

# BASIC and Advanced



A Zine for Homebrew Dungeon Masters of the OSR persuasion.

First Issue - October 2018 (Winter)

## Welcome!

BASIC and Advanced is a quarterly pdf magazine devoted to homebrew campaigns, monsters, short adventures, fantasy fiction and cartography for OSR roleplaying games.

If you are a devoted fan of OSR + RAW (Rules as Written) materials, then very likely this magazine is *not* for you. I promise to make it clear in the sales text and in this brief introduction to the magazine that this publication is not targeting a RAW fan audience.

If you like OSR games, and even better you enjoy writing your own campaign worlds and your own house rules then this magazine is absolutely for you!

## Will this publication be monthly or quarterly?

At the very minimum I would like to publish quarterly. Perhaps, if there is enough community interest in submitting good articles for this project, we will someday be able to go monthly.

## Will there be a print version?

I believe that is likely. I would like to offer a print version which compiles two or three of the publications together at a time.

## Who creates the content?

We all have to start somewhere and at the moment its only myself and a couple of professional RPG artists around the water cooler at BASIC and Advanced.

The BIG dream is to attract like minded OSR creative writers, artists and cartographers and have a nice collection of different articles all written by different authors and covering a range of subjects and genres.

## Are you accepting submissions?

Yes. I would like to keep the monthly size of this magazine down to around forty to fifty pages of content, without cluttering it heavily with advertisements and spam content.

With this in mind I should think we need to keep the size of any articles submitted down below ten pages or 5,000 words. On the average it would be even better to receive articles at around 2,500 words so that we can fit more material from different authors into the magazine.

Keeping the monthly magazine size down to fifty pages will help make it an achievable project. It will also keep the print magazine size down to around one hundred and fifty pages of material, which seems to me to be a respectable size for a printed OSR maga-

zine.

## Where shall I send my submission?

Until I set up a dedicated email account for the magazine you can email them directly to me at fencerguysmith@gmail.com. In the subject be sure to type the magazine name, BASIC and Advanced.

Submissions from monsters to fiction to short articles or encounters will most likely see the light of day for publication in about three months.

## Will I get paid?

I would like to pay at least a modest amount sufficient to buy you several cups of coffee or perhaps a pizza for your short article. I am working out the specific details of how that might work. Before I publish your submitted content I will contact you to work out the details of payment and make sure everything is agreeable.

## Publishing Rights

By placing your submission to this magazine you are agreeing to grant me the right to publish your material in the pdf edition of this magazine and also in the first printed, quarterly edition of that magazine.

You keep all other publishing rights.

## Who am I?

My name is Edward Kann and I have been a fan of Roleplaying games since 1978. I am actively working to publish material from my home campaign and I am the publisher of this OSR fan magazine.

## Legal

A copy of the OGL for all materials included in this magazine is located on the last page of every issue.

## Credits

Written material contained in this edition was created by myself. Cover art was created by the fantastically talented Marcin S. for a character in my Kingdoms Chimerical setting.

Additional interior artwork was created by JE Shields, also for my Kingdoms Chimerical setting.

A few illustrations and maps contained in these magazines were created by myself.

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### The Staff of Knockspell

This staff was constructed from the forearm and hand of a treant. Its upper end is animated and has three appendages useful for grasping, picking up items or retrieving them. The staff pictured at the right has a pipe held between the fingers of the staff but this could be put away and the fingers left free to assist the magic-user with other tasks.

While the staff is held in one hand the magic-user is counted as having an extra appendage which can be directed to pick up a sack of gold, pull a potion out of the belt loop of the magic-user and so forth.

The fingers of the staff have fine manipulation and a strength for grasping and moving objects capable of moving or holding up to fifty pounds in weight.

In combat the staff strikes as a +1 magical weapon and inflicts 1d6+1 damage.

Up to three times per day the hand of the staff can be commanded to ball itself into a fist and cast the spell knock on a closed door or chest.

Once per day the magic-user using the staff can use the magical ability “cast without trace” as per the spell, as if cast by a character of the 9th level of experience.

While holding this staff the magic-user is immune to the spell Entangle or any magic which uses the growth or manipulation of plants to ensnare or hinder the magic-user.



Staff of Knockspell created and drawn by Ed Kann, originally donated to the first issue of Knockspell magazine in 2008 but never used after that.

## BASIC Homebrews

If you are a BASIC rules Dungeon Master you likely fall into one of two schools of thought. The first and perhaps the most common is the RAW Dungeon Master. RAW stands for “Rules as Written”, meaning that any and all additions or changes to the time honored rules which appeared in your favorite edition of the BASIC game shall never be sullied by the chaotic scribbles of some strange, old DM doing his or her own thing.

It should be obvious by now to anyone who has read my work or watched my YouTube channel that I treat the rules as just one more tool for telling the story of my world.

In many cases in my home games I can leave the rules completely alone, but in a few cases I like to tack on additions to the rules to make the Fighters, Magic-Users, Clerics, Thieves, Dwarves, Elves and so forth stand out more. I want the heroes to be the sorts of characters you might encounter adventuring in *my setting*, rather than a more generic representation of a fantasy world.

Clearly, this is not everyone’s cup of tea, *and that is absolutely fine!* When I play Fifth Edition with my kids, we always stick with RAW, although in that case we are almost always playing through a purchased campaign at the local game store.

Raising the sails of my little RPG craft to voyage slightly askew of the main rules, seems to me to be something I have done with the BASIC rules ever since I started writing campaigns and adventures of my own.

What about you? Do you favor the idea behind this magazine, which focuses on homebrew rules and creations rather than articles on historical rules? Why not write up a review? Your feedback is always welcome!

### Character Advancement Points (CAP)

In later editions of the game you have proficiencies, feats, expansive additional powers aimed to make the characters more dynamic, powerful and complex.

I use a similar idea by introducing character advancement points into my BASIC campaign. While CAP is used to purchase individual abilities for a BASIC character, the abilities themselves are written to pull the game in the direction of the way I envision my own setting. My design is more setting specific rather than an attempt to boost up power levels, although in the case of magic-users it can be said that both are true.

Consider these abilities as examples only. Your

homebrew campaign will have its own flavor and I encourage you to sort through these and customize them to fit your own vision for Fighters, Magic-Users and Elves in your game.

Dwarves in your world may still dwell within their mountain halls. Elves in your vision for your fantasy setting might have more in common with Tolkien’s creative vision than the strange, teleporting, alien vestiges of an advanced civilization in mine. The important thing is the concept in broad strokes. You can easily customize this to your own tastes.

### CAP Overview

During character creation, all characters receive 2 character advancement points or CAP. CAP can be spent at a cost of one point for one ability selected from the character abilities listed on the general ability list and one other ability list, either the character’s class list if they are a human or their appropriate race list if they are a demi-human.

At every level of advancement past the first the character receives one additional CAP which they can then spend on one more ability chosen from the lists appropriate for their character. This is never more than two when playing in a BASIC campaign where race is the same as class.

**Each ability listed may only be purchased ONCE during the life of the player character.**

### Multiclass characters

Depending upon the version of BASIC which you are using, the rules may include instructions for running Multiclass characters.

CAP is written as an alternative to Multiclass characters. The abilities are designed to offer a character a small foothold in another class, should that fit the vision for the character. The ability of Dabbler allows a non-arcane spell casting character to cast a single first level arcane spell. In my campaign one of the major story threads is an ongoing struggle between independent magic-users and a powerful cabal that seeks to bring all arcane magic under its control. So in my homebrew there is both a story reason and a rules / flavor reason for making this sort of adjustment available.

### Character Type and Ability Tables

Figuring out which ability lists are available for what characters is fairly simple but to make it even easier here is a quick guide.

Dwarf	Dwarf and General List
Elf	Elf and General List

Gnome / Halfling	Small Folk / General
Fighter	Fighter and General
Thief	Thief and General
Magic-User	Magic-User / General
Cleric	Cleric / General

## General Ability List

Cautious  
 Dabbler  
 Devout  
 Hard to Kill  
 Improved Hit Die  
 Inheritance  
 Non-proficient weapon  
 Non-proficient armor  
 Petty Thief  
 Roll Max Hits  
 Tough

### Cautious:

The cautious ability grants the character a +2 bonus to saving throws against traps. This ability will not help the character to discover a trap or to disarm a trap. There are no “find traps” skills in my homebrew. Thief characters have a “disable device” skill which they can attempt against a trap, if they have a set of thieves tools in their possession AND they can describe to the DM a reasonable approach to getting access to the trap’s mechanism.

### Dabbler:

This ability may not be purchased by characters whose class already allows them access to arcane spells. For example, Magic-User characters cannot purchase this ability to add to their existing list of spells. In addition, the character must have a minimum Intelligence score of 11 to purchase this ability.

A dabbler is a non-arcane caster who has a small inherited talent for casting spells. They have no significant formal training but over the years, through experimentation and practice, they have managed to successfully cast a first lev-

el spell.

The dabbler learns one spell from the 1st level magic-user spell list. They can memorize and cast that spell once per day.

Four levels after the character becomes a dabbler they learn one additional first level arcane spell. Four more levels later the dabbler learns another first level arcane spell. Ten levels after becoming a dabbler the character learns one second level arcane spell. At twelfth level the dabbler learns one first level and one second level arcane spell. This is the maximum amount of arcane magic that the dabbler masters over the entire course of their character life.

Those who dabble in arcane magic are not approved members of the Pentagarchy and for this reason they are always considered to be practicing magic outside of approved channels. In some Kingdoms this means that the character has broken the law and may be imprisoned, if their ability to cast arcane spells is discovered. In Kingdoms in more remote corners of the world, those who dabble in arcane magic are more commonly accepted and are not considered a dangerous threat.

### Devout:

This ability may not be purchased by character classes such as clerics and druids with access to divine magic as part of their class. To purchase this ability the character must have a minimum Wisdom score of at least 11.

A devout character receives one first level divine spell chosen from either the cleric or druid first level spell lists. Once the character settles on a list to use (this means the clerical list or druid spell list) for choosing their spells, they may only gain additional spells from that list. Moving forward they may not pick spells from the other divine spell list.

Devout characters are followers of a god, goddess or demigod who are wholly devoted to the service of that entity and forwarding their cause in the world. The particular entity must be selected when this ability is purchased. The character must be of the same alignment as the god. A devout Lawful character may only purchase this ability for a Lawful god, a Chaotic character only from a Chaotic god and so forth.

Every four levels after this ability is purchased the character gains one additional first level divine spell which they can cast in a twenty four hour period.

Clerical spells renew when the character makes offerings at sunrise. Druid spells renew when the character makes offerings at moonrise.

Spells will not renew for the devout character without an offering. Suitable offerings can be determined by the GM based on the description of the character's god or goddess in their campaign lore. As a default an appropriate offering in treasure for renewing spells with this ability is ten gold pieces. When the treasure is offered to the god or goddess it vanishes and the devout character's spells are then renewed for the next day. If no offering is made at the appropriate time by the character, no spells are renewed for that day and the character must wait for the next opportunity to renew their spells.

Spells which are not cast between the time for spell renewal and the passing of 24 hours leading to the next time of spell renewal are lost, as the blessing of the god or goddess fades from the devout follower. Actual clerics and druids do not experience the fading of their spells once they are granted by their god or goddess after the passing of 24 hours.

### **Hard to Kill:**

A character must have a Constitution score of at least 11 to purchase this ability.

Under the BASIC rules, a character who suffers sufficient damage to reduce them to zero hit points is dead. Without this ability this remains true in my homebrew. A character who purchases the general ability of hard to kill is instead knocked unconscious when they reach zero hit points. The character remains unconscious but alive and able to be healed until they fall below -1 plus their current character level in hit points.

Example: A fifth level character with this ability would be able to remain unconscious but alive even after they were reduced to -6 hit points.

When a character who is hard to kill is reduced to zero hit points or less the DM places a four sided die next to the prone character on the table top. Every combat round the value on the four sided dice is reduced by one. The down character has that many combat rounds to have their wounds tended to or they will be declared dead by the DM.

Tending to a character's wounds might be the casting of a cure wounds spell, applying a magical potion or ointment or merely taking a full combat round to bind the character's wounds so that they don't bleed to death.

### **Inheritance:**

Elves and Dwarves may not purchase this ability, even though it is offered on the general table. Elves are a dying race and there are few of them remaining. Dwarves are wanderers living outside of their ancestral halls. The character must be at least level five to purchase this ability.

Once during the life of the character they may receive an inheritance or windfall. This wealth can be described as coming to the character any way that the player character and DM

agrees. Like all abilities this ability can only be purchased once.

Roll 1d6 and consult the table below. If you like create your very own table.

### Roll Result

1. The character rolls 3d6 and multiplies the result by 10. The character receives this amount in gold pieces.
2. The character rolls 2d6 and multiplies the result by 10. The character receives this amount in gold pieces. In addition the character inherits a light riding horse of good quality.
3. The character rolls 2d6 and multiplies the result by 10. The character receives this amount in gold pieces. In addition the character inherits a weapon (which the character can use) of high quality. High quality weapons are worth three times the value of a normal weapon of the same type. If the weapon hits in combat it inflicts +1 damage but the weapon is not magical. The weapon may be decorated in the family crest or an appropriate animal design. It is an heirloom passed down through the character's family for generations.
4. The character rolls 2d6 and multiplies the result by 10. The character receives this amount in gold pieces. In addition the character inherits a suit of armor or a shield of high quality. Spell casting characters who are not allowed to wear armor inherit a magical ring of protection +1 bearing the sigil of their personal family or a mark of office in the now outlaw Guild of Wizardry. High quality suits of armor or shields are worth three times the value of their normal counterparts. These objects will reduce by one point any non-magical damage or non-area of effect damage (such as dragon fire) that the character receives. Example: Wallace is wearing his inherited suit of mail armor. The suit is of high quality and features the crest of his family on the chest. If Wallace is struck with a normal weapon attack, the suit of armor reduces the total amount of damage inflicted by one point. If Wallace is stabbed with a dagger and the foe only rolls a single point of damage, Wallace takes NO damage as the point of the dagger skips harmlessly off of his grandfather's fantastic suit of high quality mail.
5. Roll again but in addition the character inherits a small property. The property is 1d10 acres in size and on the property is constructed a structure. Roll 1d6 twice on the table below for the type and condition of the structure. The inherited property is located somewhere close to where the character either is currently located or close to where they typically are based. It is meant to be a convenient location accessible to the player character most of the time without undue hassle. When rolling on the structure and condition tables subtract one point from the rolls. A roll of a one is still treated as a one.
6. The same as the result above except that rolls on the structure and condition tables are conducted normally.

### Structure Type: Roll 1d6

1. Farm House and Barn
2. Stone house of small size with an attached workshop or small business.
3. Small tower of stone.
4. Stone house of moderate size with an associated windmill or mill operated by a water wheel.
5. Large stone house with a dozen rooms plus a small attached servants quarters suitable for two to three servants. Beneath the house there is a cellar with a secret chamber of suf-

ficient size to contain a concealed workshop or shrine.

6. Large stone house with a dozen rooms plus attached servants quarters suitable for three or four servants, a small stables with quarters for a stable master, an attached wing with sufficient rooms for six guards (usually two working per eight hour shift), and an attached small tower of stone. Beneath the house is a cellar with a secret chamber of sufficient size to contain a concealed workshop or shrine and another concealed or secret door which leads to stairs down to a small dungeon level (currently inhabited by monsters which must be cleared).

#### **Structure Condition: Roll 1d6**

1. Very poor. The roof leaks, windows are missing. The front door is smashed to bits. Critters live in the attic. The place smells like rot.
2. Poor. This structure provides shelter and most of its windows and doors are in repair but all of its interior furnishings are smashed or missing.
3. Fair. Basic structural integrity but only a few internal furnishings. A basic bed, a pair of chairs, a rickety table and maybe a broken chest are all that can be found inside.
4. Good. The structure is in good repair. It retains a basic level of interior furnishing. The building is locked up and empty. There are no servants or guards remaining on the staff should the structure be a larger one which would typically be serviced by those individuals.
5. Very Good. The structure has been left for you in great condition. It is secure. The furnishings are in good shape. The larder and cellar retains some basic supplies. A single servant or guard remains to keep an eye on the place.
6. Excellent. The structure was left in excellent condition. It is so well kept, possibly by a friendly neighbor checking in on the place

over the last few weeks, its as if Uncle Robert stepped out the door to go for a walk just the previous afternoon. Most of the location servants and guards remain on a payroll which still has a little gold left in it to keep them going. You must immediately take over these costs or the staff and guards will leave to seek employment elsewhere a week after you take possession of the property.

#### **Improved Hit Die:**

This ability may only be purchased by a character who is third level or higher. When the character purchases this ability the hit die assigned to their character class increases by one step. The change only applies for hit points rolled for levels after this ability is gained.

A character with 1d4 hit die now has 1d6. A character who rolls a 1d6 for hit points now rolls 1d8. A character who rolls 1d8 for hit points now rolls 1d10.

#### **Non-Proficient Weapon:**

This ability allows a character to wield a single new weapon not normally available to their character race or class. Examples: A cleric could use this ability to learn to wield a great sword. A thief could use this ability to use a long-bow. A magic-user could use this ability to wield a long sword.

In the BASIC version which I play, all weapons inflict 1d6 damage and so this change is purely cosmetic. In other BASIC rules access to a new weapon type may need DM approval.

#### **Non-Proficient Armor:**

This ability will allow a magic-user to wear leather armor and still cast spells normally. The ability will allow Thief class characters and other character classes limited to leather armor to wear mail armor. Thief class characters suffer a -10% penalty to all thief skills when wearing



mail armor but otherwise suffer no other penalties.

### **Petty Thief:**

This ability allows a non-thief character to possess a single thief skill. The character may choose the skill that they want to know from the list of typical thief skills. They only learn one skill. They begin at the equivalent of a first level thief in their chosen skill when they purchase it. After that they advance in their thief skill normally.

Example: Tristan the Fighter purchases the petty thief ability at level four. Tristan chooses the pick lock thief ability and adds that skill to their character sheet as if they were a first level thief. When Tristan the Fighter reaches level five their pick lock ability improves as if they were now a second level thief. When Tristan reaches level six, his pick lock ability improves to be the equivalent of a third level thief and so on.

### **Roll Max Hits:**

A player can purchase this ability once for their character using one CAP. Unlike most abilities which are applied immediately when they are purchased, the player notes this purchase on their character sheet and holds onto it until they need it. This ability allows a player to replace one crappy roll for hit points when their character levels up with an automatic maximum result on their roll. Again, this ability can only be purchased once and can only be used once. It is a nice ability to have as it limits the impact of a really bad hit point roll.

Note: In my homebrew games I always allow the players to have the maximum possible hit points for their first level character. After that they must roll for hit points every time they level their character.

### **Tough:**

The character must have a Constitution score of at least 10 to purchase this general ability.

This character gains a +2 saving throw versus poisons and disease. The character has developed an especially tough resistance to toxins and illness. Dwarves and Small Folk who already have an impressive advantage against poisons and disease, only gain a +1 bonus from this ability.

### **Fighter Ability List**

Chosen Foe

Berserker

Brave

Fast Healer

Hardened Veteran

Light Fighter

Strength Feat

Strong Throwing Arm

Tracking

War Archer

### **Chosen Foe:**

Pick an enemy off of the following list. When you enter combat with that chosen enemy you enjoy a 1 point bonus to your armor class and a +1 bonus to hit and damage. You really, really hate those guys!

Orcs, Goblins, Kobolds, Men, Undead, Wild Animals, Ogres and Trolls, Underworld Monsters (Monsters found on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> level dungeon wandering monster charts which are not undead.), Lycanthropes.

### **Berserker:**

You may attempt to work yourself into a Berserker rage by rolling 1d20 with a result below your Wisdom score.

Working yourself into a rage is a half action in any combat round. Once you are berserk you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls, +1 bonus to damage rolls and +1 bonus to all saving throws.

**Fast Healer:**

Double your non-magical healing rate. Poisons and disease have half the normally indicated duration on this character.

**Hardened Veteran:**

You can survive on half rations for up to three days without suffering any ill effects. You can sleep in your armor for up to a week without suffering any ill effects but after that you **MUST** take a break from sleeping in your armor for at least three days or suffer a -2 penalty on all of your attack rolls and saving throws.

**Light Fighter:**

When you are wearing light armor such as leather, studded leather, padded or hide armor your armor class increases by one point. You also gain a five foot increase to your normal movement rate while wearing this armor. Humans who can typically move thirty feet as a half action and then attack can move thirty five feet as a half action and then attack.

**Strength Feat:**

Your character can attempt to bend bars, rip apart chains with their bare hands and other heroic acts of strength. Success is determined if you roll 1d20 under your strength score. Characters without this ability suffer severe penalties for their attempts, as determined by the DM. You gain one strength feat for every three levels you possess as a Fighter.

**Strong Throwing Arm:**

Your ability to hurl a spear, javelin, throwing axe or dagger is impressive. You increase the effective range values of all throwing weapons by ten feet.

Using your entire body effectively to follow through with a throw you inflict an additional +1 damage when hurling a weapon. This bonus is in addition to any bonus you have for having an exceptional Strength score.

**Tracking:**

Your character is a capable tracker. Dur-

While berserk you suffer a 2 point penalty to your armor class, making you easier to hit. Normal weapon damage inflicted upon you while you are berserk is reduced by one point, an attack that only inflicts one point of damage is ignored. You may activate your ability to go berserk once in twenty four hours, plus one additional time for every three character levels you gain above the level you were at when you first purchased this ability. Your berserk state lasts for 1d6 combat rounds plus your level or until the combat ends.

If the combat ends while you are still berserk you snap out of it. You do not mindlessly continue to attack your friends. You do not get to carry a use of your berserk into another combat even if it follows a combat which ended only a few moments ago.

**Brave:**

You gain a +2 bonus to saving throws versus Fear and all Fear effects. If you fail the saving throw you are effected normally.

ing daylight hours and good weather conditions you have a base chance of 80% to track a target that has moved through the area within the last hour. Your chance of success is reduced by -10% for every 24 hours which passes since the tracks were made. You suffer an additional -10% chance for every hour that rain has fallen in the area where the tracks are located. If the target crosses into a river or enters an area with wide expanses of solid stone or city conditions you may still make the attempt but receive an immediate -35% penalty to the attempt.

#### **War Archer:**

As long as no foe is within five feet of your character, you can fire a short or longbow twice during a combat round. The second arrow shot uses a second half action so you cannot move and also shoot twice in the same combat round.

If a foe is within five feet of your character you can continue to fire your bow once per combat round but the foe gains an automatic attack of opportunity when you attempt to fire your bow while engaged in melee combat.

Fighters without the war archer ability may only fire a short or long bow once per combat round. Crossbows require a combat round to reload and can only be fired every other combat round.

#### **Cleric Ability List**

Herbalist  
Inquisitor  
Lay on Hands  
Scholarly Priest  
Secret Cultist  
Surgeon  
Temple Monk  
Village Cleric  
Undead Hunter  
War Priest

#### **Herbalist:**

You receive the write ups for eight different herbs and plants used in alchemy. You can easily identify these plants and you know their properties. You receive three recipes for the preparation of herbal potions.

Note: I have a large list of herbs and a system for alchemy in my game. If you do not then simply replace this ability with something more appropriate for your own campaign.

#### **Inquisitor:**

You can be intense and intimidating, particularly when you put a series of questions to a subject. The subject of your interrogation must be able to understand the language you are speaking. If the subject knows the information you are seeking it is likely that they will crack under the pressure and share it with you.

#### **Lay On Hands:**

Once per day you have an additional magical ability to heal damage which is not technically a spell. Clerics may purchase this ability at first level. You may spend your full action to lay your hands on a target and heal them 1d8 hit points plus 1 point for each level your character has.

#### **Scholarly Priest:**

If your character has a question about the history of a location, object or person there is a good chance that he or she knows the information. In addition the DM may present you with two different alphabets used for inscriptions, scrolls and props in the game. One of these alphabets should be the alphabet used for a racial language or foreign language. The other alphabet provided to you is a magical alphabet used in arcane inscriptions and spells. If you find an arcane scroll in the arcane language you know, you may attempt to cast it but you have a 50% chance of failure.

**Secret Cultist:**

While you wear the vestments and are a cleric in good standing in the temple you claim to belong to, secretly you are a member of a cult. Your spells come from the supernatural power your cult worships, not the god or goddess you claim allegiance to.

A careful interrogation by a high ranking Cleric of your faith, may be able to determine that you are not who you claim to be but to all casual observations you remain a priest in good standing.

Choose an appropriate being or power to worship as a cultist.

**Surgeon:**

If you can reach a friend who has dropped to zero hit points or lower and is still alive, (see the general ability of hard to kill) you can spend a full combat round to stabilize them. The subject of your aid immediately returns to one hit point. You can stabilize one subject for every three levels you have as a cleric each day. You may only stabilize a specific subject once per twenty four hours.

Provided you have an hour to work outside of combat you can set and bind broken limbs, tend to wounds so they are less likely to become infected or diseased and remove blindness or deafness in subjects whose condition has not been magically created.

**Temple Monk:**

As a novice priest you received several years of difficult and disciplined martial arts instruction, so that you could serve as a defender of the local shrine or temple. During melee combat you gain one bonus attack which inflicts 1d4 plus any bonus you may possess for having a high strength score. Your bonus attack counts as a martial open hand attack, elbow smash, spinning back kick, forehead smash, whatever martial arts strike the player wants to describe. Years of

training have made it so that unarmed hand to hand attacks have their damage reduced by one point any time that they are used against you.

**Village Cleric:**

You have experience serving the residents in a close knit community. You have developed good people skills and a warm, likeable personality. You know how to talk and joke with regular folk. Any time you are trying to convince a member of the local NPC population (provided they are the standard player character races) to cooperate with you, roll 1d4 and add that result to your normal Charisma score as a temporary Charisma bonus for the duration of the conversation.

**Undead Hunter:**

You have dedicated your life to the destruction of the undead. You gain a +2 bonus to saving throws versus the spells and powers of undead creatures. You gain a +1 bonus to hit undead creatures. You inflict +1 point of damage when you hit an undead creature. Your attempt to turn undead functions as if you were a cleric one level higher than you actually are.

Your aura and smell is known to the undead. Attempts by you to sneak and hide around the undead suffer a penalty handled by the DM.

**War Priest:**

You undergo a series of rituals and trials which cover your torso with the divine markings of a war priest of your religion.

You immediately gain 4 hit points to your hit point total.

Clerics and priests of other religions may view you as a greater threat because of your status as a war priest of your religion.

Choose an opposed religion or cult. You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage when fighting a follower of the enemy religion.

## Magic-User Ability List

Alchemist (Professional)

Arcane Scholar

Black Mage

Cartographer

Gray Mage

Heretical Specialist

Linguist

Pentagarchy Loyalist

Witch or Warlock

White Mage

### Professional Alchemist:

You are an alchemist by profession. The DM will provide you with the full descriptions and alchemical properties of thirty of the one hundred different herbs, plants and trees written up for the campaign. The DM will also provide you with six different alchemical recipes. You enjoy a +15% bonus to your attempts to create a successful brew as long as you have 24 hours of uninterrupted access to a fully equipped alchemical workshop.



### Arcane Scholar:

You receive the sigil alphabets for Rakki-an, Xianian and Necromaster. You should already have in your possession the common arcane alphabet used by the Pentagarchy. You possess an excellent knowledge of history, astrology and Pentagarchy law.

### Black Mage:

During the days when the Guild Mages controlled the schools of the arcane there were three sects or disciplines of magic. Of the three of these sects the Black Mages were forced to practice their arts in secret for they sought the powers of Chaos and evil. To purchase this ability the character must be of Chaotic alignment.

Becoming a follower of the Black Cabal automatically marks the character as the worst kind of heretic, destined to be burned alive should their status ever be publicly revealed. When this ability is purchased you gain one additional first level spell slot. You also receive one prop spell page from the first level spells of the Black Cabal.

As you advance as a character you will receive additional bonus spells every other level. You have a 25% bonus on any attempt you make to learn a new Black Cabal spell which you discover.

For my home campaign The Black Cabal is not outlaw within the Necrogarchy of Leng. In your campaign such a group might be legitimate within an evil or Chaos aligned land.

The chart below shows your bonus spell progressions.

Initial Purchase	+1 - 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Spell
3 <sup>rd</sup> Level	+1 - 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Spells
5 <sup>th</sup> Level	+1 - 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Spells +1 2 <sup>nd</sup>
7 <sup>th</sup> Level	+1 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level

9<sup>th</sup> Level +1 - 1<sup>st</sup> Level, +1 3<sup>rd</sup> Level  
 11<sup>th</sup> Level +1 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Level, +1 3<sup>rd</sup> Level

any of the schools of the arcane supported by the Guild.

The player must note which spells they are memorizing using the bonus slots received as a Black Mage. They must share these with the DM on a sheet of paper every time they renew their spells.

Any time that the character casts a spell using one of their bonus spell slots and any time the character casts a spell from the Black Cabal spell list, they must incant the spell using their alignment language. Casting spells by speaking in the tongue of Chaos is a sure hallmark of a Black Mage.

**Cartographer:**

You are a skilled cartographer. Three times per game session you may ask the GM for special insight or clarification into any map you are creating either for overland maps or dungeon maps.

In addition, so long as you have access to your gear, you are always able to correctly use your compass to determine the direction of magnetic North and whilst above ground, you can generally determine your location provided you have some time to study the surrounding landscape and the position of the sun, stars and moons.

**Gray Mage:**

To join the ranks of the Gray Mages you must be of Neutral alignment.

Gray Magi were widely accepted throughout the Kingdoms of the world, during the age of the Guild Wizards. Gray Magi as a whole were more concerned with the welfare of their home Kingdom and the surrounding communities than in a larger, more esoteric struggle between good and evil. In the lands fully under the dominion of the Pentagarchy, the Gray Magi are outlaw like

You can be a magic-user who is a member of the Pentagarchy whilst secretly learning the arcane arts of the Gray Magi. Should your unauthorized studies be made know you will lose your position within the Pentagarchy and will be treated as a heretic.

You cannot be a Black Mage AND a Gray Mage. You must choose to be one or the other. In the same way you cannot be a Gray Mage AND a White Mage.

If you want to roleplay a hold out from the days of the Guild Wizards, you should choose one of the three alignment schools of magic, black, gray or white.

The chart below shows your bonus spell progressions.

Initial Purchase	+1 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Spell
3 <sup>rd</sup> Level	+1 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Spells
5 <sup>th</sup> Level	+1 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Spells +1 2 <sup>nd</sup>
7 <sup>th</sup> Level	+1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level
9 <sup>th</sup> Level	+1 1 <sup>st</sup> Level, +1 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level
11 <sup>th</sup> Level	+1 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level, +1 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level

Gray Magi had their own library of spells and you receive one of these when you purchase this ability. You must use your alignment tongue when casting spells using the bonus spell slots you gain from this ability.

While practitioners of the black arts are likely to be burned alive, a follower of the gray or white path is not considered to be as serious a threat. Still, both the Gray and White cabals are still hold outs from the days of the Guild Wizards and will be treated as a criminal. If they can be captured they will be locked up in a prison at the very least, until some manner of restricting their ability to cast heretical spells or share heretical

teachings can be secured.

**Heretical Specialist:** Inherited Gifts: Burner, Tangler or Unweaver.

During the centuries that the Guilds of Magic controlled the schools of the arcane throughout the civilized world, three specialties of magic were taught to those with the inherited gift. The three types of arcane specialists were the Burner, the Tangler and the Unweaver.

These abilities are inherited from the old bloodlines of the most powerful magic-users within the old cabals of the Guild Mages. They are not in and of themselves outlaw and there are Pentagarchy magic-users in good standing who carry these bloodlines today.

When you purchase this ability you must choose one of the three inherited talents. You cannot then purchase one of the other talents. You can only come from one of the bloodlines.

**Burner:** If you are a Burner your ancestors had a powerful knack for casting attack magic. You gain +1d6 to the damage of any attack spell which you cast. Somewhere on your body you were born with a crescent moon shaped marking which glows silvery blue under moonlight. As a Burner you are a descendent of the legendary war mages of the world.

**Tangler:** If you are a Tangler and you hold your action, and see an enemy arcane caster begin to cast a spell, you can tangle their casting. This counts as your attack action for the combat round. The target must make a saving throw versus spell. If they succeed they may cast their spell normally. If they fail their casting attempt is successfully “tangled”.

When a spell is tangled your magic-user has inserted themselves into the unfolding pat-

terns and casting of the spell, drawing the casting out and making it longer and more complex. Both of the magic-users are now caught in the weave of the spell that was originally being cast.

The spell continues to be cast from combat round to combat round and neither party can take any other action than the continued attempt to control the spell.

Each magic-user tangled in the spell may make a saving throw versus spell on their initiative. If they succeed, they can take over the completion of the spell and cast it normally, provided it is a spell of a level which the caster is experienced sufficiently to cast. If the spell is of a higher level than they could normally cast the character can simply negate the spell.

Negating the spell creates a feedback against the magic-user who did not make their saving throw versus magic in the initiative order first. That magic-user takes 1d6 magical damage as the spell unravels in their area.

It is possible that both magic-users can get caught in the ongoing tangle of the spell for some time. If the spell remains tangled for a total of five combat rounds it collapses on its own and both magic-users take 2d6 magical feedback damage from the spell as it implodes around them.

#### **Unweaver:**

The Unweaver is born with the natural talent of being able to pick and pluck at the strands of ongoing spell effects and enchantments and to negate them for a brief period. This does not destroy or remove the spell or enchantment, it merely turns the effect off for game purposes for 1d4 combat rounds.

To unweave a spell the magic-user must be able to see the enchantment or magic item. Moving their hands and fingers through the air they

can pluck and pull and tug on the weave of the spell without having to physically touch the item.

Unweaving does have a range. The character must be able to clearly see the target and be standing within sixty feet of it in order for the talent to work.

It takes the character one full combat round to effect this talent and they cannot move or speak or perform any other action while engaged in unweaving. At the end of the combat round the character (not the item) makes a saving throw versus spell. If they fail their attempt feeds back on itself and they take 1d6 magical damage. If they succeed the enchantment or magic item is nullified for 1d4 combat rounds, after which it returns to normal.

A character with this inherited power can only nullify one enchantment or object at a time. Nullified items still retain their powerful magical nature and as such cannot be easily destroyed despite their overt enchantment being dampened for a brief period of time.

#### **Pentagarchy Loyalist:**

This ability makes you a loyal member of the Pentagarchy. You have taken steps to insure that your status within the trusted workings of the Pentagarchy is (currently) unquestioned. Without clear and damning evidence of your activity engaging in heretical magic you are not likely to be seriously investigated or charged.

You gain a few bonus spells, special training provided to only the most trusted members of the Pentagarchy. You may purchase this ability AND covertly be a Black Mage, Gray Mage or White Mage, Heretical Specialist, Witch or Warlock.

Initial Purchase	1x 1 <sup>st</sup> level spell
3 <sup>rd</sup> Level	2x 1 <sup>st</sup> level spells

5 <sup>th</sup> Level	3x 1 <sup>st</sup> level spells 1x 2 <sup>nd</sup>
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#### **Witch or Warlock:**

Witch and Warlock are the slang terms attached to any village practitioner of arcane magic without any significant formal training. In the lands under the control of the Pentagarchy these folk are either converted into the fold or imprisoned. They are rarely executed because they are not seen to be the serious arcane threats that a classically trained Guild Mage or Black Cabal member presents to the future of the Pentagarchy.

As a Witch or Warlock you are adept at learning from a wide variety of sources, not being entrenched in any single school of magic. You gain a +10% bonus to any of your attempts to learn a new spell or read a scroll from any source.

As a Witch or Warlock you are a renegade and independent spellcaster. You cannot join the ranks of the Pentagarchy without significant developments within campaign roleplay unfolding.

As a witch or warlock you had access to your teacher's instructions. At the very least you had a family member who tutored you privately and secretly in the practice of magic. You may be a novice member of an underground coven with scattered allies and safe houses secreted about the kingdom.

You gain access to these additional spells as a secret member of a coven or familiar faction of magic-users.

Initial Purchase	1x 1 <sup>st</sup> level spell
3 <sup>rd</sup> Level	2x 1 <sup>st</sup> level spells
5 <sup>th</sup> Level	3x 1 <sup>st</sup> level spells and 1 Heretical spell of 3rd level known to your family or coven.



### **White Mage:**

The White Mage ability functions just like the Black Mage ability but requires that the character be of Lawful alignment.

White Mages are concerned with the spread of evil and work together to stop it. White Magi are more concerned with fighting evil than with the shorter term benefits of the local population.

Some secret cabals of the White Magi have managed to infiltrate into the command structure of the Pentagarchy. If you are able to connect with the White Magi within the Pentagarchy it is likely that your activities will be at least tolerated and in certain cases may even be sanctioned provided you can maintain a sufficiently low profile.

### **Thief Ability List**

- Abishag
- Angler
- Blackfriar
- Bousing Ken
- Bruiser
- Dimber Damber
- Gelt
- Maskin
- Pike
- Slop Seller

The origin of all of the thieves ability names listed here is thieves cant.

### **Abishag:**

An abishag is a bastard, the son or daughter of an unmarried woman and a married man, often a married man with some level of upward social standing. As a bastard offspring with absolutely no legitimate prospects for a respectable position in normal society, the character has nothing to lose. You are a daredevil by nature, brash and bold. Your life on the streets has made you hard and difficult to mislead. You gain a +2

saving throw against all charm person, hold person spells and all spells which create illusions or seek to manipulate or fool the mind of another.

The DM should grant you regular bonuses on any daredevil, risky actions which you take. These bonuses may be small but they will be present to encourage your devil may care outlook.



### **Angler:**

You are adept at hooking goods out of market stalls and through shop windows using a stick with a rope and hook attached to the end. You may apply your pick pocketing skill to steal items for sale in shops using this device. Likely, you will need to find creative ways to conceal your stick and rope contraption, as most of the guards in civilized lands are aware of this sort of theft.

### **Blackfriar:**

A blackfriar is an individual that the wider criminal community knows to steer clear of. You have a tendency to be brutal and violent in your dealings with others. It is likely that you have murdered other criminals who have attempted to double deal with you in the past. You roll backstab damage as if you are two levels higher when attacking humans, men, dwarves and small folk (gnomes and halflings).

### **Bousing Ken:**

You have a series of safe houses set up at different Inns scattered across the Kingdom. When you arrive at one of these locations you are assured a room and a means to arrive and depart

via a back or side door. The local tavern owner and staff can be relied upon not to reveal your presence to the local authorities, but if you are tracked down by magic or bounty killers that is your problem to deal with, not an issue created by the tavern. You can be issued a line of credit to cover the cost of your room and food for up to a week after which point you must pay back the debt or you will lose your safe house status at that Inn.

#### **Bruiser:**

You are adept at settling problems with your fists. You inflict 1d4 instead of 1d3 when punching. You gain a second punch attack after you have had this ability for three levels.

#### **Dimber Damber:**

You have an ally with the guild master of a local thieves guild. As long as you do not betray the trust of this ally you have a resource for finding thief related jobs, access to thief related resources and gear and a local fence which will purchase your stolen goods at approximately fifty rather than the pitiful twenty five percent of their actual value offered to regular guild members.

#### **Gelt:**

Gelt is thieves cant for coin. In this case the slang is applied to an individual gifted in the fine art of counterfeit coin making. Given a secure workshop, access to smelting equipment, tools, a weighted coin stamp which you create yourself, you can melt down gold pieces, melt down copper pieces and create reasonably accurate counterfeit coins which are 75% gold and 25% copper mixture. These coins are lighter than real coin of the realm and can be detected by an experienced merchant using scales to confirm the value of the coins. With 48 hours of uninterrupted time to work you can take 400 gold coins and 100 copper coins and turn them into 500 counterfeit gold coins. Your fakes will pass for real in

most casual transactions.

#### **Maskin:**

Maskin is thieves cant for coal or charcoal and in this case is slang for a thief with a legitimate side job as a chimney sweep and a membership in the chimney sweeps guild. A Maskin geared up to put in some work cleaning chimneys can move across the rooftops of the city without attracting the attention of the city guard. Maskin make excellent cat burglars who use roof tops or upper story windows to gain entry into a target shop or residence.

#### **Pike:**

You have a local partner who is willing to work with you on thief related missions. The Pike is an NPC thief one level below your own. They will not go on an adventure with you and they will refuse to go crawling around in dungeons, however, if you have a burglary or robbery you need a partner to pull off, they will assist you. You must pay the pike a 25% share of the total value including treasure and the value of any magical items you take in the theft. If you murder the pike or otherwise screw them over you will become hunted by the regional thieves guild and a price will be put on your head.

#### **Slop Seller:**

You are connected with a fence, someone who will pay you gold in exchange for the goods which you have stolen. Usually the gold you make will be a fraction of the value of the property but you won't have to worry about the items being tied back to you, should they be found later by the guards.

#### **Dwarf Ability List**

Dwarven Appraisal  
Dwarven Artisan  
Favored Weapon – Axes  
Flesh Wound  
Hamstring  
Honored

Pack Horse  
Stalwart Companion  
Stubborn as Stone  
Tough Negotiator

### **Dwarven Appraisal:**

Dwarves are experts at determining the monetary value of crafted objects. So long as a gem has been cut, a weapon was created in a forge, or a cask of mead was made in a brewery, a Dwarf can determine its precise value. The Dwarf must hold the object, test its balance, peer down the edge, sniff at it, and within a minute or two they can tell you the precise value. This ability does not impart what the object might do if it is magical. You still need to hire a magic-user to determine that.

### **Dwarven Artisan:**

The Dwarf with this ability understands the steps necessary to craft “Dwarven” objects be it a brew of Dwarven Ale or a mighty helm. The finer points of how this is accomplished is up to the DM but as a guide the cost should typically double or triple for the ingredients necessary, and the Dwarf might need weeks or months in a specialized workshop to make the item. Dwarven crafted items are always expensive.

### **Favored Weapon – Axes:**

Dwarves are renowned for their skill using the axe. A Dwarf with this ability gains a +1 bonus to their attack roll when wielding any type of axe. They also enjoy a +1 bonus to damage.

### **Flesh Wound:**

The prerequisite for this ability is the “Hard to Kill” ability purchased from the general ability list. A Dwarf with this ability can keep on their feet when all others would normally be flat on their face, unconscious and bleeding out. A Dwarf with this ability can continue to function normally during combat until they arrive at -5 hit points. At negative five hit points they pass out



and the normal rules for the hard to kill ability govern their survival.

### **Hamstring:**

A Dwarf with this ability can perform a special attack in place of their normal attack but only against humanoid creatures of normal, large or giant size. To use this ability the Dwarf declares they are attempting a hamstring attack. If they hit with their attack the Dwarf inflicts half of their normal weapon damage to the target but reduces the target’s ground movement speed by ten feet per combat round. This attack can be repeated until the target has zero ground movement remaining, at which point the target must make a saving throw versus paralyzation or fall prone.

### **Honored:**

As a Dwarf you can depend upon the centuries of trust that your people have built up around the issues of integrity, honesty and thrift. This ability secures your reputation as you know how to hold yourself and behave in what others consider to be a respectable Dwarven fashion. If

you get caught in a lie, the victims will be shocked, but it is unlikely that they will trust you further.

#### **Pack Horse:**

Dwarves are especially good at hauling out the treasure. You gain an additional 250 gold or 25 pounds which you can carry before the weight you carry slows your movement.

#### **Stalwart Companion:**

A Dwarf who has the stalwart companion ability, need never roll a saving throw versus fear or fear effects so long as they still have friends remaining in the fight. So long as the Dwarf has friends in combat, they cannot be forced to abandon them, no matter how dire the circumstances.

#### **Stubborn as a Stone:**

This Dwarf receives a +2 bonus versus all mind controlling or charm spells and effects. They are so difficult to sway in their opinions that they gain this added resistance to even magical attempts to influence them.

#### **Tough Negotiator:**

Dwarves have a reputation for being expert negotiators and brutal hagglers. This Dwarf may, if they so choose, sacrifice one level of charisma reaction from the party they are negotiating with to move the price point twenty percent in their favor, whether they are buying or selling an object. This negotiation ability also applies to negotiations with NPC characters over the rewards for carrying out a job or mission.

If the Dwarf manages to push down the reaction of the NPC so that it becomes hostile the Dwarf not only fails to get their price but the NPC will withdraw the offer altogether.

#### **Elf Ability List**

Calm the Mind

Door

Door - Burdened

Elven Tracker

Favored Weapon - Bow

Favored Weapon - Dagger

Fast

Manslayer

Sense Corruption

Speak to Animals and Birds



#### **Calm the Mind:**

On the rare instances when you have been in the presence of another Elf you have noticed that the intensity of their thoughts and emotions can leave you feeling on edge. You have found a way to calm and center your mind so that the presence of other Elves does not leave you feeling as tense and irritated as you otherwise would.

This can be important since each Elf you normally encounter and spend continued time around inflicts a -1 penalty on your ranged attack rolls and saving throws versus spells as their undisciplined and innate psychic abilities invade one another's thoughts.

**Door:**

Elves have the ability to teleport short distances. Once per day, for every five levels that the Elf has achieved, they can teleport as a reaction up to one hundred and twenty feet, so long as they can clearly see the spot where they intend to appear. Using this ability does not initiate an attack of opportunity against them, as it is so quick and is more of a racial ability than a spell. Teleporting uses up the character's movement for that combat round but the character can still perform a non-movement action. The Elf may only teleport themselves, their gear and a twenty five pound object they are holding in their hand.

**Door Burdened:**

The prerequisite for this ability is the Door ability. An Elf with this upgrade can teleport him or herself, and up to two additional companions who are touching them at the moment of teleportation. The Elf can also hold up to one hundred pounds of weight in his or her hands and carry that object with the teleport.

**Elven Tracker:**

Elves are storied for their tracking abilities. You automatically can find and follow the traces of any creature that passed through an area so long as the trail is less than three days old. If the trail is older than three days you must roll percentile dice. See the Fighter ability of tracking for details.

**Favored Weapon – Bow:**

You gain a +1 bonus to hit with all muscle powered bows. You gain a +1 bonus to damage with arrows.

**Favored Weapon – Dagger:**

You gain a +1 bonus to hit when wielding a dagger. You gain a +1 bonus to damage with daggers.

**Fast:**

Unless you are surprised you always go

first in any initiative order. During initiate both the player characters and the monsters each roll 1d6 and the highest result gets to go first in that combat round. The fast ability means that you go first before anyone else, so in an adventuring party with an elf, the first person to go in every combat round is the elf, then the group that won the initiative roll and finally the group that lost the initiative roll.

**Manslayer:**

Humans have been the greatest threat to your people for centuries. You have been trained in the correct ways to defeat their attacks and also the best locations to incapacitate or slay them. When fighting a human you gain a 1 point bonus to AC, a +1 bonus to hit, a +1 bonus to damage.

**Sense Corruption:**

By concentrating for a full minute, you may detect the presence of Chaos or Evil within sixty feet. You may also detect in a more esoteric sense if a forest or natural area is under the influence of a power of Chaos or Evil or has been cursed in some unnatural fashion.

**Speak to Animals and Birds:**

This elf can speak to animals or birds any time they desire. This does not mean that the animals or birds will be able to give them specific details about incidents or people who have passed, they are still animals after all. The animal or bird may accompany the Elf for a short period of time, up to ten minutes if the Elf can convince them to do so. This ability is not a magical spell and so the animal or bird is still free to react if it is attacked by the Elves companions or is harmed in some fashion.

**Small Folk Ability List**

Duck and Dodge

Cartographer

Cower

Ear for Gossip

Favored Weapon: Dagger

Gardening  
Kneecaps  
Professional Treasure Hunter  
Sputter and Ramble  
Stone Pitching

**Duck and Dodge:**

The small folk depend upon their ability to dodge and move out of the way of ranged and melee attacks, much more so than blocking or parrying. This ability grants you a one point bonus to AC, but requires that you abandon the use of a shield.



**Cartographer:**

Small folk are by nature clever and curious. You have a passion for maps of all sorts and you are always jotting down hand drawn maps and sketches in your personal notebook. Three times per game session you may ask the DM for corrections or clarifications to the map which you are making.

**Cower:**

You've mastered the fine art of looking harmless in the eyes of the big folk. Once per combat you can force an opponent preparing to attack you with a melee or ranged attack to make a saving throw versus petrification. If they fail

they then attack any companion standing within five feet of you instead. You may point to the new target. If they succeed at the saving throw they ignore how harmless you appear and attack you anyway.

**Ear for Gossip:**

Twice per day, so long as you can place yourself in a tavern or market, you hear two interesting rumors or bits of gossip. Much of this information will be about local villagers or the local nobles but occasionally some story about a distant dungeon or a rampaging dragon may reach your ears.

**Favored Weapon – Dagger:**

You are skilled in the use of a dagger. You gain +you're your attack rolls and +1 to damage rolls when wielding such a weapon.

**Gardening:**

Back in the shire your enormous prize winning pumpkins and potatoes were legend. All sorts of edible and useful plants grow tall and strong under your care. You have a broad knowledge of herbs, plants and trees and the DM will provide you with the descriptions and write ups of twenty different herbs and trees and their alchemical properties. In addition the DM will provide you with three recipes for potion brewing.

**Kneecaps:**

By taking a -2 penalty to their attack roll, the small folk can target the knees of any medium or large humanoid foe. If they hit, they inflict damage normally and reduce the movement of the target by ten feet for the remainder of the combat. This attack can be made multiple times against the same subject, possibly reducing their movement rate to zero.

**Professional Treasure Hunter:**

Any character, besides a Thief, can pick up the general ability of Petty Thief and gain the use

of a single Thief skill.

As a small folk you have a knack for stealth and clever behavior. This ability allows you to pick a second Thief skill, you must possess the Petty Thief ability as a prerequisite.

When you purchase this ability you choose the second Thief ability you are skilled in and you pick it up as if you were a first level thief. At every level of advancement your skill in that skill also advances as if you were advancing as a thief.

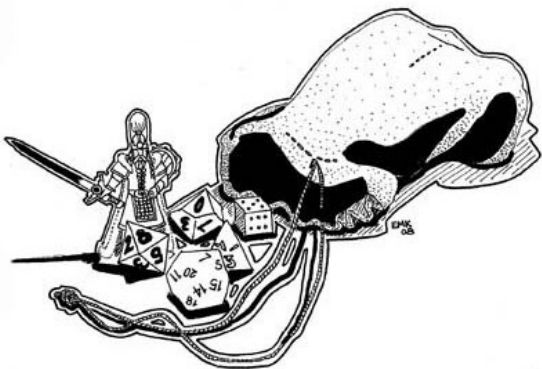
### **Sputter and Ramble:**

Trust the small folk to make a national sport out of making the big folk think your such a tremendous clot, that questioning you or holding you prisoner is a complete waste of time. You are skilled at blathering such complete nonsense that most folk will believe you are a complete idiot. Once per day, you can make a target make a saving throw versus spell or abandon their attempts to question or interrogate you. This ability does not work on other small folk.

### **Stone Pitching:**

There is an old saying, "Never turn your back when the little people stoop to pick up a stone." It seems that all of the small folk have a special talent for pitching stones with great velocity and accuracy.

You are particularly adept at hurling stones, so good in fact that you have been known to drive off and even kill wolves and other beasts by hurling rocks at them.



You can pick up a rock and hurl it as your attack so long as you have nothing in your hand. The rock you hurl inflicts full weapon damage or 1d6, due to its velocity and your skill at hitting targets between the eyes, in the eye socket, temple, throat and vital areas.

### **Little Dungeons**

The Star of the East

by E. M. Kann

Note: The text in this article references the encounter map found on page 26.

At an unremarkable section of meandering road there lies a quiet shrine to the Goddess Curanthie, the Goddess of the East Wind. Travelers sometime stop here to rest and tend the small garden of flowers and flowering trees in this shady spot.

Nearby the sputtering waters of a clear creek tumbles past over rocks and stone. Crossing the mist shrouded stone foot bridge the characters spot a dark cave entrance flanked by two more stone statues of the Goddess.

A pair of moss shrouded statues of the Goddess flank either side of a ten foot wide cave entrance. This appears to be a hidden grotto dedicated to the Goddess which is probably flooded during wetter seasons. Even from here you can see the interior is dry, the floor of the cave a mix of sand and gravel with a trio of three shaggy bushes growing up from the center of the cavern floor. There is barely enough room to squeeze past for a man. Pushing into the cave will require that you get past these dark green scrub. They have grown large enough that they effectively block the view further into the cave.

Note: Taking some time outside of the cave entrance to look for tracks or signs of anything living in the cave or moving around the area will reveal at least one bare footed humanoid footprint about fourteen inches in length and eight inches wide.

A. The brush growing inside of the entrance to the cavern are three dwarf trees, Green Jackthorne - these are hardy plants with long, hooked thorns. Pushing through the cave entrance forces a saving throw. Failure indicates that the character has been pierced by one of the cruel thorns of this plant. The thorns inflict 1d3 damage. Taking damage from the Green Jackthorne forces a secondary saving throw versus disease. If failed, within several hours the wound will become swollen, painful and puss filled. The fever and pain of this wound can debilitate a character for up to 1d4 days if it is not properly tended or healed magically.

The roots of a Green Jackthorne plant are valuable in creating potions. The crushed and dried roots of one plant have a value of 3 gold pieces and are considered one gathering suitable for attempts at potion making.

B. The cavern walls widen about forty feet inside to a width of thirty feet. The hill above the cave entrance allows the passage to raise to a ceiling height of ten feet. At this point a depression in the gravel floor of the cave has created a pool of wine colored water. The bank of the wine dark pool is crowned in a circle of mushrooms. Some of these you mistake for small skulls at first glance because of the patterns made on their black and white caps. Scattered amidst these are taller mushrooms with peaked caps whose tips glow with a strange green luminescence. Further into the cave there comes a soft moan, like the whisper of a sorrow filled spirit.

Bishops Cap Mushrooms = 10  
Skull Cap Mushrooms = 15

C. Here the cavern passage widens even further into the expanse of a cavern fully sixty feet wide with a ceiling rising up to fifteen feet in height. Where the passage splits to the left and right the characters are confronted with an interior shrine to the Goddess Curanthie. Rising up out of the floor on either side of the bust of the Goddess are tubes of reddish and deep blue caves whistle. The flow of the air through the cavern passes over the holes in these unusual fungi cre-

ating a soft sighing moan. So much of the stuff grows up around the little shrine that it suggests that it was planted and cultivated here long ago. It engulfs the stone table and bust of Curanthie like a natural pipe organ. Behind the statue there are three stone alcoves. Each is five feet wide and about five feet deep. Hanging from a metal hook secured by a spike into the back of each of these alcoves is a brass lantern containing the two inch tall stub of a candle. These candles light themselves, illuminating the chamber as you stand before the altar.

Note: No heat comes off of the candles. A clever character might figure out that the candle lights are merely an illusion spell triggered by the approach of a humanoid.

D. Twisting or turning the center bracket activates a secret door at the back of that alcove revealing a narrow five foot stair which winds down for an unknown distance. Similar illusionary candles set in niches in the wall light themselves as if beckoning the characters to enter and travel deeper into the shrine.

E. The right passage comes to another dark pool. The waters of this pool are softly illuminated by the green caps of the mushrooms growing around its edge. The walls of this area of the cavern also glow here and there with a strange green luminescence.

Note: Bishop's Cap Mushrooms = 10  
Skull Cap Mushrooms = 5

Combat: The glowing spots on the wall are not more mushrooms, these are the glowing glands of a group of giant beetles. The beetles in this cavern were attracted here to scavenge left over food discarded by the Ogres living deep in the cave. There are four giant beetles here.

Giant Beetles (4)  
AC 4  
HD 1d8 (8,7,6,5)  
Move 30, Fly 45  
XP 13 Each (52 xp)  
Alignment Nil



Treasure 0  
Attacks 1 (bite)  
Damage 1d6

These beetles have glowing glands, one above each eye and one on the abdomen which can be harvested. They will give off a persistent glow equal to a candle illuminating a 10 foot area for 1d6 days.

F. A two foot wide crack in the wall of the cavern spans the entire length of the wall from floor to ceiling. Soft clacking sounds can be heard coming from deeper within. The sand and gravel floor of this part of the cave is marked with a half dozen large and deep footprints left by some sort of humanoid.

Combat: Entering this area of the cave disturbs the colony of giant beetles living inside of the crack in the cavern wall. There are twelve more giant beetles in the colony. They will emerge, flying out of the crack to attack whoever they find.

See Encounter Area E for stats. Hit Points (8,8,7,7,6,6,5,5,4,3,2,2) Experience Points: 156 for the encounter.

A character can push through the crack in the wall and find a space where the lair opens up. Inside is a nesting area of piled debris and the bones of previous meals, some animals bones and a few humanoid bones. At the edge of the nest is a gnawed on shoulder and arm bone of a humanoid, thrust through the strap of a leather satchel. Inside the satchel is a pouch holding 38 gold pieces and 44 silver pieces. There is also a bottle which is still corked. On the side in common is written "Potion of Healing x2 Doses". Each dose heals 1d6+1 damage.

G. The cavern passage continues here but narrows to just under ten feet in width. The ceiling height remains consistent, around ten feet. The passage takes an abrupt hook where it switches back and forth. A few large humanoid footprints can be observed in the gravel floor here. A bestial stink becomes noticeable at this point in the cavern.

TRAP: The Ogres protect their lair from intruders with a simple trip wire trap attached to a large log rigged up to swing down out of a nook in the cavern wall and bash the brains out of whoever set off the trip wire. The trip wire is difficult to see without the lighting of a torch. The business end of the log can be seen jutting out of the niche in the left side of the wall. If the trap is triggered it inflicts 2d6 bashing damage against anyone standing in the space where the trip wire is located. The noise also alerts the Ogres, who usually sleep during the daylight hours with only one of their fellows keeping an absent minded watch.

H. The stink of beast living in a cave grows as the characters move down the tunnel. Here the walls of the tunnel widen to create what looks like a final cavern. There are three tattered pallets here and two stout looking wooden chests. A mugging of Ogres has made this deep cavern its lair. There are three of them here. If the characters are lucky only one of them is awake and not paying much attention to the entrance. They gain one round of surprise against the dull witted guard and his two sleeping companions. If the trap was triggered all three are awake and ready for a fight.

On the opposite wall of this cavern there is a stone ledge where the Ogres have set up a large cave bear skull. Perhaps they have felt the need to create some primitive shrine of their own to counter the influence of the Goddess in this cavern. Growing around the base of this ledge are dozens of mushrooms.

Bishop's Cap = 15  
Skull Cap = 15

Ogres (3)	XP 75 (225 XP)
AC 6	Alignment CE
HD 4 (30,25,20)	Treasure - See Chests.
Move 30	
Attacks 1	
Damage 1d10+1 (Improvised Clubs)	

The two chests in this chamber are neither trapped nor are the locked. Each contains a doz-

en torn and bloody clothing items looted off of the remains of travelers ambushed by the Ogres along the road. Together the two chests contain 120 gold pieces, 55 silver pieces and 320 copper pieces. In one of the chests there is a beautifully crafted short sword whose hilt shimmers with a soft purple light. The guard of the sword is carved with the image of a spider and the pommel is decorated so that it appears to be wrapped in silver spider webs. +1 Magical Short Sword of Proof against Poison. While grasping this magic sword the user is immune to all forms of poison.

The Cave Bear Skull - A closer inspection of the cave bear skull reveals that the eyes gleam with a red glimmer when a torch or candle is brought close. Lifting up the skull reveals a pair of red gems. Each is worth 100 gold pieces.

I. The secret stairway winds down into the Earth a full hundred feet before arriving at a hidden chamber. This stone cavern is about fifty feet wide around and twenty feet tall. A strange blue green glow shimmers up from a pond of clear water in the center of the chamber. A five foot wide ledge circles either side of the pool all the way to the back end of the chamber.

Floating in the air above the pool there is a dark green gem. The gem is about the size of a man's fist and has its own pulsing sea green glow at its heart.

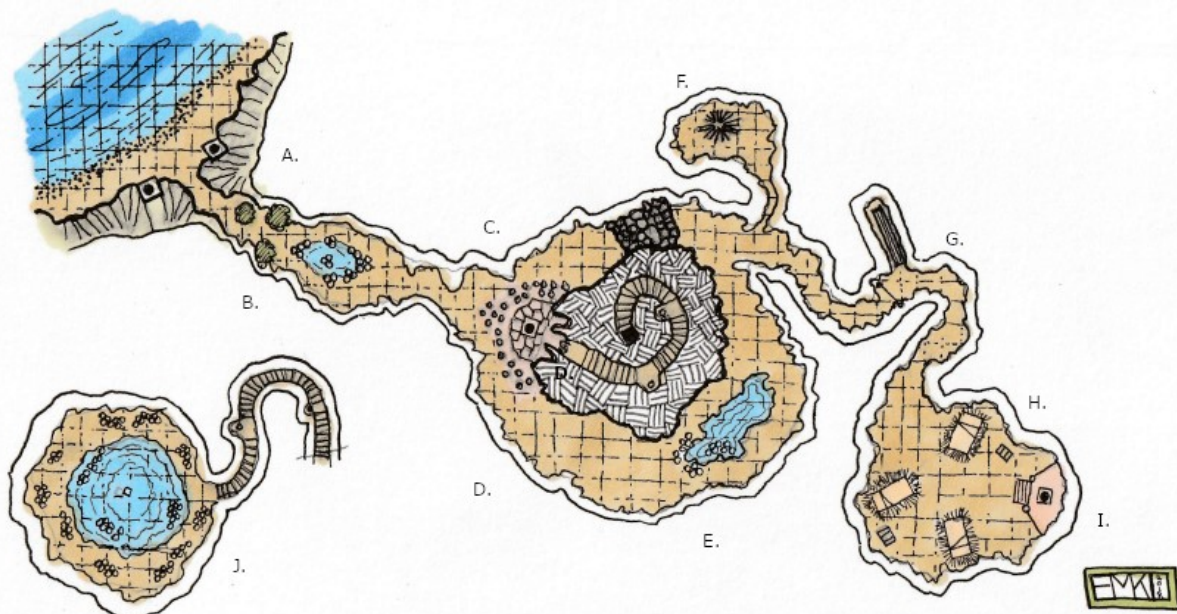
Entering the chamber you catch the strong clean scent of the sea and the air here is fresh as if you are standing near the ocean shore. The air circulating in the chamber is cool, even cold. Non-magical light sources have a 2 in 6 chance of flickering out every round.

### The Heart of the East

The floating gem is called, "The Heart of the East" and it is a sacred magical object beloved by the Goddess Curanthie. It was hidden here in this secret shrine for safe keeping as its special properties have made it sought after by a number of unsavory actors over the years.

To retrieve the Heart the character must grasp it with their bare hand. Attempts to snare the heart using a net or rope or hooking it with a pole or spear will result in the gem protecting itself with a blast of St. Elmo's Fire. When the cavern is entered by characters intent on taking the Heart the waters of the pool will start to swirl and churn as if disturbed by a strong current. The smell of salt water will get even stronger and the air will grow even colder.

St. Elmo's Fire = Save versus spell or take 1d6 electrical damage. To grasp the Heart a character must wade into the pool. When the pool is entered the guardian of the Heart will rise up out of the pool to confront the characters.



## **Nixie (Vestia the Bound)**

AC 7

HD 1 (HP 8)

Move 30, Swim 50

Attacks 1 (Weapon or Charm)

Damage 1d6

XP 100

Alignment Neutral

Treasure (See Chamber)

The Nixie will rise out of the water as a surprise action. She will cast charm person on whoever is standing in the pool. If the target fails, she will order them to protect the Heart and then vanish back into the pool. She will repeat this action on anyone who enters the pool.

Killing the Nixie while she is bound merely causes her beautiful watery form to collapse back into water. Every combat round following her demise, the magic of the pool revives her by 4 hit points so in two combat rounds she will re-emerge from the pool fully healed and ready to continue.

If things become desperate she is armed with a coral trident. She can attack with this trident for 1d6 damage or use its magic to cast St. Elmo's fire for 1d6 electrical damage at range. The trident loses its magical properties if the Nixie is permanently destroyed. If she is reduced to zero hit points or less and is merely regenerating in the waters of the pool the trident vanishes as well. The trident's ranged magic can hit any target within the room or within the entrance to the attached hall.

Taking possession of the Heart breaks the binding spell which keeps the Nixie alive. If she has the opportunity, she will dive back into the pool and vanish, returning magically to the sea from whence she was summoned. If she is reduced to zero hit points after the characters possess the Heart, she is permanently destroyed.

## **The Heart of the East**

This fist sized gem glows with its own blue green light. Once per day the gem can be asked

the direction of any object or being and the inner light of the gem will grow brighter when the holder moves in the correct direction of the item or being. This guidance will last for ten minutes but can be used to divine the general direction of a lost or hidden being no matter what enchantment is being used to conceal them. Curanthie is the Goddess of the East wind and of finding the right course for sailors, and not even the gods can hide from this powerful focus of her power.

Curanthie will take an immediate interest in the actions of whomever takes possession of the Heart, but she will not interfere with them unless they are clearly using the Heart for evil. If this occurs, she will recruit other adventurers to recover the Heart from those who would use it for evil purposes.

## **The Secret of Graves Blanket**

### **Herbs and Lore**

**By Ed Kann**

Wilford swung the spade onto his shoulder and strode across the cobbled market square behind Master Grimshod, the caretaker of the Cathedral's graveyard.

Wilford was young and strong, but not very particular about how he made enough coin to afford a dry pallet to sleep on, and something warm to fill his belly. These traits, and especially the later ones, qualified him immensely for the open position of grave digger. The only real worry he had was having to go out once a night to patrol and make sure no unsavory characters had jumped the wall. Of course, it wasn't up to him to stop actual graverobbers. The village had its own watch to protect it from robbers. Even so, he wasn't eager to be surprised in the night by some sinister cutpurse willing to defile the tombs of the dead.

Wilford stood obediently behind the stooped old caretaker as he wrestled with the chain and lock hanging off of the cemetery gate.

It was very early, an hour before sunrise and still plenty dark but Wilford was sure any shady happenings in the yard would be over with by now. The caretaker swung wide the gate with a groan and made his way inside, gesturing for Wilford to follow.

Up and up the hill they trudged, Wilford kept the spade balanced on one shoulder and a bucket holding a scrub for cleaning the stones clutched in his other hand. Master Grimshod muttered friendly greetings to the “residents” as he limped his way up the path towards the top of the hill.

“Oh bless my soul, good morning Mister Cressy, and Mrs. Cressy too, yes of course, your flowers are looking a little wilted so I’ll attend to them.” Grimshod was so elderly that Wilford wondered what portion of the total number of dead buried in the yard the man had known when they were living. Perhaps a quarter? Perhaps a third? The notion made Wilford feel a trifle sad for the fellow.

Everywhere the hills and the graves were planted with a blanket of small white, delicate little flowers, which Wilford thought almost made the hill and the graves look like they were blanketed in snow. “Its very pretty here, Wilford commented.” Grimshod slowed and peered around them, “Yes, sometimes I forget how peaceful it can be.”

About half way up the hill Wilford spied one swath of flowers which looked to have succumbed to a frost, so bruised and purple and unhealthy did they appear.

“Master Grimshod, I’m afraid we’ve got work replanting some of those pretty white flowers over there.” Wilford commented and almost walked right into the old man so suddenly did he stop on the path.

“What, what?” Grimshod gazed around them, “What do you mean, my eyes aren’t as sharp as yours, young Wilford.”

Wilford pointed so that Grimshod could follow with his gaze. The caretaker’s eyes grew slowly wider and then he quickly looked behind and paused as if straining to catch any sound, waving with one spotty hand for Wilford to keep quiet for a moment.

“Lad,” He said, “We’ve got to get out of here, we’ve got to warn the night watch.”

“Warn them about flowers, Master?” Wilford followed behind as Grimshod turned on his heel and began to lead them right back down the hill the way they had come, now swiveling his head to the left and right as if trying to spy something.

“Warn them that the undead are lurking in the graveyard.”

Wilford whispered, “The undead?” He tried his best not to make so much noise and cursed himself for the rattles of the bucket and the stir they must have made walking in. “What have flowers to do with them?”

“The flowers are called Gravesblanket, the priests keep them planted here because they thrive until they are within a few feet of something unnatural, like the undead...or worse things.”

Grimshod hurried back down the hill his sharp nose darting this way and that like a blood hound trying to catch the scent, peering into shadows and wringing his old hands together nervously.

“Awe, its probably just the frost what hurt

the flowers Master.” Wilford followed Grimshod but only at half the pace, slowly falling behind. “Truly you shouldn’t get yourself overly excited he whispered, its not good for your heart.”

Wilford stopped then because he caught a bit of noise off to the right, close to where one of the larger monuments rose up out of the ruined ground cover. “Bless me...” He set the bucket down at his feet and grasped the haft of the shovel with both hands. Staring at him from around the corner of the marble monument was a face, with pale skin and large watery gray eyes, solid orbs. It was smaller than a man, smaller than Wilford, but not by much. Wilford felt a chill run through him. He gulped and tried to make himself invisible through some reflexive act of will. Out of the corner of one eye he noticed Grimshod stop and look in the direction he was staring.

“Run for your life!” Grimshod let out a howl as if stung by hornets and began to flee down the hill towards the gate of the cemetery. The caretaker managed more agility and speed than Wilford would have imagined possible.

All in a blur the thing came straight at Wilford and out of sheer instinct, Wilford presented the point of the shovel directly into its path. The thing slammed its blotched and distended belly against the point of the shovel with such force the it nearly knocked the wooden haft right out of his hands. It let out a yelp, almost like a dog that had been . It had the body of a man, if a little smaller, pale and wearing only the most filthy of rags. It hissed up at him from where it had stumbled, showing far to many teeth. The thing was utterly repulsive and the smell...the stench of the thing was terrifying.

With a loud cry of mad fear, Wilford reflexively swung the spade up and down onto the face of the monster with every ounce of strength that he had, and again and again and again. At

first the thing hissed and spat, then flailed and finally gurgled, black ichor leaking out of its ruined features. Wilford was known to be one of the strongest young men in the entire village. He took a stumbling step backwards and dazedly noticed that the metal head of the shovel was now a gory bent and ruined tool.

The thing was down and badly hurt, even stunned. Wilford noticed that its black clawed, filthy fingers clutched and flexed. Though it was temporarily immobilized by the furious mad terror of Wilford’s blows, it seemed to still have some life left in it.

With that, Wilford had enough and he turned and pelted down the hill as fast as his legs could carry him. He ran with such inspired speed that passed old Master Grimshod about twenty feet before the gate and kept going until where they both stopped gasping for air half way across the market square.

“What...was that?!” Wilford gasped.

“Undead...something unnatural, possibly a ghoul?” Grimshod tucked a flask out of his pocket and took a long drink, offering it over to Wilford.

“Does that happen often?” Wilford took a pull on the bottle and kept hold of it feeling he might need more than one stiff drink.

“No, not often.” Grimshod reached for the flask but when it was not returned frowned and pulled out a handkerchief to wipe his brow. “It’s been five years since the last time something crawled into the graveyard, but that time it was only a zombie or two.”

“Only a zombie...or two?” Wilford straightened up and peered anxiously back in the direction of the hill. He wished he’d more than a

ruined shovel in his hands. “Will it chase us down into the village.”

“Not likely, not this close to morning, see the sunlight is already starting to peer up over the horizon to the East.” Grimshod tucked his handkerchief back into his pocket and snatched back his flask, putting it away as well.

“You didn’t think digging the occasional grave paid one full silver a day, just for that little bit of work, did you lad?” He grimaced. “It’ll crawl back into whatever hole its found among the tombs, the watch will have to go in and deal with it during the day, when its less dangerous.”

The two men backed their way cautiously away from the hill. Step by step. Heading in the direction of the Belching Beast tavern, the closest tavern to the market square, where there was sure to be a few of the watch loitering.

## **Graves Blanket**

Flowering Herb

Graves Blanket is a common flowering herb found throughout the Central and Northern kingdoms of the world of Chimera. It is often cultivated by monks and priests tending to graveyards and temple grounds.

The small white flowers of this herb are pleasant to smell and look upon but the plant’s greatest trait is that it reacts immediately to the presence of necrotic energy, such as found in the vicinity of the undead. In areas where such creatures are present the normally white flowers turn a dark purple blue color, like a deep unhealthy bruise before withering altogether.

For the purposes of alchemy and potion brewing one gathering of this herb is the equivalent of three plants. A gathering of Graves Blanket has a value of three silver pieces.

This herb can be found hanging to dry in many varieties of shop throughout the kingdoms. It is known to be a useful ingredient in a number of folk remedies and certain woven plant fetishes used to ward away the dead. Monks and priests become unhappy when it is picked without permission from where they have planted it around their temples or in graveyards. In some kingdoms it is a minor crime to be caught gathering the stuff on the property of a church or temple. Such crimes are usually punished by some form of public shaming and several days spent laboring to repair the walls or grave stones in the local cemetery.

## **The Tale of Bokstorn Homebrew Gods and Powers by Ed Kann**

Five thousand years ago, the titan Bokstorn was born within the fiery heart of the world.

Bokstorn created the race of the giants. Storm giants he crafted to be his companions, his brothers and sisters, frost and fire giants he forged to serve him as soldiers and also the builders of his mighty hall and hill giants he molded to slave as brute laborers.

Bokstorn sent forth his giants into the different corners of the world to establish kingdoms in his name. Some he sent into the mountains, others into the largest of the forests, others he sent into the Underworld. Soon the giants had constructed kingdoms in every corner of the world.

Bokstorn encouraged rivalries and conflicts between the kingdoms of his giants because he enjoyed the conflicts of war. He required each of the kingdoms to bring him tribute at the first day of each new year and every few years the amount of tribute he demanded increased.

A thousand years into his reign Bokstorn sent forth a war party of giants to capture the Goddess Curanthie. They slaughtered the elven priests which served at her temple and brought her back in chains to become his bride. For centuries Curanthie suffered in captivity as Bokstorn's wife, until the night when the giants themselves, tired of the tribute they were forced to pay to the titan, arranged the poisoning and murder of their own creator.

In the confusion following Bokstorn's death, Curanthie escaped, and she was secreted away by the Elves to a hidden island temple whose location has been kept a well-guarded secret.

For long centuries the giants withdrew into their four kingdoms and slowly each of these reduced in size and power. Finally only the Kingdom of Petrurias remained of the four great kingdoms of the giants.

Two hundred years ago a gaunt and silent specter, the wandering shade of the titan Bokstorn, began to be seen wandering amidst the fierce snow storms of the Wintersmark. No one knows what caused the ghost of the titan to appear, or what drives it to wander the white wastelands of the distant North. Nervous that the titan might return to seek revenge, some of the giants have constructed a refuge at the edge of the Wintersmark where pilgrims can travel and make offerings to appease the restless wandering spirit of Bokstorn.

## **Secret alphabets for scrolls and other props.**

By Ed Kann

All it takes to create cool props for scrolls and spell book pages, which your players may find during the course of their adventures, is a little time and imagination.

First you need to come up with a fantasy

alphabet or collection of symbols which you can pair with letters of the alphabet for creating your scroll. This is easily done and there are many examples of fantasy letters and symbols available online which you can copy or use for inspiration.

For our purposes I recommend that you start with an existing script and quickly transform it into something of your own. Looking at an existing group of sigils or symbols will give you a consistent look to the rest of your own original designs.

The first example on page 30 is the fantasy sigils I made up for the arcane spell casting tongue used by the Pentagarchy in my home campaign.

The Pentagarchy is a powerful organization which has replaced the old orders of the Guild Mages in most of the civilized kingdoms of the world. They have managed to insert themselves into the centers of power in most large cities, and they have decreed that only a member of the Pentagarchy may practice arcane magic legally.

Anyone practicing magic who is not a member of the Pentagarchy is practicing magic illegally and is declared a heretic. Worse still is casting spells which are not a part of the approved lists. Using forbidden magic is a violation of arcane law and those who do so are burned at the stake.

Approved arcane spells for Pentagarchy magic-users are the normal spells listed in the typical player's handbook. At the DM's discretion you may adjust this, adding to or removing spells which seem to violate the Pentagarchy restrictions against necromancy and city destroying magical spells.

When I make spell pages and scroll props

for my home game I use the Pentagarchy alphabet on page 30. The Pentagarchy alphabet is used if the scroll contains a legal spell recorded by a Pentagarchy magic-users.

On page 31 I present the common symbols used for Rakkian, the script of the ancient Empire of Rakkia. A Rakkian magic-user would write their personal notes in this language adding notes about the best times for creating permanent magical items using this spell, notes to assist a student in studying the spell or in creating herbal compounds which might aid the student when attempting to learn the spell. These notes might also include cautions against using the spell in certain circumstances or information about what might create a dangerous situation for the casting magic-user.

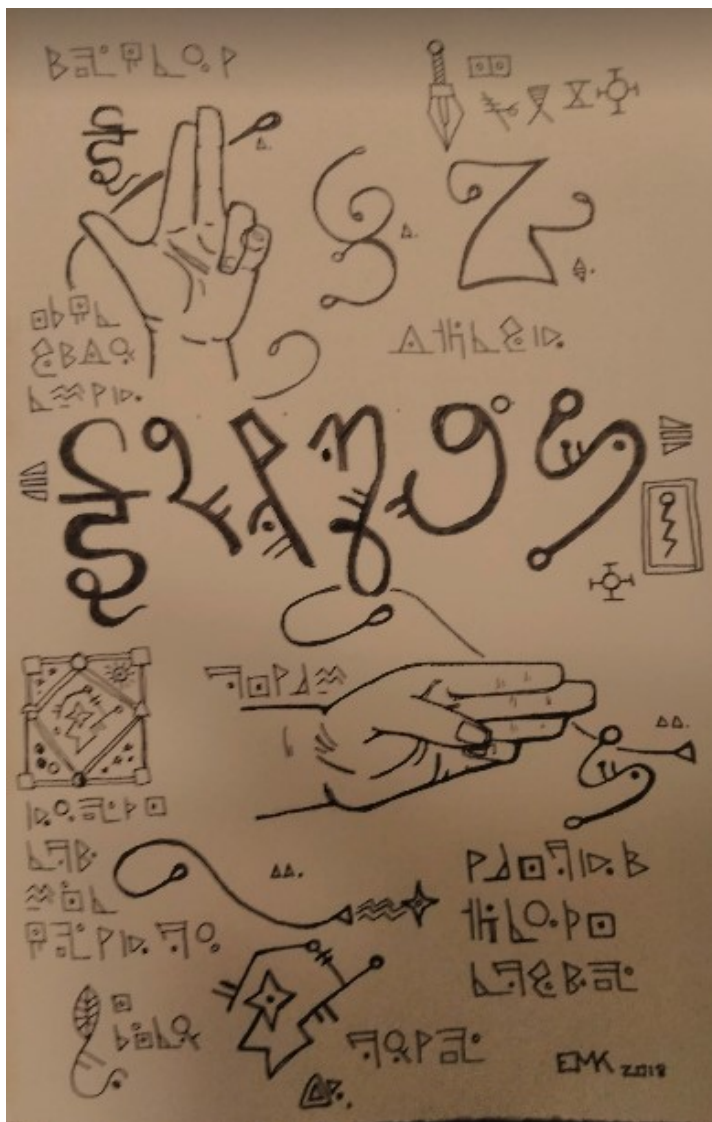
I began incorporating magical alphabets into my campaign because I wanted to have the characters occasionally discover lost magical spells, forbidden scrolls and older enchantments cast by the magic-users of the Guild Wizards. I realized that you cannot have forbidden or heretical magical spell scroll props without having some point of reference for what is considered acceptable.

I have enjoyed using these pretend magical alphabets for creating props for my campaign and I hope to pursue this idea further over the course of the coming year.

Creating your own magical alphabets and spell book pages is an easier project when you are writing up spells for earlier versions of the game. It is easier to write up example spell pages for all of the spells in say an older version of BASIC because you might only have ten or twenty spells for an entire level.

If you look at it as a whole, yes it can be very daunting to create so many sample spell pages BUT if you just relax and enjoy making one up every week or couple of weeks you will find that you'll have entire levels of magic-user spells drawn up. The addition of these props can make

for an exciting and interesting addition to your campaign. I am excited to see how this unfolds in live play in my own game over the coming months.



Prototype—Spell Book Page

Above is a prototype spell book page. At the center is the larger script for the verbal component or magic word used to utter the spell. Illustrated are two hand positions along with notations denoting hand movements for the somatic portion of the spell.

This does not represent a final product necessarily but shows that you can make some pretty cool looking props for your game with a few pretend alphabets and some creative imagination.



ARCANE (COMMON)

𐌚 𐌛 𐌜 𐌝 𐌞 𐌟  
Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff

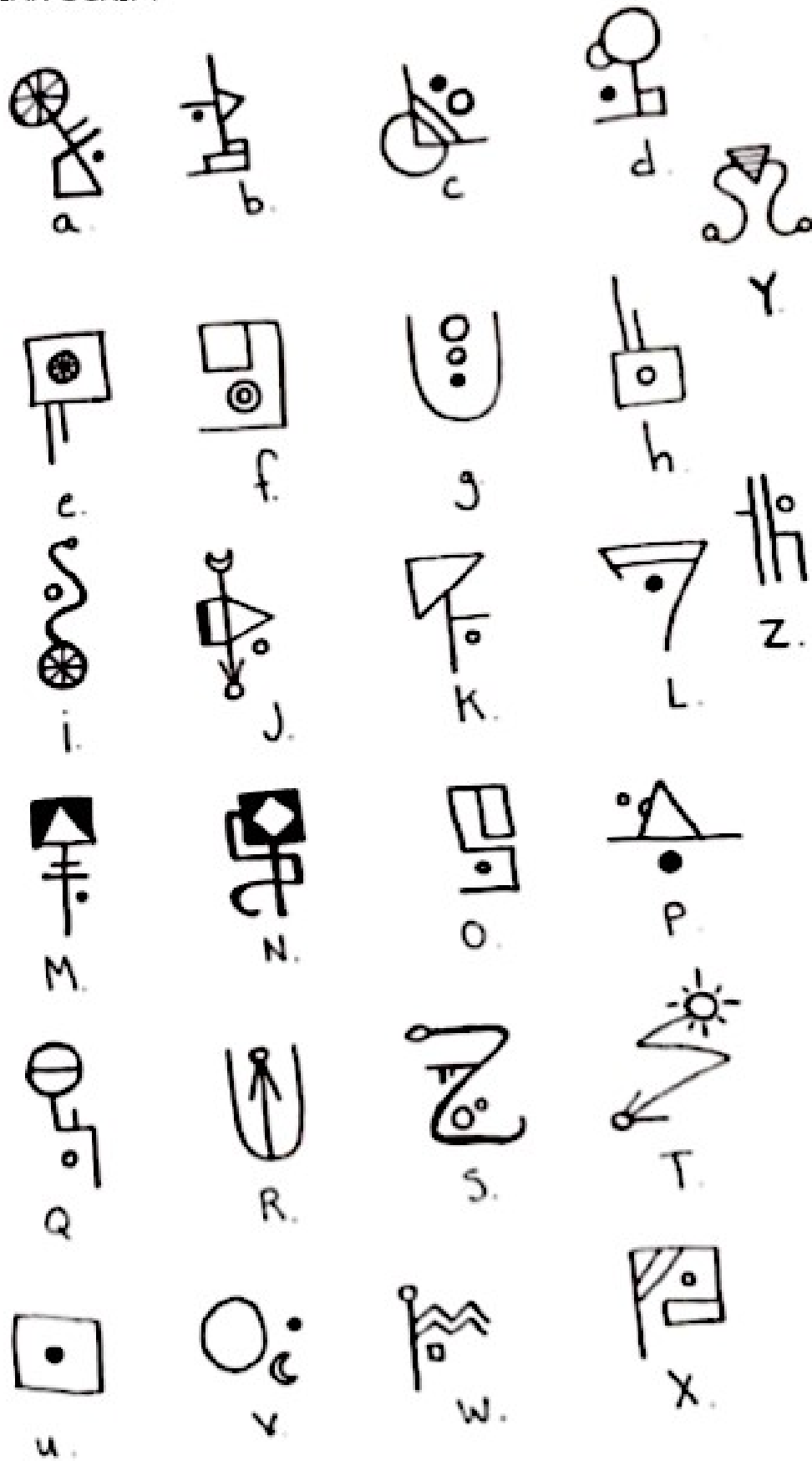
𐌠 𐌡 𐌢 𐌣 𐌤  
Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk

𐌥 𐌦 𐌧 𐌨 𐌩  
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp

𐌪 𐌫 𐌬 𐌭 𐌮  
Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu

𐌯 𐌰 𐌱 𐌲 𐌳  
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

RAKKIAN SCRIPT





Thengil stooped under the low eave of the door, arms filled with firewood, he glanced at Fritha, his beautiful darling wife and smiled but what warmth that was there slowly died. He dropped the bundle of wood onto the floor and crossed the hard trodden dirt floor to place one of his tremendous hands on Fritha's shoulder. She cradled their son, their only child, wrapped in layer after layer of soft cloth and rabbit fur sheltering him from the winter cold creeping in through the walls. Her eyes were damp from tears. In all the time they had been together Thengil had never seen her cry.

"Look and see for yourself." Fritha pulled back the blanket to show their son's little hand. "It happened in the night, the change...that devil woman sleeping in the mound has somehow touched our little Finni." She pushed Thengil's sleeping son into his arms and turned her back on them both.

Thengil felt the weight of the lead colored sky drop into his belly. "Fritha, love, this is our child."

Fritha's back stiffened. "Do what you must. He is Trollborn now. The witch in the hill has claimed him for her own."

Thengil shifted uneasily. "I know the tales,

but I will not leave our son in the forest to be killed by the cold or wolves."

Fritha's shoulders trembled and Thengil knew she was sobbing. After a time she turned to look up at him, pale eyes peering deeply into his own. "Then, we all must leave. This very night. If Finni is discovered by anyone in the clan they will kill him, they will kill all of us."

Thengil gave a slow nod in agreement and stepped to the hearth stones, his good right hand closing around the pommel of his grandfather's sword, taking it down from where it hung.

### **Trollborn Warrior**

Trollborn Warriors are the cursed descendants of Northmen heroes who long centuries ago offended the Goddess Aglaeca - Mother of Monsters.

Trollborn Warriors must be human, half-elf or half-orc. Their human ancestry must come from one of the thirty cursed bloodlines of the Northmen.

Trollborn Warriors must have a minimum Strength of 14 and a minimum Constitution of 12. They may only have a maximum Charisma score of 10.

Trollborn Warriors gain none of the sub-

class abilities of Rangers, Paladins or Anti-Paladins. They are strictly Fighter class characters who have also lost their ability to establish a stronghold or attract a group of followers at higher levels. None will follow a Trollborn or offer them loyal service for they become more monstrous and strange to behold over time. Many Trollborn forsake attempts to dwell in towns or villages and isolate themselves in the wilderness.

### **The Legend of the Trollborn**

In the North, miles beyond the Warholds of the Northmen, there is a place where the frost stiffened woods end at the base of a black mound. It is a hell's borne place where the rocks shine like bottle glass pulled from a campfire. At the summit, a gray and choking smoke boils up into the clouds which scud and weep down a dirty sludge, so that all surrounding that hill is soaked in bitter blue mountain cold, stained coal black and frozen.

The mound is Oubliette, named centuries ago by fine Princes out of the South, after their prisons, holes where enemies were dropped and forgotten. This is where they hauled her; Aglaeca, once fair goddess so utterly betrayed in love.

Long, long ago her wounded heart welled up hot tears and she banished herself from the warmth of sunlight, dwelling far below the mossy green surface of a lonely mere. Deep she dwelt in the very heart of shadow, until men wandered into the surrounding lands, sticking fingers and noses and bitter blades into places where they have no business. Northmen with round shields splashed into darkling pools where they were unwanted. Horned helmed heroes marveled within dark halls where they were uninvited.

Hateful she emerged and full of wrath, setting about herself all in a moment and with a furious roar. Aglaeca grown hard and bitter, with slime coated crone teeth sharp as a butcher's

blade, black talon nails to slash, swift as a hurricane.

The broken goddess now full of wrath and fury burst forth hurtling warriors into the air as a reaper cuts down blades of summer's grass. She struck them dead. Deader than door nails, sucking marrow out of cracks in bones and organs out of eye sockets. She paused and turned over the broken doll of a once sworn man and sniffed at it. She was puzzled. These were not the elves whose goddess had cursed and betrayed her. These dead and broken things were lesser creatures, something else which had climbed into the world from out of the mist.

Nevertheless. How dare they trespass. How dare they intrude. How dare they remind her of the warm land of the sun far above. For this she hated them nearly as much as the elves and strode forth from her lair to see what she could learn of them.

Naked, towering, ancient, horrible she strode forth anew into the land. A great giantess and hag she stalked the fens from village to village, heaping men, women, children in piles so high they topped the rooftops of houses. It is said that she emptied all of the Kingdoms to the East of the Warfang river of living men and that for more than a century all of that area became a lonely wilderness inhabited only by sorrow.

Finally the heroes came to meet her in battle. They came against her in bright armor and gifted with charms from the Dwarves, silver chains forged deep in the mountain to bind her. No sword could wound her flesh because she remained a goddess. Perhaps she had been so greatly wronged that to the All Father her blood thirst seemed like justice. Twenty mighty warriors survived out of a hundred to wrestle her onto a sled, chaining her there, lashing a bar of metal between her teeth so she could not gnash them with her horrible teeth. Standing above her as she wrestled the chains in wrath, Eoghan the He-

ro spoke to his surviving men. "Go forth and bring back more heroes from every village where any can be found which still live. We have much to do and long to go.

So they gathered that very night, a goodly host, which set forth into the snow covered woodlands dragging the sled ever North. Off to that black mound they hauled her and the journey went on for league upon league. When the sled became stuck or faltered one of the heroes would reach out a hand to steady it and the hate of Aglaeca would strike them dead.

Finally they hauled her to the top of that mound where a black hole dropped into the heart of the world. A hole so deep, that no man had ever plumbed its depths.

"If one of us touches her or the sled her power will kill him...", spoke Eoghan to his followers. "Yet if we push her in as one, then the power of her hate will be spread between many and perhaps will not be so powerful as to kill us."

With three counts and a great heave they pushed Aglaeca, Mother of Monsters in. She tumbled down and down, thrown over the edge into that chasm in such a rush that the irons fell from her jaws.

She cried out, "You...you are the monsters!" and then she was gone.

Thirty great heroes set a hand on Aglaeca to tumble her into darkness. Over the years certain of their offspring would be born touched by something dark, something monstrous. They would be born looking odd and as they aged growing more and more strange, less and less human.

The Northmen took this as a sign that these children were touched by Aglaeca's dark power. Today such a thing is an ever present worry to those who dwell in the North. In this manner the Trollborn came to exist in the world, and in the North those born with signs of the

malady are taken into the wilderness and throat put to a blade or laid out in the snow and left for beasts. Some that do not show the signs until a later age are driven away, banished, usually wandering into the lands of the South to pick up whatever living they can until the changes drive them into the wilderness forever.

The Trollborn are a thing of hers. Other creatures born out of blackness, born out of that hate know their kind and will not set claw or fang against them. Hungry creatures of the wild like wolves will not go near them for their flesh is cursed and even the beasts know better than to touch it. Lost in the darkness of that bottomless chasm Aglaeca sings to them. The Druids say she hopes to lure one to her so that they might clamber down into darkness and release her. Trollborn begin as men but eventually grow stronger, larger. They become twisted in form sometimes stooped at other times gigantic, eyes strange, teeth grown black and sharp, nails like eagle's talons. They become a nightmare thing. Truly the Northmen know what they are about. The greater mercy may be to slay one of these the very hour they are met.

### **Trollborn Warrior**

The Trollborn Warrior is a subclass of fighter. Because of their Northern heritage they tend to be more rugged and sturdy than other fighters. Trollborn Warriors receive 1d12 for hit points at first level. They receive the full Constitution bonus to hit points received by a regular fighter. A Trollborn Warrior cannot be a character with two classes. If the character class abilities and skills presented in the Kingdoms Chimerical book are in play they may purchase general abilities / skills and those available for fighters as they advance in level. A Trollborn Warrior is considered to be a character class with no primary attribute and receives no bonus to experience advancement. Trollborn Warriors begin speaking their tribal, clan or regional tongue and the common tongue and no other language. They may

learn additional languages over time through study and the investment of coin during training at the behest of the GM and based upon their Intelligence score. Trollborn Warriors may be of any non-lawful alignment. No matter how lawful the characters alignment leanings may be through unfolding play it is impossible for a Trollborn Warrior to change to a lawful alignment. Trollborn Warriors use the combat tables for normal fighters. They may use any sort of weapon, shield or armor.

At first level the player of the Trollborn Warrior rolls 1d6 to determine what initial mutation the Trollborn character suffers. In the lands of the North this mutation marks them as one who has been touched by "The Witch in the Hill". A Trollborn Warrior suffers a -10% reaction penalty any time they encounter Northmen and a -05% reaction penalty if they encounter Dwarves or Elves.

### Roll 1d6

1. My what strange skin you have... Pick one. Orange, Crimson, Violet, Light Blue, Dark Blue, Lemon Yellow, Vibrant Pink.
2. What strange eyes you have... Pick One. Your eyes remind others of the eyes of a wolf, cat, falcon, shark (solid black), lizard. You can see in low light to a distance of 120 feet. Bright light does not hinder you but sudden changes in lighting from darkness to bright light can force you to fight at a -1 penalty on attack rolls for 1d4 combat rounds.
3. What strange teeth you have... Pick One. Cute...they remind people of the little pointed teeth of a cat. Unsettling...your mouth is oddly large and filled with more teeth than a man should have, rows in fact, a bit like that of a shark. Monstrous...your mouth is a row of pointed teeth. You gain a bite attack which inflicts 1d3 damage. You cannot use your strength bonus to improve this attack.
4. What strange ears you have... Pick One. Your

ears remind others of a reptile (they are holes), a wolf, a cat, a bear, something monstrous (describe). You gain a base chance of 15% to hear noise when listening at doors. Every level you gain a +05% to this chance. If you gain the ability to listen for noise as a class skill your strange ears add to your class score.

5. What a strange...tail you have? Pick One. Your tail reminds others of a monkey, a snake, lizard, or a demon. Your tail is nimble and whip like. While it can do no real damage in combat you gain an additional limb when the tail is not concealed beneath your clothing or armor. This limb can manipulate small objects of under five pounds. You could use it to pick up a torch or use a key to unlock chains or a door.
6. Changeling. Pick One. By day you are a male and by night you shift into a female version of yourself (or the reverse). By day you appear as a completely normal human but when darkness comes you manifest your true Trollborn features. (roll 1d6 again - twice but this time ignoring this result)

### How often do you gain mutations?

Every time you level you receive a bonus reward from Aglaeca, the Mother of Monsters in the form of another mutation. Aglaeca is a Goddess of Chaos and so these mutations are rolled randomly.

First, the DM rolls to determine when the new mutation will set in. Will it set in suddenly or over a period of hours or days? Next the player rolls to determine what their mutation will be. The result is kept secret by the DM until the mutation is manifested.

### Story Note...

Some mutations are defined as (S) = Subtle and others as (O) = Obvious. A Trollborn begins to hear the siren song of Aglaeca when they have

received three (3) obvious mutations. The Troll-born begins to risk changes in their mental state if they do not begin the trek into the North. Depending on their location this journey to confront Aglaeca may take weeks or months or years. It is up to the DM to develop this piece of the story and how he or she wants it to unfold.

### **The Trigger: Roll 1d10**

1. Immediately upon awakening after leveling.
2. In the middle of the character's next strenuous physical activity.
3. The next time the character is exposed to magic through a spell or potion or other spell effect.
4. The next time the character takes damage.
5. After the character eats their next meal.
6. In the middle of their next social encounter.
7. Within an hour after the actual mutation is rolled. DM's choice.
8. The next time the character puts their hand on a weapon.
9. The next time the moon is full (1d12 days.)
10. Roll Again ignoring this result. When the mutation manifests the character discovers that with an act of will they can cause the mutation to conceal itself. Obvious (O) mutations will be hidden or (S) Subtle until they are activated by the character. The character can activate and hide this particular mutation at will. Obvious mutations still count towards the story.

**Mutations (Roll 1d100)** To you my blessed one. To you my beloved child. I grant you this boon, strong as a bear, teeth like a lion, swift as a shadow. You will be death to all those that stand against you.

01-02 Strong as a Bear (S) Your strength improves by +2 points to a maximum strength of 18.

03-04 Ripper (O) One of your arms and hands

grows longer and much more powerful. You gain an additional +1 bonus to attack and +2 bonus to damage over whatever your base is for strength. If you make a successful grab attack versus an enemy with this hand (Roll attack roll at a -4 penalty) you can inflict 1d6 crushing damage. On a natural roll of a 20 when grabbing a target with this limb the target must make a saving throw or suffer having you rip a limb off. Ripping a limb off a target always causes death. This ripper ability is only effective against small or medium creatures who are monsters or NPC characters.

Roll below for which limb you tear off the target. (1d6) 1. Head 2. Right Arm 3. Left Arm 4. Right Leg 5. Left Leg 6. Torso. You rip them in half.

05-06 Aglaeca's Mark (S) You bear the mark of the Goddess on your face or arms but it cannot be seen except when a detect magic spell is active. To normal eyes the mark is not visible. Creatures of animal intelligence of 2 HD or less will ignore you. You will not be attacked by these lesser beasts and monsters unless you attack them first. Your companions will still be treated normally.

07-08 Earth Born (S) When underground you gain 4 bonus hit points and you heal at twice the normal rate for normal healing.

09-10 Talons (O) One of your hands grows black talons. You can slash with that hand as if you hold a dagger inflicting 1d4 damage.

11-12 Man Eater (S) You do not have any special "need" to eat the flesh of men but you grow to prefer it. Once per day if you eat the flesh of a man equal to a small meal you heal yourself immediately for 1d6+1 hit points.

13-14 Intellect (S) You gain a strange intellect and insight into the world around you. You feel more removed from people than you once did. This can make your emotional reactions seem detached or sometimes somewhat inappropriate. +1 Intelligence to a maximum of 18.

15-16 Tough Hide (O) A close inspection of your

face or skin will reveal this feature. If someone touches your skin they will also immediately notice this difference. Your skin has a quality like that of a hide or lizard. Your AC improves by one, you can continue to wear any armor allowed by your class.

17-18 Fire Proof (S) Your flesh has become resistant to normal forms of flame. Torches, thrown flasks of oil, campfires have no effect on you. Magical flame and fire produced by dragons and other monsters effect your normally.

19-20 Gills (O) You develop a series of three slits on the sides of your neck which open and close when you breathe. This has no effect on you on land but when you immerse yourself in water, even ocean water, you can breathe normally.

21-22 Bone Growth (O) Your body continually grows spurs of bone out of your shoulders, elbows and hips. You can pull these out and use them as improvised weapons. Any time you do this you suffer one hit point of damage. These weapons strike for 1d6 damage. A side benefit of your overly rapid growth of bone and tissue is that you have a natural ability to regenerate one hit point every ten minutes. In an hour you will regenerate 6 hit points. In five hours you will regenerate thirty hit points, etc...

23-24 Tracking Scent (S) Provided you have a sample of the target you can use your nose to track someone like a beast. Your base chance is 50%. You improve by an additional +05% with each additional level. If a target travels into water your chance to track them by scent drops by 10% for every minute they are able to continue to remain in water (traveling along a river or lake shore etc...)

25-26 Swift (S) You enjoy a one point bonus to initiative whenever you are alone. At all times you gain a bonus of ten feet to your movement rate.

27-28 Biter (O) Powerful muscles develop around your shoulders, skull and jaw. You are able to extend your jaw into a wide gap and when you do so

your additional jagged and pointed teeth reveal themselves. You gain a bite attack that inflicts 2d4 damage on a target. You cannot add strength bonuses to this attack.

29-30 Scent (S) You emit a natural pheromone that can influence how others react to you. Despite your other outward mutations you can gain a temporary 1d4 increase to your effective Charisma score for an encounter (to a maximum of 18).

31-32 Quills (O) You grow long, sharp defensive quills out of your shoulders, back and upper arms. You must modify your clothing and armor to allow these quills to move freely or you will inflict damage upon yourself by trying to cover or restrict them. The first four times in any day that an enemy attempts to strike you with a melee weapon or engage you in hand to hand combat they must make a saving throw or take 1d6 damage from your quills.

33-34 Blood Absorption (S) If you strike a target for a critical hit in melee combat and the target is one which could bleed when wounded, you are showered in blood from your strike and your skin absorbs this blood to heal you for 1d6 hit points. Once per day you can push your hands into a pool of blood or a dying body and absorb 2d6 hit points.

35-36 Horns (O) You grow demonic looking horns out of your skull. You gain a bonus melee attack which inflicts 1d6 damage.

37-38 External Digestion (O) You must break down your food outside of your body in order to digest it. To do this you yack up a volume of stomach acid in a blob. This covers your food and breaks it down. The material smells foul. To consume the broken down food you must slurp it up. Once per day you can spit a gob of stomach acid at a foe out to a range of 60'. This counts as an extra attack. Roll to hit normally. The attack inflicts 2d6 acid damage on the target. A critical hit of a natural 20 causes the target to make a saving



throw or lose a permanent point of Charisma.

39-40 Stench (O) Your body excretes a gray film which puts off an unholy stench detectable at a range of 100'. This stench makes it difficult for you to sneak up on others undetected however it acts as a natural repellent to insects both normal and giant, rats both normal and giant, spiders both normal and giant. None of these creatures will attempt to attack or even approach you unless you attack them first. They will treat your companions normally.

41-43 Starry Wisdom (S) You gain a certain strange insight into the way the universe "really" works. Add a point of Wisdom up to a maximum of 18. If you gain this mutation and already have a Wisdom score of 18 you gain the ability once a day to detect and identify magic as the spells on any single enchanted item you hold.

44-46 Negative Material Absorption (S) Once per day, if you grab hold of an undead you can drain it of Negative Material Energy and use this energy to heal yourself. If your attack is successful you inflict 2d6 damage and gain as many hit points for yourself. Cure Light wounds spells no longer heal you but harm you. Cause Wounds spells heal you.

47-49 Commune with Slime (S) Once per day you can enter a semi trance like state and communicate sufficiently with any slime or ooze. The result is that they will ignore you and bypass you but will still treat your companions normally.

50-52 Toad's Leap (O) Your legs become enlarged and bowed. Normal movement is reduced by 10 feet but you can now leap through the air forward a distance of sixty feet or straight upwards as high as forty feet. You can drop forty feet and land on your feet in a crouch without taking falling damage.

53-55 Toad's Tongue (O) Your tongue becomes long, thick and agile like a toad. You can snatch objects or bugs, stirges, kobolds and drag them into your mouth out to a range of sixty feet. The

object gets a saving throw and if successful manages to wriggle free. A failed save means that they are dragged into your powerful jaws and teeth where their bodies are immediately crushed to a pulp as they are eaten.

56-58 Webbed (O) Your hands and feet are webbed. Add twenty feet round or turn to your swimming speed. Gain a +2 reaction bonus from swamp dwellers, lizard men, followers of certain cults.

59-61 Adder's Speed (S) Gain +1 point of Dexterity up to a maximum of 18.

62-64 Swarm Lord (O) Flies, rats, roaches, all manner of filthy creature seems called to you. If you stay in a place longer than a single day and night that place will become an infestation. Stay in a village longer than three days and nights and the locals will begin to show symptoms of disease. Once per day you can summon 1d4 giant rats to fight for you.

65-67 Pack Lord (O) You gain features which are somewhat feral. If you stay in a place longer than a single day and night, that place will begin to be visited and scouted by a pack of wolves. Stay in a village longer than three days and nights and more wolves will wander into the area such that livestock and lone travelers will be attacked. Once per day you can summon 1d3 wolves to fight for you.

68-70 Gigantism (O) You grow in an unnatural manner and all at once in a way that leaves you towering but somewhat twisted in form. You gain 10 feet in movement because of your size and +2 points of strength up to a maximum of 18. If you roll this once you grow to a height of 8 feet. If you roll this twice you grow to a height of 10 feet and so on.

71-73 Ancient Roar (S) This mutation is hidden until used. Once per day you can produce a thundering, monstrous roar which can be heard for miles. Any enemy in your immediate vicinity which is 3HD or less must make an immediate

saving throw or flee in fear for 1d4+1 rounds.

74-76 Pact Against Arrows (S) This mutation can be hidden beneath clothing. It appears as a mark of chaos which includes the symbol of the bow. Any creature so marked is immune to all arrows, even enchanted arrows.

77-79 Pact Against Death Magic (S) This mutation can be hidden beneath clothing. It appears as a mark of chaos and a circle of skulls. A creature so marked is immune from the effects of death spells and death magic.

80-82 Monstrous Shadow (O) Your shadow is a thing with a life of its own. Once per month your shadow may attack as the monster "shadow". At other times your shadow may copy your movements or it may mime what you are really thinking or what it is really thinking. Sometimes your shadow may slip away during the night if you are asleep or unconscious and behave badly.

83-85 Bane Livestock (S) Once per week you can inflict 3d6 damage against any single creature considered normal livestock merely by gazing at it for a full minute. If the livestock dies from this power you gain a bonus 1d6+1 hit points for the rest of that day.

86-88 Bane Priest (S) Once per week you can inflict 3d6 damage in a psionic attack against any single humanoid so long as they are of the cleric or priest class. If the priest dies from this power you gain a bonus 1d6+1 hit points for the rest of that day.

89-91 Bane Paladin (S) If you enter melee combat against a paladin you gain +2 to AC, +2 to attack rolls and +2 points to damage rolls. You immediately trigger the Paladin's detect evil ability any time the Paladin is actively using it within 100 feet.

92-94 Crypt Dweller (S) You do not heal normally from resting in a bed or otherwise. In order to heal over time you must climb into a coffin or burial tomb within a crypt, which is at least ten

feet below the surface of the ground.

When you rest within a tomb in this fashion you recover five hit points with every passing day. You can sleep for up to your level plus 2d6 days and nights in such a crypt without needing to rise for either food or water. Should anyone look in on you, you will appear to be dead, up to the point where they stick a blade into you. Any form of attack will immediately awaken you and you have a good chance of waking up the moment anyone walks into your sanctuary.

95-97 Vision (S) Once per day you can close your eyes and have a chance (base 40% + 05% per level) of getting a vision or sense of what is in a nearby chamber. The description is left to the DM who should be at least a little cryptic. You always have a flat 20% chance of detecting when an ambush or trap is within 100 feet. You will not know the exact nature of the danger only that it is present and the general direction from whence you feel the danger coming.

98-99 Monstrous Ally (S) Once per day you can attempt to befriend any monsters of up to 4 HD. This monster will follow you for an hour and fight on your behalf, generally following your instructions. After an hour it will wander off.

100 Trollish (O) Your skin takes on the appearance and smell of the skin of a troll. You can now regenerate 3 hit points every combat round and if you lose an arm or leg it will regrow in an hour. You take double damage from fire of all types. You cannot regenerate damage taken from fire or acid. You are not an actual troll and so if your head is removed you will not grow a new one—that sort of thing will kill you.

Parts of you left in dark places probably won't grow into anything but that is left to the DM. Such things should grow into something vile and totally monstrous, not under the control of the Trollborn from whence it came



## Monster Spotlight

By Ed Kann

### The Beastmen

Orcs are described in early editions of the game as “ugly human-like creatures who look like a combination of animal and man”. They are described as nocturnal and preferring to dwell in caverns and other underground locations.

Early illustrations of these creatures featured human-like creatures with boar features, complete with pig noses and tusks. I believe that this was just one illustration for a creature intended to represent an entire range of evil hybrid and bestial creatures organized by tribes along racial lines.

Pig faced varieties of these creatures would not be friendly with varieties with more canine or ursine appearances. Opening up this creature to the entire range of possible human and animal hybrids allows for many different tribes, some more terrifying than others.

For this reason I have decided to redefine these creatures as Beastmen rather than the terminology of the Orc borrowed from the LOTR novels.

Beastmen share the following similarities.

All Beastmen are aligned with Chaos and in games where the Good and Evil paradigm is included they can be aligned with Chaotic Neutral or even Chaotic Good factions.

All Beastmen possess dark vision, which allows them to see normally in total darkness out to a distance of 120 feet. Beastmen prefer to dwell in caves and caverns underground and like goblins, they do not like operating in bright sunlight. Beastmen caught above ground in natural sunlight suffer a -2 penalty on all of their rolls, except for damage.

Beastmen move 120' (40') and generally have a morale of 8 although this value may change for certain varieties.

In my campaign Beastmen followed the ancient gods of Chaos when they invaded this world through the captured portals of the elves. Long ago the race of men battled at the side of these creatures although this changed when humans freed themselves from the magical domination of the powers of Chaos.

In your campaign, Beastmen might be the creation of one of the gods of Chaos. They might have been the creation of some insane cabal of magic-users who were attempting to fill the ranks of their evil armies with different varieties of hybrid human thralls. What follows are some examples of different possible tribes of these creatures to introduce some interesting variety

to your campaign.

### **Pig Faced Beastmen**

AC 6 (14)

Hit Dice: 1

Attacks: 1

Damage: By Weapon or by claws or tusks for 1d3 damage.

Alignment: Chaos (Evil)

No. Appearing:

Hunting Party 1d6

Scouting Party 2d6

Raiding Party 4d6

War Band 10+4d6

Small Camp 15+6d6

Total Tribe Size: 40 to 200

Experience 25

### **Dog Faced Beastmen**

AC 5 (15)

Hit Dice: 2

Attacks: 1

Damage: By Weapon or by bite for 1d3.

Alignment: Chaos (Neutral)

No. Appearing

Hunting Party 2d6

Raiding Party 5d6

War Band 10+5d6

Total Tribe Size: 50 to 120

Experience 50

### **Fox Faced Beastmen**

AC 6 (14)

Hit Dice: 1

Attacks: 2

Damage: By bite and claw. 1d3.

Alignment: Chaos (Neutral)

No. Appearing

Often Solitary

Hunting Party 1d6

Raiding Party 2d6

War Band 10+2d6

Total Tribe Size: 50 to 120

Fox Faced Beastmen have an excellent skill in

moving silently and hiding in shadows or, depending on your OSR rules set of choice stealth / sneak. As a default, Fox Faced Beastmen are only surprised on a 1. Other characters and creatures attempting to detect them prior to combat suffer a -4 penalty on all attempts.

A Foxed Faced Beastman can construct a simple trap given an hour of uninterrupted work. This trap acts as a snare or spring trap, usually concealed by natural covering. The trap can inflict 1d6 damage against a target that wanders into it.

A camp of Fox Faced Beastmen will often be surrounded by at least a simple encirclement of traps but these traps can also be set up in complex layers.

Fox Faced Beastmen are especially hostile to Pig Faced and Dog Faced Beastmen.

Experience 50

### **Bear Faced Beastmen**

AC 4 (16)

Hit Dice: 3

Attacks: By Weapon with +2 bonus to attack and damage based upon strength or bite for 1d4+2.

Alignment: Chaos (Good)

No. Appearing

Solitary

Scouting / Gathering Party 1d6+1

War Band 10+3d6

Total Tribe Size: 50 to 100

Bear Faced Beastmen are primarily vegetarians and more of a peaceful, reclusive gathering society than anything else. They avoid other tribes of Beastmen but will viciously defend themselves if provoked. Bear Faced Beastmen are suspicious of humans, dwarves and small folk. The only human they are likely to engage with on any level is a Druid. They may also speak with Elves and welcome them into their community.

## Advanced Character Class - The Brigand

By Edward Kann

Thundering South down the water starved roads of the Great Scimitar desert or crossing the sea passage of Sheerako's kiss come the Rakkian Brigands.

White it is true that bandits and pirates can be found in every realm, only the desperate, thrice cursed smile of the hoary old city of Tahboora has the venom necessary to spittle forth this bloody reaver from behind its sand parched lips.

Referee's Note: I created the Rakkian Brigand character class specifically for a campaign with only two or three players. One player handles the Brigand, who controls their band of NPC bandits while the other players join as co-conspirators of the band, perhaps serving as a heretic magic-user or cult priest.

**Primary Attribute:** Strength and Charisma 13+

**Hit Dice:** 4 hit points plus 1d6 at first level. 1d6 at each additional level.

**Maximum Constitution bonus to HP:** +2

**Armor / Shield Permitted:** Light or Medium Armor, Buckler and Small Shields.

**Weapons Permitted:** Any single handed weapon.

**Race:** Human, Half-Orc, Half-Elf, Halfling or Gnome.

### About Brigands...

Brigands by their very nature must be of either Neutral or Chaotic alignment and are rarely good. It may be possible in far removed lands that there are greenwood dwelling men who rob from the rich and give to the poor but within the taverns of this world, such tales are pure fantasy.

Brigands are self serving raiders who seek to obtain personal fortune and fame through their

bold exploits. They are leaders of less savory individuals, criminals all, with specific goals for advancing their career and ultimately securing for themselves wealth, territory and influence.

Few Brigands are simply blood soaked murderers although this is certainly possible depending upon their temperament and circumstance.

### The Code and Mechanic

"The strongest and fiercest among us shall rule over us."

Any bandit which manages to slay their master or the strongest bandit to survive their master to live and rob another day becomes the new master of the group.

In a game with only two or three players the Brigand's band of bandits or the Viking Chieftains band of berserkers (you can modify this concept however you like) becomes central to the campaign. For this reason you might allow the Brigand player to take over one of his surviving bandits as his new Brigand character to allow the band to continue rather than starting over.

In practical terms, should the Brigand PC be slain in battle the player may choose their strongest surviving bandit follower and advance them into the open position left vacant by the dead Brigand, thus replacing their dead PC with a new one immediately. The old bandit NPC retains their previous items but immediately advances to the level and abilities of the now deceased leader of the group. The only thing left for the player to do is to roll up the new Brigand's stats using the roll 4d6 and take the highest three, arranging the results as desired character creation option.

A Brigand is more of a highwayman or

corsair leader than a highly trained cutpurse of the city.

### **Brigand Class Abilities**

Brigands may wear light or medium types of armor. They may use any single handed melee weapon until they arrive at 8th level, after which point all weapon types unlock for them. Most Brigands carry a buckler or small shield.

Brigands may use the short bow, light crossbow, sling and all varieties of thrown weapon.

Brigands typically use the Cleric attack tables as they advance in level. They may use most forms of magical weapons, armor and potions and they may use protection varieties of magic scrolls.

### **Thief Skills**

A Brigand is more of a burly thug than a highly trained rogue. At first level the Brigand may pick a single Thief skill to advance in. They start this skill at a 30% chance of success. At each level of advancement after first level they add +05% to this base chance of success.

At level three the Brigand may choose a second Thief skill to advance in. Again they start in this new skill at a base 30% chance of success. At each level of advancement afterwards they add +05% to their chance to use the skill successfully.

At level five the Brigand may choose their third and final Thief skill to advance in. They start at a base 30% chance of success and gain +05% at each level of additional advancement.

### **Ambush**

At third level the Brigand gains the special ability to conduct an ambush. This ability only applied to the Brigand and his npc bandit follow-

ers. It takes ten minutes for the Brigand to organize his bandits into an ambush. The Brigand and bandits must have available cover and / or concealment available for hiding to conduct the ambush.

During the first round of combat the Brigand and his bandits, having set-up their ambush gain one free round of surprise unless the DM determines that the ambush was detected.

During the *first* round of combat (and only the first round of combat), the Brigand gains a +1d6 bonus to damage with whatever weapon, either melee or ranged they are wielding.

Following the first round of combat additional Brigands who have not yet revealed themselves to the enemy or have not broken cover may have one of their number gain a +1d6 bonus to damage.

### **Example:**

Hathor the Brigand sets up an ambush with his four bandit followers. He designates that himself and one of his bandits along with his two player character friends will break cover and take the initial assault during the automatic surprise round.

Hathor designates two of his remaining bandits to remain concealed during the first round of combat.

During the first round of combat, Hathor himself gains a +1d6 bonus to his combat damage. His follower bandit assisting him in the first round and his player character companions gain no special bonus from this ability.

During the second round of combat, Hathor whistles, signaling one of his two hiding bandits to rise up and fire their crossbow. That bandit then gains a +1d6 bonus to damage for that combat round only. If the other bandit breaks

cover at the same time they do not receive the damage bonus as well. Only one new bandit, fresh from concealment may gain the bonus to damage per combat round. For this reason Hathor leaves his last bandit in cover until the third combat round.

At the start of the third combat round Hathor whistles again and his last bandit steps out from behind cover, aiming his short bow at the last surviving guard. Because he just broke cover that bandit gains a +1d6 bonus to damage for that combat round only and only for his first attack. The +1d6 damage bonus is like a temporary and fluid sneak attack bonus tied directly to the Brigand's skill with ambushing foes.

**Brigand Advancement Table**

Level	Experience	Hit Dice	Maximum Bandit Followers	Saving Throw
1	0	4 hp +1d6	3	16
2	2000	+1d6	4	15
3	4000	+1d6	5	14
4	8000	+1d6	6	13
5	13,000	+1d6	7	12
6	20,000	+1d6	8	11
7	40,000	+1d6	8	10
8	60,000	+1d6	9	10
9	90,000	+1d6	9	09
10	130,000	+1 hit point	10	09
11	200,000	+1 hit point	11	08
12	400,000	+1 hit point	12	08

**Bandit Followers**

At 1st level the Brigand begins with a base of zero bandit followers BUT gains bonus bandit followers based upon their Charisma score.

A Brigand with a Charisma score of 14 - 15 gains one bonus bandit follower. A Brigand with a Charisma score of 16-17 gains two bonus bandit followers and a Brigand with a Charisma score of 18 or higher gains three bonus bandit followers.

Thus a first level Brigand would begin with zero plus two bandit followers, if they had a Charisma score of 16.

Brigands do not gain hirelings or other followers although they may hire an NPC specialist to perform a special task for them.

## Recruiting Bandits

A first level Brigand automatically begins with any bandits indicated by having a higher than average Charisma score. Go straight to the “build a bandit” table at the end of this article and roll up each bandit individually.

After that, any time the Brigand levels up and can acquire new bandits or when current followers die, new followers must be recruited. Recruiting must happen in a tavern of *no higher* than average quality. An average quality Inn subtracts one from the roll of available seedy persons to recruit from at that location. A tavern of low quality suffers no penalty to the available seedy persons die roll. A tavern of poor quality provides a +1 bonus and the poorest possible quality tavern, a tavern which is rated as a dangerous dump, adds a wonderful +2 bonus when rolling for the number of seedy individuals available for recruitment.

## Seedy Characters

The base roll for the number of seedy individuals available for recruitment as a bandit in a tavern is 1d4. These individuals are automatically recognized by the Brigand and will approach the character to discuss possibly joining the Brigand’s group, so long as the Brigand loiters in the tavern for at least one hour and spends 5 gold pieces per individual on bribes, drinks and food.

## Names

Below is a simple chart of quick and easy names for seedy persons wanting to become bandits. I have found that part of the fun is naming, rolling up and keeping track of these bandits individually, taking note of their accomplishments and any special rewards or gear given to them.

This all makes things much more entertaining when the inevitable happens and the poor bandit is slain and needs replacement by

the Brigand.

## Seedy Person Name Table (Roll 3d12)

3	Muckbur Morgan
4	Tross Tempeheart
5	Grimol Gallowsmile
6	Fork Fishguts
7	Bottle the Unseen
8	Tricky Jack
9	Orbin Crackjaw
10	Finn Nosebreaker
11	Mack the Blade
12	Spinner Tossabout
13	Rusty Broketail
14	Ugly Jane
15	Wheezer
16	Tiny Squadbreaker
17	Stinky Pierre
18	Cudgel Crackbone
19	Redeye McGee
20	Ox Bigfeet
21	Sparkle Rustblade
22	Smoke Slickhands
23	Chatterbox Sally
24	Strangling Joe the Hermit

## Bandit Traits

Bandits are treated as monsters under the control of the Brigand. They have one hit die and attack as a single HD monster.

Bandits under the control of the Brigand have the benefit that they gain the AC of whatever armor and shield the Brigand is able to supply them with. They also inflict damage based upon the weapons assigned to them by the Brigand.

Each time the Brigand advances in level they provide any Bandits in their service a +1 bonus to hit points. Thus a 5th level Brigand recruiting seedy bandits in a tavern will recruit individuals who roll 1d8+4 hit points during creation. Bandits always attack as one HD monsters but they might gain bonuses to hit and damage



based upon their special traits and any magical gear granted to them by their Brigand leader over the course of their career.

### Bandit Traits

Use the tables below to generate the individual traits and personalities of each bandit. These tables also provide the starting equipment in the possession of the bandit at the time of their recruitment. Brigands may decide to improve upon this equipment to make their overall force more effective in combat and durable.

### Roll 3d6

- 3 Stutters
- 4 Bulging Eyes
- 5 Splotchy unhealthy looking skin
- 6 Greasy matted hair, stinks
- 7 Thin and Wiry
- 8 Muscle Bound +1 to melee attack and damage.
- 9 Quick -1 to AC and +1 to hit with ranged.
- 10 Fat -10 feet to movement. Must consume rations at twice the normal rate.
- 11 Crooked nose and facial scars
- 12 Baby Face - Can pull off looking like an innocent commoner when necessary.
- 13 Eye patch. -1 to attack rolls with ranged.
- 14 Solid, in good shape. 1 point bonus to saving throws. +1 bonus to hit points.
- 15 Shifty eyes, has an untrustworthy air about him.
- 16 Female. Hard Case. +1 bonus to attack rolls with melee and damage. +1 bonus to hit points.
- 17 Female. Somewhat attractive. Might be useful when luring male guards into an ambush.
- 18 Humanoid - Roll on Humanoid Table

### Humanoid Table Roll 2d6

- 2 Half-Orc or Savage add +1 melee attack and damage.
- 3 Half-Elf add -1 to AC and +1 to ranged attack.
- 4 Halfling add -2 to AC and +1 to ranged attack.
- 5 Dwarf add +1 to hp and 2 point bonus to saves.

Gnome subtract 1 from hp but can cast a single, first level magic-user spell.

7 Elf either -1 to AC and +1 ranged attack or can cast a single, first level magic-user spell per day.

8 Defrocked Priest - Can cast cure light wounds as a first level cleric once per day.

9 Trollborn curse - Can strike for 1d6 damage using natural talons as a melee attack or bite for 1d6 damage.

10 Wandering Pict - Can go berserk once per day. +2 to attack and damage rolls. -2 to AC. Gains a bonus +1d6 to hit points at character creation. Cannibalistic and head hunting habits.

11 Half Ogre - Gains +1d8 hit points during creation. +2 to attack and +3 damage in melee. Able to open doors on a 1-3 on 1d6. 7'6" tall. Weight 450 lbs. Can carry an extra 200 pounds without being encumbered. Can pick up basketball sized boulders and throw them like thrown rocks for 1d6 damage.

12 Heretic Magic-User. Roll 1d3 for level. Cannot advance as a class. Usual 1d8 for hit points and attacks as a 1 HD monster, just add in any available magic-user spells. Wanted heretics are hunted by the Ride Watch of the Pentagarchy and may bring this added complication against the Brigand and his bandits as long as the heretic remains with the group.

### Starting Gear (Roll 2d6)

- 2 Bedroll, Peasant Clothing, Knife
- 3 Bedroll, Ragged Clothing, Worn Cloak, Club
- 4 Bedroll, Common Clothing, Worn Cloak, Short Sword and Knife
- 5 Ragged Clothing, Hand Axe, Shield
- 6 Hides, Threadbare Cloak, Spear and Knife
- 7 Padded Armor, Light Crossbow and 12 bolts, Knife
- 8 Hides, Wrist shackle worn like a bracelet, War Hammer, Sling and 12 bullets
- 9 Padded Armor, Short Sword, Shield and Helm
- 10 Leather Armor, Short Bow, Quiver with 12 arrows and hand axe

- 11 Leather Armor, Spear and Short Sword
- 12 Leather Armor, Long Bow, 12 Arrows, Mace

### **DMing the Brigand Campaign**

These optional ideas will make running a Brigand player character in your campaign more enjoyable as the referee. Implement them in part or in full or alter as you see fit.

#### **Loot**

Bandits expect to be paid for the risks they undertake on the behalf of the Brigand which they follow.

Just to maintain an average morale among his followers the Brigand should be willing to pay out at least ten gold to every bandit who follows him, every week in game.

A Brigand can boost his followers up to a high morale if he pays at least twenty gold per week to each bandit and pays this amount as an advance payment at the beginning of each week of game play rather than at the end.

Any time a bandit dies the morale of the entire band drops by one level. A band with a high morale drops to average. A band with an average morale drops to poor.

If more than one bandit dies in the same combat encounter they are all counted as if only one bandit expired. Several losses in an isolated combat which goes poorly for the bandits is therefore less damaging to the mood of the survivors as is a slow but continued attrition of their fellows.

The Brigand can bank a buffer against an initial morale loss to the band by granting at least half of the members of the band gifts in armor, shields, weapons or horses. These practical items cannot replace gold for establishing baseline morale for the group.

If things are going poorly in a combat for the band of bandits they may decide to make a run for it despite the commands of their leader. The likelihood that this will happen is based on their current morale.

If the morale of the bandits in the band ever drops to the level of "mutinous" they may attempt to leave the band OR they may attempt to kill their Brigand leader. If the bandits turn on their Brigand leader this combat is run with the player character running their Brigand plus any likely single or couple of bandits the DM decides remain loyal to the bitter end. All of the remaining bandits are run as monsters by the DM.

If the Brigand prevails they may attempt to rebuild a new band. If the Brigand is slain, in this case, the entire band disbands and no surviving bandit can be nominated to take the place of the deceased Brigand by the player character.

#### **Bounty Killers**

Starting at third level the Brigand automatically attracts the attention of local law enforcement. It is just assumed that give the nature of the character's chosen career that off camera behaviors have earned the character a reputation as a criminal worth getting rid of.

The referee may create a party of NPC characters at least one or two levels lower than the Brigand character who are seeking the Brigand for the reward on his or her head. Usually this means they are going after a dead or alive sort of award.

The bounty killers might include a Fighter, Magic-User, Cleric and Rogue of the appropriate level, a classic adventuring party of NPC characters sent to track down and eliminate the Brigand.

The Bounty Killers start with a 01% chance of tracking down the Brigand which is rolled at the start of each new day. This chance increases by +01% every proceeding day. The chance increases by +02% each day that the Bounty Killer spends in a settlement, village or town with a population greater than fifty people.

If the Brigand manages to defeat the Bounty Killers, roll up a new group before the start of the next scheduled game session and start the new group over at the base 01% chance

for tracking down the Brigand.

The referee may decide to accumulate a bonus for the Bounty Killers if the Brigand player is especially active in one particular area for an extended period of time. For example, should the Brigand establish a secret lair in a hidden canyon roughly twenty miles away from a town and near a couple of useful roads for conducting raids, and continues to operate in that area for a month, the referee may grant the NPC Bounty Killers a +02% bonus per week to their base chance of success.

Even if the Brigand dispatches the first group of Bounty Killers, if he stays in the same area and continues raiding, the new group of Bounty Killers begins with a  $01\% + 08\% = 09\%$  chance of tracking his location down the very first day they are in operation.

This means that the smart Brigand will find a good location to use as a base but will then scout out a new location, well away from the old one to move to when things get too dangerous.

### The Lair

The Brigand can invest a certain amount of his groups gold into goods, decorations and amenities to make the camp or hidden grotto he and his band returns to each day more inviting.

The quality of the lair requires a weekly expenditure of coin to maintain it which is completely at the discretion of the Brigand character.

A squalid lair might impart a negative to the morale of the band while a rich lair with plenty of creature comforts awaiting the band can grant the group a bonus.

### Lair Table

Bandits living in a squalid camp environment suffer a -1 level drop in their base morale until the situation is resolved. Bandits living in a poor to fair camp environment have no morale penalty but the referee may have them argue and be less cooperative until the lot changes.

Bandits living in a good encampment have a one point bonus to their base morale. In addition bandits resting in a good encampment recover two hit points per night of rest rather than one.

Bandits living like kings in an excellent camp receive a one point bonus to their base morale. In addition they recover three hit points per night of rest rather than one. If the Brigand can maintain this quality for several weeks at a time the referee may decide to allow the effect to linger for a week, even if things change temporarily as they think very well of the leadership skills of their Brigand commander.

Value	Morale	Mood Description
Mutinous	4	It doesn't get worse than this. You must turn this around within 48 hours or face being attacked by your own men. Some may slip away when you aren't watching and desert.
Poor	6	Bandits won't take obvious risks. Grumbling. Occasional fist fights break out.
Average	8	Not horrible, not great either. The bandits will do their jobs but might quickly turn on you if things go badly.
Good	9	Your band considers you an acceptable leader. They may take some risks for you.
Excellent	10	Your band believes in you. This is as good as it gets, they are bandits after all. If a combat goes badly they still might run but what do you expect?

Quality	Week Cost	Description
Squalid	Zero	Little more than blankets and a campfire for
Poor	10 gp	The camp at least has food and a little liq-
Fair	25 gp	Some tents, better food and drink, minor
Good	50 gp	Nice surroundings, plentiful food and drink,
Excellent	100 gp	Rich surroundings, bountiful food and

## Rolling Morale

When faced with a combat which is going badly against them, the bandits will make a morale check as a unit. This morale check must be performed when the band suffers 50% casualties and again every combat round the band suffers another casualty after that.

In addition if the Brigand falls unconscious, the band must make a morale check at the end of that combat round.

To conduct the morale check roll 2d6 and compare this value to the listed value on the morale chart above. If the result is equal to or less than the listed number, the band succeeds at their morale check and may continue to fight under the control of the Brigand player.

If the band fails its morale check, all of the surviving bandits immediately flee, taking the fastest and safest path available to them away from the danger.

If the referee determines that it is obvious that there is no safe path to retreat available to the bandits, they may attempt to surrender, or if surrender is more likely to result in their death instead of capture, the referee may decide that they continue to fight until victory is achieved or until the bitter end.



## Mercenary Captain and Viking Variations

You can easily take what I have created here for the Brigand character class and adopt it into a Mercenary Captain or Viking Chieftain variation.

Each variation will provide a different flavor to the adventures as they unfold and these might fit the style of campaign you want to build more effectively.

I have DM'd the Brigand character class extensively in my home campaign both for some adult players and for my teenage boys. In both instances we only had two or three players available for our regular gatherings. This character class was specifically written to allow a small group of players to enjoy a somewhat larger scope feeling for the campaign and something which lends itself well to overland or world adventuring, rather than the more traditional dungeon crawling games.

Part of the fun of these games was putting a little work into the descriptions, names and personas of the individual bandits and making some of them stand out. Should the bandits meet their end, the players had a good deal of fun putting up a grave for their fellow bandit with some last words. Plotting the means to make a return trip into a small town to recruit some replacement bandits while trying to avoid the Bounty Killers was also great fun!

Because each individual bandit has its own weekly upkeep cost, along with the quality of the band's encampment, this campaign has some fun built in mechanics which keep the coffers of the adventurers slowly emptying. This is a good motivator to inspire the Brigand and his player character co-conspirators to plot their next ambush or expedition into adventure.

### Thank you!

I hope you enjoyed reading through the pages of this first edition of BASIC and Advanced magazine! If you have similar house rules, monsters or magical items which you would like to get into print, kindly send me an email to [fencerguysmith@gmail.com](mailto:fencerguysmith@gmail.com). Pitch your basic idea and if it works with the next issue I will be happy to try and work something out. Best Regards! Ed.

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