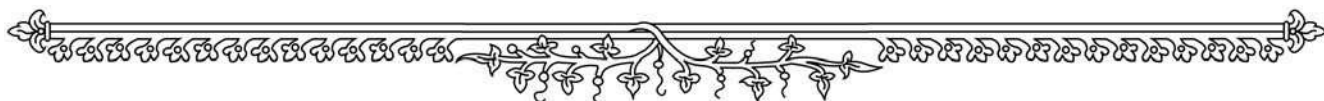
Any spellcaster can read and activate the runes. Upon doing so the room's occupants are transported into another dimension. Yet the PCs don't know what happens; they only feel an unpleasant sensation across their body, while the plaster on the walls seems to dissolve and vanish. Afterwards they are in the exact same chamber, except the walls are of the bare black stone engraved with the runes, with no trace of plaster remaining on them. This chamber is in fact a duplicate of the other, in the same location but on another dimension (most probably the Twilight Fae Realm of the elves). At this stage it's up to the GM to decide what lies and may happen beyond that room, and to design an appropriate adventure*. Note that whatever the dimension one is in, the runes (i.e., the portal) may be activated only once per day (or maybe only once per week).

(*) Suggestion: The Twilight Fae Realm.

The "gate chamber" opens into another semi-circular room, so the two of them appear to be on top of a high tower. A mythical creature such as a sphinx acts as a guardian in this other room. When looking outside, the PCs would see the misty and surreal landscapes of the Fae Realms perpetually basking in twilight. Then, beside wandering elves, the PCs would encounter mostly fey and mythical creatures in this other dimension. In fact, this would be an opportunity for using a fantasy adventure module full of magical traps and weird monsters, for a change of pace in a normally low-magic Dark Albion campaign...

20—Empty Room: The secret door that leads into this room can be activated from both sides (but make a successful Detection skill check to find each mechanism). The stairs carved into the rock behind, are steep and treacherous: if wearing iron shod boots, being encumbered, in a hurry, etc., make a Dexterity save [or vs. Paralysis] or fall 10 feet down and suffer 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage. There is nothing in this small room, except for the reinforced, barred door (i.e., barred from this side of the room).

21—Watery Cavern: When this room was dug, it emerged into a larger cavern. The place is but dark, damp and empty, with a stream of water that can be heard flowing 12 feet below. There is also a faint current of fresh air, that renews the air in the dungeon through the conduit found on the left wall (which is protected by a grille). It's entirely up to the GM to decide where the stream of water might lead.



appendix 1

The elves in dark albion

The Elves are the ancient immortal race of Chaos-spawned beings who may have been responsible for the creation of humankind. They ruled our world tens of thousands of years ago, and human beings (as well as other races, possibly) were their slaves. They were masters of magic, able to instinctively manipulate magic with great ease. For thousands of years they were rivaled only by the mighty dragons, who were individually more powerful than any elf but did not have an advanced civilization and lacked the same unity as the elves. But eventually, the Elven civilization grew decadent: its aristocracy became distracted with the corruption of entertainment and debauchery, and became rife with addiction to the powder of a magical violet lotus. Disenchanted elements of Elven society gradually turned away from the traditional Demon-gods of Magic which the Elves had always served, and turned instead to the Demonic Death-God, forming a cult of death that sought to overthrow the established rule and set up a new darker order.

Some Elves also began to engage in sexual congress with their human slaves (considered a perversion to the conservatives among them) and the offspring of these unions were mortal but gifted with talent at magic for the first time. As the Elven civilization descended into a civil war (which the old guard eventually won, slaughtering many of the followers of the Death-Cult and imprisoning others in magical bonds beneath the earth), the human slaves began to develop their own sense of identity, calling themselves the Cymri ("the folk"), and some of the most powerful elf-blooded leaders among these slaves rose up in revolt and managed to defeat the shattered remnants of the Elven rule.

The Elven survivors of the Cymri uprising were forced to flee through their magical gates (that took the form of circles of stone) into the shadowy plane known as the Fae Realm, and have remained there ever since. The Fae Realms are a chaotic netherworld of dream-like landscapes, cast in eternal twilight. Even after all this time, it appears that the Elves lack the power to attempt to force their way back into this reality, or at least the confidence or cohesion to effectively conquer humankind. But they will still make occasional incursions into our world, arriving through magical circles or in places where the veil between our world and the Fae world are thin.

appearance

Elves appear as tall (6'-7") humanoids with a generally slighter build than most humans. They are pale skinned, and their hair is very fine and either blonde, silver/gray, or very occasionally fiery red. Their eyes are slightly slanted and either

a very inhuman shade of green or dark black. Their ears are sharply pointed. Elf commoners are usually dressed in fine tunics that look like silvery silk but are in fact incredibly hard (providing armor protection as chain mail, while weighing next to nothing). Elven knights or nobles will usually appear dressed in highly stylized armor made of a hard but very light material (usually black in color for knights, red for higher-ranked aristocrats; but commanders of the death-cult had bone-white colored armor instead). This armor has protection equivalent to plate mail +2, and makes the wielder immune to all non-magical attacks; however, any human who wears such armor runs a 10% risk of mutation rolled once each day that they have worn the armor (even if the armor is only worn for a short while).

elven equipment

Elven soldiers will be armed with elven +0 magical swords (capable of damaging creatures immune to non-magical attacks, but conferring no special bonus to hit or damage). Knights will be armed with long +1 magical spears, and +0 swords. Elven nobles will be armed with demonic blades that act as swords +2, +4 vs. any Law-aligned being. Any living being struck by such a sword of 1 HD or less will die instantly as their soul is devoured by the blade. Beings of 2 or more HD will suffer a -1 penalty to all actions every time they are struck by such a blade; if the penalty equals their level or HD, they will likewise die. Whoever survives such an attack will recover from the penalty at a rate of -1 per day. These demon-blades are intelligent, have a 'power' level of 3d6+2 and can speak to and attempt to control their owner in the same way as a Familiar does (see the section on "familiar", in the section on 'severe mutations'). Whoever possesses such a sword and keeps it on their person runs a 5% risk each day of developing a mutation.



Elves are also frequently armed with wands of paralysis or magic missile for ranged purposes, depending on whether their mission is for the purpose of capturing humans or killing them. These wands will typically have 30 charges if they have not been fired. Elven knights have a 10% chance per HD of having some other magic item of use on their person; while elven nobles have a 10% chance per hit die of having 1d4 magic items on their person (elven nobles of 11 HD or more automatically have 1d4 magic items and a 20% chance of another 1d4 magic items on their person).

Elves who are planning to move far from the stone circle (or other gateway they use to enter the world of men) will travel mounted on hippogriffs.

typical elves

Commoner elves will have 2HD, Knights will have 3-6HD, Nobles will have 5-12HD. For every HD they possess, elves will have all the abilities/bonuses of both a fighter AND a magic-user of that level. Note that Elves do not need to spend time studying spells, they simply select the number indicated by their level each day. Elves can move with alarming reflexes, granting an additional +1 bonus to melee attacks and a +2 bonus to initiative checks. They are immune to all sleep or charm magic. They have a +4 bonus to moving silently in natural surroundings. They can see in darkness as easily as in light, and have extra-dimensional perception that allows them to avoid being surprised, even by invisible opponents, 5/6 times.

Encounters with Elves will consist, 50% of the time, of an encounter with 1d10 elven common warriors without steeds. The rest of the time, it will be with an elven raiding party.

Elven raiding parties will consist of 2d10 elven common soldiers, commanded by a single Knight, 70% of the time. The rest of the time they will consist of 1d10+10 soldiers, commanded by two Knights and a single Noble. Regardless of the party composition, 30% of the time they will be mounted on hippogriffs, intending to go raiding beyond the vicinity of the stone circle or magical area where they manifest.

elven characteristics

Humans are also subject to a kind of genetic fear/awe effect from their former masters. Upon seeing an Elf, any non-Cymri human of less than 1 HD will automatically become frozen with awe and terror. 0-level Cymri are allowed a regular saving throw. Characters of level 1 or higher are permitted a saving throw to resist being paralyzed in this fashion, with Clerics and Cymri gaining a +4 bonus to resist. Characters of level 9+ are immune to the fear/awe effect.

Characters who are frozen with awe will be unable to move of their own volition, and furthermore if an elven noble is present he will be able to command any such human and they will be forced to obey him as if they were under the effect of a *Charm Person* spell. If a human is ordered by an Elf to do anything immediately and significantly contrary to his fundamental nature (including anything clearly and immediately suicidal) the human will be granted a saving throw to break free of both the charm and fear effect (Clerics and Cymri have the aforementioned +4 bonus). Any command that does not clearly and immediately violate the character's most deeply-held principles will not generate any such save.

the ways of the elves

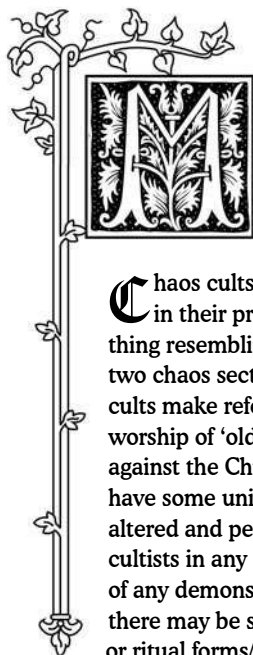
The motives of Elves are often unfathomable to humans. However, the two most typical results of elven incursions into the realm of men is that the Elves act as a war-party seeking to slay every human in their path, or act as a human-hunting party, capturing humans to take back with them into the Fae Realm. Sometimes these will be whatever humans are unfortunate enough to encounter them first, but at other times they will set off to seek specific types of humans. Virginally young humans of great beauty and human babies seem to be of particular interest to them.

Most often, any such humans taken to the Fae Realms are never seen again. But on some occasions they will be released back to the world of men, though sometimes changed: they will sometimes (33%) have appeared to have aged considerably (1d4x10 years) even though only days or weeks have passed. Sometimes (33%) they will be released with mutations. While some of these escapees will have no memory of what took place in the Fae Realms, others will come back turned to the service of Chaos; thus, any survivor of an elven kidnapping, even if not apparently aged or mutated, will be treated with extreme suspicion by Clerics and other authorities.

Occasionally, Elves will kidnap young human infants or children, and leave behind a shape-shifting changeling in the child's place. This creature will have the appearance, personality and memories of the child that was taken and may initially fool everyone, but over time will begin to commit horrific acts of evil. If they survive into adulthood, they will have the power to change appearance and will dedicate themselves to brutal acts of psychotic killing.



appendix 2



Major chaos cults and their rites

Chaos cults tend to be highly localized and very unique in their practices. They will thus rarely have anything resembling orthodoxy, and it is very unlikely any two chaos sects will look exactly alike. However, some cults make reference to larger religious ideas, either the worship of 'old' gods or spirits, or long-enduring heresies against the Church of the Unconquered Sun, which do have some uniformity. For the most part, these will be altered and perverted to suit the immediate needs of the cultists in any given place and time (as well as the needs of any demons or other entities influencing that cult), but there may be some common articles, symbols, practices, or ritual forms/traditions that cultists making reference to these major movements will be likely to engage in.

What follows is an overview of some of the major movements of this kind. The GM should be cautious to adapt as necessary to fit the chaos cult he chooses or generates, and to ensure enough variety to not make the cult too predictable even to very experienced PCs, but PCs with knowledge of these movements (from skills related to the study of theology, ancient religions/lore, or by personal experience from past inquisitions) may be able to pick up signs and act on some of this general information.

1. overt demon-cults

DEMON-CULTS – OVERVIEW

There is no single religious format for the worship of demons. Different demons will have different agendas and demand different forms of worship, or sometimes none at all. Often, demons will prefer to work with a single magician or a small group of the same, and advise these to masquerade their activities as some other religious movement. But occasionally, a sect (usually small in size) of open demon-worshippers may be found.

Overt followers of demons are in some ways the closest equivalent to what we would call 'satanists' or 'devil-worshippers' in our world. However, in Albion these are a tiny group. The typical follower of the Unconquered Sun believes that almost all Chaos cults worship demons in this open way, and there are many fanciful stories about their activities which are 'common knowledge' for peasants, villagers and aristocrats alike. The most frequent of such stories involve the blood-sacrifice of children or virgins, or of evil witches engaging in sexual congress with demons in the dark woods at midnight.

Ironically, those few cults that do openly worship demons in their sect will often borrow from these popular ideas. They will assume that this is the 'right' way to worship demons, because it is what most people imagine it to be. This is even more true of those sects that do not actually have any contact with demons at all; these are in essence engaging in a cargo-cult of devil worship!

DEMON-CULTS – HISTORY

The popular mythology around chaos demons claims that in the beginning there was Chaos, and Law emerged from this and brought order to creation. Before this time, all was darkness and instability; but Law was born as the Sun brought light to the world. Since that time, there has been a gradual but unending triumph of Law over Chaos, and the forces of Chaos have been slowly driven further into the periphery as the power of the Sun grows stronger. The victory of Law over Chaos is due to the fact that while the forces of Chaos are multitudes and unstable, Law is One, and stable. However, the power of the Sun rises and falls in great cosmic patterns, just as the sun is stronger in summer and weaker in winter. In times when Chaos is ascendant great evil can triumph in the world, for a time. Theologians of the Church speculate that in the present age, the power of the Unconquered Sun is nearing the end of a waning period, and thus Chaos has gained greatly in strength, but that in the future this will shift again to a new golden age (the previous golden age having taken place in the time of the Arcadian Empire). At the end of time, there will be a great final battle between the forces of Law and Chaos, and the Unconquered Sun will be destined to triumph. Evildoers will be cast out forever into eternal darkness while the faithful will live forever in a new Heliopolis, a golden city-paradise.



Worshippers of demons often present a different sort of mythology. Many such chaos cults claim that the time before the rise of the Unconquered Sun was a utopia, and that the Uncon-

quered Sun is a jealous tyrant who devours the lives and souls of men, and keeps them from their true divinity. The demons of Chaos represent liberation. Many of these sects also teach a different sort of eschatology: they believe that there are prophecies that foretell an end of this world, a great apocalypse where the forces of Chaos will ascend and destroy the Unconquered Sun and his worshipers. The world will be purified in blood, fire and magic; and after this a new world will be created where those who served the demons will gain immortality and become like gods themselves.

DEMON-CULTS – SYMBOLS

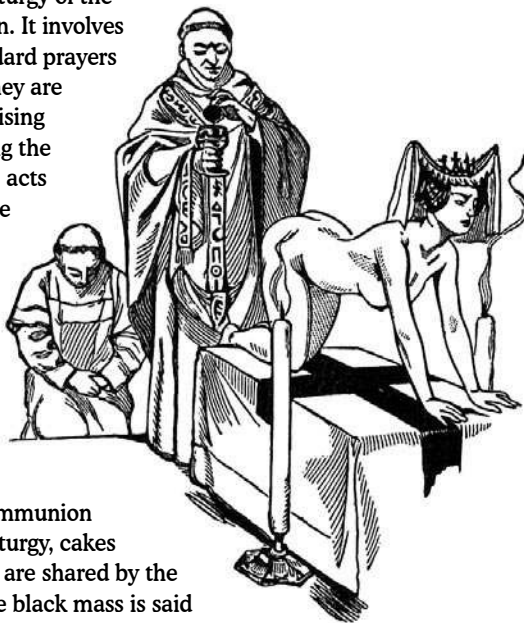
The main symbol used by overt followers of Chaos itself is the 'black sun', a completely black circle, meant to represent the antithesis of the Solar Disk (which is the most recognizable image of the Unconquered Sun). Some Chaos worshipers, mistakenly believing the Crescent Moon to be a symbol of Chaos as well, will use this symbol, or occasionally the full moon. Magisters who serve Chaos will occasionally use the inverted (upside-down) pentagram.

DEMON-CULTS DAILY – PRACTICES

There is no single set of practices for followers of demons. Common lore has it that demon-worshipers who are pretending to be regular followers of the Unconquered Sun will pretend to practice the four daily adorations of the Sun but will secretly curse the Sun while doing so. Another common lore holds that demon-worshipers will bury a solar-disk under their doorway, so that they will be stepping on the solar disk whenever they enter or leave their homes; and likewise any visitors to their homes will unknowingly be performing this blasphemy as well.

DEMON-CULTS – RITUALS

The most common ritual of demon-worshipers is the 'black mass', which takes the form of a perverse and twisted form of the standard liturgy of the Unconquered Sun. It involves altering the standard prayers so that instead they are blasphemies, praising Chaos and cursing the Sun. Degenerate acts involving perverse sexual practices (occasionally with animals) are performed at the height of the black mass, and in place of the 'cakes of light' which are given as a communion in the standard liturgy, cakes made with blood are shared by the congregants. The black mass is said to be particularly powerful if it is performed by a defrocked priest, a cleric who has renounced the Sun, or if it is performed inside a Temple of the Unconquered Sun (thus defiling it). In fact, the 'black mass' is most likely a product of invention of the collective imagination of what average people imagine the goings-on of Chaos worshipers to be



like, but as previously mentioned most demon-worshipers are basically 'winging it', copying what they imagine demon-worship to be like.

A ritual that may have more practical uses, in some cases, would be the ritual sacrifice of innocents. Blood sacrifice can be used for summoning demons. In truth, there's no specific reason why it would need to be the sacrifice of children or virgins, but once again this is based on common conceptions (it may also have some basis in truth, in that certain demons may have personal preferences for specific victims). Black masses or blood-sacrifices performed in the woods are also a reflection of popular culture, but in some cases a sect may choose (or be directed to use) a specific location which has a strong Chaos influence (either because it was used by Elves, or was the location of some ancient evil).



2. the Bacchae

THE BACCHAE – OVERVIEW

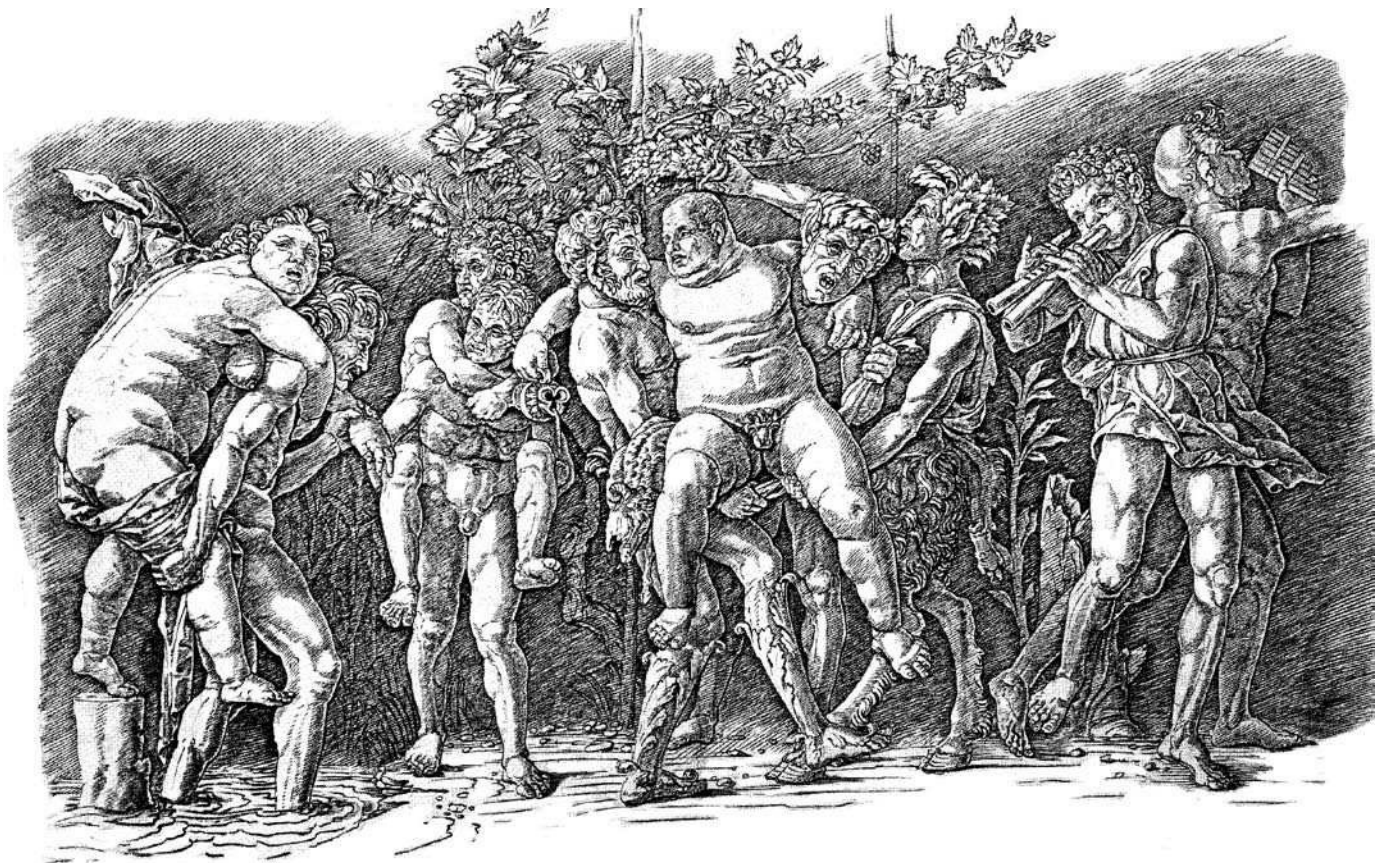
The Bacchae or 'bacchanalian cults' are cults set up to engage in the supposed worship of the Arcadian god Bacchus, the god of wine, drunkenness and revels. These sects are noted for their orgiastic ritual feasts, full of food, drink and sex. The more mild of these groups are not true cults at all; often the imagery of Bacchus is used by groups of young wealthy villains or young aristocrats as a joking pretense. Their 'temple' is some local whorehouse, and their 'rituals' just an excuse for a really smashing party. This, combined with the nature of many bacchanalian sects to have very influential people involved, makes it difficult for Clerics to engage in really serious inquisitions of local blasphemers or heretics. On the other hand, genuine Chaos cults using the facade of Bacchus can be exceedingly dangerous; this is because Bacchus is not only the god of wine and feasting, he is also the god of madness, frenzy and transformation. Inquisitors who come across a true Chaos cult of Bacchus can expect to encounter psychotics and/or mutants.

THE BACCHAE – HISTORY

The Arcadian god Bacchus is based on the older Achaean god Dionysus. He was said to be the newest god of the original Achaean pantheon; his cult was very popular but sometimes forbidden even in heathen times, both on account of its hedonistic threat to proper social values, and on account of its often being subverted by Chaos worship. His sect was forbidden along with all other heathen deities when the Arcadian Empire was converted to the worship of the Unconquered Sun. However, his sect survived in certain places or re-emerged at times in isolated pockets.

Around 100 years ago the Arcadian city states began to experience a 'classical' revival, and many of the old Arcadian gods became popular features of art, plays and poetry. Sects in honor of Bacchus re-emerged, but many of these were in fact little more than excuses for bored noble youths to party hard. Even so, Chaos subversion soon followed.

The new Bacchus cult has only just started to reach English shores.



THE BACCHAE – SYMBOLS

The vine and grape are classic signs of Dionysus. In addition to wine, the ivy, leopard, and serpents are all symbols of Bacchus. Bacchus was also historically associated with the fairy creatures known as satyr.

The pine-cone wand is another common symbol of Bacchus. It is meant to be a phallic symbol of fertility. Images of Bacchus are sometimes depicted with the pine-cone wand and the sacred wine cup being paired with each other.

In some Chaos cults, the wand and cup are used by a high priest and high priestess incorporated to the dark ritual they perform. In this case, wine put in the cup and blessed by the touch of the pine-cone wand will transfigure the wine into a mutagenic substance that will cause a dark fertility of physical transformation on one or all of those who partake in it. Obviously, in some Bacchanalian revels, the 'wand' and 'cup' are treated as symbols for the male and female sex organs, and the ritual consists of open sexual congress on the altar.

THE BACCHAE – DAILY PRACTICES

Followers of Bacchus would have no daily disciplines or religious practices. But they might secretly dedicate any alcoholic drink they are about to imbibe, in honor of their god.

THE BACCHAE – RITUALS

The only ritual practiced would be the Bacchanalia, a great feast of food, wine and sex. In some cases these might be practiced as often as weekly. Many of these sects will not really put any ritual consideration into these 'religious' activities, and are just looking for an excuse for some fun, which they will pursue without any special ceremonies. Other groups will put on ceremonies meant to be like what they imagine the ancient heathens practiced, most of these will not have any true magi-

cal elements. The Chaos cults will usually have some ritualistic elements at the start of the feast, and may perform magic (summoning or otherwise) during the feast. The Chaos cults of Bacchus may divide into an outer circle, of ordinary party-goers, and a special 'inner circle' in an exclusive area of the feasting, who are aware of the sect's Chaos allegiance. It would be in this exclusive part of the party that the Bacchus cult would engage in things like degenerate sex of the worst kind, in mutation of victims (or volunteers), or murder.



3. the blood god

THE BLOOD GOD – OVERVIEW

The Blood-God was one of the chief gods of the Northmen, before they converted to the faith of the Unconquered Sun. In some pockets of the Northlands there are still backward groups of Northmen that worship him. His worship is also secretly practiced among some tribes of Scots Men, and in secret cults in the north of Albion. The Blood God is a god of blood and fire, of conquest and violence. All Northmen warriors, particularly the "viking" raiders, venerated the god of Blood and Fire, but a few were especially devoted to him to the point of being the fiercest warriors, free of any fear of death and capable of fighting with a fanatical strategy. These were known as "berserker".

Modern chaos cults of the Blood-God tend to combine a few elements of ancient folklore with a lot of invention. The neutral-aligned cults tend to focus on honor and bravery in battle, while the Chaos-aligned cults (often in the service of a demon masquerading as the Blood God) are far more destructive and focus on murder, carnage or destruction.

THE BLOOD GOD – HISTORY

The particulars of Northman religion varied according to region and time; in some areas the Blood God was the son of Woden, in others he was his brother. In many cases he was also seen as related to the Wolf-god; in some cases his brother, but in others his nephew, and in some versions of the mythology the two are enemies. Followers of the Wolf-God and the Blood-God tend to be unfriendly with each other. These various depictions of the Blood-God may also be due to a confusion between various different Northman gods to form a new composite; in some accounts the blood-god is called “Donar” in the ancient texts,

and in others “Sutr”. The former name seems to be associated with a less-harmful ‘neutral’ deity, while the latter name tends to be the one associated with the more chaos-aligned tendencies and darker forms of worship.

THE BLOOD GOD – SYMBOLS

The followers of the Blood God often use the symbols of the weapons traditionally associated with their god: either the hammer, which is associated with the Blood God in his guise as “Donar” or the flaming sword, associated with the more chaotic guise of “Sutr”. Some sects will also use the runes, the ancient Northman script, as signs of recognition.



THE BLOOD GOD – DAILY PRACTICES

For the most part, there is no surviving daily veneration that dates back to the actual Northman heathen era, at least not in Albion (there likely is in the Northlands, but the English members of Blood God cults will not typically be aware of these). The boiling of meats and making of blood sausages are considered offerings for the god, as well as the offering and drinking of alcohol of any type, but especially honey liquor (mead). Berserkers will also consider the training and practice of any form of combat to be devotional.

THE BLOOD GOD – RITUALS

The rituals to the Blood God will usually involve sacrifices of animals, but those cults that have become dedicated to Chaos will inevitably replace this with human sacrifice. Ritualized and bloody combat will also be practiced at gatherings (though only the most insane of Chaos cults will make this lethal combat). The most sacred group activity of Blood-god chaos cultists will not be any of these, however, but to go raiding: attacking some isolated farmstead or caravan en masse and slaughtering everyone they can find.

4. the cathari

THE CATHARI – OVERVIEW

The Cathari were a major and relatively recent continental heresy/chaos-cult, created in the southern Franklands by agents of the Frog-men. This sect took on the guise of in fact being a “perfected” form of the religion of the Unconquered Sun, playing off the corruption and excesses of the church and the abuses and decadence of the Frankland nobility. They taught an

extreme form of asceticism and a denial of worldly things. Only the highest-ranking members of the cult were aware that it was actually created in the service of Chaos; all its other adherents were sure that they were in the service of Law. In fact, the name they had for their sect was “the good men”.

The typical Cathari believed that there were two equal forces: of Good and Evil. This related them to the heresy of Manicheism, which followed similar beliefs. The world and all that was in it, including humans and the human body were filled with Evil. The pure god of Law was the god of “good” and existed in heavenly realms. The Cathari believed that those who joined the religion were a special ‘elect’ few who had pure souls of Good, trapped inside the evils of flesh. The Cathari elite were known as the “Perfecti”, and these had undergone a secret rite called the consolamentum, which would transform them into perfect and pure beings incapable of any sin.

THE CATHARI – HISTORY

The Cathari were originally a minor heresy located in the southern Franklands but were encouraged and empowered by the aid of agents of the Frogmen, who wished to further destabilize the Frankland kingdom as a prelude to invasion. Thus they became a major heresy that swept vast areas of this kingdom about 200 years ago. Suppression of this sect was hampered by the fact that the Church at this time was in a particularly weak political position and rife with internal corruption; and because a significant number of the minor nobility became converts to the sect. At the same time, some of the major nobility including parts of the royal family had already been compromised and corrupted by Chaos, and either distracted by



their own decadent hedonism or directly encouraged to ignore the growth of the sect. Eventually, when the danger of the sect became apparent, and with the encouragement of the Clerical order, the Church and those nobles that were not yet compromised formed armies to make war with the Cathari forces. It took almost 40 years to wipe out the organized Cathari holdings, by which time Frankland itself was so weakened that when the Frogmen hordes came out of the Paris Swamp, the Frankland crown was in no position to defend itself, and Chaos had its greatest triumph of recent times as most of western end of the Continent fell into the hands of inhuman chaos-worshipping monstrosities. Cathari sects continued to cause great troubles in many areas of the Continent (particularly Burgundy and the Principalities) for decades to come.

The original Cathari sect never reached Albion's shores, but since that time there have been isolated cases of Cathari chaos-cults emerging in isolated pockets in the kingdom.

THE CATHARI – SYMBOLS

The chief image of the Cathari, who did not engage in the making of idols, was the eight-pointed star.

THE CATHARI – DAILY PRACTICES

The Cathari were required to dress very modestly in humble clothing, and not to adorn themselves with jewelry or perfumes. They were forbidden from eating any meat, or engaging in sexual activity. The 'Perfecti' were exempt from these taboos, as they had undergone the special ritual of 'consolamentum' (which made them completely 'pure' and immune to any sin) and they were thus permitted to do absolutely anything, as no act would be sinful to them. The Cathari had their own sets of prayers, which were somewhat similar in tone to prayers to the Unconquered Sun but made no reference to the Sun itself. To preserve themselves from evil, regular Cathari were required to receive regular blessings in the form of the laying-on-of-hands from a Perfecti.

THE CATHARI – RITUALS

The group rites of the Cathari were led by one or more Perfecti, and would consist in the singing of Cathari hymns, and the laying of hands by the Perfecti over the congregants. At these meetings it was said that 'miraculous' healings would frequently take place, which proved the Perfecti's powers (although in fact these healings were done with the use of demonic chaos magic and would often be either illusory or bring about dark consequences).

The greatest ritual of the Cathari was the rite of Consolamentum, where a congregant chosen to join the ranks of the Perfecti would be bathed in 'true holy waters'. These would supposedly make them completely pure and incapable of being affected by any sin. In fact, this ritual would bind them to the demons that were the true masters of the Cathari, and would cause mutations. Anyone who underwent the Consolamentum would receive the moderate mutation of "haunting intelligence", as well as a 50% chance of one other randomly determined mutation. Many Perfecti would also be trained in the use of magic.

5. donatists / lollarðs

DONATISTS – OVERVIEW

"Donatism" is a broad term for another variety of heresy against the Church of the Unconquered Sun. Obviously, not all Donatist movements are in fact Chaos cults, some are just individuals who are in theological error, but as Donatism is a form of rebellion against Church authority, it is easy for these movements to be secretly subverted into the worship of Chaos. Donatism refers to a number of different movements and sects that emerged over history, all of which hold in common one core belief: that anyone who is in a state of sin is incapable of validly performing the functions of the Church. In some cases this is taken to mean that regular priests who have committed sin are incapable of effective performing the various rites of the Church (like leading prayer, marriage, funerary blessings, and the confirmation of new believers), rendering any of these invalid. Often, Donatist movements will take a broader scale, suggesting that the corruption that is rife in the hierarchy of the church or the known decadence of the Pontifex renders the entire Church invalid. Its leadership is often composed of priests or monks who are particularly zealous and strict in their piety, tending toward asceticism, and fervent about the persecution of 'sinners'. In some cases, Donatist movements advocate the total abolition of the priesthood and the regular Church hierarchy, in favor of either a populist movement of a 'priesthood of all believers', or in favor of a Church composed entirely of Clerics (although Clerics are of course also capable of sin, but tend to be more noble and pure in their motivation, having been chosen by the Unconquered Sun, rather than choosing a life in the Church bureaucracy).



DONATISTS – HISTORY

The term 'Donatist' comes from the name of the Church bishop Donatus, who lived at the time of the last great persecution of the followers of the Unconquered Sun in Arcadian times. This bishop, who never renounced his faith, argued fervently after the persecutions had ended that all those priests and bishops who had renounced their faith to save their lives were no longer worthy of conducting the rites of the faith, and all who had received rites like marriage and confirmation were not validated (and would need these rites repeated by a priest who was not guilty of the sin of renunciation). His argument was very popular among the faithful who had suffered terrible persecution only to find that traitorous priests and bishops who had saved their own skin were returned to positions of authority. But the Church ruled against Donatus, in part because it was

their desire to reconcile the faith and bring as many as possible back into the fold, and in part because it was simply impractical to establish this kind of precedent in an institution that was bound to be rife with mortal folly.

After Donatus' time, many other movements emerged with similar beliefs and stringent expectations, most of which inevitably ended up in direct conflict with an increasingly corrupt Church hierarchy. Some of these movements even ended up attracting Clerics, who were deeply frustrated with having to put up with self-serving priestly bureaucrats without any evidence of divine power. However, the Clerical order itself, realizing the necessity of the massive Church infrastructure to their important work, always sided with the Pontificate.

Many later Donatist movements ended up being compromised by infiltration from Chaos-worshippers seeking to cause instability in the Church, and naturally this justified more intense repression of the Donatists.

A major Donatist sect emerged in Albion in the last century, led by an Oxford theologian named John Wycliff. He combined Donatist ideas about the abolition of the Church hierarchy with a strong iconoclastic bent against the reliance on relics and shrines, and with a rejection of luxury and vanity. He also advocated that every believer should be able to read the Book of Law for themselves, and thus translated the book from Arcadian to English. His followers were termed "Lollards", a slang word for uneducated rubes. His sect rose to considerable influence in part due to the patronage of John of Gaunt, son of Edward the

Great and the powerful uncle to the inept King Richard of Bordeaux. While Wycliff himself was apparently not a Chaos-worshiper, his movement came to be infiltrated by Chaos cultists, who played a part in encouraging the great Peasant Revolt of 1381. Wycliff lost much of his aristocratic backing, and died shortly thereafter, being posthumously declared a heretic. Lollard sects continued to thrive for decades in spite of being repressed, and some pockets of Lollardry still persist to this day.

DONATISTS – SYMBOLS

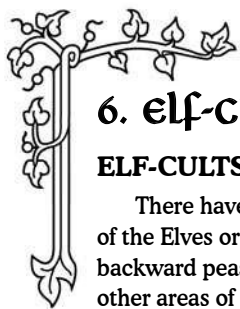
Over the centuries Donatist movements have rallied behind a number of different signs, but many of these movements are also iconoclastic and thus do not use imagery. In Albion, the most common 'sign' that may identify a Lollard would be possession of a "Wycliff Book", an English-language copy of the Book of Law.

DONATISTS – DAILY PRACTICES

In theory, most Donatists will appear to practice the same daily rites as a typical follower of the Unconquered Sun, specifically prayers to the sun four times a day, and the rite of the Mass of the Sun every Sunday. However, they will secretly meet in their own groups, and those who can read will engage in readings of the Book of Law in English.

DONATISTS – RITUALS

There are no specific rituals practiced by all Donatists, outside of their own versions of the typical Church rites. Chaos cults masquerading as Donatist or Lollard movements will usually only have an inner circle that know they are in the service of Chaos, and these will use demonic ritual practices as guided by whatever demons they serve.



6. elf-cults

ELF-CULTS – OVERVIEW

There have been a wide variety of cults of worship of the Elves or elven deities. These range from groups of backward peasants who venerate elves near stone circles or other areas of elven activity, to groups of magisters seeking to venerate Elves in the hopes of obtaining their great magical powers, to corrupt aristocrats who venerate the perverse decadence of the elven court, or all sorts of other groups, including artists inspired by the ancient elven tales or those who venerate the Elven Death Cult in the hopes of obtaining immortality through undeath.

Note: magisters may sometimes venerate the elven high god of magic, Abracax, directly. Abracax also sometimes masquerades as the human heathen god Mercury. See the section on Mercury for more information about this deity and his gifts.

ELF-CULTS – HISTORY

The elves created human beings, or at least used magic to cause their evolution from primitive ape-like beasts. The early humans were slaves to the elves, and had been made to worship their long-lived masters as gods over many generations. Eventually the elves fell to decadence, and the humans (in Albion led by the great Cymri wizard-kings) overthrew the Elves and gained their freedom. In spite of this, there were many humans who continued to venerate the Elves or the elven gods, be it the Chaos gods of magic, or the elven death god. For some this was a means of obtaining power, for others, it was due to primitive fear and superstition, seeking to placate the Elves in those places where the Elves were still capable of coming through their twilight realm to our own world.

In almost all cultures and time periods, these sects were forbidden. They were seen, even among heathens, as dangerous and nearly treasonous to the human species itself, to so venerate their former overlords.

Albion, having been the regional epicenter of elven power, and the isle with the most preponderance of elven sites and circles, has always had a disproportionate amount of elven chaos cults. Uncovering them is sometimes made more complicated by the fact that much of the peasantry engage in some folk-practices that seek to placate elves, not out of worship but as



superstition. These can sometimes be confused for cult activity, or conversely can act as cover for genuine Chaos cults.

Cymri travelers are frequently accused by ignorant folk of being Elven Chaos cultists, but in fact the vast majority of Cymri have an intense aversion to the worship of Elves, considering themselves the true descendants of the selfsame Cymric Kings who had overthrown the Elves long ago. Even so, a few truly ruthless renegades among the Cymri may deal with the Elves. Likewise, some opportunistic Cymri may try to defraud gullible peasants or burghers into thinking that they have special magical connections to the elves, starting a false cult for money-making purposes.

ELF-CULTS – SYMBOLS

Obviously, stone circles and menhirs are large scale symbols associated with the Elves. However, lesser modes of recognition include the elven 7-pointed star (or heptagram) or the spiral. Among followers of the Elven Death-Cult, the skull is a common symbol.

ELF-CULTS – DAILY PRACTICES

Elven cults tend not to have many day-to-day practices. Some peasants who believe in superstitious means of placating or warding off the elves may leave out saucers of milk, or line their doorway with salt. True elven Chaos cultists may be familiar with prayers in the elven language, which they may recite daily in secret.

ELF-CULTS – RITUALS

An elven Chaos cult will usually seek to meet at a stone circle or other elven site, at every full moon, where they may attempt to perform rituals (real or concocted) to try to call forth the elves. In the case of elven death cults, they will meet in underground locations if possible, or in those particular elven sites known or believed to be connected to the elven death god. Their rites will involve human sacrifice.

7. the cult of eros and venus

EROS & VENUS CULT – OVERVIEW

Venus was a fairly major goddess in the old Arcadian heathen pantheon, namely the goddess of love. Eros (also called Cupid) was her child, often depicted as a winged cherub, and was the demigod of romantic attraction. Both of them were also related to the issue of sex, and one aspect of Venus was as the patron goddess of prostitutes. The veneration of these paired deities came to an end when the Arcadian Empire converted to the sole worship of the Unconquered Sun, but since that time Venus and Eros continued to remain in the public consciousness to varying degrees in art, poetry and song.

Chaos cults that venerate Eros and Venus pervert this relatively innocent veneration into the worship of hedonism and (sexual) debauchery, sometimes culminating in mutation or human sacrifice. These modern chaos cults are occasionally limited to a single sex (more often women than men), in which case unaware victims of the opposite sex are recruited by seduction or force to their rites; but more often they are composed of a mix of genders.



EROS & VENUS CULT – HISTORY

To the Arcadians, Venus was a respectable goddess (and prostitution was seen in a more respectable light in those times than it is in the present age), and Eros a minor deity related to her sect. After the Arcadians converted to the worship of the Unconquered Sun, organized worship of Venus came to an end. Only references in art and some folk superstitions were maintained over the centuries. Eros and Venus did not become important sources of Chaos cult activity until the last century, where several Chaos cults emerged or were discovered active among the urban wealthy, the nobility, and even the priesthood in Arcadia. This coincided with the rise of the 'renacimiento', the era of artistic innovation and renewed interest in all things Classical. These cults gradually spread to other parts of the continent. They are still relatively rare as of yet in Albion, but have begun to emerge here as well.

EROS & VENUS CULT – SYMBOLS

Venus is sometimes represented by the symbol known as the vesica piscis, or by the clam shell. She is also represented by a rose. Eros by the bow and arrow, or the heart pierced by an arrow, or the dolphin. Eros is also represented by the erect phallus. These are all in addition to their visual depiction, which can be separate or together. Venus is always a beautiful woman, and Eros is usually depicted as a young boy (or more rarely, a teenage youth) with angel wings and his bow. Sometimes they are shown in a pose of a motherly embrace. Often they are depicted naked, or barely covered by flimsy clothing or a strategically placed piece of cloth.

EROS & VENUS CULT – DAILY PRACTICES

There's no set standard of daily practices for members of the cult. Certain cults might require members to hold a secret shrine to Venus and Eros in their homes, and make offerings of rose water, myrtle, wine, or flowers. Sexual activity is sacred to

Venus and Eros, and while it would be highly unlikely for any cult of these deities to forbid sexual activity, some might require that this activity be performed always in some kind of ritualized form (obligatory on certain days, or with the priests or priestesses of the cult, or in certain particularly debauched form).

EROS & VENUS CULT – RITUALS

The cult will typically gather to commit orgiastic practices, including drunkenness and possibly drug use, but mainly sexual activity. These rituals will include chanting and the veneration of the icon of Venus and/or Eros. They may culminate in inner-circle rites that will involve the sacrifice or mutation of a chosen cultist or victim. The entire month of April (the month of spring blooming) is especially sacred, and cult activity will be at its peak at this time. Another important ritual date is mid-August, when a feast will take place involving the sacrifice of a lamb, and potentially the deflowering of virgins; some very degenerate cults might go as far as conducting perversity with animals at this time. In September at summer's end, there is a ritual involving the veneration of childbirth; which chaos cults might alter to produce the generation of mutations or mutated offspring of cultists. And in October there is another animal-rite involving the blood sacrifice of a bull. Not every Chaos cult will follow these traditional dates; cults that are not informed of traditional practices may follow a completely different calendar, feasting at every full moon or the like.



8. frog-cults

FROG-CULTS – OVERVIEW

The triumph of the Frogmen in conquering the former Frankland kingdom was a devastatingly traumatic event for the followers of the Unconquered Sun. For many followers, the result was fear and panic. For some, it redoubled their piety and religious fervor, dedicating themselves to fighting Chaos with more zeal than ever. But for a few, it was seen as a sign of the failure of the power of Law and impending doom. Either out of nihilism, a desire for power, or just wanting to be on the side of the victors, these people turned to worshipping the Frogmen's cult.

The form a Frog-cult takes depends mainly on whether the cult is actually in contact with agents of the Frog "god", be they frogmen themselves, or (more commonly in Albion) human agents who have been sent as infiltrators from Frogland. Those sects that are not in any such contact will most likely create a worship that fits common ideas about Frogmen and Chaos typical to uniformed citizenry. These will vary wildly. On the other hand, sects guided by Frogman agents will follow a much more standardized structure.

FROG-CULTS – HISTORY

The Frog-men have worshiped the demon they call their god for untold ages, from the time that they were just barbaric humanoids in various parts of the Continent. In some areas where tiny pockets of barbaric Frogmen tribes still exist (including the English swamps), this worship is brutish and crude, with idols built from mud, on large log altars, and with primitive rites of dancing, frenzy, and sacrifice led by a Frogman shaman. The Frogmen of the Paris Swamp, the largest single population of Frogmen on the continent, found themselves surrounded by rapidly advancing human cultures; and took to imitating many of the human's cultural elements in lieu of their own lack of innovative talent. This included things like building, warfare, and modes of dress; but it likewise extended to religion. Thus, the Frogman religion became more sophisticated. They began to construct temples in some respects similar to that of the Unconquered Sun, except that these had no great window for solar worship and instead featured a great stagnant pool at its center. Their shamans became priests, who dressed in robes fashioned in a style imitative of priests of the Unconquered Sun (only in green, rather than white, black or brown robes); their high priests wearing vestments of red like cardinals. After conquering the Franklands, the Frogmen took over some of the great temples and cathedrals of the Unconquered Sun remodeling them to this foul worship. Frogmen are racial supremacists and consider that no 'dry-skin' can become a priest of their god, whose name is unpronounceable to humans but is rendered in human speech as 'Bobgobdoblz' or similar variations. However, as they have come to rely more and more on the aid of willing human collaborators in running their now-vast kingdom, they have accepted that among those humans who have willingly converted to worshipping their chaos-deity, some of these can be made into 'deacons' capable of converting other humans and leading humans in certain rites, including rites of sacrifice.

FROG-CULTS – SYMBOLS

Obviously, the chief symbol of the Frog-cult is the frog. However, the fly is also a central symbol of this sect. Much less well-known, and thus more useful for cult subterfuge are the symbols of three interlocking circles (often presented as three coins), and the circle with three lines cutting across it.

FROG-CULTS – DAILY PRACTICES

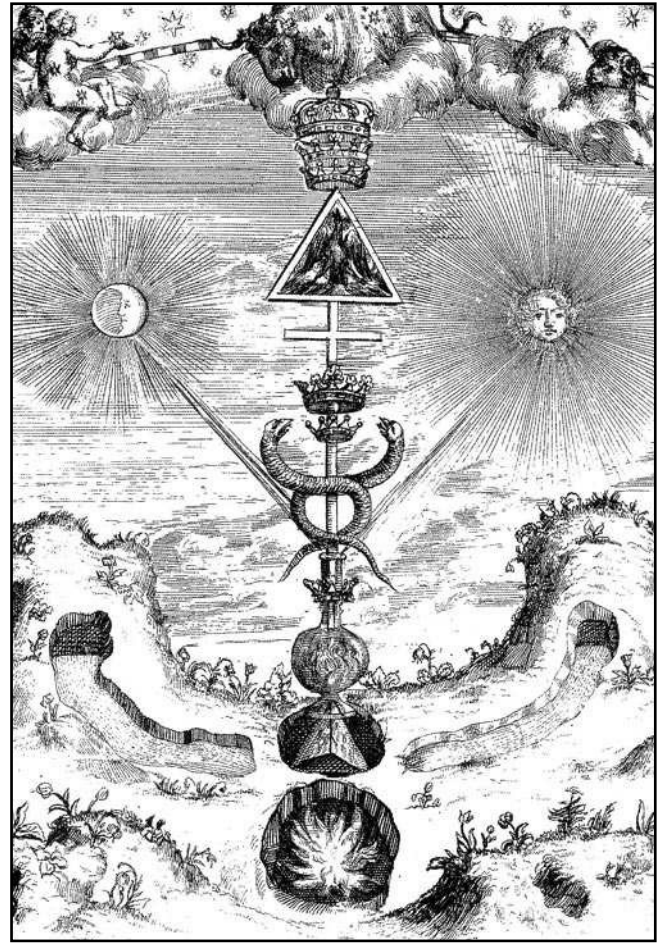
Worshippers of the Frog-God are required to venerate frogs, which is to say it is taboo to ever harm them. Some followers will go out of their way to venerate frogs and have some in their homes, although in the real cult this is not actually a practice. Practitioners also engage in ritual washing, either in the sect's communal pool or in a bath in their own homes. This is required at least once a week, which in certain social classes and locales is the most likely to rouse suspicion. Some clever cultists may intentionally dirty themselves after bathing to try to hide this practice.

The Frog-cult encourages its membership to be licentious, having sexual relations outside of marriage and adulterous intermingling. It also encourages drunkenness and gluttony. This harkens back to the cult's techniques for corrupting the Frankland aristocracy, where the sect's promise of 'liberation' helped attract the powerful and corrupt morals.

FROG-CULTS – RITUALS

Group rituals of the Frog-cult when performed by sects not actually in contact with Frogland will look like just about any kind of nonsense. They will worship a frog-idol painted or carved in wood, perform human sacrifices, engage in frenetic chanting or dancing, or the like, and possibly incorporate things like meeting outdoors at the full moon.

Actual frog-cultists who have received instruction from Frogland will engage in the rites sanctioned by the Frogland 'Church'. It is highly unlikely an actual frogman priest will be present, so the most likely is that a human 'deacon' will run the rites. They will if at all possible meet in a building or underground, once a week, always after sunset. The ceremonies involve a complex rite with prayers and chanting not unlike the solar mass in some of its style. Ritual bathing in the central pool of the cult's temple is a vital part. Deacons also get to engage in a communion of flies. In Frogland, the communal pool serves as a breeding pit for giant frogs; this is likely to be highly uncommon in Albion (maybe 20% of true Frog-cults might have these). If they do have giant frogs, then a rite of human sacrifice will be performed at the point in the year when the giant frogs reach maturity. If not, the frog cult will not actually engage in any human sacrifice as it is not necessary to their sect. Frogmen priests or human deacons can invest new human deacons, for the purpose of spreading the cult, this is done as a special ceremony mainly involving the swearing of vows and granting of authority (again, very similar to the ritual the Church of the Unconquered Sun uses to consecrate a priest). Deacons will often be trained in the use of magic; and when the cult wishes to reward or grant special powers to some deacons they will be elevated to the status of Arch-deacon and be given an anointing with the 'holy slime' of Bobgobdoblz, resulting in mutation.



9. gnostics

GNOSTICS – OVERVIEW

Gnosticism is another form of general heresy, in this case representing thousands of different unusual and diverse beliefs and sects with no particular connection to one another. They are all seen as heresy by the Church. They have only a few common features. First, all gnostic sects believe that through a process of personal mysticism/meditation their initiates can attain a state of union with the divine: either uniting to the Unconquered Sun, uniting to some other abstract force they associate with Law, in the case of open Chaos cults union with the multiversal Chaos itself, or the achieving of a state of personal godhood.

Most gnostic sects are also believers in a division between the world of matter and the world of spirit, teaching that the material world is hopelessly evil and the pure world of spirit totally good. Many gnostic sects teach that the world is ruled by a false deity, a demiurge, which they sometimes associate with the Unconquered Sun (Chaos cults will always make this claim, though sometimes only to their higher level initiates). Openly Chaos-worshipping gnostic sects will claim that this world, the world of Order, is a prison, and that one is doomed unless they can gain liberation (and immortality) by escaping the body of the flesh and uniting to the primal Chaos.

Many gnostic sects place an emphasis on the use of magic, especially those that are open in their veneration of Chaos. They will often claim that St. Apollonius, who was himself a

magister, was misinterpreted by the Church, and magic is the true path to divine union. Many gnostic sects have very complex cosmologies, of dozens or hundreds of 'dimensions' that can only be transcended through successive initiations. Their sects will function like a secret society, and low-level initiates will have very little information, while members will receive successive revelations as they make their way up the levels of initiation. In these sects, members will often initially believe the sect venerates the Unconquered Sun or at least Law, only to gradually come to see in successive levels that they are now in the service of Chaos; usually the initiations are set up in such way that by the time the candidate realizes this, he will have become sufficiently corrupted as to embrace this revelation.

GNOSTICS – HISTORY

There were gnostic movements in existence in the Achaean city-states and the Arcadian Empire before the rise of the Unconquered Sun. To many gnostics, St. Apollonius appeared to be the Great Gnostic Teacher they had been waiting for,

and the Unconquered Sun was the great truth they had sought. However, as the Church hierarchy began to emerge in the years following Apollonius' transfiguration, the gnostics became increasingly marginalized. There was little room for obscure and exclusive mystery-cults when the Church was trying to appeal universally to as a wide variety of common people as possible. And the emergence of the Clerics made the magisters who led gnostic sects seem less impressive. Eventually, conflict between the vision of the Unconquered Sun religion as an elitist

mystery-cult and the religion as a universal faith for all humans became insurmountable, and the church declared gnostic beliefs heretical.

Even before being declared a heresy, there were gnostic sects that venerated Chaos instead of Law. This continued (as did heathen gnostic sects that rejected Apollonius and the Sun) throughout most of the Arcadian period, until the time of the Emperor Constantinus, when Gnosticism was outlawed. Gnostic sects went underground, and many of these came to be subverted by Chaos. The last major gnostic movements were found in the lands of the Levant and Parthia, where the reach of the Church took longer to become inescapable. After the 6th Century, there were no major gnostic movements, but Gnosticism survived in very small sects and groups, usually as 'secret societies' run by magisters.

GNOSTICS – SYMBOLS

The gnostics made use of a wide variety of symbols, but the most common of these by far was the Ouroboros, the symbol of the serpent eating its own tail. Other symbols include the serpent with a lion's head, the winged female spirit of Wisdom known as "Sophia", the eye in the triangle, or the hieroglyphic monad (a geometric symbol that contains within it the standard symbols for all the known planets combined).

GNOSTICS – DAILY PRACTICES

The daily practices of gnostic sects are hugely varied, but almost all include some forms of daily meditation. These will be easily disguised as silent prayer. Most gnostic sects also practice magical rituals, sometimes individually but more often in groups. Some of these rituals are real magic, while others are just symbolic gestures. Gnostics will often have various taboos, the most common of which are a puritan rejection of material luxuries, simplicity of dress, and sexual abstinence. Gnostic sects tend to be composed of highly educated members (at least in their higher echelons) and will usually have their own secret books of wisdom or 'holy books', which members will keep hidden and read from or recite on a daily basis.

GNOSTICS – RITUALS

Almost all gnostic sects follow a structure of degrees or grades, where members will go through successive initiations to receive further secret teachings and greater purification on their way to achieving their divine union. These initiations will be practiced in secret temples or lodges, and will involve complex dramatic rites; some sects (particularly those aligned with Chaos) will involve bloodletting or debaucheries of some sort as 'trials' under the guise of overcoming the initiate's 'human nature'. Almost all gnostic sects are connected to magisters in some way, and thus will likely incorporate real magic to their rites; for Chaos cults this will often involve summoning and communication with demons, elves, or powerful undead beings.



9. Gaia cults

GAIA-CULTS – OVERVIEW

"Gaia" is the term for the worship of the 'earth mother' goddess, who appeared under various names in heathen times. Among ancient human cultures, this religion was generally quite wholesome; for the Arcadians and Achaeans this faith was popular among the peasantry and represented some healthy values like family, motherhood, and fertility. But in modern times Chaos cults have perverted this into the worship of dark fecundity and the destructive power of nature.

Gaia cults, much like the worship of Hecate, tend to be run by women; often the priesthood is restricted to women, and some Gaia-cults are even exclusively limited to female membership. The appearance of these cults (again, like those of Hecate) tend to resemble the most typical imagery of 'witchcraft', with an emphasis on apothecary arts, healing, and in the case of Gaia cults especially on the promise of giving its practitioners the power to cause love, pregnancy, (safe) childbirth, or to elimi-

nate unwanted pregnancies. The Chaos-cult versions of Gaia-worship inevitably focus on fertility and nature in unhealthy and unnatural ways, including mutation and the use of chaos magic to create monsters.

GAIA-CULTS – HISTORY

The worship of nature or the Earth as a ‘mother goddess’ is an ancient practice that was common among most heathen cultures. In contrast to heroic deities and law-giving sky-gods, who were more popular with the warriors and the ruling class, the Earth Mother tended to be worshiped more among the peasantry and those closest to the land. In more civilized heathen cultures, this goddess would sometimes be worshiped in various different names, taking on the role of a goddess of agriculture or of the home and family as well as that of nature. After the adoption of the Church of the Unconquered Sun, the worship of Gaia was shut down along with all other heathen deities; but like many other deities, some remnants of worship-traditions remained among the peasantry as folk-practices and superstitions. Some of these traditions were kept on by local village wise-women, who served as healers and midwives for their community, and were sometimes also hedge-witches. Many of these are benevolent and harmless. But at times, particularly in times of repression or anarchy (such as the present situation in Albion), some of these traditions are subverted by Chaos and these folk practices take a much darker and wicked turn.

GAIA-CULTS – SYMBOLS

Gaia was recognized by her image, as a wholesome mother-figure, often depicted as pregnant. Other symbols for Gaia include the poppy-flower (which was used in her ancient cult by priestesses to induce visions), and the shaft of wheat. Likewise, the pomegranate which is a symbol of Gaia’s fecundity because of its preponderance of seeds.

GAIA-CULTS – DAILY PRACTICES

Other than regular prayers or offerings to small shrines in her honor, there are no specific daily practices to Gaia. The ‘priestesses’ of Gaia will often study healing arts, herbalism, and particularly the secrets of midwifery, including the ability to induce abortions. Chaos cultists who venerate Gaia will often be magic-users.

GAIA-CULTS – RITUALS

The sects of Gaia will meet on important dates related to the cycle of nature, where they will venerate the goddess. Often but not always this will be in natural places, usually hidden in forests. Her holiest date is at the end of October, corresponding with the feast of Hallow’s Eve. In these ritual meetings, animals will be slaughtered and offered to Gaia by burying the corpses in pits in the earth. Among chaos-cults, the sacrifices might be of unwanted children instead, being returned to the ‘mother’ earth. At her great feast day, women who wished to become pregnant would particularly offer sacrifice and undergo rites of purification that were supposed to aid fertility. Among Chaos cults of Gaia, this pregnancy could be aided through the use of chaos powers, which could lead to the creation of inhuman monstrous children (that might appear human at first only to age at an alarming rate and become monstrous later on). Some cults will make use of chaos slimes to create mutated monsters to serve or protect the ‘priestess’ witches of the sect.

10. the green man

THE GREEN MAN – OVERVIEW

The Green Man is a native religion of the ancient heathen Cymri who populated Albion from before the arrival of the Arcadians or the Anglemen. He is the god of nature and the wild things, of fertility and fecundity. In the religion as practiced in ancient times, the sect of the Green Man was Neutral in nature, but in modern Chaos cults his worship has been twisted into a dark perversion of his original nature, to a celebration of savagery. The Green Man is a vegetable deity, a tree or plant with a human face, and was said to allow humans to hunt and gather securely in the wilderlands if they performed the correct veneration, and on the contrary to destroy those who would cross the ways of nature.

THE GREEN MAN – HISTORY

The Green Man religion dates back to the times where the Cymri who were slaves of the elves escaped from their masters and hid from the elven slavemasters in the wild places. The Green Man was representative of both the harshness and the generosity of the forests of Albion, as when the Cymri learned how to survive there it gave them protection and sanctuary. After the elves were defeated, the Green Man continued to be worshiped by the common folk, and eventually became associated with agriculture as well as with hunting and gathering. Even among the modern peasantry, who would consider themselves to be faithful devotees of the Unconquered Sun, the Green Man is still in some ways revered not as a god but as a nature spirit. While no longer worshiped, he is still recognized in folk art, and in traditional practices during country festivals. Some depictions of the Green Man are even found in the architecture of English temples of the Unconquered Sun.

In ancient times, the Green Man was one of a variety of interconnected nature-deities, including Cernunnos or Herne, the animal god of the hunt. Just as the Green Man was depicted as a man made from leaves and trees, the horned Cernunnos was depicted as a man with animal features, particularly stag horns growing from his head. He was similar in many ways to the Arcadian god Faunus.

Modern Chaos cults have mingled the elements of the Green Man and the horned hunter into a single deity, representative of all the dark powers of chaotic nature. He represents the power of unstoppable growth, which is often manifested in the form of mutations.



THE GREEN MAN – SYMBOLS

The main symbol of the Green Man is that of a human face emerging from leaves or vines, carved in wood or stone. Obviously, the color green is attributed to this deity, and modern cults also use stag horns as symbolic of his aspect as the Horned Hunter.

THE GREEN MAN – DAILY PRACTICES

Even the common and pious peasant Sun-worshippers of Albion will make little devotions to the Green Man, before going into the woods, as well as leaving offerings outside their doorway for the nature fairies said to be serving this deity. They may leave little cakes or a bowl with milk or beer, for example. They do not consider this to be in any way a rejection of their faith for the Unconquered Sun. Thus, for inquisitors it could often be extremely difficult to differentiate between ordinary peasants practicing folk superstitions and actual devotees of a Chaos cult using the trappings of the Green Man for their nefarious purposes.

THE GREEN MAN – RITUALS

The Green Man is venerated at the start of the various seasons, before planting and harvests. This is celebrated by ordinary people through traditional activities at fairs and festivals, like the traditional folk dances, the may-pole, and fancy dress. Chaos cults will use many of the same trappings. Chaos devotees of demons posing as the Green Man will turn back to the darker older rituals of actual human sacrifices (which are now only done in highly symbolic fashions in peasant culture), actually sacrificing innocents by burning them within 'wicker men', or on stone altars in the woods. Enemies of the cult may be ritually murdered by a visitation of "jack in the green", wherein the victim is dragged out of his home by cultists dressed in animal masks and taken to the cult priest, who is covered in foliage to appear like a walking tree. "Jack in the Green" will then ritually slaughter the victim, dismembering him into several pieces, who will in some cases be cannibalistically devoured by the cultists.



11. the hawk

THE HAWK – OVERVIEW

The Hawk is the chief god of the Scots Men. While the Scots Men, who are still heathens, worship a variety of gods (including the Green Man, the god of the hunt, the Wolf God, and in coastal areas on the Eirish Sea Mananan the Sea God), the Hawk is considered their chief deity. While he is known in some areas of Scots Land by the name of Segamon, or in some areas Codicus, those were usually names utilized only by the Wise Men or Wise Women who were said to be able to speak to the Hawk during their drunken visions. To most Scots Men, he is simply "The Hawk". He is a standard heathen sky-deity, also of the forests, mountains and wild places. Among the Scots Men, the worship of the Hawk is strictly 'Neutral' in alignment, related to nature, and not connected to the forces of Chaos, which the Scots abhor with as much or more ferocity than the followers of the Unconquered Sun. However, in the time before being converted to the Unconquered Sun, the people



of northern Albion also worshiped the Hawk, and today some chaos cults (especially in the north of Albion) make claims to be worshipping the Hawk in the old ways.

THE HAWK – HISTORY

The Hawk has been the chief deity of the Scots men, and was once the chief deity of the cymric-descended commoners of northern Albion in ancient times. The Arcadians, when they conquered Albion, brought with them the worship of the Unconquered Sun, and by building the Wall they separated the people of northern Albion from their traditions in a very literal way. Successive invasions by the (heathen) Northmen and the (initially heathen, but later Sun-worshipping) Anglemen further caused the faith to be lost. As a result, chaos cultists in Albion who claim to worship the Hawk practice a mixture of a few heathen survivalisms with invented practices, as well as dark rites of Chaos that bear no resemblance to the worship practices of the Scots Men.

THE HAWK – SYMBOLS

Icons of the Hawk are always quite simple, either carved in wood or painted on stones. They are crude drawings in the outline of a hawk with no details, and are almost always painted entirely red. Followers of the hawk will make use of a hand symbol consisting of linking the thumbs and extending the fingers to make the vague shape of a bird. They will always make this sign when they refer to the Hawk in speech, to distinguish it from the mention of any ordinary hawk. Statues or icons made among Chaos cultists in Albion may be much more elaborate, and they may think of the hand gesture as something far more powerful or significant.

THE HAWK – DAILY PRACTICES

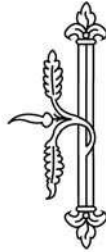
There are no particular daily practices of worship. Most Scots Men are not particularly religious, leaving that sort of business to the Wise Men or Wise Women of their clan. Some will have a wooden statue of the Hawk in their homes, which they will offer any cooked meats to before eating; the common understanding being that the Hawk is welcome to eat all of the meat they offer, and if the statue does not by some miracle devour the meat, that's a sign that the Hawk clearly wants the Scots Men to eat it instead.

Among the chaos cultists in Albion, the daily practices may be much different, and likely far more elaborate. They may make offerings of blood or human flesh.

THE HAWK – RITUALS

The Scots Men largely use their religious festivals, which occur on the new year, the day of the first flowering, the day the first batch of beer is ready to drink, the day of the paying of debts, the day of feats of strength, and the day of remembering the 'old long since', as an excuse to get drunk and fight. More clan wars have begun during or immediately after religious festivals than at any other time, except for weddings. Relatively little religious activity actually takes place, except for the offering of meat to the Hawk (again, to confirm that the inanimate idol doesn't want to eat any of it, so the Scots Men can feel free to eat it all themselves), and the spectacle of seeing the clan Wise Man or Wise Woman get drunk on strong herb liquors and utter prophecies of dubious value.

Among Chaos cultists in Albion, some versions of the above may take place in a highly twisted fashion, but it is more common for rituals to be entirely invented or borrowed from more standard lore of 'witchcraft' activities. Human sacrifice is typical.



12. hecate

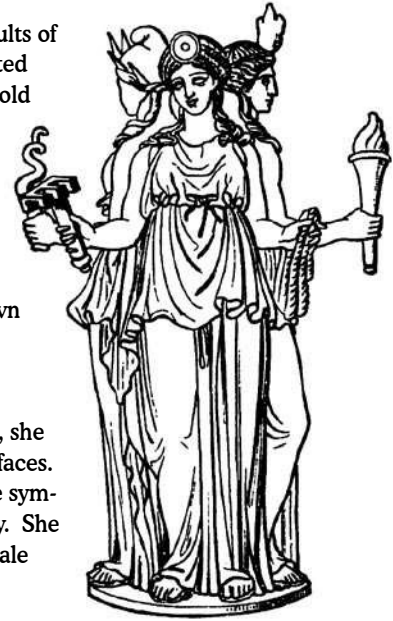
HECATE – OVERVIEW

Hecate is the witch-goddess. She is in modern times the deity often venerated by the most stereotypical 'witches'. That is to say, the group of old crones around a boiling and bubbling cauldron. While in ancient times she was already a somewhat dark goddess, in the modern era she is used by Chaos cults as a representative of the blackest of black magic: of magic to control others, poisoning, curses, and the like.

HECATE – HISTORY

The cult of Hecate originated as a part of the Achaean/Arcadian pantheon of deities. The deity was brought to Albion by the Arcadians when they first invaded the isle, when they were still heathens. While Hecate was a minor goddess to the Arcadians, she had a very active 'mystery cult' among the women of the Arcadian middle and upper classes. This sect was secret in its membership, consisting entirely of women, men were not permitted. The early Hecate cult was one of the ways Arcadian women studied magic (for in those times, other than certain priestesses, women were generally not allowed to study magic any more than in the present). And even in those times, some cults of Hecate delved into Chaos worship, their practices including poisoning and the sacrifice of infants.

Unlike other modern chaos cults of 'old gods', which are mostly twisted recreations based on fantasies of old modes of worship, there are possibly cults of Hecate that have largely managed to survive in secret since the times of the Arcadians. However, there are also cases of contemporary Hecate cults which have created their own invented versions of the religion.



HECATE – SYMBOLS

In many depictions of Hecate, she is shown as a woman with three faces. She is sometimes depicted by the symbol of a triple-torch or a triple-key. She is also symbolized by a black female dog, or a frog, or a serpent.

HECATE – DAILY PRACTICES

Hecate is usually revered by a small statue, hidden in a nook in a household, or at the base of an oak or yew tree. The most common offering to these shrines is garlic, which is considered sacred to this goddess. Any three-way crossroad is also considered sacred to Hecate, where such offerings can be made even without the use of a statue or idol. The study of herbalism and the apothecary arts, particularly the art of making poisons, is considered a field of devotional study to this dark goddess. Likewise the study of magic.

HECATE – RITUALS

Hecate's cults, if based on traditional worship, meet on each night of the New Moon (which is to say, when the moon is not visible in the sky and the night sky is at its darkest). However, modern cults that do not have actual knowledge of this tradition may incorrectly meet on the full moon instead. The meetings need to always be done with at least three priestesses if at all possible; of which to form a perfect coven at least one needs to be a virgin, and one beyond the age of menopause. The meeting place for the cult of Hecate should be at a three-way crossroad, or in a three-walled structure. The rite involves the offering of ritual meal cooked in a cauldron, a ritual sacrifice (traditionally of fish, but among the darker chaos cults it may be of a human baby), and then of the preparation of poisons or performance of curses or other magic.



13. mananan

MANANAN – OVERVIEW

Mananan (or Manannan) is the sea-god of the Eirish sea, who was particularly venerated on the Impenetrable Isle of Mann, which was named after him. He was a neutral heathen deity whose worship probably originated with the Eirish Cymri. To this day he is still given some veneration by the natives of the Isle of Mann, who are otherwise faithful adherents of the Unconquered Sun. And of course, some of the heathen Eirish, particularly pirates and fishermen, venerate Mananan as their primary deity. But in other parts of Albion, particularly along the coastline, there are Chaos cults that venerate a twisted version of this deity's faith.

Mananan is, like most heathen deities, a temperamental character. He brings the bounty of the sea and protection for sailors but can also cause storms and shipwrecks. He is depicted as a red-haired man with a cloak made of mist, and sometimes he's shown as an ordinary sized man but other times as a giant.

MANANAN – HISTORY

The religion of Mananan dates to the ancient Cymri, particularly those who lived on Eire. He was a favored god of Eirish pirates, who would raid all over the coastlines, and these brought his sect to the Isle of Mann, which being in the middle



of the Eirish Sea, and being full of ancient magic, was seen as the sacred island epicenter of Mann's cult. The people of Mann, although now converts to the Unconquered Sun, retain a great deal of affection for Mananan, and Manx sailors still make reverences and devotional offerings to him for safe voyages.

Chaos cults that have taken up the worship of Mananan are usually well informed about traditional practices related to this deity, as there is still far more common lore about Mananan available than that of other heathen gods whose cults were more strongly repressed. But these sects retain a practice that was historically rare and that no follower of the Unconquered Sun would practice: Human sacrifice by drowning. The chaos cults also sometimes engage in rites that allow them to reach out and contact monstrosities from the deep, and chaos-aligned fishman humanoid.

MANANAN – SYMBOLS

The depiction of Mananan is usually of a human figure with a cloak made of mist, sometimes atop a boat being pulled by a horse. However, a more common symbol of this god is the three-legged triskelion, which is also seen on the coat of arms of the Isle of Mann.

MANANAN – DAILY PRACTICE

There are no particular special daily rites for Mananan; offerings are made to him before setting sail, and upon returning from a sea voyage.

MANANAN – RITUALS

The feasts of Mananan are generally celebrated through dancing and feasting, as well as the ritualized retelling of the Eirish legends that involve Mananan. Note that these legends very definitively depict Mananan as a Neutral hero-god, as he joins other Eirish deities in fighting against the chaotic aquatic monster-giants known as Fomorians. Chaos cults that venerate Mananan will generally meet on the seashore or near bodies of water, and will engage in orgiastic dancing and drinking, climaxing in the ritual drowning of a sacrificial victim.

14. manichaeism

MANICHAISM – OVERVIEW

This religion is often labeled as a 'heresy' by the Church, and in some manifestations it is, when the philosophical beliefs of Manichaeism are presented in a context of the faith of the Unconquered Sun. But in fact, it is a belief system that pre-dates the modern Church, and was not originally associated with it.

Manichaeism in its purest form was not in fact a Chaos religion, but a Neutral religion. It believed in a world where there was no all-powerful deity, but in fact a state of perfectly balanced forces; there were two great powers that were in constant struggle over the universe: the Light and the Dark. This battle is mirrored in the lives of humans, who are neither lawful nor chaotic, but one of the only races capable of choosing one or the other.



MANICHAISM – HISTORY

Manichaeism was founded by a Parthian philosopher/prophet named Mani, who was born around 220AL. He was familiar with the religions of the heathens, the eastern version of the faith of the Unconquered Sun (known to the Parthians as “El Alh-Gabal”), and with the worship of chaos demons. As a young man he came to the conclusion that all these teachings were wrong, and formulated his own religious teaching of a world of balanced Light and Dark. He presented the human as fundamentally neutral, but advised choosing the Light over the Dark. He was clearly influenced by the much more ancient teachings of the Parthian magician-prophet Zarathustra, and also by the religions of the Bharata Kingdoms to the east, where he was said to have traveled. He taught that human beings could avoid suffering by perfecting themselves through holy study, the denial of material interests, and rejecting lust. It is said that Mani did not meet with the approval of the Parthian King and died in prison. However, after his death his beliefs grew in popularity and spread all through the east, remaining popular for about four centuries until the rise of the faith of the God of the Crescent Moon.

In the west, disciples of Mani incorporated elements of the Unconquered Sun cult into their philosophy, teaching that the Unconquered Sun was the embodiment of Light. But their similarity to Gnostic teachings and the rejection of the notion of the supremacy of Law over Chaos caused them to be rejected as heresy by the Church. When the orthodox form of the Church became the official religion of the Arcadian Empire, Manichaeism was forced into the shadows, and from there became frequently corrupted into sects of Chaos.

MANICHAISM – SYMBOLS

Manichaean cults will often disguise themselves as followers of the Unconquered Sun, and have no problem with wearing solar disks or using other imagery from the Church (as the Unconquered Sun is just a manifestation of “the Light” to them). They will rarely use other symbols, so much so that many cultists in a Manichaean cult will believe themselves to be followers of the Unconquered Sun until they reach the innermost circle of the cult. They will sometimes make use of a depiction of the Sun with extended rays of light.

MANICHAISM – DAILY PRACTICES

In ancient times, Manichaeans were extremely dedicated to knowledge and the study of their complex cosmology of the various ‘outer planes’ and the beings of light and darkness that supposedly governed those planes and our lives. They would also study the Seven Texts, the books on the faith allegedly written by Mani. Almost all these Manichaean texts are completely lost today, having been purged thoroughly by the Church (nor did they publicly survive in the east, where the faith of the Crescent Moon destroyed them as well). However, there is some slight possibility that some text may have survived and be in possession of some Chaos cult. More likely, modern Manichaean Chaos-cultists will spend their time studying the writings of heretical magisters, learning sorcery, or similar intellectual pursuits. Followers of this cult are also required to reject material pleasures, including sex.

MANICHAISM – RITUALS

The original Manichaean sects practiced weekly meetings where they would read their holy books and engage in instruction or initiations. Modern Manichaean Chaos cults will gather to practice acts of ‘neutrality’ of showing a rejection of ‘attachment’ to Law, and demonstrating their state of ‘equanimity’ by engaging in ritualized acts of taboo-breaking (sexual activity, drunkenness, murder, or other corrupting activities) under the assumption that by doing these things with no attachment one is ‘liberated’ into a ‘perfect mind’ that is not swayed by either good or evil.

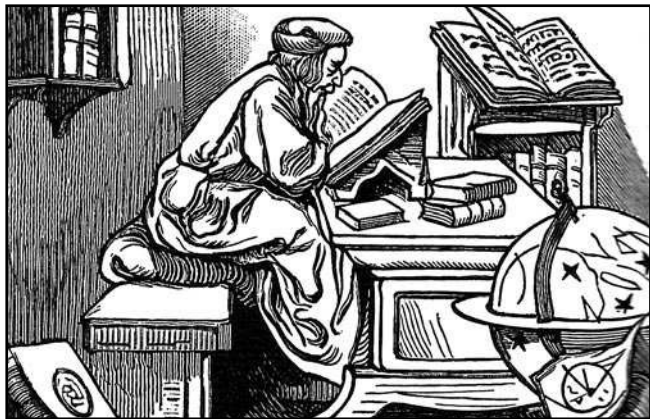


15. MERCURY / ABRACAX

MERCURY – OVERVIEW

The deity Mercury, after whom the planet was named, was one of the most popular heathen gods. At present, his sect has been revived in the form of Chaos cults alongside many other old Arcadian deities (including Jupiter, Hecate, Venus, etc.) as a result of the renewed popularity of the classical era in the ‘renacimiento’ movement of art, culture, architecture and academia that originated in the Arcadian city-states and has spread throughout the Continent.

Mercury (and the various other names by which he is known, such as Hermes, Thoth, Tahuti, etc) is a deity with many different aspects, and most Chaos cults allegedly masquerading as a cult to this deity will focus on one aspect. The most common by far will be Mercury as the god of Magic, since magisters never really stopped considering the significance of Mercury to their art. Other aspects include Mercury as the god of trade, theft and gambling (which could make him popular among both merchants and rogues), as the god who crosses between the realms of the living and the dead (a guise which may be used by a cult of undeath), as the god of language and poetry, or even in the form of Hermaphrodite as the god of gender nonconformity (which could be popular among some who might be accused of decadence or perversion by the more puritanical branches of society).



Cults of Mercury that are not mere non-chaos frauds will have a significant chance (50%) of being subverted by the demonic king Abracax, who is the greatest magician among demons and chief demon worshiped by the ancient Elves. He will seek to train magisters in creating his cult among humans, encouraging them in their researches in magic and demonology, and grant them knowledge of spells, though usually demanding some kind of price.

d100	What Abracax Demands for Spell Knowledge
1-10	That the magister makes a sacrifice of 1d100 pigs, goats or rams to his idol.
11-20	The magister must sacrifice one of his own children (or family members).
21-30	The magister must arrange the death of 1d6 particularly pious followers of the Unconquered Sun.
31-40	The magister must recruit one powerful person (a wealthy merchant or noble) into the sect.
41-50	The magister must obtain rare and valuable ingredients (metals and chemicals, mainly) for the creation of an item of Chaos (see descriptions, below).
51-60	The magister must direct his cult or agents to cause specific conflict to augment the chaos of the Rose War in a particular way.
61-70	The magister must steal a relic from a temple of the Unconquered Sun, to be destroyed in a cult ritual.
71-80	The magister must seek out the spell from a more experienced Chaos magister currently living in hiding. Abracax will guide the magister to his new teacher.
81-90	The magister must set up a permanent secret temple to 'mercury' for his cult, at a cost of at least 500L.
91-00	The magister is guided to the location of a ruined ancient temple of Abracax in an isolated area; he must clear it and bring it back into function. The area may have particular magical power and/or chaotic energy.

MERCURY – ITEMS OF CHAOS

Chaos items will require unusual ingredients, some of which include rare minerals, gems, or chemicals which must be obtained from alchemists, others may be rarer magical substances. These will need to be found, although Abracax may direct the magister as to where to obtain them. If purchased, they will have a total cost of at least 250L.

1) Blasting Rod: a specially constructed wand or staff with a crystal tip, which can fire a blast at will. The blast is fired as a ranged attack roll, with a range up to 80' distance, doing 2d6 electrical damage to anyone struck by it.

2) Caduceus Wand: a wand in the form of Mercury's famous caduceus, this item can hold one charge of three different spells. These spells must be set at the moment of construction. When used up, the Magister can recharge them by casting the spell into the wand.

3) Chaotically Charged Statue of "Mercury": This idol will have powerful effects over enemies of the magister. Any opponent of the cult who sees the idol will need to make a saving throw (characters above 9th level will be immune, and Clerics of any level will have a +4 bonus) to avoid the effect. The effect will be one of the following: 1—paralysis; 2—blindness; 3—Confusion (as per the spell effect); 4—Enfeeblement (as per the spell).

4) Mutagenic Grail/Font: a chaos-magical cup or fountain that, when drunk from, will cause Mutation. If the imbiber is not an initiate of the cult, they will also have to make a saving throw or become enthralled (charmed) into the service of the magister who created it.

5) Ring of Power: a ring made of a mix of gold and silver with a small gem inlaid, this object requires 500L worth of materials. The ring grants one of the following powers: 1—altered appearance (the ring changes the wearer's appearance to the specific appearance of a different person when worn); 2—barrier (once per day the ring can create an invisible barrier with 50 hit points around the wearer; the wearer can attack or cast spells outwardly without difficulty but all damaging attacks strike the barrier instead of the wearer; the effect lasts until the hit points of the barrier are depleted or until the wearer takes off the ring); 3—influence (the wearer can attempt to charm person, as per the spell, once a day); 4—protection (+2 to AC and saving throws); 5—spell turning (when worn, the ring reflects any spell cast at the magister back on the caster; it works regardless of whether the spell being cast on him is benevolent or harmful); 6—survival (when worn, the wearer does not need to eat, drink, or breathe, and is immune to any damage from heat/fire or cold).

6) Talisman: a magical amulet with an elven glyph inscribed upon it. It can provide one of the following effects, once per day: 1—defense (granting an Armor Class equivalent to wearing plate mail, for 10 minutes); 2—flight (as per the *Fly* spell, for one hour); 3—healing (restores 1d6+1 hit points); 4—invisibility (as per the spell, for up to one hour); 5—protection from normal missiles (as per the spell, for 10 minutes); 6—swiftness (as per the *Haste* spell for 9 rounds).

All of these magical objects are imbued with chaos energy and thus have a chance of causing mutation. The chance is a cumulative 1% chance per month, each month that the object is in one's possession (on one's person).

MERCURY – HISTORY

Mercury was another of the popular gods of the Arcadian pantheon, with a vast portfolio of powers that covered a number of different classes. His



worship was suppressed along with all other heathen deities in the time of the Emperor Constantinus. But since that time he has still been venerated by magisters as a symbol of magic. For some, Mercury replaces St. Apollonius as the patron and model-example for how magisters should act. For a few, this leads to the worship of magical power for its own sake, and the joining or creating of Chaos cults.

MERCURY – SYMBOLS

The typical symbols of Mercury are the caduceus wand, the palm leaf, the number four, the horned goat's head, or a stylized symbol of a fish.

MERCURY – DAILY PRACTICES

There are no specific daily practices for followers of Mercury in modern chaos cults. However, the study of magic is common, as is the reading of poetry or playing of games of chance (both of which are sacred to Mercury).

MERCURY – RITUALS

Sects of Mercury will vary wildly in their rituals, but will often meet on Wednesday nights. Sects might meet in open fields, in specially made temple-rooms (temporary or permanent), in caves or in tombs. They will sacrifice pigs, goats and lambs (human sacrifice may be possible in particularly open chaotic cults, but it is uncommon except on special occasions), and burn incense and perform secret chants.



16. nodens

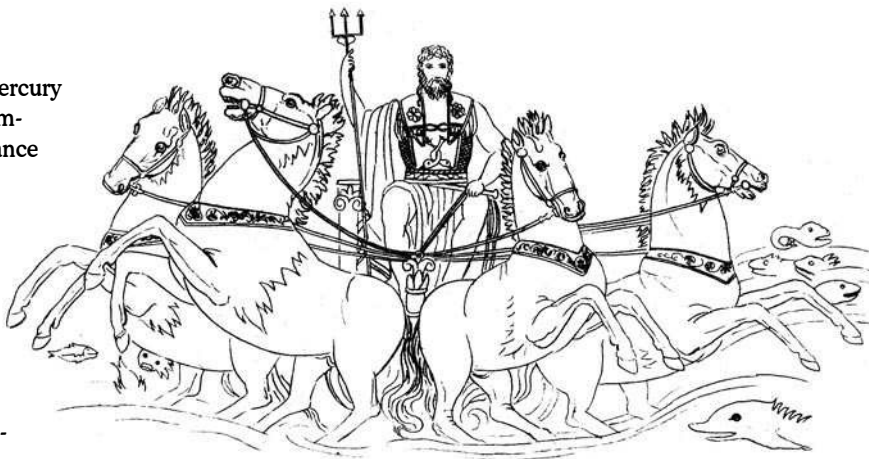
NODENS – OVERVIEW

Nodens was one of the popular gods of the Cymri after their liberation from the Elves. Among the modern Welsh and the western counties of Albion that border Wales, he is still held in high reverence in folk tales and local folkloric festival traditions. A highly benign god of healing, hunting, and fishing, his sect at first glance does not appear likely to be prone to Chaos cultism; but from the time of the revolt of the barbarian wizard-king Owain Glyndwr (some four decades prior to the start of the campaign), Nodens' folk-cult has become subverted by anti-English Welsh rebels as a nationalist figure in revolt against the English crown. Nodens has been subverted in some of these sects into a cult dedicated to revenge and murder of English overlords, and the overthrow of the Unconquered Sun to restore the 'old faith' of the Cymri folk. This includes seeking to destroy the Clerics, who have made their headquarters in Albion in the ancient holy sites in Somerset.

NODENS – HISTORY

The god Nodens may have originally been a great Cymri (or half-fae Cymri) hero. Legend holds he was a mighty warrior-mage who may have fought in what is today Albion and Wales, and then later crossed the sea to liberate Eire Land from the Elves as well. He was said by legend to have lost an arm, but had it replaced by a magical arm made of metal. From ancient times until the arrival of the Arcadians to Albion, Nodens was a major figure of worship in Wales, southern and western Albion,

and Eire Land (where he is still venerated as "Nuada"). The Arcadians were always clever at integrating local tribal deities as a way of integrating their new conquests to the Empire, and they associated the different elements of Nodens' cult with their gods Neptune and Mars. They expanded some of the great temples of Nodens, adding impressive Arcadian architecture, which was well-received by the local Cymri tribes, and indeed many Arcadians had joined in his worship. Two of the greatest temple complexes of Nodens were at Hereford by the Forest of Dean (in a location that has now been overrun by that forest) and at Somerset in Bath (along with other great heathen temples, all of which were later built over by the Clerical order).



NODENS – SYMBOLS

The image of Nodens is frequently depicted as riding on the sea in a chariot normally pulled by mermen. His image, when colored, is sometimes distinguished with an arm made of silver. The image of a (disembodied) arm is also often used to represent Nodens. The dog is also a frequent symbol, specifically the wolfhound or hunting dog, as these were said to be Nodens' preferred animals.

NODENS – DAILY PRACTICE

Followers of Nodens today will usually engage in worship of an idol, reciting ancient Cymric songs of praise to this deity. They will ritually wash themselves daily.

NODENS – RITUALS

The sect of Nodens will always perform the rituals around water, either a (sacred) spring, or the sea-shore. Common folk-practices related to Nodens include ritually bathing the ill to purify and heal them, or to sleep in small structures or huts by the sea shore to receive visionary dreams in answer to a question. In some local festivals in Wales, Gloucester, Hereford or Somerset, villagers will make an effigy of a wicked elf, parade it through town and then have a villager dressed up in costume as Nodens, grab it and hurl it into the sea, casting away with it all misfortune in the coming year.

Chaos cults will certainly make use of all these well-known traditions, but warp them with dark magic. Infirm cult members may be bathed in magical pools that will heal them but cause mutations. The seaside huts may be used for summoning or otherwise communing with deceitful demons. And enemies of the cult (or Clerics, or "evil" English oppressors) may be ritually strangled or drowned in the sea-shore in sacrifice to the Cult's demon overlord.

17. the rat cult

RAT-CULT – OVERVIEW

An inhuman sect along the lines of the cult of the Frog-god, the Rat-god is a deity of infestation and pestilence whose worship is associated with wererat lycanthropes.

RAT-CULT – HISTORY

Lycanthropes are a cursed form of chaos-mutation that works as a kind of contagion. Different forms of lycanthropes are connected to different demonic rulers each of which have their own interests. The cult of the Rat-god (known under various names) began in the Chaldean lands under the deity name of “Daggal”. Those first were-rats quickly spread to all human lands. They were bringers of disease and death, and were hunted by all neutral heathen cultures as evil. But they gained ground in some particularly degenerate and barbarous tribes which embraced the dark curse of lycanthropy as a way to gain advantage over enemies.

The Rat-god seems to have two main priorities: the first is to spread its contagion. Much like rats will infest an area, the were-rats will always seek to spread lycanthropy anywhere they can. The second is to destabilize any society where its sect infiltrates. A preferred method for accomplishing this is through plague. It was the Rat Cult that caused great plagues that took down the ancient Parthians, and spread this same plague to greatly weaken the Arcadian Empire, contributing to its downfall. The most powerful incursion of plague possibly caused by the Rat-god was the “Black Death”, which struck the entire continent around 1350AL and was responsible for the death of one in every three humans on the Continent and in Albion.



In civilized lands, the Rat Cult has always succeeded in recruiting the most desperate, deranged, or degenerate followers. Were-rats are so hated and despised by all humans that they must operate in the shadows and can only hope to win over the very dregs of society or those driven by madness or extremities of necessity (or thirst for power or revenge). Sometimes, they

manage to operate in disguise, posing as some other kind of cult, or as a criminal gang, or as some other sort of group, and only turning the select few in their sect over to lycanthropy. At times, they may turn someone into a were-rat before they realize what they are getting into, and the victim finds himself afterwards trapped into either aiding the cult or being purged as a mutation.

RAT-CULT – SYMBOLS

The obvious symbol of the Rat Cult is the rat, often depicted as a fat white rat, or sometimes as a thin black rat. These two different depictions may refer to two different lineages of the original lycanthrope clans. For reasons unknown, the trident is also sometimes used as a symbol of the rat cult.

RAT-CULT – DAILY PRACTICES

Were-rats in human guise, or humans who serve the Rat Cult, will generally go out of their way to avoid any unusual practices that could give them away. Obviously, the harming of rats is considered absolutely taboo. Humans or newer human-birth lycanthropes are required to help and often to provide for the upkeep of the higher ranked members of the cult, particularly those of the ‘true’ bloodline (those born with the curse of lycanthropy, as opposed to those turned to were-rats later in life).

RAT-CULT – RITUALS

In cities, rat cults will meet whenever possible in sewers, such as the sewers and catacombs under London. In other locales, they’ll meet in caves, tombs, or near garbage heaps. The full moon is the key time of their rituals, as this is when were-rats are bound to shift to their lycanthrope form. Human sacrifice is a standard practice at these ceremonies, but another common feature is the conversion of a (usually willing) cult member into a were-rat. Were-rats will also seek to concoct pestilence (through unwholesome environments, filth and rot, infection of animals, etc; often aided by chaos slimes that can generate mutation) and then plan to strategically introduce these into the local population.

18. star cults

STAR-CULTS – OVERVIEW

There are entities, whether in other worlds or other dimensions, that are every bit as powerful and perhaps even more alien and terrible than the Elves. These entities have made incursions into the world of men, and can be contacted and reached through ritual magic at times when the planets and constellations are in the correct alignments. These entities desire to experiment upon humans for reasons unknown, and will demand either live human victims to be handed over to them or specific parts of humans (usually the brains, preserved in a fluid they will instruct in making), and occasionally will request other animals or even plants. In exchange, they make gifts to the cult leaders of devices of strange and powerful nature, or even the bestowing of magical powers. The most

common manifestation of Star Cults are in religious or academic contexts, with astrologers.

STAR-CULTS – HISTORY

The alien race contacted by the Star Cult are probably as ancient as elves, if not more so. They live on other worlds or on other worlds in other planes. They may in fact be in some way related to elves, as they have some similar qualities being tall and thin, with very pale skin and very dark eyes; but elves look more human than these creatures. Records have shown interactions with these star-beings dating back to the classical period, and probably much earlier. They have had many names in different times and cultures: in classical texts they are often referred to as the Elhim or Lam, the Cymri referred to them as the “corraneid” (which in the Cymri tongue means ‘those who listen’).

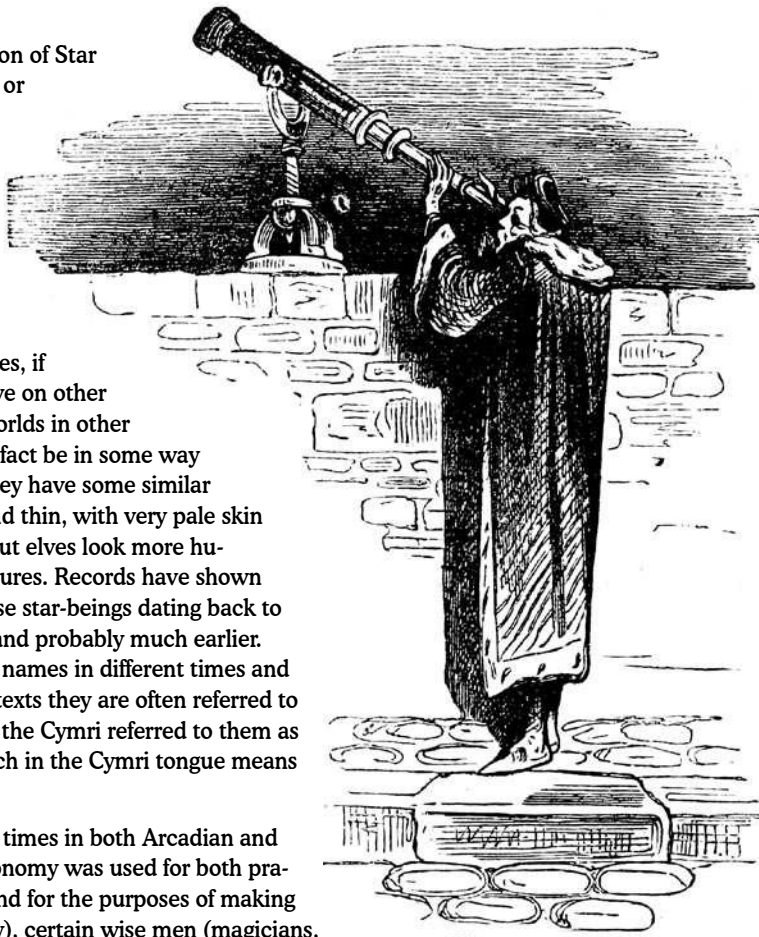
As since classical times in both Arcadian and Cymric cultures astronomy was used for both practical daily reasons and for the purposes of making predictions (astrology), certain wise men (magicians, often) were prone to spending much time investigating the stars. Some of these made contact with these aliens and recorded secret methods of how to do so. Since in the modern world most astronomical/astrological observatories were, until very recently, found in monasteries, the majority of cases of Star Cults had been found in those institutions. However, in the last two centuries they have also emerged around individual magisters who were wealthy enough to have their own observatory. Naturally, the Collegiums at Oxford and Cambridge both have impressive observatories, but these are strictly watched (as all student/staff activities are) to police for the influence of Chaos in any of its forms. Thus far there has never been a Star Cult uncovered at either Collegium.

STAR-CULTS – SYMBOLS

Star cults have no symbols in particular, except for the various symbols used in astrology. These cults are unique in that many (though not all) won't even worship the entities contacted as gods. They will also generally take great care with who they recruit, and will not wish to advertise themselves in any way. Some individual cults have come up with their own particular symbols, but there's no historical symbol to denote the cult as a whole.

STAR-CULTS – DAILY PRACTICES

Since contact with the aliens can only happen at the times of certain precise astrological conjunctions, at least some of the members of the star cult will be engaged in regular practice of astrology. This will involve both observing the night skies and making references from books, drawing up charts from these calcula-



tions. As the aliens never demand anything resembling worship, only that they be obeyed, there are few religious-type practices that a Star Cultist will engage in. Obviously some cults may take on a religious overtone and engage in made-up prayers or other adorations.

STAR-CULTS – RITUALS

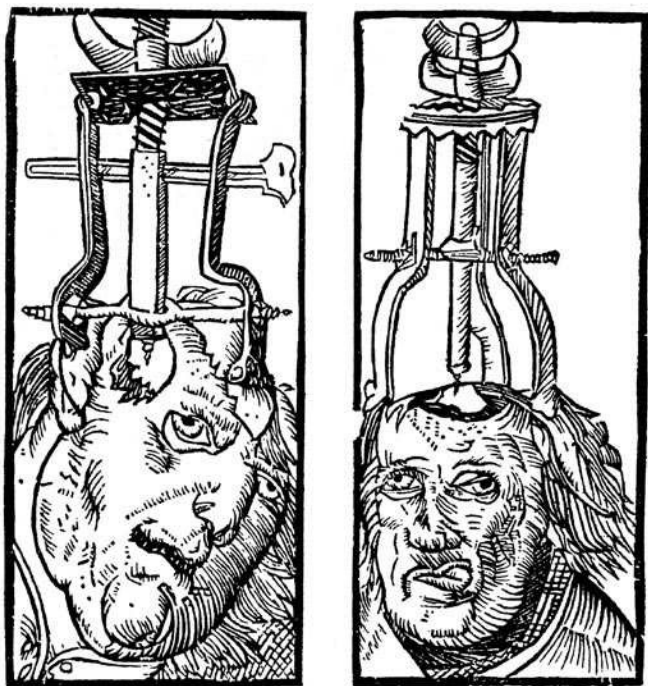
At moments of key planetary conjunctions, the aliens may be contacted. This means that the dates and times of the major cult rituals will be unpredictable. The time between possible contact will be anything from 2 or 3 to as many as 60 days apart. Contact is established through the creation of a kind of magical circle made of precise geometric patterns (that vary with each conjunction and must be derived through mathematical calculations) and the ritual incantation of certain sounds which must likewise be calculated from tables of letters. Usually the complex nature of these intonations require more than one human

voice, typically two but sometimes three or four humans would be needed.

If the ritual is performed correctly the aliens will usually appear (typically 1-3 of them) through what looks like a “door of light” created in the middle of the circle. They communicate without speaking, their words appearing in the minds of those present.

These aliens are themselves fairly physically delicate (1 HD), but possess some kind of field of protection that only magic or magical weapons can penetrate (even in these cases the field provides a protection equivalent to full plate mail). In addition to their unusual alien magic (mental powers; see below) they are often armed with small thin wands that emanated invisible beams of heat (doing 2d6 damage, with a saving throw to avoid). On some occasions (if they have reason to suspect hostile action, for example this was communicated to them by one of their psychic agents, or in a previous conversation), they will be accompanied by some kind of alien monstrosity that serves as a guard for them. These creatures have 2-8HD, and appear as a kind of tubular gastropod made of some kind of alien vegetative matter, with a bush of tentacles where its head ought to be. These creatures have armor equivalent to plate mail, and their tentacles (which can attack up to 6 opponents at a time in any direction) do 1d6 damage and cause paralysis on a failed saving throw. The aliens are not trapped in the circle used to contact them the way demons would be trapped when summoned, and can in fact come and go as they please, but will very rarely elect to leave the area where they were contacted, preferring to work through agents. However, they may choose to leave one of their tentacled guard-creatures to act as protection for the cult or as a hunter to paralyze and bring back human specimens to take.





STAR-CULTS – ALIEN ARTIFACTS

In exchange for service and the providing of humans or human body parts (usually brains), the alien entities will reward the cultists with powerful artifacts. Some typical artifacts are (roll 1d12):

1. Artificial Face: This film of flesh-like material, placed over the head, appears to make one's flesh malleable, allowing one to change one's physical appearance. By concentration and molding, taking about 10 minutes to do, the user can appear like a completely different person, including changing their nose, jawline, forehead, and even hair and eye color. It does not allow them to alter their overall size, however. This new appearance remains for about 12 hours, after which the user gradually reverts to their former appearance. This object can only be used once, but the aliens will often gift as many as 2-8 such 'masks' to their cultists at a time. However, they are also dangerous to use; every time such a 'mask' is applied, there is a 5% chance that when the duration expires, the users face will not return to its proper form; in which case there is a 75% chance of being stuck with their new appearance, or a 25% chance that they will revert to their previous face but with permanent disfigurement (their face will appear hideously 'melted').

2. Black Sphere: This object looks like a perfectly round ball made of some kind of dark crystal. When held in the hand and concentrated upon, the sphere will let out a shock-wave that will emanate 30' in all directions from the user. Everyone (except the user) in the area of effect must make a saving throw or be knocked unconscious for 20-120 minutes. After each use, it takes 24 hours to recharge.

3. Chameleon Cloak: This cloak when worn creates an effect of near-invisibility by refracting light. Anyone wearing the cloak will be effectively invisible when standing perfectly still. When moving, they have a bonus of +6 to stealth attempts to avoid being seen, and a +2 bonus to

armor class. The cloak loses its effectiveness if it is raining, or in mist or dusty environments, or if it is not kept clean. The cloak will become ineffective (causing pixellation that renders it useless) after about two years of use, or earlier if it is damaged.

4. Communication Bracelets: These two plain looking bracelets, appearing to be made of unadorned copper, will allow two people wearing the bracelets to speak to each other from any distance, just by touching the bracelet with a fingertip and concentrating. The bracelets will function for about a year.

5. Extraction Crown: This object looks somewhat like a circlet crown. However, when put on a living human's head, it will adjust to fit the victim's body, and then cut through the head to perfectly remove the top of the skull, to allow the cultist to remove the victim's brain with a minimum of effort or damage. This object is given along with instructions for how to create a type of preservative fluid that will maintain the brain in the conditions desired by the aliens. On a conscious victim, the extraction process will be excruciatingly painful. The whole process takes only 3 rounds to complete before the brain is ready for extraction, but if the process is interrupted (by somehow removing the crown) in the first or second round, the victim may survive (taking 1d6 damage per round, and requiring a saving throw each round to avoid dying from shock). The crown will function for about 30 uses.

6. Heat Wand: As described above, this wand is the preferred weapon of the alien beings. It fires invisible bolts that do 2d6 damage; they will hit (no attack roll necessary) any opponent within 100' of the wielder unless the target makes a successful saving throw to avoid. Note that the damage is heat-based and non-magical damage. It can fire up to 60 shots before it needs recharging (which only alien technology can do).

7. Eye lenses: These small transparent films must be placed right on the eyeballs. When so applied, they grant the user perfect night-vision. The effect remains for about a month, after which the film will have dissolved, and another dose would need to be applied.

8. Force Field Belt: When worn, this belt (which usually looks like a plain black belt of a material resembling leather, but with an unusual looking buckle) will make the wearer immune to all non-magical attacks. The belt can function for about a year.

9. Mental Augmentation Hypo: This vial with a needle at the end, when injected into the body, will cause a permanent change in the recipient. Their Intelligence will be increased to 18! However, the recipient will also be rendered permanently sterile. Each year after the transformation takes place, there is a cumulative 2% chance that the subject will die instantly from a massive stroke. Note that this change is not detectable as magic, nor is it detectable as a chaos mutation.

10. Pheromones: This small vial, when broken, releases an odorless invisible gas into the air around the wielder. It makes everyone in 10' around the user at the time of its release highly susceptible to the user's will, as though charmed, unless they make a saving throw (with a penalty equal to the user's Charisma bonus). People thus affected will be irrationally willing to please the user, to the point of acting against their

beliefs or their own interests, but not to the point of risking their lives or betraying their most absolutely fundamental principles (for example, a Cleric would not knowingly commit blasphemy, even under the pheromone's effect).

11. Physical Augmentation Hypo: This vial with a needle at the end, when injected into the body, will cause a permanent change in the recipient. Their Strength and Constitution will both be increased to 18! However, the recipient will also lose 1d6 points of Intelligence and Wisdom. This device is usually applied by the cult leader to some kind of personal strongman or bodyguard. This transformation also renders the subject permanently sterile. Each year after the transformation takes place, there is a 5% cumulative chance that the subject will die instantly from a massive heart attack. Note that this change is not detectable as magic, nor is it detectable as a chaos mutation.

12. Repair Device: This object looks like a small box. When placed on the bare skin of someone who is injured it will repair the injuries. It can heal 1d6 hit points per round. It can also neutralize toxicity from non-magical poisons, and remove non-magical disease; either of these effects take a full minute to fully function, but the patient will be stabilized and further harm will cease from the moment the application of the device begins. It has 30 charges; each round of healing uses 1 charge, while curing poisons or disease use 5 charges each.



STAR-CULTS – ALIEN MENTAL POWERS

The alien beings are also capable of gifting their 'magic' (which are mentalist powers) to those they choose. In fact, anyone who comes in contact with them and hears their 'voice' in their minds may spontaneously manifest these powers. The possibility of this happening to a character is of 2% per point of Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma above 15 (for example, a character with Int16, Wis10, Cha15 would have a 2% chance of manifesting spontaneous psychic abilities; while a character with Int5, Wis17, Cha16 would have a 6% chance). This check is only done once; if the character does not result in having spontaneous powers, he would not gain these on subsequent encounters either. If the aliens wish to intentionally grant such powers, they would take the cultist with them to their world,

where he would undergo a form of advanced brain surgery while unconscious, after which he would return with these abilities.

Note that this 'magic' is not actually magical in the standard sense, and does not detect as chaotic mutation. However, being seen using these abilities could certainly lead to accusations of chaos magic or mutation regardless.

A character that develops spontaneous powers will obtain 1 power for each point of Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma above 15. Those granted powers by the alien beings will be given 1d4+1 powers. Note that the alien beings themselves have use of all these powers. (Roll 1d8):

1. Alter Emotion: This power allows the user to alter the emotions of one creature per use. If the target (which must be within line of sight) fails its saving throw, the user may apply one of the following effects: Apathy (the victim will be unable to take any aggressive action), Confusion (as per the spell of the same name), Fear (the target will flee in terror). The effect lasts as long as the user maintains active concentration and the target is still within line of sight. This power has no effect on any non-living creature, any creature who lacks a functioning brain or any creature incapable of emotions. A roll of natural 20 on the power check causes a -2 penalty to the target's saving throw.

2. Blinking: The user can teleport (with all their possessions but unable to take anyone else with them) to any spot within line of sight up to a distance of 600'.

3. Heat Manipulation: This power allows the user to manipulate kinetic force to create heat. It can be used to heat metal objects (as per the *Heat Metal* spell), or to increase the intensity of any flame (as per the *Affect Normal Fires* spell). The range in either case is up to 60' away. The duration is for however long the user maintains active concentration.

4. Mental Attack: This is a direct mental attack on an opponent; this attack only affects living creatures who possess definable brains (so it will not work on undead, constructs, oozes/slimes, etc.). Each use of this power will require a single target within line of sight up to 60' away to make a saving throw or take 1d6 points of damage. A roll of natural 20 on the power check doubles the damage.

5. Mind Control: This power affects a single target within 60' distance in light of sight of the user. It allows the user to completely control the victim unless they make a saving throw. The victim is affected in such a way that they are obviously not acting normally to those around them. This control is so complete that they can even make the target actively harm themselves, but attempting to do so grants the target a second saving throw with a +4 bonus. The control lasts for as long as the user maintains active concentration, but each round provides the victim another saving throw to cancel the control. As with other such powers, Mind Control cannot be used on a non-living creature, or any creature without a defined brain. A roll of natural 20 on the power check causes a -2 penalty to all the target's saving throws.



6. Regeneration: This power is directed internally to the user. Each time it is successfully used, the user will heal a number of hit points equal to the number of points by which they succeeded their power check. A roll of natural 20 doubles the effect. The user cannot heal more points than their usual hit point maximum.

7. Telekinesis: This power allows the user to manipulate objects with their mind, although not with a great level or refinement. It allows for several effects. The user may hurl a small object at great speed, allowing them to make a ranged attack roll with the object doing 1d4 or 1d6 points of damage (depending on the size of the object hurled), with a range of up to 100' away; this effect lasts until the thrown object hits a target, so long as the user maintains active concentration. A roll of natural 20 on the power check doubles the damage of the hurled object. Otherwise, the user may lift and slowly move objects (including themselves) through the air; objects so moved can weigh up to 100lbs + 50lbs per level of the user (thus, to levitate themselves a user will usually need to be level 2, unless they are very light), and move the object vertically or horizontally at a rate of 30' per round, for as long as they maintain active concentration. A roll of natural 20 on the power check doubles the speed of movement. Finally, a user may mentally concentrate to create a field of protection against normal missiles; for as long as they maintain active concentration, no non-magical ranged attacks will be able to harm them.

8. Telepathy: This power allows the user to mentally communicate with any other individual (so long as the individual is alive and has a functioning brain), able to transmit or receive messages. The range is line of sight. This power also allows the user to read surface thoughts and judge the emotional state of their chosen target; but if the target is not aware and willing of this mind-reading, they will get a saving throw to resist the effect. A roll of natural 20 on the power check causes a -2 penalty to the target's saving throw. Either effect lasts for however long the user maintains active concentration.

Note that 'active concentration' requires that the character takes no other action beside concentrating on the use of the power. While concentrating the user cannot move, defend themselves, or take any other action aside from speaking.

These powers work through a 'power check' (similar to the spellcasting check in the Appendix P rules). To use any given power the user must roll 1d20, adding their Level (or hit dice, but the alien entities themselves count as being level 9 for the purpose of their checks), and their Charisma bonus if applicable. To succeed, they must beat a difficulty of 14. If a character fails their check, they suffer a temporary loss of 1 point of intelligence. This ability score loss heals at a rate of 1 point per day. In many cases, as described above, a roll of natural 20 will enhance the effect of the power. A roll of natural 1 on the power check means the power automatically fails, and the user suffers 1d4 (temporary) Intelligence loss AND a 1d4 hit points of damage from mental shock.

(Note: in cases where you are using a system with a variable saving throw difficulty, the saving throw 'DC' should be set at 12 + the power-user's Level).



19. Woden

WODEN - OVERVIEW

Woden was the Northman god of mysteries, magic, and the father of the Northman pantheon. Although initially worshipped by neutral heathens, his character always had a hint of the chaotic to him, and even in ancient times there were Northman tribes whose worship of Woden turned to Chaos. Today, sects of Woden are sometimes created by priests, deacons or monks in churches built on old Northman holy sites in Albion, and served by superstitious peasantry.

WODEN - HISTORY

The faith of Woden is ancient, being the chief god of the Northmen even from the records of the early wars of those people. The veneration of Woden was brought to Albion when the Northmen invaded the lands that are northern Albion and southern Scots' Land today. As a god of magic, knowledge, and mysteries, as well as rulers, Woden was always more popular with magicians and chiefs than with the common people. But the peasantry often sought to placate Woden who to them was a fearsome figure, a trickster that could bring trouble to people who crossed him. Even in heathen times, there were some Northmen whose veneration of Woden turned to Chaos. In the modern era, secret Chaos cults of Woden emerged in some of the places where there were once holy sites of this god, many of them being secretly directed by demons.

WODEN - SYMBOLS

There are several symbols associated with Woden. The Northman runes are all holy to him (as he was said to have

given them to humanity), especially the runic equivalent of the letter "A". The raven is also a symbol attributed to Woden, as he was said to be accompanied by two ravens (called "Hugin" and "Munin"; meaning 'thought' and 'memory'). The staff and the pointed hat, both folkloric symbols associated with magisters to this very day, were originally symbols of Woden, who was the master of all magic.

WODEN – DAILY PRACTICES

Followers of Woden will regularly make prayers to him, and make an offering of alcohol (called a "blot") which is then consumed in his honor. Many cultists of Woden will also study magic (based on the power of runes).

WODEN – RITUALS

Followers of Woden will meet (in hidden places), and perform rituals which involve sacrifices which are slaughtered and the meat then cooked into a ceremonial pot. Among chaos cults, these rituals would undoubtedly include human sacrifices and the practice of magical rituals if the cult is a facade for a demonic patron.

20. the wolf-god

WOLF-GOD – OVERVIEW

Like the cult of the Rat-god, the cult of the Wolf-god is primarily a cult of lycanthropy. It is governed by werewolves. But while the Rat-god cult tends to congregate in settlements and cities, the adherents of the Wolf-god dominate in wilderlands, especially forests and mountains, attracting peasants or outlaws from surrounding areas. However, the Wolf-god is also a deity that was in many ways more 'respectable' than the Rat-god or other lycanthropic cults. The Wolf-god was a warrior deity, and was venerated by barbarian cultures, including the Northmen and the English prior to their conversion to the church of the Unconquered Sun. Among the neutral barbarian tribes, the Wolf-god was venerated as a deity of warriors and hunters, and lycanthropy was not a part of that faith. But there were also barbarian tribes that turned to the worship of Chaos, and adopted lycanthropy to become savage warriors to defeat their rivals.

WOLF-GOD – HISTORY

The earliest instances of lycanthropy dates to the classical era, prior to the Arcadian Empire (or indeed, the Arcadian republic that preceded it). Legend holds that the first werewolf was an Achaean king named Lycaon, who was cursed by the god Jupiter (Zeus) to become a shapeshifter; he became an immortal demon who spread his curse to others. This is a story that apparently the 'pure' werewolves (those who are born to and not converted to lycanthropy) themselves believe and promote, claiming royal bloodline that distinguishes them from lesser shapeshifters. In more civilized heathen cultures (like Arcadia), werewolves were seen as accursed and horrific, and were always hunted. But among barbarian tribes, only some of these held such negative feelings toward werewolves, while

others respected their warlike strength and sought to venerate them. Thus began the cult of the Wolf-god. In the case of the Northmen, while most of these warrior tribes rejected lycanthropy, they came to adopt the Wolf-god as a heroic warrior deity (calling their version of the Wolf-god "Gerr"). Some renegade tribes were subverted by Chaos and embraced the werewolves themselves (to these tribes, the wolf-god was often referred to as "Fenrir", and according to them was destined to devour the Unconquered Sun at the end of the time). When the Northmen invaded many parts of northern Albion and southern Scots' Land, they brought the Wolf-god (both as a neutral warrior-deity and as a chaotic god of werewolves) with them. When William the Bastard conquered Albion and imposed the faith of the Unconquered Sun fully and resolutely to all the land, these cults were hunted down, but they have always managed to survive in the fringes of the wilder areas of the kingdom.

WOLF-GOD – SYMBOLS

The obvious symbol of the Wolf-god is the wolf; or the wolf's head. Other depictions include a man with the cloak of a wolf-fur, symbolizing the dual nature of lycanthropes. The wolf's tooth is also used as a mark of recognition, sometimes worn as a hidden pendant by followers.

WOLF-GOD – DAILY PRACTICES

Modern Wolf-cults will vary significantly in terms of their practices and what they might demand of their followers. However, many of these, relying on folk-practices, will follow folkloric versions of the old Northman rites, the chief of which is the offering of alcohol (afterwards drunk by the follower) in a simple practice of communion called a 'blot'. Hunting is also sacred to the wolf-god, and the flesh of any caught prey would also be offered to the god.

WOLF-GOD – RITUALS

Cultists of the Wolf-god will usually meet in open lonely places in nature, particularly in forested areas, if at all possible. They will meet on the full moon, when lycanthropes are bound to their transformation. Central to these meetings will be the Hunt, where they will chase some prey as a group. Cults that are not actually led by werewolves will still engage in this hunt, sometimes dressed in wolf-pelts with their faces painted in woad that causes a slight frenzy when applied to human skin. The hunt might be of an animal, but among Chaos cults they would just as likely seek to hunt a human, either at random or a captive previously brought for the occasion. At these meetings, those sects that are not yet connected to lycanthropes are likely to try to call out to these, and hope to be discovered by werewolves to lead them; while those led by werewolves already will use these meeting to choose worthy humans upon which to give the 'gift' of lycanthropy.



appendix 3

MAGICERY, VISIONS and chaos

If powerful chaos energies can affect living creatures in inflicting them mutations, they might as well warp magical energies and thus affect spells. Hence, this appendix discusses areas that are tainted by Chaos (or conversely purified by Law) to the extent that they will affect spells cast within them. The main idea is that Chaos makes magic stronger and unpredictable, while Law will usually dampen (non clerical) magic.

Note however, that PCs (and NPCs) should usually get clues about magic being altered in some area. In fact, such places present some particularities that distinguish them from normal areas. They often reek of weirdness and instability, and thus may be detected, especially by those with magical abilities. This requires a Spellcraft check (or at least a Wisdom saving throw [or vs. Spells]). Information gained is but vague, as the character will only sense that the place is altered, thus affecting magic-use in some way.

This appendix is of course entirely optional. Note also that these optional rules should not be used in conjunction with the optional chances for spell failure found p.272 of the Dark Albion Campaign book. The following paragraphs detail the various sorts of magical environments which may affect spellcasting and living beings:

1. NORMAL LOCATIONS

In most parts of the world (95% of it) spellcasting and magic-use are unaffected. Once a spell's duration ends, the normal laws of physics and life resume their course. Things immediately get back to normal, as the fabric of reality mends itself. However, this is possible only because the fabric of reality is whole and strong, and can easily overcome the slight disturbance that could be generated by a few spells.

2. MAGIC-DAMPENING LOCATIONS

When Law has a strong influence in some particular area, it dampens non-clerical magic. Treat such places as having some innate magic-resistance that will affect all spells except those cast by Clerics. The magic-resistance depends on the holiness of the area; suggestions:

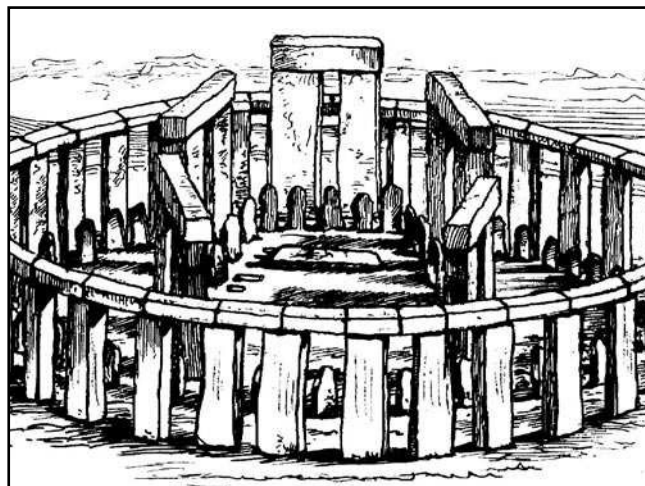
- **Slight Holiness:** MR 10% [SR14] (typically includes: the temple of a devout community; a saint's relic within 10 feet; the presence of a supernatural servant of Law within 1 foot per HD of that creature, provided it already has MR.)

- **Moderate Holiness:** MR 20% [SR16] (typically includes: the temple of a devout community that also contains a saint's relic; a minor sacred place.)
- **Strong Holiness:** MR 35% [SR19] (typically includes: a major sacred place; a major temple run by clerics.)
- **Overwhelming Holiness:** MR 50% [SR22] (typically includes: an artifact of Law within 10 feet, such as a magical sword holy-avenger or the throne of the supreme commander of the clerical order; a major temple run by Clerics that also contains a saint's relic.)

3. MAGIC-ENHANCING LOCATIONS

Some particular places are enchanted so as to make spells cast within them more powerful. They are typically circles of standing stones, but a sacred cave or special room on a ley line nexus in a dungeon might grant the same properties.

A magic-enhancing location generally grants a +1 caster level to whomever casts spells there (e.g., a 3rd level magister would cast his spells if he were 4th level, although this doesn't affect the number of spells per day he can prepare in the morning). In some rare cases (e.g. Stonehenge) spells might be cast at a +2 caster level. Yet this is only the most generic effect. The GM might want to add secondary effects such as imparting a greater enhancement on certain spells (e.g., while all spells would be cast at a +1 caster level, the spell *Contact Other Plane* is cast at a +5 caster level). Or maybe imparting a greater generic enhancement at certain periods of the year (e.g., on the 3rd of November when the moon is seen exactly between two specific standing stones from the circle's center). Alternately, sleeping in such an area could allow a magic-user to prepare 1d3 additional levels of spells in the morning (e.g., three more 1st level spells, or a single 3rd level spell).



4. CHAOS MAGIC LOCATIONS

Some areas are wholly corrupted by energies of Chaos, and as such spells cast within them are warped and produce unpredictable results. At least where human spellcasters are concerned, as the magic of elves and demons is often not affected in such places. In any case, chaos magic locations rarely come as a surprise, since they typically abound with horrible mutations of life (aberration creatures, and the like) and distorted terrain.

In such areas effectual spell-casting is possible, but each time a spell is cast, its magical effects are altered in some way. Here follow a few examples of magical alterations that may occur in unstable areas. The GM can either attribute one of these effects to a particular location, or instead roll 1d6 each time a spell is cast there.

1) Magical reversion: Spell effects are reversed. Use the reversed version of that spell if applicable (e.g., a *Cause Wounds* spell replaces a *Cure Wounds* spell). Otherwise: spells which draw on the elements create the opposite element (*Fireball* becomes *Waterball*); divination spells tell exactly the reverse (*Detect Magic* shows magical items as mundane, and mundane as magic); mind affecting spells work the reverse intended effect (*Charm Person* makes an enemy of the spell's target); etc.

2) Deceitful magic: All spells create illusions instead of real effects, and illusionary magic creates translucent images (save automatically successful). Mind affecting spells work normally until the victim realizes (makes a successful Wisdom save [or vs. Spells]) that it is a nonsense; divination spells give false results which only reflect the caster's expectations; etc.

3) Delayed magic: Spells work properly but only after a delay of 1d4 rounds.

4) Wild magic: In these areas, absolutely no effectual spell-casting is possible. Each time a spell is cast, it creates a magical accident (see Chaos Backlash table thereafter) instead of the desired effect.

5) Betrayed magic: All magic become obvious, and cannot be hidden: magical items glow distinctly; people under effect of a spell are engulfed in auras of bright colored light; mages cannot but cast spells in a very obvious manner (for instance exhale red smoke while casting a spell); etc.; and all magic-users who have prepared spells available, have bright glowing eyes or something (color matches caster's alignment), until they deplete all their spells.

6) Climatic magic: Each time a spell is cast (by a magic-user, from a magic item, etc...), the weather is obviously altered according to the caster's alignment and his intent when casting the spell. The strength of such alterations matches spell and caster level. Typical effects are: evil magic may create rain and cold; benevolent magic may create (the illusion of) a bright sun, passing comet; etc. Note that these changes are obviously unnatural and will be perceived in a range of $10 \times \text{spell lvl} \times \text{caster lvl}$ in yards; and duration is of 1 round per spell level.

5. CROSS-PLANAR LOCATIONS

In some places, the barrier between this world and another dimension (such as the Fae Realm or Hell) is thinner, or maybe the place is located at a strange intersection between the material plane and this other dimension. Besides an



occasional gate or magical feature that could be found there, the place alters spells related to magical travel and summoning. Firstly, all summoning spells are cast as if the magic-user was 4 levels higher; or any demon-summoning ritual is cast at a +4 bonus to the roll. Then, if a travelling spell (e.g., *Dimension Door*, *Gate*, *Teleportation*, etc.) is cast in this location, the caster must succeed an Intelligence saving throw [or vs. Spells] or the recipient is sent to that other plane instead of the originally intended destination.

CHAOS-BACKLASH TABLE

Chaos Backlashes (i.e., magical accidents) may automatically occur each time a spell is cast in certain Chaos Magic Locations (see above). But the GM might have them triggered in other circumstances as well, in which the caster would fail an Intelligence save [or vs. Spells] or fail a caster check (i.e., which is $1d20 + \text{caster level}$ roll equal or higher than a DC set by the GM), as required by the GM in exceptional

situation where energies of chaos are involved.

Note also that depending on the situation a chaos backlash might entirely replace the normal spell effects, and at other times simply add to them.

The table below describes different kind of magical effects that may happen from a chaos backlash. Yet, in some cases it could make no sense with regard to the situation at hand. It is suggested that the GM tailors the effect or modify them as he/she sees fit. In any case, chaos backlashes may be cancelled by the spell indicated in the left column: DM = *Dispel magic*; RC = *Remove curse*; if nothing is indicated, the effect cannot be reversed (i.e., it cannot be reversed with a spell, but usually still could be cancelled/ended by natural means).

Roll 1d20 + caster's level to determine the effects of a chaos-backlash:	
2 (DM)	Dense fog fills the air, smelling of brimstone; no visibility beyond 10 feet over a 2d10 yards radius (1d6 yards high) area for 1d12 minutes.
3 (DM)	Caster vomits 2d100 gold coins during 1d4 full rounds (can't do anything else). These coins appear real the first 2d6 hours, then turn as worthless counterfeit gold coated copper coins.
4	All items carried by caster are ejected 10 yards away in random directions.
5	A crevice of 1d10 X 10 feet deep, permanently opens beneath caster who must make a Dexterity save [or vs. Breath Weapon] or fall into it.
6 (RC)	Whenever he will speak his name, caster will suffer from one of the following: 1-10 : 1d6 rounds of booing and hisses echo. 11-17 : 1d6 rounds of dramatic music play. 19-20 : hysterical laughter echoes from above.

7	Caster blasts a permanent 1d10 yards radius crater in the ground around him (which also causes 2d4 points of damage to all within crater radius).
8 (RC)	Caster now permanently affects all people he meets in one of the following ways: 1-7 : is constantly mistaken for someone else. 8-14 : caster's presence causes animals to become aggressive and children to cry. 15-20: is believed to be a leper (-2 to reaction rolls)
9	All clothing and equipment of everyone within 2d10 yards radius are teleported into the nearest cave, lone tree, or like singular feature in the vicinity.
10 (RC)	Caster now leaves monster-shaped footprints (shoes do not interfere), even on hard ground.
11 (DM)	All caster's clothing ignites and burns (normal fire) to ashes in 1d6 rounds, inflicting 1d8 of damage per round (no save).
12	All trees within 2d10 yards suffer from one of the following effects: 1-10 : drop their leaves (non reversible). 11-17 : burst into flame (until extinguished). 18-20 : turn to stone (permanently).
13 (RC)	Caster now changes of gender (male to female to male, etc.) every time he/she casts a spell.
14 (DM)	Nothing happens at first, but spell occurs 1d4 rounds later as follows: 1-8 : spell effect is reversed and strikes target. 9-15 : spell effect is reversed and strikes random target (living creature first) within 2d10 yards. 16-20 : spell effect is reversed and strikes all targets (living creatures) within 2d10 yards. (See p.83 to see the effects of a magical reversion.)
15 (RC)	Caster's shadow becomes a full color picture of caster, or the shadow of a monster for 1d6 months (no save), which tends to scare others (-4 to reaction rolls).
16 (DM)	Target(s) of the original spell are affected in one of the following ways (instantaneous effect): 1-8 : target sprouts feathers and deer antlers. 9-14 : target grows wings and flies away (items too, or creature's weapon). 15-20 : target is polymorphed into a frog.
17 (DM)	Sudden weird rain in a 1d100 yards radius for 1d100 minutes: 1-12 : hailstorm; -1 to all d20 rolls, no missile fire. 13-16 : pebbles fall from the sky; -2 to all d20 rolls, no missile fire, 1 hp dmg/round. 17-18 : hundreds of frogs fall from the sky & hop away ; -1 to all d20 rolls, no missile fire. 19-20 : normal rain but centered on caster and moves with him, for a duration of 1d100 days.
18 (RC)	Caster gets a familiar (see Mutation chapter p.19-26) that follows him everywhere.
19	All non-magical and non-organic items carried by the caster instantaneously turn to lead. Organic items (wood, leather, etc.) instantaneously rot and crumble.

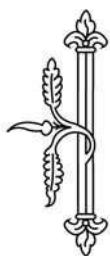
20	Caster and allies are teleported (as <i>Teleport no error</i> spell and without saving throw) in: 1-8 : a distance equal to 1d6 days of travel in a random direction. 9-14 : next random kingdom / land. 15-18 : next random exotic continent. 19-20 : another random plane of existence.
21 (RC)	Caster's presence will cause normal doors and shutters to slam. In addition, candles and torches are now automatically snuffed in the caster's presence.
22 (DM)	Caster is entangled (as <i>Entangle</i> spell) by rapidly growing grass or the like.
23 (DM)	All creatures within 1d20 yards assume gaseous form for 1d10 rounds. Equipment not affected, a Charisma save [or vs. Spells] negates.
24 (RC)	Caster gains a tattoo on his forehead identifying him as a Chaos cultist or witch.
25 (DM)	The last creature slain by the caster (or his party) is summoned in front of the caster, as a dead corpse, but animated, so follows him everywhere and complains / accuses the caster of having killed him. This cadaver is a zombie immune to non magical weapons.
26 (DM)	Random nearby animal (rabbit or like animal) instantaneously enlarges 500%, becomes a Chaos beast (use the statistics of a troll), and goes on a bloodthirsty rampage craving human flesh.
27	Lightning streaks within a 3d10 yards radius hit 1d10 random targets (for 5d6 electricity dmg each).
28 (RC)	Caster is now under a powerful illusion spell (see <i>Programmed illusion</i> spell) that produces one of the following effects: 1-6 : caster appears to have the head and skin (but a human body with clothing) of an alligator. 7-12 : caster's flesh is infested with maggots. 13-16 : caster's flesh and clothing turn invisible (weapons & skeleton remain visible). 17-20 : caster's head turns invisible, body is still visible, but seemingly undead.
29 (DM)	Nearest appropriate rock, stone statue, or what not, turns into a free-willed 16 HD earth elemental who attacks everyone on sight. After 1d100 hours, it reverts to its original inert shape.
30	The fabric of reality is torn apart. A gate to a lower plane is opened in front of the caster. There is a 10% cumulative chance per day that some creature native to that plane will come through thereafter. The gate remains in existence for 1d10 months.
31+	Caster is changed into a stone statue (as <i>Flesh to stone</i> spell). The caster is not dead however, as he has been sent to another plane in astral form (and there will have some adventures of his own). The caster may otherwise be returned to his/her normal state with a <i>Stone to flesh</i> spell.





VISIONS, HALLUCINATIONS, AND BAD TRIPS

During the course of their adventures and investigations, the PCs might come to breath magical fumes, drink visions-inducing potions, sleep in corrupted places, etc. The examples below will help the GM determine what the PCs would experience from that. Either choose what seems most appropriate, or you may just roll 1d20 and consult the corresponding entry below:



1—Ancient Elves: The PC has visions of having been an elf lord leading a dissolute life of degenerate pleasures and gratuitous cruelty. Upon awakening, he/she truly believes of being such an elf who devolved into a lesser race of wretched primitives; maybe appalled at what he/she did back then, or just being sad at having become a pathetic human. As a result, the PC suffers a -1 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws for the next 2d6 hours. The PC doesn't gain any kind of useful knowledge about the elves, and it's impossible to tell if this vision reflects any truth at all.

2—Book of Revelations: The PC has a dream where he/she finds entrance into a forbidden crypt, and gets to read definitive revelations regarding most important subjects of a supernatural and divine nature. Unfortunately, although the PC first feels exhilarated upon awakening, he/she then doesn't remember much about these revelations. Yet, a few things related to the cult's worship could later trigger some realisation in the PC's mind. That is, upon seeing the idol, the cult's leader, etc., the PC could have a vague memory of this dream come back into his/her consciousness, resulting in a +4 bonus to any knowledge skill check the PC might do that would pertain to it. (It's of course up to the GM to then give any meaningful clue to the PC.) Note that a cultist having this vision would instead get renewed faith and fanaticism in the cult's dogma.

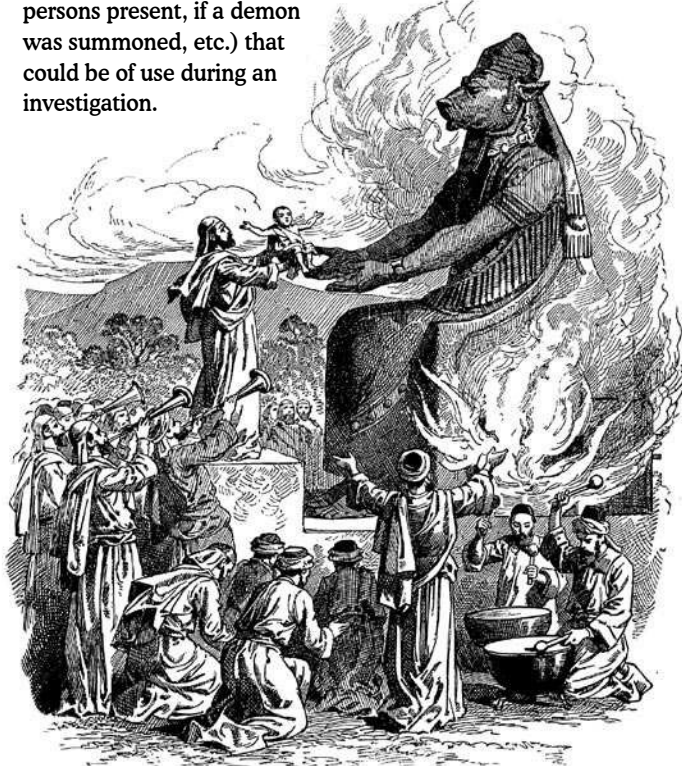
3—Loathsome Marriage: The PC has a dream where he/she gets to be married against his/her will with a repulsive demon of the wrong gender (i.e.: wrong where the PC's preference is considered). As the PC flees in a nightmarish landscape, he/she hears the curses and insults of his/her parents who wanted and organised this marriage. The PC then awakens with the certainty that the odious spouse escaped from hell and lurks nearby. As a result, during the next 2d6 hours, each time a new person comes within sight of the PC, he/she must make a Charisma save [or vs. spell] or get the impression for a few seconds that

this person is in fact the hellish spouse. Then, on a save failed with a natural roll of 1 on the d20, the PC gets the hallucination (for 2d6 rounds) that the hellish spouse is truly there. Either he/she flees screaming, or attacks the "demon" mercilessly.

4—Draining Nightmare: The PC is subjected to painful and exhausting visions of demons and the hellish realms they inhabit, having to flee them hopelessly, then suffering torment and torture, to finally awaken depressed and physically sore. The PC is fatigued (i.e., inducing a -1 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws until getting a good night sleep); in addition, if the PC fails a Constitution save [or vs. Paralysis] he falls on the ground as if affected by a *Sleep* spell. From there either he sleeps for 8 hours, or is awakened after a few turns, in which case he remains fatigued until getting a good night sleep.

5—Temptation: In some weird and eerie landscape the PC encounters with a spirit that asks him/her a favour to later perform in the waking world. If the PC agrees to it, he/she will be rewarded; if not, he/she will be cursed. The favour and the reward are normally two evils. For example: the PC would have to help free a cultist from imprisonment, and then would find a purse full of gold, but one recently lost by a honest and hard working person who will then go into great difficulties as a result of this loss. A curse would otherwise be as per the *Curse* spell, with a Law-aligned PC getting a +2 bonus to the save.

6—Sacrificial Victim: The PC has several visions during which he/she re-lives the ritual assassination of one or several of the victims, as if he/she were in their stead. When the PC awakens, his/her body is raked with pain: on a failed Constitution save [or vs. Death] the PC actually suffered 1d3 points of bruising damage; in any case, during the next 2d6 hours the PC also suffers a -1 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws, due to the physical pain. However, during the visions the PC experienced the real demise of these victims, and thus has seen many details (cult's leader visage, items used, persons present, if a demon was summoned, etc.) that could be of use during an investigation.



7—Crawling Infestation: The PC has horrid visions where maggots, arachnids, and all manners of disgusting insects crawl onto and inside his/her body. During the following day, each time the PC will notice cadavers, filthy water, rotting trash, etc., nearby, he/she will have to succeed a Wisdom save [or vs. Spell] or believe that some maggots/insects/etc., are crawling on his/her flesh. The PC must then scratch and try to get rid of them (2d6 rounds duration), which has the side effect of inducing a -2 penalty to initiative, attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws made during this situation.



8—Diabolic Sin: The PC has a dream where he/she partakes in cruel and obscene activities in company of cultists and demons, taking great pleasure in them. Assuming the PC is not a chaos cultist, he suffers intense guilt on awakening, that incurs a -1 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws for the next 2d6 hours. In addition, in situations of violence (e.g., a combat) the PC will have to succeed a Charisma save [or vs. spell] or scream "I am the demon! I am the demon!" Needless to say that such a phrase will have no useful effect on cultists and evil-doers who hear it, but will induce suspicion in any listening Cleric or ecclesiastic.

9—Murderous Urges: The PC makes a vivid dream during which he/she witnesses a loathsome ritualistic murder performed by the cult's leader (i.e., of the cult which the current adventure pertains to). Then, as the PC approaches and pulls the cult's leader hood, he/she discovers his/her own visage, and thereafter becomes that vile cultist delighting in odious assassination. For the next 24 hours after awakening, the PC will feel these murderous urges within him/herself. The PC may keep these urges under control, but it will incur a -1 penalty to all his/her attack and damage rolls. If not, next combat the PC goes into a berserking rage, gaining a +2 bonus to his/her attack and damage rolls. During this rage the PC can only attack furiously,

not think clearly or cast spells; then after 1d6 rounds, the PC will have to succeed a Wisdom save or attack the nearest ally or innocent bystander.

10—Dark Secrets: The PC has numerous visions of the local area, but appearing darker, depressing and disturbing. The PC then sees 1d6+1 persons living in this area, that he/she knows well or only superficially, and learns (sees) about some dark secret they have. The fact is, that it is true for only one of them, though this should be an important clue for the adventure or the campaign. For all others, this is simply false. So, the GM should reveal some NPC's dark secret, and can use the following tables to create false revelations:



d20	The person seen in the vision
1-2	A peasant living on the town's outskirts
3-4	The barmaid or bartender of inn where the PCs sleep
5-6	The local ruling noble
7-8	The local ruling noble's wife
9	The local ruling noble's son or daughter
10-11	The local mayor
12-13	The local mayor's wife
14	The local mayor's son or daughter
15-16	The local militia captain
17-18	A local prominent merchant
19-20	The local parish priest

d20	That person's (supposed) dark secret
1-2	Is a chaos cultist (but the cult is not revealed)
3-4	Works for a chaos cult (though isn't cultist)
5-6	Is a demon summoning adept
7-8	Committed a murder (identity of victim is revealed)
9-10	Is an informant for a gang of bandits
11-12	Is a spy for the white or the red rose
13-14	Is scheming against someone (re-roll on above table)
15-16	Is corrupt, or is used to corrupt others (i.e., bribery)
17-18	Has stolen and hidden an important object
19	Is unknowingly an illegitimate child
20	Is unknowingly an unfaithful spouse

11—Infuriating Abuse: The PC has a dream where he is a child abused and humiliated by the cultists (whether real known persons or imagined ones), in a nightmarish environment. Upon awakening the PC is subject to a furious desire to slay the first cultist he/she encounters, or run to kill the nearest one he/she knows about. Make a Charisma save [or vs. Spell] upon awakening, and every time the PC encounters a cultist (i.e., a person who is knowingly or obviously a cultist) for 1d6 hours; on a failed save the PC will attack and try to kill that person.

12—Revolt Stench: The PC has painful visions of death and torture strongly associated with rotting flesh, excrements, noxious fumes, and such. For 2d6 hours after awakening, the PC will suffer a -2 penalty to all Constitution saves [or vs. Poison] related to withstanding foul odours and disgusting substances.

13—Seen in Hell: The PC has a long vision of treading into a hellish realm, watching demons and lost souls doing abject things. Then, at some point a greater demon suddenly notices the PC, then comes and points a long claw at him/her, and says “Beware! For I am now watching you!” At this stage the PC awakens; for the next 24 hours he/she always will be the first to be targeted during detrimental situations (e.g., combat, theft attempt, false accusations, etc.).

14—Lust Baseness: The PC makes a vivid dream during which he/she encounters the most perfect lover... that is, until this lover reveals to be a foul, slimy and diseased creature in its true form. The PC awakes screaming madly. Thereafter for the next 24 hours, the PC will forcefully repel any attempt made by others at seducing or physically touching him/her. Even if the PC manages to keep quiet (which requires to succeed a Charisma save [or vs. Spells]), disgust will be clearly apparent on his/her face.

15—Disturbing Visions: The PC travels to the lower planes to encounter dead and living relatives who have become tortured and corrupted souls with hideously deformed appearances, and revel in utter abjection and blasphemy. Thereafter, the PC will suffer a -2 penalty to all Charisma skill checks for 2d6 hours, or until he/she hurts someone or destroys something (while screaming) to vent his/her anger.

16—Tainted by Chaos: The PC has visions of being in hell with perverted cultists and demons, and willingly converting to a chaos cult (typically the one involved in the current adventure). Then, as the PC converts, his/her body is slowly altered and transformed, taking a hideous fiendish shape. During the next 24 hours, the PC is convinced to have been tainted by chaos, and will seek at all cost a Cleric to purify him/her. The only actual effect of these visions however, is to impose a -4 penalty against the next spell or magical effect of chaos origin (item, monster, etc.) cast within 24 hours; plus, if the PC is a cleric, inability to cast cleric spells for 24 hours.

17—Occult Knowledge: The PC has various random visions of horror that don't make any sense at all, except that he/she hears or reads a certain word or phrase several times, and then remembers it upon awakening. This is in fact a command word, dark prayer, etc., that will activate a certain magical item, portal, etc. The PC doesn't remember what item/portal/etc. it is, until seeing it. When he/she encounters this item/portal/etc., the PC is not magically compelled to activate it; but note that this is related to Chaos, and activating it will always lead to unpleasant consequences.

18—Scary Nemesis: The PC awakens sweating and feeling scared, after having had a painful nightmare. However, what happened exactly during it remains vague at best. Only one thing stands out: the PC was killed by a horrendous foe. The GM determines who this foe is, as pertains to the adventure, whether the PC already encountered it or not. Then, next time the PC encounters this creature or individual in a confrontational situation, he/she suffers a -2 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws against it.



19—Post Hypnotic Fear: The PC awakes sweating and feeling scared, after having had a painful nightmare. However, what happened exactly during it remains vague at best. Only one thing stands out, associated with a sense of dread. The GM should determine what it is from something the PCs should probably come across later during the adventure (e.g., a room behind a certain door, a particular building, a certain group of people, a certain creature, etc.). Then, when the PC comes across it, he/she is subject to intense fear: on a failed Charisma save [or vs. spell] the PC will refuse to go past it, fleeing as if under a fear effect from the first related thing that seems threatening; on a successful save the PC nonetheless suffers a -2 penalty to all attack and damage rolls, skill checks and saving throws while in this particular situation.

20—Guided Tour of Hell: [This entry requires that the GM and player read a classical text; if you cannot be bothered with that, just discard this result and re-roll!] No matter how much time passed in the real world —minutes, hours, or days—, the PC, guided by a spirit, made a long travel across the land of the dead that lasted several days. Then, upon awakening the PC can make the effort of carefully remembering what happened during this travel; the GM must tell the player that it will require to subsequently read the Divine Comedy (but only the part about Hell) by Dante Alighieri. [This text can be found on the Internet at no cost.] With that in mind, for the next gaming session the GM should prepare one or more events / encounters directly inspired by this text. The idea is that if the player has read the text by then, he/she should recognise the situation and thus get a serious advantage to survive it, avoid trouble, solve riddles, etc. Furthermore, if he/she does so, the GM should grant the PC some bonus XP.



Cult's Name (if any)

Social Class

Size (number of cultists)

Cult's Form

• **Type:**

• **Deity/Demon Worshipped:**

• **Symbols:**

• **Credo/Beliefs:**

• **Daily Practices:**

• **Ceremonies/Rituals:**

• **Cultists Taboos and Obligations:**

• **How Cultists do Recognize Each Others:**

Cult's Leader(s)

Cult's Resources

Cult's Secret Lair

Cult's Current Complications

Cult's Exposition

• **Chance of Being Known:**

• **Non-cultists who Know:**

• **Rumors:**

• **Clues for the PCs:**

Cultist's Name

Class & Level

• Hit-Points:

• Saving Throws:

• Ability Scores:

STR.	DEX.	CON.	INT.	WIS.	CHA.

Combat

AC / Armor	BtH or TaAC0	Weapon / Damage

Character

• Age and Appearance:

• Personality:

• Mutation(s):

Capabilities

• Skills and Abilities:

• Spells (Prepared):

• Important Equipment:

Cultist's Name

Class & Level

• Hit-Points:

• Saving Throws:

• Ability Scores:

STR.	DEX.	CON.	INT.	WIS.	CHA.

Combat

AC / Armor	BtH or TaAC0	Weapon / Damage

Character

• Age and Appearance:

• Personality:

• Mutation(s):

Capabilities

• Skills and Abilities:

• Spells (Prepared):

• Important Equipment:

class	level	alignment
-------	-------	-----------

class	level	alignment
social class		home territory

home territory

Five identical rose icons are arranged horizontally. Each icon consists of a stylized rose flower with two leaves on a stem. To the right of each rose is a label, and to the left is a small text label 'mob.'.

Label	mob.
stp	mob.
dex	mob.
con	mob.
int	mob.
wis	mob.
chr	mob.

melee (STR)

missile (DEX)

**saving
throw**

BASE

(16 - Cha Mod.)

other modifiers:

weapon in hand: _____

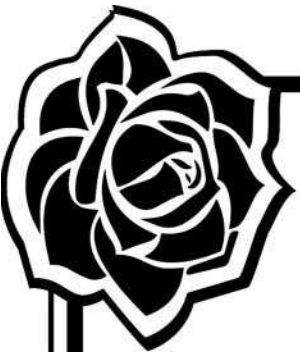
prepared spells

Weapon	DMG	S / m / l range	Special
--------	-----	--------------------	---------

special

needed for next level: _____

Dark Edition



Retainers

family lineage

equipment

mount

Family _____

order of precedence _____

heir _____

standing _____

power & influence

military _____

financial _____

political _____

important ancestors

spells/grimoires/
artifacts

Blood relations & alliances

family enemies

ancestral titles & land holdings

personal honors

Debits & obligations

Item	Weight
------	--------

small stuff

Wealth

Si:

sh: _____

_____p:

other: _____

CREDITS

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