

**OLD SCHOOL ROLEPLAYING WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG - VOLUME ONE**

# PARIAH



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Written by Sofinho.

Cover illustration by Jef (Timothy Charles Cox).

Internal illustrations by Abigail Lingford, Felicia (Hoang Minh Nhat), Jef and Sofinho.

Edited by Jarrett Crader & Fiona Geist of The MoonRat Conspiracy.

Layout by Jef & Sofinho.

Production by Nguyen Thi Phuong Dung.

Special thanks to Guy Donovan, Luca Valentini and Pham Nguyen Ha Trung.

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# PARIAH

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This zine was funded and thus distributed thanks to the many backers who saw our contribution to Zine Quest and got behind us. Without you, this project would not exist.

Yet there is more to this story, and all members of the PARI AH team wish to extend their heartfelt thanks to their friends and family, as well as the following creators:

**Angus/Spwack** of [meanderingbanter.blogspot.com](http://meanderingbanter.blogspot.com) is the creator of the classless, level-less take on the world's most popular roleplaying game known as DIE TRYING. The innovative "X" system for character growth was his creation, shamelessly stolen and re-worked by the PARI AH team.

**Arnold Kemp** of **Goblin Punch** created the **Encounter Stew** mechanic upon which PARI AH bases its own encounter mechanic. The ghou l curse class draws heavily from Arnold's own musings on undead flesh-eaters, particularly the "agony" feature. The spellcasting system is also an adaptation of the GLOG (**Goblin Laws of Gaming**) magic system.

**Emmy Allen** of *Dying Stylishly/* [cavegirlgames.blogspot.com](http://cavegirlgames.blogspot.com) was an inspiration, and not only for her paleolithic OSR *Wolf-packs* and *Winter Snow*. Emmy's *Wendigo Sickness* and *Wounded Daughters* curse "classes" established the model for the curse templates found in PARI AH.

Finally, the origin story of PARI AH can be traced all the way back to 2012, when a user on a play-by-post site briefly ran a game called *Tall Sun, Sharp Moon*. That user's name was **Kittenmancer**, and as much as this book is for everyone, it is also just for her. Thank you for opening my eyes to the greater possibilities of these wacky elf-games.

With respect to all the threads that pulled us here, I hope this zine represents something of an apotheosis: a culmination of multiple strands, currents and narratives that combine to form their own syncretic system. Yet it does not hope to be the final word (and how could anything dare such a thing): instead, the greatest ambition of this humble publication is that this can be the kicking-off point for another story, another thread, another adventure.

In short, this book is for you.

Thank you, dear reader, for what you might yet do with these words.



# PARIAH

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# I N T R O D U C T I O N

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This zine provides all the tools you need to set up and run your own psychedelic proto-neolithic animist old-school sandbox roleplaying game.

Actually, that's not completely true: you will also need:

- a set of polyhedral dice (or access to an online dice roller or app).
- some paper and/or writing implements (including a phone, tablet or computer if preferred)
- ... and some friends.

Henceforth you and your friends are referred to as “players.”

Choose a player to act as the gamemaster (GM). Tradition obligates nominating this zine's reader for that role—but this book is for everybody so don't feel compelled to become a GM merely because you're engaging with this text...

...it is recommended, though, as the GM builds a world and watches the rest of the players dismantle it in surprising, unsettling and (mostly) enjoyable ways.

Safe travels and enjoy your trip.



# CREATING A CHARACTER

Players control one (or more) characters —*pariahs*.

At times you play them directly or describe their actions in the third person. Players are the *pariah's* conscience and guiding voice. If it helps with immersion: think of yourself as their ancestral spirit.

Bad things might happen to your *pariah*. They can get hurt or die. Those things are not happening to you but it's okay to feel bad about it.

Likewise, it's okay not to feel anything: sometimes it takes a long time to feel attached to a *pariah*. Let them earn your affection.

In any case try to take care of them... but in the worst case do not dwell on loss. Roll up another.

## NAME

*Pariahs* come from hunter-gatherer tribes.

Their names reflect the surrounding environment and creatures with which they interact.

Choose or roll on the following table to determine your character's name.

PARIAH NAME				
Adjective + Noun (roll once per column)		Adjective + Noun (roll once per column)		
D20	Adjective	Noun	Adjective	Noun
1	Beautiful	Cave	Brave	Antelope
2	Black	Dell	Clever	Auroch
3	Blue	Evening	Disgusting	Badger
4	Chasing	Fallen	Fearsome	Bat
5	Cunning	Father	Feeding	Battle
6	Dreary	Fortune	Giant	Crayfish
7	Eager	Grave	Hairy	Crocodile
8	Fleet-footed	Grove	Hateful	Dawn
9	Fearful	Hill	Heartless	Dog
10	Golden	Jungle	Hurting	Dreaming Time
11	Hungry	Lake	Little	Eagle
12	Idle	Mantle	Magnificent	Eel
13	Lurking	Magnificence	Rotten	Fox
14	Mighty	Moon	Short	Gazelle
15	Nervous	Mountain	Toothless	Honeybird
16	Purple	Oasis	Unwanted	Hyena
17	Quick	Other	Unwise	Lion
18	Ravenous	Point	White	Porcupine
19	Terrible	Quiet One	Wise	Tyrant-of- the-Air
20	Ugly	Sunbeam	Yellow	Zebra



## TRUE NAME

Your *pariah's* true name was gifted by a parent or guardian but does not originate from them: it was revealed to them by the spirits. To generate a true name:

- Decide whether it starts with a vowel or a consonant.
- Roll on the appropriate column.
- Roll additional consonants or vowels as desired to create a name.

## HIT DICE & HEALTH POINTS

Hit Dice (HD) determines a *pariah's* ability to suffer and recover from wounds, how much damage they inflict, the power of their spells and a *pariah's* Attributes (p.6). *Pariahs* have the following HD: D4, D6 or D8. Roll 2d6 to determine your starting HD.

2d6	Hit Dice
2-4	D4 HD (1-4 HP).
5-8	D6 HD (1-6 HP).
9-12	D8 HD (1-8 HP).

HD determines starting HP (adjusted by CON modifier (p.6)). HP is lost whenever a *pariah* is wounded—at 0 HP they are at greater risk of serious injury or death.

*Pariahs* accumulate HD as they become hardened to the rigours of life in the wilderness—a resource that must be marshalled and managed. A player can choose to add one or more of their *pariah's* HD to the die pool—provided they have a strong narrative reason—when making any Attribute roll or attack roll.

## PARIAH TRUE NAMES

D12/ D20	Initial vowel	Initial Consonant	Vowel	Consonant
1	A	B	a	b
2	Ai	D	ae	d
3	Ao	Dr	ai	dr
4	Au	Dz (J)	ao	dz (j)
5	E	F	au	f
6	Ei	G	e	g
7	I	H	ei	h
8	Ia	K	eu	k
9	O	Kw (Qu)	i	kw (qu)
10	Or	L	ia	l
11	U	M	io	m
12	Ur	N	iu	n
13		P	o	p
14		R	oa	rr
15		S	oe	s
16		T	or	t
17		Tx (Ch)	u	tx (ch)
18		V	ui	v
19		X (Sh)	ua	x (sh)
20		Z	ur	z

*Pariahs* may spend HD they do not have and take the result of the additional HD as health damage or, at 0HP, lethal or CON damage—(p.25).

What constitutes a strong narrative reason varies by group—expending one's last HD as a last gasp effort to save the group from a savage animal is a stronger proposition than spending an HD to improve a stealth roll.



## ATTRIBUTES

Each *pariah* has six ability scores: Attributes rated 3-18 (18 is the best) to determine how well the *pariah* performs against the proto-neolithic world's challenges.

### PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

CONSTITUTION (CON)	Health and stamina. Modifies HP.
STRENGTH (STR)	How much weight a <i>pariah</i> can lift. Modifies melee attacks and damage.
DEXTERITY (DEX)	Manual skill and agility. Modifies defence and ranged attacks.

### MENTAL ATTRIBUTES

INTELLIGENCE (INT)	The ability to learn new skills and languages.
WISDOM (WIS)	Intuition: perception, magical knowledge or power, general life skills.
CHARISMA (CHA)	Strength of will, personal magnetism and sometimes magical power.

*Pariah's* Attributes resolve in-game challenges which the GM assigns a numerical difficulty (DC) and compares it with the *pariah's* relevant Attribute. If the DC exceeds their Attribute, the *pariah* rolls a six-sided die (D6) to determine their success—adding the result to their Attribute score: if it exceeds the DC they succeed.

NOTE: A roll of 1 always fails.

Players determine a *pariah's* Attributes randomly, using 3 (or more, see right) six sided dice rolled in order.

### GENERATING ATTRIBUTES

#### HD Method

- D4** STR/CON: Roll 4d6, discard the highest result and total.  
DEX/INT: Roll 3d6.  
WIS/CHA: Roll 4d6, discard the lowest result and total
- D6** Roll 3d6 in order  
(CON, STR, DEX, INT, WIS, CHA).
- D8** CON/STR: Roll 4d6, discard the lowest result and total.  
DEX/INT/WIS/CHA: Roll 3d6.

Note each Attribute's score on the Character Sheet's max, current and **modifier** boxes. Note the *pariah's* highest stat: their Core Attribute.

Totalling a *pariah's* physical Attributes determine their **speed** (movement in feet/round).

### ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

Attribute Score	Modifier
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	No modifier
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3

A *pariah* with a mental Attribute total (INT+WIS+CHA) less than twenty gains another Attribute: *Psyche*, equal to their mental Attribute total.

These individuals are known as *Spirit-Touched*—considered cursed or blessed, depending on their culture of origin (p.57).





## DAMAGE TO ATTRIBUTES

Some attacks damage a *pariah's* Attributes. In addition to limiting their performance, serious damage has the following effects:

ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE TABLE		
Attribute	Below 3...	...at 0
<b>CON</b> or <b>STR</b>	Collapses exhausted and immobile.	Instant death.
<b>DEX</b>	Paralysed.	Dies in 1d6 days unless DEX restored.
<b>INT</b>	Struggles to communicate and interact; becomes a GM controlled NPC.	Instant death.
<b>WIS</b> or <b>CHA</b>	No additional penalties.	Remains under player control but is a <b>Nameless One</b> (p.56)—and potentially <b>Spirit-Touched</b> (p.57).

## SAVING THROWS

Saving Throws govern how a character responds to unusual threats: roll equal to or higher than it to avoid or diminish threats.

**A *pariah's* initial Saving Throws are determined by their HD.**

SAVING THROW BY HIT DIE			
Saving Throw   Hit Dice	1d4 HD	1d6 HD	1d8 HD
Death/ Poison	14	13	12
Magical Devices	13	14	15
Paralysis / Petrification	13	13	13
Reflex	16	15	15
Spells	+2	+1	-

Spell Save is determined by the caster's power (their WIS or CHAScore)—lower HD *pariahs* have a bonus to this Save.

## CORE ATTRIBUTE SAVE BONUS

The *pariah's* Core Attribute modifier can be added to the following saving throws:

<b>Constitution</b>	Poison/Death.
<b>Strength</b>	Paralysis/Petrification.
<b>Dexterity</b>	Reflex.
<b>Intelligence</b>	Magical Devices or Reflex (choose one).
<b>Wisdom</b>	Reflex or Spells (choose one).
<b>Charisma</b>	Spells or Magical Devices (choose one).

Example:

*Mighty Evening Star* has d6 HD providing the following saves:

Death / Poison: 13 / Magical Devices 4 /  
Paralysis / Petrification: 13 / Reflex 15 / Spells +1

As her Attributes are CON 15 STR10 DEX 12 INT 9 WIS 13 CHA 10, Constitution is her Core Attribute, providing her a +1 save against death or poison. Despite her Wisdom (13) +1 modifier her Saving Throws are unaffected—it isn't her Core Attribute.



## SKILLS

Each *pariah* possesses a broad selection of skills base befitting a healthy human hunter-gatherer, limited only by their resources, Attributes, and ingenuity. However, there are some things that they excel at—their “skills” tied to their Attributes, particularly their Core Attributes. Skill proficiency is measured by die size (see table, right).

*Pariahs* have 2 Core Skills (tied to their Core Attribute) and a number of additional skills dependent on their HD and their INT modifier.

## CORE SKILLS

To generate Core Skills roll the associated die twice on the relevant Core Attribute column.

<b>Unskilled:</b>	D6 *
<b>Skilled:</b>	D8
<b>Expert:</b>	D10
<b>Master:</b>	D12
*(normal ability check)	

Record them on the character sheet as Skilled (D8)—if the same skill is rolled twice upgrade it to Master (D10). How skills are utilised is left to the players’ creativity. Use proficiency as a guideline.

### CORE SKILLS TABLE

Roll	CON (1d8)	STR (1d10)	DEX (1d8)	INT (roll d12)	WIS (1d12)	CHA (1d10)
1	Climbing	Acrobatics	Acrobatics	Craft+	Animal Handling	Animal Handling
2	Concentration	Climbing	Climbing	Disguise	Concentration	Disguise
3	Drinking	Grappling	Craft+	Herbalism	Entheogens	Drinking
4	Endurance Running	Hand Weapon*	Fishing	Healing	Fishing	Intimidation
5	Entheogens	Heavy Labour	Musical Instrument	Horticulture	Herbalism	Mimicry
6	Food Tasting	Intimidation	Stealth	Language	Healing	Musical Instrument
7	Heavy Labour	Jumping	Sleight of Hand	Literacy	Horticulture	Persuasion
8	Swimming	Swimming	Traps and Snares	Mimicry	Listening	Singing
9		Sprinting		Poisons	Poisons	Storytelling
10		Attack Bonus**		Tracking	Storytelling	Roll Twice ++
11				Traps and Snares	Tracking	
12				Roll Twice ++	Traps and Snares	

\* Choose or roll for melee weapon on the weapons table (p.10).

\*\* *Pariah* receives +1 to their base attack bonus.

+ Choose from or roll for craft on the crafts table (below).

++ Roll twice more, ignoring this result if rolled again

1d12	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Craft Skills</b>	Basketry	Brewing	Food preparation	Flints	Hides / Skin / Leatherwork	Painting



## ADDITIONAL SKILLS

*Pariahs* have a limited number of additional skills determined by HD and Intelligence. *Pariahs* make additional rolls on the table below equal to their Intelligence modifier (they do not deduct a negative modifier from the number of rolls).

Roll 1d6 for the column (1. CON, 2. STR, 3. DEX, 4. INT, 5. WIS, 6. CHA) and 1d8+ to determine the skill.

*Example:*

Silent Paw has 1d6 HD—3 rolls—and her 13 INT grants a +1 modifier for a total of 4 rolls. The-Last-of-a-Tainted-Brood has 1d4 HD and 6 INT, making 2 skill rolls—although their Intelligence modifier is -1 it isn't deducted from their rolls.

HD	Additional skills
D4	2 + INTbonus
D6	3 + INTbonus
D8	1 + INTbonus

If a skill was previously rolled as a Core skill increase the skill even if it was rolled under a different Attribute.

*Example:*

Moon has D8 HD and STR is their Core Attribute, rolling twice and gaining: Acrobatics (STR D8) and Heavy Labour (STR D8). Rolling once for their additional skill (for D8 HD) results in: 3 (DEX) and 1 (Acrobatics)—their existing Acrobatics skill is raised from Skilled (D8) to Expert (D10) despite the roll of DEX instead of STR.

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS TABLE

Roll	CON (1d8)	STR (1d10)	DEX (1d8)	INT (roll d12)	WIS (1d12)	CHA (1d10)
1	Concentration	Climbing	Acrobatics	Craft+	Animal Handling	Intimidation
2	Drinking	Grappling	Stealth	Disguise	Fishing	Mimicry
3	Endurance running	Hand Weapon*	Sleight of Hand	Language	Herbalism	Musical Instrument
4	Entheogens	Heavy Labour	Traps and Snares	Literacy	Healing	Persuasion
5	Food Tasting	Jumping	Ranged Weapon**	Mimicry	Horticulture	Singing
6	Swimming	Sprinting	Light Weapon***	Poisons	Listening	Storytelling
7	Re-roll	Roll again	Roll again	Tracking	Poisons	Gain an item++
8	Roll another Core Skill (p.8).	Roll another Core Skill (p.8).	Roll another Core Skill (p.8).	Roll another Core Skill (p.8).	Tracking	Roll another Core Skill (p.8).

\* Choose or roll for melee weapon on the weapon table (p.10).

\*\* Choose or roll for ranged weapon on the weapon table (p.10).

\*\*\* Choose or roll for light weapon on the weapon table (p.10).

+ Choose from or roll for craft on the crafts table (below).

++ Choose or roll for an item (p.11).

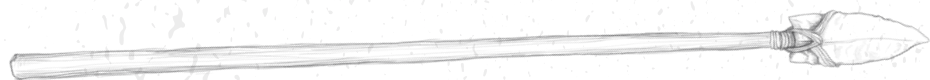
1d12	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Craft Skills</b>	Pottery	Stonework	Tattooing	Textiles	Weapons	Woodwork / Carving



## POSSESSIONS

Personal property is limited at the dawn of the neolithic and is not considered a measure of wealth or worth. In cities of mud and stone, wealth is measured by land and slaves while among the wandering wilderness tribes by the collective aptitude of the band and their relationship with the spirits.

Nonetheless, personal effects are valuable—especially tools and weapons. Each *pariah* starts with basic clothing (hide or flax, perhaps wool or even cotton), a sack and a weapon (roll 1d12 below):



### STARTING WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Size (slots)	Damage Type	To hit + dmg attribute	Notes	Optional Rules
<b>Stone/Bone Knife</b>	Small (1)	Piercing	STR (DEX Ranged)	Crits 19-20.	Breaks on natural 1. Proficient: may use DEX or INT (Melee or Ranged).
<b>Sling</b>	Small (1)	Bludgeoning	STR (DEX Ranged)	Usable in Melee.	Proficient: may use DEX (Melee) OR STR (Ranged).
<b>Small Club</b>	Small (1)	Bludgeoning	STR		Proficient: may use DEX (Melee) OR STR (Ranged).
<b>Blowpipe</b>	Small (1)	Piercing	DEX	Needs darts.	Proficient: may modify with WIS or CON.
<b>Hand Axe</b>	Medium (2)	Slashing	STR (DEX if thrown)		Proficient: may use DEX (Melee) OR STR (Ranged).
<b>Spear</b>	Medium (2)	Piercing	STR (DEX if thrown)		If proficient may modify with DEX when thrown.
<b>Bow</b>	Medium (2)	Piercing	DEX		If proficient may modify with WIS or INT.
<b>Staff</b>	Medium (2)	Bludgeoning	STR	(Two-handed)	If proficient may add +1 to defence. May also modify with DEX.
<b>Bonesword</b>	Medium (2)	Slashing	STR	Crits 19-20.	Breaks on natural 1. If proficient may add +1 to defence.
<b>Double Axe</b>	Large (3)	Slashing	STR		If proficient may add +1 to defence. May also modify with CON.
<b>Great Club</b>	Large (3)	Bludgeoning	STR		If proficient may modify with CON.
<b>Two-Handed Bonesword</b>	Large (3)	Slashing	STR	Crits 19-20. Breaks on 1.	Breaks on natural 1. If proficient may modify with CON.





## RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Normal Range	Max range	Ammunition	Damage
<b>Blowpipe</b>	≤ 25'	100'	Dart	As light/ small weapon.
<b>Bow</b>	≤ 80'	320'	Arrow	1d6 (mechanical weapon).
<b>Hand Axe</b>	≤ 20'	60'	Thrown	As medium weapon.
<b>Knife</b>	≤ 20'	60'	Thrown	As light/ small weapon.
<b>Sling</b>	≤ 30'	120'	Stone/Pellet/Bullet	As light/ small weapon.
<b>Spear</b>	≤ 20'	60'	Thrown	As medium weapon.

Next, roll 4 times on the Starting Items table (below), recording them in your inventory: 1d6 to determine column and 1d8 to determine row.

## ADDITIONAL STARTING ITEMS

1d8 x 1d6	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>1</b>	Stone knife	Bonesword	Animal pelt, large	Dried fish (3 rations)	Human skull drinking cup	Clay pipe and some dried sorcerer's sage
<b>2</b>	Sling	Double axe	Selection of dyes and paints	Clay jar of pick- led vegetables (2 rations)	Protective jerkin made from hide, wood and bone.	Clay jar (poisonous ointment)
<b>3</b>	Small club	Great club	4 pint clay jar	Fistful of clay	Fishing net	Clay bowl
<b>4</b>	Blowpipe	Fire starting fungus	Stone tools for working stone	Bone needle and sinew sewing kit	Fire starting fungus	Wooden sled (carry 20 slots)
<b>5</b>	Hand axe	Large basket	Tattoo "needles" and pigments	Stone hammer	Ivory/ bone flute	Six cactus buttons
<b>6</b>	Spear	Full wineskin	Colourful flaxen cloak	Wooden drum with a stretched animal skin	10' hazel pole	Hollowed-out auroch horn (musical instrument)
<b>7</b>	Bow	Dried meats (3 rations)	Stretched hide shield	Hempen rope (30')	Leather pouch (dried Shaman Shrooms [p.40])	Enormous animal femur (heavy club)
<b>8</b>	Staff	Fine flint blades and scrapers	Woodcarving flints	Clay jar (lard)	Leopard skull (helmet)	Carved wooden antelope

A *pariah* has Inventory Slots equal to the sum of their CON score and STR mod.

Carrying more deals 1 CON damage/day for each additional Slot.

*Example:*

*Might Evening Star has CON 15 and STR 10 (+0) ...and thus has 15 Inventory Slots.*



## REASONS FOR EXILE

PARIAH is a game of outcasts—why was your *pariah* ostracised from their tribe?

D12

### YOU WERE EXILED BECAUSE...

- 1      **...you indulged in forbidden love.** You were in a consensual relationship with someone you shouldn't have been—your love was considered taboo and you were exiled. You have vowed to gain renown to win back your true love, and will take no other. Gain one item they gave you as a keepsake (roll on the items table p.11).
- 2      **...you angered the spirits.** You don't know how—only the spirits do and, for now, they won't tell you. Maybe they simply dislike you. You may neither perform nor assist in any rituals and suffer -1 to all reaction rolls with spirits until the reason for their anger is identified and the hex removed.
- 3      **...you practised forbidden sorcery.** It was whispered to you, in a dream: awakening, you performed it. Whatever it was, the shaman did not like it. Gain one ritual and one bound spell-spirit.
- 4      **...your love was unrequited.** You fell in love with someone you shouldn't have—they thought it a juvenile obsession but you knew differently. Too late you realised they were right and, humiliated, you ostracised yourself. You were soured by the experience (+1 WIS and -1 CHA).
- 5      **...you displeased the elders.** You don't know what you did: only the elders do and they never told you. Maybe they just didn't like you. You were given a pack animal, sent off into the desert and told never to return. In addition to the pack animal you also have another small animal as a pet.
- 6      **...you were just too clever.** You always thought you knew best—despite being proven wrong numerous times. Your tribe tolerated it until your folly cost them dearly—maybe even cost someone's life. What went wrong? If your WIS exceeds your INT, swap them. Then +1 INT and -1 WIS.
- 7      **...of a blood feud with a rival tribe.** By rights you should be dead. The feud between the tribes demanded your blood as payment... but your family could not bear it. Instead, you were stripped of everything and abandoned to the wilderness. Lose all your items, +2 CON.
- 8      **...you were a thief.** Your light fingers got you into trouble once too often—never outgrowing your adolescent obsession with theft. Have you outgrown it now? Gain two items and gain or improve your Stealth OR Sleight of Hand.
- 9      **...a malevolent spirit haunts you.** You have never seen it but sometimes feel its presence when alone. Your tribe feared you, then shunned you. Your GM collaboratively decides what this means for your character.
- 10     **...you rejected a suitor.** The match seemed good—both clans...but it did not sit right with you. You felt nothing for them. You ran away... on the eve of your wedding. Gain two (stolen) items from the dowry/ bridewealth.
- 11     **...you were marked by evil from birth.** The mutation was an ill omen—as long as you can remember you hid it. When the rest of the tribe discovered you, your parents abandoned you to the wild—roll for mutation (please visit [altelier-hwei.itch.io](http://altelier-hwei.itch.io)).
- 12     **...you violated a weird taboo.** Of course, many of the above constitute taboos: this one was... weirder. Unique. What was it? Why did you break it? You lack gravitas and are obdurate but your willfulness grants you +1 against charm and mind control effects.



## ATTACK AND DEFENCE

Record your *pariah's* combat stats: base attack and defence bonuses (default 0).

- All *pariahs* are proficient with their starting weapon(s), adding their attack bonus (if any) and Attribute Modifier to attacks.
- However, if not proficient, they add their Attribute Modifier **only** and ignore their attack bonus (**if any**).
- Optional rules allow *pariahs* to add other Attribute Modifiers to weapons they are proficient with (p.10).

## SPECIAL FEATURES

Roll your *pariah's* HD and all lower HD dice (a d6 HD *pariah* rolls 1d6 + 1d4) and consult the table to gain one special trait, item, companion or skill:

HD + lower HD	Special feature	HD + lower HD	Special feature
1	You are bound to a spell-spirit (p.36). How did this happen? What does it do? Consult the GM.	10	You were trained as a warrior: +1 attack bonus.
2	Choose a sacred ritual you are familiar with (p.32).	11	You have picked up an additional melee weapon proficiency.
3	Before you left, an elder gave you a pouch of dried shaman shroom (4 doses).	12	Renowned for your pugilistic prowess, you are proficient with unarmed attacks.
4	Former shaman's assistant: gain or improve the Herbalist and Entheogen skills.	13	The art of defence is your forte: +1 defence bonus.
5	Gain an additional skill plus associated item.	14	You are known for your Grappling skill, gain or increase it by one die (max d12).
6	Gain 1 Core skill plus an item associated with that skill.	15	Gain a weapon or armor related craft skill.
7	Gain 1 craft skill plus an item associated with that skill.	16	Choose a sacred ritual you are familiar with (p.32).
8	You have a pet! It's probably a dog.	17	One of your weapons is spirit-bound: consult your GM as to what this entails.
9	Through rigorous training you are proficient with the bow. Gain a bow.	18	You are bound to a spell-spirit (p.36). How did this happen? What does it do? Consult the GM.

Add any other physical appearance details such as height, build, ritual scarification or skin tone using your *pariah's* Attributes as a prompt. A 1d8 HD character with high STR and CON is athletically built; in contrast, a 1d4 HD *pariah* with low physical stats might be clumsy and gawky. Charisma might indicate physical beauty or other magnetic qualities such as a commanding voice or a kind face.

Your character sheet detailing your *pariah's* strengths and weaknesses, items and skills—and some clues about their past—is complete. Stack completed sheets, take a blank sheet and roll up another *pariah*.

When each player has at least two *pariahs* it's time to think about the wandering band of outcasts as a whole.



# THE BAND

The players have a collection of *pariahs*: healthy young adults all equipped and ready to explore the wilderness. Record their details on the Band Sheet. In addition to the healthy young adults, each band may also have a number of elders and children.

## YOUTHS

Roll 1d4 -1 to determine how many non-combatant, unskilled youths (each 4d4 years old) your band cares for: orphaned, exiled from their tribe or simply lost—they're your responsibility now.

Record their names and genders on the band sheet. Do not roll Attributes for them: ordinarily, children aren't part of a hunting or exploration party but may assist the band between expeditions with simple tasks.

## ELDERS

Most hunter-gatherer cultures take great care of their elderly: foragers live long lives and enjoy relatively abundant food—they're not considered a burden.

However, sometimes bad luck leads to difficult decisions and elderly tribesfolk are sent into the wilderness alone, never to return. Your band has 1d4-1 elders (choose their name and gender, their age is unknown) while weak of body and mind, elders are often happy to tag along and rarely exert their seniority over their younger bandmates.

Helpfully, they possess skills: roll 4 times on the table(right).

While incapable of joining hunting and expedition parties they can bolster the band between expeditions and train other *pariahs*.

## ELDER PROFICIENCY

1d20	The Elder is Proficient in...
1	Craft+
2	Disguise
3	Herbalism
4	Healing
5	Horticulture
6	Language
7	Literacy
8	Mimicry
9	Poisons
10	Tracking
11	Animal Handling
12	Concentration
13	Entheogens
14	Fishing
15	Storytelling
16	Drinking
17	Musical Instrument
18	Singing
19	Knows a Ritual
20	Knows Two Rituals

## INFANTS

The band starts with no infants.

## WATER

All adults (including elders) begin the game with a full waterskin. The youths begin with a shared waterskin.





## ANCESTRAL RELIC

Choose any item belonging to one of your *pariahs*. For whatever reason this item was important to one or more *pariahs*' ancestors and is the focus of the band's spiritual practice—it is the most valuable object they possess. It could be a weapon, a tool or an item of clothing.



## ANIMALS

The band begins with one animal (rolled on the following table) for every three adults—including elders—in the band. Record your animals on the Band Sheet.

### STARTING ANIMALS

Id	Animal	Notes
1-3	Nothing	-
4	Honey Bird	The Honey Bird follows the band and sings beautifully but is not a pet.
5	Falcon	The Falcon likes to follow hunting parties. Could it become an ally?
6	Puppy	This poor Puppy is orphaned. If anybody has a Dog it adopts the orphaned pup.
7	Dog	The Dog follows the band—at a safe distance.
8	Dog Pack	1d4 mostly friendly Dogs—potentially aggressive if not approached gently.
9	Goats	2d3 Goats. They're hanging around because the band protects them from predators.
10	Giant Locust	Probably should have eaten this a while ago but the smaller children like to play with it.
11	Auroch	The Auroch is weirdly docile and can carry things.
12	Crow	The Crow has befriended an elder and occasionally mimics band members.

## SETTLEMENT

The band begins with no established settlement.

## REPUTATION

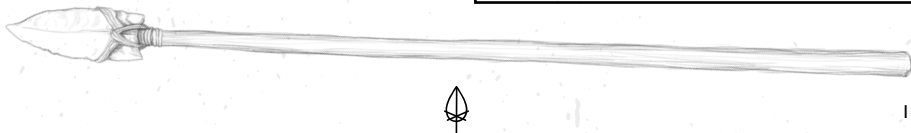
Enter "0" in this box on the band sheet.  
Reputation increases over time: see  
"Between Trips" (p.19).

## LANGUAGE AND DIALECT

All band members with INT 3+ can communicate with each other—eventually developing a coded language.

**Well, that's it.**

Your band is ready to begin exploring  
the proto-neolithic wilderness!



# INTERACTING WITH THE WORLD

PARIAH is a dialogue between the GM—who describes the scenario confronting the party—and the players—who describe how the party responds. Where the outcome is uncertain, dice decide what happens, the world is changed and the conversation continues. There are four connected ‘Tiers’ of play:

- **Between Trips** (p.19): Time is measured in days, weeks or even a whole lunar month depending on the group’s needs such as training or development.
- **Overland Travel** (p.18): Time is measured in periods of 1-4 hours when travelling long distances, particularly across open land or along established routes like rivers and trails.
- **Exploration:** Space and time become more granular when the party enters an unfamiliar environment—particularly if it is dense and claustrophobic such as: a cave network, a jungle or a human city. An exploration turn represents 10 minutes of in-game time during which each character’s actions are described and resolved.
- **Tactical play:** Whenever actions have immediate and deadly consequences—combat, negotiating a series of traps, stalking unwitting quarry or intense negotiations—time is measured in 6 second rounds.



## THE EXPLORATION TURN

Begins whenever the party enters an unfamiliar environment: the GM describes the scenario, asking each player in turn what their *pariah* wants to do.

## MOVEMENT & ENCUMBRANCE

Moving cautiously, investigating and interacting with their environment thoroughly searches an area of ~1,200ft<sup>2</sup> while moving ~120 ft.

Each character has a unique carrying capacity of item slots equal to their CON Attribute +/- STR modifier which *pariahs* may fill without penalty.

For each additional slot they suffer 1 CON damage/day travelled. This:

- Reduces their combat movement (CON + STR + DEX).
- May reduce their CON modifier, thus reducing their HP.
- In tactical play they must make a CON Check (below) at every round's start where they decide to act—failure deals 1 CON damage.

To make a CON Check Roll 1d6 + CON Attribute.

- Success: the roll is  $\geq$  their current Carrying Capacity.
- Failure: 1 CON damage if the roll is  $<$  current Carrying Capacity or a 1 is rolled.

A *pariah* whose CON drops below 3 must stop and rest immediately (p.7).

## INVESTIGATING

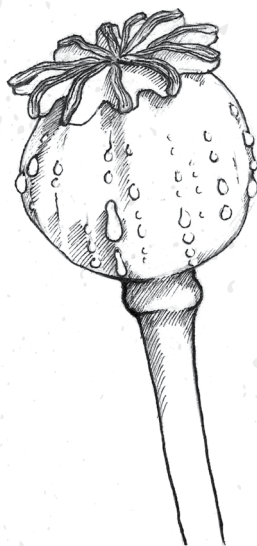
The GM describes the environment's remarkable features, drawing the party's attention to them. Players carefully describe how their *pariah* interacts with these details, receiving more information about them from the GM.

## ENCOUNTERS

At the end of each Exploration turn the GM rolls for encounters— see Generating the Wilderness (p.18) for more detail.

## RESTING

During Exploration the party may take a short rest (at least 1 hour) in a secure spot and attempt to treat any wounds, consume food and water and recover their strength. If a *pariah's* wounds are treated and they consume a daily meal they may roll HD to recover HP or Attribute damage. 1 HD is recovered after a full night's rest, as long as the *pariah* is not wounded.



OVERLAND TRAVEL & GENERATING THE WILDERNESS

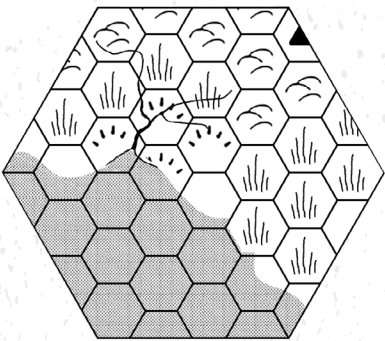
The PARIAH is set in the prehistoric wilderness. Somewhere on the outskirts of that wilderness the first permanent human settlements are emerging, but for the *pariahs* the environment is dangerous and foreboding.

Due to the pressures of supporting elderly and infant band members, pariahs may find that they are often on the move, owing to pressure from other humans, predators or even more sinister threats.

THE HEX MAP

To represent the wilderness, the GM must create a hex map, similar to the one pictured. Each hex represents six miles from centre to centre.

The number of 6 mile hexes a *pariah* can move per day is equal to their speed (p.6) divided by ten, rounded down, with modifications for terrain.



WILDERNESS MOVEMENT		
Plains	Woods/Hills/ Desert	Mountains/Jun- gle/Swamp
100%	66%	50%

The band or party may only move as quickly as their slowest member. Additionally, players must decide the marching order and formation of the *pariahs* as they travel through the wilderness.

Once the marching order is established, the GM describes the terrain and weather and checks for encounters.

GENERIC WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS								
	Plains	Woods	Swamp	Mountain/ hills	Desert	Jungle	River/Lake	Ocean
1 or less	No encounter							
2	Animal	Animal	Swimmer	Animal	No encounter	Animal	Swimmer	Swimmer
3	Animal	Animal	Swimmer	Animal	Insect	Animal	Swimmer	Swimmer
4	Insect	Animal	Insect	Flyer	Flyer	Insect	Swimmer	Swimmer
5	Flyer	Insect	Flyer	Flyer	Flyer	Insect	Animal	Swimmer
6	Human	Human	Human	Insect	Animal	Human	Flyer	Flyer
7	Human	Weird	Weird	Human	Human	Weird	Human	Flyer
8	Weird	Spirit	Spirit	Weird	Weird	Spirit	Weird	Weird/ human
9 or more	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit	Spirit





## ENCOUNTERS

PARIAH uses a three dice method for generating encounters, inspired by Arnold Kemp's *Encounter Stew*. Use different coloured dice if possible, placing them in a bowl and shaking them together to generate encounters. Standard dice are as follows:

- **Encounter Die**—a red D12. The GM is free to increase or decrease the die size to modulate the likelihood of encounters.
- **Caution Die**—a blue D4.  
Use a bigger die if the *pariahs* are attempting to move stealthily (see below).
- **Awareness Die**—a yellow D6.  
If a party member has the listening skill, use their die instead.

Deduct the Awareness and Caution dice from the encounter die and consult the generic encounters table (p.18). Due to space limitations more extensive encounter tables are unavailable in this volume, though free tables can be found at [atelier-hwei.itch.io](http://atelier-hwei.itch.io).

- **If the Caution Die shows a “1”**  
whatever they encounter is immediately aware of them (it cannot be surprised).
- **If the Awareness Die shows a “1”**  
whatever they encounter automatically gains surprise.

Encounters occur at a distance of 4d6 feet. Roll an additional D6 for each “6” rolled and add to the total.

## MOVING CAUTIOUSLY

The party may increase their caution die from a D4 to a D6 if they move through the wilderness at half speed. This reduces the likelihood of an encounter, and also

means they are more likely to catch whatever they encounter unawares.

A group of more than ten *pariahs* is unable to move cautiously.

If a particularly stealthy *pariah* leads the group, they may increase the Caution Die to match their stealth skill. The party must still move at half speed.

## THE EXPLORATION TURN

This encounter method is also employed during the exploration phase of play, though the dice are rolled each ten minute turn instead of only when a new hex is entered.

## BETWEEN TRIPS

When *pariahs* are not travelling, hunting or exploring the *between trips* mode of play is employed. This can be conducted at any appropriate time during the session or, if preferred, between sessions using a chat app.

During this period *pariahs* may rest, recover, train, forage and craft.

Additionally, the band may attract new members and lose existing ones. Random events in far off places may have unforeseen consequences for the band.

Due to space limitations, these rules and guidelines are free to download from [atelier-hwei.itch.io](http://atelier-hwei.itch.io).



## TACTICAL PHASE

The tactical phase—where time is measured in 6 second rounds—commences when encountering a hazard, trap or hostile situation.

As usual, the scenario is described and players relate their characters' response—within the constraints of a 6 second round.

Tactical play continues as long as the environment is changing on a round-by-round basis. Once a situation stabilises play reverts to 10 minute Exploration Turns.

## MAPS & MINIATURES

Because positioning and movement are more important during tactical play many groups find scale maps—and miniatures or counters representing the party, other characters, creatures or terrain—helpful.

Other players find such props—even detailed miniatures and terrain—“immersion breaking” and prefer envisioning the unfolding scenario within their mind's eye.

It is worth discussing individual preferences. Bear in mind some individuals struggle to visualise space—diagrams and maps may assist their engagement and consider that it is better to accommodate those struggling to participate rather than those with an aesthetic preference.

## SURPRISE

During tactical play the party may encounter unfamiliar (potentially hostile) creatures: to determine which party acts first, establish if either side is surprised—unable to do anything while the other side acts.

The GM should use common sense: is one side aware of the other before the encounter? Is one side anticipating the encounter? In such cases the GM may dictate surprise circumstantially.

Commonly, the situation is ambiguous and the GM calls for a die roll: each side rolls 1d6—with a 2-in-6 (roll of 1 or 2) chance—determining if a party is “surprised” and cannot act during the first round. If both (or all...) sides are surprised ignore the result and roll Initiative.

## INITIATIVE

After the surprise round all sides roll 1d6 for initiative—the side with the highest result may act first.

Optional: modify the party's roll by the lead *pariah's* WIS or DEX bonus and the opposition's speed and reaction.

*Example:*

*Wading through the tall grass of an arid steppe, the party stumbles upon a pride of sleeping lions. The GM asks for a surprise roll: they roll a 1 and so are surprised—frozen in fright as 3 sleeping lionesses stir from their slumber.*

*Awake now, both parties roll for initiative—the GM allows the party to modify their roll with Swollen Trunk's—the pariah at the front—WIS modifier. The GM warns the lions' roll is +2, owing to their cat-like reflexes and alertness. The players argue the lions are sleepy and the GM it to +1.*

*Regardless, the players roll a 7 (6+1) and the lions roll a 5 (4+1): the players now describe how their characters are extricating themselves from this situation.*



In case of ties: reroll until a side wins or have all actions take place simultaneously. Initiative order lasts for the encounter's duration unless a reroll is triggered by combat (p.23).

## MOVEMENT

A *pariah's* movement per round is their speed in feet. If they don't perform any other action they may also:

- **Jump:** at the end of their move, leaping STR + D6 feet in length—½ that without moving first—OR jump STR modifier + D6 feet vertically (minimum 1'). The associated die size increases by one step for each rank of skill.
- **Run:** double movement without any cost.
- **Sprint:** Take 1 STR & 1 CON damage to move 2x Movement + STR + D6 (higher if they have the sprinting skill).

## ACTION

Apart from moving, a *pariah* may perform 1 action per round. What exactly constitutes an action is relatively open—consider the feasibility of carrying it out in 6 seconds. Crossing a clearing while swigging herbal medicine from a clay jug makes sense, while jumping a ravine, emptying a sack retrieving a rope, throwing it back across and holding tight while another colleague makes the same leap does not.

Attacks and spells are considered actions. See combat (p.23).

## STEALTH & LISTENING

Stealth is of great importance in *PARIAH*: whether creeping up on your prey for a clean shot or skulking into an enemy camp in the dead of night to desecrate their ancestral shrine, moving undetected is a useful skill.

All *pariahs* can use stealth regardless of skills or training but some specialise in stealth or listening.

To move stealthily the *pariah* first describes their planned route and any special measures they are taking (removing their pack, slowing down to a crawl, etc.). The GM considers any bonuses or penalties these actions and the environment entail as an additional modifier to the *pariah* rolling 1d6 + DEX against the WIS of anything potentially alerted to the *pariah's* presence. If the *pariah's* roll exceeds the target number (WIS) they are successful that round. They make a new roll each time their *pariah* moves.

If the target doesn't have a WIS the GM tailors one to the creature. Note: a typical human has WIS 10 but for purposes of alertness a typical wild animal has WIS 16. Creatures controlled by the GM can use stealth: a Stealth roll against each *pariah's* WIS. If the characters are intently listening have a "Stealth Contest" where listeners roll their own Stealth roll against the sneaking entity.

If a *pariah* hides their player describes how they use the environment for concealment and the GM uses common sense to determine effectiveness.



## COMBAT

What follows are simplified combat rules—more complete rules are available free from [atelier-hwei.itch.io](http://atelier-hwei.itch.io)

Combat is tactical play with the following additions:

## I. COMBAT SEQUENCE

- If necessary: roll or reroll Initiative.
- Higher Initiative acts.
- Lower Initiative acts.
- GM makes morale checks for combatants under their control.
- Repeat, only rerolling Initiative if the situation calls for it.

## IV. RANGED ATTACKS

Ranged attacks require a whole round—unless they have a bow, *pariahs* cannot move and make a ranged attack in the same round. A *pariah* with a bow can make 2 attacks if they do not move.

When making a ranged attack:

- A visible target within normal or long range is selected—special rules apply if the target is engaged in melee.
- GM determines penalties to the attack roll: range, cover or other environmental conditions.
- Player rolls:  $D20 +/\text{- DEX Modifier} + \text{Attack Bonus}$  minus additional penalties determined by the GM.
- A 'natural 20' is a Critical Hit and always hits. Roll damage if it ties or exceeds the target's Defence Value. A roll below the target's Defence Value misses.

When attacking a target in melee:

- Player rolls as outlined above.
- A total of 10 or less misses.
- A total of 11+ hits a random combatant.
- A 'natural 20' is a Critical Hit against a random combatant.

When a GM controlled individual makes a ranged attack against a *pariah* who isn't in melee:

- The *pariah* must be visible and within normal or long range.
- The GM determines penalties and/or bonuses to the defence roll (due to range, cover or other environmental conditions).
- Player makes a defence roll:  $D20 +/\text{- DEX Modifier} + \text{Defense Bonus} +/\text{- GM Bonuses or Penalties} + 1$  for a Long Range Attack.
- If it ties or exceeds the assailant's Attack Value it misses. If it's below the assailant's Attack Value the *pariah* suffers—roll damage. A 'natural 1' is always a Critical Hit.

When a GM controlled character makes a ranged attack against a *pariah* in melee:

- The GM declares any bonuses or penalties to the roll.
- The Player rolls  $1d20 +/\text{- assigned modifiers}$ .
- Total the roll:
  - 11+ misses everyone.
  - 10 or less hits a random combatant.
  - A 'natural 1' is a Critical Hit against a random combatant.



## II. INITIATIVE (P.20)

Initiative order is maintained from round-to-round. However, a reroll is made if:

- The side without Initiative kills or incapacitates an opponent.
- An opponent fails a morale check or flees.
- Any narratively sensible reason.

## V. MELEE

When a *pariah* attacks an adjacent character both are 'in melee'—including attacks with a ranged weapon, a spell or a hand weapon. In melee:

- Characters may only move 5' each round—unless **fleeing** (p.24).
- Characters may attack anyone except those they're engaged in melee with—including ranged and magical attacks.
- If a target of a ranged attack is in melee it is equally likely to hit any combatant in melee.

When a *pariah* makes a melee attack:

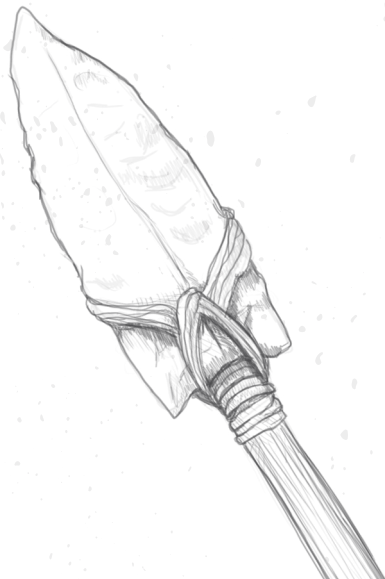
- Select an adjacent target—who may already be in melee.
- GM determines any penalties or bonuses to the attack roll
- Player rolls:  $d20 \pm \text{STR mod} + \text{Attack Bonus} \pm \text{GM Modifiers}$ .
- Total the roll:
  - A 'natural 20' is always a critical hit.
  - If the roll ties or exceeds the target's Defence Value—roll damage.
  - A total below the target's Defence Value misses.

## III. MAGIC

*Pariahs* bonded to spell-spirits can use their magic once per round—for complete details see p.37.

If a GM controlled character melee attacks a *pariah*:

- A *pariah*—who may already be in melee—is targeted.
- The GM determines and bonuses or penalties to the defence roll.
- Player rolls:  $d20 \pm \text{DEX modifier} + \text{Defence Bonus} \pm \text{GM Modifiers}$ .
- If it ties or exceeds the attacker's Attack Value it misses. If beneath the attacker's Attack Value the attack hits—roll damage. A 'natural 1' is always a critical hit against the *pariah*.



## ADDITIONAL COMBAT RULES

A character in melee may elect to fight **defensively**:

- *Pariahs* fighting defensively roll defence with 2 dice and take the better result.
- A *pariah* attacking an opponent fighting defensively rolls 2 dice for their attack roll and takes the worse result.

To attempt a **tactical withdrawal**:

Instead of attacking take a 5' step back from the opponent.

- If the opponent steps towards them the individual withdrawing makes an attack roll.
- If their opponent does not move toward them both combatants are no longer in melee.

To **flee** while in melee:

- Any opponents they are in melee with make an attack roll.
- Fleeing *pariahs* make their defence roll without any bonuses.
- *Pariahs* get +1 a bonus attacking fleeing opponents.

Targets in melee with **multiple attackers** are easier to hit:

- For each successive attack against a target, *pariahs* receive a cumulative +1 bonus to their attack roll.
- Ex. the second attacker in sequence gets +1, the third +2 and so on.
- A *pariah* being mobbed similarly suffers a penalty to their defence roll by 1 for each successive melee attack that round.

Example:

The second defense roll is -1, the third is -2 and so on.

A *pariah* **Fighting Defensively** facing multiple attackers:

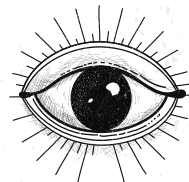
- Defends with 2 dice (choosing the better result) against the first attacker.
- Defends normally against the second attack.
- Defends against the third attack (and subsequent attacks) with a cumulative -1 penalty.

A GM controlled individual Fighting Defensively against multiple *pariah*:

- Penalises the first attacker (rolling 2 dice and choosing the worse result).
- The second *pariah* attacks normally.
- The third and subsequent *pariahs* are attacked with a cumulative +1 bonus.

If Attacked from Behind...

- A *pariah* loses DEX and shield bonuses to their defence roll.
- Reduce non-*pariah*'s Defence Value as appropriate.
- Any roll of 20+ (including by modifiers) is a Critical Hit.
- OPTIONAL: *pariahs* modify their defence roll against attacks from behind by their WIS bonus, representing their awareness of their surroundings.
- OPTIONAL: treat attacks during Surprise (p.20) as Attacks from Behind.





## MANOEUVRES

Players often wish to perform something other than a standard melee attack: shoving an opponent to the ground, pushing them back, disarming them or slapping them about the chops and stunning them.

The GM resolves these situations as combat rules are limited to those which are codified. A good heuristic: an ordinary attack roll followed by an Attribute or skill roll to resolve the manoeuvre.

*Example:*

*Chau wants her pariah, Sick Dog, to wrestle an enemy shaman to the ground pinning them. The GM asks Chau to make an attack roll—success! Sick Dog grabs the shaman! The GM sets the difficulty of Sick Dog's Strength roll at 15 to successfully bring the shaman to the ground. With a Strength of 13 she only needs to roll a 2+ on a d6 to succeed. Further, Sick Dog is an Expert Grappler (d8) and rolls a d8 but rolls a 1: failure! The Shaman stands and the GM proposes rolling a strength check at the start of next round to see if he escapes Sick Dog's grasp.*

## ROLLING FOR DAMAGE

Damage is determined by using the *pariah's* HD, inflicting damage equal to the roll.

### Damage Modifiers:

- Light Weapons roll two dice and choose the lower result.
- Heavy Weapons roll two dice and choose the higher result.
- Bows, being mechanical, do a fixed damage die of 1d6.
- Melee Damage is adjusted by a *pariah's* STR modifier.
- Ranged Damage is adjusted by a *pariah's* DEX modifier.
- Characters under the GM's control have their own damage dice.
- Critical Hits do double total damage.



## DAMAGE, DYING, DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT

Ordinary damage reduces HP.

At 0 HP:

- The *pariah* falls prone, critically wounded.
- Movement (including standing up or attacking) requires a difficulty 15 CON check (D6 + CON) each round. Failure deals 1 CON damage.

Further damage is inflicted on their CON unless using the Death and Dismemberment table (p.26). **Remember:**

- A *pariah* at 0 HP can only recover HP following treatment (p.17).
- At 3 CON or less a *pariah* collapses from exhaustion, unable to act until they've been restored to 3.
- At 0 Con a *pariah* dies.



## ADVANCED DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT

Instead of critically wounded characters taking CON damage, you may use the Death & Dismemberment table.

- Roll a D12 to determine the afflicted Attribute, adjusted by the Modifiers below:
  - Bludgeoning +0
  - Piercing +2
  - Slashing +3
  - Fire/ Acid +4
  - Lightning +5
- Consult the table for any additional effects.

## NOTES:

**Agony:** pain so intense that moving deals D6 HP damage.

**Consequences of Limb Loss** (player and GM resolve how this affects the *pariah* later):

- Hand: permanent -3 DEX and -3 STR.
- Foot: permanent -2 DEX, -3 STR and -2 CON.
- Arm: permanent -3 DEX, -4 STR and -1 CON. Save vs. Death or fall unconscious.
- Leg: permanent -3 DEX, -4 STR and -2 CON. Save vs. Death or fall unconscious.

DMG	1-3 CON	4-6 STR	7-8 DEX
1	<b>Blood Loss:</b> 1 CON damage.	<b>Tissue or Bone:</b> 1 STR damage.	<b>Nerve or Muscle:</b> 1 DEX damage.
2		Take 2 damage to [attribute].	
3		Take 3 damage to [attribute].	
4		Take 4 damage to [attribute].	
5		Take 5 damage to [attribute].	
6	As above +1 permanent damage. Save vs paralysis or suffer <b>agony</b> .	Reflex save or lose a hand! (see above). Else as above +1 permanent damage.	Reflex save or lose a hand! (see above). Else as above +1 permanent damage.
7	As above +2 permanent damage. Save vs paralysis or suffer <b>agony</b> .	Reflex save or lose a foot! (see above). Else 5 STR dmg +2 perm.	Reflex save or lose a foot! (see above). Else 5 DEX dmg +2 perm.
8	As above +3 permanent damage. Save vs paralysis or suffer <b>agony</b> .	Reflex save or lose an arm! (see above). Else STR dmg +3 perm.	Reflex save or lose an arm! (see above). Else 5 DEX dmg +3 perm.
9	As above +4 permanent damage. Save vs paralysis or suffer <b>agony</b> .	Reflex save or lose a leg! (see above). Else 5 STR dmg +4 perm.	Reflex save or lose a leg! (see above). Else 5 DEX dmg +4 perm.
10	<b>Stomach wound:</b> Save vs death or 10 perm CON damage, else 5 STR dmg +5 perm.	<b>Internal trauma:</b> Save vs death or 10 perm STR damage, else 5 STR dmg +5 perm.	<b>Spinal trauma:</b> save vs paralysis or permanently paralysed (waist down), 5 DEX dmg +5 perm.
11	As above but all CON damage is permanent. If still alive, save vs death or die.	As above but no save. If still alive, save vs death or die.	As above but all DEX damage is permanent. If still alive, save vs death or die.
12+	Instant death.	Instant death.	Instant death.



**Zero health:** As stated, *pariahs* must make DC 15 CON checks if they wish to move or act while at 0 HP (p.9).

Finally, this table provides very broad strokes: what does 3 Dexterity damage look like? A sprained wrist, a twisted ankle or something more gruesome? Does CHA damage constitute marred physical beauty through facial scarring or faltering confidence?

The GM and players should fill in the details.



9 INT	10 WIS	11-12 CHA
<b>Head Injury:</b> 1 INT damage.	<b>Head Injury or Psychological Trauma:</b> 1 WIS damage.	<b>Facial Scarring, Damage to Voice or Humiliation:</b> 1 CHA damage.
	Take 2 damage to [attribute].	
	Take 3 damage to [attribute].	
	Take 4 damage to [attribute].	
	Take 5 damage to [attribute].	
As above +1 permanent damage. Save vs death or fall unconscious.	As above +1 permanent damage. Save vs death or flee in terror.	As above +1 permanent damage. Save vs paralysis or cower in shame.
As above +1 perm damage (2 total).	As above +1 perm damage (2 total).	As above +1 perm damage (2 total).
As above +1 permanent damage (3 total).	As above +1 permanent damage (3 total).	As above +1 permanent damage (3 total).
As above +1 permanent damage (4 total).	As above +1 permanent damage (4 total).	As above +1 permanent damage (4 total).
<b>Major trauma:</b> As above +1 permanent damage (5 total) + fall unconscious (no save).	<b>Major trauma:</b> As above +1 permanent damage (5 total) + flee in terror (no save).	<b>Major trauma:</b> As above +1 permanent damage (5 total) + cower in shame (no save).
As above but all INT damage is permanent (12 total). If still alive, save vs death or die.	As above but all WIS damage is permanent (12 total). If still alive, save vs death or die.	As above but all CHA damage is permanent.
Instant death (decapitation).	Instant death.	As above + save vs death or die.



## **X** IS FOR ... EXPERIENCE

- PARIAH lacks levels and experience points normally used to measure a *pariah's* development. Players are expected to make their band stronger by building relations with other humans and spirits and/or developing their technology and skill base.
- Tools, items, skills and magic are picked up while interacting with the world... as are curses, mutations and other boons and banes complicating generic *pariahs*. However, PARIAH also uses Angus (Spwack)'s mechanic from Die Trying (a GLOG hack published on meanderingbanter.blogspot.com). This system uses X marks on your character sheet features (such as an Attribute, saving throw or HD). Accumulating 3 Xs means it can be improved.

### **... EXCELLENCE**

- Xs are awarded for excellent results such as:
- Rolling a 'natural 20' for an attack or saving throw.
- Rolling the maximum die value on a skill or ability check.
- If rolling multiple dice, an X is only awarded for a maximum total (all die show the maximum numerical result).

### **... EXECRABLENESS**

- Xs are also rewarded for terrible results only if the player describes a particularly nasty consequence.
- In PARIAH there are no rules for a critical failure during combat besides an automatic miss. For example, a player detailing an especially nasty mishap (injuring an ally, dropping their weapon) as a consequence of failure would place an X next to their attack roll. Failure is the best way to learn, after all!
- As with multiple dice and Xs for excellence, Xs are only awarded if all dice show the lowest result—including spell failure.

### **... EXPIRATION**

- A character at 0 HP may be on their last legs but they get an X against their HD.

### **... EXECUTION**

- Rolling dice presents players with a good probability of advancing their *pariahs* but, to encourage more creative and intelligent play, GMs should award Xs for successful plans requiring no rolls.
- This is built into the skill test mechanic: a GM sets the difficulty for a task, reducing it for every environmental condition the players introduce or exploit. If the difficulty is brought down to your ability score you automatically succeed and there is no reason to roll!
- NOTE: Xs for execution are reserved for difficult tasks and cunning plans, not catching a gecko or boiling an egg!

### **... EXEMPLARY ATTENDANCE OR ROLEPLAY**

- The GM can reward performance outside of the game world.
- Sometimes it's difficult to schedule everyone at the same time: when people make it, a reward for one of their characters is welcome.
- Likewise, good roleplay (note that this does not necessarily mean "good acting") makes the experience at the table especially enjoyable. Allow each player to nominate their favourite role player at the end of the session, and reward the player with the most nominations with an X for one of their characters.
- Not all tables demand diegetic reasons for everything that occurs within the game, but if the above is immersion breaking for some, consider this:
- The players represent the *pariah's* guiding ancestral spirits. They may impart their blessing onto their descendants (by giving them an X!)



- Likewise, sometimes the line between the spirit and their descendant becomes blurred: the spirit feels immersed in the world of the living once again, and from that power blesses the one who facilitated this phenomenon (good roleplay!)

### ...EXCLUSION (DON'T DO IT!)

- At the end of the session there may have been characters who, despite being a vital part of everything that the party got up during their most recent trip, somehow did not pick up any Xs. Reward them with an X!

## ADVANCEMENT WITH XS

### Skills

- Obtaining 3 Xs next to a skill enables it to increase in die size.
- A character learns or even invents new skills in as they overcome skill challenges in game (or fail miserably in the attempt).
- A skill cannot be improved beyond 1d12.

### Saves

- Individual saves are improved by -1 (or +1 for spell saves) whenever 3 Xs are obtained against them.

### Attributes

- Accumulating 3 Xs allows a *pariah* to “test” that Attribute in order to improve it.
- They must roll higher than their Attribute on a D20 to improve by one point.
- Failing the roll means all Xs are lost.
- For a more challenging Attribute test, use 3d6 instead of 1d20.

### Attack & Defence Bonus

3 options for improving a character's attack or defence bonus:

- Increase bonus by one for every 3 Xs placed.
- As above, but limit the bonus to the *pariah's* HD (+4, +6, +8).
- Increase by one when the number of Xs = 3 + current bonus (i.e. 3 Xs to get to +1, 4 to get to +2, 5 to get to +3).

## Placing Xs against Weapons

- Option 1: Improves weapon proficiency. Receive an additional to hit bonus when using that weapon type, as well as their ordinary attack bonuses. This “proficiency bonus” maxes out at +3.
- Option 2: The individual weapon becomes imbued with magical power, adding additional attack bonuses (as above) and damage bonuses, but only with that individual weapon. It should have a name and its own personality.

## Hit Dice

- 3 Xs against a hit die enables the *pariah* to gain an additional hit die.
- A *pariah* can have up to nine hit dice! But...
- Their maximum health points limited to two hit dice (+CON modifier for each die)
- Ordinarily, a *pariah* may not exceed 22 hp. The additional hit dice do have a lot of uses however:
  - to recover health and to heal Attribute damage.
  - in spells and rituals.
  - to bolster any Attribute, skill, attack, damage, defence rolls or saving throws (see the character generation section).

## X PLACEMENT WEIRDNESS

Spwack of Meandering Banter includes excellent guidelines for “adjudicating strange x placement” in the DIETRYING RULES. Here follows a brief summary of those guidelines, adapted for PARIAS:

- Encourage players to place Xs against things useful to the character.
- Xs placed against negative traits should make the trait more useful, not erase it altogether.
- Xs against names earn new epithets or alter one's true name.
- Tools should become “more of themselves.”
- If in doubt, make it sentient: this is an animist RPG, bring everything to life!









# MAGIC

## RITUALS, SPELLS & SPIRITS

Magic is the very lifeblood of existence—the divine spark animating the universe. Controlling and mastering magic is beyond ordinary human capability: utilising magical power requires calling upon the spirits' aid through ritual practice. Rituals are not only to invoke the spirits' power but also to commune with, honour and placate them.

### THE SEVEN REALMS

There are 7 spiritual realms—each with important ritual magic implications. Each realm is associated with a time of day and, sometimes, a cardinal point. Sitting parallel to the *pariahs*' realm, folded up within it, near but somehow far.

- Here** Our world of nature, of humans, animals, birds, trees, winds, and rains... all that lives and reproduces and grows and moves.
- There** The land of shadow, of death and lost spirits awaiting rebirth. The realm closest to our own and most likely to interfere with it.
- Dawn** The chaotic world of new life, capricious and fey. An ever-changing realm of endless fractals associated with the east, day and night and nature's weirder elements.
- Dusk** Entropy and complexity—like Dawn, a realm of complex fractals, but rectilinear, angular and dry. Native spirits value a complex rationality alien to human minds and cleave closer to the insectile and reptilian. Associated with the west.
- Moon** The silver lake—allegedly, a vast shimmering disk beneath a starless indigo sky. Realm of dream and the collective unconsciousness containing all the memories of men and women and more, guarded closely by the curious moon spirits. Associated with the moon, night and the north wind.
- Sun** Brutal and uncompromising, the sun nevertheless gives life as well as taking it away. Dancers of the heavens—proud and haughty fire and lightning spirits—dwell here, most humans would not petition these dangerous elementals. Tied to high noon, cardinal south and tumultuous summer storms.
- The Beyond** Allegedly a shimmering sea of crystal glass—others suppose it is an impossible iridescence dancing across the sky or a diamond sea filled with all of heaven's rainbows. Some say it is nothing at all, a hungry void beyond blackness. Truthfully, few have experienced the Beyond and survived to share their experiences. Ordinary humans associate it with the tiny stars spilled across the sky like mother's milk or the deep indigo spaces between those numerous nameless pinpricks of light.



## RITUALS

*Pariahs* may begin the game knowing rituals. For convenience, the ritual's leader is referred to as a shaman—a term with no special significance in *PARIAH*.

Choose from or roll upon the table below to discover which rituals they know, noting:

- How long it takes.
- When it must be performed.
- What must be given.
- Who must be present.
- How it is learned.

Many rituals require a sacrifice measured in HD. The following are acceptable sources:

- The shaman's HD (erasing them from their character sheet).
- Without HD they may sacrifice HP: roll the HD, recording health damage.
- In some cases an animal's HD may be sacrificed.

2d4	RITUAL	PURPOSE
2	Show Me Then the Truth of its Nature	Seeing and knowing invisible things.
3	All in this Circle Shall Lie Safe	Protecting the band from evil.
4	Ritual of the True Name	Finding one's true name.
5	The Binding of Two Souls	Uniting two lovers or friends.
6	Sorcerous Ritual: Invocation	Invoking elemental power.
7	Sorcerous Ritual: Binding	Binding a spell-spirit.
8	Sorcerous Ritual: Conjunction	Conjuring an elemental spirit.

## SHOW ME THEN THE TRUTH OF ITS NATURE

<b>Time taken</b>	Up to 3 nights each a month apart.
<b>When</b>	By the light of a full moon
<b>Entheogen</b>	Sleepflower resin.
<b>Sacrifice</b>	A lock of the victim's hair. The shaman drains their blood to 0 HP into a bowl of water reflecting the moon.
<b>Participants</b>	The shaman.

A ghostly silver reflection of the shaman emerges from the bowl, drinking the blood. On the first moon, it seeks the victim, divining their location with the lock of their hair. On the second moon, it uses that hair to present the shaman with the victim's ghost, asking it any question which it answers. On the third moon, it reveals the victim's true name to the shaman.

**Learned...** by the moon-ghost whispering it to you in your sleep (if instructed to do so by the shaman).



## ALL IN THIS CIRCLE SHALL LIE SAFE

<b>Time taken</b>	10 mins + 10 mins per HD.
<b>When</b>	After noon but before sunset.
<b>Entheogen</b>	A low dose of desert rue.
<b>Sacrifice</b>	One HD per 9' of radius.
<b>Participants</b>	The shaman.

- A protective circle bars spirits from crossing—but not humans or animals, and spirits may still coax humans from the circle with trickery. The magic fades by noon the next day.
- This ritual can be made permanent by building a powerful shrine (refer to [atelier-hwei.itch.io](http://atelier-hwei.itch.io)).

**Learned...** by assisting in the ritual every day for a full lunar month.

## THE BINDING OF TWO SOULS

<b>Time taken</b>	A whole night.
<b>When</b>	From dusk until dawn beneath a new or full moon.
<b>Entheogen</b>	Unnecessary.
<b>Sacrifice</b>	Each half must give all to the other.
<b>Participants</b>	Two people to be bound. The shaman. At least one other witness.

By dawn two souls will be as one—a bond so powerful that, unless sundered by betrayal:

- In daylight hours, they may share short telepathic messages.
- By night they may communicate as though sat side-by-side regardless of distance.
- They share injuries and wounds between each other as if sharing one body (including recovering HP and HD).

**Learned...** by assisting in the ritual every day for a full lunar month.

## RITUAL OF THE TRUE NAME

<b>Time taken</b>	A whole night.
<b>When</b>	From dusk 'til dawn beneath a full moon.
<b>Entheogen</b>	Unnecessary.
<b>Sacrifice</b>	Nothing.
<b>Participants</b>	A baby or Nameless One, their guardian and a shaman. No other witnesses.

- By dawn, the guardian (which forgets the name afterwards) whispers the unnamed supplicant's name into their ears—the child always remembers.
- If performed on a Nameless One their curse is lifted and their WVIS and/or CHA rise to 3.

**Learned...** by assisting with the ritual 6 times.

## SORCEROUS RITUALS

Shamanic rituals produce reliable, specific results through complex procedures.

Less reliable (but more flexible) is the magic of sorcery: rituals of invocation, conjuration and binding. Practitioners are called “sorcerers” but possess no special power beyond knowledge.

*Invocations:* bring forth a wisp of elemental power: a spell-spirit.

*Conjurations* summon elemental spirits of definite form, strong personality and great intelligence.

*Bindings* enable the sorcerer to place contingencies on summoned entities, usually through a device and/or a command word.



# INVOCATION & CONJURATION

The sorcerer marks a circle on the ground and sits before it and decides how much power (measured in HD) they invoke as a spell-spirit. HD is traded on a like-for like basis and must come from the sorcerer. A spell-spirit may not exceed 3 HD but powerful sorcerers can summon more than one. *Examples below:*

*Killing Moon wishes to invoke 2 HD of elemental power and crosses off two of her HD to start the ritual.*

*Madness-is-the-Season (5HD) wishes to invoke three 2HD spell-spirits, crossing off all their HD and deducting the sixth die from their HP.*

The sorcerer must chooses a realm to invoke according to the magic they seek (see below).

The sacrificed HD forms a die pool to which additional dice may be added (outlined below): limitless dice can be added but the HD invoked cannot exceed their initial investment.

- +2 dice if the sorcerer has ingested a low dose of psychobotanicals (p.38).
- +1 if associated with the invoked realm.

- +1 die for every realm-favored material offering.
- +1 die for every previous time this realm was invoked (maximum 3).
- +1 dice for each HD of animals sacrificed.
- +2 dice if conducted at a shrine dedicated to the invoked realm.
- +1 die if performed at the realm's favoured time of day.
- -1 die if enacted at the opposite time of day e.g. *invoking Dawn at dusk, Moon at noon or The Beyond without a solar eclipse.*
- Dice may be added for player provided description of the ritual.
- Additional die equal to the (higher) WIS or CHA Attribute modifier.

*Examples:*  
*Killing Moon already committed 2 HD invoking Dawn and performs the ritual at sunrise (+1 die) at a shrine dedicated to Dawn spirits (+2 dice) under the influence of a low dose of mushrooms (+3 dice) and has a Wisdom of 14 (+1 die). Next, she places a glass shard she found in the desert on the shrine, positioning it to catch the early morning light.*

REALM	TIME	MATERIAL	ASSOCIATED MAGIC
Here	(daytime)	Wood, hide, plant matter, stone, water, anything within reach!	Becoming an animal, controlling the weather, speaking with animals and plants.
Dawn	(sunrise)	A beautiful, shiny object imitating something natural.	Illusions & charms, changing shape, mimicry.
There	(night)	Any human body part, but especially blood & bone.	Necromancy, entropy, decay, speaking with the dead.
Dusk	(sunset)	A complex mechanical tool, an elaborate pattern of stones, an insect swarm, live reptiles.	Knowledge, teleportation, imprisonment, mechanisation.
Moon	(midnight)	Milk, silver, jasmine, ginseng, moonstone, lead, water.	Divination, knowledge, sleep, dream, reflection, imitation.
Sun	(noon)	Fire, acacia, vine, sunstone, olibanum.	Fire, lightning, creation, destruction.
The Beyond	(a solar eclipse)	A piece of a dragon, a fragment of rainbow, metal from a fallen star, gold, diamond.	Terrifying eldritch sorcery.



Using it as a focus as she begins chanting Dawn spirits' many false names(+1 die for material, +1 for narrative effect) for a total of 10 die (2 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 1 + 1) using her HD value for the dice pool and keeping the best dice equal to her initial HD outlay (2).

Low HD sorcerers are more likely to succeed than those with greater HD. For a *pariah* may use up to six words to command an invoked spell-spirit, such as *Tell me of Running Hawk's plans* or *Find me my true love* or *Kill them all*.

GMs and players are encouraged to be creative while placing limits on the extent of the effects.

- An instruction to "kill" might inflict one die of damage for each HD of spell-spirit.
- A transformation spell might only last for one day with a save vs spells.
- For invocation and conjuration rituals, spell save is equal to the sorcerer's CHA or WIS + invoked spell-spirits' HD.
- Effects' duration can be bound by dice (roll HD of elementals/ invocations) with an upper limit of 24 hours: an invocation returns to its realm its preferred time of day (dawn spirits by sunrise, moon by the following midnight, eldritch horrors from Beyond by the next solar eclipse...).

Invocations may be learned by any observer repeating its steps. However, until they have successfully invoked a power, their dice pool is limited to one die regardless of actions they take. After successfully invoking a spirit, they fully understand the ritual and may add to their dice pool normally.

## INVOCATION & CONJURATION

HD	Result
1	<b>Success!</b> 1 HD invoked or conjured.
2-5	No effect.
6	<b>Partial Success:</b> conjured or invoked spirit is from a random realm—during a solar eclipse, the invocation appears from the Beyond.
7	No effect.
8	<b>Catastrophe:</b> conjure an elemental from a random realm (Beyond if there is a solar eclipse)

## CONJURATION

Conjuration follows the same process as an invocation ritual but fails without a minimum of three successes (three 1s) when conjuring an elemental from another realm. Conjured elementals fully understand any instructions received—seeking loopholes, particularly to inflict pain on the conjuring sorcerer.

An **elemental** has the following statistics:

<b>HD</b>	3-5d10
<b>Attack</b>	Strike or Invocation*
<b>Attack value</b>	15 (D10)
<b>Defence</b>	14**
<b>Morale</b>	12
<b>Speed</b>	60'
<b>Size</b>	Large
<b>Mind</b>	13

\* Instead of an attack, an elemental may invoke (HD-2) HD of spell-spirits from its realm every turn.

\*\* Mundane weapon immunity.

The elemental remains in the sorcerer's service until one of the following occurs: their task is complete or the spirit's next associated time (dawn/dusk/midnight/solar eclipse) passes or the sorcerer is killed, after which it returns to its realm.



## BINDING RITUALS

Binding rituals trap a conjured elemental or invocation in an object or living thing, enabling the sorcerer to reproduce a magical effect at a later date.

### BINDING TO A DEVICE

A device is a spirit-bound object—anything not usually considered alive like a wand or a pebble. Before an invocation or conjuration begins, the object is placed in the ritual circle's center.

The sorcerer must take immediate steps to bind the spirit(s) to the device once invoked, using the usual five words with an additional D6 words for every additional HD invested.

*Example:*

*Killing Moon invoked 2 HD of spell spirits and wishes to bind this power to her device: an ornate willow wand. She invests 2 more HD binding them, rolling 2d6 for a result of 5 and 10 total words. She utters: "To this wand I bind thee until I say "semlek!" completing the ritual.*

The pattern is the same for conjurations but it is permitted to save vs the sorcerer's casting Attribute to resist. If successful it attacks the sorcerer.

With multiple invocations or elementals are materialised, only a single realm may be bound to the same device. In Madness-is-the-Season's ritual (above); they may choose to bind the spirit they intended to invoke, the spirit they inadvertently invoked or one of the two accidentally conjured elementals.

Breaking the bind releases the spirit: the sorcerer issues commands as though it was ritually summoned.

## BINDING A SEMI-SENTIENT

A spell-spirit or conjuration may be bound to an animal or Nameless One: a vessel. Doing so requires they remain (conscious) in the invocation or casting circle for the initial ritual's duration. Otherwise this is similar to other rituals with the addition the vessel must make a saving throw vs spells.

If the vessel is successfully bound to a spell-spirit they become the sorcerer's obedient servant—responding to five-word commands like an invoked spell-spirit. At the GM's discretion, they may also gain a minor magical effect befitting their elemental power source. Destroying the vessel breaks the bond and the spell spirit immediately returns to their realm.

If a conjuration is bound to a vessel, they act as an obedient and intelligent servant of the sorcerer, retaining an elemental's ability to invoke spell-spirits, not requiring sleep and only consuming as much food and drink as their vessel ordinarily would.

The servant views their new body as a prison and uses every spare moment plotting to subtly undermine their magical gaoler.

If the vessel succeeds their save, the spirits still believe they are bound to it and writhe about the vessel unless the sorcerer commands otherwise or their special time of day arrives.

### BINDING A SPELL-SPIRIT

To gain the power to spontaneously cast spells a *pariah* must bind themselves to a spell-spirit in the ritual of *spellbinding*. It begins as an ordinary invocation but the sorcerer places themselves within the invocation circle.





Then the sorcerer lets sufficient blood to reduce them to 0 HP while remaining conscious.

They must invoke 3HD of elemental power and—provided they successfully invoke the spell-spirit—use their incantation to bind it to them. Typically, *I bind thee to me* is sufficient—but it doesn't stop there. The sorcerer makes a DC 16 WIS/CHA check, rolling and adding 1d6 to their Attribute:

- A natural 1 always fails.
- Deduct 1 from their roll for every spirit already bound to them.
- Deduct 1 from the roll for every point of damage past zero.

Success: grants the sorcerer a great and fierce power.

Failure: the invoked spirit attacks them before returning to its realm of origin leaving behind a cold, bloody mess—wouldn't it have been easier to make a magic wand?

## SPELLS

The *pariah* gains spontaneous Invocations (Spells)...

- by ritually binding a spell-spirit to themselves (p.36).
- as a Spiritual Boon.
- during character creation.

Possessing a "Spell" means a spell-spirit from one of the 7 Realms (including Here and Now) is bound to the *pariah's* very being as a faithful servant.

## THE SPELL-SPIRIT'S REALM

Realm dictates a Spell-Spirit's favoured activities (p.34). Casting a spell is a spontaneous invocation ritual: the *pariah* utters (no more than 5) command words and the spirit obeys to the best of its ability.

## WAGERING INNER POWER

A *pariah* wagers HD casting a spell: rolling as many HD as they wish—the more rolled, the more powerful the spell effect.

A roll of 4+ means the die is "spent" and removed from the *pariah's* HD total. Any HD rolled for ≤3 are returned to the *pariah's* HD pool.

The total value dictates the spell effect: damage, duration, range etc. (p.35)

*Pariahs* with a larger HD do more damage/ create more intense spell effects but likely expend HD doing this. *Pariahs* with smaller HD are likely to retain their HD after casting, compensating for potentially weaker spells.

## SPELL FAILURE

There is a chance of spell failure when using powerful magic occurring if two or more 1s are rolled.

- Double 1s: spell has no effect.
- Triple 1s: spell backfires against the caster. Area of effect spells centre on the sorcerer. Some cases may require creativity.
- Quadruple 1s: as above, additionally caster develops a superficial mutation, manifesting over 10 rounds.
- Quintuple 1s: as above. Additionally the caster receives a curse template (p.52).
- Sextuple 1s: as above but caster also rerolls the dice—the spell backfires, the sorcerer is cursed and mutates, then recasts the spell.
- Septuple (or more) 1s: so bad it's good. All dice are rerolled and the caster receives 7 Xs (p.28) distributed as they wish.

Casting Without HD: caster may still cast spells after running out of HD by taking HP damage equal to the casting dice's value.

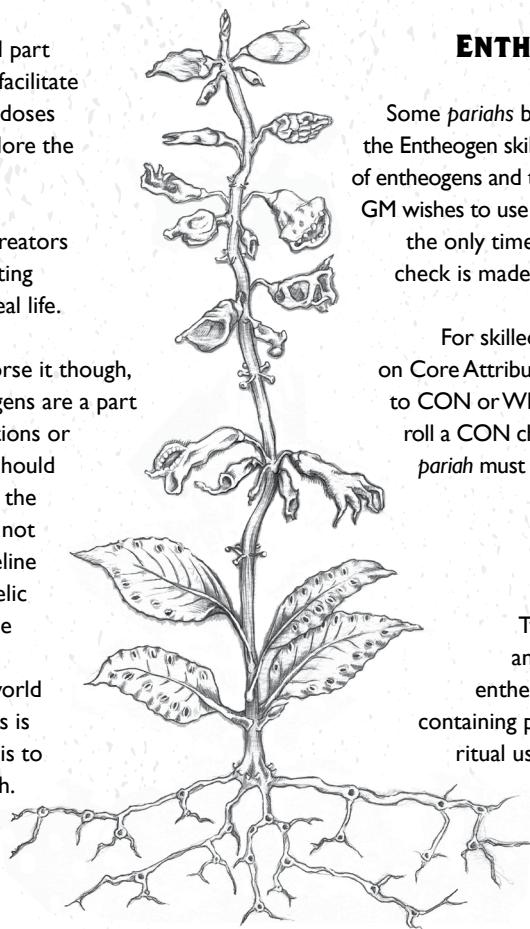


# ENTHEOGENS

Entheogens are a vital part PARIAS: small doses facilitate magical rituals, larger doses enable *pariahs* to explore the spirit world.

However, PARIAS's creators do not endorse ingesting psychobotonicals in real life.

They do not *not* endorse it though, particularly if entheogens are a part of your cultural traditions or spiritual practices. It should go without saying but the following text should not be considered a guideline for ingesting psychedelic substances nor are the substances described analogous with real world psychobotonicals. This is a work of fiction and is to be appreciated as such.



## ENTHEOGEN SKILL

Some *pariahs* begin the game with the Entheogen skill: a good knowledge of entheogens and their use. Unless the GM wishes to use the skill other ways, the only time an Entheogen skill check is made is during ingestion.

For skilled *pariahs*, depending on Core Attribute, the skill is linked to CON or WIS—unskilled *pariahs* roll a CON check. Regardless, the *pariah* must meet or exceed the provided DC.

## TYPE

Two detailed entries and four summarised entheogens are provided containing preparation, dosage, ritual use, associated realm and other possible effects for each.

## DOSAGES

Doses produce (entheogen-dependent) different effects.

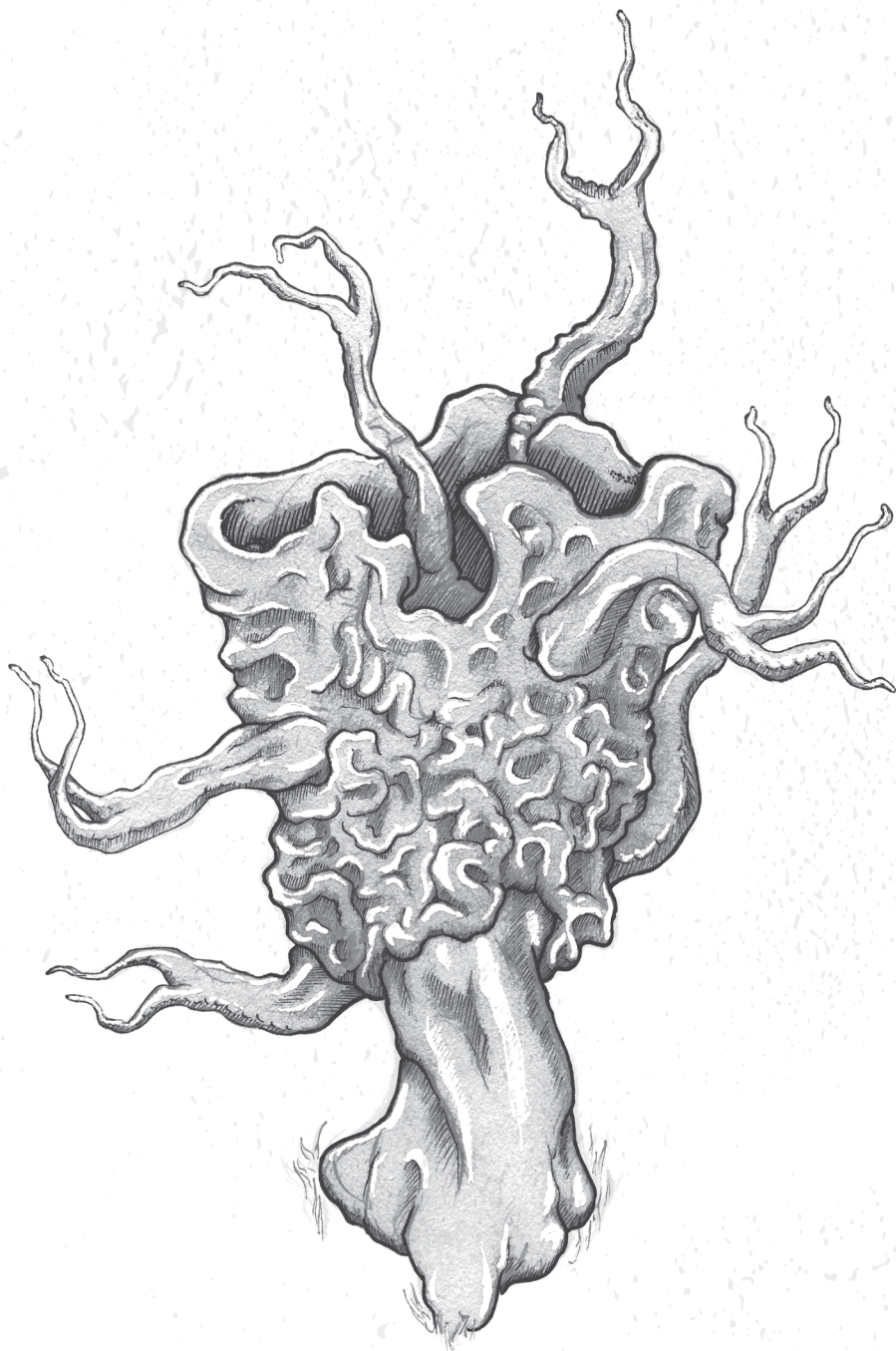
1. A Low Dose (a taste) alters perception but the *pariah* can still interact with the physical world (sometimes with penalties or bonuses).
2. A Powerful Dose floors the *pariah*. Hovering between worlds but capable of interacting with the physical reality their body occupies.
3. A Heroic Dose is what shamans ingest to directly experience the spirit realm, leaving their bodies and wandering the plane.
4. A Ridiculous Dose is (usually) taken by accident and has potentially injurious effects. However, surviving the experience may provide fresh insights into the nature of reality, oneself and more.



# S O R C E R E R S   S A G E

<b>Description</b>	Herbaceous perennial plant. Growing on the slopes of subtropical hills and valleys. White flowers resemble skeletal human body parts when glimpsed from the corner of the eye.
<b>Realm</b>	<i>There</i> (Death).
<b>Preparation</b>	Dried leaves burned and smoke inhaled over a fire or through a pipe.
<b>Low Dose (DC12)</b>	<p>A handful of leaves from one adult plant, dried, smoked and fully inhaled.</p> <p><b>Success:</b> Mild Dissociation: voice feels strange and alien—like someone rattling around the hollow vessel of their body.</p> <p>Everything Glows (Eerie White): especially humans. From the corner of their eyes, white ghosts interact with the pale auras.</p> <p>Further Ingestion: requires a poison save, success leads to “the next level”, failure in vomiting.</p> <p>+1 to defence rolls, craft skills and any WIS checks (except Entheogen checks).</p> <p><b>Failure:</b> save vs poison or vomit, after which no further effects are felt.</p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes.</p>
<b>Powerful Dose (DC15)</b>	<p>Smoke two plants in quick succession or burn four plants’ dried leaves in an enclosed space (such as a tent).</p> <p><b>Success:</b> Dulled Senses: immersed for 10 minutes in a landscape of saturated colours.</p> <p>Disoriented: -1 to Attribute checks performing simple tasks including speech.</p> <p>Simultaneously Occupy the Realms of the Living and Dead: may interact with any dead souls encountered.</p> <p>Insight: +1 WIS Bonus during interactions for 1 week OR heal all WIS damage.</p> <p><b>Failure:</b> save vs poison or violently sick for 10 mins (1 HD damage).</p> <p>Passed: Heroic Dose effects.</p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes.</p>
<b>Heroic Dose (DC18)</b>	<p>Smoke eight plants’ resin or burn 24 plants’ dried leaves in an enclosed space.</p> <p><b>Success:</b> Insensate: slump to the floor.</p> <p>Cross Over: spirit freely enters the world of the dead moving as if in the Here and Now.</p> <p>Insight: +1 WIS bonus for one week AND heal all INT, WIS or CHA damage.</p> <p><b>Failure:</b> save vs poison or debilitating nausea.</p> <p>Passed: Powerful Dose effects.</p> <p>Duration: 10 minutes, time dilation feels like two hours.</p>
<b>Ridiculous Dose (DC21)</b>	<p>Two Heroic Doses (second is DC 21) assisted by a sober person.</p> <p><b>Success:</b> Lord of the Dead takes notice.</p> <p>Failure (second attempt): 1d6 WIS damage.</p>
<b>Ritual</b>	<p>A trained shaman (Entheogen skill expert+) can guide 2+ <i>pariahs</i> to the Realm of the Dead (p.46).</p> <p>A heroic dose is burned as the shaman begins leading a unifying chant.</p> <p>Everyone present rolls an Entheogen die using the best result for a collective DC 18 Entheogen check.</p> <p>The shaman may roll two dice.</p>





# SHAMAN SHROOM

<b>Description</b>	Large fungus—like a baby's head-sized stinkhorn mushroom with weird tentacles that seem to move when you look away—growing at trees' feet in tropical rainforests and jungles. One mushroom provides 6 doses.
<b>Realm</b>	<i>Dawn, the realm of wyrd nature.</i>
<b>Preparation</b>	Noxious if consumed raw: -2 to poison saves or Entheogen checks. Usually dried and smoked in a pipe or added to soup.
<b>Low Dose</b>	One dose.
<b>(poison save)</b>	Full effects after 3 turns(raw) or 2 (boiled or immediately (smoked). No Entheogen Roll: save vs poison—add Entheogen skill if applicable. <b>Success:</b> The World Comes to Life: everything intensifies—riotous colours and details.. +1 bonus on all checks for the duration. Dawn Association: additional +1 to interactions with plants and animals due to the realm's close association with Here and Now. <b>Failure:</b> 10 minutes of nausea (1d4 CON damage) then experience Powerful Dose effects. Duration: 3 hours + 1 per additional dose (maximum two, risk of experiencing a more powerful trip).
<b>Powerful Dose</b>	Achieved via failed save or ingesting 1/3 of a mushroom.
<b>(DC13)</b>	<b>Success:</b> Sluggish: slowed to half speed Delayed Response: treat Dexterity as 3 points lower affecting defence and other bonuses—this is not damage. Glimpse the Lands of Dawn: a fecund and wild place of constant flux, where trees and plants collapse in on themselves in infinite fractal loops. Dawn Sensitivity: spirits of Dawn traversing the Here and Now are visible and can be communicated with. Plant and Animal Speech: receive answers that seem comprehensible—mostly nonsense, mostly. Afterwards: want to do nothing but eat and then sleep, revisiting the whole experience in dreams. <b>Failure:</b> nausea until the effects take hold (Low Dose)—ingesting additional shrooms automatically acts as a Powerful Dose. Duration: 4 hours + 1 hour per additional low dose (no additional effect for consumption)
<b>Heroic Dose</b>	Ingst an entire mushroom.
<b>(DC16)</b>	<b>Success:</b> Vacated Body: slump to the floor as spirit enters Dawn. <b>Failure:</b> triggers a poison save: <b>Success:</b> travel to the realm of dawn but spend the trip's duration being attacked by malevolent spirits causing 1d4 (temporary) CHA damage. Fail the save and they will suffer the same fate, but the CHA damage is permanent. Duration: 5 hours in the Realm of Dawn (1d4 hours per hour in the Here and Now).
<b>Ridiculous Dose</b>	Consume more than one mushroom—poison save just to hold down (at -2 if eaten raw).
<b>(DC19+)</b>	<b>Success:</b> Intruder in Dawn: draw the (hostile) attention of Aziza, Queen of Dawn. <b>Failure:</b> as Heroic Dose but any CHA damage is also applied to WIS. Failure (second attempt): 1d6 WIS damage.
<b>Ritual</b>	A trained shaman can guide 2+ <i>pariahs</i> (maximum of a tent full) to the Realm of Dawn (p.47). A Heroic Dose is dissolved in broth and passed around until consumed. Everyone present rolls an Entheogen die using the best result for a collective DC 18 Entheogen check. The shaman may roll two dice.





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# S L E E P F L O W E R

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**Description:** Sleepflower poppy resin.

**Realm:** Moon.

**Preparation:** Extracted resin (smoked).

**Low Dose:** 1-4 poppy heads.

**(10)** **Success:** Dexterity halved (Slowed Reaction).

Heal 1d4 HP (revitalising).

**Failure:** Paralysis. Nausea—1d4 HP damage.

**Duration:** 1 hour followed by 3 hours sleep.

**Powerful Dose** 5-8 poppy heads.

**(DC12)** **Success:** Dexterity quartered (Slowed Reaction).

Revitalising—Heal 2d4 HP.

Receive artistic inspiration.

**Failure:** Save vs poison or suffer 2d4 HP damage (1d4 if save passed).

**Duration:** 2 hours followed by 4 hours sleep.

**Heroic Dose** 9-12 poppy heads.

**(DC14)** **Success:** Travel to the Realm of the Moon!

**Failure:** Save vs Poison or die (fall sleep for duration if save passed).

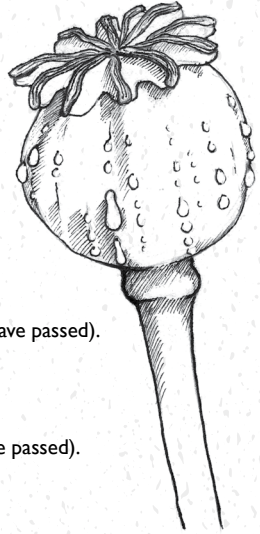
**Duration:** 3 hours followed by 4 hours sleep.

**Ridiculous** 12+ poppy heads.

**Dose (Save** **Success:** Fatigued: 2d6 temporary CON damage.

**vs. poison)** **Failure:** Die.

**Ritual** Share Heroic Dose experience induced via pipe of sleep flower while ritually chanting. Collectively journey to the moon.



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# Q U I C K L E A F

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**Description:** Glossy, heart-shaped leaves of a highland rainforest evergreen shrub.

**Realm:** None in particular.

**Preparation:** Usually chewed raw, can be brewed or smoked if dried.

**Dose:** **One Leaf.** (no save or roll):

- Vigorous: +1 to all physical rolls (STR, attacks, etc.).

- Wired: +1 to all alertness rolls (listening, surprise, initiative etc.).

Duration: 1 turn.

**Each Additional Leaf** (save vs poison, -1 to save for each additional leaf):

**Success:**

- Extends duration 10 minutes.

- Believe effects intensified.

**Failure:**

- Vomit up all ingested leaves.

- Cancel all effects.

**Ritual** No associated ritual but chewing quickleaf during invocation or conjuration (like any Low Dose entheogen) increases the sorcerers' die pool.

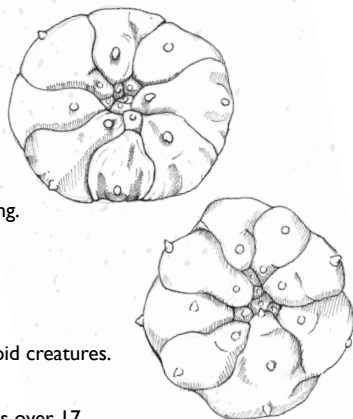


## DESERT RUE

<b>Description:</b>	Desert Rue—an acacia bush growing in dry areas—root and bark. One bush produces 30 doses of tea/stew.
<b>Realm:</b>	<i>Sun.</i>
<b>Preparation:</b>	Brewed slowly for one day. Cannot be prepared without training.
<b>Low Dose:</b> <b>(DC 11)</b>	One dose. <b>Success:</b> similar to Shaman Shrooms   <b>Failure:</b> No effect. <b>Duration:</b> 2 turns.
<b>Powerful Dose:</b> <b>(DC 14)</b>	Four doses make the world seem as if it is on fire. <b>Success:</b> Enjoy the spectacle, heal 1d4 CHA damage. <b>Failure:</b> Cower in fear. <b>Duration:</b> 2 turns.
<b>Heroic Dose:</b> <b>(DC 17)</b>	About 8-12 doses. <b>Success:</b> Travel to the Sun Realm. <b>Failure:</b> paralysed for two turns + 1d4 WIS damage. <b>Duration:</b> 2 turns.
<b>Ridiculous Dose:</b> <b>(DC 20+)</b>	17+ buttons—save vs poison for every 1d4 buttons over 17. <b>Failure:</b> (poison save) paralysed for two turns + 1d4 WIS damage. <b>Success:</b> make a DC 20 entheogen check... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fail</b> the entheogen check, experience heroic dose as above.</li> <li>• <b>Pass</b> the entheogen check experience the above PLUS converse with the Sun lord (p.50).</li> </ul>
<b>Ritual</b>	Everyone imbibing a Powerful Dose around a fire in the full sun gains Heroic Dose effects. Dose.

## CACTUS BUTTONS

<b>Description</b>	Buttons from the desert cactus.
<b>Realm</b>	<i>Dusk.</i>
<b>Preparation</b>	Chew and swallow. Given it is bitter, often brewed in honey-sweetened tea.
<b>Low Dose</b> <b>(poison save)</b>	2-4 buttons as a Shaman Shroom but with insects. <b>Duration:</b> 1 hour.
<b>Powerful Dose</b> <b>(DC 13)</b>	5-8 buttons—interesting but occasionally frightening. Heal INT damage. Receive technological inspiration. <b>Duration:</b> 1 hour.
<b>Heroic Dose</b> <b>(DC 16)</b>	9-16 buttons. Travel to the Dusk Realm and talk to weird insectoid creatures. <b>Duration:</b> 2 hours.
<b>Ridiculous Dose</b> <b>(DC 19+)</b>	17+ buttons—save vs poison for every 1d4 buttons over 17. <b>Success:</b> Meet an insect god and receive a revolutionary piece of neolithic technology. <b>Failure:</b> horrid nausea.
<b>Ritual</b>	Shared Heroic Dose experience induced in a ritualistic tea drinking ceremony.



# OTHER REALMS

*Pariahs* (individually or as a group) can travel to the realms beyond the *Here and Now*. There are three options for resolving this in play:

1. **Roll & Narrate:** The GM rolls on the table below revealing the trip's outcome and adding narrative flavour as they wish.
2. **Extra-Planar Adventure:** like a wilderness adventure, but in a weird place, using encounter tables below. As the trip ends, the *pariahs* awaken in their earthly bodies.
3. **The Upside-Down:** to capture altered states of consciousness' otherness, change the game format entirely: switch *pariahs*, systems, roles or media. Some suggestions are listed for each realm.

## ROLL AND NARRATE

Roll the *pariah's* Entheogen dice + VVIS or CHA modifiers and follow the relevant realm's unique instructions.

1	<b>Something followed you back.</b> Describe the realm as nightmarishly as possible. Roll on the bane table and the <i>pariah</i> is haunted by a malevolent spirit.
2-4	<b>The experience was unpleasant—</b> but lessons were learned. Describe the realm and roll on its bane table.
5-8	<b>Well, you definitely went there!</b> Roll a boon and a bane. Describe the realm in whatever detail you wish.
9-11	<b>A beautiful experience interacting with other-worldly entities.</b> Roll a boon.
12-14	<b>The experience was intense!</b> A relationship developed with an elemental bonded to you as a spell-spirit. Roll a boon.
15+	<b>A breakthrough about the nature of reality!</b> Increase VVIS by D4 and roll for 2 boons.

## EXTRA-PLANAR ADVENTURES

When wandering the spirit realm, roll for encounters every turn.

### SPIRIT REALM ENCOUNTERS

1d20	Encounter
1-11	None.
12	A sad and lonely spell-spirit.
13	1d4 spell spirits whirling around an unusual landmark.
14	An elemental like a shepherd, crossing the landscape followed by 1d4 spell spirits.
15	Two elementals chasing 1d4 spell spirits.
16	A landscape feature is actually an elemental.
17	1d4 elementals weirdly mimicking the <i>pariahs'</i> appearance.
18	1d4 elementals fighting 1d4 elementals.
19	2d4 elemental spirits performing a... ritual?
20	A Greater Spirit, a demon.

Roll 1d12 to determine reaction: modify positively for friendly party behavior, negatively for hostility.

### SPIRIT REACTION TABLE

1d12	Reaction
1-3	<b>Hostile/Wary</b>
4-6	<b>Mildly Hostile/Cautious:</b> Probing questions: reroll reaction after the interrogation modified by party behavior.
7-9	<b>Neutral</b> As above, +4 to reroll if the party answers questions favourably.
10-11	<b>Friendly/Talkative</b> The spirit wishes to engage.
12	<b>Special</b> The spirit has a special request or purpose (see below).



## THE HERE AND NOW

*Pariahs* do not need entheogens—they're already there! See *Overland Travel* (p.18).

Spirits may still be encountered in the Here and Now, details as follows:

### BANES & BOONS OF THE HERE & NOW

Id12	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Transformed (mouse).	Darkvision (60' in low light or moonlight).
2	Hated by plants cannot even digest them.	Improved Hearing.
3	Insatiable Appetite: capable of fatal overeating.	Animal Bond: species always positively reacts.
4	Hydrophobic: must be forced to drink liquids.	Hawksight: details visible at incredible distances.
5	Perpetually in motion, incapable of rest or sleep.	Plantspeech: can speak with plants.
6	The ground refuses your footsteps: permanently float 1".	Raging Frenzy: in combat, d6 temp HP and +1 to attacks, cannot stop until unconscious or all opponents defeated.
7	Falls in love with an animal.	Tree Friend: climb them effortlessly.
8	Blind as a mole.	Animal Speech: individual species (wolves, antelopes etc.).
9	False lycanthropy: believe you are a werewolf.	+3 to Foraging.
10	Stench: a permanent, acrid smell.	Animal Speech: Complete.
11	Despised by animals (except humans).	Mastery of Animal and Plantspeech.
12	Bad Luck: -1 on all rolls.	Good Luck: +1 on all rolls.

### SPECIAL REQUESTS OF ANIMAL SPIRITS IN THE HERE & NOW

Id6	PREY	PREDATOR	INSECT SWARMS
1	<b>Protect:</b> Escort the herd for a day, protecting them from predators for a boon to each <i>pariah</i> .	<b>Join Us:</b> Hunt with the pack: after catching some prey, you are released.	<b>Find:</b> Smash a termite hill 2 miles to the west.
2	<b>Destroy Predators:</b> Exterminate a predatory pack plaguing them for a boon.	<b>Bring Us Flesh:</b> Bring at least 3 HD of meat for sparing your life.	<b>Fetch:</b> Bring us a random item (p.11).
3	<b>New Watering Hole:</b> Escort them to the nearest watering hole... the "leader" is rewarded.	<b>Hunting Grounds:</b> Lead us to a new hunting ground, at least 24 miles away.	<b>Feed:</b> We hunger for something (1D6) 1-2: sweet 3-4: rotting   5-6: alive.
4	<b>Gather Flowers:</b> Collect the flowers growing on the crocodile infested banks in exchange for being taught the use of a new entheogen.	<b>Destroy our Rivals:</b> Destroy rival animal pack (different species) and receive a boon.	<b>Escort:</b> A new queen was born. Take her ½ mile away to start a new nest.
5	<b>Engage Tribe:</b> A tribe hunts us—insist they stop. Do this for us and we grant you one of our herd each month.	<b>Destroy Your Weapons:</b> Your human hunting tools offend us. Destroy them and receive a boon.	The smiling spirit has a humble request: a hand, a limb, a child, your laugh... sacrifice something the <i>pariahs</i> value. Whoever makes the sacrifice is granted a spell-spirit. If no one will make a sacrifice, roll for 2 banes.
6	The smiling spirit has a humble request: a hand, a limb, a child, your laugh... sacrifice something the <i>pariahs</i> value. Whoever makes the sacrifice is granted a spell-spirit. If no one will make a sacrifice, roll for 2 banes.	The smiling spirit has a humble request: a hand, a limb, a child, your laugh... sacrifice something the <i>pariahs</i> value. Whoever makes the sacrifice is granted a spell-spirit. If no one will make a sacrifice, roll for 2 banes.	The smiling spirit has a humble request: a hand, a limb, a child, your laugh... sacrifice something the <i>pariahs</i> value. Whoever makes the sacrifice is granted a spell-spirit. If no one will make a sacrifice, roll for 2 banes.



# THERE, THE SHADOW OF DEATH

Drained of colours and devoid of any sound, the air is cold yet heavy and close. Dwelling here are emotionless dead souls who (while translucent) physically resemble the deceased and share their memories—I-in-4 chance the soul is someone the *pariahs* know—they choose who.

The Lord of Death often appears as a vast swarm of bluebottles coalescing into an enormous human skull. His approach is sudden but can be anticipated as the buzzing of his approach drowns out other sounds. He shapes 10,000 buzzing wings into audible speech.

The Lord of Death must be petitioned to free a wandering ghost's soul from its curse.



## THE UPSIDE-DOWN:

Making Death's realm weirder takes a narrative approach: forget stats and rolls! Ask players what they think the *pariahs* want from the Land of the Dead and confront them with the ghosts of their past. They'll return to the Here and Now with new wisdom, losing something as well.

BANES & BOONS OF THERE		
Id8	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Become a Wandering Ghost in death.	Cheat Death: at 0 HP heal 1HD (once).
2	Dogs bark at you.	Ask the dead for guidance (yes/no question) once/day.
3	Flesh appears to be slowly rotting.	Detachable Hand: can be controlled remotely (range: 120').
4	Permanent Chill: vulnerable to cold damage.	Cheat Death: at 0 HP heal 1HD (twice).
5	The ground refuses your footsteps: permanently float an inch from the floor.	Gain a bonded spell-spirit.
6	You're Already 'Dead': refusing food or drink.	Speak with a recently deceased corpse's spirit once a day.
7	Become a ghost (p.54).	Cheat Death: at 0 HP heal 1HD (thrice).
8	Bad luck: -1 on all rolls.	Good luck: +1 on all rolls.





## DAWN, THE WYRD SIDE OF NATURE

The chaotic world of new life, capricious and fey, a swirling ever-changing realm of endless fractals. Associated with the east, night and day, nature—especially mammals and birds.

Aziza, Queen of Dawn, appears as a terrifyingly beautiful man or woman with entirely black eyes and the bat, butterfly or bird wings. Endlessly changing, her skin shimmers and bursts, sprouting new limbs and appendages, ultimately subsuming her entire form.

### THE UPSIDE-DOWN:

- Invert all modifiers.
- Only speak in character.
- Speak only in rhyme.
- Swap character sheets every turn.



### BANES & BOONS OF DAWN

Id10	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Transformed into a frog.	Darkvision (60' in low light or moonlight).
2	Cannot touch metal or salt.	Become incredibly beautiful.
3	Falls in love with a Dawn spirit.	Invisibility, one turn, once per day.
4	The ground refuses your footsteps: permanently float an inch from the floor.	Can speak with all animals.
5	Cannot stop dancing, can no longer rest or sleep.	Visit the dawn realm at will for ten minutes before each sunrise.
6	Bees spill from your mouth when you talk.	Can speak with all plants.
7	Descends into an enchanted sleep for 100 years.	Bane: inflict a bane against an enemy.
8	Birds peck out your eyes.	Receive a bonded spell-spirit.
9	Fall in love with your own reflection.	Gain a new craft skill.
10	Bad luck: -1 on all rolls.	Good luck: +1 on all rolls.





# DUSK, THE VESPERS OF KNOWLEDGE

Everything is yellow and red, sharp and angular. Step pyramids jut from the ground and sky, folding back in on themselves. There are mosquitoes everywhere. When bitten, you observe its tiny head has your face. Your own eyes swallow you and you are trapped in a rough-hewn stone chamber. Pushing against the walls, panicking, they slide backwards, forming a complex labyrinth. Despite mounting panic, you experience a parallel calm: you know you can do this. The labyrinth's bricks collapse into a four-dimensional cockroach asking you seventeen simultaneous questions.

## THE UPSIDE-DOWN:

For extra weirdness build a set up tower, players take turns (what do they do in this realm) removing one brick at a time. When the tower collapses, the last player to act's *pariah* rolls a bane, the remaining *pariahs* roll a boon. If a player passes their turn, their *pariah*(s) awakens in the Here and Now.

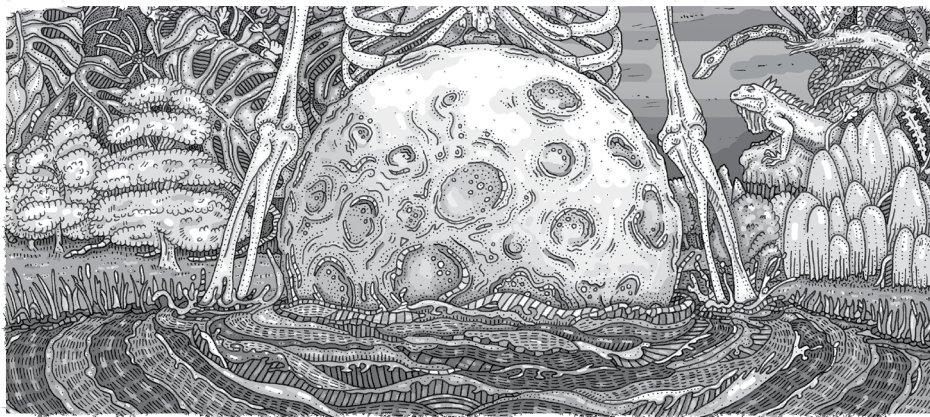


## BANES & BOONS OF DUSK

Id12	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Imprisoned in a labyrinth.	Brain fuel: heal 1d4 damage to WIS or INT every meal.
2	Lose knowledge: craft, proficiency, etc.	Always know which way is west, even on starless nights.
3	1d4 permanent INT damage.	Gain 1d4 INT (max 20).
4	Afraid of water; must be forced to drink any liquid.	Gain sustenance from eating wood.
5	Cannot stop moving; can no longer rest or sleep.	Gain a lizard or giant locust as a familiar.
6	Falls in love with an animal.	Can speak with all plants.
7	Blind as a mole.	Learn a new craft.
8	False lycanthropy: you believe you are a werewolf.	Can speak with all insects.
9	Stench: cursed with a permanent, acrid smell.	Can speak with all reptiles.
10	Despised by all animals (except humans).	Gain a bonded spell-spirit.
11	Bad luck: -1 on all rolls.	Good luck: +1 on all rolls.
12	The ground refuses your footsteps: permanently float an inch from the floor.	Receive knowledge of a new technology (metallurgy, the wheel, crop domestication, bread making etc.).



## MOON, THE SILVER LAKE



The silver lake, realm of dream and unconsciousness. Spell-spirits and elementals encountered here may be the *pariah's* forgotten memories, those of their ancestors or those they have not yet experienced.

### THE UPSIDE-DOWN:

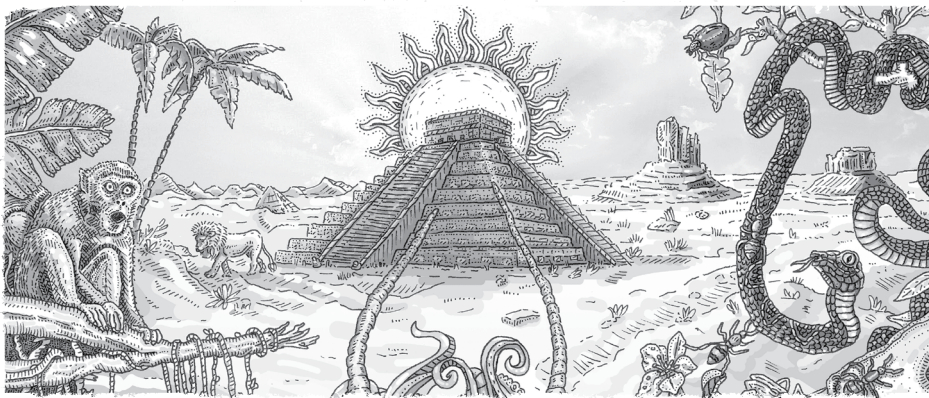
Clear the table. Place the map of the moon (as big as you can print) in the centre. Light a candle. Play Dawn of Worlds on the lunar map until the candle burns out, at which point the *pariahs* return to their bodies with memories of being gods and creating civilisations.

### BANES & BOONS OF MOON

1d8	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Lycanthropy. As Jackalwere curse (p.55) but become a werewolf.	Darkvision: up to 60' by moonlight.
2	Fall into an enchanted sleep for 100 years.	Telepathy once per day.
3	Terrified of the moon.	Gain 1d4 WIS (max 20).
4	In love with the moon.	Bonded to a spell-spirit.
5	At night your soul wanders, you cannot benefit from a night's rest.	Project one's ghost like a Spirit-Touched, but only by night (when the moon is visible).
6	Cannot speak, except to howl at the moon.	Receive inspiration for a masterpiece of art.
7	The ground refuses your footsteps: permanently float an inch from the floor.	Gain an item of pure silver.
8	Bad luck: -1 on all rolls.	Good luck: +1 on all rolls.



## SUN, THE FIRE OF HEAVEN



Violet-grey clouds swell in a livid sky from which no rain falls; instead, magenta lightning lashes the infinite level plane as a colossal orange-yellow sun peeks through the cloud cover's only continual gap, scorching the earth. Cities of glass and metal erupt from the desert, reaching to the heavens, coaxing the lightning dancing across their spires. The Sun Lord usually appears as a warrior

aflame or great firebird. He is haughty, proud and patriarchal, looking down from his heavenly throne. He wishes the human realm honoured him more.

### THE UPSIDE-DOWN:

Make it weird by taking out a deck of cards and playing *Our Big Show of Worth* by Vian Nguyen.

## THE BEYOND

You feel the sensation of falling engulfed in nothingness: not blackness just... nothing. And then you stop. Your feet touch something stable: a star. Before you, a line of stars, stretches into the void like luminous stepping stones. You step forward into the unknown of The Beyond.

As alien as the other six Realm's spirits may be, the seventh is more so. The human imagination fills in the gaps of comprehension when beholding the incomprehensible. Since it fears what it cannot understand, it fills this void with nightmares.

The entities of The Beyond are infinitely varied, but draw on the traditionally nightmarish: eldritch horrors, demonic beings, tentacles monstrosities, horrifically assembled flesh golems, spectral maidens with bleeding eye sockets, faceless statues, the greys...

### THE UPSIDE-DOWN:

Make it weird by turning the lights out and switching to Cthulhu Dark.



## BANES & BOONS OF SUN

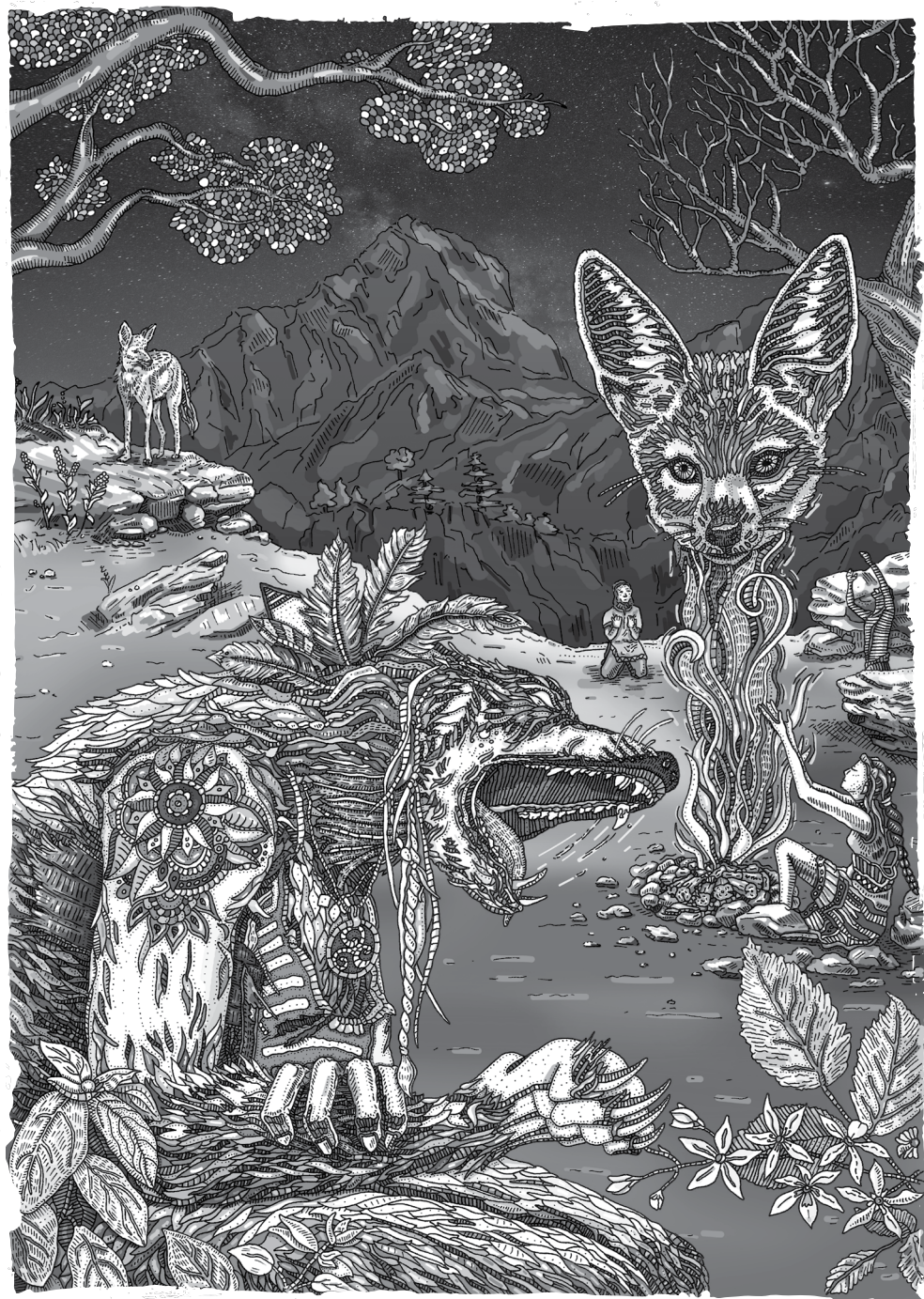
Id12	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Immolated until ashen.	Immunity to fire damage.
2	Fear of thunderstorms.	The gift of metallurgy (choose a metal).
3	Afraid of fire.	Can return a deceased <i>pariah</i> to life, but only once.
4	During thunderstorms, will always be struck by lightning unless under cover.	If killed, cremation will enable them to rise again, like a phoenix... but only once.
5	Must always face the sun, regardless of their direction of travel.	You are given a law by which your band will now live by. You must plant an acacia bush and there build a shrine to the sun.
6	Objects they touch transform into gold.	You can produce a small flame at will.
7	Any sons they have will transform into aurochs; if none, the next child will be born with a mutation.	Immunity to lightning damage.
8	Any daughters they have will transform into crows; if none, the next child will be born with a mutation.	Bonded to a spell-spirit.
9	Blinded: eyes transform into rubies, if removed, <i>pariah</i> dies.	Gain the services of an elemental for one year.
10	Faint smell of ozone. Deals minor electrical shocks to all they touch (no damage).	The Sun Lord wants you to build an enormous monument to honour him. Do this to receive his blessing.
11	Sunlight deals 1HD fire damage/turn.	Good luck: +1 on all rolls.
12	Bad luck: -1 on all rolls.	Gain one wish.

## BANES & BOONS OF THE BEYOND

Id8	Spiritual Banes	Spiritual Boons
1	Something is growing inside you. It feels like an octopus.	Build a shrine to the powers beyond and they will favour you again.
2	The ringing in your ears never stops. It is the singing of the stars and you hate it.	Immunity to mind control/dominate/charm effects
3	Every time you close your eyes you see it. You never wish to close your eyes again.	Always knows an illusion to be an illusion.
4	CHA reduced to 0. You are a Nameless One.	You possess a petrifying gaze.
5	Afraid of the stars.	Receive a piece of alien technology.
6	The ground refuses your footsteps: permanently float an inch from the floor.	Spell-spirit binds itself to you.
7	Receive one mutation.	Receive one mutation.
8	Pure horror, Id12 permanent WIS damage.	Gain Id4 WIS and Id4 INT (max 20).









# CURSE TEMPLATES

In *PARIAH*, powerful curses are represented by *curse templates*. Inspired by Emmy Allen's sideways advancement trackers (particularly **wendigo sickness** and the **wounded daughter**) templates provide the opportunity to inflict a doom on a *pariah* over an extended period rather than removing them from the game immediately—providing the opportunity to remove the curse, or at least having some fun in the attempt.

Each template has triggers which initiate a roll on the curse table. Each entry reveals a new affliction: beneficial, baleful or both. An affliction can only be received once: reroll until a new affliction is inflicted. A *pariah* afflicted by all curse table entries falls under the GM's control as a monster—stats are provided in each entry.

## BLOOD-DRINKER

Blood-Drinkers are horrible dead spirits wishing to remain among the living. Dark grey, hovering wraith-like figures infecting humans and eventually transforming them into blood-drinking walking corpses.

**HD:** 4 (4d8)

**Attack:** Draining touch\*

**Attack value:** 16 (1d4 HP 1d4 CON)

**Defence:** 17†

**Speed:** 60' (flying)

**No. app:** 1d4

**Morale:** 11

**Size:** Human

**Mind:** 13

\* Drain 1d4 HP and CON by touch. 0 HP: fall unconscious afflicted by *The Thirst*. 0 CON: death and their spirit arises as a Blood-Drinker.

† Mundane weapon immunity.

At 0 HP a Blood-Drinker disincorporates—its spirit returning each morning to its rotting body. Only destroying their corpse permanently destroys them.

*The Thirst*: seeing human blood, save vs. spells (12) to avoid rushing to lap it up—on a failed save the *pariah* may still resist by suffering 1d4 damage.

A pint of human blood can replace rations and heals 1d4 HP. Drinking human blood bestows an affliction, reroll repeats. When a *pariah* gains all afflictions their body dies and their soul is twisted into a Blood-Drinker.

- 1 Canines extend, jaw grows stronger: inflict an additional bite attack in melee (as light weapon).
- 2 Skin gains a chalky pallor.
- 3 30' low-light vision.
- 4 With bite attack (1), may grapple an opponent and bite after a successful hit (in addition to damage); next round they may drain 1 HD of blood (HP or CON damage). Without the bite attack, this power is dormant until contracted.
- 5 Health fails, but becomes quicker and stronger. Reduce CON by 1d4, increasing STR and DEX equivalently.
- 6 Float 1". Movements are weird and jerky or supernaturally graceful. Double Movement per round.
- 7 Incapable of receiving sustenance except from blood—an animal's suffices but only human blood has healing properties.
- 8 Unable to cross a protective circle (see rituals).
- 9 Sunlight deals 1d4 damage per turn, can only see up to 30' in daylight.
- 10 While asleep, a blood drinker rises from their body to pursue human prey.



## GHOST

A dead *pariah's* body necessitates the dignity of funeral rites. What is considered dignified is entirely up to the players; whether cremation, burial, excarnation or something else it should be consistent.

Those not afforded such rites are trapped between the realms of the dead and the living as a ghost. For an entire lunar month it lingers beside its body, a pale shadow of its former self, unable to speak, hiding its face in its hands and sobbing quietly.

If its body is laid to rest within that time, its soul and animating spirit depart.

If it is not, it is trapped as a ghost forever.

This manifests in several ways:

- As a terrifying environmental effect lingering at its corpse (a creeping sense of terror; a lure enticing others to share its fate etc.).
- As a spirit haunting the *pariah* (or NPC) it deems responsible for its death.
- As a Bane of the Realm of Death (p.46) against those responsible for its fate.

...or a combination of all three. The players and GM are encouraged to creatively develop ways of lifting the curse or putting the ghost to rest—given the month to bury the body, the task should be more complex and challenging than fulfilling a belated funerary ceremony.

## GHOUL

Ghouls are humans transformed into hideous and bestial creatures that feed on human flesh—particularly the long dead. Their transgression, succumbing to dark appetites, transformed them into monsters.

Though feared, their connections to the dead and resemblance to loved ones—combined with their virtual immortality—sometimes sees them entombed at sacred sites and worshipped as spirits.

### Ghoul

<b>HD:</b>	2 (2d8)
<b>Attack:</b>	Claw/bite
<b>Attack value:</b>	12 (1d8+agony/1d4)*
<b>Defence:</b>	13
<b>Speed:</b>	30'
<b>No. app</b>	2d4
<b>Morale:</b>	9
<b>Size:</b>	Human
<b>Mind:</b>	3-12

\* The ghoul makes a bite and a claw attack each round. Their claws secrete paralyzing toxin. After damage, save versus paralysis or experience up to an hour of agony—moving deals 1d4 health damage, the afflicted fall unconscious at 0 HP and gain The Hunger.

Ghouls' unconscious victims are dragged to their larders (pits in the ground) so their rotting flesh may be consumed long after succumbing to wounds or starvation.

*The Hunger* has 2 triggers:

1. Reduction to 0 HP by a Ghoul.
2. Eating human flesh.



Upon seeing human flesh, raw or cooked, save vs spells (12) to avoid scampering over and eating it —on a failed save the *pariah* may still resist by suffering 1d4 health damage.

Eating human flesh bestows an affliction, reroll repeats. When a *pariah* gains all afflictions they become a monster under the control of the GM.

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Canines extend and jaw grows stronger: can inflict an additional bit attack in melee for 1d4 damage.  |
| 2  | Skin begins to putrefy. They emit a foul stench, like death.  |
| 3  | 60' low-light vision. Eyes turn a sickly yellow colour.   |
| 4  | Nails extend into claw: can make medium weapon attacks in lieu of hand weapons.   |
| 5  | All body hair falls out.  |
| 6  | Can no longer receive sustenance from ordinary food, it's human flesh or nothing, preferably rotting human flesh. Gums appear to be permanently bleeding. 1d4 CHA damage (permanent). |
| 7  | If they have the claw attack, they may now inflict paralysing agony. If not, this ability lies dormant until they gain the claw attack.   |
| 8  | Eating human flesh heals 1d4 health or Attribute damage.  |
| 9  | Unable to cross a protective circle (see rituals).  |
| 10 | Sunlight deals 1d4 damage per turn, can only see up to 60' in daylight.   |

## JACKALWERE

Jackalweres are minor demons wandering the wilderness in human form, seeking human victims for the Great Jackal. They infiltrate wandering human bands, particularly *pariahs*, abducting some by night and converting others to their vile kind.

The jackalwere may assume the form of a jackal at any time, and is sometimes found amongst ordinary jackals. However, their true form is somewhere between that of a jackal and a man.

### Jackalwere

<b>HD:</b>	3 (3d6)
<b>Attack:</b>	Claw/bite OR weapon OR gaze*
<b>Attack value:</b>	13 (1d6/1d4 OR 1d6)
<b>Defence:</b>	13 †
<b>Speed:</b>	35' (50')
<b>No. app</b>	1d4
<b>Morale:</b>	8
<b>Size:</b>	Human
<b>Mind:</b>	10

\* Jackalweres in human form may only make weapon or gaze attacks. In full jackal form they may not use weapons. In jackal form their speed increases to 50'/round.

† Mundane weapon immunity.

The jackalwere gaze attack requires a spell save (10+) or sleep is induced for a whole turn (the victim can be awoken as easily as an ordinary sleeping person).

Anyone reduced to 0 HP by the jackalwere receives their curse (see below). Jackalweres have excellent senses and are only surprised on a roll of one. They are also very stealthy, particularly in pure jackal form.



## JACKALWERE (CONTINUED)

There are two triggers for the jackalwere curse:

1. The light of a full moon.
2. Eating the flesh of a creature that has been dead for more than a day (excluding dried or prepared food).  
Does not trigger the curse in anyone not previously wounded by a jackalwere.

- 1 By light of a full moon, may transform into a jackal, assuming all their physical stats.
- 2 Ears and feet grow larger: listening and stealth increase one die size.
- 3 30' low-light vision.
- 4 Gains the jackalweres gaze attack.
- 5 Body becomes hirsute.
- 6 Re-roll twice: ignore this result if repeated.

When a *pariah* gains all afflictions they become a jackalwere under the control of the GM.

## NAMELESS ONE

Any *pariah* reduced to 0 WIS or CHA loses their true name and, with it, a piece of their soul.

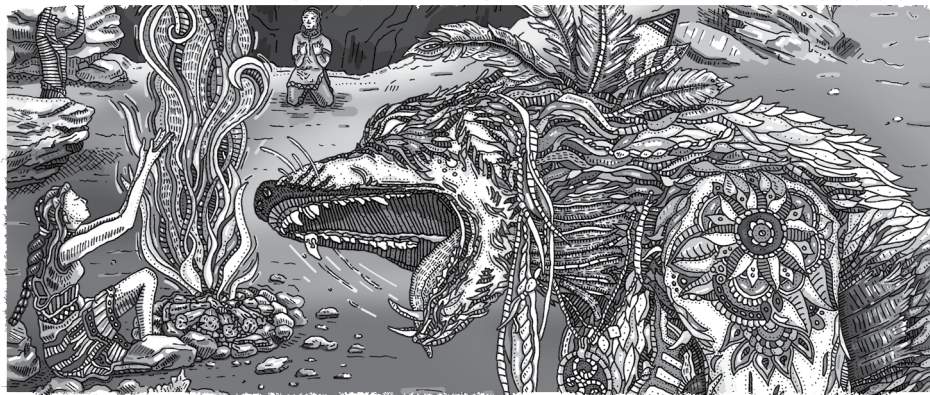
The *pariah* becomes emotionless and mechanical, speaking only when spoken to. They are highly suggestible, especially to instructions given by friends or allies—players should roleplay this as they see fit alongside the following mechanical effects:

- WIS or CHA modifier of -5.
- No saving throw against dominate/ mind control/ charm effects.
- Lose all bonded spell spirits.
- Other active curse templates take full effect and the *pariah* becomes an NPC.

If the *pariah* remains under player control they are vulnerable to spirit attacks. During spirit encounters, an adjacent elemental may possess them assuming control of their body without a saving throw.

This curse is lifted by receiving a new true name during a naming ritual (p.33).

All infants are Nameless Ones until they receive their true name.



## SPIRIT-TOUCHED

A *pariah* with mental Attributes  $\leq 20$  is *Spirit-Touched* and possesses an additional Attribute: *Psyche*, derived from the sum of their INT, WIS and CHA (p.6).

*Psyche* is the Spirit-Touched's Core Attribute: they receive no Core Attribute skills and no saving throw bonuses. However:

- *Psyche* replaces CON or WIS for Entheogen checks.
- *Psyche* is their spell DC (target spell save).
- They may astrally project their spirit [*Psyche*] feet each round.

While astrally projecting, their body falls into a trance as their spirit moves invisible to all but spirits. They retain sight and hearing in the Here and Now but cannot otherwise interact with it except to attempt possession.

Spirit-Touched may attempt to possess an adjacent body assuming all of their physical stats. The victim rolls a spell save vs the Spirit-Touched's *Psyche* to resist. Every round, after ten rounds every turn, after one hour (six turns) every hour, and after one day every day. If they still occupy the body after one month, the victim's soul is utterly beaten, and they may only resume control if the Spirit-Touched astrally projects again.

While astrally projecting, their body is vulnerable to spirit possession, including by other Spirit-Touched's. They receive no save but may attempt to reclaim their body when adjacent to it like a normal possession. A Spirit-Touched without a body remains under player control as long as they wish.

A Spirit-Touched's disembodied spirit may be bound to a device through a binding ritual (see above).

If their CHA, WIS or INT increases, pushing their *Psyche* past 20, they still remain Spirit-Touched.

*Pariahs* can become a Spirit-Touched through injury: becoming a Spirit-Touched as outlined but retaining their Core skills and losing any save benefits their Core Attributes granted.





# PARIAH

## BAND SHEET

**BAND NAME:** .....

**ALLIES:** ..... **ENEMIES:** .....

**ANCESTRAL RELIC:** ..... **REP:** .....

### ADULT PARIAHS

Name	Age	Gender	Special Items	Skills	Notes
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### YOUTHS

Name	Gender	Name	Gender	Name	Gender
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### ELDERS

Name	Gender	Skills	Name	Gender	Skills
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**INFANTS** (add to tally below, note D.O.B.)

**ANIMALS** (note name, type, number etc.)

**SETTLEMENTS & PERMANENT SHRINES**

**LANGUAGE & LITERACY**



# PARIAH

## CHARACTER SHEET

NAME: .....

CORE ATTRIBUTE: .....

TRUE NAME: .....

HIT DICE: .....

### CONSTITUTION

HP BONUS, ENDURANCE

MAX CURRENT (Bonus) .....

### STRENGTH

MELEE TO HIT & DAMAGE

MAX CURRENT (Bonus) .....

### DEXTERITY

DEFENCE, RANGED TO HIT

MAX CURRENT (Bonus) .....

### INTELLIGENCE

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

MAX CURRENT (Bonus) .....

### WISDOM

SENSES, MAGIC

MAX CURRENT (Bonus) .....

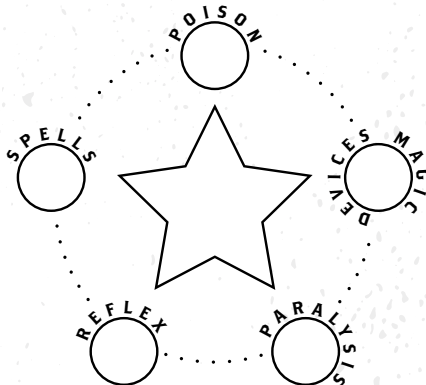
### CHARISMA

LEADERSHIP, MAGIC

MAX CURRENT (Bonus) .....

### HP:

MAX CURRENT TEMPORARY



ATTRIBUTES

SAVING THROWS

MOVEMENT (SPRINT) \_\_\_\_\_ ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

CON + STR + DEX FEET/ ROUND (x3)

CORE ATTRIBUTE MAY  
GIVE A BONUS ON SOME SAVES

### BASE ATTACK BONUS:

MODIFY ALL MELEE AND RANGED  
ATTACK ROLLS BY THIS NUMBER

○

### BASE DEFENCE BONUS:

MODIFY ALL DEFENCE ROLLS  
BY THIS NUMBER

○

### WEAPONS:

NAME	SIZE	PROFICIENCY	BASE ATT.	ATTRIBUTE	MODIFIER	TOTAL
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### ACTIVE DEFENCE:

BASE DEFENCE BONUS	DEXTERITY MODIFIER	SHIELD	WEAPON	TOTAL
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



**PERSONAL ITEMS:**  
**CAPACITY EQUALS CONSTITUTION..... PLUS STRENGTH MODIFIER .....**  
(EACH EXCESS ITEM DAMAGES CONBY ONE POINT)



**SKILLS (DIE SIZE & ATTRIBUTE IN BRACKETS):**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**RITUALS, SPELLS & SPIRITS**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER NOTES**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_