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CRIME AND PUNISHMENT



THE PLAYER'S
SOURCEBOOK OF THE LAW
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To my father, whose passion for the law has always been an inspiration.

— Keith Baker

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INTRODUCTION

Lord Blackwater looked at the dagger, studying the runes carved into the blade. “It’s a legionnaire’s grave blade, no question about it. Jericho won’t say who sold it to him?”

“No, sir. I think he’s more afraid of these customers than he is of us.”

“That’s hardly a surprise. Anyone who could get past the catacomb wards and overcome the guardians of the legion could most likely slaughter our entire garrison. But grave robbing is a serious business, and I don’t intend to let this go. Put Thorn on the trail of the dagger ... let’s see if he can track down Jericho’s mysterious customers. I’ll call on the Church and see if we can get Warden Mora to assist us. Finally, I want to you see if you can track down Angus Dolan ... if we are dealing with a group of grave robbers, we may need to hire specialists to bring them to justice.”

The law is one of the defining elements of civilization. But it is all too often overlooked in a fantasy setting. What are the values of a society? What is considered to be a crime, and what punishments are used to enforce the rule of law? What recourse does an accused individual have to defend herself? And what about magic — what new types of crime or punishment could exist as a result of mystical abilities? How would deadly sorcerers be restrained? For that matter,

in a world where high-level characters can single-handedly defeat armies, how can any powerful individual be captured or imprisoned?

This book takes an in-depth look at the law, and the many ways it can be incorporated into your game. It contains the following material:

Finding the Truth deals with investigation. It provides new uses for existing skills and discusses various investigative techniques. It includes new equipment, additional spells, and two new classes geared towards information gathering. It also gives tips on incorporating investigation and mysteries in a campaign. Now you can play a holy inquisitor or a hardboiled investigator determined to get to the bottom of the mystery!

Bring ‘em Back Alive discusses the challenges involved in capturing criminals — especially characters or creatures that are significantly more powerful than your party. It includes new equipment and spells designed to contain or weaken an enemy, combat tactics, and three new classes. Could you make a living as a professional bounty hunter tracking down mystical fugitives?

The King’s Justice takes a look at justice in a feudal monarchy. Using medieval law as a starting point, it discusses the nature of crime and the legal process in a feudal society. What will happen if you break the laws of the



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kingdom? What if you are called to serve on a jury — or if you are appointed a justice of the crown?

Divine Law examines theocratic societies, where justice is in the hands of the gods. Like the previous chapter, it examines the workings of the court, providing information on what will happen if you fall afoul of the law or choose to uphold it. It includes two new classes and information on the use of divine magic in the courts of the church.

Law in a Lawless World studies chaotic societies — both outright anarchy and nations ruled by military might or insane despots.

Against the Law discusses the challenges of adventuring in areas where your activities are considered to be illegal. How do you conceal your sorcerous powers in a nation where arcane magic is seen as proof of an infernal pact? What about evil or oppressive societies where any act of “justice” is against the law?

Punishment examines the nature and purpose of punishment, and examines the myriad forms of retribution that are available in a fantasy world, including a variety of new spells.

Dungeons & Dungeons provides information on different types of jails. Perhaps you’ll have to break into or out of these prisons. Or, if you choose to be a servant of the law, you may use one of these buildings as a stronghold!

Crime and Punishment is intended for use by both players and Game Moderators. As a player, it provides you with a host of new spells, feats, core and prestige classes, mundane and magical equipment, and new uses for old skills. In the hands of a GM, all of these tools can be turned against parties of adventurers who ignore the laws of the land. Regardless of which side of the screen you’re on, you can enjoy a campaign based around the pursuit — or evasion — of justice.



FINDING THE TRUTH

Mora Tolana put the finishing touches on her sketch. "This was the last person to touch the dagger before the merchant Jericho."

Thorn looked at the drawing and sighed. "I thought as much. She was with a group of vagabonds that passed through town two days ago — you know the type, rogues and sorcerers who think that they're above the law. If they've been making a career of tomb robbing, who knows what sort of relics they possess. It's going to be a tough job, bringing them down."

"Surely there is more to know about this situation. How did these 'vagabonds' learn of the catacombs in the first place? Was it their intent to despoil the sacred site, or were they tricked into these actions? Knowledge is the lifeblood of justice, lieutenant; unless you know the facts of the situation, you risk causing even greater damage."

Thorn grimaced. "All right, Warden Tolana, spare me the sermon. What do you have in mind?"

Mystery can be an intriguing part of any game. Sometimes it can be interesting to deal with an actual, honest-to-goodness crime story; when the baron is murdered, can you expose the traitor within the court? But the skills of investigation can be useful even if you don't intend to have a career in law enforcement. Perhaps you'll find yourself looking for clues to the whereabouts of a lost relic, or trying to gather information on a bandit lord or orcish tribe that has been raiding the area. Maybe you'll need to look into the activities of the local thieves' guild. Or perhaps you're a rogue yourself, in which case it wouldn't hurt to know what techniques the screws will be using to track you down.

This chapter provides a variety of tools for both players and GMs. It begins by providing two new classes: the investigator core class and the inquisitor prestige class. It continues with a discussion of the techniques of investigation, ranging from mundane skills to mystical spells. It concludes with a look at ways to work these techniques



into adventures, to help you get the most out of your investigator characters.

IN SEARCH OF THE ANSWERS

Any type of character can be drawn into a mystery. Paladins usually uphold the law, and despite their chaotic nature bards have a flare for uncovering secrets and plots. However, this section provides

details on two new classes that focus on gathering information and uncovering the truth.

whereas an evil one could use his talents for blackmail and extortion.

Hit Die: d8

THE INVESTIGATOR

The investigator specializes in unraveling mysteries. In many ways, the skills of the investigator are similar to those of the rogue; the hound needs to understand the fox if he hopes to catch her. But where the rogue focuses on bypassing security systems and striking by surprise, the investigator learns to understand people and to draw hidden secrets out of his surroundings.

Most law enforcement agencies will have at least one investigator on the books; investigators are also often used as spies, when a situation calls for observation as opposed to assassination. In large cities investigators may sell their services to the general public. Many investigators choose their vocation because of insatiable curiosity; such a character could easily decide to join a party of adventurers, hoping to solve greater mysteries than local theft or adultery.

NEW CORE CLASS:

THE INVESTIGATOR

Abilities: An investigator can follow many different paths. Wisdom helps an investigator overhear conversations and draw conclusions about the people he deals with. Charisma is useful for gathering information and fast-talking suspicious guards. Dexterity is critical for an investigator who plans to spend his time shadowing his suspects down dark alleys — and also helps to keep him out of harm's way when blades are drawn. Finally, Intelligence provides an investigator with access to a wider range of skills.

Alignment: An investigator can have any alignment. A lawful investigator may use his skills to uphold the laws of the land, while a chaotic investigator might use his talents to solve mysteries the law won't touch. A good investigator will try to help people in trouble,

CLASS SKILLS

The investigator's class skills are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis). In addition, an investigator may select any one Knowledge skill to be a class skill. For example, an investigator in the service of a church may study religion, while an imperial investigator will know about the aristocracy.

Skill points at 1st Level: (8 + Int modifier) x 4

Skill points at each level: 8 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the investigator:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: An investigator is proficient with light armor, shields, the sap, and all simple weapons. In addition, an investigator is proficient with one of the following weapons: battleaxe, hand axe, longsword, rapier, or short sword.

Deduction: This ability allows an investigator to pluck critical facts out of the morass of a mystery. It is two parts skill and three parts luck; sometimes an investigator just happens to recognize a clue that other people would overlook. Deduction is not intended to replace Gather Information, Search, or other forms of active investigation. Instead, it is a bonus to these skills. It gives the investigator access to clues he might have missed, or highlights details that might not have seemed important. Perhaps the party didn't pay attention to the fact that the pattern of broken glass shows that the window was broken from inside the room. Or that the guardsman was killed with a blunt weapon, but all of the Irontooth orcs use spears out of devotion to their god. Usually, Deduction will not



solve a mystery — but it will give the investigator a new lead to look into.

In every game session, an investigator may make one voluntary Deduction check for every five investigator levels that he possesses. This is an Intelligence check, and the investigator can add his class levels to the roll. The amount of information he receives is based on the result:

Check Result	Information Gained
10	Revisit and highlight existing information.
20	Reveal a small detail that was missed or ignored.
25	Significant insight — a major clue about motive or identity — is gained.
30	A Holmesian revelation occurs; many pieces fall into place.

If there is no useful information to be gained about a particular situation, the GM should highlight the facts that the party already possesses and try to point the investigator in the right direction.

In addition to the investigator's active use of Deduction, a GM may choose to have the character make an involuntary Deduction check at other times, to see if he notices minor details or facts that have slipped by the other characters. This does not count toward the character's voluntary Deduction check limit.

While Deduction is mainly useful when an investigator is attempting to solve a crime, it can be helpful in other situations. In general, it can be used any time that the character is faced with a mystery; a good roll should give the investigator a push in the right direction.

Read Character: One of the primary skills of the investigator is the ability to size up the people that he

 THE INVESTIGATOR

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Deduction
2	+1	+0	+3	+1	Read Character
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	Networking
4	+3	+1	+4	+2	Bonus Feat
5	+3	+1	+4	+2	
6	+4	+2	+5	+3	Bonus Feat
7	+5	+2	+5	+3	Networking
8	+6/+1	+2	+6	+4	Bonus Feat
9	+6/+1	+3	+6	+4	Special Ability
10	+7/+2	+3	+7	+5	Bonus Feat
11	+8/+3	+3	+7	+5	Networking
12	+9/+4	+4	+8	+6	Bonus Feat
13	+9/+4	+4	+8	+6	Special Ability
14	+10/+5	+4	+9	+7	Bonus Feat
15	+11/+6/+1	+5	+9	+7	Networking
16	+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+8	Bonus Feat
17	+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+8	Special Ability
18	+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+9	Bonus Feat
19	+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+9	Networking
20	+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+10	Bonus Feat

meets — to get a sense of their motivations and capabilities. A talented investigator can determine a character's class, alignment, and even her level. This requires a Wisdom check against the DC specified below; the investigator may add his class level to this roll, and if he has five or more ranks of Sense Motive he gets an additional +2 synergy bonus.

Task	DC
Determine Class	15
Determine Partial Alignment	20
Determine Level	25
Determine Complete Alignment	30

Determine Partial Alignment allows the investigator to judge his target's bias towards either law and chaos or good and evil; determining the complete alignment requires a more difficult check. As each check can only be attempted once, the investigator can't just use Determine Partial Alignment twice.

An investigator may make one check in each category for each target he deals with; no retry is allowed. Each check requires a full minute of observation or conversation, so an investigator with a limited amount of time will have to decide what information he's most interested in. A character can make an impulsive judgment and make a check after a single round, but this increases the DC by 10. The GM should make all checks secretly. If the investigator misses the check by five or fewer points, he simply can't form an opinion; if he misses the roll by more than five points, he should receive incorrect information.

Networking: Over the course of a career, a successful investigator will build up a web of contacts and informants. Most investigators specialize in dealing with certain types of people, and this experience transcends personal contacts; an investigator who is used to dealing with criminals will have an edge when he is looking for information in the underworld, even if he is in a city he doesn't know that well.

Networking is similar to the favored enemies of a ranger. At level three and every four levels after that, an investigator picks a Networking specialty. The choices are:

Specialty	Examples
Academic	Scholars, students, philosophers, university staff.
Aristocratic	Nobility, the wealthy social elite.
Criminal	Anyone who makes a career out of breaking the law.
Merchants	Craftsmen and traders.
Military	Professional soldiers, both mercenary warriors and career soldiers.
Police	People who make a living upholding the law.
Political	Anyone who is actively involved in government, from the governor to the tax collector.
Poor	Beggars, peasants, and others at the bottom of the social ladder.
Religious	Priests, monks, and hermits.

An investigator gains a bonus to a number of skills when there is a connection to one of his Networking specialties. He gains a bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, and Read Character when he's targeting someone covered by the specialty, and a bonus to Gather Information and Knowledge (local) when he's looking for information relating to the specialty. This bonus starts out at +2; every time the investigator selects a new Networking specialty, the bonuses on each of his old specialties are increased by one. In addition, each time an investigator selects a specialty, he gains one special informant in that specialty. The nature of this character should be determined by the GM; ideally, it should be an NPC the investigator has had dealings with in the past. This informant will go out of her way to provide the investigator with information, and the investigator can ask her to perform simple tasks. Should this informant be killed, she will not be replaced.

Networking specialties are not exclusive. A baron could be covered by both the aristocratic and government specialties, while a crooked bishop could be criminal and religious. In these cases, an investigator should use the highest bonus he possesses; Networking bonuses are not cumulative. If you have an idea for a specialty that is not on this list — you want your investigator to specialize in naval contacts, for example — that's fine, as long as you can get your GM's approval.



Bonus Feats: Investigators can follow many different paths. Some learn to fight, specializing in brawling or disarming enemies. Others focus on honing their deductive abilities. At fourth level and every two levels thereafter, an investigator can pick an extra feat from the following list: Alertness, Careful Listener, Dodge, Combat Expertise, Hard to Fool, Improved Disarm, Improved Unarmed Strike, Investigator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Gather Information), Skill Focus (Search), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Slippery Tongue, Stealthy, Track. The investigator must meet the prerequisites of any bonus feat he wishes to take.

Special Abilities: At 9th level and every four levels thereafter (13th and 17th), an investigator gets a special ability of his choice from the following:

Dramatic Moment: The investigator has a knack for dramatic confrontation. Once per gaming session he

may take a +10 circumstance bonus when using one of the following skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Sense Motive.

Informants: The investigator gains two additional informants, as described under Networking. These are NPCs who will act to provide the character with information and minor assistance. The investigator must work together with the GM when selecting these informants; the investigator can make requests, but the GM has the final word. Also note that NPCs with apparent value may not make the best informants. A prince is constantly surrounded by guards and busy with affairs of state, and it may be difficult for him to slip away to talk to an investigator. But no one pays any attention to the Royal Librarian. Typically these informants should be associated with one of the character's Networking specialties, but the GM has the final say on choice of informants.



Unlike the NPCs associated with Networking, these informants will be replaced with new NPCs if they are killed or alienated. A character can take this ability multiple times.

Skill Mastery: The character selects a number of skills equal to his Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check with one of these skills, the investigator may take 10 even if circumstances would normally prevent him from doing so. An investigator may take this ability multiple times.

Slippery Mind: The investigator's quick wits and dedication to his work can allow him to break free of magical compulsion. If an investigator with this ability is targeted by an enchantment and fails his saving throw, he may make an attempt to save again on the following round. The character only gets one additional save per enchantment. This ability can only be taken once.

Feat: An investigator may take a feat instead of a special ability.

THE INQUISITOR

An investigator relies on mundane skills to gather information. But in a world of magic, there are many mystical tools that can help to unravel a mystery and to enforce the rule of law. The inquisitor specializes in both aspects, using magic both to determine guilt and to punish the guilty.

The inquisitor is a divine spellcaster. Some inquisitors are devoted to a particular god of justice, while others revere the law as a pure force, in much the same way that a druid worships nature. Such individuals may not seem to be especially religious — but they are fanatically devoted to the pursuit of justice. More often than not, inquisitors are found in the service of churches or theocracies. Such organizations already respect the power of the divine and are most likely to turn to magic to solve the problems of their society. But occasionally characters from other walks of life turn to the path of the inquisitor. Itinerant justices (see Chapter Four) may become inquisitors after mastering the basic skills of their trade. Investigators are also

well-suited to this role. Combining skill in deduction and information gathering with mystical divination, the inquisitor-investigator is a potent force when it comes to upholding the law.



NEW PRESTIGE CLASS:

THE INQUISITOR

An inquisitor must be completely dedicated to the law, and she must possess the skills required to wring the truth from those who would lie to her. Investigators and justices are especially well suited to this path, but inquisitors have also started their lives as clerics, wizards, and even rogues.

Hit Die: d4

REQUIREMENTS

To become an inquisitor, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any lawful

Intimidate: 4 ranks

Knowledge (law): 5 ranks

Sense Motive: 4 ranks

Code of Conduct: An inquisitor must swear to uphold the laws of a particular organization — a nation, a church, a city-state, etc. If he is lawful evil, this may mean following the letter of the law rather than the intent, but if he blatantly breaks the laws he is bound by he loses all inquisitor spells and special abilities until he atones for his acts (using the *atone* spell or a similar action).

CLASS SKILLS

The inquisitor's class skills are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken separately) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis).



Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the inquisitor:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A character does not gain proficiency with any sort of weapons or armor when she becomes an inquisitor.

Spells: Magic is the primary tool of the inquisitor. Beginning at first level, an inquisitor gains the ability to cast divine spells. To cast a spell, an inquisitor must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level, so an inquisitor with a Wisdom of 10 or lower cannot cast spells. Inquisitor bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + Spell Level + the inquisitor's Wisdom modifier (if any). An inquisitor gains her spells by taking an hour in the morning to meditate on the pursuit of justice and the tasks that lie ahead of her. An inquisitor casts spells in the same manner as a cleric, but she does not receive domains or domain spells. If she does not revere a particular god, her divine focus will be her symbol of office. The inquisitor's spell list is provided below.

Spell Substitution: When casting a spell, an inquisitor can lose any prepared spell of equal or greater level in its place. For example, if an inquisitor who has memorized *detect poison*, *detect magic*, and *charm person* wishes to cast *detect magic*, she could lose *detect poison* or *charm person* in its place, thus retaining her ability to detect magic later in the day. As a result, the inquisitor is less versatile than a sorcerer but more flexible than a cleric. This versatility can be very important, since an inquisitor may not know at the start of the day what sort of cases will come her way.

Truthreader: Whenever an inquisitor casts *discern lies*, *light of truth*, *painful truth*, *read the guilty face*, *zone of truth*, or another spell that exposes falsehoods or forces a victim to speak the truth, the saving throw DC is increased by 2.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd level and every three levels thereafter, an inquisitor gains one feat from the following list: Alertness, Careful Listener, Hard to Fool, Heighten Spell, Negotiator, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Spell Focus (Divination), Spell Focus (Enchantment).

The inquisitor must meet the prerequisites of any bonus feat she wishes to take.

THE INQUISITOR

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Spell Substitution, Truthreader
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus Feat
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Advanced Truthreader
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus Feat
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus Feat
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Spirit of Truth

Advanced Truthreader: At 5th level, an inquisitor's ability to reveal the truth increases. Whenever she casts a spell that exposes lies or forces a victim to tell the truth, the saving throw DC is increased by 4. This is not cumulative with the bonus from the basic Truthreader ability.

Spirit of Truth: At 10th level, an inquisitor develops a sixth sense for recognizing falsehoods. She may *discern lies* at will. This is a spell-like ability. Its effects are identical to the spell, except that it has an indefinite duration and is considered to be a 5th-level spell for purposes of saving throws and defensive magic.

INQUISITOR SPELL LIST

Inquisitors choose spells from the following list. An inquisitor has access to all spells of a particular level, just like a cleric or druid.

0-level — *agony, cloud the guilty mind, detect blood-traces, detect heretic, detect magic, detect poison, direct conversation, message, pins and needles, read magic, read the guilty face, sleep of the unjust, testimony of the broken window*

1st level — *blood spilled anew, cause fear, charm person, detect magical residue, final vision, form bloodstone, identify, sanctuary, see the face*

2nd level — *augury, ban, detect thoughts, follow the bloody trail, gentle repose, indelible mark, mystical manacles, painful truth, scare, tongues, zone of truth*

3rd level — *bestow curse, detect mystical streams, discern lies, dispel magic, garble, hold person, light of truth, locate object, remove curse, speak with dead*

4th level — *break enchantment, dimensional anchor, divination, lesser geas, locate creature, mark of justice, modify memory, scrying, weaken resistance*

5th level — *atonement, commune, excommunicate, forget, malediction, nightmare, taboo*

6th level — *geas/quest, greater mark of justice, greater scrying, sever from the source, steal the painful memory*

7th level — *anathema, binding, demand, dictum, discern location, scourge*

Forget, taboo, and weaken resistance can be found in the book *Dynasties & Demagogues*, also by Atlas Games. *Ban, excommunicate, and anathema* can only be used by an inquisitor who holds a church office. In addition, an inquisitor will generally only have access to one of either *painful truth* or *zone of truth*.



INQUISITOR SPELLS PER DAY

Level	0	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
1	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
2	5	4	3	—	—	—	—	—
3	5	4	3	2	—	—	—	—
4	5	4	4	3	—	—	—	—
5	6	5	4	3	2	—	—	—
6	6	5	4	4	3	—	—	—
7	6	5	5	4	3	2	—	—
8	6	5	5	4	4	3	—	—
9	6	6	5	5	4	4	2	—
10	6	6	5	5	4	4	3	1



THE TALENT OF INQUIRY

The best investigators and inquisitors draw on a variety of special talents that help them gather information and uncover the truth. Some of these are given below, as feats.

CAREFUL LISTENER [GENERAL]

You have a talent for studying expressions and reading the true thoughts of a speaker.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Sense Motive checks and Gather Information checks.

HARD TO FOOL [GENERAL]

You are familiar with the tricks of con men and thieves; it's hard to put anything past you.

Prerequisite: 3 or more ranks in one of the following: Bluff, Disguise, or Sleight of Hand.

Benefit: You receive a +4 bonus whenever you use Spot or Sense Motive to oppose an enemy's Bluff, Disguise, or Sleight of Hand check.

INDOMITABLE [GENERAL]

Your mental discipline and astonishing strength of personality help you to resist both mental and physical compulsion.

Benefit: You receive a +3 bonus to saving throws against Compulsion effects, Mind-altering effects, and any form of torture.

SLIPPERY TONGUE [GENERAL]

You have a knack for bending the truth. By convincing yourself that your words are true, you can even evade mystical means of divination.

Prerequisite: 3 or more ranks in Bluff

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus to Bluff and a +2 bonus when saving against any sort of magic that detects lies (*discern lies*, *painful truth*, *zone of truth*, etc.).

THE TECHNIQUES OF INVESTIGATION

There's more to solving mysteries than having a level or two in the investigator class. Many types of characters may have the skills it takes to get to the bottom of an enigma. Rogues can be just as useful at inquiry, provided that they have proper motivation to use their skills to acquire knowledge instead of wealth. And clerics, bards, and wizards share magical techniques with the inquisitor, although the inquisitor has a few unique tools.

This section provides information on a wide variety of tricks that can be used to solve a mystery: new spells, new magical and alchemical items, and new applications for pre-existing skills. Now your cleric can use her knowledge of healing to gain information from examining a corpse, as well as using her magic to speak to it!

PART ONE: NEW TRICKS FOR OLD SKILLS

Many of the existing skills have broad-reaching applications. Gather Information represents a general talent for picking up knowledge from groups of people — but what happens when you focus that flair for conversation on a single individual? And what about the potential uses of medical and alchemical knowledge? This section takes a new look at a variety of existing skills and the ways that they could help during an investigation.

GATHER INFORMATION [CHA]

Gather Information can be used both for revealing specific information and in urban tracking.

SPECIFIC INFO

At its core Gather Information represents the ability to guide a conversation — to get people to talk about the things you want to hear, without realizing that they are being led by the nose. In addition to its general use — picking up rumors and local gossip — Gather Information can also be used to trick an individual into revealing specific information.

Check: Make a skill check opposed by the target's Sense Motive check. The target receives a +10 to her Sense Motive check if she is actively suspicious of you; at the GM's discretion, she may receive an additional bonus based on racial hostilities, religious differences, or similar issues. Finally, she receives a bonus based on the importance of the information you are trying to obtain:

Import	Example	Bonus
Trivial	What's your name?	+0
Significant	When's the guard's shift-change?	+5
Secret	Where is the safe hidden?	+10
Top Secret	What's the combination?	+20

If your Gather Information check is successful, your victim won't even realize that she let the information slip; you keep the conversation moving seamlessly. If you miss a check by five or more points, your target realizes that you are digging for information and may become hostile or suspicious.

Retry: You can retry a failed roll, but you take a cumulative –5 penalty on each subsequent attempt, as the target begins to get suspicious; this penalty continues to accumulate even if you decide to search for a different piece of information. You cannot take 20 when you attempt to direct a conversation.

Special: This is not intended to take the place of roleplaying conversations with NPCs. In general, a GM will require you to roleplay at least part of the

conversation. Depending on how you handle the situation, this may provide you with a bonus or penalty to your skill check. A particularly suave lead-in to your question might get you anywhere up to a +5 bonus, while a ham-handed or blunt query may give you a –5 penalty. Finally, characters with 5 or more ranks of Diplomacy receive a +2 synergy bonus to a Gather Information check to reveal specific information.

URBAN TRACKING

Urban tracking is another way in which you can use Gather Information. If you're trying to track a target's movement within a city, knowledge of the area is far more important than Survival. In this case, you are not tracking a physical trail as much as you are talking to your contacts within the city.

Check: The base DC of the check is determined by the amount of time that has passed since your target was in the area:

Time	DC
5 minutes	5
1 hour	10
6 hours	15
24 hours	20
1 week	30

Other conditions can also affect the base Difficulty Class:

Condition	DC
Every three creatures in the tracked group	–1
Target is distinctive (unusual race, dress)	–2
Excellent description available (portrait)	–2
Target involved in minor incident (street brawl, public argument)	–2
Minor bribe or Intimidation (DC 10)	–2/+2
Disliked in the area	+3/–3
Major bribe or Intimidation (DC 20)	–4/+4
Well-liked in the area	–5/+5
Target involved in major incident (inciting crowds to riot)	–5
Vague description available	+5
No description available	+10

Some of these modifiers can apply either to you or to your target; the first value is for you, the second for your target. If you have a good reputation in the area you are canvassing, the DC is modified in your favor (–5); if your target is well-liked, the DC is modified in her favor (+5). If you are disliked (+3) and she is well-liked (+5), you're going to have a difficult time finding her. Bribes are based on the general wealth of the area; in a slum, a gold piece might be enough to buy you a lot of friends, while in the merchant district it may be negligible. Intimidation can be used to bully people into helping you or to frighten them into covering your tracks — but if you use Intimidation on a regular basis, you will quickly become disliked in the area.

Pass without trace does not protect against this sort of tracking, but Disguise and Hide are both useful; if people didn't see your quarry, they can't help you. The GM should make a Spot check opposed by the target's Hide or Disguise skill, using the average skill bonus of the inhabitants of the area; if it fails, the target cannot be tracked using Gather Information.

Retry: The check takes a certain amount of time based on the population of the area you are searching, as shown on the following table. If you fail the check, you can try again, but as time passes the trail will become harder to find.

Population	Time Required
Thorp (20–80 people)	20 minutes
Hamlet (81–400 people)	40 minutes
Village (401–900 people)	60 minutes
Small Town (901–2000 people)	90 minutes
Large Town (2001–5000 people)	2 hours
Small City (5001–12,000 people)	3 hours
Large City (12,001–25,000 people)	4 hours
Metropolis (25,001+ people)	6 hours

It is possible to search a subsection of a community. You may be in a metropolis, but if you are only searching in a single district, only the population of that district should be considered when determining time. Of course, if your target has left that district, you'll have to start all over again in the adjacent area.

Special: You must possess the Track feat and a Knowledge (local) specialization in the current city in

order to make an urban tracking check. If you possess at least five ranks of Knowledge (local) you receive a +2 synergy bonus to Gather Information checks for purposes of urban tracking.

⦿ HEAL [WIS]

Heal represents knowledge of medicine and the humanoid body. By combining medical knowledge with alchemical techniques, it is possible to gain a significant amount of information from a corpse without the use of magic. Heal forms the basis of forensic pathology, but Craft (alchemy) allows you to test the characteristics of blood and is required for certain advanced actions.

Check: The following table indicates the type of information that can be gained with a Heal check, along with the DC of the check and the ranks in Craft (alchemy) that you must possess (if any). An alchemist and a healer can team up in order to perform a task.

Nature of Information	DC	Craft (Alchemy) Ranks
Cause of Death	10	None
Examine Injury	10	None
Presence of Foreign Substances	15	4 ranks
Nature of Foreign Substances	25	8 ranks
Time of Death	20	0 or 8 ranks

Performing an autopsy requires approximately three hours. At the end of this time, you can make two checks (typically cause of death and examining the injury that caused death). Each additional check takes an additional thirty minutes to perform.

Cause of Death can be useful when you want to know if the crushing damage came *after* the victim was poisoned. This only provides general information: “She died as a result of decapitation” or “She appears to have died of natural causes.” To obtain more specific details, you must make an additional check to examine the injury or determine the nature of foreign substances.

Examine Injury allows you to obtain information about a specific wound. If you make the check, you

determine the basic cause of the injury (a narrow blade, a small blunt object, teeth). If you make the check by at least five points, you gain specific details about the weapon that caused the injury (a double-edged dagger with a six-inch blade). If you make the check by ten or more points, you gain information about the manner in which the wound was inflicted (the attacker was left handed, about six feet tall, and probably grabbed her from behind).

Presence of Foreign Substances reveals whether the victim had drugs, poison, or high levels of alcohol in his system when he died. As with a cause of death check, this information is not specific; it simply determines that something unnatural was present at the time of death.

Nature of Foreign Substances allows you to determine the specific nature of any substance you have identified. You must discover the presence of foreign substances before you can attempt to determine their nature.

Time of Death reveals when the victim was killed. This is an imprecise science at best. If the user does not possess the prerequisite levels of Craft (alchemy), time of death can only be determined to within 4d6 hours. With access to alchemy, the time can be pinpointed to within 1d6 hours.

Retry: You cannot retry a failed roll. If you miss the check by ten or more points you may come to a false conclusion, otherwise you will just be unable to obtain any useful information.

Special: Time is the enemy of the pathologist. Every twelve hours that passes from the point of death adds 2 to the DC of any autopsy check. In a swampy or tropical environment, this penalty is doubled; in an especially dry environment it is halved. The spell *gentle repose* will preserve a body in its current condition for the duration of the spell.

Certain poisons and drugs may be harder to detect than others. The GM should consider the poisons that exist within the gameworld; those that are difficult to trace could increase the DC of checks made to determine cause

of death, presence of foreign substances, and nature of foreign substances by up to 5 points.

During the course of an autopsy, you may also make a Search check to notice any unusual details about the corpse. There may not be any; but perhaps you will notice a few threads of cloth caught under the victim's fingernails, or a small tattoo that will prove to be relevant later. It is up to the GM to determine whether there are any facts to be discovered, and if so, what the DC of the check should be.

KNOWLEDGE [LAW] [INT]

Knowledge (law) provides you with information of all manner of legal systems — both the specific laws of the nations you know of and the general principles of legal theory.

Check: You can make a skill check to determine whether you are about to engage in an illegal activity, or to check on any point relating to the laws of the land. If you have access to a library, you can use this skill to dig up obscure legal clauses and precedents. You may use this skill with any culture you are familiar with; if you travel into a completely unknown land, you will have to engage in basic research before you can use your legal knowledge. However, once you have established a few ground rules, you can generally get a sense of the values of a society.

Special: Knowledge (law) covers all types of societies and legal systems. However, characters who possess Knowledge (nobility) may use that skill to gain information about the legal systems of feudal societies, while characters with Knowledge (religion) may use it in connection with theocratic societies. Alternatively, a character with at least five ranks in Knowledge (nobility) or Knowledge (religion) may take a +2 synergy bonus when using Knowledge (law) in the appropriate type of society.

If you have at least five ranks in Knowledge (law), you receive a +2 synergy bonus to your Diplomacy check when you plead a case in a common law court; see Chapter Four for more details on the common law system.



Knowledge (local) overlaps with Knowledge (law). If you are familiar with a city, you can make a Knowledge (local) check to determine if a particular act would be illegal.

A further examination of Knowledge (law) can be found in Atlas Games' *Dynasties & Demagogues*.

KNOWLEDGE [LOCAL] [INT]

Knowledge (local) represents a deep familiarity with the people and customs of one or more cities. Just as each point of Performance skill gives you access to a new style, each level of Knowledge (local) provides you with information about a different community.

Check: You can make a Knowledge (local) check to pick up any sort of basic information about any community that you are familiar with. What's the ritziest tavern? What districts should you avoid after dark? Where's the black market? Why are all the people wearing their hats backwards? It does not replace Gather Information. Think of Knowledge (local) as a guidebook; it can provide you with a great deal of useful information, but it won't be completely up to the minute. If you want to know the current state of tensions between the dwarves and the humans, or what happened to old Smitty, or if Frederic Silverhand has been seen in town recently, you'll need to use Gather Information.

Special: If you have 5 ranks in Knowledge (local), you get a +2 synergy bonus to all general-purpose Gather Information checks within communities covered by the skill. This does not apply to attempts to direct a conversation, but does apply to urban tracking.

SENSE MOTIVE [WIS]

Sense Motive allows you to determine whether someone can be trusted and whether his behavior is being influenced by mystical forces. But if you are especially observant, your sensitivity to body language can allow you to gain additional information about the people you are dealing with.

Check: You may make a Sense Motive check to perform either of the following tasks:

Task

Spot Sense Motive

Spot Spell Use

DC

Opponent's Sense Motive check

20 + Opponent's Cha Modifier

Spot Sense Motive: As a careful conversationalist, you can get an idea of whether or not an opponent is paying undue attention to your words — specifically, whether he is using Sense Motive against you. The DC is based on his Sense Motive check; as a result, the more skilled character will typically spot the novice, while his own actions remain hidden.

Spot Spell Use: A related ability, this allows you to determine if someone you are speaking to is using spells or psionic powers to analyze your conversation — for example, *discern lies* or *detect thoughts*. You do not receive any sort of information about the nature of the spell, simply that the level of concentration indicates that a spell of some sort is being maintained. At the GM's discretion, this may not work against creatures for whom the power is a natural ability — for example, a doppelganger's power to *detect thoughts* at will.

Retry: No. The checks are automatic and require no conscious action on your part, but if you miss the cues you don't get to try again. Typically the GM will make these rolls on your behalf; if you fail the check, you won't even know that it was made.

Special: You must have at least 5 ranks of Spot to notice these details.



TORTURE

The willful torture of another living creature is a heinous act. But that hasn't stopped it from being performed throughout history, to extract information or enforce cooperation. Evil-aligned governments may use torture as a way to motivate suspects to confess. You may not stoop so low as to engage in torture, but should you or your friends fall into evil hands, it's important to understand the horrors that may lie in wait.

It's possible to torture someone without using any skill whatsoever. Anyone can, say, start to cut off your toes or pull out your teeth. But too much pain will simply put a victim into shock, or cause him to start babbling whatever



er he believes his torturer wants to hear. The true art of the torturer is to keep the victim alive and conscious, and to motivate him to speak clearly and honestly — to tell the truth because he is more afraid of what will happen if he is caught in a lie than he is of what has already occurred.

There are two basic types of torture: psychological and physical. Psychological torture is based on Intimidation, while physical torture — strangely enough — uses Heal.

⊗ HEAL {WIS}

If you understand the body, you know how to maximize pain while inflicting minimal damage. Very few people have the strength to resist judicious physical torment.

Check: After 30 minutes, make a Heal check opposed by the victim's Fortitude save. If you are successful, the victim will provide you with the information you have asked for, or perform a simple action (such as signing a confession). If the victim resists, he may say nothing or choose to pretend to be broken and lie to you. The latter requires a successful Bluff check, opposed by your Sense Motive skill.

Retry: You may retry a failed attempt (assuming that you realize that you failed). However, unless you have access to *cure* spells, you will eventually have to stop or your victim will pass out or die. You cannot take 10 or 20 on a torture check.

Special: Regardless of success or failure, the victim will suffer 1d4 points of damage and 1d4 points of nonlethal damage from the torture.

⊗ INTIMIDATION {CHA}

Compared to physical torture, psychological torture can take a tremendous variety of forms. It might involve the threat of physical torment, making it sound even worse than it actually is. It could be based on threats to loved ones or to the victim's reputation. Or it could simply involve actions intended to drive the victim to the point of madness — without actually pushing her over the edge. The advantage of psychological torture is that it can break people who possess

tremendous fortitude. A barbarian may be far too tough to fall victim to a set of thumbscrews, but a skilled inquisitor can still make her cry like a baby.

Check: After 30 minutes of working on the victim, make an Intimidation check opposed by her Will save. The consequences of success or failure are the same as physical torture, including the victim's ability to lie if she saves successfully.

Retry: You must wait for at least an hour before retrying a failed roll. You cannot take 10 or 20 on the check.

Special: You can improve the odds of psychological torture by spending time to prime the subject. For every 30 minutes you spend speaking with your victim (or performing other actions designed to unnerve her), you may make a Sense Motive roll opposed by your target's Will save. If you are successful, you get a +1 circumstance bonus to your Intimidation check. You can instead choose to keep prying at the victim's mind to increase this bonus; each subsequent successful Sense Motive check will add one to the bonus, to a maximum value of +4. However, if you leave the subject alone and unattended for more than an hour, the bonus is lost.

Like Gather Information, psychological torture should involve roleplaying; the victim or inquisitor should get bonuses to their rolls based on how they handle the situation.

PART TWO: FORENSIC MAGIC

As a quick glance at the television will show, modern-day law enforcement agencies have access to a vast array of tools. From fingerprinting kits to DNA testing, technology provides the law with many options that did not exist six hundred years ago.

But where technology fails, magic begins. In the Middle Ages of Europe, the servants of the law believed that the power of the divine would ensure that justice would be done. It was thought that a corpse would bleed if its murderer passed by, and that a victim's eye recorded the last image seen before death. In a world where the forces of magic can be channeled and controlled, it should come

as little surprise that arcane powers would be turned to the cause of justice.



This section provides a set of spells that can help a character conduct an investigation or locate a suspect. All of these spells can be used by inquisitors, but many can be also used by clerics, wizards, or other spellcasters.

Some of these spells can have a considerable impact on a character's ability to get to the bottom of a mystery; a GM may wish to restrict access to these spells based on deity. For example, it would make more sense for a god of Knowledge to provide his priests with *final vision* than a goddess of Healing. A GM may also wish to use the inquisitor class in a particular region, but say that this nation has not mastered *detect bloodtraces* or *form bloodstone*; this would make it more difficult to identify and track a murderer.



AGONY

Illusion (Figment)

Level: Inq 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: Touch

Target: One living creature

Duration: 30 minutes/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

A hardened warrior may have the courage and fortitude to resist pain — but where his flesh is strong, his mind may be his weakness. This minor spell heightens the victim's sensations of pain, sending illusionary signals of agony throughout his nervous system. It does not actually harm the victim, but it makes him far more susceptible to torture. For the duration of the spell, any Heal check used to torture the victim receives a +3 bonus.



BLOOD SPILLED ANEW

Necromancy

Level: Clr 1, Inq 1, Nec 1

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: Touch

Effect: One object or corpse

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell enchants an object that has been stained with blood in an act of murder — a weapon used in the attack, a piece of clothing, or the corpse of the victim himself. For the next twenty-four hours, if the object comes within six feet of the person who struck the killing blow, fresh blood will flow from the original stain. The flow of blood will stop as soon as the killer moves away from the object. This spell is often used in cases where there are many suspects or no leads, when *testimony of the broken window* has failed to provide a useful image and *speak with dead* or *final vision* are not available. It also has the advantage of displaying clear evidence to onlookers, as opposed to the rituals that only provide information to the inquisitor. In certain savage humanoid societies, *blood spilled anew* is the closest thing a murderer gets to a trial; if the blood of the victim flows again, his family can immediately spill that of the killer.

CLOUD THE GUILTY MIND

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Altering]

Level: Inq 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: S, F/DF

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One living creature

Duration: 10 minutes/level or until noticed

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Shadowing a suspect can be a critical part of investigation. This spell affects a single creature; it warps her perceptions, subliminally encouraging her to ignore you. This results in a -3 penalty to any Spot, Search, or Listen checks she makes against you for the duration of the effect. However, if the victim does notice you — through a success-

ful skill check or due to your own actions — the enchantment is immediately broken.

Focus: A small, ovoid piece of quartz wrapped in a strip of black cloth. The quartz can be of low quality, and the cost is negligible.

DETECT BLOODTRACES

Divination

Level: Inq 0

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell is one of the hallmarks of the inquisitor; it is an invaluable tool when investigating a murder or a brawl. Using this spell, you can sense any blood that has been shed in the area within the previous 48 hours. Inquisitors say that spilled blood retains a mystical connection with the creature whose veins it once flowed through. By reading this aura — referred to as a “bloodtrace” — an inquisitor can gain a tremendous amount of information about the creature that was injured.

The effects of the spell depend on how long you study a particular area:

1st round — The presence of spilled blood within the area of effect.

2nd round — The precise location of bloodstains, and the number of different creatures involved.

3rd round — Study the bloodtraces of any blood you have located. This requires the use of the Heal skill; inquisitors who study medicine spend a great deal of time studying the nature of blood. The following checks are possible:

Information	Heal Check DC
Precise time blood was spilled	10
Confirm identity	10
Determine species	15
Detect foreign substances	15
Determine gender	20
Determine age	20
Determine nationality	30

Each check requires 2 full rounds. A failed roll results in no information as opposed to faulty information. You may retry a check if you fail, or take 20 by spending 4 minutes on the check — but keep the duration of the spell in mind. You would have to be at least 5th level to be able to take 20, and then you'd only have time to make a single check before the spell expired.

To clarify the effect of each check:

Precise time blood was spilled is just that — how old is the bloodstain?

Confirm identity allows you to compare the blood-trace to a *bloodstone* (see *form bloodstone*) or another sample of blood and determine if they come from the same creature.

Determine species lets you to identify the type of creature from which the blood came. You must be at least somewhat familiar with the creature in order to identify it; otherwise, you will simply know that it is a species you have not encountered before.

Presence of foreign substances allows you to determine whether there was a significantly level of alcohol, poison, drugs, or any other unusual substance in the blood at the time it was spilled. A successful check will determine the basic nature of the substance (i.e. poison or alcohol). However, in a world where inquisitors are common, poisons may have been developed that are harder to spot by bloodtracing; this would result in an increased DC for the base Heal check. Identifying the precise nature of the substance — such as what type of alcohol it is — requires a successful Craft (alchemy) check (DC 20, modified as the GM sees fit based on the rarity of the substance). You cannot retry a failed Craft (alchemy) check; if you miss the roll, you know the basic nature of the substance but cannot pin down any specifics.

Determine gender, age, and nationality all provide information about the being whose blood is being studied. Nationality is extremely difficult to pin down, and only the most skilled inquisitors can accomplish this task. As with determine species, if you have never encountered a being of a particular nationality before, you will not be able to pinpoint its identity.

Each round, you can turn to examine a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but will be blocked by 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or three feet of wood or dirt. Flesh also acts as a barrier; it will not detect blood flowing through the veins of a living creature, or for that matter a vampire.

This spell is the foundation of *form bloodstone* and *follow the bloody trail*, two other spells that are described later in this section.



DETECT HERETIC

Divination

Level: Clr 0, God's Eye 1, Inq 0, Pal 1

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: DF

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Chapter Eight provides a number of spells that allow priests to mark enemies of their faith. This simple ritual allows you to sense whether anyone in your vicinity bears the mark of heresy. By casting the spell, you can detect the presence of anyone who has been affected by *anathema*, *ban*, or *excommunicate* — provided that the original spellcaster was a member of your faith. Everyone has different views on heresy, and you can only identify those who have been cut off from *your* church. The effects of the spell depend on how long you study a particular area:

1st round — The presence or absence of marked individuals.

2nd round — The number and location of marked individuals, along with the level of mark (*ban*,

anathema, or *excommunicate*?). If a heretic is out of your line of sight, you get a general sense of direction but not a precise location.

3rd round — By studying an individual target you can learn where and when he was marked, who cast the spell, and a brief (approximately one paragraph) description of the nature of his crimes against the church (as set by the caster of the marking spell).

Each round, you can turn to examine a new area. The spell can penetrate barriers, but will be blocked by 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or three feet of wood or dirt.

DETECT MAGICAL RESIDUE

Universal

Level: Inq 1, Sor/Wiz 2

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This is another specialty of the inquisitor, although wizards engaged in deep research occasionally learn this technique. It is a more powerful version of *detect magic*, designed to detect residual traces of recent enchantments and to provide information about the spellcasters.

Detect magical residue is identical to *detect magic*, with two exceptions. The first is that the spell can detect auras long after they are too weak to be sensed with *detect magic*. Aura strength is determined in the same manner as *detect magic*, as shown on the following table.

Aura Strength	Functioning Spell Level	Item Caster Level
Dim	0-level	N/A
Faint	1st – 3rd	1st – 5th
Moderate	4th – 6th	6th – 11th
Strong	7th – 9th	12th – 20th
Overwhelming	Artifact or deity level	Beyond mortal caster

The length of time that an aura lingers is indicated below:

Aura Strength	Duration
Dim	30 minutes
Faint	6 hours
Moderate	24 hours
Strong	4 days
Overwhelming	16 days

The second difference is the amount of information you can gain after studying an aura for three rounds. In addition to determining strength, location, and possibly the school associated with each aura, you may take two full rounds to make any of the following Spellcraft checks:

Information	Spellcraft DC
Confirm identity	10
Determine class	10
Determine class specialty	15
Determine time of casting	15
Determine class level	18
Determine species	20
Determine gender	25
Determine age	25
Determine nationality	30

Most of these checks are identical in effect to those described under *detect bloodtraces*.

Confirm identity allows you to compare two different magical auras and see if they were generated by the same caster.

Determine class identifies the class that was used to cast the spell, while *determine class specialty* reveals the wizard specialization or clerical deity of the caster. Determine class specialty does not use Spellcraft; it requires a Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) check, based on whether the aura is arcane or divine in nature.

Determine time of casting reveals the precise age of the spell trace.

You may reroll failed checks or take 20 if you have the time, as described under *detect bloodtraces*.

If a spellcaster was under the effect of *misdirection* when he cast a spell, *detect magical residue* will reveal the false aura; this can cause an elven enchantress to appear to have been a half-orc necromancer. However, if you make your check by 10 or more points, you will see through the deception; you will gain information about both subjects, but you will be able to identify which aura belongs to your actual target.

DETECT MYSTICAL STREAMS

Universal

Level: Diviner 3, Inq 3

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Quarter circle emanating from you to the extreme of the range

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

A highly specialized form of *detect magical residue*, this spell allows you to trace streams of mystical energy that are linked to your current location. This includes the residual effects of *clairvoyance/clairaudience*, *greater scrying*, *prying eyes*, *scrying*, and any form of teleportation.

The effects of the spell depend on how long you study a particular area:

1st round — You can sense if teleportation or scrying has occurred in the area of effect within the last 24 hours. You can distinguish between teleportation and scrying, but you cannot identify the specific nature of a spell.

2nd round — You can sense the number of instances of teleportation or scrying that have occurred within the last 24 hours, and the approximate time of each event.

3rd round — You can identify the specific spell that was used in each instance. By studying a specific trace, you can follow the mystical stream to get a sense of the connected location — the point which a caster teleported from or to, or the location of a scrying mystic.

This requires a successful Spellcraft check, as shown on the following table.

Information	Spellcraft DC
Determine rough location	20
Determine general location	25
Determine precise location	30

Determine rough location gives you a vague sense of distance and direction, but there is a margin of error of a few miles on the distance.

Determine general location provides all of the above information, but narrows the margin of error down to a single mile and adds a rough description of the area — “the city of Fellvale” or “Berkannon Wood.”

Determine precise location gives you an exact sense of the destination point and a clearer description — “The Black Eagle Inn in the city of Fellvale.” A basic check requires 2 minutes, and has a range of up to 50 miles; if the destination point is not within that area, you can take an extra minute to extend the range by another 50 miles; you can continue extending the range until the duration of the spell expires.

It takes three minutes to study a stream in enough detail to allow a Spellcraft Check. If you fail the check you can’t gain any information, but you are not given false information. As long as you continue to maintain the spell you can retry failed checks; if the spell expires you must begin from scratch.

DIRECT CONVERSATION

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Altering]

Level: Brd 0, Inq 0

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: S

Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One living creature

Duration: 1 minute/level or until discharged, whichever comes first

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This subtle spell helps you to encourage your target to unburden her thoughts. It provides you with a +4 on

the next Gather Information check that you make against the target, provided that the check is made within the time limit of the spell's duration.

ENDURE PAIN

Illusion (Figment)

Level: Clr 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: Touch

Target: One living creature

Duration: 30 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

If you know that you will be tortured in the near future, this spell may allow you to resist the machinations of your enemy long enough to feed him false information. This minor ritual reduces the target's sensitivity to pain; it does not block the sensations entirely, but it helps to mitigate the agony. This has two effects. First, the target receives a +4 bonus to any Fortitude save he makes to resist torture. Second, he receives Damage Reduction 1/— against nonlethal damage. This stacks with other forms of Damage Reduction, but provides no defense against lethal damage.

FINAL VISION

Necromancy

Level: Clr 3, God's Eye 2, Inq 1, Nec 2

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: Touch

Target: One dead creature

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

A more powerful version of *testimony of the broken window*, this spell allows you to touch a corpse and relive the last few minutes of the victim's life. You may concentrate for up to one round per caster level; for each round of concentration, you relive an additional round in the victim's life, slowly rewinding from the moment of death. Every time you cast the spell, the

vision begins again at the moment of death, so you cannot reach deeper into the past by casting the spell multiple times.

While you are reliving the life of the victim, you are completely unaware of your surroundings in the real world; during this time you are considered to be flat-footed. While you perceive the world through the eyes and ears of your target, you use your own ranks in Spot, Listen, and Search, and may notice details that your victim missed. This is a recorded experience; the mind of the victim is not involved in any way.

This spell cannot be used on a corpse that has been turned into an undead creature or targeted by the *absorb revenant* spell (from Atlas Games' *Occult Lore*).

FOLLOW THE BLOODY TRAIL

Divination

Level: Inq 2, Lawkeeper 2

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S, M

Range: Circle, centered on you, with a radius of 600 ft. + 60 ft./level

Effect: Touch

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell is similar to *locate creature*, but you don't need to be personally acquainted with your target; instead, you use a *bloodstone* (see *form bloodstone*) to locate the target. You slowly turn and sense when you are facing in the direction of the creature whose blood is within the stone, provided the creature is within range. You also know in which direction the creature is moving, if any.

Material Component: A *bloodstone* attuned to your target.

FORM BLOODSTONE

Conjuration (Creation)

Level: Inq 1

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S, M

Range: Personal
Effect: One stone
Duration: Permanent
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This ritual imprints a ruby with a record of a blood-trace. You must first cast *detect bloodtrace*; once you have isolated a particular trace, you may cast this spell to store the trace within the stone. From that point on, you may use *detect bloodtrace* to gain information from the stone, just as if you still had access to a fresh bloodstain. This is typically used in conjunction with the Confirm Identity function of *detect bloodtrace*; an investigator will take a blood sample from a suspect and compare it to the aura of the stone. It is also required for *follow the bloody trail*, which allows an inquisitor to track a creature using the stored trace.

Material Component: The material component of this spell is a small ruby with a minimum value of 25 gp. A ruby can only hold one imprint.

☉ LIGHT OF TRUTH

Divination
Level: Clr 4, Inq 3, Justice 3, Pal 4
Casting Time: 1 action
Components: V, S, DF
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: Concentration, up to 3 rounds/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The trouble with most spells that reveal the truth — like *discern lies* and *detect thoughts* — is that only the spellcaster can perceive the information revealed by the spell. *Zone of truth* has the opposite effect; if it works, the effects are apparent to all — but as it is an area effect spell, you can't tell if the target has resisted the effect.

Discern lies allows you to spot falsehoods by noticing shifts in the target's aura. *Light of truth* makes this aura visible to observers. If the spell is successful, the target is surrounded by a pale blue glow; if she lies while under the influence of the spell, this briefly shifts

to an aura of red and black. If the target succeeds in the initial Will save, the aura never becomes visible.

Light of truth has a longer duration than *discern lies*, but it has a shorter range and the drawback of being obvious to the victim as well as to onlookers. In addition, unlike *discern lies*, once the spell is cast the target cannot be altered. Another problem with *light of truth* is that the effect can be mimicked using *silent image* or any similar spell; as a result, the caster must still be known or trusted by her audience in order for the results of the spell to be trusted.

A god of Knowledge will offer both *light of truth* and *discern lies* to his followers. However, another deity may only offer one or the other, based on her nature; this decision is up to the GM. *Discern lies* could be argued as being more appropriate to a goddess of Trickery or Chaos, while *light of truth* may be more appropriate for a god of Good or Protection.

☉ PAINFUL TRUTH

Evocation
Level: Clr 2, Inq 2
Casting Time: 1 action
Components: V, S, DF
Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)
Area: 5 ft. radius/level emanation
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell serves the same purpose as *zone of truth*, but in a different manner. When you enter the area of effect you must make a Will save. If you fail under the influence of the spell you suffer 1d4 points of damage every time you intentionally lie. In addition, you must make a Fortitude save (with the standard DC based on spell level); if you fail, you wince or cry out in pain, making it clear to those around you that your statement was false. This only lasts as long as you remain within the area of effect.

Like *light of truth*, this spell may not be available to all clerics. *Zone of truth* is a peaceful spell that would be offered by benevolent gods; *painful truth* would be a gift from evil or destructive deities. It is unlikely that a god would offer both spells to his followers.

 READ THE GUILTY FACE

Divination

Level: God's Eye 1, Inq 0, Lawkeeper 1, Sor/Wiz 0**Casting Time:** 1 action**Components:** V, S**Range:** Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)**Target:** One living creature**Duration:** 1 minute/level**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This simple divination enhances your ability to interpret the expressions and body language of a single individual. For the duration of this spell, you receive a +3 bonus to all Sense Motive checks that you make against the target.

 SEE THE FACE

Divination

Level: Brd 2, God's Eye 2, Inq 1, Sor/Wiz 2**Casting Time:** 1 action**Components:** V, S**Range:** Touch**Effect:** One object**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This useful divination allows you to study the aura of an object and pluck out images of the people who have handled it most recently. Receiving an image of the last person to hold the object requires a Spellcraft roll with a DC of 10. If you make the roll, you may continue back into the history of the object; each subsequent holder adds 3 to the DC of the check, so the second most recent holder requires a check at DC 13, the third a check at DC 16, and so on. You may continue until you fail a check, at which point the connection is lost. You do not receive any personal information about the people that you see, but you receive a clear visual image, sufficient to allow you to recognize the target should you cross paths with him. In addition, this image is strong enough that you could attempt to draw a picture (making a Craft check) or use Disguise, *alter self*, or similar effects to mimic the person you saw.

 TESTIMONY OF THE BROKEN WINDOW

Necromancy

Level: Clr 1, Inq 0, Nec 0**Casting Time:** 1 action**Components:** V, S**Range:** Touch**Effect:** One dead creature**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

It is often said that the eyes of the dead hold the last image seen; this ritual proves the truth of that saying. By touching a corpse, you can see what he saw in his last round of life. You may make Spot or Search checks to study the surroundings, but the image is so brief that you will take a -4 circumstance penalty on these checks.

A corpse that has been targeted by *absorb revenant* or used to make an undead creature cannot be targeted by this spell.

PART THREE:

THE TOOLS OF DETECTION

In a fantasy setting, there are fewer mundane tools that can assist you with an investigation than in a modern campaign. However, magic provides a host of possibilities. Both types of equipment are described below.

 NEW EQUIPMENT

The following mundane equipment can be useful in situations where inquiry is required.

BLOODHOUND

A well-trained bloodhound can be extremely useful when investigating a scene or tracking a criminal. Of course, you need to know how to direct the dog and how to interpret its behavior. To use a bloodhound



effectively, you must have at least 4 ranks in Handle Animal. As long as you meet this condition, a bloodhound can help you in the following ways:

- If you're using Survival in conjunction with the Track feat, the assistance of a bloodhound provides you with a +4 to your check.
- A bloodhound provides you with a +3 bonus to Search checks, provided that the details that he helps you find relate in some way to smell. A bloodhound could help you locate a spilled potion or a buried corpse, but he won't notice a tripwire.
- If you don't have the Track feat or just don't feel like using it, a bloodhound can track using scent alone. In order to pick up a fresh scent, the dog must make a Wisdom check with a DC of 10; due to its keen sense of smell, a bloodhound receives a +8 to this check. However, for every hour that passes the scent grows colder, resulting in a cumulative -2 penalty per hour; the DC may be further modified based on the strength of the odor (a stinky troll is easier to track than a pristine elf). Use the other modifiers listed under the standard D20 System Track feat description, with the exception that surface conditions and visibility make no difference. A bloodhound can track in a city as well as in the wilds, but if there is a great deal of activity it will be hard to isolate a scent; the GM should raise the DC of the check to 15 or even 20 for a busy metropolis.

A bloodhound has the following stats:

CR 1/3; Small animal; HD 1d8+2; hp 6; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flatfooted 12; BAB +0; Grap -4; Atk +1 melee (1d4, bite); Face 5 ft. x 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Scent; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1, Swim +4

Feats: Alertness, Track

A bloodhound is trained to identify and follow scents, and to help his master search. Good bloodhounds are

relatively rare; it's up to the GM to decide if a particular community has a breeder willing to sell his dogs.

Price 75 gp

INVESTIGATOR'S KIT

This contains a variety of lenses, brushes, and tools designed to help you get the most information out of a crime scene. You may not be able to take fingerprints, but you can brush for particles, use alchemical swabs to identify unusual liquids, or make rubbings of seemingly significant inscriptions or marks. An investigator's kit is used in conjunction with Search; it provides a +2 circumstance bonus when examining the scene and may allow you to obtain information that you couldn't discover with the naked eye. However, using the kit increases the amount of time required for the check by a factor of five.

An investigator's kit is designed to help you discover unusual or abnormal facts that are indicated by a crime scene. It will not help for other applications of Search, such as a rogue looking for traps.

Price 40 gp; Weight 8 lbs

TORTURER'S LAB

This is an unpleasant collection of sharp objects, acids, thumbscrews, and other devices designed to maximize pain and suffering. If you have this at hand, you receive a +2 circumstance bonus to any Heal or Intimidate check made to torture an opponent. It is useful in psychological torture as well as physical torture, as the visible threat of the tools is often as disturbing as the pain they can cause.

Price 100 gp; Weight 35 lbs

TRUTH SERUM

There are a variety of concoctions that can help a torturer wrest information from his victim. Some dull the mind, making it more difficult for the victim to resist the badgering of the inquisitor. Others enhance the pain experienced by the victim, encouraging him to speak in order to end his suffering. In either case, this serum will add a +2 circumstance bonus to any Heal or Intimidate check made to torture the victim.

Price 45 gp; Raw Material Cost 15 gp; Craft (alchemy) DC 25

NEW MAGICAL ITEMS

The following magical abilities and items can also be used to aid in an investigation.

NEW MAGICAL WEAPON

SPECIAL ABILITY: BLOOD DRINKING

A *blood drinking* weapon must have a ruby embedded along its surface. In response to a mental command, it can store the bloodtrace of the next creature that it injures; see *detect bloodtraces* for more information on this effect. By touching it to an existing *bloodstone*, you can draw the imprint out of the other stone and into the weapon. A *blood drinking* weapon is considered to be a *bloodstone* for purposes of *detect bloodtraces* and *follow the bloody trail*. It can only store one trace at a

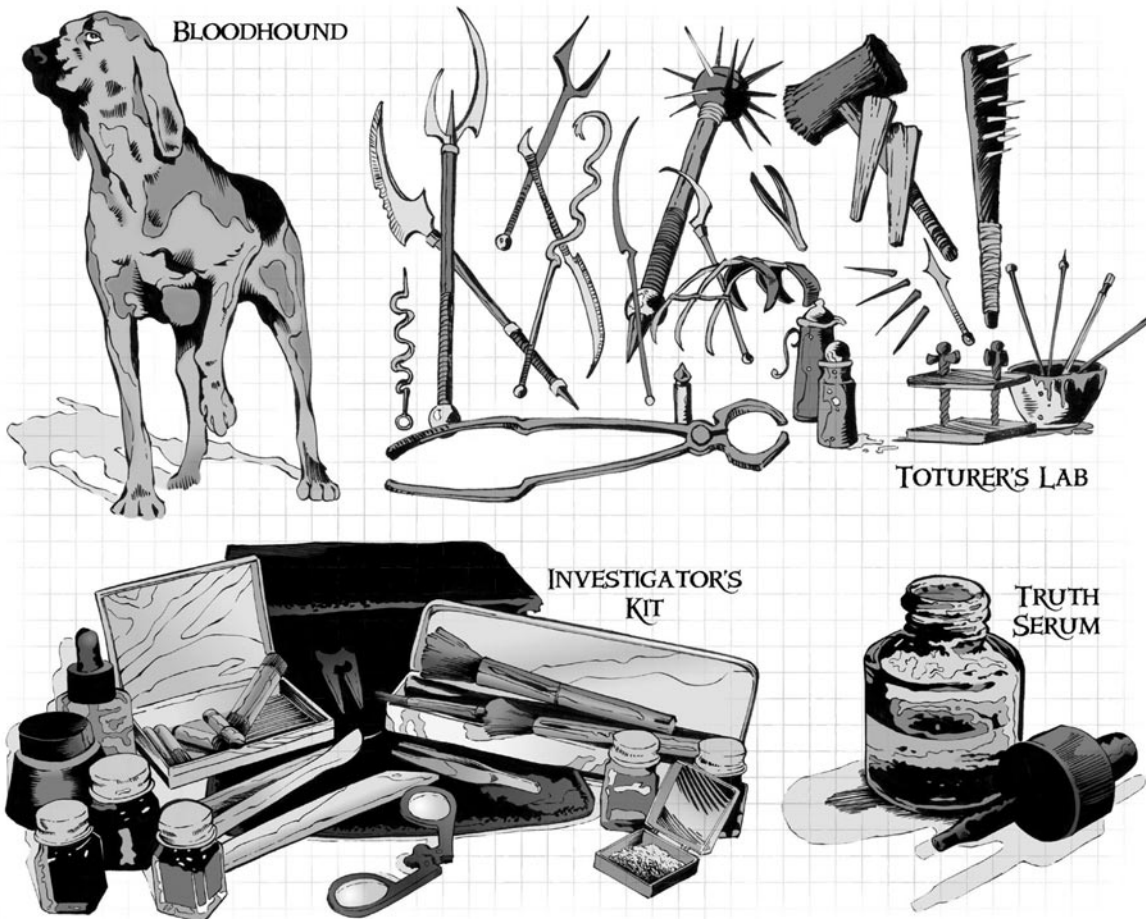
time, but you may overwrite the existing trace as many times as you wish.

Faint conjuration; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *form bloodstone*; Price +1 bonus

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: FIGURINE OF WONDROUS POWER [BLOODHOUND]

This *figurine of wondrous power* is particularly useful for investigators and guardsmen. A tiny ruby carved in the shape of a dog, it expands into the form of a small dog on the utterance of a command word. It has the statistics of a normal bloodhound, with the following exceptions:

- It has a +12 to Survival checks when tracking by scent.
- It can cast *follow the bloody path* at will; the *bloodstone* it is to track must be placed in its mouth.



- It provides its owner with the Alertness feat as long as it is within 60 feet.

The owner has an empathic link to the hound, much like a wizard's familiar; he can make sure the dog understands what scent it is to follow. This link has a range of one mile. If the dog is slain, it reverts to its inert ruby form and cannot be resummoned for one week. Otherwise, the dog may be summoned twice per day, for a maximum of two hours per day.

Moderate divination and transmutation; CL 11th; Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects, follow the bloody trail*; Price 11,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

CLOAK OF SHADOWS

This unremarkable gray cloak is favored by assassins and investigators tailing a suspect. If you focus on a single individual while wearing the cloak, your target receives a –3 to all Spot and Listen checks he makes to notice you.

Faint enchantment; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *cloud the guilty mind*; Price 600 gp; Weight 1 lb

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

DEATH COINS

These copper coins come in pairs. When the coins are laid over the eyes of a humanoid corpse, they store the last image seen by the victim. If a living being then places the coins over his own eyes, he sees this image, as if he had cast *testimony of the broken window*. The coins can only store a single image at a time, and this image can only be changed once per day. However, there is no limit on the number of times that the current image can be viewed.

Faint necromancy; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *testimony of the broken window*; Price 2,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

HONOR'S SEAT

This item takes the form of a stone or wooden chair, covered with elaborate runes. The precise shape

varies based on the tastes of the artificer; it could be an enormous, immovable throne or a lighter chair. Whatever its form, the mystical sigils and stones embedded in the surface of the chair hint at its hidden powers.

A character who sits in the seat is immediately affected by *painful truth*, with no opportunity for a Will save. While he remains in the chair, he suffers 1d4 points of damage every time he knowingly lies, and he must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) or cry out in pain.

While these objects are usually used for purposes of interrogation, they are occasionally used as thrones for rulers; when the king speaks while sitting in *honor's seat*, the people know that they can trust his words.

Faint evocation; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *painful truth*; Price 12,000 gp; Weight varies

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

MANTLE OF THE INQUISITOR

This is the formal robe of an inquisitor. It strengthens the resolve of the wearer and surrounds him with a fearful aura. This provides him with a +3 insight bonus to Intimidation checks and a +1 insight bonus to Will saves.

If the robe belongs to an inquisitor who is an official representative of a force of law, it is likely to be embroidered with symbols of rank, indicating the inquisitor's status and power. In societies where inquisitors play an important role, it could be a crime to wear a *mantle of the inquisitor* unless you are a representative of the law.

Faint necromancy; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *cause fear*; Price 1,550 gp; Weight 1 lb.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

MONOCLE OF AURA COMPARISON

This mystical lens allows its wearer to cast *detect magical residue* two times per day. The user may save the imprint of a mystical aura within the lens for later comparison to another spell; this can be very useful when combined with the Confirm Identity action

associated with *detect mystical residue*. The monocle can only hold one image at a time; the user can change this image any time she examines a new aura.

Faint divination; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *detect mystical residue*; Price 2,160 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

PHANTOM BLADE

At first glance, this is a small knife with a long handle and a sharp, narrow blade — a surgeon's tool, suitable for precise operations. On closer examination, a character will find that the blade itself is an illusion; although the pain it causes feels real, it is insubstantial and cannot actually cause any sort of physical injury. While this may seem to be useless, it can be quite valuable in the hands of a skilled torturer. A *phantom blade* allows its wielder to make Heal checks to torture a victim without causing a loss of hit points (although the victim still takes 1d4 points of nonlethal damage per check).

Faint illusion; CL 1st; Craft Wondrous Item, *agony*; Price 800 gp

NEW MAGICAL RING: RING OF TRUTH

This metal band has two powerful enchantments. To begin with, it allows its wearer to *discern lies* at will (Will save DC 14). However, the wearer himself must speak the truth, as if he was under the influence of *zone of truth*. There is no save against this second effect. These rings are often used to force prisoners to speak the truth, but are also quite useful for characters engaged in espionage — although enforced honesty can prove to be quite dangerous for a spy.

Moderate divination; CL 9th; Forge Ring, *discern lies, zone of truth*; Price 75,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

SPECTACLES OF SPECULATION

These enchanted eyeglasses draw their wearer's attention to minor details, providing a +2 insight bonus to Sense Motive, Spot, and Search checks. While these items are typically spectacles, pince-nez and lorgnettes

can also be enchanted in this manner. These items are prized by spies, thieves, and investigators alike.

Faint divination, CL 3rd; Create Wondrous Item, *read the guilty face*; Price 1,200 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: STONE OF WIT

This item takes the form of a necklace or choker bearing a glittering sapphire. This stone possesses the power to sense the subconscious desires of those around it and guide the speech of its wearer accordingly. This provides a +4 insight bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Gather Information checks, but only when the wearer is dealing with a single person; you cannot use the powers of the stone to help you when you are giving a speech to a crowd.

Moderate enchantment; CL 6th; Create Wondrous Item, *charm person*; Price 2,400 gp

THE LIFE OF THE INVESTIGATOR

"Gather round! There's work to be done. The sage Hulan is concerned about that amulet that was stolen from the Tyran Institute. He thinks that it's linked to a string of other minor robberies, all involving Xorian artifacts. Individually, these are copper-piece items, and the guard could care less. But Hulan thinks that there's more to it — that these objects could be part of some greater ritual. Naine, you and I are going to the Tyran Institute, to see if we can pick up any information about the thief. Zora, I want you to find out everything you can on the Xorian dynasty in general and these relics in particular."

"What about me?"

"Don't worry, Sal. I'm sure there'll be something for you to hit before this thing is through."

Now you have classes, skills, and spells that all focus on gathering information and solving mysteries. The



question is, what do you do with it? You hardly need to perform an autopsy on that orc shaman to discover that he was killed by, well, you. If you're focused on dungeon crawling, the life of the investigator may not be for you. But there are a number of ways that this material can add a new layer to your game.

ADVENTURES IN INVESTIGATION

It's possible to add investigation into your regular dungeon-crawling routine. On the other hand, you might choose to embrace the role of the investigator. As noted above, a large city can support a vast array of crimes, plots, and nefarious schemes; instead of slaying dragons, perhaps you should try your hand at uncovering secrets and exposing conspiracies.

One of the strengths of focusing on a specific type of activity is that it gives you a theme to use when creating a party, allowing you to bring together a tightly knit unit of people as opposed to a random assortment of vagabonds in search of adventure.



An investigative team should include individuals who can fill the following roles:

The Mouthpiece — Detective work involves a great deal of talking. Gather Information is a critical skill, with Sense Motive a close second. Bluff and Diplomacy can help you soothe ruffled feathers or talk your way past suspicious guards. An investigator is an ideal choice for this task, since her Networking talent enhances her ability to gather information, but a rogue or a bard can be just as effective.

The Scout — Finding a suspect is one thing; following her is another. An expert in stealth and observation is an invaluable addition to the party. Move Silently, Hide, Spot, Listen, and Search are all critical skills. A rogue is well-suited to this role, and can add Open Locks and Disable Device to his repertoire; once he's tailed the villain to her lair, he can break in and scout it out. But investigators, rangers, and bounty hunters also have sharp eyes and silent feet — and a ranger or bounty hunter can handle

herself in battle if she's spotted by her quarry. At higher levels, a shadowdancer or illusionist-thief could also fill this role, using his magic to hide in plain sight.

The Scholar — Someone on your team needs to be able to use Gather Information. But the word on the street is only one piece of the puzzle. Knowledge skills may help you catch clues that would otherwise slip by. Divination magics can be priceless when it comes to locating a stolen object or identifying a killer. And Heal and forensic pathology can come in handy when magic won't do the job. This role is tailor-made for the inquisitor, but the loremaster is a close second choice; if neither one is available, a bard may be able to fill in, provided she has taken a few Knowledge skills to flesh out her training in Bardic Lore.

The Muscle — Raw firepower isn't as important for an investigating team as it is for a group of dungeon crawlers, but you need to be prepared when things go wrong. Rangers, monks, and bounty hunters are excellent choices, as their skill with stealth and observation can allow them to act as back-up in other positions when things are peaceful.

Magical Backup — Like martial skill, mystical firepower and healing are not as critical for sleuths as for most parties. However, it's good to have some sort of healing available, whether it's a bard or a cleric of Knowledge or Trickery. If the group does not have an inquisitor, then a diviner, enchanter, or illusionist can also prove useful — either for acquiring knowledge through mystical means, or being able to overcome obstacles through charm or deception.

If you do decide to put together a party of freelance investigators, take the time to think about the nature of your group. How did you come together? Perhaps you used to work for the city guard, but left due to your frustration with corruption within the system. Perhaps you made common cause against a mutual enemy — a vicious band of thieves or an unscrupulous merchant lord — and chose to remain together after you overcame this foe.

A second question is what motivates your group. If you aren't in the employ of church or state (subjects that will be covered in later chapters), what drives you? Are you just in it for the gold? Are you atoning for past sins? Is it a philosophical exercise — you solve crimes simply for the diversion? Are you fanatically devoted to justice? Or do you just ride around in a wagon accompanied by your ranger's goofy dog, discovering a new mystery every time you have to get a new shoe for one of your horses?

LIFE IN THE BIG CITY

Investigation doesn't have to be about the law. If your adventures are based in a large city, there may be any number of conspiracies and schemes going on — guilds and factions vying for power, political intrigue, or infighting in the criminal underworld, for example. Perhaps dark elves or wererats are plotting beneath the city, or doppelgangers are scheming in the shadows. If you spend a lot of time there, you may be caught up in these conspiracies. Or perhaps you'll manage to get in trouble when you're just passing through a major metropolis; a gang of thieves may steal a treasured artifact or important document. How long will it take you to track them down and regain your property?



Gather Information is an extremely useful skill. Chapter Two describes how this skill can be used to direct conversation or track an enemy through an urban area; both of these can be invaluable when you're trying to follow the activities of a particular group or locate your nemesis. The ability to read a room using Sense Motive can also be useful if you're dealing with suspicious characters; at least you'll know who's keeping an eye on you and when to watch your words. And should you get caught up in a guild war or similar feud, the forensic skills and spells may be invaluable. Perhaps you're not going to make a living by solving crimes, but the ability to identify the person who killed your friend — using *final vision*, *testimony of the broken window*, *detect bloodtraces*, or by performing an autopsy — can be the critical first step in obtaining a little personal justice.

If you spend most of your time crawling through dungeons, you may find that the abilities of the inquisitor are too limited for you. The inquisitor cannot heal or inflict swift damage on an enemy. But if you're based in a city, you may find the investigator to be a valid class choice. While lacking the combat abilities of the rogue, the investigator's contacts among the city inhabitants can help a group of mercenary adventurers find work and stay informed about local activities, while his powers of deduction can help with puzzles that the group encounters in subterranean labyrinths. His strength is his ability to provide the group with information; he backs that up with medium combat ability and a talent for stealth and scouting.

AGENTS OF THE OPPOSITION

You may not care that you slaughtered that band of orcish warriors or the cadre of doppelgangers — but their comrades might. Once the inquisitor comes to visit them, there may be a group of assassins that knows what you look like and has a *bloodstone* to track you with. Or perhaps you broke the laws of the land — in this case it may be the city guards you have to deal with as opposed to cold-blooded killers. But either way, it can be an unpleasant surprise if you think you got away with the perfect crime.



Your enemies have access to all of the same materials that you do. *Testimony of the broken window* and *detect bloodtraces* will allow them to identify you. Urban tracking or *follow the bloody trail* will let them find you. Seemingly innocent bystanders may be part of an enemy investigator's intelligence network. And an enemy with Sense Motive can even read the room to tell when you're trying to read his thoughts. So be aware — these tricks aren't just there for you!

ADVENTURE SEEDS

So, you're interested in a life of investigation? Here are a few challenges a party of sleuths could encounter as interludes in a more traditional campaign. These are



merely a few examples of mystery plots. Forged deeds, kidnapping, guild wars, lycanthropic infection — the possibilities are limitless.

DEATH IN THE FALLOW

Can you expose a killer who moves among the helpless poor?

Every year there's a streak of killings in the poorest quarter of the city. Some believe this is the work of a madman, while others call it a curse — a vengeful ghost that haunts the quarter. The royal guard has no time to help destitute beggars and whores. Can you unravel this mystery? Is it a ghost, and if so, can you exorcise the spirit? What if it's actually part of the annual admittance trials for a local order of assassins — or training for a brutal special division of the royal guard itself? Sometimes solving a mystery can be more dangerous than failure!

THE ANCIENT PUZZLE

Is a series of petty thefts the harbinger of a far greater threat?

A wave of thefts is sweeping the city. Someone is stealing small pieces of ancient artwork and trivial magic items. Perhaps something is stolen from your group. This may seem like nothing to be concerned about, until an investigator's academic contact comes up with a link between the stolen goods — a legend of an ancient puzzle, which if completed will become a mystical artifact of tremendous power. Can you locate the thief? If you obtain the pieces she has stolen, will you try to finish the puzzle yourself, or destroy it once and for all?

WHEN THE STARS ARE RIGHT ...

When your death is predicted by the stars, can you cheat fate?

A traveling astrologer arrives in the city; to prove his powers, he predicts the death of a few prominent individuals. Each dies, in exactly the manner the astrologer has predicted. The last person on his list? You. Is the astrologer a charlatan and a murderer? Perhaps he's innocent, but someone else is inspired by his predictions and is making them come true. Or maybe the stars themselves are against you. You have two days to find the answer, before your time comes!

BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE

Angus Dolan was sharpening an axe. He kept his eyes on the blade of the axe as he spoke; he seemed more interested in the weapon than in Thorn. "So what've we got?"

"Five. Two swordsmen, one cutpurse, a sorcerer, and a priest of Korla, of all things." Thorn placed a bloodstone on the table. "This is from one of the swords. Male half-orc, probably Torian, about twenty-three years old."

Dolan grunted. "Swords I can handle. Tell me more about Korla and the dragonblood."

"Warden Mora was able to find spell residue for both of them." Thorn quickly summarized the information the inquisitor had obtained. "They're probably just misguided ... the usual vagabonds in search of money and excitement. I doubt they realized the significance of the catacombs or what they stole. We'd like you to take them alive, if you can."

The bounty hunter scowled. "I'll do what I can, but I'm going to take the dragonblood down as quick as I can. You're not the one looking a fireball in the face."

The average fantasy world is a place of extremes — filled with heroes and villains who possess powers far greater than those of the general populace. So what happens when these worlds collide? If a powerful sorceress — someone with the power to kill with a word and teleport with a thought — kills a man in a small town, what are the local guardsmen supposed to do about it? What if your party of low-level adventurers is sent to capture this vicious sorceress and bring her to justice? Are these villains above the law — or are there ways for the underdogs to triumph over their more powerful foes?

This chapter focuses on the capture and containment of powerful individuals — especially spellcasters, whose powers can be a great menace to society. It provides a range of spells, tools, and techniques designed to bring down the mighty and to hold their powers in

check — material equally applicable to officers of the law and adventurers facing dangerous opponents in dark dungeons. It also includes three new classes, and an outline of the life of the professional bounty hunter. Just remember: if you break the law, these are the forces that will be arrayed against you!

HUNTERS

This section presents a number of classes that specialize in bringing down fugitives. The bounty hunter is a jack-of-all-trades, able to use his wits or her sword as a situation requires. The magehunter and the spellbane are opposite sides of the same coin, who both study ways to bring down powerful spellcasters: the magehunter is a mundane warrior who fights magic with skill, strength, and sheer force of will; the spellbane is a former mystic who uses his knowledge of magic to disrupt arcane energy.

THE BOUNTY HUNTER

All too often, local guardsmen are not up to the task of bringing a fugitive to justice. Few possess the skills to track someone who has left the city walls — and more often than not, a criminal who can pose a threat to a party of adventurers is more than a match for simple guards. When faced with a particularly wily or dangerous opponent, the forces of the law may turn to someone trained to bring down such difficult prey — a professional bounty hunter.

Characters of any class can bring criminals to justice in exchange for gold or glory; nothing stops a fighter or a wizard from using sword or spell in the service of the law. But some specialize in this profession, developing a range of skills that are ideally suited to tracking humanoid opponents and bringing them back alive. The bounty hunter class combines traits of both ranger and rogue, excelling



at stealth and deception and possessing combat abilities that help to capture an opponent in one piece. A hunter has no interest in a fair fight; his job is to subdue his enemy as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Skilled bounty hunters are rare. Some are loners, while others assemble teams to maximize their abilities — adding a spellbane or magehunter to handle magical opponents, an inquisitor to mystically track fugitives, and some additional fighting power for when blades are drawn. Of course, if prey can be taken without resorting to swords and fists, so much the better. Some bounty hunters specialize in the use of disguise and poison, preferring treachery and deceit to physical conflict. Any trick is fair game when it comes to bringing down your target!



NEW CORE CLASS:

THE BOUNTY HUNTER

Abilities: Claiming bounties is a dangerous job, and Strength and Dexterity will help a hunter see the end of another day. Intelligence is also important to bounty hunters; a hunter needs to possess as many tricks as possible, and every new skill gives him another tool to work with.

Alignment: Bounty hunters can be of any alignment. Most hunters lean towards neutrality; their job is to capture fugitives, not to be concerned about the details of the situation. It's also often useful for a bounty hunter to work outside the strict confines of the law. A lawful good bounty hunter would have to deal with many ethical issues that a neutral hunter could ignore — on the other hand, a lawful hunter would make an excellent vigilante, bringing a little justice to lawless territories.

Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

The bounty hunter's class skills are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide

(Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the bounty hunter:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A bounty hunter is proficient with light and medium armor, shields, the hand crossbow, the net, and all simple and martial weapons. Bounty hunters are trained to take opponents alive; when using a quarterstaff or a club a bounty hunter can choose to deal nonlethal damage instead of normal damage, without the usual –4 penalty.

Track: A bounty hunter gains Track as a bonus feat.

Poison Use: Bounty hunters often use poison when dealing with enemies too powerful to face in a fair fight. A bounty hunter never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a blade.

Improved Unarmed Strike: A bounty hunter gains Improved Unarmed Strike as a bonus feat.

Painful Blow: Similar to the Sneak Attack of the rogue, Painful Blow represents a bounty hunter's skill at hitting nerves and pressure points to cause maximum pain and to render an opponent unconscious. Any time the bounty hunter's target is denied her Dexterity bonus to AC (whether or not she has a Dexterity bonus), the hunter's attack deals an additional +1d6 points of nonlethal damage (regardless of whether the base attack inflicts normal or nonlethal damage). This bonus increases by +1d6 at 5th level and every four levels after that (9th, 13th, and 17th level). Should the bounty hunter score a critical hit, this extra damage is not multiplied. Like a Sneak Attack, Painful Blow damage can only be added to a ranged attack if the target is within 30 ft. A Painful Blow only affects living creatures with a discernable

anatomy — of course, creatures like skeletons and golems ignore nonlethal damage.

Hunter Bonus: Bounty hunters are trained to hunt and capture humanoids of all types. A bounty hunter may add this bonus to Survival or Gather Information checks made in conjunction with the Track feat, as long as he is tracking a humanoid opponent. He adds this bonus to any Use Rope checks made to secure a prisoner with rope. He may also add this bonus to any grapple check that he makes against a humanoid opponent. Finally, he may add this bonus to his attack rolls when he is using a net. The Hunter Bonus begins at +1 and increases by one every four levels, to a maximum bonus of +5.

Improved Grapple: At third level, the hunter gains the Improved Grapple feat, even if he does not have the prerequisite Dexterity score.

Evaluate Injuries: Nonlethal damage is the stock in trade of the bounty hunter, and a good hunter needs to

know when an unconscious captive might suddenly wake up. By taking a standard action and making a Heal check (DC 15), a bounty hunter can determine how many hours it will take for an unconscious humanoid to regain consciousness (assuming no further damage or healing occurs). Note that this can be a simple Wisdom check if the hunter does not possess ranks in the Heal skill. If the hunter fails the roll he receives no information, but he can retry the check as many times as he wishes. This ability can only be used at extremely close range; in order to use Evaluate Injuries, the hunter must be able to touch and carefully examine his target.

Bonus Feat: At 4th level and every four levels thereafter, a bounty hunter may pick a bonus feat from the following list: Alertness, Careful Listener, Bondsman, Combat Expertise, Group Tactics, Hard to Fool, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Net Master, Stealthy, Stunning Fist, Twist the Knife. A bounty hunter must meet the prerequisites of any feat that he selects.



THE BOUNTY HUNTER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Track, Poison Use, Improved Unarmed Strike
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Painful Blow +1d6, Hunter Bonus +1
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Improved Grapple, Evaluate Injuries
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus Feat
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Painful Blow +2d6, Hunter Bonus +2
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	Special Ability
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+2	
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+2	Bonus Feat
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+3	Painful Blow +3d6, Hunter Bonus +3
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+3	Special Ability
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+3	
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+4	Bonus Feat
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+4	Painful Blow +4d6, Hunter Bonus +4
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+4	Special Ability
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+5	
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+5	Bonus Feat
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+5	Painful Blow +5d6, Hunter Bonus +5
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+6	Special Ability
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+6	
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+6	Bonus Feat

Special Ability: At 6th level and every four levels thereafter, a bounty hunter gets a special ability of his choice from the following list:

Choke Hold: The bounty hunter is an expert at non-lethal combat. If he successfully pins a humanoid opponent, he inflicts his Painful Blow nonlethal damage in addition to immobilizing his target for the round. This ability can only be taken once.

Crippling Strike: The bounty hunter can inflict lasting injuries that weaken and handicap his foes. When the bounty hunter damages an opponent with a Painful Blow, the victim also takes 2 points of temporary Strength damage. This ability can only be taken once.

Improved Hunter Bonus: Each time the bounty hunter takes this ability, his Hunter Bonus increases by 1.

Opportunist: Once per round, the bounty hunter can make an attack of opportunity against an opponent who has just been damaged in melee by another character. This counts as the hunter's attack of opportunity for that round, and it can only be used once per round, even if the bounty hunter possesses the Combat Reflexes feat. This ability can only be taken once.

Precise Strike: Each time a bounty hunter takes this ability, he adds +1d6 to his Painful Blow damage.

Stunning Surprise: If the bounty hunter makes a critical hit against a humanoid target, he may add his Painful Blow bonus to the amount of damage inflicted. If he is attacking an opponent who has lost her Dex bonus to her Armor Class — and thus would already suffer Painful Blow damage — he inflicts double the usual Painful Blow damage. This ability can only be taken once.

THE MAGEHUNTER

Some cultures have a superstitious fear of magic. Others with a greater understanding of mystical

forces may still see a need to keep rogue wizards under control. This has resulted in a specialized warrior class, trained to resist supernatural influences and to overcome those who traffic in mystical powers. The name of these warriors varies based on the way in which their culture views magic. They may be known as witchfinders, pureblades, spellshields, silver guardians, or by any of a dozen other names. For purposes of this book, we will call them *magehunters*.

The path of the magehunter requires intensive training and ritual purification. Magehunters often form small orders — elite military units attached to a church or lord — but occasionally a lordless magehunter will travel across the world, sharing her knowledge with apprentices who show promise or working with bounty hunters. Cultural upbringing has a tremendous impact on a magehunter's choice of allies. Some view any manifestation of the supernatural as inherently tainted and evil, and will have nothing to do with any sort of spellcaster. Others see magic as a natural force — something that they have learned to oppose and contain, but a force that can serve a noble cause when used wisely.



Magehunters do not lean towards any alignment. Good magehunters will actively seek to protect the innocent from mystical threats. Neutral hunters simply perform their duties, for which they will expect to be duly compensated. An evil magehunter could work in the service of an oppressive lord, hunting down any mystical opposition to her master's tyrannical rule.

It should be noted that magehunters can use magical artifacts and weapons. The act of actually casting a spell — forming a personal connection to a source of mystical power — would defile the mystical purity that shields the hunter from harm. But simply carrying a magical sword or wearing enchanted armor has no sort of detrimental effect on a hunter. Likewise, another party member can cast a spell on a magehunter without disrupting her purity — although the spell will have to overcome the magehunter's natural resistance!

NEW PRESTIGE CLASS:

THE MAGEHUNTER

A magehunter is a highly trained warrior who can overcome hostile magic through martial discipline and indomitable willpower. Part of the power of the magehunter comes from ritual purity. A magehunter must never have channeled magical forces; this blank slate becomes her shield, severing her connection with the world of the supernatural. In addition to this defense, she learns a variety of offensive techniques that aid her when she is battling spell-using opponents.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To become a magehunter, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Feats: Iron Will

Special: The character cannot possess any sort of spell-casting ability. Races or creatures with spell-like abilities (such as gnomes) cannot become magehunters. If the character ever acquires a level in a class that grants spell ability, she loses the class' Spell Resistance and all magehunter special abilities. *Imbue with spell ability* cannot be used on a magehunter, unless she has lost her powers.

Also, the abilities of the magehunter are the result of ancient techniques and intensive training. In order to become a magehunter, a character must receive instruction from an experienced magehunter. Whether the character is dealing with an order or an individual, the teacher will require the student to perform a task to display her dedication to the goals of the order — being sent to defeat a rogue wizard, a mystical monster, or some other supernatural threat is common.



CLASS SKILLS

The magehunter's class skills are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str). A magehunter may also select either Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) to be a class skill.

Skill points at 1st Level: $(2 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$

Skill points at each level: $2 + \text{Int modifier}$

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the magehunter:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A magehunter is familiar with shields, all simple and martial weapons, and light, medium, and heavy armor.

Spell Resistance: A magehunter's ritual purity shields her from all forms of magic. This takes the form of Spell Resistance. A 1st level magehunter has 12 points of Spell Resistance; this increases by two points each level. To successfully use a spell or spell-like ability against a magehunter, an opponent must make a level check ($1d20 + \text{caster level}$). If the roll equals or exceeds the magehunter's Spell Resistance, the spell works normally. The hunter still gets to make a save against any magical effect that penetrates her Spell Resistance, if one is normally allowed.

A magehunter's Spell Resistance is an extraordinary ability, and cannot be voluntarily deactivated; as a result, it can be difficult for allies of the magehunter to assist her with magic. If she concentrates, a magehunter can temporarily reduce her Spell Resistance by up to five points, but she cannot drop it completely.

Disrupting Wound: The purity of the magehunter has a disrupting effect on any magic she comes into contact with. If a magehunter inflicts melee damage on a creature that is casting a spell — either as a result of a readied action or an attack of opportunity — the magehunter may add an amount equal to twice her magehunter level to the DC of the victim's Concentration check.

Resist Mystical Influences: Even if a spell penetrates her natural defenses, a magehunter of 2nd level or higher gets a +2 to all saves against magical effects.

Sense Magic: At 2nd level a magehunter becomes sensitive to the unnatural emanations of supernatural forces. When she comes within 30 feet of an active spell or spell-like ability she may make a Wisdom check, adding her magehunter level to the roll. The DC is 15 minus the level of the effect. If the magehunter is successful, she senses the source of the mystical emanations. If she makes the roll by five or more points, she can determine if the spell is divine or arcane in nature. This is the only information she receives. Unlike *detect magic*, this effect extends in all directions and does not require any sort of concentra-

THE MAGEHUNTER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	SR	Special Abilities
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	12	Disrupting Wound
2	+2	+3	+0	+1	14	Resist Mystical Influences, Sense Magic
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	16	Smite Mystic (Daze)
4	+4	+4	+1	+2	18	Dodge Spell (+2)
5	+5	+4	+1	+2	20	Detect Magic
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+3	22	Smite Mystic (Idiocy)
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+3	24	Dodge Spell (+3)
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+4	26	
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+4	28	Smite Mystic (Paralysis)
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+5	30	Dodge Spell (+4)

tion on the part of the character; a magehunter may detect someone who has snuck up behind her to cast a silent spell.

Smite Mystic: As a magehunter develops her skills, she learns to use her purity as a weapon. She may project this force along with a melee attack, or she may deliver it as a touch attack; this can be performed as an attack of opportunity. This has a disruptive effect on any creature that possesses spell-like abilities or the power to cast spells. The effects of the attack vary based on the level of the magehunter:

Magehunter

Level	Effect
3 rd	Victim loses next action; +1d6 damage
6 th	Victim suffers effects of <i>touch of idiocy</i> ; +2d6 damage
9 th	Victim is paralyzed for 1 round/level; +3d6 damage

A high-level magehunter may decide which spell-like effect to apply to the attack. This effect can be negated by a Fortitude save with a DC equal to 10 + the magehunter's level + her Wisdom modifier. There is no saving throw against the additional damage. Further, a victim struck by Smite Mystic cannot cast a spell or use a spell-like ability for the remainder of the turn; if the magehunter smites an enemy in the act of casting a spell, it automatically causes the spell to fail, with no Concentration roll allowed. A magehunter may use Smite Mystic a number of times per day equal to half her Magehunter level.

Dodge Spell: As a magehunter becomes more sensitive to the fluctuations of magic, she learns to intuitively avoid mystical attacks. If someone makes a touch attack (ranged or melee) against a magehunter as part of a spell or spell-like ability, the magehunter should immediately make her Sense Magic check. If she succeeds, she gets a bonus to her AC against that attack. This bonus begins at +2 at 4th level, and increases by one every three levels.

Detect Magic: By 5th level, a magehunter has developed a highly refined sense of the unnatural forces around her; this allows her to *detect magic* at will.

This is identical to the spell of the same name, but it is considered to be an extraordinary ability; it is not itself a magical action and cannot be blocked by *antimagic field* or *dispel magic*.

THE SPELLBANE

There are many ways to fight magic. The magehunter divorces herself from the mystical world, thereby shielding herself from its effects, and relies on her sword to protect those around her. The spellbane takes the opposite approach. He embraces the arcane, becoming a channel for mystical energy — for the specific purpose of countering and containing its effects. Any spell effect can be blocked by an equal expenditure of arcane energy; the spellbane sacrifices the ability to use traditional magic in exchange for a greatly heightened ability to block it. He lacks the magehunter's inherent resistance to magical effects, but he can use his energy to shield others from hostile spells. In the process, he also becomes highly attuned to the ebb and flow of arcane energy, making him more than a match for the inquisitor when it comes to analyzing esoteric residue.

Like the magehunter, the role and title of the spellbane will vary based on the culture that spawns him. In nations where arcane magic is feared and witches and warlocks are persecuted, a spellbane may be seen as an exorcist — a holy man who can banish infernal powers. Mystically advanced cultures are more likely to see the spellbane as another form of specialized wizard. Such nations will use spellbanes to maintain their prisons, and may integrate spellbanes into their military forces to defend against mystical attacks. In general, however, spellbanes are uncommon; the path requires vast knowledge of arcane forces and a willingness to forever abandon the path of wizardry — two traits that are rarely found in the same person.

Because of their highly specialized nature, spellbanes rarely work alone. Freelance spellbanes often team up with bounty hunters, using their powers to shield fighters from mystical assault. They may also sell their services as bodyguards or security specialists, protecting those who expect to be targeted by magical attacks.



 Spellbanes can be of any alignment. Most tend to be lawful, as their studies require a disciplined and ordered mind. On the other hand, the spellbane by his nature breaks the bonds of magic; a chaotic spellbane may thrive on his power to disrupt the plans of others, preventing clerics from healing their charges and destroying the works of wizards.

NEW PRESTIGE CLASS: THE SPELLBANE

The spellbane is an arcane spellcaster who has dedicated his talents to the destruction of magic; he uses the knowledge of arcane energies to disrupt the spells of others. A spellbane may work as a bodyguard, a bounty hunter, or even as part of a nation's army — especially if magic is a major part of warfare. The path of the spellbane requires a deep understanding of the nature of magic, a strong will, and the knowledge of how to dispel magical energies.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

To become a spellbane, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Knowledge (arcana): 9 ranks

Spellcraft: 9 ranks

Feats: Skill Focus (Spellcraft)

Will Save: +6 (including bonuses from Wisdom and Feats)

Special: The character must be able to cast arcane spells, including *dispel magic*.

CLASS SKILLS

The spellbane's class skills are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills, taken separately) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int).

Skill points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4

Skill points at each level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the spellbane:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Lacking access to offensive magic, a spellbane devotes slightly more time to martial training. Spellbanes are proficient with all simple weapons and light armor. A spellbane suffers the standard arcane failure chance when actually casting a spell, but Spellblock and his other class abilities are not affected by armor.

THE SPELLBANE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities	Spell Slots
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Spellblock, Sense Magic	+1 level of existing class
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Improved Dispel	+1 level of existing class
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Improved Counterspell	+1 level of existing class
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Detect Magic	+1 level of existing class
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Advanced Spellblock	+1 level of existing class
6	+3	+2	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Detect Magic Residue	+1 level of existing class
8	+4	+2	+2	+6		+1 level of existing class
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Spellsense	+1 level of existing class
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	True Spellblock	+1 level of existing class

Spell Use: As soon as a character takes a level in the spellbane class, he irrevocably loses his ability to cast arcane magic. Even if he increases his level in a class with arcane spellcasting abilities, he will not regain this power. However, he keeps the spell slots that he possessed due to his former class; in fact, if he is a traditional wizard he gets an additional slot per level, as if he had been a specialist mage. As his spellbane level increases, his spell slots and caster level will increase as if he was still pursuing his old arcane class. However, a spellbane can only use these slots in very limited ways. To begin with, he can use them to power special class abilities, like Spellblock and Advanced Spellblock. In addition, he can cast a limited set of spells, all related to detecting or disrupting magic. Regardless of his former class, the spellbane casts spells as a sorcerer; he does not have to prepare spells in advance, and he can sacrifice higher-level spell slots to cast lower-level spells. The spellbane can use metamagical feats with his spells, just as a sorcerer could. The complete list of spells that are available to a spellbane can be found at the end of this section. A spellbane has access to the entire list; he does not have to select spells as a sorcerer does.

Spellblock: The trademark of the spellbane is the ability to expend arcane energy to disrupt the spells or spell-like abilities of other creatures. If the spellbane has a readied action, he may attempt to counter any magical action taken by an enemy. To do this, the spellbane must sacrifice a spell slot of equal or higher level to the one that is being cast. When the spellbane uses his readied action, he learns the level of the spell that he is attempting to block. If he doesn't have a spell of the necessary level, the block fails and the action is lost (though he does not lose a spell slot). Provided that the spellbane expends a spell slot of the required level, he makes an opposed dispel check. The DC of the check is 11 + the spell's caster level; the spellbane rolls 1d20 and adds his Wisdom modifier, his spellbane level, and the class level from previous arcane classes he possessed (with a maximum bonus of +10 from previous classes). In addition, for every level that the spell slot dropped exceeds the enemy's spell, the spellbane gets a +1 bonus to the check. If the check is successful, the enemy's spell is completely negated.

Example: Til is a 3rd level spellbane who was formerly an 11th level wizard; he has a Wisdom score of 14. He attempts to block a 1st-level spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer, and sacrifices a 2nd-level spell slot to do so. The DC of the check is 23. Til rolls 1d20 and adds 16 — +2 for his Wisdom modifier, +3 for his spellbane levels, +10 for his wizard levels, and +1 for the fact that the slot he dropped is one level greater than the opposing spell. He rolls a 10, for a total of 26, and succeeds in blocking the spell.

Sense Magic: By choosing the path of the spellbane, a character becomes a conduit for mystical energy. This makes him extremely sensitive to the flow of supernatural energies around him. When he comes within 30 feet of an active spell or spell-like ability, he may make a Wisdom check, adding his spellbane level to the roll. The DC is 15 minus the level of the spell. If the spellbane is successful, he senses the source of the mystical emanations. If he makes the roll by five or more points, he can determine if the spell is divine or arcane in nature. Unlike *detect magic*, this effect extends in all directions and does not require any sort of concentration on the part of the character.

Improved Dispel: When using *dispel magic* or *greater dispelling*, the spellbane receives a bonus to the dispel check equal to 2 + his Wisdom Modifier. This bonus is also added to the DC of *disjunction*. Spellblock allows the character to negate spells as they are being cast, but *dispel magic* is still the best way to remove enchantments that are already in place.

Improved Counterspell: At 3rd level, the spellbane receives Improved Counterspell as a bonus feat.

Detect Magic: A spellbane continues to hone his mystical senses as he rises in level. At 4th level he may use *detect magic* at will, as a spell-like ability.

Advanced Spellblock: At this point, a spellbane can attempt to block hostile magic as an intuitive action, without even being prepared for the casting. If an opponent casts a spell and the spellbane makes a successful Sense Magic check, he may immediately attempt to block the spell, even if he did not have a readied action. This still requires a standard action, so if the spellbane has already acted in the round he is out of luck; but if he has not yet



had the opportunity to act, he can instinctively sacrifice his action in an attempt to block the spell. In addition, the bonus for sacrificing a higher-level spell slot increases from +1 to +3 per level of difference between the spells.

Detect Magic Residue: At 7th level, the spellbane may *detect magic residue* at will, as a spell-like ability.

Spellsense: By 9th level, the spellbane has become exceptionally sensitive to the flow of mystical energy. He immediately notices any spell or spell-like ability used within 30 feet (in any direction), and can make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level) to identify the spell. If the spellbane wants additional information about the spell, he will have to use *detect magic* or *detect magical residue*. This is an extraordinary ability that requires no effort on the part of the spellbane.

True Spellblock: At this level, the spellbane has attained true mastery of countering mystical forces. If he sacrifices a spell slot of equal or greater level to the spell he is attempting to block, the spell is automatically negated, with no need for a dispel check. It is as if the spellbane had used the identical spell as a counterspell.

SPELLBANE SPELL LIST

In addition to using their spell slots to power their class abilities, spellbanes can cast the following spells:

0-level — *detect magic, mystic oppression*

1st level — *aural disruption, detect magical residue, identify, mystical void, opposing currents, magic aura*

2nd level — *arcane sight, obscure object*

3rd level — *dispel magic, nondetection*

4th level — *minor globe of invulnerability, remove curse*

5th level — *scatterbrain, spell resistance*

6th level — *antimagic field, globe of invulnerability, greater dispelling*

7th level — *greater arcane sight, spell turning*

8th level — *protection from spells*

9th level — *disjunction*



HUNTING TECHNIQUES

Those characters who specialize in bringing down fugitives have a few unusual tricks in their arsenal of tactics.

NEW FEAT: BONDSMAN [GENERAL]

You are a master of ropes and manacles, which helps both when you're trying to escape and when you're binding an opponent.

Benefit: You receive a +3 bonus when using Escape Artist to get out of ropes or manacles (but not grapples, nets, *entangle*, or other restraints). You also receive a +3 bonus when making a Use Rope check to bind an opponent.

NEW FEAT: GROUP TACTICS [GENERAL]

You have trained in group tactics; you have learned to coordinate your attacks and create openings and opportunities when ganging up against a single target.

Prerequisite: Base Attack Bonus +1

Benefit: You gain a +1 to your melee attack roll when you and one or more allies team up to fight the same opponent. If any of your allies also possess the Group Tactics feat, the bonus is increased to the number of attackers who possess the feat (with a maximum bonus of +3).

Special: A fighter may take Group Tactics as a bonus feat.

FEAT: IMPROVED GRAPPLE [GENERAL]

You are skilled at grappling opponents.

Prerequisite: Dex 13+, Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You do not provoke an attack of opportunity when you make a touch attack to start a grapple. You also gain a +4 bonus on all grapple checks, regardless of whether you started the grapple.

Normal: Without this feat, you provoke an attack of opportunity when you make a touch attack to start a grapple.

Special: A fighter may take Improved Grapple as a bonus feat.

NEW FEAT: NET MASTER [GENERAL]

You are an expert in the use of the fighting net. You know how to throw the net to increase its effect on a victim, and you are skilled at controlling the movements of your victim.

Prerequisite: Proficiency with using the net as a weapon

Benefit: A net master receives a number of bonuses when using a net. To begin with, it only takes you one round to fold an unfolded net. In addition, when you catch someone in the net, your victim takes a –3 penalty on attack rolls and a –6 to her effective Dexterity. The DC of the Concentration check to cast a spell while entangled is increased to 17. Finally, you receive a +2 bonus to the opposed Strength checks when you use the trailing rope to limit the movement of your victim.

Normal: Without this feat, the penalty for being trapped in a net is a –2 to attack rolls and –4 to effective Dexterity. It normally takes two rounds for a proficient user to fold a net and four rounds for a non-proficient user to do so.

Special: A fighter may take Net Master as a bonus feat.

NEW FEAT: TWIST THE KNIFE [GENERAL]

You know how to make your blows especially painful — something that can be extremely useful if you're attempting to distract a spellcaster.

Prerequisite: Base Attack Bonus +4

Benefit: You can perform this maneuver any time you make a melee attack. You take a –2 circumstance penalty on your attack roll, but if you're successful the target must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 15)

or take a –2 circumstance penalty on attack rolls and skill checks for the following two rounds. In addition, if the victim was casting a spell when he was struck, the DC of the Concentration check required to maintain the spell is increased by 2; this is in addition to the 2 point skill check penalty if the caster fails his Fortitude save.

Special: A fighter may take Twist the Knife as a bonus feat.

FIGHTING AGAINST THE ODDS

Whether you're a bounty hunter or a guardsman, you have a host of challenges ahead of you. To begin with, you'll often be called upon to take on enemies who are considerably more powerful than you are. On top of that, you'll frequently be trying to take your enemy alive — which means you can forget about fireblasts and magical swords that slice and dice. So what do you do? This section examines tactics and techniques that can help you gain the upper hand against a superior foe, and provides you with new equipment, spells, and magical items that can help to even the odds. Of course, you never know when someone is going to send bounty hunters after *you*, so be prepared to deal with these tricks yourself!

PART ONE: GAINING THE UPPER HAND

There's a lot more to bounty hunting than beating up the bad guy. How do you locate your prey? What do you know about him, and how can you use your knowledge to your advantage? This section looks at the various tasks of the hunter, providing ways to maximize your effectiveness and to gain an edge over the opposition.



🕵️ LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

You can't do anything unless you find your opponent. To a large degree, this falls back on the tricks provided in Chapter Two — forensic magic, tracking, Gather Information, and other skills.

TRACKING

So, you're trying to track down your mark? Well, tracking is the logical place to start. If you're serious about bounty hunting, you're going to want a skilled tracker in your group — whether it's a ranger, bounty hunter, or someone who has picked up the Track feat independent of class.

GATHER INFORMATION

Along with Track, this is the other no-brainer. If your target is in an urban area, you'll want to break out Gather Information right away. Even if it doesn't help you find your prey, it may at least give you the name of someone you can talk to for specific information.

CONTACTS

If you've got an investigator in your group, she may be able to use her Networking ability to help obtain information about your prey. Even if you don't have an honest-to-goodness investigator, you should think about the NPCs who you associate with on a regular basis. Perhaps the innkeeper has information about your quarry. If your prey is a thief, do you know any other rogues who could dredge the grapevine in the local guild? A good GM will make sure that there are a few leads out there to be found. Further, if you come up with a logical source for information, she may reward your creativity even if it isn't what she had planned.

Getting information from a contact may require bribery, an exchange of favors, or a show of force (if you don't care about maintaining a good long-term relationship with the NPC). If you're a smooth talker,

you can use Gather Information to get your contact to talk; see Chapter Two for more details.

MAGIC

There are many spells that can help you to locate your prey. *Discern location* is as good as it gets, but as an 8th-level spell it's out of reach of most characters. *Locate creature* is an obvious choice, but it has a short range and requires a personal familiarity with the target.

If you have an inquisitor on hand, *follow the bloody trail* has a longer range and requires no personal contact with your victim, provided that you have a blood-trace to follow. If your target is out of range of these spells, *scrying* and *greater scrying* may give you enough clues to determine your target's general location; if you ask the right questions, *augury* or *divination* can also lend a hand.

BLOODHOUNDS

There are two types of bloodhounds — the living, breathing kind and those made of magic. Either one can fill gaps in your party. If you have an animal handler in your group, a living bloodhound can assist or replace a human tracker. A magical *bloodhound* can use *follow the bloody trail* for you — this is a handy tool if you don't have an inquisitor at your beck and call.

GOING PUBLIC

This is rarely the best idea and it may be something that your employer forbids, but in some circumstances you may want to take your quest to the public at large. Offer a reward for information about your target, and spread nasty rumors about what he's been up to, so people will be more inclined to help. You'll want to have a decent level of Sense Motive so you can tell if someone's lying to try to claim your reward. Again, going public is rarely a good idea, since it will tip off your target; anonymity is a powerful defense. But when you're completely out of ideas, this just might produce results.

⊗ KNOW YOUR ENEMY,

KNOW YOURSELF

The role of the hunter is quite different from that of the typical dungeon crawler. You don't need to kick the door in without knowing what you're going to find, and if you're wise you never will. If you're dealing with an enemy who is stronger than you are — either through natural power or because you need to restrain yourself — you need every advantage you can get, and knowledge truly is power.

If you have been sent on a job, the odds are that you know something about your targets. Try to find out as much as you can before you leave. Name and appearance are vital for finding the target, but what about behavior?

Knowing a target's alignment can help you to predict his movements and how he will react to situations and proposals. It also helps with spell selection — do you want *protection from chaos* or *protection from law*? Will *detect evil* let you spot your enemy? Will your *holy sword* inflict extra damage, or should you stick with the *staff of thought disrupting*?

If your enemy is a spellcaster, what are his favorite spells? Aside from knowing what to expect, this can also help you set up magical defenses like *mystical opposition* or *protection from energy*. Pay attention to saving throws — if you're going up against an enchanter, you want the monk with the high Will save to take point; keep the barbarian with 6 Wisdom out of the way until you're sure he won't get *charmed*.

If the target is a fighter, what are his preferred tactics? If he's an expert archer, you'll want to make sure you catch him face to face. If he's a terror in melee, sniping may be a better alternative.

Does he use any magic items? If so, is there any way for you to counter these items? Can you steal them or catch your victim when he is separated from them?

Try to anticipate other weaknesses he may possess. If you can determine his class and guess at his statistics (Is he frail? Robust? Clumsy? Quick?), you can get a good sense

of what his saves may be. If he's a fighter, ranger, or barbarian, Fortitude will be high but he will be vulnerable on other fronts; consider using mind-altering magic. Effects like *hold person* also have the advantage of bypassing a fighter's high hit points. A wizard or sorcerer will easily resist your enchantments, but will be vulnerable to poisons, thunderstones, and other physical effects. By planning in advance, you can make sure to hit your target with the attacks that will cause maximum damage.

If your employer can't provide you with this information, you will have to turn to other sources. If the target is well-known in a particular area, you may be able to obtain useful data from Gather Information, Knowledge (local), or even Bardic Lore. *Detect magical residue* can provide some sense of a target's skills and power. And if it comes to it, there is always personal observation. The bounty hunter usually has the advantage that she knows her target's face — but he doesn't know hers. Once you've located your enemy, don't be in a rush to attack him; observe him, see what you can find out about his patterns and behavior. Get into a conversation — can you get him to tell you anything by using Gather Information? Do you have access to *detect thoughts*? An investigator with the Read Character ability? Can you Spot anything interesting? This isn't just limited to human opponents — you never know if that dragon you're after might have a chink in his armor.

It's equally important to know your own abilities and those of your allies. If you're facing multiple opponents, try to pick opponents ahead of time — maximize your strengths and hide your weaknesses. So the barbarian shouldn't take on the enchanter — who would he be best suited to fight? If you set him against the rogue, who is his secondary target once the rogue has been defeated?

⊗ LOCATION, CONTINUED:

CHOOSE YOUR GROUND

So, you've learned everything you can about your prey and tracked him down. The next question is the degree to which you can choose the battleground. If



your target has gone to ground in some sort of stronghold, you may have to bring the battle to him; in this case, the best you can do is to thoroughly examine the safehouse. Do you need to cover multiple exits to prevent your quarry from escaping? Depending on your capabilities, this could involve spreading caltrops across an area or the use of spells like *web* or *alarm*, either to slow retreat or to alert you to possible flight.

Ideally, however, your target will not be aware of your pursuit. In this case you have far more flexibility. Using stealth, disguise, a familiar, or magical techniques of observation, and take some time to watch your prey. If he's in a city, does he have a pattern of movement — and if so, where is he most vulnerable? If he's traveling through the wilds, will he be stopping at an inn or camping for the night? Again, you'll usually have the advantage of anonymity; your target may be generally paranoid, but unless your cover has been blown, he won't know *you're* after him. Look for ways to turn the ground against him. If he's resting at an inn, can you bribe the innkeeper to create a distraction or slip paralytic poison into his drink? If he has servants, can you subvert one of the hirelings — or even replace her, using illusion magics or the Disguise skill?

While this is advice for the bounty hunter, it can apply to other types of adventure. If you're out to slay a dragon, can you draw it into a location that suits your needs — where you have concealment from its breath? Can you identify its feeding habits, and drug the beasts it preys upon to slow down the dragon itself? The key is patience — taking the time to study your situation and pick the perfect battleground.

In certain situations, time of day can be just as important as location. If the fight will occur outdoors, consider whether your group has the edge in terms of Low-Light Vision and Darkvision — either due to racial abilities or *goggles of night*. If so, a night attack can be extremely effective; if not, you don't want the enemy to have an advantage over you.



THE ART OF THE AMBUSH

When you're trying to set up the perfect ambush, there are a number of things to consider.

ADVANCE PREPARATIONS

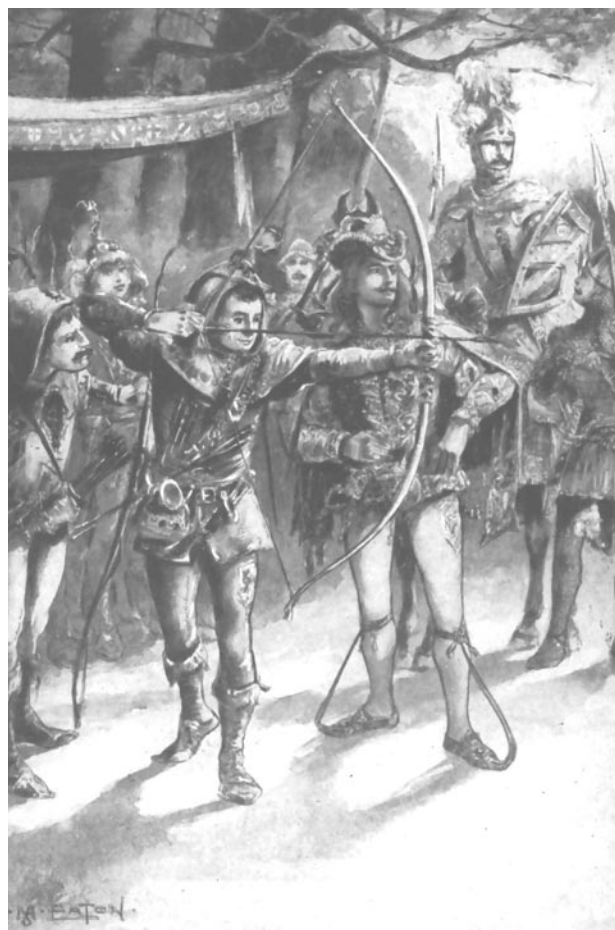
If you know you're going to get into a fight, you can do all your preparations ahead of time. Get your protection spells up! Spells like *mirror image* may draw attention if used in a public place, but *protection* spells, *cat's grace*, *bless*, and the like can all help without making you stand out to your target.

The next issue is positioning. In an outdoor attack, you'll want to look for concealment, especially for your spellcasters. In an indoor battle you need to cover the escape routes, and position your people close to their designated targets. And as mentioned earlier, you should always look for other ways to skew the odds in your favor — whether it's poisoning the beer or setting up traps along likely escape routes.

COMMUNICATION: SOUND AND SILENCE

In the ideal ambush, you want to be perfectly coordinated. You need to be able to quickly adjust your battle plans based on unexpected surprises, like the sorcerer *summoning* a demon to even the odds or suddenly flooding the area with *darkness*. At the same time, the less your enemies know of your plans the harder it will be for them to react effectively. If your GM allows open table talk, this isn't an issue. If she's strict about it — only letting you discuss strategy if your characters are actually talking — things are more difficult. The ideal solution is *telepathic bond* or a set of *circles of thought*; both allow silent telepathic communication. Unfortunately, *telepathic bond* is a high-level spell and *circles of thought* are very expensive. Lower-level hunters may have more luck with the *message* spell or *message stones*, although these have a limited range.

If you're going to rely on verbal communication, come up with abbreviated designations for each target and each member of your party. If there are multiple areas that have tactical significance — like doors to an inn — assign designations to these points as well. Instead of saying “Jonath, Kayli, get the rogue who's headed for the back door,” you want to be able to say “Green, black, coins at the bolt.” This leaves your enemies in the dark as to exactly what you're doing — and it gives you an excuse to come up with cool code



names. A slightly simpler alternative is for your entire party to learn an obscure language, and hope that your enemies don't know it. If you shout all your commands in Ignan, odds are good that *most* of your foes won't know what you're talking about.

If you're operating from a long distance and don't have a method of magical communication, thunderstones or flashstones can be a useful way to signal an attack (in addition to blinding or deafening your targets). This brings up one last point — disrupting your opponent's communications is just as valuable as getting your own plans in order. If you can deafen your enemies with a thunderstone, it will be even more difficult for them to coordinate with one another. The *silence* spell can be an invaluable tool for a surprise attack, especially if you're making a night attack on a camp; it has a long range, and if you hit a sentry with the spell you can charge onto the scene and begin your work without waking any sleepers. Of course, *silence* will affect you as well, so you'll need to make sure you've done your planning in advance! All of

these techniques can also interfere with enemy spell-casting, though again, *silence* will hinder you as well as your enemies.

SPEAKING OF FLASHSTONES ...

Alchemical weapons like thunderstones and flashstones can provide you with a vital edge in combat; if you have to cover a significant distance to reach your prey, a concealed archer providing flareshot covering fire can be an excellent distraction. At close range, thunderstones can be problematic; there's no way to spare your friends from the effects of the stone. However, allies can shield their eyes to avoid the effects of a flashstone or flareshot. The problem is one of communication. If you can communicate telepathically, you can warn your allies of an incoming flashstone without giving your enemies a chance to react. You can use a verbal signal, but there's the risk that your enemies will come to recognize the signal. Alternately, you can come up with a code, like counting in Ignan; any number means "flareshot!" but the since each number is a different word, your opponents may assume that the signal has a different meaning.

Flashstones, thunderstones, and tanglefoot bags are all grenadelike weapons. As a result, they make excellent back-up weapons for wizards, sorcerers, and other characters with poor Base Attack Bonuses and low hit points. A wizard should be staying off of the front lines anyway, and he'll still have a decent chance of hitting an area with a flashstone in spite of his poor BAB.

THE SURPRISE ROUND

If you've done your job, you should get a surprise round at the start of an ambush. If you're out in the open, you may have to spend this round drawing a weapon — walking around with drawn blades has a way of putting people on edge and spoiling surprise. But even in public, Quick Draw or *gloves of storing* can let you produce a weapon and still act — while a weapon like a quarterstaff can be carried in plain sight without raising suspicions. It's just a harmless walking stick, after all.

While your enemy is flat-footed, he does not receive his Dexterity bonus to his Armor Class. Aside from the obvious advantage of making him easier to hit,

this has two useful secondary effects. First, rogues and bounty hunters will get bonus damage from Sneak Attack and Painful Blow. In addition, a flat-footed opponent does not get to make attacks of opportunity — so if you're not in the right position, this is your chance to move in! Get into flanking position. Grapple with a weak enemy. Get close enough to threaten enemy spellcasters in upcoming rounds. And if you're right next to an opponent and you need to cast a spell or use a ranged weapon, now is the time to do it!



EFFICIENT COMBAT

When you're fighting a superior foe, you need to make absolutely certain that you're working at peak efficiency. This chapter presents a variety of new spells that can help you to gain the upper hand; these are provided later in the chapter. Here are a few tips for using these spells and other techniques to get the best of your enemy.

GET THE NUMBERS ON YOUR SIDE

When you're setting up your plans, evaluate your enemies. Sometimes you need to spread out — to give man-to-man coverage to each of your opponents. But at other times it will be far more efficient to team up and try to take one or two of your foes out of the fight in the first round or two; this can allow you to use flanking, grappling, and other group tactics on those who remain. Fighters may be your most dangerous enemies in close combat, but they are also the most difficult to take out of the fight; wizards, sorcerers, and rogues can be knocked out more quickly, allowing you to focus your full resources on the bruisers.

TEAM PLAY

Flanking is an obvious tactic in group combat, especially if you have a rogue or bounty hunter in play; the extra damage from a Painful Blow or Sneak Attack can add up over time. But Aid Another is a maneuver that often gets overlooked. If you and an ally are both in a position to strike the same opponent, you can take a standard action to assist your comrade. You must make a successful attack roll against AC 10; if you succeed, you may give your friend a +2 circumstance

bonus to her attack rolls or AC against your mutual opponent. While much of the time it will make more sense to make an attack of your own, when you're dealing with a vastly superior opponent who you just can't hit, you may be better off helping a stronger ally to make a successful attack. This can be especially relevant for a weak spellcaster, if she either has no useful spells or doesn't want to risk an attack of opportunity; she can at least try to help the melee bruisers with Aid Another — although it may be best for her to stay safely out of melee range. Multiple characters can use Aid Another to help the same person, and the bonuses stack — so if you just can't hit a speedy foe, ganging up to assist your strongest fighter may be your quickest path to victory.

If you do end up with a spellcaster on the front lines, consider drawing attacks of opportunity in order to assist the caster. A heavily armored fighter can afford to draw an attack — moving through threatened space to flank the target or trying a grapple — to allow the weaker caster to perform a spell or to move away from the front lines.

If you're really focused on group combat, the Group Tactics feat provides you with a bonus to attack rolls when you are fighting an opponent in conjunction with an ally. This bonus increases for each person with Group Tactics involved in the fight, up to a maximum bonus of +3. If you're planning to be serious about the bounty hunting business, it's something you might want to invest in as a team.

ENTANGLEMENT, OR “WHY JANNI CAN'T CAST”

An entangled opponent is an unhappy opponent. A victim of an entangling effect suffers a –2 penalty to attack rolls, a –4 to her effective Dexterity, must make a Concentration check (DC 15) to successfully cast a spell, and can at best move half his normal speed; in addition, he cannot charge or run. There are a number of spells — *web* and, well, *entangle* — that cause this condition. These generally cover a wide area. If you're going to be fighting close up, there are two other valid alternatives: the net and the tanglefoot bag.

The tanglefoot bag can be expensive for low-level characters — 50 gp for a single-use item — but it is extremely useful. It requires no special proficiency to use and counts as a touch attack, allowing you to ignore your target's armor. Further, if your victim fails a Reflex save (DC 15), his movement speed is reduced to zero. Needless to say, this can slow up that clumsy warrior and give your allies time to bring spells or missile weapons to bear. On the other hand, a victim can break out of the goo by inflicting 15 points of damage to it, so the mighty warrior may not be trapped for long.

Another alternative is the net — an exotic weapon, but one that members of the bounty hunter class are trained in. The net has a limited range, but it is also a touch attack. You can break out of a normal net by inflicting 5 hit points of damage against it with a slashing weapon, by making a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20), or by making a Strength check (DC 25). The equipment section later in this chapter includes a variety of superior fighting nets, include the silk net, mithral net, and special rules for magical nets; among other things, these nets are considerably stronger than their hemp counterparts.

GETTING A HOLD ON THE SITUATION

If you outnumber your opponents, grappling is another thing to consider. While caught in a grapple a character loses his Dexterity bonus to his AC, opening himself up to Sneak Attacks and Painful Blows. He loses his ability to make attacks of opportunity, allowing you to cast spells right under his nose. Meanwhile, he can't cast any spells that have somatic components — and since wizards and sorcerers are often lacking in physical strength, this can be a good way to take one out of the fight. If you successfully pin your opponent, the only action he can take is to try to escape your pin; in addition, melee attacks against the victim receive a +4 bonus. As the grapple itself is a touch attack, you get to ignore your victim's armor; so this is another way to deal with a single, well-armored enemy that most of your allies can't hit.

One of the greatest challenges involved in grappling is getting the tussle started in the first place. Making a grapple attempt provokes an attack of opportunity — and if you are damaged by that attack, the grapple

automatically fails. There are a few ways to deal with this:

- A flat-footed target doesn't get to make any attacks of opportunity. So get your grapple in right away!
- Most people only get to make one attack of opportunity per combat round. If you've got a tough, well-armored ally on your side, let her draw the attack of opportunity — then you can slip in with your grapple.
- A victim of the *hinder* spell doesn't get to make an attack of opportunity.
- Finally, if you have the Improved Grapple feat, you can grapple without provoking an attack.

Grappling is one example of one member of your party creating an opening, but there are many others. A monk's stunning attack, a trip attack, or use of a spell like *hinder* can all produce openings for allies who follow you later in the round.

MANAGING SPELLCASTERS

High-level spellcasters can be extraordinarily dangerous. *Charm* spells can turn allies into enemies, *hold person* can take the brawniest barbarian out of the fight, and *meteor swarm* can devastate an army. However, spellcasters have many weaknesses. If you plan ahead, there are a variety of ways to handle those pesky magi.

- A spellcaster provokes an attack of opportunity if he casts while he is within an area that you threaten (with the notable exception of touch attack spells). So close as quickly as possible! If you have the element of surprise on your side and can choose the battlefield, try to position your fighters next to the spellcasters from the very beginning of the battle.
- Concentration is the second great weakness of the caster. If you keep hitting him every time he tries to cast a spell, it will be very difficult for a wizard to do his job. The spell *pins and needles* and the Twist the Knife feat both help to prevent a spell-



caster from focusing on his magic.

- If you are of the same class as your opponent and have a talent for Spellcraft, counterspells can be a powerful weapon. If you've done your homework and learned what spells your enemy favors in combat, you can negate the magic of your enemy with no chance of failure, regardless of his level. You may be 6th level and your opponent may be 12th level, but if he casts a *fireball* and you have one prepared that you can drop for the counterspell, you automatically negate his attack. As long as you outnumber your opponents, this is a great way to buy time for your fighters to close and engage with enemy magi. You can't counter a spell that you cannot cast — but that's what *dispel magic* and *scatterbrain* are for.
- As noted in the previous two sections, both entanglement and grappling can make life difficult for magic users. Get the tanglefoot bag out there quickly!
- *Silence* prevents the casting of any spells with verbal components, although it hinders you as much as your opponent. *Garble* prevents a single target from casting spells with verbal components, but it will not stop him from making noise and raising an alarm. *Mystic opposition* and *opposing currents* won't stop your enemy from casting, but they will weaken the effects of his spells; *aural disruption* has the same effect, and may prevent your opponent from using his strongest magic. *Touch of idiocy* has a limited range but affects multiple statistics at once and allows no saving throw. And finally, *scatterbrain* will drain stored spells from your opponent — which can be very useful if a band of you are taking on a single powerful spellcaster.

CONTAINMENT

If you're fighting your way through an ancient tomb, you don't have to worry what to do with the skeletal warriors *after* you defeat them. Sometimes you may be sent to take a target dead or alive, but death is the business of the assassin. For a bounty hunter, victory in battle is usually just the first part of the challenge. Now you need to return your quarry to face justice (or whatever fate awaits him) — which means keeping

your victim alive and in custody for however long it takes to travel. A fighter may not be so bad once he has been disarmed, but a sorcerer has the potential to devastate your party with a word, which makes transporting and even feeding the prisoner a dangerous business. Here are a few things to consider.

AN UNCONSCIOUS PRISONER IS A HAPPY PRISONER

At least, if an unconscious prisoner isn't happy no one knows the difference. Under normal circumstances, someone who has been incapacitated recovers a number of points of nonlethal damage equal to his level per hour of rest, and wakes up when his nonlethal damage is less than his current hit points. Bounty hunters with the Evaluate Injuries ability can predict how long it will be before a captive wakes up, which lets you know just when to administer another boot to the head. Arcane casters can use the *sleep of the unjust* cantrip to keep someone unconscious for an extended period of time. And if you don't fall into either of these categories, you can always pick up a vial of the poppy's kiss poison from your local alchemist.

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF PROBLEM PRISONERS

The trouble with unconscious or gagged prisoners is that they have this annoying tendency to starve to death or dehydrate. If you've got the gold, a set of *manacles of maintenance* or a *ring of sustenance* will handle this problem. If not, you can always head back to that alchemist and stock up on mother's milk.

A MANACLE FOR ALL SEASONS

Part Three of this chapter includes a wide assortment of restraining devices, both mundane and magical. It also discusses the effects of being restrained, just in case you ever have to put up a fight while in chains.

You also need to consider the issue of how you will physically move your targets. If you're traveling light

and you pick up six prisoners, what do you do with them all? If you keep the restraints light enough to allow unhindered travel on foot, you may find that it's difficult to keep them all under control. On the other hand, traveling with a chain gang will slow you down, not to mention attracting attention and possibly reprisals from friends of your prisoners. A wagon or similar contrivance is usually the simplest way to handle prisoners, unless you've got teleportation magic on your side.

In any case, when you're setting out in search of prey, make sure you think about what happens *after* you capture your quarry. Do you have a way to hold your target? An idea of how to transport him? You really want to think about these things *before* you have a powerful sorcerer on your hands and no idea what to do with him!

PART TWO:

SPELLS OF CONTAINMENT

Magic is a powerful tool, and over the centuries the forces of law have developed a wide range of spells to help the agents of justice overcome rogue wizards and rampaging warlords. Many of these spells have seemingly minor effects — slightly dulling the target's reflexes or reducing the power of his spells. But when you're facing a superior opponent, everything you can do to bring him closer to your level is helpful.



In addition to the spells provided here, many existing spells can be extremely useful when trying to capture an opponent. A few examples:

- When used as part of a coordinated attack against a single opponent, *daze* can be an excellent way to prevent counter-attacks. *Lesser confusion* is less predictable, but still may prevent the victim from responding effectively to your actions.
- *Animate rope* is an excellent tool to use when setting up an ambush. The fact that it requires a Reflex save to avoid being entangled makes it

equally useful against fighters, wizards, and clerics.

- *Ray of enfeeblement* can severely handicap fighters or other characters who rely on their physical strength. In addition to lowering attack rolls and the amount of damage a character can inflict, this can also cause encumbrance to suddenly affect a character who was previously strong enough to deal with 50 pounds of plate mail. *Ray of exhaustion*, *touch of fatigue*, *waves of exhaustion*, and *waves of fatigue* can also handicap characters who rely on their physical abilities.

Many of the spells listed below are specifically designed to be used against higher-level opponents. *Bumble*, *hinder*, *pins and needles*, and *sleep of the unjust* force the target to make a saving throw at a penalty, giving these low-level spells a better chance of affecting a powerful target. *Mystical opposition* and *opposing currents* have no save whatsoever. The effects of these spells are not as dramatic as those of *fireball* or *lightning bolt*, but they can add up. A few notes on these new spells:

- *Aural disruption* does to spellcasters what *ray of enfeeblement* does to fighters. While not as severe as *feeblemind*, *aural disruption* can prevent a spellcaster from being able to use his most powerful spells; it will also lower the save DC of the spells that he casts. On the downside, the victim gets a standard Will save (unlike *opposing currents* or *touch of idiocy*).
- *Hinder* prevents a target from making his usual free attack of opportunity each round. This can be critical when you're fighting a single powerful opponent; once he's *hindered*, you have more freedom to grapple, cast spells, and move around in his threatened area.
- *Mystical opposition* and *opposing currents* can be used offensively or defensively. These spells lower the saving throw DC of the target's magic — giving you a better chance to resist the attacks of a powerful spellcaster — but also serve to shield the victim.



 ANIMATE NET

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 2**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)**Target:** One rope net**Duration:** 1 round/level**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

A more-powerful version of *animate rope*, this spell allows you to breathe life into a standard fighting net. In most respects, it is identical to *animate rope*, with the following notable differences.

A net can only target Tiny, Small, Medium, or Large creatures. It has 5 hit points, and an entangled victim must make a Strength check of DC 25 to escape.

An *animated net* restricts movement more severely than an *animated rope* or a regular net. For the duration of the spell, anyone caught in the net receives the following penalties: –4 to attack rolls, –6 to effective Dexterity, Concentration check (DC 17) to cast a spell. Movement is reduced to one-quarter its normal value (or to zero if the net can anchor its trailing rope to something stationary). If the duration of the spell ends while a victim is still entangled, the penalties drop to –2 to attack and –4 to Dexterity, DC 15 for Concentration, and movement is reduced to one-half its normal value.

If the net is attacking on its own, a target must be within two feet; the victim gets to make a Reflex save to avoid the net, using your DC for a 2nd-level spell. Alternately, you may throw the net at the target. In this case the range is increased to ten feet, but you must make a successful ranged touch attack against your intended victim (with the usual penalty if you are not proficient in the use of nets). If the net is unfolded, you take an additional –4 penalty on your attack roll. The net can fold itself as a one-round action.

 AURAL DISRUPTION

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 2, Spellbane 1**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)**Effect:** Ray**Duration:** 1 minute/level**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This beam of arcane energy twists the mystical aura of the target. To use it, you must strike your target with a ranged touch attack. The beam has no effect on characters or creatures who do not use magic, but it has a disturbing effect on the mental state of any kind of spellcaster or creature with spell-like abilities. The victim suffers a –1d4 enhancement penalty to one of her ability scores, with an additional –1 for every four caster levels. The spell affects the primary ability for the victim's highest-level spellcasting class — Wisdom for clerics, druids, paladins, and rangers; Intelligence for wizards; and Charisma for sorcerers, bards, or creatures with spell-like abilities.

 BUMBLE

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Altering]

Level: Sor/Wiz 0**Components:** V, S**Casting Time:** 1 action**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)**Target:** One creature**Duration:** 1 minute (D)**Saving Throw:** Will negates (see text)**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This annoying enchantment dulls the nerves in the victim's hands and feet, rendering him more prone to embarrassing accidents. If the victim rolls an unmodified 1 when making an attack roll, he will either drop his weapon or fall down (50% chance of either effect). In addition, as long as this spell is in effect the victim suffers a –2 circumstance penalty on any rolls he makes for a trip, disarm, or grapple attempt, regardless of whether he is initiating the action or if he is the target of it.

The target may negate this spell with a Will save, but the spell is surprisingly effective and the DC is increased by 3.

GARBLE

Illusion (Glamour)

Level: Bard 3, Inquisitor 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This curse alters the target's speech. Whatever she says sounds completely normal to her, but is incomprehensible gibberish to everyone else. Most skills involving a common language are useless, though the target may be able to communicate with non-verbal methods such as touch, writing, facial expressions, or sign language; you could also use Spot to try to read the victim's lips (DC 15). This effect prevents the casting of any spell that uses verbal components.

Material Component(s): A slice of lemon, which the caster must bite and suck the juices from.

HINDER

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This is a weaker form of *slow*. It dulls the victim's reflexes, preventing her from taking advantage of openings in battle. For the duration of the spell, the victim loses the ability to perform one attack of opportunity; this means that unless she possesses Combat Reflexes, she cannot take any attacks of opportunity.

The target may negate this effect with a Will save, but the DC of the save is increased by 3.

INDUCED ILLITERACY

Enchantment [Mind-Altering]

Level: Bard 2, Inquisitor 2, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell subtly alters the victim's brain, striking at his language centers and stripping away his ability to understand written words. If the target fails to make a Will save, he will find that he cannot read or write; any sort of script is completely illegible to him, and he cannot remember how to form words on paper. While this may not have any sort of immediate impact on the target, it can be a serious threat to a wizard, who will find himself unable to read his own spell book when he goes to prepare new spells. It will also prevent the victim from reading or using scrolls or any other magical item that requires the character to understand written words.

Material Component(s): A piece of aged parchment inscribed with mystic symbols, which the caster tears in half.

MYSTIC OPPOSITION

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 0, Spellbane 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 minute (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This establishes an invisible arcane barrier around the target; this field absorbs a certain type of spell energy, and moves with the victim. When you cast the spell,

you must specify a school of magic. While your target is under the effect of *mystic opposition*, any spell of that school that he casts has its saving throw DC reduced by 2. However, the barrier works both ways; if the victim is targeted by a spell of the specified school, the DC of any save that he needs to make to resist the spell's effect is also reduced by 2.

No save is allowed against this effect; the spell surrounds the victim, moving as he does, as opposed to targeting him directly.

MYSTICAL MANACLES

Conjuration

Level: Inquisitor 2, Lawkeeper 2, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Ray

Duration: 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

If you can strike your victim with a mystical beam — which requires a ranged touch attack — you can form a set of manacles around his wrists or ankles. The precise effects of the spell depend on how you target it.

Ankles: The magical chains hobble the victim, restricting his movements. While he is in the manacles, he suffers a –4 circumstance penalty to his AC and to any skill checks requiring the use of his legs; this penalty is also applied when he makes a contested roll to avoid being tripped. His movement speed is reduced by 10 feet per round. Finally, he takes a –2 circumstance penalty to his attack rolls because of his restricted movement.

Wrists: The chains are loose enough that the victim can move his arms, but his actions are severely restricted. He suffers a –4 circumstance penalty to attack rolls and any skill roll requiring the use of his hands; the GM can further rule that an action is simply impossible while chained, if it requires excessive freedom of movement. If the victim is using a shield, he loses his shield bonus to his armor class if he chooses to make an attack. He cannot use a bow, and he

takes a –1 penalty to all melee damage rolls. Finally, if he wishes to cast a spell that requires a somatic component, he must make a successful Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level); if he fails, the spell is lost. A monk who is fighting unarmed may attack using his feet; in this case, he can ignore the penalty to attack and damage rolls.

A character can escape from the chains by making an Escape Artist check (DC 25) or a Strength check (DC 23); either check requires a full action. The chains are formed from mystical energy, and have a Hardness of 8 and 8 hit points. The manacles do not have hinges and cannot be opened, but the caster can dissolve the chains at any time. *Freedom of movement* will allow a character to ignore the mystical manacles for the duration of the *freedom of movement* spell.

Material Component(s): A link from an iron chain. If the manacles are broken, the link of chain used to cast the spells will shatter.

OPPOSING CURRENTS

Abjuration

Level: Sor/Wiz 1, Spellbane 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

A more powerful version of *mystic opposition*, this affects all schools of magic at once. If the victim casts a spell, the saving throw DC is reduced by 2. But if any spell is used against the victim, the DC of any save that he makes to resist the spell's effects is also reduced by 2.

PINS AND NEEDLES

Illusion (figment)

Level: Bard 1, Inquisitor 0, Sor/Wiz 1

Components: V, F

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 2 rounds/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

For the duration of this spell, the victim has the unpleasant sensation of being poked and prodded with hundreds of tiny needles. This causes the victim to suffer a -1 circumstance penalty on all attack rolls and skill checks, and requires that he succeed at a Concentration check (with a DC equal to your normal saving throw for a 1st-level spell) any time that he tries to cast a spell.

The target creature may make a Will save to negate this effect, but the effect is surprisingly subtle and the DC is increased by 3.

Focus: A silver needle.

SCATTERBRAIN

Enchantment [Mind-Altering]

Level: Enchanter 5, Spellbane 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect: Ray

Duration: Instant

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This mystical bolt disrupts the mind of a spellcaster, selectively eliminating memories and causing her to forget the formulas she uses to perform acts of magic. Unless she makes a successful Will save, the victim loses 1d6 levels worth of prepared spells — +1 for every two levels of the caster. Begin by removing the spell of the highest possible level, then remove the spell of the next highest level, and so on; if there are multiple spells of the same level, select one randomly. Two 0-level spells are equal to one 1st-level spell.

Example: Til the spellbane strikes an 8th-level wizard with *scatterbrain*. Til rolls a 3 and adds 6 for his level, for a total of 9. The victim loses both of his stored 4th-level spells and one 1st-level spell. If the target had

already used one of his 4th-level spells, he would lose a 4th-level spell, a 3rd-level spell, and a 2nd-level spell.

This spell requires you to make a successful ranged touch attack against your target. It has no effect on characters or creatures who do not cast spells.

SLEEP OF THE UNJUST

Enchantment [Mind-Altering]

Level: Bard 0, Inquisitor 0, Lawkeeper 1,

Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 8 hours + 2 hour/level

Saving Throw: Will (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

While the traditional *sleep* spell can cause a waking creature to fall into a mystical torpor, this minor enchantment is more subtle. It has no effect whatsoever on targets who are fully conscious. But if it is cast on a target who is already unconscious or asleep, it places him into a deeper, almost comatose state. Sounds will not wake the victim of this spell, and he can be moved or stripped of his clothing with no risk of disturbing his rest. There are two things that can break the enchantment before it expires on its own: the victim will wake immediately if he takes damage, and an ally can wake him by taking a standard action (this is an application of the aid another action).

The victim of the spell gets a Will save to negate the effect. However, because the spell is amplifying an existing state, the DC of the save is increased by 3.

PART THREE:

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Chapter Two includes equipment that can help you find your prey. This section contains a variety of magical, alchemical, and mundane gear that will help you capture your enemies and hold them once they've been defeated.



 In addition to the new equipment provided in this section, many existing items can be invaluable to bounty hunters. On the alchemical front, tanglefoot bags and thunderstones can help even the odds on the field of battle. Paralytic and soporific poisons — like blue whinnis, taggit oil, and brain juice — can help you capture your prey without a fight. Caltrops can seal off escape routes. Once you get into magic, there are dozens of useful tools. A set of *goggles of night* will help you strike under cover of darkness. A suit of *glamered armor*, *hat of disguise*, *ring of force shield*, or *glove of storing* can help you to get close to an enemy without raising suspicions, suddenly producing weapons and armor out of thin air. A *glove of storing* is an especially effective way to transport a net; after all, a net is a large weapon that tends to attract attention, especially from fugitives.

If you have Atlas Games' *Occult Lore*, there are many botanical concoctions that can help in a hunt. A *fragrant egg* is a grenade-like weapon that can temporarily incapacitate opponents; *Pigbail's soporific* has a similar effect. *Faerie dust* can also reduce a target's ability to defend himself, while *godspittle* prevents a victim from using magic. *Baird's bedtime blend* can keep a prisoner unconscious for an extended period of time. *Ranger coffee* is similar to strolga (described below); the effects are more powerful, but so are the downsides. If you've got the book, take a look through Baird's Botanical and see what it has to offer!

NEW EQUIPMENT

The following mundane equipment is especially useful when used to capture fugitives

BALL AND CHAIN

A ball and chain is a portable prison. A single manacle is fastened around the ankle, and then attached to a heavy metal ball by a chain. It's typically used when a prisoner has been assigned to a work assignment and thus requires full mobility, yet needs to be kept from running off.

As long as he stays within the radius of the chain, the prisoner suffers no penalties. If the prisoner is only lightly encumbered by the ball, he can drag it behind him as he moves; however this slows his movement to 20 feet (or 15 feet if his base movement is only 20 feet), and also gives him a –2 penalty to his Armor Class. If he picks up a light ball he can move without a penalty. If the victim is more heavily encumbered by a weightier ball, he must pick up the ball by the chain in order to move, incurring encumbrance penalties.

In either case, the victim takes a –3 penalty to any attempt to Move Silently, due to the clanking of the chain; this is in addition to any penalty from encumbrance, which is the real purpose of the ball and chain.

As the weight of the ball is the major limiting factor on the prisoner, these items come in different sizes — generally 10-pound increments. Escaping from a ball and chain requires an Escape Artist check with a DC of 28. Breaking the chain requires a Strength check (DC 26); the chain has a Hardness of 10 and 10 hit points. You will need a lock to secure the ankle manacle; add the cost of the lock to the cost of the ball and chain.

This price is for a ball and chain designed for a Small or Medium creature; larger or smaller fetters vary in cost, using the same formula as regular manacles.

Price 10 gp + 1 gp/10 lbs.; Weight 20 to 70 lbs.

FLARESHOT

This is a flashstone that has been carefully shaped and attached to an arrow or crossbow bolt, allowing it to be used from a greater distance. Due to its weight and shape, a flareshot bolt has a –1 penalty to attack rolls, a –2 penalty to damage rolls, and a –10 to the normal range increment of the weapon. When it strikes a hard surface, it detonates, with effects identical to those of a normal flashstone.

If a flareshot bolt strikes an unarmored creature, it will not detonate. If it strikes a creature wearing light armor or with a natural armor bonus of up to +3, there is a 35% chance it will detonate. If the creature is wearing medium armor or has a natural armor bonus or +4 or +5, there is a 60% chance it will deto-

nate. If it strikes a target wearing heavy armor or with a natural armor bonus of +6 or greater, or if it hits a hard inanimate object, it will always detonate.

Price 80 gp; Raw Material Cost 26 gp; Craft (alchemy) DC 26, Craft (fletcher) 16; Weight 1 lb.

FLASHSTONE

Similar to a thunderstone, a flashstone is an alchemical invention — a small stone coated in chemicals that result in a blinding flare of light when set off by a powerful impact. A flashstone can be thrown as a grenadelike weapon. When it strikes a hard surface, it creates a brilliant burst of light. Creatures within a 10-foot radius must make a Reflex save (DC 13) or be blinded. In addition to the obvious effects (no Spot checks, for example), a blinded creature suffers a 50% miss chance in combat (as if an opponent had full concealment), loses any Dexterity bonus to AC, moves at half speed, and suffers a –4 penalty on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skill checks. Further, anyone attacking a blinded character gets a +2 to his attack roll. Unlike a thunderstone, an opponent who is prepared for this attack can shield himself from its effects by covering his eyes or looking away; however, he is effectively blind for as long as he shields his eyes.

Flashstones also make effective signaling devices, helping a group to coordinate an ambush.

Price 60 gp; Raw Material Cost 20 gp; Craft (alchemy) DC 26; Weight 1 lb.

IRON HANDS

Effectively a pair of locked gauntlets, this object is designed to immobilize the wearer's fingers and hands. A thick leather strap binds it tightly around the wearer's wrists. While it's attached, the wearer cannot use his hands to perform skills, hold objects, or cast spells that have somatic components. It's very difficult to wriggle free of a pair of iron hands, requiring an Escape Artist check (DC 35). However, a Strength check (DC 23) can burst the wrist bond. Iron hands have a Hardness of 10 and 7 hit points.

Few nations make use of these unusual restraints. They are primarily found in advanced nations with a high con-

centration of sorcerers or wizards. Iron hands are normally designed for Small or Medium creatures.

Price 30 gp; Weight 6 lbs.

LEATHER GAG

A gag is designed to prevent a person from speaking. Someone who has been gagged cannot cast spells requiring verbal components. A makeshift gag can be formed from a strip of cloth; the prisoner can work his way free of the gag with a successful Escape Artist check (DC 20). A leather gag is held in place with multiple straps and is very difficult to work loose; working free of the gag requires an Escape Artist check (DC 30). If your hands are free you can easily remove a gag.

Price 3 gp; Weight 1 lb.

MITHRAL NET

A net made out of mithral-laced rope, this has all the traits of a traditional fighting net, but is considerably more durable. It has a Hardness of 5 and 15 hit points, and can be burst with a Strength check (DC 28). Like mithral rope, this is an uncommon item that will only be found in certain regions.

Price 1,000 gp; Weight 15 lbs.

MITHRAL ROPE

A clan of dwarven smiths first developed the technique of weaving mithral threads into corded rope. The resulting rope is extraordinarily strong and durable. It has 6 hit points, a Hardness value of 3, and can only be burst with a successful Strength check (DC 26). However, mithral rope is less flexible than hemp, and this results in a –1 circumstance penalty to Use Rope checks. The creation of mithral rope requires specialized skills and access to mithral ore; the GM will have to decide what cultures in her world produce or use mithral rope, and thus where it can be acquired.

Price 100 gp (for 50 ft.); Weight 12 lbs.



MOTHER'S MILK

This potent alchemical brew is a concentrated blend of medicine and herbs. One dose of mother's milk will provide sufficient nutrition for a day of activity. It does not spoil, and thus makes an excellent source of nourishment for long journeys. It is often used to feed prisoners who must be kept gagged at all times; a wineskin with a narrow spigot is used to squeeze the liquid past the gag.

An injured character on a diet of mother's milk recovers an additional hit point each day, above the usual healing rate.

Price 5 gp; Raw Material Cost 16 sp; Craft (alchemy) DC 20; Weight 1/2 lb.

ful soporific effect. In combat, it can be applied to a cloth and then held over the mouth and nose of a potential victim. The attacker must successfully grapple with his target. In future rounds, he may use the cloth on any successful grapple check. If the victim fails a Fortitude save (DC 17) she takes 3d6 points of nonlethal damage, which may cause her to become staggered or to fall unconscious. This damage is not affected by the attacker's Strength. Once applied to cloth, the drug holds its potency for one minute. If the drug is used on an unconscious character, she will fall into a comatose slumber; this effect is identical to *sleep of the unjust*, and has a duration of 8 hours.

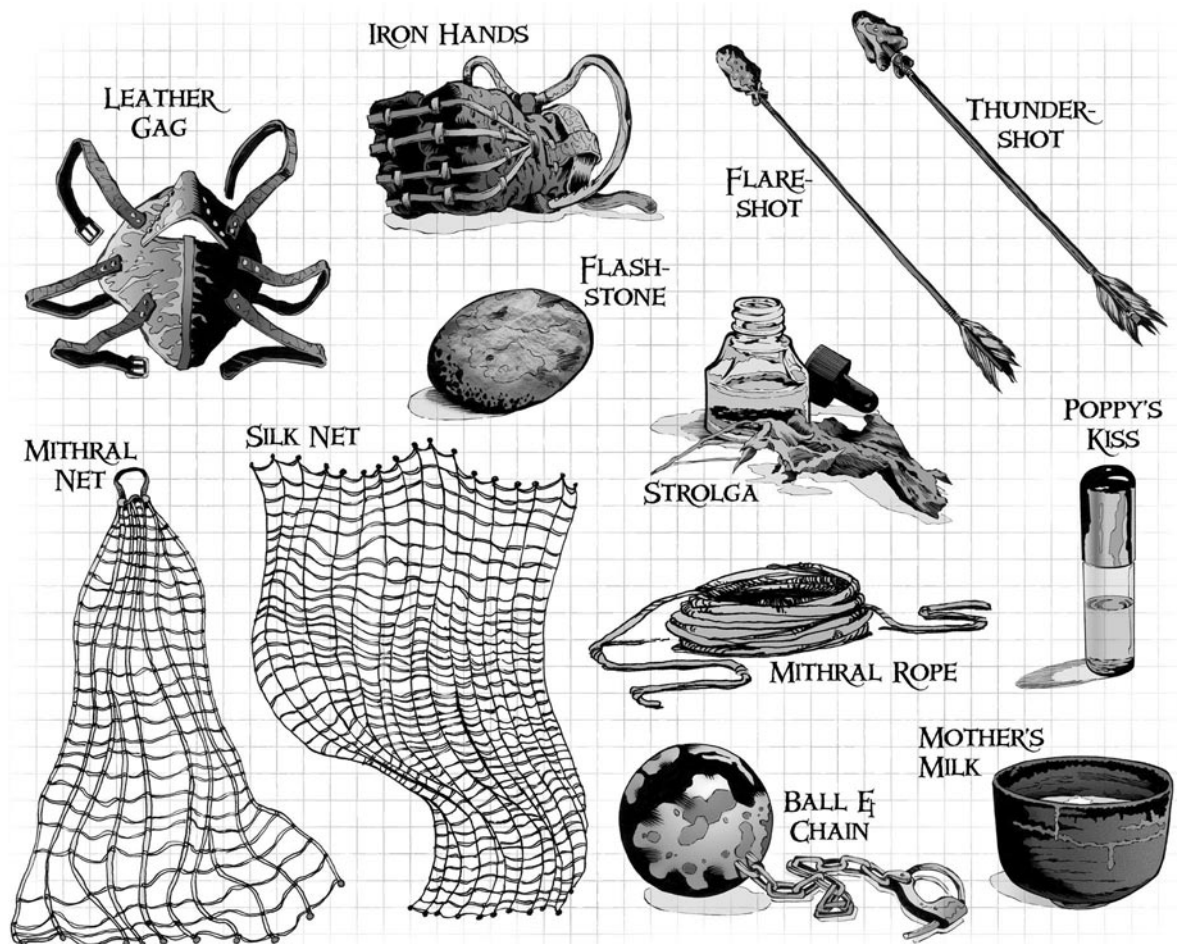
Price 100 gp; Raw Material Cost 33 gp; Craft (alchemy) DC 26

POPPY'S KISS

This elixir has two uses — rendering a target unconscious and keeping him that way. When inhaled, it has a power-

SILK NET

Silken rope is considerably stronger than normal hemp. A net made from silk has 10 hit points, and can be burst with a Strength check (DC 26). The



lighter weight of a silk net makes it especially popular among the smaller races.

Price 200 gp; Weight 5 lbs.

STROLGA

Orcish for “strong brew,” strolga is a powerful stimulant. A vial of strolga will allow a Small or Medium humanoid to go without sleep for a thirty-six-hour period, with no ill effects whatsoever. A double dose will have the same effect on a Large creature. After this period, you must let another thirty-six hours pass before you can safely take strolga again. If you use the drug before this time has passed, you must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or fall into a coma for 12 hours. Each subsequent use adds an additional thirty-six hours to the time that must pass before you can safely take the stimulant again. Each time you take strolga without resting since the last dose, you take a cumulative –3 penalty on your Fortitude save.

Strolga is a development of orcish adepts; it is generally only found in nations with a significant goblinoid population, and the herbs required to brew it may not be found in every nation.

Price 45 gp; Raw Material Cost 15 gp; Craft (alchemy) DC 23

THUNDERSHOT

This is a specially designed arrow or crossbow bolt that has a thunderstone affixed to the tip. The thunderstone is shaped to be as aerodynamic as possible, but a thundershot bolt still has a –1 circumstance penalty to attack rolls, a –2 penalty to damage rolls, and a –10 to the normal range increment of the weapon. When the thundershot strikes a hard surface, it creates a deafening bang — a sonic attack. Creatures within a 10-foot radius must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be deafened. In addition to the obvious effects — no Listen checks, for example — a deaf creature suffers a –4 penalty on initiative and a 20% chance to miscast and lose any spell with a verbal component that he attempts to cast.

If the thundershot strikes an unarmored creature, it will not detonate. If it strikes a creature wearing light

armor or with a natural armor bonus of up to +3, there is a 35% chance it will detonate. If the creature is wearing medium armor or has a natural armor bonus or +4 or +5, there is a 60% chance it will detonate. It will always detonate if it strikes a target wearing heavy armor or with a natural armor bonus of +6 or greater, or if it hits a hard inanimate object.

Price 40 gp; Raw Material Cost 13 gp; Craft (alchemy) DC 25, Craft (fletcher) 16; Weight 1 lb.



FUN WITH ROPES AND CHAINS

The statistics for manacles and ropes provide the information you need to break free of the restraints — but very little information on what it actually means to *be* restrained. If you run away while you’re wearing leg irons, exactly how much of a handicap is it? Can you fight while in chains?

The effects of restraints vary considerably based on placement and style. Note that manacles must be specifically designed as ankle or wrist restraints; the statistics and cost of the manacles are the same regardless of what they are designed to restrain, but it’s something you need to specify.

This section presents three different styles of restraints: Bar, Loose, and Tight. The style does not affect the cost of the object. These styles can be used with any type of restraint, from iron manacles to rope bonds.

BAR RESTRAINTS

In bar restraints, the victim’s limbs are pinned to a metal bar or wooden pole. The rigid bar severely restricts movement and places the weight of the bar directly on your wrists or ankles.

LOOSE RESTRAINTS

Loose restraints allow the prisoner significant freedom of movement. These are manacles separated by a long length of chain, or similar bonds of rope. These are working restraints; they hamper you slightly, but allow you to move normally and to



perform basic actions like walking and feeding yourself. Because of this, you get a +5 circumstance bonus to any Escape Artist check to free yourself from loose bonds. On the downside, if the bonds are linked by chains, you get a -3 circumstance penalty to any attempt to Move Silently; this is a cumulative penalty, so if you're wearing loose wrist and ankle restraints, you take a -6 on the roll.

TIGHT RESTRAINTS

Tight restraints hold the wrists or ankles directly together. Think of modern handcuffs, or a pair of manacles with no linking chain. This is the most restrictive form of restraint; with the limbs bound together, it is extremely difficult to take any sort of action.

The effects of manacles also depend on what part of the body is restrained.

WRIST RESTRAINTS (FRONT)

When your wrists are bound in front of your body, you still have some freedom of movement; the ability to move your shoulders and elbows can allow you to take some basic actions. The precise penalties depend on the style of restraint.

Bar Wrist Restraints — These restraints are very restrictive. While in the restraints, you take a -6 circumstance penalty to attack rolls or skill checks requiring use of your arms, and a -2 to melee damage rolls. You cannot wield a two-handed weapon or use a shield, a bow, or a sling; you can fire a crossbow, but it will take you twice as long as usual to reload it. You can use the bar itself as a weapon; it inflicts 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage, with a x2 critical multiplier. As a general rule, physical tasks requiring the use of your hands (combat aside) will take twice as long as usual. You may attempt to cast a spell with somatic components, but it takes twice the usual casting time, and you must make a Concentration check (DC 25 + spell level); if you fail the check, the spell is lost.

Bar restraints keep your hands a set distance from one another; as a result, you cannot try to pick the lock on the restraints you are wearing.

Loose Wrist Restraints — These restraints allow more freedom of motion. While in loose wrist restraints, you take a -3 circumstance penalty to any action that uses your arms and a -1 penalty to melee damage rolls. You can wield a weapon or use a shield, but you cannot do both at once; if you make an attack you will lose the shield bonus to AC for that round. You cannot use a bow. You can attempt to cast a spell requiring somatic gestures by making a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level); if you fail, the spell is lost. You can attempt to pick the lock on your own loose manacles.

Tight Wrist Restraints — These restraints are even worse than a bar. Your hands are tightly bound together; many actions are simply impossible. The GM has veto power on any action you wish to take; if she allows you to use your arms, she can apply a circumstance penalty of up to -9 to the roll, or -3 to any melee damage roll. Physical actions will take up to three times as long as usual. The GM may choose to reduce this penalty if you have a creative explanation for how you are overcoming your handicap. While restrained in this manner, you cannot use two-handed weapons, shields, or any sort of ranged weapon. At the GM's discretion, you may try to cast a spell requiring somatic components; this will require three times the usual casting time and a Concentration check (DC 30 + spell level). If you fail the check, the spell is lost. You cannot pick the lock on tight wrist manacles unless you come up with a clever explanation — somehow getting the pick to your mouth and holding it in your teeth, for example — and the GM may impose whatever penalty she sees as fit in such a situation.

WRIST RESTRAINTS (BACK)

If your arms are pinned behind your back or behind your neck, it's almost impossible to take any action involving your arms. You cannot cast any spells using somatic components. If the GM wishes to allow you to attempt some sort of action — for example, you get pushed into a stream and have to try to swim — she can apply a penalty of up to -10 to the check.

ANKLE RESTRAINTS

Ankle restraints are generally designed to keep a victim from running. The precise effects depend

on the style of restraint. You cannot run, charge, or perform a bull rush while wearing any sort of leg restraints.

Bar Ankle Restraints — These restraints place a tremendous amount of weight on your ankles and also force your feet to remain at a set distance. This reduces your movement to 5 feet per round. If you are heavily encumbered, you cannot move at all. While restrained, you suffer a -7 circumstance penalty to your AC and a -2 circumstance penalty to attack rolls; this is cumulative with any penalty from wrist restraints. If a skill specifically requires use of your legs — like Climb, Swim, or Tumble — you take a -8 circumstance penalty on the action; this penalty also applies to the contested roll if an opponent tries to trip you.

Loose Ankle Restraints — These restraints do not actually reduce your movement rate, although they keep you from running or charging. While wearing the bonds you take a -2 circumstance penalty to your AC and to any action that requires the use of your legs. This penalty also applies to the contested roll when an enemy tries to trip you.

Tight Ankle Restraints — These restraints prevent you from walking; you can pull yourself along using your hands at a rate of 1 foot per turn. While restrained in this manner you take a -10 circumstance penalty to your AC, a -4 circumstance penalty to attack rolls, and a -12 circumstance penalty to any skill checks requiring the use of your legs, including the contested roll to avoid being tripped.

MONKS AND MANACLES

A monk is a deadly unarmed fighter with both fists and feet. If a monk is wearing wrist restraints but has both legs free, he can make unarmed attacks without taking any penalty to his attack or damage rolls.

NEW MAGICAL ITEMS

The magical items described below also make powerful aids in any attempt to capture fugitives.

MAGICAL NETS

Magical weapons cannot be damaged unless the attacker uses a weapon with an enhancement bonus that at least matches the weapon he's striking. As a result, strength alone cannot burst a magical net. If the attacker himself possesses an enhancement bonus (like a monk with Ki Strike or a creature with Damage Reduction), he may attempt to burst the net as usual. However, each $+1$ enhancement bonus to the net adds $+1$ to the DC of the Strength check required to burst the net, in addition to providing a point of Hardness and adding 1 hit point.

A net enchanted with the *flaming*, *frost*, *merciful*, *shock*, or *vicious* special abilities only inflicts the special damage on the initial strike. However, by increasing the caster level of the ability to 12 and the market price modifier to $+3$, the effect can be made continuous; a *net of continuous flame* (or *shock*, or *mercy*, etc.) inflicts damage every round the victim is trapped within. An *anarchic*, *axiomatic*, *bane*, *holy*, or *unholy* net can be upgraded to cause continuous damage with a caster level of 15 and a market price modifier of $+4$.

Wounding can be placed on a net, but it is a $+3$ cost modifier. A *wounding* net is covered with razor-sharp barbs. It only inflicts ability damage after the initial attack, and cannot be turned into a continuous ability. However, if the wielder maintains control of the net he may use a standard action to make a touch attack against any creature trapped in the net. If this attack is successful, he twists the barbs and inflicts an additional point of Constitution damage. Once the victim escapes the net, it must be refolded before it can be used again.

A net enchanted with the *returning* ability refolds itself immediately on a failed attack. Otherwise, a magical net requires two rounds to refold after use, just like a mundane net. A *dancing net* can refold itself after a failed attack, but takes two rounds to do so.

A net enchanted with *ghost touch* can hold an incorporeal creature in place; while entangled in the net, the victim cannot move through solid objects to escape the net.



The *brilliant energy, burst* (flaming, icy, shocking, thundering), *defending, disruption, keen, mighty cleaving, speed*, and *vorpals* abilities cannot be placed on a net.

NEW MAGICAL RING: CIRCLES OF THOUGHT

When these rings are forged, a ritual prepares the molten metal itself, forming a link between a set of rings. At least two must be made at once, and they are often produced in sets of three or four. A command word activates each ring, and allows the wearer of a ring to transmit his thoughts to the other ringbearers until deactivated, as the spell *telepathic bond*. Any message sent is sent to all active rings in the set, and distance is no object (although they do not allow interplanar communication). Of course, if you happen to find a pair of these rings, it's possible that there are others in the set that you don't know about — in which case someone could be listening in on your mental conversations.

Strong divination; CL 12th; Forge Ring, *telepathic bond*; Price 50,000 gp/ring

NEW MAGICAL WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITY: CLINGING

This is an enchantment that can be woven into any magical net. The net clings to its victim with a life of its own. The DC of any Escape Artist check to escape from the net is increased to 25; this is increased by 1 for every +1 enhancement bonus on the weapon. Casting a spell while trapped in a *clinging net* requires a Concentration check (DC 17); the DC of this check is also increased by 1 for each +1 enhancement bonus on the net.

Faint transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Magical Arms and Armor, *animate net*; Price +1 modifier

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: COLLAR OF DREAMLESS SLEEP

This is a hinged collar formed from silver and ebony; it will expand or contract to fit the neck of any Small or Medium creature. When it's placed on an uncon-

scious creature and a command word is uttered, it places the victim into a comatose state similar to that induced by *sleep of the unjust*. Every 16 hours, the wearer may make a Will save (DC 13). If he's successful, he wakes up; otherwise, he remains asleep. The victim will also wake up if the collar is removed or if he takes damage. If the wearer wakes up, the collar automatically becomes unlatched.

Faint enchantment; CL 1st; Create Wondrous Item, *sleep of the unjust*; Price 1,800 gp; Weight 1 lb.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: COLLAR OF PAIN

This is a thick band of blackened iron inlaid with mystical runes. It is hinged at the back, and will magically expand or contract to fit about the neck of a Small or Medium creature. When a *collar of pain* is forged, it's bound to a specific *collar of pain control ring*. Only the wearer of the ring can open or close the latch on the front of the *collar of pain*, although the lock can be temporarily disabled by a *knock* or targeted *dispel magic* spell. A rogue (and only a rogue) can use Open Lock to open the latch (DC 25 + spell level).

If the wearer of the collar moves more than 40 feet away from the associated *control ring*, he suffers terrible pain. Each round he takes 2 points of nonlethal damage. His effective Dexterity is temporarily reduced by 2 and he takes a -4 penalty to attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks. There is no saving throw against this effect, but Spell Resistance can block it as usual. If a creature with Spell Resistance stays beyond the range of the control ring, he must reroll the check every ten minutes. The pain and all of the associated penalties end as soon as the victim returns to within 40 feet of the ring.

Strong abjuration, divination, necromancy, and transmutation; CL 15th; Create Wondrous Item, *arcane lock, knock, locate object, symbol of pain*; Price 140,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

NEW MAGICAL RING: COLLAR OF PAIN CONTROL RING

A ring of blackened iron, this mystical band is linked to one or more *collars of pain*. The wearer of the ring can

lock or unlock the linked collars by touching the ring to the front of the collar and speaking a command word. He can track the motions of anyone wearing a linked collar, as if using *locate object*; the maximum range is 1,000 feet. Finally, he may voluntarily activate or deactivate the pain function of a collar — even if the wearer is within 40 feet. Activating or deactivating the pain is a free action with a maximum range of 1,000 feet.

Strong abjuration, divination, necromancy, and transmutation; CL 15th; Forge Ring, *arcane lock*, *knock*, *locate object*, *symbol of pain*; Price 80,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

ENCHANTED MANACLES

By weaving enchantments into metal, a smith can provide a set of manacles with the strength of a magical blade. A set of *enchanted manacles* has an enhancement bonus with a value of +1 to +5. *Enchanted manacles* are unnaturally durable. The enhancement bonus is added to the hardness and hit point values of a set of *enchanted manacles*. More significantly, the manacles cannot be damaged at all unless the attacker is using a magical weapon with an enhancement value equal to or greater than that of the manacles. Strength alone cannot burst a set of *enchanted manacles* unless the prisoner's natural attacks are considered to be magical weapons, and the break DC of the manacles is increased by 2 points for each +1 enhancement bonus.

Enchanted manacles must be masterwork quality. As a general rule, the locking mechanism is built into the manacles and has the same defense as the manacles themselves. The cost of the lock should be added to the cost of the manacles. The DC of any Open Lock or Escape Artist check made to remove or escape from the manacles is increased by 2 points for each +1 enhancement bonus, so a set of +3 *enchanted manacles* (*good lock*) would have an Open Lock DC of 36 and an Escape Artist DC of 41.

It is possible to combine the abilities of *enchanted manacles* with other forms of mystical restraint, such as *mana manacles*, *manacles of maintenance*, a *collar of pain*, or a *collar of dreamless sleep*. Combine the costs of the two items and increase the total by 10%, then use the higher caster level of the two items.

Enchanted manacles can be designed for Medium or Small creatures; the cost of crafting them for creatures of other sizes follows the same ratio as for mundane manacles.

Transmutation, strength varies based on caster level; CL 3 x enhancement bonus; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item; Price 1,000 gp (+1), 2,500 gp (+2), 5,500 gp (+3), 9,000 gp (+4), 16,000 gp (+5); Weight 2 lbs.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

MANA MANACLES

These masterwork manacles are covered with mystical sigils. A spellbane charges the restraints with negative energy, which activates any time the wearer attempts to cast a spell, countering it with *dispel magic*. A dispel check of 1d20 + 10 is applied against a DC of 11 + the prisoner's caster level. If the check is successful, the spell is lost.

The manacles will automatically adjust in size to fit any Small or Medium creature.

Moderate abjuration; CL 10th; Create Wondrous Item, *dispel magic*, creator must be a spellbane; Price 60,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

MANACLES OF GHOSTLY BINDING

These manacles are used by societies that have to deal with criminals who can assume incorporeal form, or wizards working with uncooperative spirits. Often formed from alchemical silver, these masterwork manacles use an enchantment similar to the *ghost touch* special ability. The manacles can be used to bind an incorporeal creature as if it were made from solid matter. The bonds do not prevent the prisoner from assuming incorporeal form, but the manacles remain solid at all times and will prevent the prisoner from fleeing through solid objects. *Manacles of ghostly binding* automatically adjust in size to fit any Small or Medium creature.

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Create Wondrous Item, *plane shift*; Price 6,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.



NEW WONDROUS ITEM:
MANACLES OF MAINTENANCE

If a prisoner is gagged or kept unconscious by the poppy's kiss or *sleep of the unjust*, she may eventually starve to death. *Manacles of maintenance* are designed to help with these problem prisoners. These masterwork manacles hold an enchantment similar to that of a *ring of sustenance*; the wearer does not have to eat or drink for as long as he's restrained. The manacles must be worn for a full day before this comes into effect. They will automatically adjust in size to fit any Small or Medium creature.

Faint conjuration; CL 5th; Create Wondrous Item, *create food and water*; Price 2,250 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:
MESSAGE STONES

When you need to communicate with your allies but can't afford *circles of thought*, you'll have to make do with *message stones*. Each round stone is about 1 inch in diameter, inlaid with mithral sigils. They come in sets of four. If you hold the stone in the palm of your hand and whisper, your voice is audible to anyone carrying one of the other stones in the set (whether they're holding the stone or not). The stones have a maximum range of 280 feet, and the message will be blocked by magical *silence*, 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal (or a thin sheet of lead), or 3 feet of wood or dirt — although it can circumvent a barrier if there is an open path between the stones. You must actually whisper to send a message, which means that you can be overheard or have your lips read.

Faint transmutation; CL 4th; Create Wondrous Item, *Enlarge Spell, message*; Price 8,000 gp (set of 4)

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:
ORB OF DIMENSIONAL STABILITY

This powerful magic item is found in realms where the forces of the law commonly deal with powerful spellcasters or extraplanar criminals. The *orb* is a three-inch sphere of green crystal that swirls with an inner light. It projects an invisible field of mystical energy that interferes

with any form of extradimensional travel. This is identical to the effects of the spell *dimensional anchor*, which the exceptions that it affects a 30-foot radius surrounding the *orb*. In addition, the effect of the *orb* is continuous; it cannot be shut off. However, the effect can be blocked by a sheet of lead or similar material. Placing the *orb* in a lead-lined box will allow dimensional travel to take place in the area — but the *orb* itself can never be transported using any of the prohibited spells.

Moderate abjuration; CL 7th; Create Wondrous Item, *Extend Spell, dimensional anchor, permanency*; Price 112,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:
ORB OF SILENCE

A three-inch sphere of black marble, the *orb of silence* absorbs all sound within a 15-foot radius. This acts just like the spell *silence*, with one notable exception — like the *orb of dimensional stability*, the magic of the *orb of silence* can't be shut off. The effect can be blocked by a sheet of lead or similar material.

Faint illusion; CL 3rd; Create Wondrous Item, *Extend Spell, silence, permanency*; Price 24,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:
PORTABLE CELL

The ultimate tool for the transportation of troublesome prisoners, the *portable cell* is similar in appearance to a *portable hole* — a piece of black cloth that can be folded out to form a space six feet in diameter and ten feet deep. However, a *portable cell* maintains a slight connection to the material plane — just enough to allow oxygen to pass through into the extradimensional space. This allows a hunter to throw his prey into the cell and leave her there until she can be returned to justice. The *cell* cannot be opened from the inside. For full details on the interior of a *portable cell* and the ways to escape one, see Chapter Nine.

Strong conjuration, CL 14th; Create Wondrous Item, *plane shift*; Price 20,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

SILENT PASSENGER

This magical collar appears to be a band of aged leather, with mystic sigils stitched on the inside. When it's placed around the neck of a victim and a command word is spoken, its enchantment is activated. This has two effects. First, the victim cannot speak; it's as if he is under the effect of a *silence* spell, but only as far as vocal sounds are concerned. This will prevent him from casting any spells with verbal components. The second effect is that an illusory appearance can be placed over the victim, as if he were under the effect of *disguise self*; the appearance of this illusion is determined by the person who fastens the band, and it cannot be changed once set. Both these enchantments remain in effect until the band is removed. The collar is considered to be sealed by an *arcane lock*, but only for purposes of keeping the wearer from taking it off; anyone else can remove the band without difficulty. The collar will magically resize to fit any Small or Medium humanoid. Fastening the collar is a complex procedure, and the victim must be unconscious, willing, or helpless; it cannot be used in combat.

Faint abjuration and illusion; CL 5th; Create Wondrous Item, *arcane lock*, *disguise self*, *silence*; Price 36,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

NEW MAGICAL WEAPON:

SLEEPER NET

This *+1 net* has a soporific effect on any creature caught in its strands. On the round a creature is struck with the net and each round it is trapped within, the creature suffers 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. In addition, any creature with 4 or fewer Hit Dice must make a Will save (DC 11) each round or fall asleep.

Strong conjuration and enchantment; CL 12th; Craft Magical Arms and Armor, *cure light wounds*, *sleep*; Price 52,000 gp; Weight 10 lbs.

NEW MAGICAL WEAPON:

SPELLBANE'S BOLT

This *+1 bolt* has blue fletching and a small sapphire embedded in the shaft. When it strikes an opponent who

is currently under the effect of a spell, it acts as a targeted *dispel magic* in addition to inflicting damage. For every spell in effect, make a dispel check of 1d20 + 6 against a DC of 11 + the spell's caster level. If the check succeeds, the spell in question is cancelled. A *greater spellbane's bolt* functions in an identical manner, but with a total bonus of +12 to the dispel check.

The *dispel magic* effect only activates if the bolt strikes a target with an active magical effect. However, when it is activated, it disrupts the enchantment of the bolt itself; the *dispel magic* effect can only be used once.

Abjuration, strength varies based on caster level; CL 6th (*spellbane's bolt*), 12th (*greater spellbane's bolt*); Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *dispel magic* (*spellbane's bolt*), *greater dispelling* (*greater spellbane's bolt*); Price 500 gp (*spellbane's bolt*), 1,800 gp (*greater spellbane's bolt*)

NEW MAGICAL WEAPON

SPECIAL ABILITY: TENTACLE ROPE

This enchantment can be woven into any net with an enhancement bonus of +1 or greater. Instead of the net, it actually enchants the trailing rope that it used to control the net. When using a net with a *tentacle rope*, you may perform a trip or disarm action using the rope, with a range of ten feet. This is the equivalent of using a whip, although you do not have to have whip proficiency. You gain a +2 bonus to your opposed checks to trip or disarm, and may add the enhancement bonus of the net to this roll as well (so a *+2 tentacle rope net* would provide a +4 bonus).

Faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Create Magical Arms and Armor, *animate rope*; Price +1 modifier

NEW MAGICAL WEAPON

SPECIAL ABILITY: THOUGHT DISRUPTION

A weapon with this ability is enchanted to disrupt the thoughts of humanoid creatures. Any Small or Medium humanoid struck with the weapon must make a Will save (DC 13); if he fails, he can take no action in the following round. He is not stunned, so attackers receive no special advantages against him.



The effect is similar to the spell *daze*, but any humanoid creature can be affected.

Faint enchantment; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *daze*, *hold person*; Price +1 modifier

THE LIFE OF THE HUNTER

Nikkal was smiling as she returned to the lookout position, high on the hill behind the inn. "They're all in there. I chatted up your sorcerer — his name's Morlian, and it sounds like he's all about fire. I also talked to the innkeeper, and he's happy to add a little taggit oil to the night's meal ... if the price is right. He says he'll be serving just after sunset."

Angus grunted. "Gold we've got," he said. "Nikkal, you get back there and give the innkeeper the oil and his coin. Jonath, Kayli, and I will show up just before sunset. You sit next to the sorcerer — if he doesn't fall down, do something about that. Kayli, you're managing the priest — he's got a better chance of resisting the poison, and I don't want him curing any of his friends. Jonath, have you got your net stored in your gauntlet?"

The half-orc nodded, flexing his left hand.

"Good. Flashstones first, then net the first one to draw a weapon. Thael, you watch the exterior. I want caltrops around the doors and windows, and be ready to animate your net." Angus allowed himself a rare smile and spun his quarterstaff through the air. "Time to earn our keep."

Having covered the tools and techniques of the professional bounty hunter, it's time to look at how you might use these in your campaign. Do you want to build your group around bounty hunting — to make a living taking on the worst fugitives and horrors that your GM has to offer? Even if you choose to pass up the life of the bounty hunter, there's always the chance that you and your friends will end up with a price on your head. Next time

you decide to rob the temple of the dark god or steal the Crown of Stone, keep in mind that it's not just the local guards you have to worry about — it's the people that they'll hire to take revenge.

BLOOD AND GOLD

The traditional adventuring party has no true purpose — it wanders from quest to quest, taking whatever fate sends its way. If you and your GM settle on a particular style of play ahead of time — whether it's bounty hunting, investigation, the pursuit of justice, or for that matter, a career in high-stakes theft — you might find that it makes for a more interesting campaign. There are a number of different approaches to this. If you are just starting a long-term campaign, you can create new low-level characters; it will take some time for you to be able to take on major challenges, but it gives you a goal to guide you as you choose and develop your skills. Alternately, if you play more sporadically or want a short-term campaign, you could create a party of higher-level characters; this would allow you to immediately take advantage of the material presented in this book, and to go after powerful threats from the very beginning.



Regardless of which approach you decide to take, as you develop a party of bounty hunters you should look for the following:

Tracking — Whether it's a ranger, a bounty hunter, or a character who picks up the Track feat along the way, you're going to want someone who can physically locate your prey. Ideally, you should have both Survival and Gather Information at your disposal, so you can track in any environment.

Mystical Tracking — This is not something you can do at low levels. But in the long run, you'll want access to some of the following spells: *divination*, *follow the bloody trail*, *locate creature*, *locate object*, or *screying*. Almost any spellcasting character can obtain some of these spells in the long run. An inquisitor gives you the most tracking poten-

tial — but at the same time, the inquisitor lacks the offensive power of a wizard or the healing abilities of a cleric.

Stealth and Observation — The strength of the bounty hunter is the ability to study his enemy and strike from surprise. Gather Information, Move Silently, Hide, Spot, and Listen are all valuable skills; you'll also want someone who can Open Locks for those times that breaking and entering is the only option. Bounty hunters, rangers, monks, investigators, and rogues can all serve this role; in general, the more stealthy characters in your group, the better.

Countermagic — At low levels, you may only have access to *pins and needles* and *opposing currents*. In the long run, you'll want someone with *dispel magic*; a spellbane or magehunter can be an invaluable addition to the group. A spellbane allows you to be more open when engaging powerful spellcasters, since the spellbane can stand back and counter any magic deployed against you. If you're relying on a magehunter for mystic defense, you need to make sure you engage your enemy as quickly as possible, since the magehunter can't shield others except by taking down the enemy magic-user.

Firepower — No matter how good you are, you need to be prepared for a fight. You'll want one or two specialists in melee combat. A fighter gives you the greatest versatility in combat-related feats. Bounty hunters and rangers combine combat skill and tracking abilities, while bounty hunters and monks are stealthy and skilled at unarmed combat. A paladin's mystical abilities can be useful, but the paladin's strict code of conduct can be a problem; bounty hunters often need to work around the law. As far as magic goes, the spells of massive destruction — *fireball* and the like — are usually too clumsy and ham-handed for bounty hunting. Spell slots are generally better spent on tracking, spells of deception, or effects that can weaken your opponents or strengthen your allies.

Taking 'em Alive — Raw firepower is all well and good, and if you get a lot of "dead or alive" contracts it may be all that you need. But a large part of bounty hunting is the ability to capture an enemy and return him to face justice in one piece. Magically this means spells like *charm*, *hold person*, and *sleep*. On the physical front, nonlethal damage is the key to success. Bounty hunters, monks, and sap-wielding rogues can all throw out hefty amounts of nonlethal damage. A fighter can pick up feats like Improved Unarmed



Strike and Stunning Fist, but it can be more effective to focus on Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Sunder, or other feats that help to limit the enemy's ability to inflict damage.

ASSIGNMENTS

If you're based in a major metropolis, you may find enough work to keep you busy without the need for travel. However, most bounty hunters remain in constant motion, traveling a circuit between cities and allowing business to grow. Let's look at a few different types of assignments that may come your way.

FUGITIVE HUNT

"It's clear that Lady Selya was working for the Cult of the Bloody Moon. We need her alive. The people need to see that justice will prevail ... and more importantly, we need to know what else the cult has planned."

This is the standard mission that most people associate with bounty hunters — locating escaped criminals and returning them to justice. Fugitive assignments typically come from the local authorities, but you could also have a parent seeking the return of a wayward child or a family waiting for the return of a deadbeat spouse. Depending on the morality of your group, you may wish to see the evidence stacked against your target — or you may just be interested in the gold.

In a fugitive situation, the greatest challenge is often locating the target. Once you find your quarry, it's up to you to subdue him and return him to your employers.

EXTRACTION

"Lady Selya never betrayed the Church. The woman you captured was an imposter ... a shapeshifting agent of the Cult. We believe that Selya is being held in the dungeon of Kilraine. We can't risk war with the Kilraini ... but we can't leave Selya in their hands."

Bounties aren't always placed on criminals. Perhaps a beloved prince has been kidnapped or a spy has fallen into enemy hands. Maybe a wizard has been researching spells for an enemy nation, and your government wants him working on their side. It's also possible that a wanted fugitive will have taken refuge in a stronghold; her location is known, but political or military concerns make it impossible for the authorities to strike against her position. These situations call for an extraction — removing the target from a guarded facility.

Typically a frontal assault is out of the question, either because of the forces involved, the level of fortification, or the risk of your quarry being slain if a rescue attempt is made. So the first challenge is penetrating the enemy defenses. If the target is being held against her will, she may assist you once you reach her. If not, you'll have to subdue her without raising the alarm. And either way, you'll need to escape from the prison with your target in tow. If you're caught, you may face a double challenge; it's one thing for you to fight your enemies, but you'll also need to protect the life of your prisoner while you're doing it. If you're trying to rescue the child prince, it may be much more difficult to keep him alive in the middle of a fight than it is for you to take care of your own skin.

RELIC HUNT

"Two days ago, a cache of gems was stolen from Corrhyn Manor. According to Selya, only one of these is of any consequence ... the Eye of Bhazor. The thieves are irrelevant, but we must recover the Eye before the next new moon. I would hope that concern for the fate of the kingdom would be sufficient motivation, but I am authorized to offer a significant reward on behalf of the Church."

A bounty can be placed on an object as opposed to an individual. This usually occurs when a relic with great religious or cultural significance is stolen; the authorities involved care more about the return of the object than the fate of the thieves. Of course, there are times when the individual placing the bounty isn't the rightful owner of the object in question. This could be innocent enough — a collector offering a reward to

anyone who can locate the lost paintings of an obscure artist, or a prodigal son seeking to recover the heirlooms of his fallen family, for example — or it could be a sly way of hiring an unwitting thief.

WOLF'S HEAD

“With the destruction of the Eye of Bhazor, the power of the Bloody Moon has been broken. But there may be other shapeshifters hidden throughout the city. Our citizens will not sleep in peace while these creatures roam free. Henceforth, we will offer 1,000 gold pieces to anyone who can present the Church warden with the corpse of one of these vile doppelgangers.”

This type of assignment is what puts the “dead” in “dead or alive.” The name comes from the fact that nobles often post a bounty on wolves that hunt in their lands, offering 5 to 10 gp to anyone who brings in a wolf's head. Actual wolves may be small game for professional bounty hunters, but this style of assignment can involve anything that threatens a community — from a gang of bandits to an evil wizard or powerful dragon. In a wolf's head mission, the primary challenge is combat; the general location of the victim is known (although it could be as vague as “somewhere in Sherwood Forest”), so the only question is how your group will manage to eliminate the threat. This may be an exercise in brute force, or it can involve careful scheming. If that evil wizard is vastly more powerful than you, outright combat won't do it. Can you come up with a way to gain his trust or trick him into lowering his defenses?

More often than not, wolf's head assignments are found in remote territories — places where the local law knows of a threat but simply doesn't have the resources to deal with it. In major cities, wolf's head bounties may be placed on notorious criminals or elusive creatures that the guard either can't find or is unable to face in battle. Doppelgangers, wererats, dark elves, and vampires are all examples of creatures that might have standing wolf's head bounties — although the trick with a vampire is proving that you killed it, as few lords are willing to pay a bounty in exchange for a pile of ashes.

HONOR AMONG THIEVES

As a bounty hunter, your most dangerous opponent may not be your target — it may be the others who seek to claim the same reward as you. In some cases, an assignment may be closed — the authorities in question may specifically hire you to perform the job. But most bounties are open to all comers. The person with the gold wants her fugitive, and she doesn't care who brings him in. As a result, capturing and containing your targets may only be half of the battle; if you have a long trek home, you'd best keep your eyes open for those who would steal your prize. Of course, if you know that you're competing with other bounty hunters, you could always try to let *them* do the hard work for you ...

ON THE RUN:

PLAYING THE PREY

As discussed in Chapter Two, a victory may not be as complete as it appears. Perhaps you defeated the Dark Lord and threw the Unholy Diadem into the Pit of Annihilation. But if the grand vizier can identify you — either through forensic magic or other investigative techniques — he may dedicate the last remnants of the infernal treasury to putting a price on your head. Suddenly you've got teams of bounty hunters on your tail. The dangers of a dungeon crawl may pale in comparison to the threat presented by the roadside inn. Who can you really trust? Who might be a bounty hunter in disguise?

As a general rule, bounty hunters are not assassins. Wolf's head bounties are placed on monsters and outlaws, and hunters who wish to maintain a relationship with the local authorities will not pursue a kill bounty against heroes of the realm. Of course, there are always exceptions to the rule; maybe the Dark Lord's last death squad has gone freelance, and they'll take any bounty, no matter how questionable. But most of the time bounty hunters will try to take their prey alive, so that even if you are captured, you may get a second chance to break free once you're delivered to the grand vizier. Another possibility is that a bounty won't be placed on you, but rather



on an item that you possess. You may have managed to recover the Sword of Wonderment from the lost tomb, but the merchant prince has posted a hefty bounty on the blade. You might decide that you'd rather exchange the blade for the gold yourself, instead of worrying about constant attacks from those who want to claim the reward.

Of course, a third possibility is that you yourself will be declared an outlaw. Perhaps this is due to a misunderstanding — you didn't realize your little dungeon crawl would be seen as tomb robbing. Maybe the lords of the land are corrupt. Or perhaps you're just a bad, bad person. Once you're outside of the law, a wolf's head bounty may be placed on your head. If this occurs, anyone can take your life without fear of legal reprisal, so tread carefully. Perhaps you could defeat the entire garrison of city guards. But are you absolutely certain you can handle the people who will try to claim the bounty that the king will place on your head afterwards?

ADVENTURE SEEDS

You don't have to make a living as a bounty hunter to try to claim the occasional prize. The "Blood and Gold" section presented a few general types of bounty missions; here are a few specific ideas for stories centered around a group of professional or amateur hunters.

RATS IN THE WALLS

The city council has decided to clean house ... but is there a secret agenda to this wererat purge?

The sewers of Blackwall are infamous throughout the region. Many stories are told about the kingdom of giant rats that lives within the shadows. For generations, mothers have frightened their children with tales of the ratmen.



A POSSIBLE PARTY: THE GREY CHAIN

Angus Dolan's Grey Chain society is an example of a mid-level group of bounty hunters. It is a five-character party made up of the following individuals:

Angus Dolan, 8th-level dwarf bounty hunter

Kayli, 8th-level half-elf monk

Jonath Blackhammer, 5th-level half-orc fighter/3rd-level magehunter

Thael Tarivol, 5th-level elf transmuter/
3rd-level inquisitor

Nikkal Aldara, 5th-level human cleric/
3rd-level rogue (Knowledge and Trickery domains)

While they will chase wolf's head bounties, the Grey Chain specializes in live captures. The Chain makes extensive use of stealth and observation prior to an attack, always looking for a way to weaken an opponent before engaging in battle. Lacking a spellbane, the Chain fights

high-level spellcasters by using surprise and speed. They focus on melee combat; between the five members, three are skilled with nets and three have Improved Disarm, and in addition to Improved Disarm, Kayli makes use of Improved Trip and Painful Blow to keep foes off balance. In battle, they begin with nets, *hold person*, and *hinder*. Jonath has a *tentacle rope net* that he keeps in a *glove of storing*, while Angus fights with a +1 *staff of thought disruption* or attempts to grapple with an opponent and apply a Choke Hold. Spellcasters are the focus of initial attacks; fighters are disarmed or tripped.

Angus Dolan is neutral by nature. He works for the law, but he doesn't allow personal interest or emotion to interfere with business. He takes his assignments from sheriffs and other government officials; as far as he's concerned, the guilt or innocence of his quarry is for the courts to decide. Of the group, Thael and Kayli are most dedicated to the strict pursuit of law; Jonath simply enjoys the fighting, while Nikkal believes it's her sacred duty to catch inept thieves.

But now a new force within the city council has decided to clean house. A handsome bounty has been posted for any wererat slain within Blackwall. It seems simple enough — a chance to make a considerable sum of gold, as long as you're willing to put your silvered sword to work. But some say that the new councilors have a hidden agenda. The wererats have lived in relative harmony with the people of Blackwall for ages — why has the council decided to fight them now? Perhaps the new councilors are representatives of a new force that's trying to gain a foothold in Blackwall — maybe dopelgangers or even another wererat clan are behind it. If you get involved in the wererat hunt, you may find that the bounty comes with a hidden cost!

THE ZHOZAR ENCHANTRESS

You've caught fugitives and criminals — but can you collect the bounty on a legendary force of ancient evil?

For hundreds of years, the Zhobar Enchantress has lurked in her tower in the depths of the Forest of Thorns. Legends speak of the bold knights and brave paladins who have ventured into the forest to challenge her might, and never returned. Many of the families who live near the forest still bear the curses inflicted on ancestors who transgressed against the Enchantress. But now a new lord has risen to power, and he intends to see the witch driven from his lands. The young lord has opened his coffers, offering a vast reward to anyone who can defeat the Enchantress. And so your band has come to the Forest of Thorns. The Enchantress is a sorceress whose skills are legendary, and none have faced her in battle and lived to tell the tale. Can your wits succeed where the swords of countless knights have failed?



THE KING'S JUSTICE

Warden Tolana studied the prisoners, and then spoke in a clear, ringing voice. "You stand accused of crimes against the city of Fellvale, the kingdom of Kantor, and the Undying Legion."

"They seemed dead enough to me," Shayn muttered.

The inquisitor gave the halfling a cold stare. "You have stolen from the dead, despoiled sacred ground, and sold the treasures of our ancestors for personal gain. You have this moment to account for your actions, here in the sight of those you have robbed. Choose your words wisely, and cherish these moments ... for if you cannot defend yourself, you face the full force of the King's justice!"

The next three chapters examine broad systems of justice — secular law, theocratic law, and life in a lawless society. Many nations are governed by a single system, but some make use of multiple traditions; certain crimes may be persecuted by the crown while others fall under the dominion of the church. This can also be based on the identity of the accuser; it may be that a paladin of Khesh can only be tried by a religious tribunal, regardless of his crimes.

The goal of these chapters is twofold. The first is to give you some sense of what you may have to deal with if you run afoul of the law — what sort of things could be considered crimes, and what you can expect on your day in court. The second goal is to present you with all the information you need to serve as an agent of the law — whether you're a royal justice or an ordained witchfinder.

These three chapters discuss the nature of crimes and courts. One thing that is not described here is the nature of punishment. While a monarchy and a theocracy may have different ways of determining guilt or innocence, the punishments they impose may overlap. As a result, the wages of sin are discussed in Chapter Eight.

LAW IN A SECULAR SOCIETY

Just as the courts of a nation can be split between the will of the gods and the law of the land, a kingdom may use different types of law in different situations. In medieval England a free man had recourse to justice in a common law court, while it was the place of the feudal lord to deal with his serfs and servants.

This section focuses on two different styles of justice: legislative and common law.

Legislative law is created by a central authority — a king, a baron, or a council of lords. In a purely legislative system, a ruler may have virtually absolute power; if the king's word is law, who can challenge him?

Common law is based on the traditions of the people and the region. A nation governed by common law believes that the traditions of the past hold more weight than the opinions of any single lord. Under common law, the actions of the king can be challenged, if he has gone against the clearly established laws of the land.

When you enter an unfamiliar realm, you should acquaint yourself with its customs as quickly as possible. Until you know its laws and where the power lies, you are at the mercy of chance; many actions that seem innocent or even altruistic can turn out to be serious crimes. Like Hell, the road to the stocks is paved with good intentions.



If you don't like to take chances, a few ranks of Knowledge (law) and Knowledge (local) may help you avoid a major mistake.

THE LAWS OF THE LORD: LEGISLATION

In a legislative system, the laws are set by the ruling body of the land. This may be a king, a council of advisors, or a league of generals in a land ruled by military force. Whatever the nature of the rulers, the laws are not based on the traditions of the people and need not have any sort of prior precedent. The ruler or his designated lawmakers can set whatever laws they please, and the population must follow them.

This style of law is common among evil and oppressive nations, since all power ultimately rests in the hands of the ruler. However, a legislative system does not need to have the feel of tyranny. If the ruler is a popular leader, he may have created his laws with the best interests of his people in mind. The point is that he has the power to change the laws if he wishes — to add new laws or to modify those of which he no longer approves.

PLEADING YOUR CASE:

THE ROYAL COURT

In a legislative system, justice is administered by the appointed representatives of the ruler. In a feudal society, this typically means the local lord or an individual appointed to serve in his place — a sheriff or itinerant justice, for example. In a society ruled by a council of mages, justice might be administered by the wisest wizard in the region, while in a nation ruled by martial law the ranking officer would hear the facts. This is rarely as complex as a modern court of law. Typically, the facts of the matter are presented to the lord by those who apprehended the criminal, and the lord will make a ruling based on his personal opinion concerning the case; his ruling cannot be questioned, even if it seems to contradict the facts or the precedent set by previous cases. The criminal does not get to make an appeal. If you are brought before such a court, you'll be lucky if you're given the opportunity to speak at all; this will largely depend on your status in the community. If you're a hero of the realm, the justice will most likely hear your plea; if you're a myste-

rious vagabond, he will be more likely to take the word of those who have apprehended you.

If you're allowed to defend yourself, you can usually appoint an advocate to speak on your behalf. However, you don't have any sort of right to an advocate; it is simply the case that if you are a poor speaker, you may be allowed to appoint a friend or hire a professional to speak for you.



If you're allowed to speak in a legislative court, your goal is to sway the justice to leniency. In general, the facts of the case and your status within the community will determine the attitude of the judge. If you are accused of murder, there is some evidence supporting the claim, and you are a stranger in the community, the judge will undoubtedly have a hostile attitude towards you. If you have some status in the community or if the evidence is flimsy, the judge may only be unfriendly; if you are a renowned hero, the judge may even be indifferent. If you or your advocate make a plea, you can make a single Diplomacy check to adjust the judge's attitude; the GM may modify this roll if you manage to produce strong (or flimsy) evidence of your innocence. This uses the standard D20 System table for modifying NPC attitudes, which is provided at the end of this section for reference. If you don't have the Diplomacy skill, you should use a Charisma check for this purpose.

A judge with a final attitude of helpful may choose to dismiss the case; otherwise, it is largely a question of how severe the punishment will be. This varies by alignment. A chaotic justice will be much more likely to dismiss the case because he has a good feeling about you (or a friendly attitude); a lawful judge may cling to prior precedents no matter what his personal opinion. Of course, a lawful evil judge may even be happy to find a loophole for you — for the right price.

Speaking of bribery, there are a few tricks to passing a bribe successfully. If you don't know, you may want to make a successful Knowledge (law) check (DC 15) to determine whether attempted bribery is a crime in the nation; if you are in your



homeland, you may make this check untrained and you get a +5 to your roll. Next, a Sense Motive check (DC 20) will provide you with a general sense of your target and whether she would be receptive to a bribe. If the target will take a bribe, a Gather Information check can be used to determine the lowest amount that you would need to pay your target in order to sway her opinion; this is a directed conversation action, as described in Chapter Two. Knowledge (local) or a similar skill would also give you a general sense of the range of bribes used for certain activities; the GM may also rule that this knowledge is commonplace for any sort of rogue, merchant, or character in a position to bribe or be bribed.

This system primarily applies to criminal cases, where it's the word of the law against that of the defendant. In the case of a dispute between civilians, the justice will almost always hear both sides of the case.



Under normal circumstances, pleading your case will be an instance of contested Diplomacy (or Charisma) checks. Whoever wins the contested check should then make a second Diplomacy (or Charisma) check to influence the attitude of the judge, as described earlier. Social standing can play a critical role in this contested check; a character who is a respected and prominent member of the local community has a considerable edge over the suspicious stranger, and this can modify your Diplomacy roll. Possible modifiers are provided on the following table.

Status	Diplomacy Modifier
Stranger to the region	-3
Distrusted race	-2
Distrusted class	-2
Follower of a distrusted religion	-2
From a hostile nation	-2
History of previous offenses	-2
Long-time resident, no history of trouble	+2
Valuable member of the community	+2
Community leader	+4

These modifiers are cumulative. A long-time resident who provides a valuable service to the com-

munity receives a +4 bonus, while a stranger from a hostile nation receives a -5 penalty. Distrusted class and religion penalties would only apply if these traits are known to the justice; while few people will trust a rogue, it's rarely obvious that you are a rogue. On the other hand, if you're a wizard and were seen casting a spell in a culture that fears and hates magic, you'll take the penalty.

These penalties and bonuses are merely guidelines; the GM should add additional modifiers as appropriate to the local culture. Perhaps your gender will work for or against you. Maybe membership in a particular guild or devotion to the local god will work in your favor. Ultimately, it's up to the GM to decide the factors that shape the society!

In some nations, actual pleas are not heard; instead, the parties involved in the dispute must get prominent citizens to swear oaths on their behalf. Under such a system, a citizen's oath holds a certain value based on his place in society — this is often tied to his wealth or the amount of land that he owns. If this system is used, the justice will simply rule in favor of the side with the more respectable set of oaths. Needless to say, this can make life extremely difficult if you're a traveler; the oaths of your adventuring friends will have little value in a region where none of you are known. Typically you'll be given a few days to acquire supporters for your cause, though; you'll have to get out there and make your case to the people with power!

If magic is a respected part of society, it's also possible that spells will be used to determine guilt or innocence; this is covered in more detail later in this section.

The tradition of trial by ordeal is primarily used in religious courts, and it is covered in Chapter Five; the fundamental precept of this style of trial is that the gods will shield the innocent party. However, in a legislative system, the rulers can set any laws they like. As a result, the council of mages could declare that all disputes will be resolved by mystical duel, or a bloodthirsty king could allow an appeal to trial by combat. Again, the point of a legislative system is that the laws are ultimately in the hands of the lords; the nature of the law should clearly reflect the nature of the ruler.



INFLUENCING NPC ATTITUDES

Most of the legal systems presented in this book use the standard system for influencing NPC attitudes. The following table determines the DC for using the Diplomacy skill (or a Charisma check) to influence the attitude of a nonplayer character. Note that you don't have to specify the final result that you hope to

achieve. For example, if a justice has an initial attitude of hostile, you must get a check result of at least 20 to improve his attitude to 20. But if the result of the check is 25 to 34, his attitude improves to indifferent. And if you manage to get a result of 50 or higher, he goes all the way from hostile to helpful!

Initial Attitude	New Attitude (DC to Achieve)				
	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	Less than 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	Less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	Less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	Less than 1	1	20
Helpful	—	—	—	Less than 1	1

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to hurt you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, avoid, gossip, insult, watch suspiciously
Indifferent	Doesn't much care	Socially expected interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help
Helpful	Will take risks to help you	Protect, back up, heal, aid

If you're interested in more-complex systems of debate that can be used in legal trials, refer to *Dynasties & Demagogues*, also by Atlas Games.

COMMON LAW:

THE RULES OF THE REALM

Common law is created over time. It's an aggregation of legal traditions and rulings that have developed over generations. In a nation dominated by common law, the fundamental idea is that the laws are a part of the realm — the law exists independently of any one ruler. A ruler or prominent justice may be able to add new rules to the body of common law, but there will typically be policies for doing this; the king can't arbitrarily decide to revoke the penalties for murder, for example.

Common law is rarely found in evil nations; an evil ruler will usually overturn any system that prevents her from exercising complete authority. On the other hand, it's possible that an evil nation would use elements of both common law and legislative law. If the population was stratified into two classes, the elite might be governed by common law, while the oppressed majority is ruled by legislative law. As a result, the ruler might have absolute authority over the masses, but she would have to respect the rights of the powerful nobles. This sort of system will often be seen in expanding empires; members of the conquering race will be bound by a different set of laws than their subjugated foes.

THE COURT OF COMMON LAW

In a realm dominated by common law, knowledge of legal traditions is extremely important. In a common law system, the justice must consider all of the precedents and traditions when making a ruling. Most of the time, an appointed justice will preside over a common law court, as opposed to a hereditary noble; should the justice be found to be blatantly ignoring the law, she could be stripped of her office.

With that said, a medieval court of law is still a far cry from the modern courtroom. You don't get to make endless appeals, and you still may not have the opportunity to plead your case. You may actually be worse off, because the judge can't spontaneously decide to set you free if the precedents clearly dictate otherwise. However, if you do get the opportunity to speak — either on your own behalf or through an advocate — knowledge of the laws of the land can be vital to your success.



A plea in a court of common law will also involve a Diplomacy roll to shift the opinion of the judge. If you have at least five ranks in Knowledge (law) you get a +2 synergy bonus to this check. The drawback is that no matter how friendly a judge is, she cannot completely ignore the dictates of the law. Of course, in a lawful evil society there may be a wide variety of precedents that a justice could choose to use or to ignore — depending on whether you make it worth her while.

A common law court will often make use of a jury to determine the actual guilt or innocence of a victim. In this case, the justice simply determines the appropriate punishment for the crime. Juries are described in more detail in the following section.

As with a royal court, proceedings can be quite different in a nation where magic plays an integral role in society. This is discussed later in this chapter.

THE ROLE OF THE JURY

In medieval times, many courts used juries to help determine the guilt or innocence of an accused criminal, or to arbitrate disputes. Juries are usually found in common law courts, but they could be used in a benevolent legislative court. But there is an important distinction between the medieval jury and the jury of modern times. In the medieval court, the jury did not sit idly and listen to the evidence gathered by others. Instead, it was the duty of the jury to go out and *find* the facts — to uncover the evidence and solve the case themselves, and then to present the justice with their verdict. If an appointed jury

took too long to solve a case or failed to deliver a verdict, the members of the jury could be punished themselves.

There are a number of reasons for using the jury in this manner. The first is a question of manpower. All too often, the forces of the law do not have the resources to conduct a full investigation into every accusation or disagreement brought before the justices; as a result, members of the local community are drafted to solve the problem. The second is that, especially when the case is being heard by an itinerant justice, the justice may not be familiar with the community or its inhabitants; the theory is that the members of the jury know their neighbors and are best able to find the truth. The final point is one of motivation. In many societies, the local community may be held responsible for any unsolved crimes. If a borough cannot produce the guilty party, then all of its inhabitants may have to pay the fine for his crime.



This practice is especially common in lawful societies. In a lawful evil society, this is another way to extort money from the downtrodden. In a lawful good society, it's simply a way to encourage citizens to work together — to look out for their neighbors and be aware of any crimes that occur in their borough. Of course, this can lead to a disturbing “spy on your neighbor” mentality.

Another side effect of this occurs as a result of the fact that strangers make excellent scapegoats. If the jury can't solve a crime, or if they discover that the murderer is the son of the beloved town founder, well, they may decide that it's better for their community if they pin the crime on you, the vagabond adventurer.

In addition to the temporary juries assembled to solve specific crimes, some societies maintain inquest juries — groups that meet on a regular basis to identify local criminals or troublemakers and present their findings to an itinerant justice.



Inquest juries are also most common in lawful societies. In a lawful evil society, the members of an inquest jury may use the position to extort money from other members of the community. However, inquest juries can also be found in neutral good nations, where the citizens do what they can to take the burden of justice off

of the government. Of course, in a neutral good nation, the criminals identified by an inquest jury may also be dealt with by the citizen militia instead of being reported to an official justice.

THE HUE AND CRY

Another practice common in societies where the law has limited resources is that of the hue and cry. If this system is in effect, all citizens of the community are required to raise the alarm and give chase if a criminal act is discovered — which is to say, if the butcher cries “Stop, thief!” everyone else is supposed to stop what they're doing and immediately help apprehend the villain. If the criminal escapes and cannot be identified or caught, the entire community may be held responsible for his actions.



This practice is generally found in good-aligned societies, where it's expected that citizens will volunteer to help one another. It's also common in lawful neutral societies, where all citizens are expected to act in strict compliance with the law. It's virtually unknown in evil societies.

A sheriff or similar official also has the authority to raise the hue and cry at any time, gathering the citizens together to hunt down a fugitive; also known as the *posse comitatus*, this tradition continued to all the way to America's Wild West, with the sheriff's ability to round up a “posse.”

THE ITINERANT JUSTICE

In many countries and kingdoms, most of the communities are too small to have a personal representative of the ruling body — and the rulers don't have time to listen to every case or concern. This often results in a system of itinerant justices (more formally, *justices in eyre*) — judges who travel in a set circuit around the country. When the justice stops in a village, she rules on disputes. Typically the local sheriff will have already assigned juries to



investigate crimes; the justice simply listens to the facts and the verdict of the jury, and makes her ruling as to punishment. In extreme cases, she may assign a new jury to look into the matter while she remains in the area. However, an itinerant justice has a busy schedule to keep, and cannot afford to stay in one place for too long; some justices have been known to shackle a slow-acting jury and drag the members along on the circuit, holding the jury in custody until its members can serve up a verdict.

A side effect of the system of itinerant justices is that if you're suspected of a crime and taken into custody, you may be held for an extended period of time as your captors wait for the justice to arise. The local reeve simply doesn't have the authority to pass sentence on you; the best he can do is to hold you.

This system of juries and justices can be used as a starting point for many different types of adventures; this will be examined in greater detail later in this chapter, under "A Life of Law."

THE SHAPE OF SOCIETY

The laws of a nation are influenced by many factors — the nature of the ruling body, the general attitude of the populace, and as a result, what actions are considered to be crimes. This section examines these concepts, looking at the basic elements of the nation itself.



POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

One of the first things to do upon entering a new nation is to try to identify the general outlook of its systems — or, at least, its government. How strong is the power of law? Is the law used to protect the citizens, or it is used to oppress them?

The alignment of a power center should have a considerable impact on the laws of the land and how they are enforced. The alignment of the majority of the citizens will also play a role; many nations rely on the

population to help the guard enforce the laws. Most power centers with strong systems of law will be lawful, but this isn't always the case. This section assumes that the society has some level of laws and structures; for ideas on life in a truly chaotic power center, see Chapter Six.

Lawful Good — In a typical lawful good society, the laws are designed to protect the citizenry from crime and treachery. When possible, a justice will seek a wise solution as opposed to a simple one; will executing a murderer actually heal the damage he has caused in the community?

If the citizens of a lawful good society share the alignment of their community, they will do their best to abide by the rule of law, trusting in the government to protect them and look out for their best interests. At its best, this results in citizens helping one another, cooperating to prevent crime, and working together to strengthen the community. Of course, while the citizens may protect one another, this does not necessarily extend to outsiders; if anything, the community will unite to keep an eye on suspicious travelers — including most adventurers. Likewise, extreme lawful good societies are the sorts of places where a citizen might turn in a friend or relative for a seemingly harmless crime — because the informer believes that he's acting in the best interests of the community and, potentially, even the "criminal."

Lawful Neutral — In a lawful neutral nation, justice truly is blind. The law is an impartial force, and justices and nobles follow the precise letter of the law. Lawful neutral states are especially well-suited to common law. If the nation uses a legislative system, it is likely to build up a similar mass of precedents, collecting the writs of kings back to the founding of the nation and following each one as closely as possible. In some cases this can go to ridiculous extremes, with bizarre outdated laws that have long outlived their intended purpose coming to the fore. Most of the time the laws will make sense, but they may or may not have been designed with the best interests of the community in mind — and justices will always choose the law over the people. In some cases, the people of a lawful neutral society may be extremely litigious — constantly debating slights based on violations of

obscure laws. In other societies, the citizens do their best to stay out of the way of the lawkeepers, so as not to interfere with the process of justice.

A lawful neutral citizenry will obey the law not because they believe that it has their best interests at heart, but because it is the law. Traditions are very important to such a society, and people are more likely to unquestioningly cling to the ways of the past than to try to change the future.

Lawful Evil — In a lawful evil country, the law is a tool the rulers use to maintain their power. Graft and corruption are extremely common in lawful evil cultures. Law may provide a basic structure for a society, but it is something to be manipulated and used for the benefit of the powerful, the wealthy, and the clever; the laws oppress the masses, as opposed to protecting them. A lawful evil society is far more likely to use a legislative system than common law, since those in power will want to be in control of the law, not the other way around. In general, the citizens of a lawful evil nation do their best to avoid the agents of the law; the city guards are more likely to extort gold from you than to protect you. The penalties for breaking the law will be extremely harsh — unless, of course, you can afford to pay off the so-called justice.

Most nations that have lawful evil power centers do not have a primarily lawful evil population. More often than not, the evil forces in power use the law to oppress the more neutrally-aligned masses. In a culture that is itself lawful evil, the citizens fully accept the idea that law is just a tool to be used. These nations are extremely Machiavellian; virtually all interactions and relationships are based around self-interest and greed (whether a desire for gold or power). Lawful evil citizens will betray one another at a moment's notice — in accord with the proper forms, of course. In comparison to a chaotic evil society, lawful evil citizens are careful planners; they form highly structured guilds with their own laws and bylaws. Murder on the streets is frowned upon, but subtle assassination, blackmail, a carefully arranged fall from grace — these are all expected risks. And if you think it's dangerous to *live* in a lawful evil nation — well, it's much worse if you're a stranger and don't know the lay of the land!

Neutral Good — In a neutral good nation, the law is a relatively passive force. Whether it's based on the traditions of common law or the legislative decrees of a wise ruler, the law is there to resolve conflicts and maintain order. However, the forces of the law are less powerful than in a lawful society. The laws are simple and designed with the best interests of the people in mind. As a result, most citizens will solve their own problems in accordance with the law, without actually calling upon the official representatives of justice. The people are not afraid to use the forces of the law; they just rarely see the need, and the government prefers not to interfere unless it has to.

Members of a neutral good population will work together to create strong communities. Neutral good villages are likely to form citizen militias and other informal groups — organizations that serve the laws of the land, but that have no official connection to the government itself.

True Neutral — A true neutral realm is a watered-down version of a lawful neutral society. The laws are functional and sufficient to keep the nation running. The government is not extremely strict about enforcing the laws; when they are enforced, it is typically without regard to the circumstances of a situation. A true neutral government may have no interest in interfering with the daily lives of its citizens, or it may not have the power to enforce the law. A lawful neutral power center that loses the support of its citizens may slowly drift toward true neutral, as it loses its resources and control over the population. In such a situation there may still be justices who are devoted to the law — they just don't have the influence to make much of an impact on their nation.

While a true neutral citizen may be roused to action by a charismatic local or national leader, left to his own devices he will mind his own business and take care of his own property.

Neutral Evil — A neutral evil nation is similar to a lawful evil society, but worse. While a lawful evil nation may use the law to oppress its citizens, at least the law is a respected power. In a neutral evil society the rulers hold absolute power, and there is rarely any pretense that the citizens have any rights. Slavery is extremely common in neutral evil societies; members of the ruling class may have cer-



tain privileges and a legal code, but the teeming masses have no rights whatsoever, and no recourse to the law.

In a nation where the majority of the population is neutral evil, opportunism is the name of the game. If there's any way the lower classes can move up in the world, they will do anything to do so. If not, they will stoop to any depths to gain a modicum of long-term security and comfort.

Chaotic Good — Chaotic good countries can have laws. However, a chaotic country will tend to have a very simple legal system, with as few laws as possible. A chaotic good kingdom may use common law or legislative law, following ancient traditions or the guidance of a wise king. The critical thing about a chaotic society is that an individual justice is much more likely to ignore or reinterpret the law in order to do what she considers to be the right thing. The laws are seen as guidelines for proper behavior, not immutable rules that *must* be obeyed.

A chaotic good population follows the same path as a chaotic good justice. As a rule, the citizens will obey the laws, because the laws serve the common good. However, if an individual feels that the law does not apply to his particular situation, he will break it without a second thought. Where a lawful good citizen may place the law above friendship, a chaotic good citizen will almost always shield an ally from persecution. Of course, this isn't necessarily good for you; if the only way to save a local boy is to blame his crime on a suspicious stranger — which is to say you, the wandering adventurer — a group of chaotic good villagers may do just that.

Chaotic Neutral — Chaotic neutral nations vary tremendously. A chaotic neutral society may be pure anarchy, with no central government or legal system whatsoever. Alternately, it may have a legislative system that shifts on a daily basis. In any case, life in a chaotic neutral society will be unpredictable at best. See Chapter Six for more details on chaotic societies.

Chaotic Evil — A chaotic evil realm may resemble a chaotic good or chaotic neutral nation. It could have a basic structure that holds society together, or it may be complete anarchy. Power is what matters in a

chaotic evil society; the strong rule the weak, and any rules created by the strong will generally disappear as soon as someone stronger comes along. See Chapter Six for more details.

THE NATURE OF CRIME

Every society has different views on what constitutes a crime. And there are many, many crimes that are considered to be serious offenses by most civilized nations but which are very unlikely to come up in the course of an adventuring campaign. For example, virtually every civilized nation will have harsh punishments for counterfeiters — people who forge the coinage of the land using debased materials. But are you really about to take a break from hunting dragons to start up a counterfeiting ring? This section takes a brief look at some of the crimes that characters may commit in the course of a game, either on purpose or by accident, and considers how these crimes could be viewed by different societies. Again, these are extremely general guidelines; it's up to the GM to decide how things work in her world! Each crime includes a few general suggestions for punishment, but this is a subject that's dealt with in more detail in Chapter Eight.

MURDER AND AGGRESSION

At first glance, murder — the theft of life — seems like a very straightforward crime. But this isn't always the case. In many nations there are set guidelines under which it's acceptable to kill another person. Many kingdoms have dueling laws, and killing an opponent in a duel is rarely considered to be murder. Often, both participants in a duel need to consent to the match, but in some nations a duel cannot be refused; under such circumstances, if the attacker follows all of the traditions and customs of the duel — typically a public announcement of the reasons for the duel, and granting his opponent the opportunity to react and defend himself — he is absolved of blame; at worst, he may have to compensate his victim's next of kin.

In fact, if the target of the challenge breaks the rules of the duel — for example, calling on a group of friends for assistance — *he* may be held in violation of the law! However, in most nations with these laws, the aggressor must have a valid grievance with his opponent; he cannot simply walk down the street challenging and slaying everyone he meets.

It's also perfectly legal to slay someone who has been declared to be outside the law; in some nations, it's even considered to be the duty of the populace to kill such people should the opportunity arise.

There are two cases where murder is almost always considered to be a crime — and a serious one at that. The first is when a person is slain without a valid reason, or solely in the interests of personal gain, as when the cutthroat kills a noblewoman for her jewels. The second is when the victim is killed without being given any sort of opportunity to defend herself, which is traditionally what assassination and murder are all about. In practice, this means that in some nations, the massive fighter can challenge the shrimpy scholar to a duel and kill her with no penalty; but if the scholar uses her brains to poison the warrior, she may be executed for her crime. Of course, depending on the nation, the scholar may have the right to appoint a champion in the duel, which would give her some chance to stand on an equal footing with the fighter.

In either case, murder is one of the most serious of all crimes and carries the highest penalties. Capital punishment is the most common sentence. However, some societies look for answers that will help the community heal from its loss, as opposed to the quick vengeance of execution.

Beneath murder are crimes of aggression. As with murder, physical assault may be perfectly legal if it's provoked or conducted in a manner specified by law. In other nations, any act that causes physical harm is illegal; in some extremist societies, even threatening behavior — such as a wizard pointing his finger at you and threatening to blast you with magical forces — can be penalized under the law. Needless to say, those whose duties include aggressive behavior — bouncers

or guardsmen, for example — will not be punished for performing their jobs.

The penalties for aggression vary considerably based on the customs of the land and the extent of the harm done to the victim. Aggression is more likely to call for a minor fine or some sort of public humiliation as opposed to a serious long-term punishment. However, the status of the aggressor and victim play a major role. If the scruffy adventurer threatens the town bishop, the penalties will be severe; if the adventurer claims that the bishop threatened him, the authorities are unlikely to even listen.

So how does all this apply to you, the adventurer? Well, to begin with, watch who you threaten. If you don't know the laws of the land — and especially if you're a stranger in town — a lost temper could result in a day in the stocks. You probably already knew that poisoning someone could get you in trouble, but now you know that if you're formally challenged to combat, your opponent may have gained the right to kill you. And as always, being declared an outlaw is a serious problem. In many nations, you may be safe if you can prove that you were simply defending yourself, but this isn't always the case; it could be that taking a life is always considered murder, and that you're expected to find nonlethal ways to resolve conflicts.

OATHBREAKING

Most civilized nations take oaths very seriously — especially oaths sworn to the king or to the gods. If someone can be proven to have foresworn himself or broken a contract, he may face punishment under the law. This can result in anything from a monetary fine to exile, branding, or having your lying tongue torn from your mouth. As with assault, the more respected party in the dispute will probably be given the benefit of the doubt. If you say that the wealthy merchant promised to pay you 20,000 gold pieces to return the Orb of Khagala and he has a different version of the story, the justice is likely to side with the wealthy member of the community as opposed to the unknown vagabond. On the other hand, if you're a renowned hero of the realm, the shoe is suddenly on



the other foot. And if the society uses magic to verify honesty, it's pretty easy to win this sort of dispute.

SMUGGLING

Many nations restrict the sale of certain goods or substances. The nature of these prohibited goods depends entirely on the values of the society in question. A few possibilities include narcotics, sacred relics, weapons, magic items, or alchemical creations. It can be extremely easy for you to break these laws without being aware of it. If you don't know that the kingdom has outlawed possession of magical goods by those not of noble birth, you can suddenly find yourself in big trouble just because you tried to unload a few potions that were taking up room in your backpack.

The penalties for smuggling vary considerably, generally based on the value and danger presented by the prohibited substance. Invariably, the contraband material will be confiscated. Beyond that, you may be faced with fines, exile, or disfigurement. On the other hand, if it's a minor crime you may just have to suffer public humiliation.



You can learn what substances are illegal in the area you're in with a successful check on any of the following skills: Knowledge (law) (DC 15), Knowledge (local) (DC 10), Profession (merchant) (DC 18). If you're in your homeland, you're allowed to make an untrained Knowledge (local) roll.

It can also be illegal just to possess certain objects or substances — many of which can be quite mundane. This may depend on your social status; for example, a kingdom may have laws that make it illegal for a commoner to carry a martial weapon. Needless to say, this can be quite problematic for your party of adventurers!

THEFT

Theft is an extremely broad term. Obviously, stealing the belongings of another person is considered to be theft. But the definition of "belongings" can go a long way. A few distinct types of theft:

- Poaching is the theft of game or wildlife on someone else's property.
- Plagiarism is the theft of ideas (generally combined with the act of publishing those ideas under your own name). In certain nations, making a copy of a spell or alchemical recipe could be considered plagiarism.
- Grave robbing is the act of stealing from the dead. While this may seem obvious, the question you have to ask yourself is: what do you know about the dungeons you're crawling through? One man's ruined temple is another's sacred catacombs. There may be a *reason* that those ruins are filled with gold and magic items — and if you take this treasure, you may have broken the laws of the land.

These are just a few examples. The critical point here is that you need to think about anything that you take as your own — is there any way that it could be seen to be the property of someone else?

Punishment for theft will vary considerably based on the nature of the crime. In extremely strict societies, a pickpocket may have her hand cut off, while a plagiarist may lose his eyes or his tongue. In some nations, a poacher will lose his legs or feet to keep him from trespassing. Grave robbing can even call for execution, if the despoiled site was of great importance. Other possibilities include branding, fines, exile, and outlaw status.

TREASON

Treason is another crime that you can easily commit without being aware of it. The act of treason is an offence against a state or against the ruler of that state; needless to say, this definition can be stretched to cover a wide variety of activities. Let's say that you meet a wizard in a tavern and he hires you to find the Staff of Goran for him. All fine and good — standard adventure — until you discover that the wizard is part of a proscribed order and that by aiding him you've committed an act of high treason. The penalties for treason can be quite severe. Exile, outlaw status, or execution are all possibilities, unless you can somehow prove your innocence — and that might be harder

than you think, if you aren't given a chance to plead your case.



The best way to avoid committing an act of treason is to be familiar with local politics. At least then, if you commit treason it will be because you're choosing to do so. Any of the following skill or ability checks should help in this regard: Bardic Lore (DC 23), Knowledge (history) (DC 22), Knowledge (local) (DC 12), Knowledge (nobility) DC (17), or Knowledge (religion) (DC 17). History, nobility, and religion will only provide you with information about treason relating to that subject; for example, Knowledge (religion) will tell you what would be considered an act of treason against the church.

Of course, the challenge of treason is that the definition can always be stretched a little farther. In a lawful evil society, the charge of treason is something that can be added to your sentence just to make things more difficult for you.

TRESPASSING

Trespassing is the act of intruding upon the property of another. It's a crime that can be taken quite seriously in some nations; ignorance of borders is rarely an excuse. In addition to breaking and entering or wandering onto the property of an owner, you can also trespass by entering places held inviolate by a church or state. That ruined temple out in the woods may have been left alone for a reason, and not just because of the wights in the basement; one man's dungeon is another man's sacred shrine.

The penalties for trespassing vary considerably based on the area violated and the intent of the trespasser. You won't get a price on your head because you accidentally wandered into a farmer's field — although killing a stranger intruding on your property is rarely considered murder. On the other hand, breaking into someone's home with the intent to steal their belongings, intruding on the king's land to poach his deer, or



breaking into an ancient crypt to despoil the resting place of the honored dead — these can all invite serious repercussions.

OTHER CRIMES

So far, this section has only touched the tip of the iceberg in regards to categories of crime. Here are a few more crimes that you may encounter — but again, this list is anything but complete.

- Counterfeiting is a serious crime, if one you're unlikely to commit accidentally. Common forms of counterfeiting include false coining (creating counterfeit coins with a low percentage of precious metals); the creation and sale of fraudulent legal documents; and the duplication and abuse of noble seals (an extremely serious offense).
- Fraud can generally be considered to be a form of theft, at least if it's performed in order to defraud the victim of gold or property. On the other hand, in extremely pious or strict nations, *any* form of deception could be punishable as a crime — use of a disguise or a false name could result in a fine, branding, or public humiliation!
- Gambling may or may not be illegal in any given country. Usually it's fairly easy to tell based on the circumstances of the game. If people are dicing on the tables at the local tavern, it's probably safe to join in the game. If you're ushered into a secret back room with a look-out and guard, well, it might not be on the up and up.
- The attitude towards prostitution varies from nation to nation. Some states consider it to be a crime. Some actively subsidize it. Others simply ignore it.
- Rape is generally viewed as a serious crime. While this attitude may vary based on the position of women (or men) in a society, even in a nation where one sex is considered no better than property, rape is an attack on someone else's belongings. Rapists typically suffer genital mutilation and public humiliation.
- Vagrancy is often considered to be a crime. A stranger

with no means of support will be viewed with suspicion and may be driven from the region. If you've clearly got money, you're unlikely to get charged with vagrancy. However, people may still keep an eye on you, just in case.

THE ROLE OF MAGIC

The use of magic can play a major role in the shape of a society and its laws. Will the courts use spells to verify the truth of testimony? Is magic itself considered a crime? Some nations embrace magic, considering wizards and sorcerers as no different than tradesmen with mundane talents. In other countries, magic is recognized and accepted even though it's rarely seen. And then there are kingdoms where magic is feared and reviled, where any sort of sorcery is considered to be a mark of traffic with unholy forces. This section looks at general ways in which nations may use magic in the pursuit of justice — or persecute it in the name of justice.

HIGH MAGIC

In a society where magic is commonplace, it's likely that magic will be used to assist the agents of the law. Chapters Two and Three have already discussed the ways that magic can be used to locate and capture criminals; this section will instead look at ways that magic may appear in the courtroom.



There are a number of spells that can be useful in determining the veracity of a statement, including *detect thoughts*, *direct conversation*, *discern lies*, *light of truth*, *painful truth*, *read the guilty face*, and *zone of truth*. However, the effects of these spells are either known only to the caster (like *discern lies*) or can be mimicked with illusion spells (such as *light of truth*). In some nations, these spells are not used in open court. However, in most mystically advanced nations, this has created the position of truthreader — an individual who must go through intense tests to prove her honesty and loyalty, but who is then trusted to provide honest mystical testimony to the court. An itinerant justice will usually have a truthreader in his retinue, or else he

will be a truthreader himself. If the legal system is secular in nature, truthreaders will generally be arcane spellcasters or inquisitors from mundane backgrounds; clerics may be considered to have conflicting loyalties that may influence their ability to provide unbiased testimony. However, if church and state are intertwined or if the cleric represents an impartial god of knowledge or justice, this concern may be waived.

While truthreaders can determine the truth of testimony, this doesn't mean that a truthreader will be used for every case. A justice may choose to rely on her own sense of human nature. Perhaps the justice believes that the jury has provided her with false information — but that their decision is the right one for the good of the community. In such a case, she would choose not to call in a truthreader.

In suspicious or important cases, a truthreader may be tasked to monitor the courtroom with *detect magic*, to ensure that no one attempts to influence the justice or anyone else through magical means — so no *charming* the judge or using *mass suggestion* on the jury. In the case of a particularly dangerous criminal, a spellbane or magehunter might be called in to provide additional protection against mystical influences; an inquisitor or other spellcaster would also be prepared to use mystical means to restrain the prisoners or maintain order. If possible, *dispel magic* will be cast on the defendant at the start of the trial, to remove *misdirection* or any similar effect that could block divinatory spells.

If magic is a part of everyday life, the society is likely to have laws dealing with the specific uses of sorcery. It may be illegal to spy on the thoughts of another (which is, after all, a form of theft), to use magic to harm another (a form of aggression), or to practice any sort of magic in certain areas; normal citizens may not be allowed to use magic within a mile of the king, for example. Mental manipulation would almost certainly be a crime (as a temporary theft of freedom or mental assault). These crimes would be prosecuted like any mundane offense, and a common law system would undoubtedly have dozens or hundreds of laws relating to specific abuses of magic.

TYPICAL MAGIC

In a society where magic exists but is uncommon, spellcraft is less likely to be integrated into a secular courtroom.



An itinerant justice may have inquisitor levels himself, or if there are close ties between church and state he may be accompanied by a truthreader, but this would be a rarity. In addition, the common people might mistrust evidence gathered through use of magic. In short, it would be something that an individual justice might make use of, but it would be unlikely to be the policy of the state — and the justice would want to be careful not to rely on magic, lest he draw suspicion upon his abilities and his rulings.

While sorcery might not be common in the realm, if people are aware of magic they're going to be extremely alert for any use of magic to manipulate the process of justice. Even if he doesn't have a truthreader, an itinerant justice may at least have a low-level wizard, sorcerer, or adept who has the ability to cast *detect magic*, to monitor proceedings and watch for mystical manipulation. If this isn't possible, the guards will keep an extremely close eye on the accused and his friends — especially if he's one of those suspicious adventurer types. Any attempt to use magic to modify the outcome of a trial will be severely punished.

Lack of understanding would prevent the typical society from forming a complex system of laws relating to magic. Instead, infractions using magic might all be lumped together into one category.



Any sort of use of magic against an unwilling victim might be designated under the crime of witchcraft; there would be no distinction between using *charm person* on a guard or blasting him with *magic missile*. On the other hand, the society would probably be enlightened enough to realize that if magic is not used aggressively it presents no danger — so there's no harm in the use of *floating disk*.



Of course, the emphasis here is “probably.” And the society could still prohibit the unauthorized use of magic in certainly locations, especially around important individuals like the king or high ministers.

LOW MAGIC

If the people of a nation don’t use magic at all, it certainly won’t be a part of court proceedings. A justice and his guards may not be prepared for the use of magic — but if they realize that they’re being influenced, they will react with extreme hostility.

As for the general use of magic, many mundane societies have difficulty distinguishing between peaceful and aggressive spells. In the eyes of the superstitious commoner, any sort of spellcasting can be a sign of traffic with dark powers. This will vary considerably from country to country. A nation that has never encountered magic may see a wizard as a worker of miracles. But a kingdom that has consciously avoided the use of magic — hunting and persecuting spellcasters — will respond aggressively to any sort of witchcraft.

 An extremely important question is whether a culture draws a distinction between arcane magic and divine magic. Quite often, a nation that will hunt and persecute the wizard for consorting with demons will revere the paladin or priest, and accept his powers as gifts from the gods. This knowledge can be quite valuable if you happen to be a wizard passing through hostile territory; see Chapter Seven for more details.

SERVANTS OF THE LAW

There’s more to justice than swords and sorcery. A society — at least, a lawful society — needs those who are willing to dedicate their lives to maintaining order. This section looks at the life of the itinerant justice, who travels across the land settling disputes and pun-

ishing those who prey on their fellows. You may be brought before a justice over the course of your adventures. Or perhaps you’ll try your hand at the path of law, assuming the role of an itinerant justice and his retinue. Isn’t it about time you gave something back to the kingdom?

THE JUSTICE

Someone needs to preside over a trial — to maintain order, to examine the evidence that’s presented, and to hear the pleas of all parties. Even if the verdict is to be determined by a jury, someone has to select the jury, ensure that the legal traditions of the nation are upheld, and determine the punishment that best fits the crime. This is the role of the justice. Whether he acts as judge or overseer, the justice is the representative of a higher power and brings the authority of the court to the people.

The ideal justice is wise, perceptive, and charismatic. He can spot a lie, pull the truth out of a web of conflicting stories, and convince those he deals with to accept his authority. First and foremost, he must know the laws and traditions of his nation; beyond that, he must be an excellent judge of human nature and capable of both harsh and soft speech, as a situation requires.

 The justice is similar to both the expert and the aristocrat. He is physically weaker than either class and has limited combat training, but he has a good selection of skills and receives more skill points than either of the other two NPC classes. Needless to say, a character does not have to have levels in this class to hold the office of justice. The class simply represents formal training for legal service; a character with levels in this class has dedicated his life to the law, as opposed to spontaneously being appointed to the role.

While it is an NPC class, the justice has an excellent selection of skills. In particular, if a character wants to become an inquisitor, the fastest way to reach his goal is by serving as a justice.

NEW NPC CLASS:

THE JUSTICE

Abilities: A high Charisma is vital for a justice; as an agent of the law, he must be able to exert his authority over others and get people to listen to his words. Wisdom is equally important; a justice must have an unshakeable force of will and a keen ability to see into the depths of the human soul. Physical abilities are less important; as a general rule, the justice will have guards to protect him from harm.

Alignment: Any lawful. As an instrument of the legal system, it follows that a justice would respect the power of the law. Of course, a lawful evil justice may twist the law to his own benefit — but that's a different story.

Hit Die: d4

CLASS SKILLS

The class skills of the justice are Appraise (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (All skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, and Spot (Wis). Common specialties for the Knowledge skill include Geography, Law, Local, Nobility, and Religion; Perform is generally reserved for oratory and other forms of public speaking.

Skill points at 1st Level: (8 + Int modifier) x 4

Skill points at each level: 8 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the justice:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A justice is proficient with the club, dagger, quarterstaff, and

THE JUSTICE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Judicial Authority
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	



three additional simple weapons of his choosing. The justice is not proficient with any sort of armor or shield.

Judicial Authority: A justice is a representative of the law. As long as the justice is pursuing his duties and is within the dominion of the force that grants him his authority, he may demand room, board, and cooperation from the local representatives of the law. All citizens are expected to cooperate with a justice acting in the pursuit of his duties, but your mileage will vary based on the degree of respect that the populace has for the governing body. A justice in the service of a much-loved church may receive freely offered advice and assistance, while if he serves a hated tyrant the citizens may actually try to sabotage his efforts behind his back.

Judicial Authority is a privilege; if a justice fails to perform his duties or incurs the wrath of his liege, he will lose his authority. Likewise, if a player character takes a level in this class during his adventuring career, he does not automatically receive Judicial Authority. He has the training required to become an excellent justice, and a lord may recognize this, but he still has to be invested with an office by someone in a position of power.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN: THE LIFE OF THE ITINERANT JUSTICE



If you're looking for an interesting alternative to the standard dungeon crawl, you might consider trying a brief campaign in the service of the law. The life of a traveling justice can be filled with adventure and intrigue, and can make an interesting basis for a party.

Consider the following party structure:

The Justice — If you're going to make a campaign out of the pursuit of the law, someone needs to play the justice. A justice can start taking levels in the inquisitor class as early as 3rd level. If you start off with a somewhat experienced group, the justice can begin with a few inquisitor levels. That way he can

serve as his own truth-teller and also make up for the fact that he's got an NPC class.

The Investigator — Most of the time an itinerant justice will trust in the report of the jury. But as an adventuring group, you never know what you could encounter. Cover-ups, conspiracies, doppelgangers, and stranger things abound — for such cases, it's good to have someone on the team who specializes in gathering information. An investigator is the logical choice for this, but a rogue or bard can serve equally well.

The Confessor — Assuming that the nation isn't filled with atheists, it never hurts to have a representative of the gods in the party. Criminals and townsfolk alike may be more willing to unburden themselves to a minion of the divine than to a representative of the king. And if blood is shed, the ability to heal never hurts. A hint: a cleric of a god of Good, Protection, the Sun, or the like usually makes a better confessor than a priestess of Death, Destruction, or Evil.

The Shields — An itinerant justice would be wise to travel with a few good blades at his side. Aside from the likelihood of bandits on the roads, there's always the possibility that the townsfolk may take umbrage with an unpopular ruling. The justice must be prepared to enforce his decision through force of arms. And if you conduct your own investigation, you never know what you might find. Both fighters and paladins serve this purpose admirably, but if you start at higher levels you may want a magehunter, to help to control mystical prisoners.

Like the average adventurer, an itinerant justice spends most of his time traveling. Wherever he goes he has to deal with crime and disputes. Certainly, most of the time these trials may be open-and-shut cases — but hopefully your GM will skip over those. Let's look at a few of the more interesting events you may face in the course of a judicial career.

THE CANCER WITHIN

In a magical society, there are any number of problems that could lie hidden within a seemingly simple town. What appears to be a crime of passion or an unsolved murder could draw you into a complex web of deception and intrigue. A seemingly simple village could be concealing a population of doppelgangers or wererats. A vampire could be holding the villagers in its power. A possessing ghost could be responsible for a string of unsolved murders — brutal slayings in which the actual killer is long dead. If you discover such horrors, will you have the power and skill to put a stop to them? Or will your devotion to justice be your undoing?

THE INQUEST JURY

In the more boring cases, you will be ruling on events that've already occurred. The culprits have already been caught, the reeve has appointed a jury and they have already reached a verdict; all that remains is for you to set your seal upon the case and determine a suitable punishment.

But then there are inquest juries — cabals that meet to identify the most notorious members of the community. When you arrive, the inquest jury will present you with their list; more often than not, they expect you to take things from there, as the representative of royal justice. It falls to you to track and capture these villains before they can cause more harm. These scoundrels may simply be unsavory individuals, or they could be deadly threats that will present a considerable risk to life and limb. Bandit lords, sinister wizards, demon worshippers — can you succeed where the villagers fear to tread? What if you discover that the inquest jury has been abusing its power — that the jurors are using you to settle their personal feuds?

THE TERRIBLE TRUTH

In a region filled with racial tensions and ancient feuds, a terrible murder takes place. The truth you uncover could fracture the fragile peace that has held the area together — and if the region falls into chaos once more, it could have an impact on the entire kingdom. What will you do? Will you follow the course of



justice even if it means more deaths will follow? Or can you find a way to punish the guilty beyond the public court of law?

TROUBLE ON THE ROAD

Even if you're playing the role of an itinerant justice, not every adventure has to revolve around the law. As a justice you're constantly traveling — who knows what troubles you could encounter on the road? If you stumble upon an ancient ruin, will you decide to explore it, or will you leave these mysteries to traditional adventurers? At least as a justice, you'll know if your actions will be considered to be tomb raiding!

TWELVE ANGRY ADVENTURERS

If you aren't interested in starting an entirely new campaign based around the pursuit of the law, there are still ways that your regular band of adventurers may be brought into the action (without being on the wrong side of the law). If you're at least reasonably respected by the local community, a justice might charge you to serve as the jury for a difficult case. As noted earlier in this chapter, in the medieval system the jury doesn't sit and listen to the evidence, but rather goes out and solves the mystery themselves. Any of the ideas mentioned above could be used as the basis of a jury adventure. If the justice doesn't like you, he may intentionally set you to solve a difficult crime with serious political ramifications, so that *you* are the ones who make powerful enemies. And should you refuse or fail to solve the case within the assigned amount of time, *you* will be the ones in violation of the law!

Jury duty is also an excellent way for your band of adventurers to build up a reputation within a community and with the lords of the land. If you manage to lay a number

of difficult cases to rest, you may be called upon to serve as an itinerant justice or sheriff yourself!

THE SHERIFF OF RAVENSWOOD

An alternative to the life of the traveling justice is to assume the role of the local justice of a larger community. You could create a party specifically for this purpose, or perhaps your existing party will be called by the king to take charge of a dangerous and unstable region. A warrior, paladin, or ranger would make an excellent sheriff (that's drawn from "shire reeve," if you want to impress your friends). Perhaps another character will serve as a local justice — or maybe you'll have to round up and contain criminals between the visits of the itinerant justice for your region. As a sheriff, you must maintain order within your community. In addition to crimes and conspiracies, you'll have to deal with tensions resulting from racial and religious differences, not to mention families divided by ancient feuds. And what about the dragons ravaging the countryside, the cult of demon worshippers, the mercenaries raiding across the border, and the band of merry outlaws in the nearby forest? A life in law enforcement can be just as dangerous as any dungeon!

THE ADVOCATE

A final possibility is that a member of your party may be asked to serve as an advocate. In most courts, anyone can act as an advocate; the position does not require any sort of special rank, training, or license. If you're a skilled orator — a glib bard, or a fast-talking rogue or investigator — you may be called upon by a non-player ally, an old friend who is in desperate trouble with the law. If your friend is truly innocent, can you find some way to spare her from the gallows? What if she is in fact guilty of the crime of which she is accused? Will you and your companions still try to save her, or will you abandon her to her fate?

DIVINE LAW

For ten minutes the grey-bearded justice sat in silence, his eyes closed, lost in thought or deep in meditation. Finally he opened his eyes and gazed down at the prisoners. “In the First Book of Khesh, the evil prince Dalsan tricks the paladin Khitar. Dalsan convinces Khitar to strike against a band of approaching brigands; and in his zeal to battle evil, Khitar never realizes that he is fighting the older prince and his guards. In this way, Dalsan eliminates his only rival to the throne, and his hands are free of his brother’s blood. Although he meant no harm, in his recklessness Khitar committed a great evil against the kingdom. And so he had his sword hand struck off at the wrist and the stump sealed with brass. In time he learned to fight with his other hand; but for the rest of his days, his stump reminded him of the price of his careless behavior.” The justice gestured at the crimson-garbed knight standing by the door. “We will need a sharp blade, and a healer to purify the wounds.”

This chapter examines theocratic law. It discusses the general evolution of law in a theocratic society, but bear in mind that a monarchy or feudal nation may still use theocratic law — either for all purposes or for a segment of the population. It may be that the Paladins of the Silver Scale are entirely responsible for the administration of justice within the kingdom. Or it could be that members of the clergy can only be tried in a religious court. Or that certain crimes — for example, the abuse of magic — are prosecuted by the church, while mundane crimes are managed by the state.

We will begin with an examination of the forces that shape a theocratic society, followed by a look at what you might face in a religious court and the adventuring possibilities that await you as an agent of divine law. Again, it’s up to the GM to decide how these different elements may fit into any particular nation — even though the Black Kingdom is a monarchy, the Church of Pain may be the real power behind the throne.

THEOCRATIC SOCIETY

In a theocracy, the inspiration for the shape of society is the will of gods. The rulers are typically the highest religious authorities, who are the gods’ chief servants on the world. However, it is possible for a divinely chosen king or paladin to serve as a figurehead. In some cases, the ruler might actually claim to be an avatar of the chief god — and what if he really is? The important thing is that even if the land is technically ruled by a monarch, what distinguishes it as a theocracy is the belief that the gods are the ultimate authority, and the use of religious doctrine as a basis for law and all other customs of daily life.



The effect of alignment on the shape of society has already been discussed. Most of these ideas carry over into theocratic societies — with the exception that theocracies have a tendency to be more zealous in their beliefs.

The citizens of a theocracy are more likely to share the alignment of their power center than those of a secular society — at least, assuming that the religion is a popular one, as opposed to being the church of an oppressive minority. This can have a few specific effects:

Good and Evil — Good and evil are serious concepts in a theocratic society, and their influence is usually far more visible than in a purely secular nation. On a small scale, good citizens may believe that they have a duty to help their neighbors, to be generous to those in need, and so on. A good theocracy can be a very pleasant place to live, if the citizens truly live up to these ideals. The down side is that theocracies can easily fall into crusader zeal. A good theocracy may feel obliged to spread the benevolent rule of its gods across the land (regardless of the wishes of those to be ruled), while an evil nation might believe that it has a divine right to take all that it can seize.



Lawful — Lawful citizens are more likely to follow the rules of society than their secular counterparts. After all, this is the will of the gods, not some king's crazy idea! Break the law and you could be looking at eternal damnation. A lawful evil theocracy may still be riddled with graft and corruption, or it may be an extremely organized society dedicated to the evil goals of its patron gods.

Chaotic — A citizen of a chaotic theocracy will be dedicated to the traditions of her gods, but she may feel that she is just as well suited to interpret the laws of the gods as any ordained priest. A chaotic theocracy is likely to be more stable than a secular chaotic society; at the very least, the people are bound together by shared beliefs. But that won't necessarily result in a stable government. In a society dedicated to chaotic evil gods, the citizens may actually be *encouraged* to fight amongst themselves and assassinate their superiors; this sort of behavior is the way of determining who the gods wish to rule.

MONOTHEISM VS. POLYTHEISM

When you're studying a theocratic society, one of the most important questions to answer is: how many gods are there? A society dedicated to a single god is going to be quite different from one that reveres dozens of deities.

In a monotheistic society, culture is shaped by a single doctrine. The nature of the god should pervade all levels of society. In most of the monotheistic religions of our world, the central deity has a broad focus; these religions tend towards omnipotent creator gods, as opposed to gods with specific and narrow attributes.



Needless to say, an omnipotent god is difficult to reflect in game terms; you could choose to give the priests of such a god access to all domains (as their god is all things) or you could limit domains to the most abstract concepts, like Good and Law for a benevolent divine overlord.

In a society dedicated to the worship of such a god, the main effect is that citizens will be charged to respect the law, to act in a benevolent and generous manner, and give thanks for the gifts of the heavens. Such a society might not appear to be that different from a typical feudal monarchy; it's just that the power is held by priests instead of aristocrats, and justice is placed in the hands of the god and his representatives.

On the other hand, a deity with a tighter focus may produce a more unusual society. A few examples:



A nation dedicated to the god of Strength and War would be an aggressive and militaristic nation. Justice would most likely involve trial by combat, and duels would be a common method of resolving disputes. Any theocracy dedicated to a War god is likely to try to spread its influence through conquest and crusade, to better display the power of the god.

The goddess of Water and Travel would inspire a nation to focus on trade and naval power. The people of such a nation might spend much of their lives on giant houseboats, or even create floating cities.

A god of Nature and Animals would result in a strongly agricultural nation; such a country might avoid the construction of large cities and other structures that come between the people and the land.

A realm devoted to the goddess of Knowledge and Magic would place a tremendous emphasis on education and learning. Physical violence would be abhorred, and any sort of aggressive behavior would be punished. Magic would be an integral part of law, both for determining guilt and enacting punishments.

In a nation that revered the god of Luck and Trickery, the only crime would be getting caught! A court of justice might literally involve the roll of a die or spinning of a wheel to determine the fate of the victim; alternately, the defendant might play a game with his accuser, or get to engage in a bluffing contest.

The critical element is that a monotheistic nation will have a unified theme to its society and its laws. If you make a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 15) you should be able to get an idea of the values of the god and how this might affect the laws of the land. If you make the check by at least five points, you should have a very clear idea as to what sort of things would be considered to be crimes.

Polytheistic societies are far more complicated. There are a number of questions that you need to consider when dealing with a polytheistic theocracy.

First, are all of the gods allies? Are they a big happy family? If not, divine feuds could have a significant effect on the stability and shape of the nation. Perhaps a nation is divided between the worship of a noble sun god and a sinister moon goddess. In a case like this, control of society could be determined in an orderly manner; perhaps the lunar or solar eclipse marks the official change of power, when the new priesthood takes control from the old. Or maybe things are more chaotic, and the nation is torn by constant infighting; the opposing factions are endlessly battling over the relics and sites that convey control of society.

Alternately, the gods could exist in harmony, but with only one ruling at a time. For instance, during the summer, the priests of the harvest god are the law-givers. In times of war, the goddess of battle and her priestesses are given full control of society. The secondary gods are always respected, but one god shapes the laws; thus, under the rule of the war goddess you'll see more trial by combat, whereas the harvest god may be more lenient.

A third possibility is that there are a multitude of gods, all respected equally, and that each holds dominion over a different part of society. The priestesses of the war goddess direct the army. The priests of the trickster handle foreign relations. The nation as a whole is ruled by a council of high priests, which each god having a voice. In such a nation, the courts might be administered by the priests of the god of justice; alternately, each deity could oversee crimes or disputes within his particular sphere of influence.

In general, the people of a polytheistic society are going to be less prone to fanaticism. They have to accept multiple points of view as part of their own society, so they will usually be more open to the unusual views of outsiders. Of course, you don't want to press your luck.

THE NATURE OF CRIME

Common crimes have been discussed in Chapter Four. The trick is that in a theocratic society, the nature of the gods will have a tremendous impact on what is and isn't considered to be a crime. A few examples to consider:



In a nation dedicated to a goddess of War, murder may not be considered a crime as long as the target has a chance to defend himself. If the goddess is of good alignment, this rule may only apply to combat between equals; however, an evil goddess may see the weak as being unfit to live. In either nation, assassination would be considered a truly vile crime as it denies the warrior the chance to die in battle.

On the other hand, in the nation of a god of Trickery and Evil, assassination may be perfectly acceptable; it could be that if no one sees the crime, the guard won't even investigate. But outright street violence goes against the teachings of the god and must be punished. Likewise, in the realm of a god of Trickery, crimes like fraud and theft are unlikely to be investigated; however, a criminal caught in the act will be punished for her incompetence.

Of course, while some theocracies may overlook certain crimes due to the nature of the revered god, religious governments can also go to fanatical extremes. A nation that reveres a god of justice may impose severe sentences for even the most minor crimes. In addition, protection afforded by the traits of a god may not apply to non-believers; maybe it's all right for a follower of the god of thieves to steal, but as a heathen you don't have that



privilege. This is especially relevant in a polytheistic society where people are judged by the priests of their own deity. In such a society, the follower of the god of thieves would be pardoned for stealing, but the follower of the goddess of war might have his hand cut off for performing the same crime — although his priests might allow him to get away with outright murder.

Another crime that you need to consider is blasphemy — treason against the gods. Depending on the nature of the central religion and the degree of control that the church has over society, blasphemy could range from worshipping false gods or failing to observe religious customs (specific modes of dress, dietary restrictions, and the like), all the way down to swearing or taking the name of a god in vain. In secular societies priests typically have to be accepting of alternate beliefs and modes of behavior. But once the church dominates society, it has the power to be as strict as its priests want to be. This can be extremely problematic if you're a priest of a competing god; if you reveal your true loyalties, you can immediately be declared a subversive enemy of the state. So hide that holy symbol! Chapter Seven looks at this problem in more detail.

The short form is *look at the gods*. What behaviors do they encourage, and what do they condemn? Are they oppressive or gentle? This should give you a fairly clear view of what is considered a crime in the society ruled by a theocracy.

THE ROLE OF MAGIC

One of the most important pieces of information you need to know when entering a theocratic society is the level of mystical power in the priesthood. In a theocracy, the church will have vast political power. Priests are generally more common in a theocracy than in other societies, as they hold many offices that would otherwise fall under the jurisdiction of nobles or secular officials. The question is, do all these priests have the ability to use magic? In this section, we will look at three different styles of theocracy: high magic, typical magic, and low magic settings.

 In a high magic setting, most representatives of the church will be clerics or paladins. An acolyte may only have one or two levels, but nonetheless, the representatives of the gods have the ability to use magic. If arcane magic is uncommon in the society, the spellcasting power of the church may be one reason that it's a theocratic society in the first place; the mystical power of the clerics may give them a stranglehold on society.

In a typical setting, only high officials will be paladins or clerics. Divine magic is accepted and recognized as the power of the gods, but it's something that must be gained through years of pious devotion. Other religious officials will simply be dedicated experts with levels in Knowledge (religion).

In a low magic setting, actual spellcasters are an anomaly — saints, avatars, or others who have been touched by the gods in some way. Church officials are skilled orators and dedicated to the teachings of their gods, but cannot call on magical powers. An actual divine spellcaster would be seen as a miracle-worker — or a heretical witch, depending on the circumstances.

This section primarily deals with the role of divine magic in society. Arcane magic is an entirely different matter — and something else you need to know about. Depending on the nature of the religion, arcane magic could be embraced by the culture, ignored, or reviled. Those who channel arcane forces could be seen as working with evil spirits instead of drawing on the pure magic of the gods — or the warlock could simply be considered to be playing with forces not meant for mortal hands.

 Your GM will need to decide how a society views arcane magic. As a general rule, you should be able to obtain this information with a successful check with any of the following skills or abilities: Bardic Lore (DC 10), Gather Information (DC 15), Knowledge (geography) (DC 20) Knowledge (local) (DC

10), Knowledge (religion) (DC 15). If the nation in question is your homeland or if you are a follower of the god of the land, you should be able to obtain this information without making a die roll.

Chapter Seven takes a closer look at societies where magic is restricted by law.

HIGH MAGIC

In a high magic theocracy, divine magic is *everywhere*. From customs inspectors to justices to politicians, all important officials are devoted priests with at least minor spellcasting ability. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, magic will be an integral part of locating and capturing criminals, and it will also play a major role in the courtroom.

 In a theocratic society, magic is a gift from the gods. As a result, spells like *zone of truth* and *light of truth* are almost always used during any sort of serious trial.

There is no question about whether spells can be trusted or about any sort of right to privacy — this is the power of the gods at work! Typically, a justice will have cleric or inquisitor levels and perform her own verification. If not, she will have a truthreader in her retinue who will cast these spells on her behalf. Magic also plays a critical role in punishments and sentencing; curses, memory modification, and other magical effects are at least as common as physical punishments or fines.

In addition to someone charged with verifying the truth, a major court will have a cleric or spellbane on hand to detect and dispel unauthorized magic. The court may also have a paladin, lawkeeper, or other sacred warrior present to maintain order and discipline.

TYPICAL MAGIC

In a typical theocratic society, there are spellcasters among the clergy and many important officials are

magic-users — but not every priest can call down the power of the gods.

 A justice may still have a few levels of cleric or inquisitor, and he only needs to be 3rd level to gain access to *zone of truth* or *painful truth*. In a typical theocratic court, the justice will reserve the more powerful spells of verification for difficult cases; in most situations she will rely on her own instincts, possibly using *read the guilty face* to enhance her natural talents. With that said, if she has any doubts, she will use truth-telling magic or call for a truthreader to be brought in.

Unlike the typical secular society, there is no stigma to using magic in the courtroom of theocratic society; there is no shame in calling on the gods to see that justice is done.

LOW MAGIC

In a low magic theocracy, priests with magical powers are considered to be holy men — at least, if they worship the right gods. Such an individual would be unlikely to be tied down to a position as a justice or dragged around a legal circuit to serve as a truthreader. However, if a miracle worker happens to be present at an especially thorny trial, she may volunteer her services to see that justice is done. Such help would certainly be gratefully received, and provided that she was a recognized priest of the god of the land, her testimony would be trusted by almost any court.

It's worth noting that all three of these descriptions — high magic, typical magic, and low magic — have highlighted the fact that a priest will be trusted to relay the truth to the court. However, that doesn't mean that he will.

 In a lawful evil society, an inquisitor may use his powers and determine that a victim is innocent — and lie about his findings in favor of his own personal agenda. A chaotic good priest may choose to suppress the truth in order to protect a community from emotional trauma.



The priest is trusted by society, and will usually behave in a manner appropriate to his society — but that may not involve telling the truth.

THE ABUSE OF DIVINE MAGIC

As a general rule, use of divine magic is never a crime in and of itself — at least, if the source of magic is one of the gods revered by the society. As noted earlier, the invocation of strange gods can be a serious crime in its own right, even if the magic is used to heal or help. Otherwise, the use of divine magic is persecuted only if it results in a crime. In a high magic society, this would be treated just like any other crime; a murder using a column of holy fire is still a murder. In a low magic realm, it's possible that the church would rule that a crime can't be committed using the miraculous powers of the gods — if a god lends his holy fire, the victim must have been deserving of death. Or, the church could just as easily decide that the fact that the priest committed a magical crime proves that he *must*

be in league with unholy forces, as the god of the land would never kill an innocent.

THE THEOCRATIC COURT

The inquisitor looked down from the podium. "Lilara sees through my eyes, and she speaks with my voice. It is she who sits in judgment over you, she who will decide your fate. I am merely the instrument of her will."

Shayn leaned over to whisper in Garret's ear. "What do you think? Will Lilara take a bribe?"

In a divine court — whether it's the only form of justice available in a society or it's an alternative to secular law — the defendant is being judged by the gods themselves. The justice is the representative of the



gods, and his rulings are either divinely inspired or guided by the wisdom of the holy scriptures.

In a theocratic society, justice is usually administered in one of two ways. It may be that there's a special class of priests who are authorized to administer justice and adjudicate disputes. If this is the case, then any major city will have its justicar; outlying villages and communities will be served by a network of itinerant justices. The other alternative is that any priest has the power to mete out justice; in this case, the senior priest in a community will either hear cases or appoint a representative to take his place. That yokel priest in the tiny village you're passing through may also be the judge, so make sure you treat him with respect! If a community were to be deprived of all representatives of the church — say, because you killed the yokel priest — then the villagers would attempt to imprison any criminals while they sent for a new priest to come and administer justice.

Juries can be used in theocratic societies, but they are only commonly found in low magic settings. If the justice has access to truth-telling magics, he doesn't need the jury to investigate the facts; instead, he will hear the report of those who captured the criminal, and possibly the pleas of the criminal herself, using divine magic to verify these stories. The actual determination of innocence or guilt is for the gods to decide, either through the person of the justice or through trial by ordeal, which is discussed later in this chapter. However, while a traditional jury is rare, an itinerant justice may still convene a body of villagers and discuss the crime with them. The goal of divine justice is to punish the transgressor and to give a warning to others — but also to bring justice and peace to a troubled community. A local priest will know what his people need, but an itinerant justice may wish to hear the voices of his people, so as to judge the damage that the offender has dealt to the community beyond the simple act of crime.

In this section we will look at four styles of justice:

“The Voice of God” is the theocratic equivalent of legislative law. Justices are chosen by the gods; therefore any ruling that the justice makes is considered to be divinely inspired.

“Divine Interpretation” is based on laws established in scripture and sacred tradition. Under such a system, the role of the justice is to interpret the scriptures and apply them to the situation.

“Absolution” discusses the power of the priesthood to lift the burden of sin, and the reasons for such a thing.

“Trial by Ordeal” describes the many ways that your fate may be put directly into the hands of the gods.

As always, these systems are not mutually exclusive. In particular, while trial by ordeal may be a stand-alone system of justice, an ordeal can also be ordered by a judge acting as the voice of god or performing divine interpretation.

THE VOICE OF GOD

In this style of divine justice, all wisdom is seen as flowing directly from the gods. Just as a god will grant his priests the ability to perform miracles, so too he will guide them when they sit in judgment. As a result, the justice — either a priest or an individual selected through a holy ritual — has complete authority over the courtroom. While he will be expected to follow the doctrines of the church, when it comes down to it he can make any decision that he wishes. In principle this sounds pretty good; free rein, and any decision he makes is considered holy writ! But bear in mind that in a fantasy theocracy, the gods do exist — and a justice who intentionally turns his back on holy doctrine may find that he's the one who is punished.



At the GM's discretion, a justice who intentionally violates the precepts of his god may be stripped of the ability to cast divine spells, or he may suffer the effects of one of the curses described in Chapter Eight. The punishment will remain in effect until the justice has performed an act of atonement, either through the spell or as dictated by his faith.

Of course, the actions that will call for divine punishment will vary considerably based on the nature of the god. A goddess of Evil and Trickery



may actually encourage her justices to take bribes, while a god of Law and Good would be sure to punish such an act. A god of Death and Destruction might punish his justice for taking mercy on someone who should by rights be sent to the gallows.

In the court of divine justice, crimes or disputes are presented before a justice (or occasionally a group of justices, depending on cultural traditions). If you've been caught red-handed performing a criminal act, you may not be allowed to speak in your defense; on the other hand, if a case involves an unproven accusation, both the defendant and the accuser speak before the judge. After hearing the case, verifying the truth of the statements that have been made, and potentially discussing the matter with a council drawn from the community, the justice will announce his decision.

 If you are allowed to speak, you may make a Diplomacy (or Charisma) check to try to influence the justice, as described in Chapter Four. If you have at least five ranks in Knowledge (religion), you get a +2 synergy bonus to your roll. Social standing is less important in the theocratic court than in secular society, but the GM may choose to apply any of the following bonuses or penalties to your roll.

Diplomacy Check

Status	Modifier
Follower of a condemned religion	-10
Convicted heretic	-8
Follower of a foreign religion	-2
Stranger to the region	-2
From a hostile nation	-2
Distrusted race	-2
Distrusted class	-1
Follower of the national religion	+2
Priest of the national religion	+4
Respected religious leader	+8

The religious penalties do not stack — you're only considered a heretic if you follow the same religion as the justice. In addition, if you are a heretic, you do not receive any of the usual bonuses for sharing the same religion as the judge. The religious bonuses do not stack, either; if you are a priest of the

national religion, it is already assumed that you are a follower of it.

During testimony, the justice will use Sense Motive to gauge the truth of the statements. He, or an attending truthreader, will likely use one or more of the following spells: *detect thoughts*, *discern lies*, *light of truth*, *painful truth*, *read the guilty face*, or *zone of truth*. At the GM's discretion, a judge who finds that you honestly believe that you are innocent may have his attitude improved by one category prior to your Diplomacy check. Of course, if you're found to be lying, this will almost certainly cause the judge's attitude to shift to hostile or unfriendly.

In this style of court, defendants are rarely allowed to use advocates; the justice will wish to judge the truth of your words, and an advocate could evade the effects of truth-telling spells by simply being unaware of the facts of the case — as far as your advocate is concerned, she isn't lying if she says you're innocent.

Once the justice has made his decision, it's final. There is no process of appeal. The only force that could intervene would be a direct act of the god himself — a sign that the justice has intentionally turned against his faith.

Access to truth-telling spells gives a theocratic justice an excellent chance of determining whether you're actually guilty or innocent of the crimes of which you are accused. But as always, it's important to note that innocence will not always save you — just as guilt will not necessarily condemn you. The justice is acting on behalf of his god, and seeking to do what's best for his people (at least, if he's honest). If you are an outsider and an unbeliever, it may be better for the community to use you as a scapegoat, to set the minds of the faithful at ease — and to deal with the true culprit in a quieter manner.

DIVINE INTERPRETATION

In many societies, a justice is not seen as the direct voice of god. Instead, it's her job to interpret the

divine laws that have been handed down through scripture or oral tradition — the words of the prophets, the saints, and the gods themselves. In many ways, this is similar to secular common law — except that the traditions that the justice draws upon are the laws of god, not those of men.

As with any trial, the first step in a court of divine interpretation is to establish the facts of the case. The justice will typically listen to the statements of both parties, using magic to verify the facts of the matter. Advocates cannot be used for these initial statements.



At the end of these statements, you may make an opposed Diplomacy (or Charisma) check to influence the attitude of the justice, with the same modifiers given in “The Voice of God.” Of course, the judge’s attitude may not matter, if divine law is clear on how your case should be resolved.

After the justice has obtained all of the facts to her satisfaction, the accuser and defender may be given a chance to make an argument on religious grounds. Not every society practices this custom, and it would never be granted to an enemy of the faith. However, advocates can take part in these debates — so if you don’t know a thing about local religion, try to find an advocate who does.



The GM will decide if you are offered this opportunity. If so, you must first make up a myth that you feel supports your actions. You don’t have to go into detail, and you don’t have to worry about matching your story to historical names — but you need a simple fable, moral, or myth that you feel justifies your actions (whether you are innocent or guilty) and fits within the basic precepts of the religion. Once you’ve done this, you and your accuser must make opposed Knowledge (religion) checks; the GM will modify your roll based on the strength and plausibility of your myth. This acts just like a Diplomacy (or Charisma) check, and is used to influence the attitude of the justice.

You can have an advocate stand in for you to make the rolls — but you still need to come up with the story.

Once the justice has heard these pleas, she will reflect on the matter. Ultimately, she must choose a religious text that applies to the situation and provides a punishment or a reason to release the defendant. The judge has a limited set of options; unlike the justice in “The Voice of God,” her decisions can be questioned by the church, and she may lose her position if she makes questionable rulings, not to mention risk divine displeasure. Ultimately it’s up to the GM to decide what options the religion would present and how the judge can interpret the scripture. You cannot question the decisions of the justice — but if there is sufficient time before you suffer the consequences of judgment, a higher-ranking member of the church could question the application of scripture — assuming, of course, she had some reason to intervene on your behalf.

ABSOLUTION

In medieval Europe, the courts of the Catholic Church were empowered to try a wide variety of crimes and mete out punishments. But the point of punishment was not to obtain vengeance against the criminal; rather it was to save him. By committing a crime, the sinner had placed his immortal soul in jeopardy. Only through the intercession of the Church could this stain be removed.

You may not be concerned with the fate of your character’s immortal soul, but perhaps you should be. If the GM wanted to make things difficult, she could declare that a character who dies with the burden of sin on his soul cannot be resurrected by any means — although perhaps some sort of extreme measures could be taken, like personally journeying to the underworld to rescue your friend.

Another possibility is that in a theocratic society, justice might be enforced by the gods as opposed to any mortal agency. If this were the case, then if you committed a criminal act or some other serious sin while within the borders of the theocracy, you might immediately be stricken with divine punishment.



The level of punishment would depend on the nature of the crime. Here are a few



possibilities, ranging from minor to severe. These can be considered the result of a *scourge* spell with a caster level of 26.

- Warts, boils, or discolored skin on the face. This results in a general -1 penalty to Charisma. However, people belonging to the local religion will recognize it as a sign of the divine punishment; this results in a -4 to any Charisma-based skill checks and a basic attitude of unfriendly when dealing with religious NPCs.
- A -2 penalty to any one ability score, representing weakness, general confusion, or a repellent aura.
- Nightmares give you a 50% chance each that you will suffer effects identical to the *nightmare* spell every time you try to sleep.
- Any sort of disease. Such an affliction would not be contagious, even if the disease normally is.
- A 50% chance that any spell you cast will backfire, having the reverse effect or striking you instead of your target.
- Loss of voice is a fitting punishment for a con artist or someone who used magic to commit a crime.
- Loss of sight or hearing, as the *blindness/deafness* spell.
- Any of the effects of *bestow curse*.
- A repellent aura causes all creatures — both animals and sentient beings — to have a hostile attitude towards you. This also lowers your effective Charisma by 6 points.
- Any of the curse effects provided in Chapter Eight. See *scourge* and *malediction* for ideas.

Getting a divine punishment removed is no simple matter. You can have it removed using the

standard techniques for breaking a *scourge*, but the high caster level makes this extremely difficult. However, a priest of the same religion as the god who laid the punishment upon you can absolve you of your guilt by setting a mundane form of punishment. Once you complete your sentence, the gods will be satisfied and the curse will be removed. However, the punishment does have to be appropriate to the crime; if you just happen to have a priest of Khesh in your party, she can't let you off the hook every time Khesh gets mad at you.

In addition to these techniques, a cleric can use *atonement* to intercede with the gods. But in the case of a major transgression a god may not be willing to interfere with the actions of another deity, especially if the afflicted individual is not a follower of the god providing the *atonement*. This may result in an increased XP cost to the priest, or an outright failure of the ritual. And while *atonement*, *wish*, or *miracle* can remove the *scourge*, if you have not truly atoned for your sin there is nothing to prevent the god from revisiting his anger upon you the next time you enter his earthly domain.

While powerful magics can negate divine punishment, the simplest answer is to seek out a local priest to absolve you of wrongdoing. Needless to say, in such a society there will be little need for armed guards to maintain the law; who needs guards when you have gods? So if you're a rogue visiting a theocratic nation and there seem to be a few too many easy opportunities for profit, well, you might want to keep your hands in your own pockets!



TRIAL BY ORDEAL

Theocratic courts will often turn to trial by ordeal. The concept of the ordeal is that the fate of the accused is placed in the hands of the gods themselves — either literally, as in the case of a combat to the death, or figuratively, if the accused is asked to perform a miracle. The idea is that the gods will protect the innocent from harm, and ensure that the guilty are punished.



In some societies — especially chaotic ones — trial by ordeal could be the only form of law. A chaotic evil nation dedicated to a god of War and Strength could easily make trial by combat the basis for any sort of dispute. In lawful societies, it's more likely to be a supplemental form of trial. Under the voice of god system, a justice could choose to set an ordeal instead of making a ruling himself. Under a system of divine interpretation, the scriptures could insist on ordeals for specific types of crimes.

Trial by ordeal was a well-known practice in medieval Europe. However, a number of the traditional ordeals don't really fit into a world of magic. For example, one ordeal involved the accused carrying a red-hot iron rod for a certain distance, after which his hands were bandaged; after three days, the bandages would be removed, and if the burns were healed than the accused was clearly innocent. But in a fantasy world where a cleric could slip in and heal the wounds for you, odds are that ordeals would be a little more dramatic. Here are a few ideas for trial by ordeal, with suggestions for the types of gods who would use each ordeal.

TRIAL BY COMBAT



Trial by combat is one of the most common forms of ordeal. While it's especially appropriate for gods of War or Strength, many domains can fit within this form of trial. With Luck or Protection, will the god shield you from your enemy or grant you the luck you need? With Death or Destruction, can you prove yourself to be the vessel of the god's power? The principle is that if the deity is on your side, you can't possibly lose.

Most people think of trial by combat as a simple fight to the death — a trial that gives a significant edge to the well-armed and armored warrior. However, there are many variations of trial by combat, including rules that are unique to each religion. Here are a few things to consider:

- Trial by combat doesn't always have to be to the death. It could be to first blood, to serious injury,

to unconsciousness, or until one combatant yields. However, if you are the defendant and you lose the ordeal, your guilt has just been proven; if the ordeal itself is not the punishment, then a worse fate is probably in store for you.

- Combatants will rarely get to use their own equipment for a trial by combat. More often than not, the battle will be fought with the favored weapon of the god in question — which can be a problem if it's an exotic weapon you're unfamiliar with. Armor may be provided, or the battle may be fought without it. In certain situations, the sides may be intentionally unbalanced; the champion representing the court may receive better equipment or armor. After all, if the gods are on the side of the defendant she can't lose, right?
- The use of magic may be prohibited as part of trial by combat, or it may be allowed. Generally, a cleric or paladin who follows the local faith will be allowed to invoke the favor of the god who is supposedly judging the combat; but calling on the power of a heathen god may be an automatic admission of guilt. On the other hand, in some secular societies magic may be an accepted weapon; in a nation ruled by sorcerers, magic may be the *only* weapon combatants are allowed to use.
- If you truly are innocent of the crime you have been accused of and the GM believes the god would take an interest, she may grant you a boon.



At the GM's discretion, you may gain a sacred (or profane) bonus of +1 to +5 to AC, saves, and attack and damage rolls. On the other hand, if the god is not on your side, your opponent could receive this bonus.

The GM always has the final say in this matter; more often than not, the gods will leave the matter to your skill, wits, and the luck of your dice.

- Depending on the nature of the god, the combat could be fought under unusual circum-



stances. A goddess of water could demand that the combat be fought in a room that was slowly filling with water, while a god of fire could have pits of flame scattered about the arena. If you are being tried under the eyes of a nature god, you might have to fight wild animals instead of human opponents; in this case you might not be allowed any weapons or armor.

- A battle will usually occur in a restricted area — either a sealed arena, or a designated field of battle, like a ring. Leaving the area is an automatic admission of guilt; if the trial was supposed to be to the death, you will be executed on the spot.

The church will generally have a champion on hand to represent the god in battle. If you're in a large community, you may be able to find a mercenary champion who will represent you in a trial by combat; however, if the battle is to the death, the mercenary will need to be well paid for his efforts. Such a champion could be a cynic who doesn't believe in the power of the gods; if not, he will need to be convinced of your innocence before he will be willing to fight on your behalf.

TRIAL BY ELEMENT

If a god is dedicated to a particular force of nature, then that element could serve as the judge of the accused. A few possibilities:

- You could be dropped into a deep pool and left to keep your head above water for an extended period of time.



Assuming that you're dealing with still water and just have to keep afloat, this only requires a Swim check with a DC of 5. If your modified Swim score (combining Strength modifier, encumbrance or armor penalties, and ranks in the skill) is at least +4, you shouldn't have to make regular per-round rolls. However, for every hour you need to stay afloat you must make a Swim check (DC

20) or suffer 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and become fatigued. In addition, if you're afloat in salt water or otherwise tainted liquid, after a day has passed you will begin to suffer from dehydration. This requires you to make a Constitution check (DC 10, +1 for each previous check) once per hour, suffering 1d6 nonlethal damage for each failed check.

In all likelihood the priests will strip you of armor before throwing you in the water — but if you can't swim, things could be bad.

- You might be manacled to a rock in the wilderness and left for wild animals to feed upon. This really is between you and the gods; basically, the question is what shows up in the time that you're out there. If you have Wild Empathy, you may be able to “talk” your way out of hostile encounters; otherwise, hope that you don't run into predators. Thirst and exposure to the elements are also serious dangers.
- You could be placed in a chamber and exposed to extreme temperatures.



This requires you to make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) every 10 minutes; failure results in 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. If you become unconscious, you suffer 1d4 points of normal damage every 10 minutes, with no saving throw.

These are just a few examples. As with trial by combat, the GM may decide to give you a sacred bonus to checks or saves if the gods truly are on your side.

TRIAL OF LUCK

The followers of a god of chaos might truly leave your fate up to chance. For example, you might have to spin an enormous wheel, marked with different punishments; the results might look something like this:

D20	Result
1	Death by the sword
2	Death by drowning
3	Death by stoning
4	Death by burning
5	Loss of a leg
6	Loss of an arm
7	Loss of wealth and property
8	Loss of physical possessions
9	Facial scarring
10	Loss of ears
11	Loss of tongue
12	Exile or enforced pilgrimage
13	Execution of closest relative
14–15	Public humiliation
16–18	Freedom
19	Freedom and gift of gold
20	Freedom and position within society

Simpler options might involve a shell game or “pick a card” system of determining punishments. Needless to say, a society that used such a system of justice would be quite bizarre!

TRIAL OF SKILL

In a peaceful society trial by combat would be highly inappropriate. Instead, the defendant could be set a challenge of skill. This could involve a champion of the church, or it could be a challenge that only involves the defendant. A few examples:

- A debate against a church champion, before a jury selected from the community.



Using opposed Diplomacy checks, can you convince the jury of your innocence?

In many ways, this is not unlike a traditional modern trial. The expanded debate system presented in *Dynasties & Demagogues* is ideally suited to this task.

- You could be given a set amount of time to solve a riddle or a puzzle (such as the Gordian knot). A god of thieves might present you with a series of locks to

pick, or you might be tied up and given a short period of time in which to free yourself.

- You might have to play a game with a church champion.



A god of Trickery or Luck could use a game like poker; a goddess of Knowledge would be more likely to use Chess, or a similar game of strategy and skill.

- You may be called upon to defeat a church champion in a test of strength: arm wrestling, tug-of-war, or holding weights aloft for an extended period of time are all possibilities.



Tug-of-war could be resolved as an extended grapple. Holding weights could require a Strength check (DC 10, +1 per previous check) every minute, with the first to drop the weights being the loser.

OTHER TRIALS

The possibilities for ordeals are virtually endless. You might have to walk slowly down a path of red-hot coals. You could have to reach into an urn of black stones and pull out the single white one. Perhaps you're forced to go without food for a week. Whatever the challenge is, there should be something that links it to the god who will be judging the contest. In extreme cases, there may be no way to come out ahead in a trial; if the judge is a god of death, then it may be that by dying you prove your innocence (passing on to a justly deserved afterlife) and if you live you simply prove your guilt. In such a situation, escape may be your only hope!

Depending on the nature of the religion and the crime, you may or may not be allowed to appoint a champion to take the challenge in your place; ultimately this is up to the GM. As with trial by combat, in most ordeals you will be stripped of your own gear; if you need equipment it will be provided by the church.

AGENTS OF DIVINE LAW

Many of the classes presented in previous chapters can easily find a home in the service of the church. The spellbane and magehunter fight the influences of dark spirits. The inquisitor exposes the guilty so that justice can be done. And the tasks of the justice and the minister are just as important in a theocratic society as in a monarchy or republic. This section presents two new classes that are ideally suited for use in a theocratic campaign. The lawkeeper is a sacred guardian empowered to uphold the laws of the church and to combat heresy wherever it appears. The god's eye is a spy in the service of the church — a sly observer equally adept at ferreting out corruption and heresy. This section concludes with information for traditional clerics interested in following the path of justice.

THE LAWKEEPER

A paladin is a divine warrior, empowered by the gods to seek out evil in all its forms. The lawkeeper is another form of sacred warrior — a consecrated fighter dedicated to maintaining order and enforcing the laws of his god. A lawkeeper is not called as a paladin is, but must be chosen by his church; he undergoes a series of tests and rituals to prove his devotion to the law and his gods.

Lawkeepers tend to be grim and serious — crime and heresy never sleep, and the job of the lawkeeper is never done. As the role of the lawkeeper is specifically to apprehend heretics and fugitives from divine justice, a lawkeeper will rarely be part of an adventuring party; however, a lawkeeper may accompany an inquisitor or itinerant justice during her travels, acting both as guardian and as the hand of justice when force is required.



NEW PRESTIGE CLASS: THE LAWKEEPER

A lawkeeper must be a skilled warrior with absolute dedication to the laws of the church. Unlike the paladin, a lawkeeper can be of any lawful alignment. Where a lawful good lawkeeper strives to protect the people of the community, a lawful evil lawkeeper is more likely to be an oppressive agent of the church; a lawful neutral lawkeeper will simply be an impartial servant of the law.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To become a lawkeeper, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Alignment: Any lawful

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Knowledge (law): 2 ranks

Knowledge (religion): 2 ranks

Code of Conduct: A lawkeeper serves two masters — the law and the church. To begin with, a lawkeeper must be chosen and consecrated by a religious order. From that point on, he must uphold the laws and principles of his patron church. If he is lawful evil, this may mean following the letter of the law rather than the intent, but if he blatantly breaks the laws he is bound by he loses all lawkeeper spells and special abilities until he atones for his acts (using the *atonement* spell or a similar action).

CLASS SKILLS

The lawkeeper's class skills are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (law) (Int), Knowledge (religion), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Ride (Dex).

Skill points at each level: 2 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the lawkeeper:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A lawkeeper is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with all types of armor, and with shields.

Spells: Beginning at 1st level, a lawkeeper gains the ability to cast divine spells. To cast a spell, the lawkeeper must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. Bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against lawkeeper spells have a DC of 10 + the spell's level + the lawkeeper's Wisdom modifier. A lawkeeper prepares his spells just like a cleric; the spell list is provided below.

Battle Heresy: The primary purpose of the lawkeeper is to capture or eliminate those who have been marked as enemies of the church. As such, the

lawkeeper receives a number of special benefits when he's facing individuals who have been affected by *anathema*, *ban*, or *excommunicate*. These benefits include:

- The lawkeeper may add his Battle Heresy bonus to attack and damage rolls made against marked enemies of his church.
- The lawkeeper may add his Battle Heresy bonus to saving throws made against spells cast by marked heretics.
- The lawkeeper may add his Battle Heresy bonus to any check to oppose Bluff or Disguise checks made by marked heretics. This bonus stacks with Unfailing Eyes.

Battle Heresy is considered to be a sacred bonus (or profane if the lawkeeper is evil). The target must have been marked by a member of the lawkeeper's religion.



Detect Heresy: A lawkeeper can sense the presence of enemies of his church. This is identical to the spell *detect heretic*, except that the range of the effect increases dramatically as the lawkeeper rises in level. This is a spell-like ability that can be used at will.

Divine Grace: Starting at 2nd level, a lawkeeper applies his Charisma modifier (if positive) as a bonus to all saving throws. If the character receives Divine Grace from two separate sources (for example, if he also has paladin levels), the bonuses do not stack; instead he receives an additional +1 bonus to all saving throws. So a paladin/lawkeeper with a 16 Charisma would receive a +4 modifier due to Divine Grace.

Unfailing Eyes: At 2nd level and above, a lawkeeper receives a +2 bonus to Sense Motive checks. He receives a +2 to any Spot check to oppose Disguise, Hide, or Sleight of Hand.

Sense Heresy: No heretic can escape the sight on an experienced lawkeeper. At this point, the lawkeeper need not concentrate in order to detect the presence of the profane; he automatically knows when a heretic (marked by a member of his church) comes within 30 feet of his location. At 4th level, this power is equivalent of using *detect heretic* for one round; the lawkeeper can sense the presence of the unclean, but must use his Detect Heresy ability to get specific information. At 6th level, this mystical sense sharpens and the lawkeeper knows the precise number and location of any heretics within 30 feet. This will reveal invisible

THE LAWKEEPER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Battle Heresy +1, Detect Heretic 60 ft.
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Divine Grace, Unfailing Eyes
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Battle Heresy +2, Detect Heretic 150 ft.
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Sense Heresy 30 ft
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Battle Heresy +3, Detect Heretic 300 ft.
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Sense Heresy 30 ft (location)
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Battle Heresy +4, Detect Heretic 600 ft.
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Battle Heresy +5, Detect Heretic 1200 ft.
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Sense Heresy 60 ft (full nature)

LAWKEEPER SPELLS PER DAY

Level	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1	0	—	—	—
2	1	—	—	—
3	1	0	—	—
4	1	1	—	—
5	1	1	0	—
6	1	1	1	—
7	2	1	1	0
8	2	1	1	1
9	2	2	1	1
10	2	2	2	1

and hidden foes, but any magic that would disrupt *detect heretic* will block the effect. At 10th level the range of this effect is increased to 60 feet; in addition, the lawkeeper receives full information on the nature of the heresy, as if he had used *detect heretic* for three rounds. This is a supernatural ability.

LAWKEEPER SPELL LIST

Lawkeepers choose spells from the following list.

- 1st level — *bless, bless weapon, command, detect poison, divine favor, endure elements, read the guilty face, sleep of the unjust*
- 2nd level — *bull's strength, hold person, follow the bloody trail, mystical manacles, resist energy, shield other, zone of truth*
- 3rd level — *ban, discern lies, dispel magic, greater magic weapon, magic circle against chaos, sending*
- 4th level — *break enchantment, greater command, death ward, freedom of movement, mark of justice, righteous might*

THE GOD'S EYE

A church can have many enemies. Those in power must worry about attacks from infidels and heathens, and also corruption and heresy within their own ranks. In the case of an oppressive theocracy, the high priests must remain constantly alert for those who would stir up rebellion against the church. This has resulted in the development of the god's eye, a sacred spy who watches the faithful and gathers information in the service of her church. Typically, god's eyes are found in evil theocracies, where the church feels the need to watch its followers closely for signs of rebellion or betrayal. But there is still a place for a god's eye in other churches. A god's eye could be assigned to assist an inquisitor in his investigations, to locate a suspected enemy of the gods, or to protect the church from the activities of enemy spies.

A god's eye possesses mystically enhanced powers of stealth and observation. She does not have the raw physical power of a fighter or the rogue's ability to inflict additional damage, but if you have secrets to hide she can be an implacable enemy.



NEW CLERICAL DOMAIN: JUSTICE

Justice is blind; it has no inherent allegiance to good or to evil. The servant of Justice receives divine gifts that allow her to enforce the laws of her land and her church — the power to force truthful testimony from questionable witnesses and to bind the guilty to carry out their sentences. A priest of Justice has the power to mark criminals as enemies of the church, or even cut them off from the powers of the heavens entirely.

JUSTICE DOMAIN

Deities: Any god concerned with law or justice.

Granted Power: Knowledge (law) is a class skill. Add +1 to the saving throw DC of any Justice domain spell that you cast.

JUSTICE DOMAIN SPELLS

1 Command. One subject obeys 1-word command for 1 round.

2 Zone of truth. Subjects within range cannot lie.

3 Indelible mark. Places a permanent mark on the victim.

4 Lesser geas. Commands subject of 7 HD or less.

5 Mark of justice. Designates action that will trigger curse on subject.

6 Geas/quest. As *lesser geas*, plus it affects any creature.

7 Greater mark of justice. Designates action that will trigger *malediction* on subject.

8 Scourge. Places one of a variety of curses on the subject.

9 Imprisonment. Entombs subject beneath the earth.

An evil deity will grant *painful truth* in place of *zone of truth*. A cleric with the Justice domain can also prepare a specialized form of *freedom* as a 9th-level domain spell; this restricted version of *freedom* can only be used to release those *imprisoned* by another cleric of the same faith.

 NEW PRESTIGE CLASS:

THE GOD'S EYE

A god's eye is a spy in the service of the church. As such, god's eyes often begin their lives as rogues, investigators, or bounty hunters, eventually hearing the call to take up religious orders. A god's eye needs to be sharp-eyed and quick-witted. Combat is not her specialty, but she must be prepared to get out of the way of a blade if she's caught in the open.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

To become a god's eye, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Gather Information: 8 ranks

Hide: 8 ranks

Listen: 4 ranks

Knowledge (religion): 2 ranks

Code of Conduct: A god's eye is a servant of a particular deity. She must strictly adhere to the doctrine of her faith, and she must obey the orders of those higher than her in the hierarchy of her church. If she acts against the teachings of her faith, she loses all god's eye spells and special abilities until she atones for her sins (using the *atone-ment* spell or a similar action).

CLASS SKILLS

The god's eye's class skills are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide

 THE GOD'S EYE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special Abilities
1	+0	+0	+2	+0	Shadows of Divinity
2	+1	+0	+3	+1	Soul Mark +2
3	+2	+1	+3	+1	
4	+3	+1	+4	+2	Soul Mark +3
5	+3	+1	+4	+2	Bonus Feat
6	+4	+2	+5	+3	Soul Mark +4
7	+5	+2	+5	+3	
8	+6	+2	+6	+4	Soul Mark +5
9	+6	+3	+6	+4	Bonus Feat
10	+7	+3	+7	+5	Soul Mark +6

 GOD'S EYE SPELLS PER DAY

Level	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
1	0	—	—	—
2	1	—	—	—
3	1	0	—	—
4	1	1	—	—
5	1	1	0	—
6	1	1	1	—
7	2	1	1	0
8	2	1	1	1
9	2	2	1	1
10	2	2	2	1

(Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Lock (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill points at each level: 6 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the god's eye:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A god's eye is proficient with all simple weapons, the sap, the hand crossbow, the rapier, and the favored weapon of her god. She is proficient with the use of light armor, but not with shields.

Spells: Beginning at 1st level, a god's eye gains the ability to cast divine spells. To cast a spell, the god's eye must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. Bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against god's eye spells have a DC of 10 + the spell's level + the god's eye's Wisdom modifier. A god's eye prepares her spells just like a cleric; the spell list is provided below.

Shadows of Divinity: The faith of the god's eye conceals her from her prey. She receives a divine (or profane, if she serves an evil god) bonus to any Hide or Move Silently check. This bonus is equal to 1 + half her god's eye level.

Soul Mark: A god's eye can call on the powers of her god to link her soul to that of her target, giving her tremendous insight into the location, thoughts, and actions of her marked prey. This has the following effects:

- The god's eye adds her current Soul Mark bonus to all Sense Motive, Spot, and Listen checks made against the marked target. She may also add this bonus to any Gather Information or Survival check she makes to track her target.
- If the god's eye takes a total defense action in combat, she may add her Soul Mark bonus to her AC against any attack made by a marked target. If she fights defensively, she receives half of the bonus

against attacks made by marked targets. These bonuses are divine (or profane) and stack with the usual AC bonuses for defensive actions.

- When she uses *scrying*, the god's eye is considered to be familiar with her marked targets (inflicting a –5 penalty on the target's Will save).
- Finally, the saving throw DC of any divination spell that the god's eye casts on a marked target is increased by the value of the mark.

A god's eye can have one marked target for every point of Soul Mark bonus that she possesses; a 2nd-level god's eye could have two marks at once, for example. Setting a mark is a standard action. The god's eye must be within 60 feet of her target and have a clear line of sight. A god's eye can break her link to a marked target as a free action, but she must wait for six hours before she can mark a new target using the vacated slot.

The Soul Mark ability can only be used against humanoid creatures.

Bonus Feat: At 5th and 9th levels, a god's eye can pick an extra feat from the following list: Alertness, Careful Listener, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Hard to Fool, Improved Disarm, Investigator, Skill Focus (Gather Information), Skill Focus (Hide), Skill Focus (Sense Motive), Slippery Tongue, Stealthy.

The god's eye must meet the prerequisites of any bonus feat she wishes to take.

GOD'S EYE SPELL LIST

God's eyes choose spells from the following list.

- 1st level — *cloud the guilty mind*, *comprehend languages*, *detect heretic*, *detect magic*, *direct conversation*, *disguise self*, *message*, *mystical void*, *read the guilty face*
- 2nd level — *cat's grace*, *cloak of silence*, *detect thoughts*, *eagle's splendor*, *final vision*, *nondetection*, *see the face*, *sending*, *undetectable alignment*
- 3rd level — *ban*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *darkvision*, *discern lies*, *invisibility*, *locate object*
- 4th level — *detect scrying*, *freedom of movement*, *greater invisibility*, *locate creature*, *scrying*, *tongues*



IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

A shared religion can be an excellent foundation for an adventuring party. A powerful church can make an excellent patron, and can provide you with clear goals and the satisfaction of working for the gods. If the world is threatened by the forces of darkness, a church may be the only force with the power and knowledge to combat the rising evil. As agents of the church, you can be on the forefront of the battle.

All of the party ideas presented in the previous chapters — a group of investigators, bounty hunters, or the itinerant justice and his retinue — can easily be converted to a religious background. A lawkeeper or god's eye can also make a valuable addition to any of these groups. This section presents a few additional ideas for campaigns that could center around a friendly church or theocracy. Either idea is well-suited to a specially tailored party, but either one could be adapted to work with your current adventuring group.

THE INQUISITION

The Inquisition is normally thought of as a time of horror and torture. But what if you lived in a world where it truly was a war of survival? This would be a realm where demon cults plot to summon their unholy princes back to this plane. Where doppelgangers and vampires have infiltrated the highest levels of society, and are steering society to its doom. Where wererats and werewolves lurk in the shadows, spreading death and disease among the innocent. In such a world, the Inquisition is the only thing standing between the innocent and the abyss. As agents of the church, your holy mission is to track down these hidden threats to civilization — and once you expose the forces of darkness, you must overcome them.

If your existing party follows a prominent religion, the church could simply recruit you into the battle against the darkness. Otherwise you'll want to put together a party designed for this purpose. This is another scenario that is better suited to mid- to high-level characters as opposed to starting adventurers; between vampires, demons, and wercreatures, you may be facing powerful enemies. Group members might include:



NEW DEITY: THE SILVER BOOK

Alignment: Lawful Neutral

Domains: Knowledge, Justice, and Law

Typical Worshippers: Justices, politicians

Description:

"In the first days of the world the gods fought one another, and the battles in the heavens were mirrored on the earth. There was no justice, no order; all was chaos and confusion. Finally the creators of the world gathered the lesser gods before them. The lords of creation brought forth a silver book, and on its pages they inscribed the laws that would govern both gods and men."

This is the doctrine of the priests of the Silver Book. According to legend, the Book outlasted the gods who created it; it has existed through many ages of creation. With every age, new gods have added to the book; it contains all the laws

that have ever been and ever will be. The priests of the Book believe that laws are the cornerstone of civilization, regardless of what those laws are. These priests spend most of their time traveling, studying the laws of different nations and helping young kingdoms develop new laws. They are widely respected as impartial mediators, and in some kingdoms priests of the Book are authorized to act as itinerant justices.

The priests of the Silver Book worship the Book itself; while inanimate, the Book is a sentient force and the embodiment of the law. The Silver Book has no overt agenda; it is a resource, a source of order and inspiration that will guide the world for many ages to come. The symbol of the deity is the Silver Book itself. Its favored weapon is a quarter-staff with a silver band on each end.

The Priest — Needless to say, someone should directly represent the local church. The power to turn back undead creatures could also prove to be critical when fighting necromantic cults, and the ability to heal and cure can be equally vital given the dangers of the job.

The Holy Warriors — Both paladins and lawkeepers can be extremely valuable as agents of the Inquisition. Someone needs to be able to go toe-to-toe with the forces of darkness. The paladin is able to face evil in any form; the lawkeeper specializes in heretics and other designated enemies of the church. Together, they can locate and overcome almost any force of evil.

The Spy — When you're trying to expose hidden evil, you need someone who can find it. A god's eye fits right into the religious fold, and her ability to mark her enemies can be very useful when it comes to tracking the enemy. However, an investigator, rogue, or even a bounty hunter can serve just as well in this role.

The Inquisitor — Given that it's called "the Inquisition," you may want to have an inquisitor on hand. A cleric could do double duty as an inquisitor. Alternately, the character could start off as a sorcerer or wizard — but if the society you're in fears arcane magic, you may just have to work with the divine.

The Spellbane — When you're trying to fight cultists, demons, liches, and the like, it helps to have someone who can negate dark magics. A spellbane is the obvious choice, but a magehunter can work just as well, especially if you're short on muscle. If you can't fit either one into the group, you'll just have to make sure you get those sacred warriors into close combat as quickly as possible!

As powerful agents of the church, you'll have considerable resources backing you up. On the other hand, it's always possible that while you're fighting to save the world, the common people don't realize the true nature of your heroic actions. Creatures like vampires and doppelgangers are sly manipulators; they could turn the public against the Inquisition, causing those you are trying to save to fear and hate you. Alternately, you could be doing

everything possible to prevent the public from realizing the true danger they're in. In either case, you may have to fight your battles in secret, respected only by your brethren in the church.

THE CRUSADES

Where the Inquisition is a secret battle — a war against the heretics and horrors hidden within the shadows of the church — the crusades are outright war. In a world of magic, control of holy sites and relics can have a tremendous impact on the shape of the world. If the forces of darkness begin to seize control of sacred shrines or major artifacts, all loyal followers of the church may be called to fight in the service of the gods. You could be placed in control of a large armed force, or you and your fellow adventurers might be used as a small elite unit sent on dangerous missions to reclaim stolen artifacts or to eliminate cabals of enemy wizards.

A crusade can easily incorporate your existing party of adventurers. If you do create a new party of crusaders, it may be interesting to focus on purely religious characters — clerics, paladins, lawkeepers, and perhaps a god's eye — pitted against an enemy that relies entirely on arcane magic!

While a crusade against a truly evil foe can be a black and white situation, things can certainly be more morally ambiguous. It may be that a sacred shrine provides prosperity to whatever nation controls it. Your church has held the disputed shrine for centuries, and now a neighboring king feels that it's his country's turn; according to their myths and history, they have an equal right to the shrine. Perhaps a terrible plague is coming, and the shrine will protect one of the two countries. In such a case, both sides may technically be good, and both simply want to protect their people. Will you fight in such a war? What if your own friends and family are threatened by the plague? What if your party includes people from both countries? Is there an answer besides violence — and if so, can you find it in time?



LAW IN A LAWLESS WORLD

“Remind me — what did we do this time?” Shayn whispered to Garret.

“From what I can gather, you’re not allowed to wear a sword on your left hip.”

“Of course. That makes perfect sense. I suppose they’re going to cut off our left legs?”

Garret sighed. “Actually, that does appear to be the plan.”

There are many forms of chaotic society. On the one hand, you can have outright anarchy: a society with no structure whatsoever. But in practice this is quite rare; as soon as people begin to congregate they start to make rules, even if these are as simple as “I’ve got the biggest rock, so I’m in charge.” In a chaotic society, systems of law may be extremely unstable, but there are still rules you can break if you try hard enough.

In addition to the chaotic society, there are nations or civilizations that may appear to have no organized government, yet still possess strong cultural traditions. In a territory held by an alliance of clans, the laws may change every five miles. But again, there may still be taboos that can be broken.

It’s impossible to describe all the possible permutations of chaotic or anarchic societies. What this chapter presents is a variety of unusual civilizations, to serve as examples and alternatives to the more traditional systems outlined in Chapters Four and Five. It’s up to the GM to decide if any of these ideas fit into her game world. But at least you can get an idea of what might be waiting for you in the wilds.

THE WARLORD STATE

Throughout history, there have always been those who have preferred to rule by the sword instead of by

divine right or popular support. Most orcish tribes respect strength over blood lineage, and they enforce their rule over the weaker goblinoids through force of arms. Among human barbarians leadership often passes from father to son, but it’s not uncommon for entire bloodlines to be wiped out in internecine feuds. Even civilized nations can collapse into the chaos of military rule; many an emperor has fallen prey to his own army once he has run out of neighbors to conquer, leaving a morass of generals and legions battling over the corpse of the realm.

In a warlord state, all political power is derived from military might. Groups of warriors join the banner of a powerful leader who derives his power from his personal strength (or in rarer cases, his skills as a tactician). Sometimes a single leader gains control over a vast territory, while other times lesser warlords engage in never-ending battles for territory.



ALIGNMENT

The vast majority of warlord states are chaotic in nature. A nation ruled purely by military power is inherently unstable; if a powerful leader manages to establish a successful dynasty, the society will shift towards a lawful alignment. Warlords rarely have any interest in managing the daily affairs of a nation; the common folk are usually left to produce crops and keep the society afloat. Depending on the alignment of the lord, his warriors may be revered or feared as they are either the protectors of the people or a scourge on the land.

Chaotic Evil — In a chaotic evil society, the common folk live in constant fear of the lords who rule the land. Warbands take whatever they want, pillaging and killing those who interfere. A warlord rules through fear, and typically holds power only as long as he can hold a blade.

Chaotic Good — Chaotic good warlords are more likely to have the support of the people; the warlord may not have any sort of traditional claim to the land, but she's seen as a protector of the realm. The warlord typically has no patience for complex systems of law, but she will try to do what's best for her people and see that justice is done. In a chaotic good society, a warlord is unlikely to be assassinated by her allies. But the loyalty of her subjects does not extend to her children, and her death may trigger a vicious war of succession.

Neutral — Neutral and chaotic neutral warlords stand between these two extremes. A neutral warlord will expect tribute from the commoners who share his territory. If he doesn't receive his due, he'll take it by force, but he will not be as wantonly cruel as his evil counterpart. Chaotic neutral warlords are often driven by impulse and the thirst for glory, and are given to extravagant gestures of generosity or rage.

THE LAW

In this society, all justice — such as it is — flows from the warlord. This invariably results in a double standard, as the members of the warlord's retinue enjoy more privileges than the common people. Should you be accused of harming a member of the lord's warband, you can expect harsh penalties. In a good society, commoners may be able to appeal to the warlord for justice, especially if they have suffered at the hands of outsiders; in an evil society, the common folk have no one to turn to.

Justice within a warlord society tends to be harsh and swift. In a malevolent nation, the lord or his representative will make a judgment without hearing any pleas; expect a lot of executions and amputations. An unstable warlord may also present you with unpleasant options. For example, if you fight to the death against one of your fellow adventurers, the victor can go free.

Benevolent warlords will often turn to trial by ordeal to resolve accusations or questions of guilt. Trial by combat and trials of strength are the most common forms of ordeal. Death and disfigurement remain

popular punishments, although exile or public humiliation are possible alternatives for minor crimes. A noble warlord will try to see that justice is done, but when it's the blood of one of her own against the lives of strange adventurers, the odds may be stacked against you.

In a warlord state, aggressive behavior is rarely punished. Far from being a crime, a drunken brawl may be seen as a friendly gesture. Crimes of property vary considerably based on the values of the society; as a general rule, people don't have much to steal. The greatest crimes are generally assassination and slander; murder is rarely considered murder if the victim has a chance to defend himself, and theft of honor is far more serious than theft of gold.

ADVENTURES

Warlord states are wild and dangerous territories. Bloodshed is commonplace; even in a nation ruled by a benevolent warlord, bandits and would-be tyrants tend to sprout out of the woodwork with alarming frequency. You may be called upon to escort a caravan through a warlord's territory, or you might be sent to put a stop to a rash of border raids, either through violence or negotiation. Another possibility is particularly appropriate when warlords have seized control of territory once held by an ancient empire. If a powerful kingdom collapsed into chaos and violence, you may learn of ancient vaults or treasure hoards hidden in the corpse of the fallen kingdom. Can you avoid both the forces of the warlords and the deadly guardians of the ancient artifacts?

If you're looking for another direction for a mini-campaign, you could assume the role of a would-be warlord and her loyal retinue. Perhaps you are the last descendant of the ancient line of kings that ruled the land before it fell into chaos. Can you defeat the rival warlords and unite the feuding clans, restoring the kingdom to its former glory? If you begin to win clans to your banner, you may have to worry about treachery on the part of neighboring nations who don't want to see a return of the old kingdom!



STRUCTURED CHAOS

It's possible to have a chaotic society that appears to be extremely well-organized. Typically, this occurs when a powerful lawful nation is falling into decline but hasn't collapsed just yet. Imagine an empire that has existed for hundreds of years. It has legions of soldiers, a complex system of courts and churches ... and a mad emperor. By tradition, the emperor is the voice of the gods on earth; there is no system for deposing him, and he's a charismatic leader who still has the love of the citizens. But his word is law, and his bizarre whims are making the empire a stranger place by the hour. Perhaps he starts by declaring new holy days, or appoints his wolfhound to high office. As time passes, he begins creating new laws: all foreigners must wear green; on Tuesdays, no one is allowed to wear shoes; everyone whose name begins with "J" must donate all of their worldly possessions to the church. No matter how ridiculous they are, these laws are enforced by the highly organized system of guards and justices.

This sort of society can be extremely unpredictable and dangerous. On the surface it looks like a sane and prosperous nation. But you never know what insanity the next royal decree will bring. Before you know it, you may find yourself hauled before a magistrate for eating soup after noon.



ALIGNMENT

Typically, this sort of society appears when a formerly lawful society slips into chaos. The power center itself is chaotic, but the populace is largely lawful or neutral; thus they continue to obey the laws of the land even as those laws become increasingly more erratic and illogical. Alternately, the society itself could be lawful, but simply burdened with bizarre laws due to the decrees of past emperors. By tradition, a law cannot be removed or changed once it has been made, so the insane laws have remained even though leveler heads now prevail.

A chaotic good leader may actually be trying to do what's best for his people — he's just having trouble determining the proper course of action. Perhaps he's trying to create

the perfect civilization, one law at a time; he has a vision in his mind, and the trip there is just a very strange one. Such a ruler probably won't condemn people to death for failing to cut their hair or follow the daily dress code, but failure to conform to the current laws could certainly result in fines or public humiliation.

A chaotic evil ruler could be insane, or she could simply be drunk with power; she has no long-term goals, and is simply playing with the laws of her ancient kingdom like a child with blocks. She might sentence people to death for wearing white or speaking elven. Once she tires of playing with her citizens, such a ruler could easily start a war or take other dangerous actions.

THE LAW

The structured chaotic society has a highly organized justice system, with a network of royal courts, sheriffs, and itinerant justices. However, that system is beginning to unravel under the strain that's being put on it. The justices are having an increasingly difficult time keeping track of all the different decrees of the ruler and convincing themselves to enforce them. However, the word of the ruler is law, and that's all there is to it.

This system is a variation of the legislative and common law systems described in Chapter Four. The ruler has absolute power to set the laws (similar to legislative law), but the justices must follow these laws to the letter (making it more like common law or the theocratic system of divine interpretation). In most cases you'll be allowed to make your plea before the justice, using the systems outline in the previous two chapters. The problem is that the laws are so strange that you may be unquestionably guilty, and a law may leave a justice no room for personal leniency; if the law declares that all elves should have their ears cut off, and you happen to be an elf, there's little room for argument.

The nature of crime in such a society has no bearing on traditional society. A few possible crimes:

- Being a member of a particular race.
- Speaking a certain language.
- Carrying a weapon.

- Wearing a certain type of clothing.
- Singing.
- Bathing.
- Having facial hair.

All of these could also be reversed; perhaps it's a crime *not* to speak elven, or *not* to have a beard (hopefully, women will be excused from this one). Punishments can be equally bizarre, ranging from deadly to trivial.

ADVENTURES

Whenever possible, it's best to simply avoid chaotic societies. However, there are many possible adventures that could draw you into this kind of strange realm. You could be sent to negotiate with the mad emperor, in an attempt to prevent a war. If you're investigators, you could be asked to find the cause of the ruler's strange behavior; perhaps he has been cursed, possessed, or replaced by a doppelganger. Alternately, a rebel party could seek your help in assassinating or deposing the madman, in order to restore sanity to the kingdom.

THE POWER OF TRADITION

It is possible to have a stable and structured community that doesn't actually have a leader. Common law is based on tradition and precedent; a society may have developed a system of laws based on popular consensus as opposed to the rulings of justices or kings. As a general rule, such a society needs some underlying structure. Even if the law is enforced by the people as opposed to appointed justices, there still need to be recognizable power groups that form the basic building blocks of society.

A basic example of a traditional society would be a region dominated by powerful families. At one point this may have been a warlord state, with each clan enforcing its rule over the region through military

might. But over generations, the clans have settled into peaceful coexistence. No one clan claims power over any other; within the clans, age and wisdom are respected, but there is no single ruler. Everyone has a voice — and if those voices are not entirely equal, that too is a matter of tradition.



ALIGNMENT

A society that's held together by traditions will lean towards lawful or neutral alignments. Chaotic nations are more likely to fall back to the rule of warlords or into total anarchy; a chaotic population lacks the respect for the law that a traditional society needs to survive. Likewise, evil nations rarely hold onto this style of government for long; an evil family will generally desire more power and control, and attempt to seize it through force or guile. With that said, it is possible that you will encounter a realm in the midst of this process. An evil clan may be searching for a way to seize power, but at the moment it lacks the strength to challenge the other families in the region.

In a lawful nation, respect for tradition means everything; the citizens consider the laws to be what holds their society together. In a neutral nation, the traditions are seen more as guidelines; they provide a framework, but it is up to the citizens to use wisdom to fill in the gaps, and to create new traditions in situations where the old laws no longer apply.

THE LAW

Traditional justice has much in common with common law or divine interpretation, as outlined in the previous two chapters. The punishments for specific crimes and transgressions are clearly dictated by the past experiences of the clan. One of the critical differences is that there is rarely a designated justice; instead, the heads of the local households meet in council to debate the case and the fate of the accused. This council acts as both judge and jury; they come to a conclusion about the facts of the case, and then rule on it in accordance with tradition.





Typically, you will be allowed to speak in your own defense in a system of traditional justice. Advocates, however, are rarely allowed. A Diplomacy roll can be used to influence the opinion of your judges, as outlined in previous chapters. However, in the less-structured traditional system, Bluff can also play a roll. A successful Bluff check — opposed by your judges' Sense Motive rolls and modified based on the strength of the evidence against you — will shift the judges' attitudes towards you up by one category.

While they do not have rulers as such, traditional societies may make use of a *wergild* or oath-price system — placing a value in gold on the life and honor of each member of the community, based on his role in society. A child may be worth 3 gp, a laborer 30 gp, a skilled craftsman or warrior could be worth 150 gp, and a community leader might command a price of up to 750 gp. The community might then settle disputes by swearing oaths, as discussed in Chapter Four; the side with the highest combined oath-price wins the debate. Alternately, if a matter cannot be settled, a community could turn to trial by ordeal. Odds are that the trial would be non-lethal and merely designed to settle disputes, after which the accused would go free or be punished, in accordance with the outcome of the trial.

It should be noted that in a society that makes use of *wergild*, the price is based on the wealth of the community. In other words, killing a skilled craftsman is supposed to be a significant cost. If you show up with tens of thousands of gold pieces in your pocket, that doesn't mean that you can slaughter a village and then absolve yourself of blame with one flawless gem. *Wergild* is a system of ranking; but in the case of heinous crimes — especially crimes involving foreigners — the community will be likely to demand a more serious punishment. *Wergild* is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

The nature of crime can vary considerably from society to society. In particular, in an area shared by multiple clans, it's highly likely that each family will have its own traditions and views on crime and punishment. Aggressive behavior may be seen as harmless in one village, but the next village over the merest hint of

threatening behavior could buy you a ticket to the stocks. Some clans might see gold as the solution to all disputes, while others might have no interest in it; in an isolated, self-sufficient agrarian society, both fines and crimes of property could be unknown.

ADVENTURES

Traditional societies are generally peaceful. In comparison to the warlord states of crumbling empires, you usually don't have to worry about being attacked without provocation or executed for the color of your hair. However, in a land dominated by a number of different clans, you may be expected to respect the customs of each clan whose territory you pass through. This might mean paying a tax for travel or bringing a gift for the community leaders. You may be expected to stay as a guest for a night, and to show your appreciation for the hospitality of your hosts. In such instances, the main trick is not to break any local taboos while you're visiting. Be careful what you say about peoples' ancestors, look to your host for table manners, and try not to start any fights — unless that seems to be the local custom.



You can pick up the local customs with any of the following skills or abilities: Bardic Lore (DC 20), Knowledge (geography) (DC 20), Knowledge (law) (DC 15), Knowledge (local) (DC 10).

Within a traditional society, you could get drawn into conflicts between neighboring clans. While clans typically get along peacefully, what happens when one clan begins to behave in an unusual manner? Has the clan decided to form a new empire through military might? Is a neighboring nation trying to gain a foothold within one of the clans, in preparation for an invasion? Alternately, a failure to recognize local customs could land you in an unexpected situation. Obviously, it's easy enough to give offense if you don't know the local customs. But perhaps you manage to get married or to adopt an orphan child without realizing what you've done. In either situation, breaking the contract you've unwittingly made would be seen as a grave offense against the community.

LIFE AMONG THE RUINS

It's always possible that you'll find an area where anarchy reigns supreme. While this is probably an extremely unusual form of society, it's more common in areas that have been devastated by war or other disasters. It may be a buffer zone between two powerful kingdoms; neither side has the power to formally lay claim to the territory, but the constant skirmishes between the two great powers prevent the pitiful inhabitants from creating a new society. Or perhaps a powerful monster is responsible; an evil dragon might toy with a community, tearing it down every time the citizens begin to find their feet again. Or a mindless and immensely powerful monster could be wandering aimlessly across the nation; while it is not intentionally evil, it's drawn to outposts of civilization and leaves only ruins in its wake. Until the beast is destroyed, the nation will remain a ruin. Another option is a magical disaster; either the experiment of a wizard gone horribly wrong is responsible, or a divine curse has brought famine, pestilence, and ruin to the region.

Whatever the cause, a ruined civilization will be filled with bands of refugees. If the force that devastated the land is no longer present, the society may slowly rebuild or shift into a warlord state. Otherwise, the survivors will desperately cling to existence. The only law in such a land is the law of survival.



ALIGNMENT

A ruined nation has no organized leadership. It could best be called chaotic neutral, as each different band of refugees will have a different attitude. Good survivors may hope to recreate the former civilization, and are more likely to provide shelter to the weak or helpless. Evil refugees may seek to build a tyrannical powerbase in order to become warlords. Or they may simply be driven by fear and selfish greed, taking whatever they need to survive with no thought for the needs of others. There's no way to predict what you'll run into. And in

many ruined civilizations the refugees will need to keep moving in order to survive, constantly fleeing from the force that devastated the realm. As a result, even if you find trustworthy allies, you may not be able to locate them the next time you pass through the region.

THE LAW

There is no law in a ruined society. Refugees may try to cling to the laws of their old civilization, but there are no justices, no jails, and no stocks. For a member of the community exile is the greatest punishment of all, since it's often tantamount to a death sentence. For the most part, a ruined society can be considered to be in a permanent state of war — life is cheap, and properly belongs to whoever has the strength to hold onto it. The survivors aren't looking for trouble, and they're just as likely to ignore a crime as to risk life and limb trying to punish the criminal. Of course, this is a two-way street; it means that you can steal the necklace from that woman without being called to task, but it also means that no one will care if she murders you to get it back.



If a refuge community does call for a trial, it will typically use some simple form of trial by ordeal, or the leader of the community will hear pleas. As with a traditional society, both Diplomacy and Bluff can be employed in this situation; the leader has ultimate authority, and if you manage to shift his attitude to helpful, odds are that he'll let you go regardless of evidence.

ADVENTURES

The tone of a ruined territory is based on the nature of the force that devastated the area. A land that has been blighted by an ancient curse is quite different from one trapped between two warring nations or suffering the ravages of a dragon. If the inhabitants of the land have been cursed, foreigners may be immune to the effects. But a plague or a





dragon can be as much of a danger to you as to the people of the land.

There are a number of adventuring possibilities in a ruined land. You could put together a party of refugees and play a mini-campaign based on restoring order to the nation. Or your regular band of adventures might be called upon to break the ancient curse or defeat the monster that's stalking the land. And, of course, a shattered kingdom may contain any number of ancient treasures that were lost when the nation fell into ruin. Any of the ideas suggested for a warlord state can also work here.

A SOCIETY OF SORCERERS

While hardly common, this is an interesting variation on a traditional society. Some sages believe that the powers of the sorcerer are derived from dragons — that in the distant past dragons mingled their blood with humanoids, and that their power occasionally resurfaces in the hands of their distant descendents. If this is the case, it appears that the blood has been much diluted; sorcerers are typically quite rare.

But what if there was a region where dragon's blood was strong — where it continued to breed true? A land where *everyone* possessed the innate potential for magic? How do you enforce order in a realm where anyone can throw bolts of lightning or fireballs?

A capable leader might be able to organize these people through pure charisma; if they could join together, an army of sorcerers could be a force to be reckoned with. But in the absence of such a leader, it's more likely that groups of sorcerers would gather together as smaller, independent communities. Like modern nations with nuclear weapons, the devastating magical powers possessed by each clan would be enough to discourage attempts at conquest, both by neighboring sorcerer-clans and larger non-magical nations. At the same time, the small size and simple lifestyle of an individual clan would keep it from seek-

ing to conquer the larger mundane nations. If each clan is peaceful and self-sufficient, and possesses all of the conveniences that magic has to offer, why would they need to risk their lives battling their neighbors?



If the talent for sorcery passes through the blood, then each clan could have certain specialties; one village might have a knack for necromancy, another talent for enchantment or divination. These specialties might form the basis for arranged marriages, as the elders try to bring new talents into their community. Certain clans might consider marriage to foreigners — or even members of other clans — to be a serious crime, potentially weakening the divine blood.

If a village does have a range of talents, then an individual's magical abilities could determine his role within the community, as well. A villager who can cast *mount* might serve as a farrier; *magic missile* and *acid arrow* would be the tools of hunters and soldiers, while illusionists could serve as spies or entertainers.



ALIGNMENT

A society of sorcerers does not have an inherent bent to any particular alignment. An evil society might lean more towards the attitude of a warlord state; instead of ruling by the sword, a sorcerer-warlord could dominate a region with her band of mystical warriors. An alliance of peaceful clans would have more in common with a traditional society; as such, the inhabitants would lean more towards lawful and neutral alignments.

While it would be a very different sort of society, it's easy to imagine a neutral evil monarchy in which the sorcerer elite maintain a tyrannical rule over a population of powerless slaves. Or a theocracy dedicated to a goddess of magic might see sorcerers as the blessed children of the goddess. Or perhaps a ruined society collapsed due to a magical catastrophe; now horrible aberrations roam the blighted landscape, but those refugees who survived the disaster have begun to develop mystical powers.



THE LAW

The system of law within a sorcerous society will duplicate that of the style of nation it most closely resembles. A warlord will mete out judgment on a whim, while a traditional society will hold to the ancient customs of its clans.



One critical difference is that whatever its system of law, a sorcerous society will use magic in its trials. *Detect thoughts, charm person, read the guilty face, detect magical residue, and agony* will all be brought into play as the elders search for the truth.

Regardless of the nature of the society, it's highly likely that crimes against sorcerers will be seen as being far more serious than those against people with mundane blood. As noted above, some might consider miscegenation to be a crime. Physical aggression might be treated more harshly than magical assault — a magical attack might not even be a crime if it was committed against a mundane victim. Of course, the culture would probably have specific laws dealing with the abuse of mystical powers; this idea has been explored in previous chapters.

One thing to consider is how the society views bards, wizards, or for that matter sorcerers from other countries. Are wizards blasphemers attempting to steal the powers of their betters? Or are they to be commended for rising above their mundane blood? Are all sorcerers allies, or are those of other cultures considered to be savages?



Sever from the source would be a common punishment for members of the sorcerous community; the duration of this magical "imprisonment" would vary based on the nature of the crime. The loss of her mystical powers would be a terrible blow to any sorcerer.

ADVENTURES

There are many ways that a culture of sorcerers could be worked into a campaign. Here are a few to consider:

- If you're playing a sorcerer, perhaps you've fled from a sorcerer nation. If so, why did you leave? Were you exiled? Are you avoiding an arranged marriage? Was your family slaughtered in a vicious magical feud? Any of these ideas could give a GM material to work into future adventures.
- A nation of sorcerers has existed in peace for hundreds of years, ignoring the political machinations of the empires and kingdoms that have grown around it. But now a charismatic leader is trying to stir the sorcerers to war, urging them to use their powers to dominate the land. Can you find a way to put a stop to this fire-brand? Or failing that, can you assassinate him and escape with your lives?
- Alternately, a good kingdom is under attack by a terrible force of darkness. The only hope for salvation is the tiny nation of sorcerers on the distant border — but these magi have always remained neutral and aloof. Can you convince them to take part in the current war?
- There is always room for infighting among the clans. Perhaps a clan that specializes in necromancy or enchantment is feared by the others; you're hired to investigate their activities without throwing suspicion on the other clans.
- The idea of the ruined sorcerous kingdom could make an interesting setting for a mini-campaign. Each character should receive at least one sorcerer level in addition to her other levels. The land has been devastated by a mystical conflict, and aberrations and magical beasts roam the realm. Can you restore order to this ravaged world? You could make an entirely new party to use in this setting, or the disaster could occur in your normal campaign; in this case, your GM could assign sorcerer levels and spells to your existing characters. Who needs mutants when you've got magic?

AGAINST THE LAW

“I told you that the Orb would bring us trouble,” Nikkal said.

“Trouble I can handle,” Shayn muttered. “You didn’t say anything about the Black Guard.”

“It seems that the king is a little more sensitive about preserving history than I would have thought. We could always surrender and offer to return the Orb.”

“Not on your life,” Shayn said through gritted teeth. “The border’s not far from here, and I’ll be damned before I spend any more time in a royal court.”

No matter how hard you try, you may find yourself fighting the forces of the law. This could even happen accidentally, if you’re unfamiliar with the customs of the land you’re traveling through or fail to consider the full consequences of your actions. The rest of this chapter looks at cases in which you may knowingly break the law — you might choose to fight against an oppressive system, willfully ignore the law, or become a criminal just by virtue of your existence.

IGNORANCE OF THE LAW

As discussed in Chapter Four, trespassing and theft can take many forms; one man’s dungeon is another’s sacred burial ground, after all. As a traveling adventurer, you’ll be putting yourself into many questionable situations. Are you sure that it’s all right to kill those bandits — or are you going to be expected to bring them to justice? Are dragons considered to be sacred beasts in this land? Have the locals set up a treaty with the tribe of orcs in the mountains — a treaty you may endanger if you destroy that orcish camp?

When traveling you need to be aware that any time you enter an unfamiliar nation, the rules may have changed. There are a variety of ways to learn the most important laws of the land.



As a general rule, you can pick up the basic taboos of a society with any of the following checks: Bardic Lore (DC 20), Knowledge (geography) (DC 20), Knowledge (local) (DC 10), Knowledge (law) (DC 15). If you are in your homeland, you receive a +5 to all of these checks except for Knowledge (local). Knowledge (law) will give you the most specific information about the legal ramifications of an action, possible punishments, systems of trial, and the like; the other skills simply help you to determine “Is this a crime?”

You can also use Gather Information to pick up the general customs. The DC of the check is only 10, but it takes the standard amount of time (a few hours) to perform the check. In addition, if you’re in a backwater village, the local inhabitants may not know all the laws of the land. Of course, if *they* don’t know their own laws, hopefully you won’t get in trouble for breaking them.

In addition to these skills, *augury* or *divination* can both help you determine whether an action is a bad idea. With *augury*, you may not be able to tell if fighting those orcs is unwise because it’s against the law or because your group is hopelessly outnumbered — but in either case, a bad idea is a bad idea.

Accidents, crimes of passion, and aggression in self-defense can all be unavoidable; if you’re caught in such a situation, you may just have to do your best to plead your case and hope that the justice and jury don’t have a hidden agenda.



WITCHCRAFT AND BLASPHEMY: CRIMINAL CASTING

In a fantasy world, magic is a force to be reckoned with — but that doesn't mean that everyone approves of it. In an advanced civilization magic may be woven into daily life. But more often than not, magic is available only to a few members of society — and all too often, these spellcasters are mysterious vagabonds or power-hungry tyrants. When the evil archmage and his undead army have been attacking your kingdom for generations, it's fairly easy to develop a negative attitude towards magic.

Of course, there are many different forms of magic. A primitive society may see no difference between them, but a more advanced nation may draw clear distinctions between arcane magic, divine magic, and the natural magic of the druid and ranger. Let's look at each class in turn.

Wizardly Magic — The wizard draws a great deal of attention. Her powers come from occult research — poring over musty old tomes and messing about with frog's eyes and similarly unwholesome substances — and as a result many consider the wizard to be in league with dark forces. Devout churches may be especially suspicious of the wizard; where *do* her powers come from, since they clearly don't stem from the gods? And finally, there are tyrannical lords who fear wizards because of the fact that wizardry is something that people can learn. What does the evil king do if a wandering wizard somehow teaches his subjects to throw fireballs? Certainly, this is easier said than done, but your typical tyrant may not know that.

Sorcerous Magic — In many cultures, the sorcerer draws even greater suspicion than the wizard. At least the wizard seems to derive his powers from research — as for the sorcerer, what *is* he? Some say that the powers of sorcerers come from dragon blood, but it would be just as easy to believe that they come from demon blood — or that a sorcerer is actually a demon that has taken human form. In cultures where sorcer-

ers are common, people may not mistake them for demons, but then you can run into the prejudice of those who fear that the sorcerers will use their magical powers to seize control of the nation (if they haven't already).

Bardic Magic — The bard may be able to slip by unnoticed, if people believe that her mystical powers are simply a result of her mastery of music. On the other hand, people magically manipulated by her powers may have the same reaction as they would to a sorcerer.

Paladins and Clerical Magic — Paladins and clerics are generally recognized by the common folk. People understand that their powers come from the gods. So then the question arises — how do people feel about the cleric's god? A cosmopolitan society may be tolerant of many religions, but a theocracy — or even a secular kingdom with strong ties to a single church — may forbid the worship of “false gods” within its borders. This can be quite awkward for a cleric. A sorcerer can just hide her powers and sneak in a spell when no one is looking, but if a cleric is passing through a region where the practice of his religion is forbidden, he will have to conceal his holy symbols and other trappings of his faith.

Rangers and Druidic Magic — Druids and rangers typically find themselves in the same situations as paladins and clerics; in the case of the druid, veneration of nature *is* her religion. Druids are likely to have the respect of those who work the fields for a living. Even in a theocracy, commoners may respect the druid's ties to nature and conceal her activities from the church. Of course, the boot can always end up on the other foot; in a theocratic society dominated by druids, and both arcane magic and divine magic may be seen as crimes against nature.

Needless to say, these various attitudes can be mixed and matched based on the values of a society. In the society of sorcerers, bards and sorcerers may be welcome, while wizardry is forbidden as a vile attempt to mimic the natural talents of the sorcerer. A society ruled by a council of wizards might allow all forms of arcane magic but ban any sort of religion; either the wizards want a society based purely on knowledge and

reason, or they view the gods as powerful forces that cannot be trusted. A theocracy dedicated to a goddess of magic may allow the use of arcane magic but forbid the worship of other gods. The study of magic could be restricted to certain social classes. And, of course, a superstitious barbarian nation may fear any sort of magic; any use of supernatural powers could buy you a quick trip to a stake and a bonfire.



Another question is the role played by magical items. If a nation fears arcane magic, its people probably won't see much of a difference between using a *wand of fire* or casting a spell yourself. On the other hand, magic items with subtle effects may go unnoticed. You probably won't have customs agents checking every sack to see if you've got a *bag of holding*. But dramatic items — like a *brilliant energy* weapon — may draw unwanted attention. And in extreme cases, the locals may use magehounds to sniff out any object or individual bearing the taint of supernatural forces.



SOMEBODY'S WATCHING YOU ...

If a nation fears magic enough, it may not have access to spells that detect spells; after all, these are themselves spells. However, there are a few mundane tools that can be used to spot the activity of those nefarious sorcerers. Spell sense allows a character to recognize the emanations of magic — just the thing for your paranoid witchfinder general. The magehound is a dog with the ability to sniff out spells and magic items. Both should be relatively rare; you shouldn't be bumping into magehounds on every corner throughout the continent. But if you are dealing with a serious Inquisition, be prepared to have these tricks used against you.

NEW FEAT:

SPELLSENSE [GENERAL]

Your keen intuition allows you to recognize the emanations of magic directed against you.

Prerequisite: Wisdom 12+; 2 or more ranks of Spellcraft

Benefit: If you make a saving throw against a spell, you learn what the precise effect of the spell would have been and the location of the caster. If the caster is out of your line of sight, you have a sense of the general direction and distance from you, though you do not receive a name or any sort of visual image. If you fail your save, you may make a Will save (DC 15) to recognize the effect of the spell and the location of the caster at the time of the casting, but only after the effect has expired. In other words, if an enchanter casts *charm person* on a guard, once the effect is over she may realize exactly what has occurred — but that won't help her while she's under the influence of the *charm*.

Normal: A character who successfully saves against the effect of a spell knows that he was targeted with magic, but he does not know who the caster was or what the nature of the effect would have been.

NEW MAGICAL BEAST: MAGEHOUND

CR 1/3; Small magical beast; HD 1d10+1; hp 6; Init +2; Spd 40 ft; AC 14 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flatfooted 12; BAB +1; Grap -3; Atk +2 melee (1d4, bite); Face 5 ft. x 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Scent, Spellscint; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills: Listen +5, Spot +5, Survival +1 (+6 when tracking by scent), Swim +3.

Feats: Spell sense, Track

Spellscint (Su): A magehound has the innate ability to sense magic. This is constantly in effect, and requires no conscious effort on the part of the hound. This is similar to *detect magic*, but extends out in a 30-foot radius circle centered on the dog. A magehound automatically senses any spell cast within this area. A well-trained hound can detect the difference between divine and arcane magic; it can be taught to ignore magic of a specific school or the divine magic of a specific deity, and with time it can be trained to ignore the magical actions of a specific individual. A magehound cannot track

using this ability, but if it can pick up the scent of a spellcaster it can track using its sense of smell.

The magehound is a mystical canine with a natural talent for sensing the disruptions caused by magical energy. Societies that possess the hounds typically use them as watchdogs. A guardian magehound will bark and point whenever it detects magical energy; the hound can be trained to give a different bark for a spell or a magical object. The hounds are difficult to breed in captivity; due to the effort required to train (Handle Animal 30) and breed a magehound, the creatures are generally extremely rare. A breeder may charge up to 4,000 gp for a fully trained magehound.

A magehound is a small dog, similar in overall appearance to a beagle. It has a black coat with silver markings, including silver ears and stripes along the snout.



SECRET MAGIC

If you're playing a wizard or a sorcerer and you're passing through a superstitious nation or a restrictive theocracy, you're going to need to hide your abilities — but you probably want to find a way to use your powers. One of the first questions is what you have to worry about from the opposition. Is it simply a matter of not being seen casting a spell, or do you have to worry about inquisitors or magehounds picking up your scent and tracking you down?

Magehounds and other foes using *detect magic* present a difficult challenge for any spellcaster. Your best friend in this situation is *misdirection*; cast this spell on your friend the fighter, and suddenly you don't radiate magic at all. Other options include *nondetection*, *mystical void*, and *magic aura* (if you're just trying to hide magic items). In addition to these spells, there are a variety of magic items that can help to conceal your activities from *detect magic*; these are provided at the end of this chapter.

If your problem is one of physical observation, there are two primary issues: components and effects. The feats Still Spell and Silent Spell are invaluable for concealing your activities, but even if you don't utter an

incantation the appearance of a huge ball of fire may draw unwanted attention.

In a theocratic society where the worship of “false” gods or use of arcane magic is suppressed, you can always try to trick your opponents into thinking you're calling on the local gods to produce your magical effects. If you're casting a spell that has no verbal component, you can chant whatever invocation you want. With a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10) you can make up an incantation that at least sounds plausible; remember that the average guardsman can't check the rulebooks and say “Hey! Clerics can't cast *fireball*!” If one of the observers also has Knowledge (religion), he can make a check opposing your roll; if his score is higher than yours, he recognizes that your invocation is a bluff. In addition, if you're casting an arcane spell with somatic components, an observer can make a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10) or Spellcraft check (DC 10) to recognize the gestures as being associated with wizardry. If the situation is reversed, you can disguise a divine spell as arcane; follow the same procedure, but switch Knowledge (religion) and Knowledge (arcana).

You can also use a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 10) to try to disguise a divine spell by pretending to invoke a different god than you actually are; you might recite a prayer to the moon goddess while actually drawing on the power of the sun, for instance. Of course, spells that require a divine focus are a bit problematic; it's hard to appear to be invoking the Lady of the Moon with a sunburst in your hand. However, many useful clerical spells don't require a divine focus, including *bestow curse*, *blindness/deafness*, *cause fear*, *command*, *contagion*, all *cure* spells, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *dispel magic*, *geas*, *harm*, *heal*, all *inflict* spells, *lesser geas*, and *silence*.

One drawback with this trick is that if the gods are really paying attention, you may find that you'll have a little explaining to do somewhere down the line. If you're truly acting in the interests of your god, he'll probably overlook this minor transgression — but what about the deity whose name you're taking in vain?

Of course, if you don't have the Silent Spell feat, this strategy won't be of much use. Another alternative is

the *cloak of silence* spell, which allows you to cast a spell with a verbal component without being heard. This won't help you explain how a lightning bolt appeared when you gestured — but it can keep people from starting a witchhunt at the first sound of an incantation.

If you've managed to find some way to cast your spell in silence, an ally can attempt to draw other eyes in the room away from you for long enough for you to perform your ritual. This requires a Bluff check opposed by the Sense Motive checks of the other people in the room; if successful, the people will glance over at the character instigating the distraction. This trick only works if you don't appear to be a threat, though; people will rarely look away from you in the midst of battle because a halfling is jumping up and down. It should also be noted that only hostile actions disrupt an *invisibility* spell; as a result, if you're invisible and able to cast silently, you can sneak around healing your friends or casting spells like *bleed* or *protection from evil*.

In peaceful situations, a Perform check (DC 20) will also tend to draw the eyes of the audience. A lesser score may or may not attract attention, at the GM's discretion; but a truly masterful performance is hard to ignore.

If you can cast without being seen, another alternative to silent casting is to drown out the sound of the incantation with other activities. If you really need to cast *divination* and you don't want the people in the next room to hear, get your bard to sing a song, or have the dwarf recite an epic tale. Just because your god has to hear your voice doesn't mean that anyone *else* does.

If you can't disguise your spells, your best answer is probably to rely on subtle long-term effects like *dark-vision*, *bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *disguise self*, *bear's endurance*, *invisibility*, *mage armor*, *magic vestment*, *mislead*, and *mount*. The long durations of these spells allows you to cast the spell when the opportunity presents itself, and continue to benefit from it for hours to come.



HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT

It's hard to beat Still Spell and Silent Spell when it comes to hiding magic from the masses, but here are a few more tricks for your repertoire. Suppress Spell Energy is a metamagic feat that helps you to conceal your actions from *detect magic* and *detect magic residue*. *Cloak of silence* is a new spell that allows you to maintain a bubble of silence around you — so you can incant as loudly as you want, and no one can hear you. Combine it with *invisibility* and you can cast all the spells you please, as long as you don't actually attack anyone. Finally, *mystical void* conceals the auras of ongoing enchantments and magic items on your person — which can be invaluable when you need to sneak past that pack of magehounds.

NEW FEAT:

SUPPRESS SPELL ENERGY [METAMAGIC]

You have learned to minimize the mystical disruption caused when a spell is cast, making it difficult for others to detect your spells.

Benefit: For purposes of *detect magic*, *detect magical residue*, and *detect mystical streams*, the aura strength of any spell that you cast is reduced by one category; if you cast a 4th-level spell, the aura will be faint instead of moderate, for example. In addition, the DC of any Spellcraft check to analyze or identify your spell is increased by 5. This is an innate ability and does not require the caster to use a higher-level spell slot for a spell. However, if the caster chooses to use a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actually level, the spell's aura is instead reduced by two categories (to a minimum level of dim) instead of one and the DC of any Spellcraft check is increased by a total of 10.

NEW SPELL: CLOAK OF SILENCE

Illusion (Glamer)

Level: Brd 2,Clr 2, God's Eye 2

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S

Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)



Target: You or one creature weighing no more than 100 lb./level

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Sometimes there are situations in which you don't want to be heard — and yet, you have to speak. *Cloak of silence* is the spell for just these situations. The *cloak* surrounds a single target with a field similar in effect to the traditional *silence* spell; however, there are a few inches of space between the target and the field. What this means is that the target can speak, but no one can hear him. He can speak to someone else as long as he's able to lean close and whisper in her ear; if her ear penetrates the field, she can hear perfectly.

The *cloak of silence* moves with the target. As long as it's active, it has the following effects:

- The target gets a +10 on any Move Silently checks.
- The sound-dampening field extends approximately one foot away from the victim. Anything within this area makes no apparent sound. As a result, if the target draws a weapon, no sound is made. Further, if the target grapples with someone else, his victim is inside the field for the duration of the grapple; treat this as being caught in the area of a *silence* spell.
- The target can cast spells that require verbal components. However, as he cannot be heard through the field, spells such as *shout*, *suggestion*, and *command* are useless. *Message* still works normally, as the target can whisper and the spell then carries her voice directly to his targets.
- The target cannot use any sort of Bardic Music abilities while trapped in the field. The one exception is that a bard can use his Countersong ability to protect himself; but as no one else can hear his song, they cannot benefit from the protection.

While this spell is usually cast on yourself or on an ally, it can be used on any living creature; this is an effective tool for preventing a guard from raising an alarm or a politician from making a speech.

NEW SPELL: MYSTICAL VOID

Illusion (Glamer)

Level: Assassin 1, God's Eye 1, Spellbane 1, Sor/Wiz 1

Casting Time: 1 action

Components: V, S, F/DF

Range: Personal or touch

Target: You or one creature weighing no more than 100 lb./level

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

A variation of the *magic aura* spell, *mystical void* surrounds a creature with a field that absorbs the background emanations of magical items or effects. This conceals any magical objects carried by the target and any personal spell effects; while the *void* remains in effect, these will not show up with the use of *detect magic*, *detect magical residue*, or *detect mystical streams*. Any spell effects that project beyond the target will trigger *detect* spells normally.

Arcane Focus: A small square of silk that must be touched to the target.

VIGILANTE ACTION

So, you're a heavily armed group of wizards and warriors with more firepower at your disposal than a garrison of the royal guard. Under the right circumstances, you might be heroes of the land. But many rulers don't *like* having the stability of their reigns threatened by bands of vagabond adventurers. Consider this: a village is being raided by a group of bandits. The villagers have appealed to the local lord for help, but as yet, none has been forthcoming. It seems simple enough, doesn't it? You ride in, save the day, and accept the accolades of the grateful townsfolk, attend a feast in your honor, and ride off into the sunset. You'd think the lord would be happy for your help, right?

But maybe the lord doesn't have access to wizards, clerics, magic items, and all of the other handy tricks

you have up your sleeve. He might have actually been in the process of gathering a host of warriors to eliminate the bandits. By striking first, you've made him look weak and foolish in front of his subjects.

Also consider that the lord is supposed to be the source of justice in the realm. In the eyes of the lord, you're no better than bandits yourselves — certainly, you helped today, but what will you do tomorrow? Meanwhile, to the villagers you're a symbol of the failure of the current system and the value of independent action. Perhaps they'll rebel against their lord. Maybe they'll call on you to rule the region. Even if you don't know anything about this, if treasonous rumors reach the ears of the ruler you could be in considerable trouble — and if you do inadvertently incite a village to rebellion, you could be responsible for many more deaths.

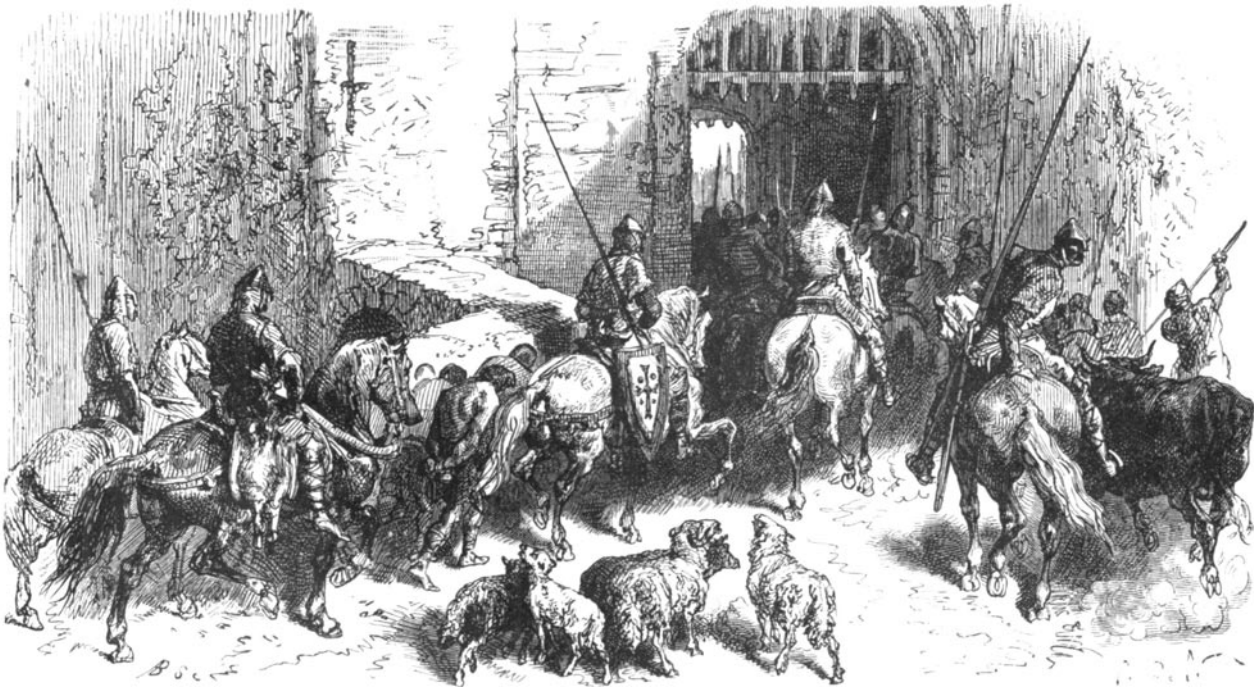
Or, there's always the possibility that the bandits are in league with the lord — they could even be his soldiers in disguise. Perhaps he receives a share of the loot. Maybe he uses them to keep the local populace in line and to kill rabble-rousers. Alternately, the bandits could be the disguised agents of a foreign power — a force that the lord is either monitoring or doesn't wish to face yet. In any of these cases, if you defeat the bandits you may earn the enmity of the lord.

The point is that what appears to be an action that may earn you the gratitude of the local populace may not be well received by the local authorities. Unless you have been deputized or appointed to an office, you are not agents of the law — and in a lawful society, any sort of disruptive action may be viewed with anger and suspicion.

Does this mean that you should just let the bandits continue their raiding? Not at all. It simply means that you may want to look and see if they're part of a bigger picture — and if so, decide whether you want to try to receive official support for your actions or whether you choose to ignore the laws of the land.

WHERE THE LAW IS LACKING

Many kingdoms don't have the resources to address every problem in the land. If a murder rocks a small hamlet, the villagers will have to wait until the itinerant justice arrives — which could be weeks. When a town is attacked by hobgoblin raiders it will take time for the ruler to even hear about it, let alone dispatch royal troops to the region. The ruler may have the best interests of his people at heart — but he doesn't have the power to help them.



In this sort of nation, you could always hope to present yourself to the ruler and become official representatives of the law. But this is unlikely to be as simple as it sounds. Assuming you can actually reach the ruler, you'll probably find that kings don't just appoint itinerant sheriffs out of hand. In addition, your race, religion, nationality, or social standing may count against you. In all likelihood, you'll have to build a reputation before you make any deals with the crown — and hope that your heroism earns you a pardon for any “crimes” committed along the way.

Of course, it's possible the authorities won't even hear about your vigilante actions; in all likelihood, a group of grateful villagers isn't going to report you to the crown for saving them. But the ruler may find out all the same, and if he doesn't know who you are, he may worry that you could become a threat to the peace of the land.

THE EVIL EMPIRE

It may be that a nation lacks the power to defend its people. Or perhaps protecting the people isn't the first thing on the minds of the rulers. In most of the evil societies we have described, the law — if it exists at all — is a tool that is used against the people.



Lawful evil tyrants tax the lifesblood from the citizens. Neutral evil sorcerer-princes rule over an oppressed mass of powerless slaves. Chaotic evil warlords pillage the farmers who are merely trying to survive. Against these powerful forces, the people have only one hope — you.

In an evil society, the law itself is your enemy. Your GM could choose to make an entire campaign out of this; an oppressive government can be far more difficult to overcome than a dragon or demon. Or if you're part of a traveling band, it may be that you occasionally have to do business in an evil nation — the question is whether you can do some good at the same time.

There are a number of different approaches you can take when dealing with an evil government. A few of these are described below.

MERRY OUTLAWS

If you're a group of low-level characters, you aren't about to overthrow an entire government or take on the royal army. But that doesn't mean that you can't make a difference. At the least, you can help the oppressed citizens with the troubles their rulers are ignoring — putting a stop to bandit raids or marauding monsters. If you want to take things a step farther, you could attempt to disrupt the tyrannical activities of the government, *a la* Robin Hood or the Scarlet Pimpernel. A few possible activities:

- Raid the caravan of the royal tax collector, returning the gold to the people (well, you probably deserve some sort of commission for your trouble).
- Rescue innocent victims from the prisons or gallows of the crown. For a little higher-level excitement, if you're dealing with a theocracy or a land ruled by wizards, there may be a soul vault or a reliquary ward (see Chapter Nine) that you can raid.
- There are many tools that the government could use to oppress the citizens. You could raid armories, wizards' workshops, dark temples, or warehouses filled with alchemical supplies. You may be able to find some goodies for yourself, or you may simply derive satisfaction from destroying materials that could be used to do evil.
- It never hurts to make a ruler look foolish. Whether you're showing up her finest archer at the big contest or interfering with her wedding to the king of the neighboring evil land, a little humiliation can go a long way.
- If you're dealing with an evil theocracy or a nation ruled by a council of mages, you can bet that they'll be holding important rituals now and again — communing with the forces of darkness, summoning the legions of the abyss, and so on. It never hurts to interfere with these plans.
- While you're at it, this is one of those cases where if the rulers consider that ruined temple to be a sacred site, you'll want to get in and steal the relics.

If the common people are on your side, this is the quick road to folk hero status; hopefully, once you start to build a name for yourself the commoners will help to hide you from the authorities. However, there's always the chance that the people of the land have been so thoroughly indoctrinated by the tyrants that they don't *want* to be helped — those evil sorcerer-princes are their rightful rulers, and it is wrong of you to interfere with their dark designs. This can make the life of the crusading adventurer considerably more difficult!

CONSPIRACIES AND CABALS

It's possible that a malevolent nation is not inherently evil. Rather, some malign force may have seized control of the highest levels of government: the king might be possessed; vampires or doppelgangers could have infiltrated the royal councils; or a cabal of sinister enchanters or dark priests may have overthrown the rightful rulers of the land. This takes the Merry Bandit concept one step further. Here you can potentially save the entire realm and set it back on the path of light — if you can identify your true enemies.

In some cases, the activities of a cabal are extremely obvious. If the Church of Pain has kidnapped the heir to the throne, all you've got to do is rescue the heir and defeat the leaders of the Church. On the other hand, it could be that the ruler has only gone through a strange shift in behavior. It seems likely that he's under some form of mystical control, but uncovering and exposing the forces behind the conspiracy will be a major challenge. Investigators, rogues, god's eyes, and inquisitors can all be invaluable in such a scenario, as it's a battle of wits as much as a battle of blades.

One of the major challenges of a conspiracy campaign is that while the powers at the top of the ladder may be irredeemably evil, their servants may be good people who are simply following the commands of their ruler. What do you do when you're attacked by a noble law-giver who has been led to believe that you're dangerous assassins? What about that mob of city guards?

A conspiracy theme can easily be slipped into your normal campaign. As a mini-campaign, you and your fel-

lows could assume the roles of members of the court who have uncovered some clue as to the nature of the conspiracy, and now seek to put a stop to it.



For an interesting challenge, you could use NPC classes instead of core classes; as courtiers and guardsmen, you'll have to use aristocrats and warriors instead of fighters, rogues, and wizards.

YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION?

In the two previous ideas, it's you and your band of adventurers against the forces of evil. You may receive support from the common folk, but when the chips are down you're on your own. If you want a more serious long-term challenge, you could actually try to overthrow a well-established government by rallying the oppressed commoners to your banner and finding a way to fight the superior forces of evil. All of the ideas mentioned for the Merry Outlaw campaign apply here as well. But in addition, you will need to establish pockets of resistance, forge alliances between rival guilds and the priests of forbidden faiths, and organize an untrained mass of commoners into a force that can hold off a royal army. It's no small task — but if you can succeed, you will have changed the face of the world.

One interesting twist on this would be if you were actually natives of another land that's threatened by the evil empire. Fellvale has determined that the Church of Pain is gearing up for war, and will attack in two months time. You have that much time to stir up a revolution and overthrow the hierophants, or else Fellvale will be utterly destroyed!

ADVENTURER CONTROL

As all of these scenarios show, a party of adventurers can be a considerable thorn in the side of the powers that be. Here are a few common tactics that may be deployed to make life a little more difficult for the wandering hero.



WEAPONS LAWS

The right to carry martial weapons or crossbows may be reserved for the nobility or members of the royal guard. They can't stop you from carrying a quarter-staff, but if you walk around with a sword on your hip you're going to be challenged and the weapon confiscated. Unless you're a monk, having to fight without weapons can be something of a challenge. Magical items with extra-dimensional storage capabilities can be very useful in such a kingdom!

SALVAGE AND TRIBUTE

It may be that a ruler is willing to overlook your pillaging of dungeons and ruins — for a piece of the action. If you return from an expedition laden with loot, the sheriff may appear to claim a share for the crown. If you only had a small haul, it's possible that your activities will go unnoticed; on the other hand, if you perform an epic feat like slaying a dragon, word will quickly spread. Where do you think that dragon got all of those artifacts in its hoard? The king will wish to reclaim these national treasures, and will expect you to share the wealth so that it can be used to ease the pain of those who have suffered from the beast's attacks for generations.

TRAVELING PAPERS

A truly paranoid nation may require you to acquire letters of passage from various officials in order to use ferries, cross bridges, or enter major cities. These letters probably cost a significant amount of money. The net effect is that most people spend their entire lives in their villages, and traveling adventurers are easy to track.

BOUNTY HUNTERS

If the royal guard just isn't up to catching your wily band of adventurers, the king may call in professionals. In a magiphobic theocracy, the church may maintain an elite order of witchfinders to combat those who traffic with unnatural forces. In other words, all

the ideas from Chapter Three could be brought to bear on your head, which means that you'd better learn to cover your tracks ...



HIDING YOUR TRAIL

So you and your band of jolly outlaws are setting up shop in the Dark Woods, and you don't want the earl's men tracking you to your hideout. Or perhaps you're plotting a magical attack against the Church of Pain and you're worried about the mystical senses of the Church inquisitors. Well, there are a number of tricks you can use to help to throw off pursuit.

If you're in the wilds, *pass without trace* is the obvious spell of choice — although, if you've got the spellpower, *flight* will certainly do the trick, too. *Control weather* can also be quite useful when it comes to covering tracks. If you don't have magic at your disposal, you can increase the DC of Survival checks used to track you if you cover your trail.

In an urban community, the most important element in avoiding discovery is to get the local population on your side. Performing heroic deeds and spreading a little money around the community can both help to throw off pursuit; see Chapter Two for complete information on Gather Information and urban tracking. However, sometimes you just don't have the time to earn the friendship of the townsfolk through noble action. If you know how to canvas an area and have a charismatic tongue, you may be able to convince the locals to lend you a hand.

Finally, in this age of inquisitors, you may have to worry about being tracked down by magical means. The spells *misdirection* and *nondetection* are two highly effective techniques for avoiding unwanted divination. In addition, wizards and sorcerers have developed a wide variety of tools to help them evade mystical detection. While most of these are fairly simple to produce, they will probably be rarely seen in nations that do not deal with inquisitors on a regular basis; if you're not worried about people using *detect magical residue*, you don't really need *powder of power*. And, of course, if they are too easy to come by, what's the point of having inquisitors in the first place?

SURVIVAL {WIS}

Survival is the key to tracking — but anyone who knows how to track also knows how to hide his trail.

Check: If you succeed at a skill check (DC 15), the DC of any attempts to track you and your party is increased by 5. This does not require your party to move at half speed; if you do move at half speed, the DC is increased by 10.

Retry: If you fail the check, you may try again in one hour. You cannot take twenty when hiding tracks.

Special: You must possess the Track feat in order to perform this check. If you have 5 or more ranks in Hide, you get a +2 synergy bonus on any Survival check to conceal tracks.

If you have 5 or more ranks of Herbalism or Knowledge (nature), you can use pungent herbs to hide your tracks from dogs and other beasts that track by scent; on a successful check, this increases the DC of a Survival check made to track by an additional 5 points if scent is involved. The Herbalism skill can be found in Atlas Games' *Occult Lore*.

DIPLOMACY {CHA}

If you're familiar with the local area, you can use your diplomatic skills win friends and throw off pursuit.

Check: Diplomacy can be used to interfere with urban tracking. The GM should assign an attitude to the community as a whole; unless you're already well-known, people will probably be indifferent. If you can modify this attitude to helpful, the DC of any Gather Information checks to determine your location will be increased by 5. This check takes from one to six hours, based on the size of the area that you're trying to affect; it takes longer to canvas a metropolis than to cover a thorp. The effects last for 24 hours.

Retry: You must wait for 24 hours before you can retry a failed check.

Special: You must have 5 or more ranks in either Gather Information or Knowledge (local) in order

to attempt this check. If you have 5 ranks in Bluff, Knowledge (local), or Sense Motive you get a +2 synergy bonus to the check.

NEW POTION: BOTTLED SPIRITS

The renowned alchemist Sazakara was fascinated with the nature of the human soul. He spent his entire life trying to reduce the spirit down to its fundamental mystical and chemical components. This potion is merely one of the fruits of his strange research. A *potion of bottled spirits* is a mystical simulacrum of another person's spirit. Drinking the potion has the same effect as a *misdirection* spell; for three hours after drinking the potion, any spell that reads your aura (*discern lies*, *screaming*, *locate creature*, *detect magical residue*, etc.) will instead pick up the false reading. A potion is based on the aura of a specific individual, who must be on hand when the potion is created. It should be noted that it is a "snapshot" of the subject's aura, not an actual redirection. In other words, someone using *locate creature* to find the person whose aura was used for the potion may instead track you down, which could result in an interesting situation. The potion does not offer any sort of protection against *discern lies*, *painful truth*, or *zone of truth*.

Faint illusion; CL 3rd; Brew Potion, *misdirection*; Price 300 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:
GLOVES OF SUBTLE CASTING

Originally created by an elite order of mystical assassins, these gloves alter the energy of any spell cast by the wearer. This minimizes the impression that the spells leave on an area. For purposes of *detect magic*, *detect magical residue*, and *detect mystical streams*, the aura strength of the spell is reduced by 1 category (to a minimum level of dim) and the DC of any Spellcraft checks to analyze the nature of the spell are increased by 5. If the wearer also possesses the feat Suppress Spell Energy, the benefits are cumulative. Due to their nature, the *gloves of subtle casting* will not register as magical if studied with *detect magic*; however, they



have distinctive mystical sigils embroidered on the lining. *Identify* can be used to determine the abilities of the gloves.

Faint illusion; CL 4th; Create Wondrous Item, Suppress Spell Energy, *magic aura*; Price 3,200 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

POWDER OF POWER

This unusual substance was created by a mystical thief who sought a simple way to avoid the pursuit of the local inquisitors. *Powder of power* appears as opalescent sand; when a handful is thrown into the air and a command word is spoken, the powder erupts in a pulse of pure magical energy. This has no physical effect whatsoever. However, it disrupts all traces of magical energy within a 30-foot radius. For purposes of *detect magic*, all magic auras with a rating of strong or below are erased; instead, the entire area is flooded with a single strong aura in the Universal sphere. If a spellcaster is studying the area using the *detect magical residue* spell, she can make a Spellcraft check (DC 15) to recognize that lesser auras may have been wiped clean. If a person or creature who is actively detecting magic is caught in the pulse, she must make a Will save (DC 15) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. The powder is destroyed when it's used.

Faint illusion; CL 5th; Create Wondrous Item, Heighten Spell, *magic aura*; Price 250 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM:

ROBE OF DECEPTION

Looking to frame a friend? Then the *robe of deception* is just what you need. This drab robe does not alter your physical appearance in any way. However, if you touch someone, you can mentally command the robe to pick up your target's spiritual signature. This has two effects. First, it acts as the spell *misdirection*, redirecting any sort of magical divination against you to your target. Second, it replaces your scent with that of your target; as a result, anyone tracking by scent will pick up the false smell. Your victim gets a Will save (DC 13) to resist the effect. You can keep trying to use the robe until you pick up a signature, though. Once you successfully pick up a signature, the effect lasts for 24 hours and it cannot be changed during that time, though the robe can be taken off.

Faint illusion and transmutation; CL 4th; Create Wondrous Item, *alter self*, *misdirection*; Price 10,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: TRACKLESS BOOTS

The wearer of *trackless boots* leaves no scent or trail behind him, and cannot be tracked using Scent or the Track feat. However, this enchantment offers no protection against spells like *follow the bloody trail* and *locate creature*.

Faint transmutation; CL 2nd; Create Wondrous Item, *pass without trace*; Price 4,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

PUNISHMENT

“While you may have meant no harm through your actions, our laws are clear; the honored dead must be protected from the depredations of the living, for the service they have given us and may yet give again. That the public may see your pain and know that justice has been done, we decree that you shall be placed in the stocks in the village square, there to remain for one day; during this time you shall each receive twenty lashes, and any citizen who so wishes shall have the right to inflict an additional lash. Thereafter, you shall receive the indelible mark of the tomb robber. You shall have one week to leave our land; should you ever return, the mark will become red hot and burn the flesh from your bones.”

Shayn leaned over towards Garret, her chains clinking slightly. “Sure, let’s go exploring the old catacombs. What could possibly go wrong? Great idea. Just great.”

There are many different styles of law. You may be judged by the gods, tried before the king’s justice, or have to fight to prove your innocence. But whatever the shape of the road, the path ultimately leads to the same two destinations: release or punishment. This chapter begins with an examination of the theory behind punishment: what sort of penalties will a particular society impose for specific crimes, and why? It continues with a description of a wide variety of punishments that you may have the opportunity to sample, along with spells and tools that can be used as part of a judicial proceeding. It concludes with a section on the life of the convict.

THE PURPOSE OF PUNISHMENT

The nature of a society will have a major impact on the form of punishments it uses. Consider the crime of willful murder. What is the society most concerned about? Taking vengeance on the killer? Providing support for the widow or children of the victim? Making

a grisly example of the killer as a warning to others? Finding a way to lift the emotional trauma from the community in which the crime occurred? Or finding a way to absolve the killer from the stain on his soul?

In many societies, the primary purpose of punishment is revenge. The criminal must pay for his actions, and the law exacts this payment on behalf of the community. This might involve a fine, which could go to the victim (in a good society) or the crown (in an evil society); ideally, the criminal suffers in accordance with the level of his crime and the victim receives some form of recompense. Of course, in many societies a criminal may not possess the wealth to pay the penalty for his crime. In this case, he may pay with pain — suffering torture, humiliation, disfigurement, or even death as a way of repaying his debt to society. Other options include incarceration or exile — effectively stealing the life of the criminal without actually killing him.

Another purpose of punishment is to deter others from repeating the crime. For a penalty to serve as an effective deterrent, it needs to be public and severe. If vengeance is the only concern, a thief might have his hand cut off in a private cell; if he is to serve as a deterrent, the amputation should occur in the town square, with fanfare and a public announcement of the thief’s crimes. Public humiliation is a major part of deterrent punishments. The stocks are a simple form of this. On the more extreme end you have the tradition of leaving the body of a hanged criminal on display, as a warning to any others who would consider following his lead. Deterrent punishments will often involve some sort of recognizable disfigurement — whether a brand, tattoo, or amputation — that will allow anyone who meets the criminal to recognize his crime and the price that he has paid for it.

An enlightened society may be more concerned with healing, redemption, and rehabilitation. Can the criminal be shown the error of his ways? Can he become a productive member of society? Can any taint on his soul



be redeemed? And for that matter, what of the people that he harmed? In some cases, the execution of a murderer may put a community at ease; in other cases, it may only deepen a rift between the townsfolk, increasing existing tensions or feuds. So what sort of sentence can bring peace to the community, or provide true restitution to those harmed by the crime? Magic may be employed to change the behavior of the criminal or alter the memories of a community. And prisons may seek to provide moral or religious instruction, or to train a prisoner in a new trade so he can become a more productive member of society upon his release.

Evil nations tend to focus on revenge and deterrence. An evil society is rarely concerned about justice for the victims of a crime; instead, punishment is a display of the power of the state and the consequences of challenging the laws of the ruler. Sentences are often cruel and severe. Bear in mind that in terms of setting an example, crippling a criminal may be even better than executing her; eventually a corpse will rot away, while a thief who's had his hands cut off can stick around for a long time.

Good nations are equally concerned with deterrence, but will often have a greater interest in redemption than revenge. The first concern of a good society will be the people harmed by the crime. Whether this is a child orphaned by a murderer or a village robbed by a con artist, a good society will try to find a way for the criminal to make restitution for his crimes. Where this is impossible, a good society may turn to exile instead of execution — safeguarding the community, but again hoping that the criminal will learn the error of his ways as he roams the world. Of course, in the case of a truly heinous villain execution may be seen as the only way to protect the world from the criminal and send him to the judgment of the gods.

Some societies stand between these two extremes, though. A nation like this may be driven by a desire for revenge, but its punishments are unlikely to be as blatantly cruel as those of an evil society. And when restitution is made, while the crown may claim a share — after all, the criminal has dishonored the ruler by breaking the laws of the land — a justice will also seek to provide aid to the victim.

In general, look to the tone of the nation to guess the nature of its punishments. What are the values of the nation? Does it have access to powerful magic, or will it have to rely on traditional forms of punishment? A militaristic society will be more inclined towards corporal punishment, while a theocracy will takes its cues from its gods. In a nation of merchant princes, fines may be the only form of punishment; in a utopian, mystically advanced community the elders may simply modify the criminal's mind to prevent him from being able to take such an act again, and then blot out the memory of the event from the minds of the entire community. Look at the different forms of punishment that are available, and consider what seems to fit best with the laws of the land — that's what you can expect to come up against.

METHODS OF PUNISHMENT

In the case of trial by ordeal, the contest may include the punishment; if you die as a result of trial by combat, it's a little hard to punish you further (although it's certainly not impossible in a fantasy setting). But most of the time the trial will determine guilt or innocence, and punishment will follow. The section looks at the following forms of retribution:

Action and Inaction — Imprisonment or enforced activity.

Corporal Punishment — Disfigurement and other forms of physical punishment.

Capital Punishment — Death is sometimes the only answer.

Magical Retribution — This section introduces judicial curses, which are spells that can be used when a criminal can't be brought to justice.

Punishment Through Property — Fines and confiscation.

The Role of Society — Public humiliation and healing a community's wounds.

ACTION AND INACTION

Quite often, the forces of justice will seize control of the life of the lawbreaker. You may be forced to perform a service to the community or some other specific action as restitution for your crime. You might be exiled. Or you could be imprisoned — which is to say forced to take *no* actions. This section will look at each type of punishment — and the means of enforcing it — in turn.

ENFORCED ACTION

It may be that you can do more for the community alive and free than dead or chained in the stocks. By performing a public service, you may be able to redeem yourself and repair the damage you've done. In general this is a redemptive act, but depending on the nature of the task it can certainly have an element of deterrence or revenge.

For a minor crime, you may simply have to work off your transgression. In a gentler society, you might be set to work in the bakery to make up for stealing a loaf of bread. In a harsher land you could be put on a chain gang and set to quarrying stone, mining, or similar hard labor.

For a more serious crime you could be set a harder task, like slaying a dire wolf that has been preying on livestock; in the eyes of the justice this could be seen as a death sentence, with the benefit that if you live you'll have done a great service to the community. Alternately, you may simply be given a long-term assignment; if you killed a man, perhaps you'll have to take his place within the community, carrying out all of the duties that he used to perform.

Other possibilities could take you far from the community. A religious court might send you on a pilgrimage; only by journeying to a distant shrine can you cleanse yourself in the eyes of the gods. Typically, you must return to your place of judgment bearing a token from the shrine you're sent to. In nations where pilgrimage is a common practice, it can become a serious tourist industry. Or your mission could be more dangerous; perhaps you must atone for an act of theft by tracking down and recovering a relic stolen from the community ages ago.

Of course, this leaves one obvious question: what forces you to complete your assigned task? There are many possible answers. The first and simplest is that if you don't complete your task in the designated period of time, a second sentence will be enacted. If you don't return from your pilgrimage in two months, you'll be declared a wolf's head — so in other words, be back in time or don't come back at all. If you're in need of absolution, you won't get it until you've completed your task.



Other options depend on the level of magic that's available to the court. *Lesser geas* and *geas/quest* are both highly effective short-term solutions, but the effects may not last long enough to handle a pilgrimage or an extended quest. *Mark of justice*, *greater mark of justice*, and *sentinel stones* can all enforce a particular type of behavior for an extended period of time.

When dealing with *geas/quest*, *mark of justice*, and *sentinel stones*, be aware that the caster can either demand a course of action ("Return with the Crown of Gol within six days' time"), command that you refrain from a specific action ("Cause no harm to any human being"), or both at once ("You will leave this land as quickly as possible, and then never return"). *Taboo* — from *Dynasties & Demagogues* — only allows you to forbid a course of action, but it has more powerful short-term effects than *geas*. While *geas* and *taboo* spells have a limited duration, part of a *geas* could involve returning on a regular basis to have the spell refreshed; in a sense, this would be a form of mystical probation.



NEW SPELL: GREATER MARK OF JUSTICE

Transmutation

Level: Clr 7, Inq 7, Justice 7

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes



This ritual is a more powerful version of *mark of justice*. As you cast the spell, you scribe an indelible mark on the subject and state a course of behavior that he must adhere to (or refrain from). If the subject disobeys your command the mark is activated. This has the effect of *malediction*, and the target does not get a saving throw; you choose the nature of the *malediction* effect when you scribe the mark.

A *greater mark of justice* cannot be dispelled or removed using *break enchantment*. *Remove curse* will destroy the mark, but only if the caster level is at least two levels higher than your caster level. In addition, when the mark is removed the victim suffers 5d6 points of damage. *Limited wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse*, and *wish* can remove the mark without damaging the victim.

Because of the length of time it takes to cast this spell, and the fact that it involves writing on the subject, the target must be willing, restrained, or unconscious.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: GREATER SENTINEL STONE

A *greater sentinel stone* is identical to a *sentinel stone*, only the effects are far more severe. If the victim of the stone intentionally deviates from the course of action set by the stone, she must make a Will save (DC 20); if she fails, she is immediately slain. If she makes the save, she still suffers 3d6 + 15 points of damage. The precise nature of the attack will vary based on the creator of the stone; the victim's body may be consumed by flames, she could rot away from the inside out, or she might simply drop dead with no apparent injuries whatsoever.

Strong enchantment and necromancy; CL 15th; Create Wondrous Item, *geas/quest*, *destruction* or *finger of death*; Price 150,000 gp

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: SENTINEL STONE

A *sentinel stone* is a magical device that's used to enforce the law in mystically advanced societies. A small gemstone is set with a thin triangular plate of silver or gold. This plate is one and a half inches on a side, and covered with mystical sigils. To activate the *stone*, you must place it directly against the skin of your tar-

get's skull and speak a lengthy incantation; this takes a full minute, so the target must either be restrained, unconscious, or a willing participant in the process. Once the incantation is completed, the stone fuses to the victim's skull; it cannot be physically removed without killing the victim.

When you activate the stone, you describe a course of action that the victim must follow. This must be reasonably specific. Acceptable commands would include "Never tell a lie," "Never harm a human," or "Leave this land as quickly as possible and never return." Unacceptable commands would be things like "Be a better person" or "Fly to the moon."

Each stone is tuned to a specific ability score; if the victim disobeys the mandate of the stone, he suffers one point of temporary ability score damage. This effect cannot lower an ability score below 1, and the damage is recovered at the standard rate of 1 point per day. If the stone is set to a specific action — such as "Never harm a human" — the victim takes a point of ability score damage each turn that he performs the prohibited action. If the action is more general — like "Leave the land as quickly as possible" or "Locate the Orb of Gorac and return it to me" — the victim takes one point of ability damage for every hour that he intentionally deviates from the directed course of action, not counting reasonable pauses for rest and meals.

A *sentinel stone* does have one positive side effect; the victim receives a +2 bonus to all Will saves and an additional +2 to saves against mind-altering effects, as the stone protects the victim from outside influences.

There are a number of ways to remove a *sentinel stone*. A *lesser wish*, *miracle*, or *wish* will remove the stone. Alternately, if the power of the stone is temporarily deactivated with *dispel magic* or *greater dispel*, a *heal* spell will allow the caster to remove the stone. Regardless of the method used, once a stone is removed it will immediately dissolve.

Strong enchantment; CL 12th; Create Wondrous Item, *geas/quest*; Price 75,000 gp



KNOWLEDGE

[ARCANAS OR RELIGION] [CHA]

If you're familiar with magical or religious traditions, you may be able to decipher the purpose of a *sentinel stone* or a *mark of justice*.

Check: A *mark of justice* is a complex religious symbol; typically, it describes the nature of the crime, the course of behavior that must be followed to prevent the mark from being activated, and the consequences of activation. To obtain this information you must be able to examine the mark for a full minute, and you must make a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20). If the mark was made by a priest of your own religion, you get a +5 circumstance bonus to the check. The same check can be used on a *greater mark of justice*, *sentinel stone*, or *greater sentinel stone*. However, if a *sentinel stone* was created using arcane magic, you should instead use Knowledge (arcana) (DC 20) for the check.

Retry: If the *mark* or *stone* was created by a priest of your religion, you may retry the check after one hour has passed. Otherwise, you cannot retry the check.

EXILE

Exile is imprisonment in reverse — instead of keeping you locked up, the powers that be banish you from their dominion. Depending on the nature of your crime and the jurisdiction of the justice, exile might cover a single community, an entire country, or all of the subject nations of a vast empire. Your sentence will include the penalty that will be imposed should you break your exile; typically this is death, but it's always possible that you could get away with some form of severe corporal or magical punishment.

There are a variety of ways that exile can be enforced. If you're a well-known public figure — a prominent member of the aristocracy, for example — it may simply be assumed that the law will hear of it if you return. More often, you will be branded or tattooed with a mark that indicates your criminal status; see the section on corporal punishment for information on receiving and removing brands.



Finally, if magic is available the judge could use *mark of justice*, *greater mark of justice*, *sentinel stone*, or *greater sentinel stone* to enforce the exile; at the very least, he could use *indelible mark* in place of a brand.

INCARCERATION

In many cultures incarceration is not actually used as a punishment in its own right. Instead, a prison is simply a holding facility to keep you out of trouble until your day in court. Prisons require guards, food and water for prisoners, and there's always that chance of escape — not to mention the myriad problems associated with holding sorcerers, clerics, and other spellcasters. A society in search of revenge usually finds corporal or capital punishments to be more satisfying, and a public execution has a greater deterrent value. If the rulers just want you out of the way, exile is a simpler solution. But there are a few situations that call for long-term prison sentences, including the following:

- The society believes in the redemptive value of prison and hopes to rehabilitate you. Expect lots of moralizing sermons and instructive labor. Or, depending on the culture, expect torture and brainwashing. Either way, it's not going to be fun.
- The justice feels that he cannot enforce a harsher penalty against you, either due to your popularity among the common people, political connections, or some other mitigating factor. Executing a foreign prince is a good way to start a war, for example.
- Your life has value as a bargaining chip in a greater game, or you possess important information. Perhaps you are a prisoner of war, a spy, or, well, a foreign prince.
- You have friends who can resurrect you; if you're executed, they'll just bring you back to life and claim your punishment has been served.

Chapter Nine discusses a variety of types of prisons, ranging from the basement of the village sheriff to the reliquary wards used by powerful churches. Chapter Three includes a variety of tools that are just as useful



to prison wardens as to bounty hunters; gags, iron hands, and magical tools of restraint can be invaluable when it comes to keeping a spellcasting prisoner from causing trouble.

If your guardians hope to rehabilitate you, your prison may be a pristine and safe environment. In some cases, a prisoner may simply be a guarded guest at a manor or palatial estate. However, the life of the typical prisoner is less pleasant. If you're simply being held for execution, the guards have little reason to worry about your health. This can result in malnourishment, parasites, infections, and various diseases.

 As a general rule, you must make a Fortitude save (DC 10) for every week that you spend in a hostile prison. Failure — and a roll of 1 is always a failure — results in the loss of one point of Constitution. This is temporary ability score damage, but you cannot recover the lost points while you remain in the same conditions. If you are released or receive medical attention and better nutrition, you can recover the lost points at the usual rate of one point per day.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is an extremely common style of retribution. Inflicting pain on another often satisfies a primal need for vengeance. Doing it in public serves as a deterrent to others who might break the law. And there are those who believe that mortification of the flesh is the key to redemption of the spirit — so it can even be a tool for rehabilitation.

With that said, corporal punishment can take many forms. One nation may have you publicly scourged; another may simply chain you to the face of a plateau for a few days, allowing the elements to administer justice. This section will provide a brief overview of some common styles of corporal punishment, but the GM will undoubtedly find ways to improve upon this list. Enjoy!

BEATING

There's nothing like a good caning to beat the bad out of you. Well, maybe that's true and maybe it's not, but a lot of justices are willing to put it to the test.



Judicial beating does not translate well into a “damage per stroke” system. Consider it to be a form of *coup de grace*; when you're being beaten you are typically restrained and helpless, so it's really a question of the level of damage your tormenter wants to inflict.

Being beaten has two effects. The first is loss of hit points; the second is temporary ability damage to your Dexterity score. A successful Fortitude save can reduce or negate these effects. The damage and DC of the saving throw is based on the level of the beating, as indicated below:

Light — 20% hit point loss (Fortitude DC 13 halves), 1d4–1 Dexterity loss (Fortitude DC 13 negates)

Moderate — 40% hit point loss (Fortitude DC 15 halves), 1d4 Dexterity loss (Fortitude DC 14 halves)

Heavy — 60% hit point loss (Fortitude DC 16 halves), 1d6 Dexterity loss (Fortitude DC 15 halves)

This assumes that you're being beaten with a cane, scourge, or similar weapon. If your tormentor is unarmed you suffer nonlethal damage instead of normal damage, and the DC of the save against loss of Dexterity is reduced by 3.

DISFIGUREMENT

Physical disfigurement is a common form of corporal punishment. Aside from being extremely painful, as long as the style of disfigurement is recognized by the general populace it serves two additional purposes: it informs others of your criminal activities and simultaneously serves as a warning of what will happen to those who follow in your footsteps.



The standard form of disfigurement is branding. A hot iron is used to sear a mark onto your flesh; this inflicts 3 points of damage and leaves a distinctive scar. A brand is usually put in on a prominent location — the face, a hand, the neck, etc. — so that it will be seen by others. A brand is rarely disturbing enough to affect your Charisma score, but depending on the nature of the crime of which it accuses you, it may affect the attitudes of NPCs you interact with. If the crime is serious, the attitude of most honest NPCs will be reduced by at least one category (indifferent to unfriendly, for example). On the other hand, a fellow criminal might actually respond to you more favorably; this could result in an attitude shift in your favor.

In addition to any attitude shift, depending on the situation and nature of your brand you may suffer a circumstance penalty of -1 to -3 on any Bluff, Diplomacy, or Sleight of Hand checks that you make; the exact level of the penalty should be determined by the GM based on your audience. It's harder to fast-talk someone when you've got "Con Artist" stamped on your forehead, after all.

You can remove a brand using *heal*, *lesser wish*, *miracle*, *regeneration*, or *wish*. You can also simply burn the skin around the brand or cut it away; doing this to yourself requires a Will save (DC 15), so you may need a friend to help you out. This causes you to take 1d6+2 points of damage, but you're free of the brand — though without *regeneration* or *heal* you'll still end up with an unsightly scar. Because a brand can be removed in this manner, mystically advanced societies prefer to use the spell *indelible mark*.



NEW SPELL: INDELIBLE MARK

Transmutation

Level: Clr 3, Inq 2, Justice 3, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

A more powerful variation of *arcane mark*, this ritual allows you to brand a living creature with a message, symbol, or sigil. The process of inscription takes ten minutes, and the target must either be unconscious, restrained, or willing to cooperate with you. If the target is not willing to cooperate, she gets to make a Will save at the end of the process. If she's successful, the inscription fails and the material components are lost.

An *indelible mark* can cover a square of skin no larger than 2 inches on a side. When you inscribe the mark, you can designate it as voluntary or involuntary:

A voluntary mark is under the control of the owner. She cannot change the appearance of the mark, but she can cause it to appear or disappear at will, as a free action. Secret societies and spy rings will often use voluntary marks as a means of verifying membership.

An involuntary mark cannot be concealed. The target can hide it beneath clothing, or clothing, but she cannot remove it from her skin. If she grows hair over the spot, the hair will be discolored to match the mark. If she uses *alter self* or *disguise self*, the mark will remain. If the flesh is burned away or cut off, the mark will return when the skin heals. Even if the victim is *polymorphed* into the form of another creature, her new form will still bear the mark.

There are a few spells that can remove an *indelible mark*. The mark cannot be dispelled, but it can be removed with *break enchantment*, *limited wish*, *miracle*, *remove curse*, or *wish*. If *break enchantment* or *remove curse* is used, the caster level must be at least equal to your caster level. In addition, you can always choose to remove a mark that you've made.

It should be noted that *mark of justice* and *greater mark of justice* both include an *indelible mark* as part of the spell.

Material Components: 100 gp worth of dyes and tattooing equipment.

Some nations use tattoos instead of brands, or more extreme forms of scarification. Particularly brutal societies will mutilate criminals, removing a victim's ears or nose. The effects of mutilation will be discussed later in this section.

EXPOSURE

Exposure is a form of short-term incarceration during which you are exposed to the elements and hazards of the wild; the idea is to let nature act as the hand of justice. In practice, this is the same as trial by element. An urban form of exposure is the use of stocks and pillories, which will be described later in this chapter.

MUTILATION

If you're a convicted thief, the justice may decide to brand you so that others know about your larcenous tendencies. Or he may feel that a sterner lesson is required — say, chopping off your hand.

 Mutilation as a form of punishment is almost unheard of in good-aligned societies, but can be quite common in evil nations; the tyrant appreciates its value as a deterrent, while the warlord simply enjoys causing pain. In neutral-aligned societies specific types of mutilation may be viewed as a form of just revenge — taking the “an eye for an eye” approach.

Here are a few forms of mutilation. The effects are permanent unless the limb is restored, which can be accomplished through use of *miracle*, *regeneration*, or *wish*.

Ears — Gives –1 drain to Charisma score, –2 circumstance penalty to all Listen checks.

Eyes — Gives –1 drain to Charisma score; you suffer all the penalties of the blinded condition.

Hand — You have a 50% chance to miscast any spell requiring somatic components, in which case the spell is lost. You also have the obvious disadvantage of only having one hand to hold objects.

You can get a prosthetic (such as the traditional pirate's hook), but unless it's magically animated you'll take a –4 circumstance penalty on any action involving the hand.

Fingers — Sometimes fingers or finger joints are removed in place of an entire hand. In this case you only have a 25% chance of miscasting a spell with somatic components, and you take a –2 circumstance penalty to any action involving use of the hand.

Genitals — A common punishment for rape, this has no quantifiable game effects, but it's really not a lot of fun. Some societies also use this as a penalty for treason, ensuring that you will not propagate your traitorous blood.

Nose — Gives –3 drain to Charisma score.

Tongue — You cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components.

If a society practices mutilation as a standard form of punishment, then members of the society will know the crimes associated with each form of injury; this has the same social effect as having a brand.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Execution is the ultimate form of corporal punishment. As a deterrent, it's hard to do better; if you know that you'll be killed if you're caught, you may reconsider a life of crime. In terms of vengeance, some cultures view execution as the most satisfying form of revenge. However, others consider a sentence of death to be either too swift or too meaningless. Such a culture might prefer that you suffer under a slow curse, or that you live out your life as a blinded cripple. A more enlightened society could see the best revenge as forcing you to help the community that you harmed, and so making you to do something meaningful with your life.



In a good-aligned society, execution will be saved for the most serious crimes — premeditated murder or serious acts of treason — and will

generally be as quick and painless as possible. As you slide down the scale of alignment, execution becomes increasingly more common; in a chaotic evil nation, it may be the standard form of punishment for challenging the warlord. In addition, the methods of execution will become increasingly more horrific — instead of being hanged or beheaded, you may find that you are scheduled to be drawn and quartered, stoned to death by the public, burned or buried alive, slowly crushed, have your flesh eaten away by slow-acting acid, or condemned to some other charming way passing into the next world. Such executions will generally be public spectacles, emphasizing both the power of the state and the price of challenging the laws of the land. As always, neutral nations tend to stand between the two, although there are always strange extremes. A lawful neutral nation might impose the death sentence for every crime, in an attempt to create a utopian society where no one dares to break the law.

Most of the time, if you're going to be executed you're completely helpless and it's considered a *coup de grace*. In the case of being burned alive, you might be able to forestall death by using a spell like *protection from energy*; but assuming that you're chained, the executioners will probably notice that you aren't burning and try an alternate tactic (say, shooting you with arrows). If you're being stoned to death — that is, a crowd is pummeling you with rocks until you die — you will take 3d4 points of damage per round; it's possible your friends will be able to rescue you before the mob finishes its work. But as a general rule, the best way to survive an execution is to not be the one with your head on the chopping block.

As execution is typically used as a warning to others, many societies will continue to display the body of the victim after death. Someone who has been hanged may be left dangling from the gibbet, while the head of a traitor may be set on a spike. If you're hoping to bring an executed friend back to life, this can be rather problematic; getting his head down from a spike above the palace gates can be something of a challenge.



In a nation where magic is common, the victim's remains may be stored in a reli-

quary ward to prevent *resurrection*. Even if the executioners don't have the means or desire to ever *resurrect* the victim, they'll want to make sure that no one else can dig him up and bring him back (although *true resurrection* will still work). In truly vile nations, the corpse of a criminal may be *animated* as a zombie and set to work in the community as a guard or laborer — a sinister reminder that the state holds the power of life and death over its subjects.



MAGICAL RETRIBUTION

In a society where magic is part of everyday life, it's only natural to assume that spells will be used to punish criminals. Earlier sections have already discussed the value of *geas/quest*, *taboo* or *mark of justice* in enforcing punishments. Here are a few more examples of mystical retribution:

Bestow curse could be used as a form of punishment; this could be intended to be a permanent affliction, or else the law may intend to use *remove curse* after a certain period of time.

Blindness/deafness would be a more humane way to punish an offender than physical mutilation — not to mention being easier to reverse.

Energy drain — carrying the potential of permanent level loss — could be used as punishment by powerful wizards or clerics.

Feeblemind could be seen as a fitting punishment for certain crimes. *Insanity* is also an option, but someone afflicted with *insanity* can pose a considerable threat to those around him.

Forget (from *Dynasties & Demagogues*) can be used to strip the knowledge of criminal skills from the mind of an offender.

Plane shift allows a nation to exile a condemned criminal from the world itself; in a theocracy that uses the voice of god system, the justice may believe that it is his divine right to banish the guilty to the abyss.



Baleful polymorph is a highly effective punishment; the form that the victim is given may be determined by the crime that he has committed. For example, a bandit judged to be a wolf in human form might be given the body of a hart and released into the wild, so he might suffer at the jaws of the wolves. *Baleful polymorph*, *flesh to stone*, *trap the soul*, and *imprison* can also all be used to create magical prisons; this is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

JUDICIAL CURSES

There are times when a criminal cannot be brought to justice, or when she is simply too powerful for the forces of the law to overcome. But where an evil archmage may be able to resist any minor spell a crusading cleric has in her repertoire, the church can call on the power of the faithful to overcome his resistance. If a spell is identified as a judicial curse, it has the following benefits and restrictions:

Ceremonial Force: You can increase the power of the spell by taking additional time to perform the ritual and by receiving support from assistants. This increased effect is measured in *ceremonial force*.

For every two hours you add to the casting time of the spell, you receive 1 point of ceremonial force. You can receive a total of 3 points of ceremonial force by increasing casting time.

For every two assistants you have helping you with the ritual, you receive 1 point of ceremonial force, to a maximum bonus of 3. Assistants must be of at least 2nd level in a class that has the potential to cast the spell in question. To provide you with this benefit, an assistant must perform the verbal and somatic components required by the spell, and he must participate for the full casting time of the spell.

If the spell is divine in nature, you can increase its power further through use of a sacred relic of your deity. The nature of the deity will determine the nature of her relics; a goddess of knowledge might have spread the pages of the first book across the world, while a war god would treasure the weapons of

his sacred champions. You cannot create a relic, and it's ultimately up to the GM to decide if your god even has relics. Depending on the holiness of the object, you will gain 1 to 3 points of ceremonial force from its presence. Even if you have multiple relics, you cannot gain more than 3 points of ceremonial force. Arcane casters may be able to mimic this effect by creating esoteric spell amplifiers; this is left up to the GM.

Ceremonial force has the following effects:

- Spell formulas (such as spell range) may be modified by the number of points of ceremonial force in the spell. These effects vary, and details can be found in the description of a specific judicial curse. For example, *steal the painful memory* uses ceremonial force to determine both the range of the spell and the number of people that it can affect.
- The ceremonial force is added to the DC of the spell's saving throw. This cannot increase the DC by more than 5 points.
- If the spell effect can be removed with *break enchantment*, the ceremonial force is added to your level to determine the effective caster level of the spell.
- Unless otherwise specified, the effects of a judicial curse can be broken with *remove curse*. Add the ceremonial force of the spell to your caster level; the character attempting to break the curse must be of equal or higher level or *remove curse* will fail.

Example: You're a level 15 cleric casting *scourge*. You take two hours (+1 CF), you have two assistants, (+1 CF) and a minor relic (+1 CF), for a total of three points of ceremonial force. This increases the saving throw DC by 3 and adds 15 (3 x 5) miles to the range of the spell. If someone uses *break enchantment* to try to remove the curse, the DC of the check is 29 (11+15+3).

Restrictions: A judicial curse can only be used on a creature who could normally fall under the jurisdiction of your justice system. Nationality is not an issue, so most societies could target any human; but you can't *excommunicate* a dragon. As an optional rule,

the GM may decide that judicial curses cannot be used unless the target has actually been convicted of a crime (even if she was tried in absentia); alternately, he could receive a +5 bonus to his saving throw if he is innocent of any wrongdoing.

These benefits and restrictions only apply to spells that are clearly designated as judicial curses! You can't increase the power of a *fireball* just because you have a few friends working with you.

SPELLS OF JUDGMENT

The following section presents a few new spells designed to punish the guilty. *Anathema*, *ban*, and *excommunicate* are tools that a theocracy can use to mark its enemies, while *sever from the source* is a severe punishment for an arcane caster. *Malediction* and *scourge* are more powerful forms of *bestow curse*; *scourge* is a particularly flexible spell that can be tailored to produce especially appropriate punishments.

ANATHEMA

Transmutation [Judicial Curse]

Level: Clr 8, Inq 7

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Special (25 miles/level + 25 miles/point of ceremonial force)

Target: One living creature

Duration: Permanent (see description)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

Anathema is the ultimate form of theocratic justice. You can only cast this spell if you're an official representative of the church — and this means holding a rank or office within the hierarchy of the church, not simply having a level in the cleric class. The isolated hermit or wandering acolyte does not have the authority required to place this mark upon an enemy. In addition, you cannot use *anathema* on a person who holds a higher rank within the church than you do; again, this is based on rank and not character level.

Anathema has the following effects:

- An *indelible mark* appears on the victim. This mark is only visible to members of your faith, and it brands the victim as accursed in the eyes of the church. This will typically result in a hostile attitude from any NPC who can see it. Note that the victim himself may not be able to see the mark.
- The victim suffers from all the effects of *excommunicate*. However, the victim cannot benefit from beneficial spells cast by clerics of your religion even if he himself does not share your beliefs.
- The victim takes a –2 sacred (or profane, if your religion is evil in nature) penalty to all attack rolls or skill checks made against members of your faith. He suffers a –2 sacred (or profane) penalty to saving throws made against the actions of the faithful.
- Followers of your religion receive a +2 sacred (or profane) bonus to all attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws they make while fighting the victim.

Anathema can be removed in the same manner as *excommunicate*. However, the god himself has to approve of any use of *atonement*. Any cleric can cast *atonement*, but the deity will state the penance that must be performed before the mark of *anathema* will be lifted.

Anathema is a judicial curse; the saving throw of the spell can be increased through the use of ceremonial force.

XP Cost: 500 XP

BAN

Transmutation

Level: Clr 3, God's Eye 3, Inq 2, Lawkeeper 3

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: Permanent (see text)

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: No

This ritual mystically marks the victim as an enemy of your church. You can only cast this spell if you are an official representative of the church (as outlined under *anathema*) and you cannot use it on a person who holds a higher rank within the church than you do.

This spell has little effect on people who are not followers of your faith; for the most part, it simply means that the target can be located by the *detect heretic* spell, and can be targeted by special effects like the lawkeeper's Battle Heresy ability. If the victim is a member of your faith, as long as the *ban* remains in effect she loses the ability to cast *anathema*, *atonement*, *ban*, and *excommunicate*.

When you cast a *ban*, you must state the crime that your target has committed against your church; this message is limited to 100 words and can be examined by others who use *detect heretic*. Under normal circumstances no saving throw is allowed. However, if the target is a member of your church and is innocent of the crime that you've accused her of, she may negate the spell with a successful Will save. This spell can only be used as a condemnation; you cannot use it to secretly imprint messages for other members of your church to pick up with *detect heretic*.

Any higher-ranking priest from your church can remove your *ban*, provided that he himself is not under the effects of *anathema*, *ban*, or *excommunicate*; he simply makes a formal statement absolving your victim of her crime. Alternately, a lower-level priest of your religion may help your victim by casting *atonement* on her behalf — although if the victim did commit the crime of which you accused her, she must honestly repent her actions. Otherwise, the only way to remove the *ban* is through a *miracle* or *wish*. Note that “higher-ranking” does not necessarily mean “of higher level.”

Unlike the other spells in this section, *ban* is not a judicial curse; you cannot use ceremonial force to increase its power.



EXCOMMUNICATE

Transmutation [Judicial Curse]

Level: Clr 6, Inq 5

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Special (10 miles/level + 10 miles/point of ceremonial force)

Target: One living creature

Duration: Permanent (see text)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

Excommunicate allows a cleric to cast a member of her faith out of her church and the sight of her god. You can only cast this spell if you are an official representative of the church (see *anathema*) and you cannot use it on a person who holds a higher rank within the church than you do.

Excommunicate has the same effects as *ban*. However, when you cast it on a member of your faith the effects are far more severe. If the victim is a divine spellcaster, she loses the ability to receive spells or to Turn/Rebuke Undead. A paladin also loses the ability to *remove disease*, *detect evil*, or Lay on Hands, but keeps her other class abilities. Regardless of her class, the victim cannot benefit from divine spells of her (former) faith — although she can still suffer the effects of hostile magic. If a cleric of her faith attempts to cast a beneficial spell on her, he will sense her status; the spell is lost, but the cleric knows why it failed.

There are no visible signs of excommunication. Under normal circumstances it can only be discovered through the use of *detect heretic* or by trying to cast a beneficial spell on the target. If the victim is revealed as an excommunicate, the attitudes of any NPCs who share the faith will be reduced by at least one category. In some religions the faithful are not allowed to interact with those who have been excommunicated; if this is the case, the victim will probably be exiled as part of her sentence.

Excommunicate can be removed in the same manner as *ban*. For this purpose, *atonement* and *miracle* can affect the target. Casting *atonement* on behalf of an excommunicate is a serious business that can get the caster herself excommunicated; as a result, the cleric will generally require proof that the victim has repented of her mistakes.

Excommunicate is a judicial curse; the saving throw of the spell can be increased through the use of ceremonial force.

 MALEDICTION

Transmutation [Judicial Curse]

Level: Brd 5, Clr 5, Inq 5, Sor/Wiz 6

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One living creature

Duration: Permanent (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

A *malediction* is a more severe form of *bestow curse*. As it is a judicial curse, the saving throw of the spell can be increased through the use of ceremonial force.

When you cast *malediction*, you can choose one of the following effects:

Affliction — One of the target's ability scores is permanently reduced by 9 (to a minimum of 1; Intelligence can only be reduced to a minimum of 3).

Ill Luck — The target suffers a –6 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Torpor — Each turn, the victim has a 35% chance (1–7 on a d20) of acting normally; otherwise, she takes no action.

You can come up with other effects with your GM's permission, but they should have roughly this level of power. The effects of *malediction* do not stack with those of *bestow curse*; however, if the two spells are being used for different purposes — a *curse* is reducing the victim's Strength while a *malediction* is affecting her Intelligence, for example — the two effects will not interfere with one another.

A *malediction* cannot be dispelled. *Remove curse* can remove *malediction*, but only if its caster level is equal to or greater than your caster level. It can also be removed with *break enchantment*, *lesser wish*, *miracle*, or *wish*. Finally, you can release the victim from the effects of the curse at any time.

 SCOURGE

Transmutation [Judicial Curse]

Level: Clr 7, Inq 7, Justice 8, Sor/Wiz 8

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Special (4 miles/level + 4 miles/point of ceremonial force)

Target: One living creature

Duration: Permanent (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

A *scourge* is an extremely powerful form of *bestow curse*. It can be cast over a vast distance; as a result, it is often used to punish heretics and criminals who cannot be brought to face justice. As it is a judicial curse, the saving throw of the spell can be increased through the use of ceremonial force.

When you cast *scourge* you can choose to duplicate any of the effects of *malediction*, or you can select one of the following effects:

Aging — The victim ages one year at the start of each day. The victim may be sentenced to lose ten years of her life in prison — but it will only take ten days.

Barren Touch — Any food or drink touched by the victim spoils. Any plants he tills die. Any Heal checks he makes automatically fail, and any *cure* spells he casts have a 50% chance of becoming *inflict* spells of the same level.

Ignominy — Anyone who comes into contact with the victim will forget any noble or valorous deeds she has done, while clearly remembering any crimes she has committed or mistakes she has made. People will attribute the character's greatest achievements to other people (other party members, for example, or legendary heroes). If the curse is lifted, these memories will return.

Ostracism — The victim is surrounded by an aura that causes all NPCs to have a hostile attitude towards him. This also results in a permanent –6 penalty to the victim's Charisma score, to a minimum score of 1. People can't explain why they don't like the victim —

he just seems suspicious and hateful. NPC allies and friends can resist this somewhat, but will still find the character strangely repellent; they may suspect that he has been replaced by a doppelganger. In addition, any sort of spell used to detect alignment will always respond with the alignment most hostile to the caster, and *discern lies* will always show the victim as lying.

Poverty — Any precious metal that the victim touches turns to lead.

Prohibition — You specify a specific action that the victim cannot take. “Do not lie” or “Do not physically hurt humans” will work; impossible or broad requests like “Do not breathe” or “Never hurt anyone in any way” will not. Any time that the victim attempts the prohibited action, she must make a Will save (using the DC of the *scourge*). If she succeeds, she can perform the action unhindered; otherwise she is wracked with extreme pain and stunned for 2d4 rounds.

You can come up with similar effects with your GM’s permission.

A *scourge* cannot be dispelled or removed with *break enchantment*. You may choose to release the victim from the *scourge* at any time — although in the case of the curse of aging, this will not restore lost years to the victim. *Remove curse* can end the *scourge*, but only if its caster level is at least two levels higher than your caster level; *miracle* or *wish* will also work. Breaking the curse using any of these spells will restore the years lost to mystical aging. Finally, when you cast the spell you must declare a set of circumstances that will cause the curse to be broken. Depending on the reasons for inflicting the *scourge*, this could range from “Save an innocent man from death” or “Submit to Kheshite justice,” to “Defeat the demon lord Xarglbarg” or even “Find true love.”

SEVER FROM THE SOURCE

Transmutation [Judicial Curse]

Level: Inq 6, Sor/Wiz 6

Components: V, S, M, XP

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Permanent (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

One of the greatest punishments that can be inflicted upon an arcane spellcaster is to strip her of her ability to perform magic. For a sorcerer, the loss of her natural powers can be a fate worse than death. As a result, this ritual is not undertaken lightly. It involves a lengthy incantation and the creation of a complex mystical seal around the victim, so she must be unconscious, restrained, or a willing participant in the ritual. In addition to the materials required by the spell, you must have the cooperation of at least two assistants; as they are a required part of the spell, these first two assistants do not provide you with a point of ceremonial force.

The spell takes an hour; at the end of this time you must spend 500 XP and your target must make a Will save. If she’s successful, the spell fails. If she fails to make her save, she loses the ability to cast any form of arcane magic for as long as the spell remains in effect. You have the power to restore her abilities at any time; otherwise, she can only regain her mystical abilities as a result of a *limited wish*, *miracle*, or *wish*.

Material Component: The gemstone powder and mystic oils used to create the seal cost 500 gp. These are used up in the casting; if the target saves against the effect and you wish to try again, you must use new components.

XP Cost: 500 XP

PUNISHMENT

THROUGH PROPERTY

Fines and confiscation of goods have been used as a form of justice for millennia. The problem with using fines as the basis of justice in a roleplaying game is that wandering adventures rarely *have* much in the way of property. The crown can’t claim your lands as punishment for your treasonous acts if you have no lands in the first place. This is true across society. In a prosperous nation, where most citizens have some sort of property or means of making a living, a system of fines may be effective; but if the popu-

lation includes large numbers of slaves, beggars, serfs, and others with little or no property to call their own, fines will be a secondary system if present at all.

In a nation that uses fines as the basis for justice, the amount of the fine may be increased based on the social standing of the victim. Stealing from the king results in a far greater penalty than stealing from a merchant.

It's impossible to set a hard system for fines, given the different values that nations assign to different crimes. Here's a basic outline; the GM can modify it as she sees fit.

Crime	Example	Fine
Minor crime	Brawling, minor fraud, theft, or smuggling	1 gp
Moderate crime	Serious fraud, theft, smuggling, or oathbreaking	3 gp
Serious crime	Murder, treason	6 gp

Victim's Status	Multiplier
Beggar	x 1
Laborer	x 10
Craftsman	x 50
Community leader, priest, knight	x 250
Lesser noble	x 500
King or hierophant	x 2,500

So breaking your oath to a priest might produce a fine of 750 gp, while killing a beggar may only set you back 6 gp. A foreign diplomat (or adventurer) might be treated as a lesser noble or a beggar, depending on the values of the society.

The most important consideration is that most societies will not allow the wealthy to completely wash away crimes with gold. Just because you've managed to raise 30,000 gp doesn't mean that you can go ahead and kill the king. When fines are used, they'll often be applied on top of any additional punishment. In a good society, they'll probably go to the victim of the crime (or his next of kin), while in an evil society, the crown may claim the fine.

In any sort of theft or smuggling operation, you can also expect the stolen or illegal goods to be confiscated; this is not considered to be part of the payment of the fine.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY

A final consideration is the role that the community may play in the punishment of an offender or resolution of a crime. Public humiliation can serve as both an effective deterrent and a possible source of redemption, as the criminal must face those that he has harmed and then look them in the eyes in days to come; and it certainly provides an angry populace with the chance to take vengeance on the offender.

Public humiliation can take many forms. Beatings, disfigurement, or mutilation may be performed in a central location allowing the populace to see justice in action. Your crimes will probably be announced to the people, in as much detail as possible. For minor crimes, humiliation alone may be the only punishment. You could be driven through the town in manacles, forced to shout out the details of your crime as you go. Or you could be made to wear unusual or embarrassing forms of restraints indicating the nature of your transgression against the community; if accused of drunk and disorderly conduct, you could find yourself wearing a barrel, for example. On the lower end of this, you could simply be required to wear something that indicates the nature of your sin — a large wooden collar, a scarlet letter, a red hood, etc. This is a lesser form of disfigurement; there is no permanent damage, but it still alerts other members of the community to your criminal past.

STOCKS AND BONDS

An extremely popular form of public humiliation is the use of stocks or pillories — a form of public incarceration that leaves you exposed and at the mercy of the people.

Stocks are formed from two pieces of wood or iron, connected by a hinge and able to be locked together. Sets of holes are placed along these planks, designed to accommodate the ankles of one or more prisoners. The stocks force you to remain in a sitting position — but they do at least leave your hands free, so you can try to defend yourself from thrown objects.



While in stocks, your movement rate is reduced to zero. You lose your Dex bonus



to AC and take an additional –7 penalty to your Armor Class, and you're effectively flat-footed. If your hands are left free you can perform any action that you could do while sitting. You take a –2 circumstance penalty on any melee attack roll due to your limited ability to move, however.

Wooden stocks have a Hardness value of 5 and 30 hit points; you can break free of the stocks with a Strength check (DC 24). Iron stocks have a Hardness value of 10 and 60 hit points, and require a Strength check of DC 27 in order to break free. The stocks are held closed by a lock. Depending on the number of people the stocks are designed to hold, you may not be close enough to reach the lock; even if you are, you'll take a –5 circumstance penalty on any Open Lock checks due to your awkward position. If you make a successful Escape Artist check (DC 30) you can slip your legs free.

A pillory is similar to a set of stocks, but it holds your head and wrists pinioned instead of your ankles. This leaves you totally defenseless and virtually unable to move.



If you're trapped in a pillory, your movement rate and AC are both reduced to zero. You lose your Dexterity bonus to your AC and are considered to be a helpless opponent. You cannot cast spells requiring somatic components. You cannot use skills involving any sort of physical motion, but you can still use Bluff, Diplomacy, Knowledge, or similar skills — although you get a –3 circumstance penalty on any use of Intimidate.

A wooden pillory has a Hardness value of 5 and 30 hit points, but it is extremely difficult to force your way free from it; this requires a successful Strength check (DC 27). An iron pillory has a Hardness value of 10, 60 hit points, and a Strength check DC of 30. Like the stocks, a pillory is held closed by a lock. However, it's impossible to reach this lock while you're actually in the pillory. It's also difficult to squeeze your head out using Escape Artist (DC 35).

If you're left in the stocks or a pillory for an extended period of time, you may have to worry about starvation, dehydration, or exposure. But in the short term, the greater danger is the crowd. If your crime is minor, you may simply be subjected to ridicule; people may pelt you with rotten vegetables or other refuse. But if the public wants blood, there's nothing to stop them from taking it, whether this means stoning you to death or getting in close and slitting your throat. Generally, you won't be placed in the stocks if the justice truly believes that the crowd wants you dead; in such a case, you're far more likely to be beheaded. It's quicker for you, and it lets the people have a show.

THE WOLF'S HEAD

As mentioned in previous chapters, a court can sentence you to be placed outside the laws of the land. In this case, you have no protection from the law. Not only can anyone cheat, rob, or kill you, but in many nations they will actually be rewarded for doing so. This punishment is usually applied to criminals who cannot be brought to justice; the goal is to allow the people of the land to act as enforcers of the law, should the opportunity ever present itself. However, it's possible that a prisoner who has been sentenced to exile will be branded with the mark of the wolf's head; that way, if he ever returns to his homeland, he will find every hand raised against him.

HEALING AN INJURED COMMUNITY

Sometimes punishing a criminal isn't enough to repair the damage that he has caused. In a land fraught with racial tensions, clan feuds, or political rivalries, an execution could set the entire community ablaze. Or perhaps the crime is so unexpected and horrific that no punishment will assuage the shock and grief it has caused. The death of a beloved leader or the murder of children are both terrible crimes — but what happens when the people discover that their leader was sacrificing children to demons, and that their souls will be tormented for an eternity? What could possibly set the minds of the people at ease?

Public humiliation — placing a criminal in the pillory or parading him through town in chains — gives the people the chance to express their feelings, to shout and cry, and to fling rotten fruit or stones. Alternatively, an execution or brutal form of vengeance is sometimes the only way to defuse this anger. But if the justice is willing to speak on behalf of the criminal — using her diplomatic skills to explain why his life should be spared and why the chosen punishment is fitting — she may be able to calm the anger of the crowd.

In other situations, community service may be the best way to restore the balance. This certainly won't work for the child-murdering mayor — but if the thief is forced to repay his debt by working for the people from whom he stole, he may learn the error of his ways and the people might come to forgive him. He could become a part of the community, instead of being its enemy.

 For more extreme situations — crimes where there is no way to punish the criminal without causing more death, or horrors have been committed that shock a community to its core — there is always the potential for magic to solve the problem. The spell *steal the painful memory* allows a priest to wipe the knowledge of an event from the minds of an entire community. This may mean that a criminal actually escapes justice. But sometimes being able to set aside the past and move forward with the future is more important than the need for vengeance.



NEW SPELL:

STEAL THE PAINFUL MEMORY

Enchantment [Judicial Curse, Mind-Altering]

Level: Clr 7, Inq 6

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Special (1 mile/level + 1 mile/point of ceremonial force)

Target: See text

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: See text

Spell Resistance: Yes

Sometimes a trial reveals information best left unknown. Perhaps a village doesn't want to remember a particular-

ly horrible murder, or the shameful act of one of its members. In this case, a powerful inquisitor or cleric can use *steal the painful memory* to remove all recollection of the event from the minds of the community.

Steal the painful memory allows you to strip away all memories of a particular event. You must be able to describe the event in approximately 12 words or less. For example, any of the following would work: "Forget that Shaeryn ever existed;" "Forget that Shaeryn was murdered;" or "Forget that Prince Korrin murdered Shaeryn." The gap in memory will be filled in by the simplest solution, and all people affected by the spell will share this memory. Told to forget a murder, they will believe that the victim moved away; told to forget the identity of the murderer, they will believe that the crime was never solved or that the murderer was a stranger who escaped.

The targets of *steal the painful memory* must be linked in some way. They could be members of the same community, the same guild, the same religion, or the same party of adventurers. The basic spell can affect up to 100 people; every additional point of ceremonial force can add up to 250 people to the effect. The power of the spell spreads out in a radius from your location until it reaches the maximum range or has affected the maximum number of targets. This spell is intended to be used against willing targets. When the effect occurs, the targets will have a sense of the memory that's to be lost; if a target chooses to resist, he may make a Will save with a +10 circumstance bonus to negate the effect. If the targets are within your line of sight when you cast the spell, you will know if they choose to resist it; otherwise, you're not aware of the success or failure of the ritual.

Remove curse restores the memories of a single individual, but he must choose to cooperate and the caster level must at least match your caster level. *Limited wish* restores stolen memories to a single person, while *wish* or *miracle* restores memories to all victims of an affected community.

Steal the painful memory is a judicial curse; the saving throw of the spell can be increased through the use of ceremonial force.

XP Cost: 1,000 XP

DUNGEONS & DUNGEONS

“S’pretty, I’ll give it that,” Jonath grunted, glancing around at the enclosed grove of trees. Tropical birds twittered in the branches, nervously preening their beautiful plumage. “But we’re bein’ paid to free a prince, not to sit around watchin’ birds.”

“This is no simple aviary, you fool,” Thael said, studying the birds. “It’s a prison — a marvelously clever prison. Each one of these birds was once a person. But which is the one we seek?”

“Huh.” The half-orc looked at the birds with renewed interest. “Birds! We’re here to rescue Prince Selwyn! Which one of you is Selwyn?”

As one, the birds began to cry out and chirp loudly, fluttering and flapping about the two bounty hunters. Thael sighed. “You know, there was a reason I hadn’t done that.”

Long-term imprisonment may be a rare form of punishment, but it is used by some societies — and at the least, law enforcement needs some place to hold accused criminals until trial. This chapter discusses a variety of different styles of prisons, from the traditional castle dungeon to bizarre forms of incarceration used by mystical societies.

This material is primarily intended for the GM. In general, jails are places that you’ll have to break out of — unless of course you’re breaking *in* to save a friend (needless to say, breaking out is usually the next step). However, if you accept the office of sheriff or justice, you might find yourself managing one of these prisons. If you try the Sheriff of Ravenswood mini-campaign described in Chapter Four, managing the city jail would be part of your duties; a jailbreak or prison riot can be just as much trouble as an orcish war party raiding in the mountains.

THE SIMPLE DUNGEON

Contrary to popular belief, the average dungeon is not full of traps, treasures, and monsters. Instead, it’s designed to hold a prisoner for a short period of time until a justice or local lord can pass judgment on him — or until the evil tyrant can torture him to death, depending on the role the prison plays in the story. As opposed to containing row upon row of cells, a typical simple dungeon is a single room. The walls are lined with manacles, and prisoners are simply hung up and left to rot.



Unless a community is especially wealthy, the town dungeon will be a single room with a wooden door (Hardness 5, 15 hit points, break DC 18, Open Lock DC 25). The wall chains are average manacles (Hardness 10, 10 hit points, break DC 26, Escape Artist DC 30, Open Lock DC 20). The walls themselves are thin stone (Hardness 8, 60 hit points, break DC 30) or wood (Hardness 5, 40 hit points, break DC 25).

While wall manacles are loose wrist restraints, they are set into the wall at a height designed hold your arms pinned above your head. While you’re held in wall restraints your movement rate is — surprise — reduced to zero. You lose your Dexterity bonus to your AC and take an additional –8 penalty to your AC. You cannot cast spells requiring somatic components or take any action that requires the use of your arms. If you’re a monk and your legs are free, you can still kick anyone who gets close to you; otherwise your options are limited to using skills that don’t require movement, spells that only have verbal components, or making a Strength or Escape Artist check to burst or slip free of your chains. If your legs are also restrained, your AC drops to zero and you’re considered to be a helpless opponent.

Unless you're accused of an especially heinous crime, you probably won't be put in the manacles — although if you start trying to break down the door, or if you escape and are recaptured, expect security to be tightened. Known spellcasters are an exception to this rule; a sorcerer can expect to be chained and gagged, and treated with extreme caution during feeding times.

In a lord's castle, you may get to share your dungeon with the torturer, giving you an excellent view of the various implements of "justice" that you may become better acquainted with if you don't work things out with the local authorities. A wealthy lord may have one or two private cells; otherwise you'll stay chained on the walls.

 In a castle dungeon, you should expect to find a higher level of restraint. The doors will be stronger (Hardness 5, 20 hit points, break DC 23, Open Lock DC 30) and you'll be held in place with masterwork manacles (Hardness 10, 10 hit points, break DC 28, Escape Artist DC 35, Open Lock DC 20). The walls will be typically be thick stone (Hardness 8, 180 hit points, break DC 40).

An evil lord will probably chain you up right away — especially if you're sharing a dungeon with valuable torture equipment. A good noble may allow you to keep your freedom of movement; if you're really lucky, she may even visit you in the dungeon to hear your side of the story. Of course, everything depends on the nature of the crime.

 The quality of guards will vary a great deal based on the size of the community. A prison in a rustic hamlet might be maintained by a few 1st-level warriors, while the local lord may have 3rd-level warriors to watch his dungeon.

THE DEDICATED PRISON

In a large city the sheriff will need to be able to hold more than a handful of prisoners at one time — and he's going to have to worry about skilled rogues who

can slip out of manacles and pick locks. A major metropolis may have a prison tower, intended to hold traitors, diplomatic prisoners, and other "guests" of the state for extended periods of time.

A city jail would have four to six separate cells, with one or two guards on watch at all times. If the prison was filled to capacity or if an especially important prisoner was being held — say, the leader of the local thieves' guild — this watch could be tripled.

A prison tower might have as many as thirty cells. The ground floor will contain the barracks of the guard, so any attack or escape attempt will have to go directly through the wardens. A standard design for a prison tower is to have a narrow, spiraling central staircase that winds up through the tower. Invaders will have to move up through the tower in single file, limiting their ability to fight and use offensive magic. At any given time a prison tower would have ten guards on duty; this watch would be increased in times of crisis.

 In a dedicated prison, prisoners are kept in cells sealed with iron doors and the best locks gold can buy (Hardness 10, 60 hit points, break DC 28, Open Lock DC 40). Usually the door will be considered sufficient to hold you in and you won't be restrained. However, if you are a known spellcaster or escape risk, you may be placed in masterwork manacles (Hardness 10, 10 hit points, break DC 28, Escape Artist DC 35, Open Lock DC 30) or an iron pillory (Hardness 10, 60 hit points, break DC 30, Escape Artist DC 35, Open Lock DC 30); a spellcaster will also be gagged. Note that while hung in manacles or placed in a pillory you don't have sufficient range of movement to try to pick the locks on your restraints. Monks or other characters who are considered to be escape risks or dangerous unarmed combatants may be placed in loose wrist manacles and bar ankle manacles — these aren't hung from the wall, but are merely encumbering enough to limit the chance of escape or attack. Such manacles will probably be of average quality (Hardness 10, 10 hit points, break DC 26, Escape Artist DC 30, Open Lock DC 20). If two prisoners are forced to share a cell, they may be chained together at the ankles; this can make for



rather comical escape attempts. The interior walls will be typically be thick stone (Hardness 8, 180 hit points, break DC 40).

In any dedicated prison — whether it's a city jail or a full-fledged prison tower — the guards will take care to strip you of any useful equipment. If you're considered a serious escape risk, a guard may take 20 on a Search check in an attempt to find thieves tools, spell components, or anything else that could help you in an escape. It's possible to use Open Lock or Disable Device without proper tools; if you can create makeshift tools, you only take a -2 circumstance penalty to your check. However, a watchful guard will try to keep a cell clear of any materials that could be used to create picks. You'll have to use your imagination to see what you can come up with; if you can filch a writing quill off the sheriff's desk, that might do the trick. Otherwise, the GM can impose up to a -5 circumstance penalty for having to use completely inadequate materials.

In a tower, you will probably have a barred window in your cell. Bending iron bars requires a Strength check (DC 24). A Small creature could slip through a window after the bars had been bent — but the frame of the window is generally too small for any Medium creature to try this. The walls themselves are made of thick stone (Hardness 8, 360 hit points, break DC 42). A prison will always contain a few windowless cells for dangerous criminals — so if you squeeze out the window and are later recaptured, don't expect another room with a view.

As for the guards themselves, like the simple dungeon the levels of the guards will vary based on the size of the community. A metropolis will have more capable troops than a small town. However, the guards of a dedicated prison will generally be well trained. A typical prison could be managed by a 6th-level fighter, with four 4th-level fighters as lieutenants, and 25 3rd-level warriors to round out the staff. In a major metropolis, these levels might be doubled, and the guard itself increased by a factor of five.

While a dedicated prison may just be a city jail, its effectiveness can be enhanced by its location. If the prison tower is suspended over an active volcano, jumping out of the window will be a slightly less attractive option, even if you can get those bars bent. Less extreme examples could include jails set on high mountain peaks or island prisons — even if you escape the building, how do you get off of the island?



FORTRESS OF JUSTICE

The dedicated prison is a solid and secure building, but it is the product of a mundane society. In a nation that deals with spellcasters on a regular basis — where magic is commonplace and demons, dark elves, and doppelgangers may need to be held alongside human prisoners — a jail is designed with a much higher level of security. Such an institution would be designed to be impenetrable.

All of the restraints and techniques used in dedicated prison would apply here as well, but based on the nature of the society and the level of magic available, any of the following options could be implemented:

Adamantine — Exceptionally powerful prisoners are restrained in +5 *enchanted manacles* forged from adamantine and fitted with amazing locks (Hardness 25, 25 hit points, break DC 40, Escape Artist DC 45, Open Lock DC 50). The *enchanted manacles* can only be damaged by weapons with a +5 enhancement bonus, and can only be broken by creatures whose natural attacks are considered to be magical weapons. Doors to high-security cells and restricted wards are also be made of adamantine (Hardness 20, 80 hit points, break DC 30, Open Lock DC 40).

Arcane Locks — The doors of the prison fortress are sealed with *arcane lock*. Typically, this would be accomplished through the use of *wands of arcane lock*. Each ward of the prison is locked using a different wand. Guards wear *key talismans* allowing them to open the doors on their ward; the warden has talismans for the entire prison. Even within a particular ward, high-security cells could be locked with a separate spell — that

way, if a guard was to be captured and his *key talisman* stolen, the high-security cell could not be opened.

Collars of Pain — Prisoners who are considered to be escape risks may be equipped with *collars of pain*; the watch commander on the ward will hold the associated control ring.

Forbiddance — The high-security areas of a theocratic church could be shielded by the effects of the *forbiddance* spell, preventing creatures of opposing alignments from moving through the areas. The watch commanders would know the passwords for deactivating the various zones of *forbiddance*, which would have to be done in order to transport prisoners between different areas of the fortress.

Glyphs of Warding — The hallways of a prison fortress are often filled with *glyphs of warding*. The standard trigger is based on an object carried by the guards; if you aren't within ten feet of someone carrying the security object, you set off the ward. The security object is generally not a *key talisman*; it's intentionally nondescript, making it difficult for an escaping prisoner to quickly take the object from a fallen guard. Possible objects could include a coin or a lock of hair, either of which could be sewn into one of the guard's boots. *Blindness*, *bestow curse*, *hold person*, and *invisibility purge* are all commonly used glyphs. A rogue can locate and remove a glyph by making a successful Search check (DC 28) followed by a Disable Device check (DC 28); if he is using makeshift tools, he takes a circumstance penalty of -2 to -5.

Guards — A prison fortress is staffed with the finest soldiers the nation has to offer. The warden may be a fighter, paladin, or lawkeeper of up to 15th level. The precise number of guards depends on the size of the fortress. 5 percent will be 8th-level fighters, 10 percent 6th-level fighters, and 20 percent 4th-level fighters; the remainder will be 4th-level warriors. In addition, the fortress will have a small corps of spellcasters to maintain the mystical wards and to manage magical prisoners. The classes of these casters will vary based on the national bias between arcane and divine magic. But a fortress will generally include at least 1 spellcaster of 10th level, 2 casters of 7th level, and 4 casters of 5th level. A fortress will also include 5 to 10

specialists of other classes. A theocracy might have a few paladins to supplement the soldiers. A fortress geared to hold mystical prisoners could also have spellbanes or magehunters. It's up to the GM to decide what best fits the culture.

Needless to say, this is a fairly impressive force; a 15th-level fighter may be a hero of the realm. However, few nations will have the resources or the need to build a fortress of justice. If you intend to hold demons and devas, you want your best people on the job!

Hell Cells — Different wards of the prison are designed to hold different types of prisoners. A section designed to imprison extraplanar beings like demons or celestials would include an *orb of dimensional stability* extending over the relevant cells. Demons will typically be shackled hand and foot in +5 *enchanted manacles* forged from adamantine, and contained within a *magic circle* created using a *rod of containment* (see below).

Indelible Marks — Most prisoners, especially those who can shapeshift, will be branded with an *indelible mark* in a prominent location upon admission to the prison. The mark indicates the security risk posed by the prisoner, including whether she is a known spellcaster.

Paladins and Lawkeepers — In a lawful good theocracy, a prison fortress will have at least one low-level paladin on duty at all times; this paladin will man the gate and continuously use *detect evil*. In other lawful theocracies this role may be assumed by a lawkeeper, who will use *detect heretic*. Most of the prisoners in a theocratic fortress are marked with *ban*; this will allow a high-level lawkeeper to keep track of the location of the prisoners using his mystical senses.

Silent Cells — Silent cells are a slightly more humane way to contain spellcasters without having to keep them bound and gagged. An *orb of silence* is embedded into the floor, so that its effects cover a few small cells. Within a silent cell, no one can speak, and no sound can be heard. The guard has access to a lead sheath that can be lowered over the *orb*, in case speech is necessary.

The walls of the fortress are hewn stone (Hardness 8, 540 hit points), at it is designed to resist a siege. Like the



dedicated prison, a fortress may be built on an island or mountain peak to take advantage of natural defenses; if not, it will certainly have a moat and outer walls.

TOOLS FOR THE WARDEN

Chapter Three includes many useful devices for a prison warden, ranging from the old ball and chain to *mana manacles* and the *orb of silence*. Here are a few more magic items designed specifically with the fortress of justice in mind.

NEW WONDROUS ITEM: KEY TALISMAN

The caster of an *arcane lock* can bypass his own locks — but in a prison, it's generally not good to have a door that can only be opened by one person. A *key talisman* must be created at the same time as a *wand of arcane lock*; it is tuned to that wand, and the bearer of the *talisman* can open any door locked using the wand. A wizard can craft as many *key talismans* as he wants when he makes a wand, provided that he pays the cost for each. A *key talisman* is a small brooch; it does not count towards the number of magic items a character can wear.

A *key talisman* can be designed for any item that produces an *arcane lock* effect. An obvious example is the *rod of containment*, but if someone was to craft a *staff of locking* or *ring of arcane lock*, he could make a *key talisman* to go with it.

Faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *arcane lock*; Price 400 gp

NEW MAGICAL ROD: ROD OF CONTAINMENT

A *rod of containment* is a useful tool for any prison warden. When used in combat, it strikes as a +2 *light mace of thought disruption*. It also has the following powers:

- Four times per day as a standard action, the wielder can cast *arcane lock*. The locked portal is keyed to the rod, not the specific wielder who casts the *lock*.
- Twice per day the wielder may inscribe a *glyph of*

warding. This takes 5 minutes, and the wielder may set the conditions under which the glyph will be triggered. The effect is *hold person*, and the save DC is 13.

- Twice per day as a standard action, the wielder can cast *hold monster* (Will save DC 19).
- As a standard action, the wielder can dispel any *arcane lock* or *glyph of warding* set using the rod. The locked door or *glyph* must be within the wielder's line of sight, but she will sense the presence of the spell.

Key talismans can be created along with a *rod of containment*, just as if it was a *wand of arcane lock*.

Strong abjuration and enchantment; CL 12th; Craft Rod, *arcane lock*, *glyph of warding*, *hold person*, *hold monster*; Price 110,000 gp; Weight 10 lbs

ISLAND CASTAWAYS

Let's say that you've just deposed your brother, the rightful heir to the throne. He is your brother, and you don't actually want to kill him — but if you keep him in a prison or exile him to a foreign land, your political enemies may rally around him. What do you do? One possibility is to strand him on a remote island. As long as no one knows where to find him, the odds are slim that he'll make his way back to civilization — and if he dies, well, at least you'll never know about it.

The desert island has a lot to offer as a long-term prison. If you believe in rehabilitation, you can show up occasionally to provide your prisoners with supplies and inspirational platitudes; meanwhile, the constant struggle against nature will help them to better themselves. If you're just looking for revenge, letting your enemies slowly starve to death while fighting beasts with their bare hands may appeal to your sense of humor.

If you're stranded, a main concern is what you have to work with. If your enemy has left you without equipment or food, survival will be a trial.

 The Survival skill can be used to provide food and water, or to help to find shelter against the weather and the elements; refer to the skill description for full details. If the island is especially desolate, the GM may increase the DC of these checks by 5 points; if it's a sheet of bare rock or ice, the DC may be increased by 10.

If you fail these checks, you'll start to take damage due to starvation, dehydration, and exposure. If you don't have any skilled woodsmen, hopefully you have a cleric on hand to cast *create water* or *create food and water*.

If your island is home to hostile animals, beasts, or humanoids, weapons may be the first order of business. If there is wood on the island, it is a fairly simple matter to make clubs, halfspears, or quarterstaves. You can also gather rocks to throw (1d4, x2 crit, 7-foot range increment, 1 pound, bludgeoning). If you have a party member with Craft (leatherworking) and access to animal hides, she may be able to craft slings (DC 15), leather armor (DC 18) or hide armor (DC 22). All of this equipment will be crude, and liable to need constant maintenance or replacement — but it may be enough to keep you alive.

Of course, you're probably going to be more interested in finding your way home than setting up a leather workshop. You can always just hope that someone beats your location out of your captor and comes to rescue you, but after a few weeks you may be motivated to find your own way home.

 In an ideal world, one of you will have *polymorph*, *alter self*, *fly*, *lesser planar ally*, *teleport*, *sending*, or some similar spell. These allow you to simply go for help or contact an ally. On the other hand, if your enemy knows you're a spellcaster, he'll almost certainly have deprived you of your spellbook and any spell components, focuses, or divine focuses; he may even remove a few fingers or your tongue to be safe (see Chapter Eight for the effects of such mutilation). Even if you can cast without any of these, there's still the

matter of distance and direction — it's not good to be over deep water when your *fly* spell wears off!

If magic isn't an option, you can build signal fires and hope that a nearby ship comes to investigate (and that a nearby dragon doesn't). If you come up with some sort of cutting tools you can attempt to build a raft; this requires a successful check with one of the following skills: Craft (carpentry) (DC 20), Craft (shipmaking) (DC 15), or Survival (DC 20); you may make a check once per day. However, unless you have Profession (sailor) — not to mention some way to acquire food and water — you could easily drift at sea until you starve to death. And that's not even addressing the possibility of hungry sea creatures looking for snacks!



EXTRAPLANAR CELL

What's worse than being stranded on a desert island? How about being stranded in a pocket dimension the size of a large walk-in closet? A mystically advanced society could use *plane shift* to store dangerous prisoners in small inter-dimensional spaces, similar to those used in *portable holes* or *bags of holding*. This is the principle behind the *portable cell*. While these items are useful for bounty hunters looking to transport troublesome captives, there's no reason that an entire portable prison couldn't be built using these items; you could have a hundred *portable cells* folded up in a footlocker.

So, if you're trapped in a *portable cell*, what are your options? The first problem you may need to deal with is food and water. Needless to say, Survival won't help. If you can cast *create food and water* you're all set. Otherwise, unless your captor provides you with supplies, you'll begin to suffer from dehydration and starvation.

With that said, this may actually be your best chance of escape. A smart bounty hunter will simply throw rations in when he first drops you in the cell. If your captors instead open the cell on a regular basis, you may be able to make a break for it during one of these interludes.

A *portable cell* is ten feet deep. A *jump* spell, *ring of jumping*, or *boots of striding and springing* may let you leap out when the cell is opened.

If you can fly, or if you can cast *dimension door*, *teleport*, or any similar spell, you can use this ability to escape as soon as the door is opened. You cannot use *dimension door* or any other form of teleportation while the cell is closed.

A Medium creature standing on the shoulders of another Medium creature will be able to reach the top of the cell. This can allow you to try to attack the person who opens the cell, or to simply climb out as quick as you can. To make an attack, you must first make a Balance check (DC 14) — if you fail, you fall off of your friend's shoulders. Otherwise, the attack proceeds as normal. If you want to climb out, make a Climb check (DC 15).

If you're on your own, you can try to climb up the side of the *portable cell*. However, the walls are extremely slick and hard to keep hold of; this requires a Climb check (DC 30), and you must repeat the check every ten minutes that you stay braced near the top of the cell.

If you can cast *gate* or *plane shift*, you can leave whenever you want to — unless, of course, your captor took your *plane shift* spell focus when he put you in the cell.

If you can't cast *gate* or *plane shift* and your captor doesn't plan on opening the cell, things are fairly grim. The only other option is to try to cut your way out. The walls of a *portable cell* have a Hardness value of 8; it takes 30 points of damage to create a hole large enough for a Small creature, and 60 points of damage to open a gap wide enough for a Medium creature. The cell repairs itself at a rate of 5 hit points per round. In addition, the walls of a *portable cell* have an inherent Spell Resistance rating of 20 — and don't forget, casting a *fireball* in an enclosed space is not a good idea. Even if you can open a gap, the fun is just beginning — the hole will open into a random spot on one of the planes, but who knows which one?

A cautious captor may put you in some form of restraints before placing you in the *portable cell*; this can make life even more difficult for you. In addition, while the cell is

closed there is no light inside; unless you have *Darkvision* you will be at a considerable disadvantage. In other words, don't get stuck in a *portable cell*!



UNUSUAL FORMS OF IMPRISONMENT

The fortress of justice is an example of how magic could be merged with mundane defenses to create a heavily secured dungeon. But a theocracy, church court, or land ruled by wizards or sorcerers could create magical jails that are far more imaginative and effective than simple *arcane locks*. Here are a few ideas based around the judicial applications of particular spells. Any of these concepts could also be combined with a prison fortress; perhaps the most dangerous prisoners are kept in the reliquary ward located beneath the warden's chambers.

EMPTY PRISON

Provided that he possesses the required level of mystical power, a tyrannical lich or sorcerer-king can simply *imprison* his enemies, using *freedom* to release them should the need arise. Imagine a central chamber with six cells. The lich can use one of the cells when he wants to interrogate a prisoner, and then he simply banishes her beneath the earth. If his memory is good and the cells are distinctive, he can just remember which victims have been bound beneath each cell; as a result, there are no markers to guide would-be rescuers — who would, in any case, have to be able to cast *freedom* themselves. Meanwhile, the prisoner herself can't escape on her own, can't cause any sort of trouble, and can't be contacted by *sending* or located with *screaming*. As prisons go, it's hard to beat.

MENAGERIE

To all appearances, a menagerie is a traditional zoo or aviary; a plethora of colorful birds or other exotic creatures are kept in gilded cages. In point of fact, these are prison-

ers who have been transformed into animal shape with *baleful polymorph*. The exotic appearance of the animals makes it easier for the jailer to remember the true identity of each creature (“The princess is the peacock, and the bandit king is the gold-furred fox”), and may help to locate any prisoner who somehow manages to escape. A menagerie can pose a real problem for would-be rescuers unless they can reverse the spell; after all, should the animals realize that you’re going to rescue someone from the prison, many will try to trick you into rescuing them instead of your friend.

At its core, a menagerie is a lower-level alternative to the empty prison. It’s not as secure, but it’s still difficult for the prisoners to cause trouble or escape on their own. However, some societies may use it as a means of rehabilitation, trying to select a form that will teach the prisoner a moral lesson about the crime that he committed. So you poisoned your brother? Well, why don’t you spend the next ten years as a snake, and see how it really feels!

RELIQUARY WARD

The reliquary ward is a bizarre prison sometimes used by churches that have access to *resurrection*. In these societies, a prisoner may be killed and cremated, after which his ashes are stored in a heavily secured vault — along with the remains of dozens or hundreds of other prisoners. In principle, this is very similar to the empty prison; you don’t have to care for the physical needs of the prisoners, you don’t have to worry about riots or escape attempts, and the ward takes up very little space. This is especially useful for hostages or prisoners of war; they’re kept safely out of the way until it’s time to make an exchange, and then *resurrected* and returned to their people.

A reliquary ward could also be used as an unusual form of exile. Instead of being banished from a particular nation, the prisoner is banished from a particular time — reduced to ashes and kept in storage for years or decades, and then eventually restored. The criminal suffers the loss of her friends and family; meanwhile, the community has time to heal and forget the harm that she has caused. Needless to say, this is just as applicable to an empty prison, soul vault, or stone garden.

SOUL VAULT

If the sorcerer-king can’t cast *imprison*, he may compromise with *trap the soul*. Instead of a dank dungeon, he will have a fabulous vault of gems — many of which contain the minds and bodies of criminals or enemies of the realm. The soul vault has the advantage that prisoners can be easily transported in gem form; anyone can release the trapped soul by shattering the gem. The ash prisoners in a reliquary ward are also easy to transport, but you still need *resurrection* when you want to restore the prisoner.

STONE GARDEN

The stone garden is a lower-level arcane alternative to the soul vault and the empty prison. Instead of *baleful polymorph*, *flesh to stone* is used to preserve prisoners and prevent escapes. This takes up a little more space than the other alternatives, but it is at least decorative. And if you want to rescue a friend and don’t have a *flesh to stone* spell available — well, it can be quite a challenge to break out of a royal palace while lugging around a life-sized statue!





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