

CARCASS CRAWLER

The official Old-School Essentials zine

Issue #6



Writing: Chance Dudinack, Brad Kerr, Gavin Norman. **Editing, layout:** Gavin Norman. **Art direction:** Gavin Norman. **Cover art:** Jacob Fleming. **Interior art:** Chris Huth, Kennon James, Peter Pagano. **Cartography:** Glynn Seal. **The Tavern of Elemental Evil playtesters:** Mark D Faulkner, Dalton (aka CthulhuCake), Dralkin, David, Dr Thunderman, Larry Adams, Steven, Mike Williams, Ray Smith, Loki, Andrew Tomkin, Bill Fugler, Edi, Joseph Delgado, Gio, Hugo, Yandere, Joel, Nicolas, Christina, Jacob, Charles, Abraham, Anna, Chris, Mark Joseph E, Daniel, Vivian, Andrew Clark, Evan McBlain, Beck McBlain, Gwen McBlain, Sarah Higgins, Arun Velamari, Jared, Otis, Nate, Jaime Brad Kerr, Dylan Camus, Directsun, Michael Sean Cummins, Bret Stenger, Tyler Welch, Travis Peterson.

Text, design, and art © Necrotic Gnome 2025. Dimitri © Fontalicious – Derivative Versions © Font Bros. – www.fontbros.com. Economica © TipoType – Derivative Versions © Font Bros. – www.fontbros.com. Published by Exalted Funeral Press, 1740 E. Fairview Ave #1052, Meridian, ID, 83642, United States, www.exaltedfuneral.com.

Old-School Essentials is a trademark of Necrotic Gnome. This work includes material taken from the System Reference Document 5.1 ("SRD 5.1") by Wizards of the Coast LLC and available at <https://dnd.wizards.com/resources/systems-reference-document>. The SRD 5.1 is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>.



NECROTIC
GNOME



EXALTED
FUNERAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3	Inns and Taverns	16
Welcome	3	Pike's	16
In This Issue	3	The Morning Star	17
New Character Classes	4	The Goddess of Mercy	18
Dwarf Brewmaster	4	The Resounding Clang	19
Dwarf Runesmith	6	Tavern Games	20
Runes of Power	8	Contests	20
Deities and Cults	10	Axe-Jack	20
Assedh	10	Hectare Poker	21
Spells of Assedh	11	Warg Bite	21
Barg	12	Dungeon Flora	22
Spells of Barg	13	Dungeon Mounts	24
Ghredga	14	Elemental Monsters	26
Spells of Ghredga	15	The Tavern of Elemental Evil	30





INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

Welcome to issue 6 of *Carcass Crawler*—the official *Old-School Essentials* zine.

IN THIS ISSUE

Character Classes

Introduce these new classes as NPCs for player characters to encounter or add them to the roster of character types players can choose from.

Dwarf brewmaster: A demihuman class with the ability to brew potent dwarf ales with special qualities.

Dwarf runemith: A demihuman class focused on forge-craft and the secret arts of rune magic.

Deities and Cults

Three example deities favoured by dwarf adventurers—one Lawful, one Neutral, and one Chaotic. Each deity is described along with details of their cults and the spells and tenets of clerical spell casters in their service.

Inns and Taverns

Four example establishments to drop into any setting, each detailed with price lists, proprietors, and possible happenings.

Tavern Games

Simple rules for three common tavern games, along with guidelines for contests of strength, wits, and more.

Dungeon Flora

Twenty weird plants and fungi that thrive in the Mythic Underworld.

Dungeon Mounts

Four subterranean creatures that can be captured in dungeons and trained as specialised underground mounts.

Elemental Monsters

Eight new monsters themed around the elemental planes.

The Tavern of Elemental Evil

A short adventure set beneath a tavern, in the long-forgotten workshop of an order of runemiths, now overrun by wayward elementals.

NEW CHARACTER CLASSES

By CHANCE DUDINACK AND GAVIN NORMAN

DWARF BREWMASTER

By Chance Dudinack

Demihuman Class

Ability minimums: CON 9

Prime requisite: CON and STR

Hit Die type: 1d8

Combat aptitude: Martial

Maximum level: 10

Armour: Leather, chain mail, shields

Weapons: Battle axe, dagger, hand axe, mace, short sword, war hammer

Languages: Alignment, Common, Dwarvish, Gnomish, Goblin, Kobold

Brewmasters are dwarves who dedicate their lives to the craft of brewing alcohol. In combat, they are unpredictable brawlers who fight with drunken fury. Dwarf brewmasters are driven to adventure in search of rare ingredients, secret recipes, and ever-stronger drinks.

Prime requisites: A dwarf brewmaster with at least 13 in one prime requisite gains a 5% bonus to experience. If both STR and CON are 16 or higher, the dwarf brewmaster gets a +10% bonus.

Brewing

Working with sufficient brewing equipment, a dwarf brewmaster can brew potent dwarf ales with special properties.

Chance of failure: 25% minus the character's level (minimum 15%).

Time and cost: See table (cost listed per dose, 1 pint).

Materials: At the referee's discretion, creating specialty brews may require rare or expensive ingredients that the character must obtain by adventuring.

Specialty Brews Time and Cost

Ale	Time	Cost
Blood of the Mountain	2 weeks	500gp
Blue Salamander	1 month	1,000gp
Dragonfire	2 months	1,000gp
Liquid Courage	3 weeks	500gp
Strongarm Brew	1 month	1,500gp

Brewery Construction Costs

See **Strongholds** in OSE for full details on building.

Standard brewery (any level): 3,000gp.

Alchemical brewery (from 9th level): 20,000gp.

Specialty Brew Effects

Duration: Brews with non-instantaneous effects have a duration of 1d6 turns + 1 per level of the brewmaster.

Blood of the Mountain: Dark, earthy stout. Drinking it restores 1d3 hit points +1 per level of the brewmaster.

Blue Newt: Minty stout that sheds frosty mist. The drinker is resistant to heat (as *resist fire*). Can be poured onto the ground to create a slippery sheet of ice in a 5' diameter area. Creatures who walk onto the ice must **save versus paralysis** or fall to the ground.

Dragonfire: Deep red ale that leaves fire in the belly. Drinkers are resistant to cold (as *resist cold*). Can be burned like oil.

Dwarf Brewmaster Level Progression

Level	XP	HD	THACO	Saving Throws				
				D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
2	2,500	2	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
3	5,000	3	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
4	10,000	4	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
5	18,500	5	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
6	37,000	6	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
7	85,000	7	14 [+5]	4	5	6	7	8
8	140,000	8	14 [+5]	4	5	6	7	8
9	270,000	9	14 [+5]	4	5	6	7	8
10	400,000	9+3*	12 [+7]	2	3	4	4	6

THACO: Attack matrix row to use.
(Ascending AC attack bonus in [].)

*: Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

Liquid Courage: Hearty, bitter-sweet, amber ale. Drinking it removes fear. +2 to saves versus magical fear.

Strongarm Brew: Buttery, golden lager. The drinker gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls, saving throws, and morale.

Drunken Fighting

When drunk (referee's judgement), a dwarf brewmaster gains 1d4 bonus hit points and a +1 bonus to melee damage rolls. This increases to 2d4 and +2 at 4th level and to 3d4 and +3 at 8th level.

Penalties: While drunk, a brewmaster suffers a -1 penalty to attack rolls and saves.

Bonus hit points: These can increase the character's hp total above the normal maximum. Damage is subtracted first from the bonus hit points. Any remaining bonus hit points are lost once sober.

Duration: A brewmaster sobers up and loses these effects after 6 turns.

Infravision

Dwarf brewmasters have infravision to 60' (see *Darkness* in OSE).

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands;
P: Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks;
S: Spells / rods / staves.



Ingested Poison Resistance

Dwarf brewmasters gain a +2 bonus to saving throws against ingested poisons.

Listening at Doors

Dwarf brewmasters have a 2-in-6 chance of hearing noises (see *Dungeon Adventuring* in OSE).

After Reaching 9th Level

A dwarf brewmaster may construct a special alchemical brewery at the heart of a stronghold. This allows the character to research new specialty brew recipes, using the guidelines for spell research (see *Magical Research* in OSE).

When the alchemical brewery is complete, 1d6 1st level brewmasters arrive to train under the character.

DWARF RUNESMITH

By Chance Dudinack and Gavin Norman

Demihuman Class

Ability minimums: CON 9, INT 9

Prime requisite: INT and STR

Hit Die type: 1d8

Combat aptitude: Semi-martial

Maximum level: 10

Armour: Any, including shields

Weapons: Small or normal-sized

Languages: Alignment, Common, Dwarfish, Gnomish, Goblin, Kobold

While dwarves typically have no skill as magic-users, the wondrous magical armaments of their smiths are legendary. Masters of an ancient secret tradition, dwarf runesmiths wield magic by binding it into runes of power.

Prime requisites: A dwarf runesmith with at least 13 STR and INT gains a 5% bonus to experience. A dwarf runesmith with a STR of at least 16 and an INT of at least 13 receives a +10% XP bonus.

Weapons: Dwarves' stature means they can only use small or normal-sized weapons. They cannot use longbows or two-handed swords.

Forge-Craft

Working in a suitable forge, a dwarf runesmith can craft battle axes, war hammers, shields, and mail of exquisite quality. The items that can be created depend on the character's level:

- ▶ **1st level:** Normal armour and weapons at half the standard sale price. A weapon or shield takes 1 week, chain mail 2 weeks, and plate mail 4 weeks.
- ▶ **5th level:** +1 magic armour / weapons.
- ▶ **8th level:** +2 magic armour / weapons.
- ▶ **10th level:** +3 magic armour / weapons. Requires a runic forge (see below).



Magic Armaments

Chance of failure: 25% minus the character's level (minimum 15%).

Time and cost: See table.

Materials: Creating magic armaments often (at the referee's discretion) requires rare materials such as special metals, expensive gems, or the body parts of monsters. Often, adventures will be required just to acquire these materials.

Magic Armaments Time and Cost

Item	Time	Cost Per Plus
Chain mail	4 months	8,000gp
Plate mail	6 months	10,000gp
Shield	1 month	2,000gp
Battle axe	5 weeks	10,000gp
War hammer	3 weeks	6,000gp

Forge Construction Costs

See *Strongholds* in OSE for full details on building.

Standard forge (any level): 3,000gp.

Runic forge (from 9th level): 25,000gp.

Infravision

Dwarf runesmiths have infravision to 60' (see *Darkness* in OSE).

Listening at Doors

Dwarf runesmiths have a 2-in-6 chance of hearing noises (see *Dungeon Adventuring* in OSE).

Dwarf Runesmith Level Progression

Level	XP	HD	THACO	Saving Throws				
				D	W	P	B	S
1	0	1	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
2	2,800	2	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
3	5,600	3	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
4	11,200	4	19 [0]	8	9	10	13	12
5	23,000	5	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
6	46,000	6	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
7	100,000	7	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
8	200,000	8	17 [+2]	6	7	8	10	10
9	300,000	9	14 [+5]	4	5	6	7	8
10	400,000	9+3*	14 [+5]	4	5	6	7	8

THACO: Attack matrix row to use.
(Ascending AC attack bonus in [].)

*: Modifiers from CON no longer apply.

D: Death / poison; **W:** Wands;

P: Paralysis / petrify; **B:** Breath attacks;

S: Spells / rods / staves.

Rune Magic

Dwarf runesmiths learn to craft runes of power—secret, carved symbols imbued with magic. At 1st level, a runesmith only has knowledge of a single rune of power, selected by the referee (who may allow the player to choose). The runes of power are described on *p8*.

Learning new runes: Upon gaining an experience level, a runesmith can learn a single new rune through training (1 week with a mentor) or magical research.

Carving runes: A runesmith must perform a special ritual to carve a rune into an object and imbue it with magic. Once carved, the rune glows with magical energy. When its power is expended, the rune dims, becoming a mere carved pattern.

Restrictions: Carving runes requires a simple tool, such as a dagger. An object can only hold 1 active rune at a time, and runes cannot be carved onto magic items.

Time: Carving a rune of power takes 1 turn. If the runesmith is interrupted at any point during the carving ritual, the magic is lost and they must begin again.

Maximum number of runes: Laws of deep magic govern the runes. A runesmith can carve each rune they know but once per day and can only have active runes equal to their level at a time. If a runesmith carves runes beyond their limit, their other runes lose their power, starting with the first carved.

Magical research: A dwarf runesmith of any level can spend time and money on magical research. This allows them to learn new runes (2 weeks, 1,000gp) and to research other magical effects. Researched effects must be within the scope of the runesmith class, as judged by the referee. See *Magical Research* in *OSE*.

After Reaching 9th Level

A dwarf runesmith may construct a special runic forge at the heart of a stronghold. Some magic items can only be created in this forge: +3 armaments, *dwarven throwers* (24,000gp), and other items with unique powers.

When the forge is complete, 1d6 1st level runesmiths will arrive to apprentice under the character.

RUNES OF POWER

By Chance Dudinack

Talismans: Roughly fist-sized pieces of stone, wood, or bone onto which runes can be carved. Whoever keeps the talisman on their person is affected by the rune's magic.

Rune of Alarm

Medium: Talisman

Duration: 1 hour per level



If any creature aside from those declared when the rune is carved comes within 20' of this rune, it emits a loud ringing sound audible up to 240' away.

Rune of Ale

Medium: Drinking vessel

Duration: 1 hour per level, until used



This rune is carved onto the rim of a goblet, horn, bowl or other liquid-bearing vessel. If a poisoned, rotten, or contaminated liquid is placed into the vessel, it evaporates into black smoke.

Rune of Finding

Medium: Melee weapon

Duration: 6 turns



The weapon inscribed with this rune is caused to glow when a certain type of creature comes within 60' + 10' per level of the runesmith. It has two usages (chosen when carved):

1. **Specific type:** The rune responds to the presence of a specific type of creature (e.g. spiders, dragons, magic-users, undead).
2. **Individual:** The rune responds to the presence of a specific individual, either named or described (e.g. "the red dragon who lives in the ruined castle").

Rune of Fire

Medium: Weapon

Duration: 2 turns



This rune enchants a weapon with flame. It has two usages (chosen when carved):

1. **Flaming weapon:** Carved onto a melee weapon, the wielder's strikes are imbued with fire. The weapon gains a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls and is able to harm creatures which are immune to mundane damage.
2. **Exploding missile:** Carved onto a missile (e.g. arrow, quarrel, sling stone), this rune causes the missile to explode in a 5' radius blast of flame on a successful hit, inflicting 1d8 damage +1 per level of the runesmith.

Rune of Grounding

Medium: Talisman

Duration: 6 turns



This rune causes the wearer to become a magnet for magical energy. For the duration, whenever a spell is cast within 60' of the rune, the caster must **save versus spells**. On a failed save, the spell targets the wearer of the rune instead of its intended subject.

Touch spells: Spells that require the caster to touch the intended subject are unaffected.

Rune of Healing

Medium: Drinking vessel

Duration: 1 turn



This rune is carved onto the rim of a goblet, horn, or other drinking vessel. When the vessel is filled with water, the water becomes enchanted, healing whoever drinks it for 2 hit points per level of the runesmith.



PETER FAGIANO

Rune of Luck



Medium: Talisman

Duration: 1 hour per level,
until used

One who wears this rune can expend its power to gain a +4 bonus to a saving throw, attack roll, or ability check. The rune must be expended before rolling.

Rune of Shielding



Medium: Shield

Duration: 2 turns

The wielder of the shield inscribed with this rune only suffers half damage from one specific type of weapons (e.g. swords, bows, claws, etc.), selected when the rune is carved.

Magical weapons: Magical weapons and the attacks of magical creatures still inflict full damage.

Rune of Slaying



Medium: Melee weapon

Duration: 1 turn per level,
until effective

The weapon inscribed with this rune is enchanted to kill a certain type of foe.

Damage: The weapon inflicts double damage when used against creatures of one specific type (e.g. spiders, dragons, magic-users, undead) selected when the rune is carved.

Treated as magical: If a creature of the selected type can only be harmed by magical weapons, the rune-inscribed weapon can harm them.

Rune of the Forge



Medium: Talisman

Duration: 1 turn per level

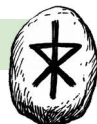
The subject who wears this rune is protected from fire, as follows.

Normal heat: Unharmed by non-magical fire and heat.

Save bonus: Gain a +2 bonus to saving throws versus fire-based effects (e.g. magic or breath attacks).

Fire-based damage: Is reduced by 1 point per damage die rolled. (Each die inflicts a minimum of 1 damage.)

Rune of Thunder



Medium: Blunt weapon

Duration: 2 turns, until used

The wielder can slam the rune-enchanted weapon into the ground to create a thunderous shockwave in a 5' radius per level of the runesmith. All within the area must save vs paralysis or be stunned for 1d3 rounds ($\frac{1}{3}$ move, -2 AC, unable to act).

Rune of Warding



Medium: Talisman

Duration: 1 turn per level,
until effective

While wearing the rune, the subject gains a +4 bonus to saving throws against magical effects. If the subject is affected by a spell that permits a saving throw for reduced damage, they instead take no damage on a success. Once the subject passes a saving throw against magic, the rune's power is expended.

DEITIES AND CULTS

By CHANCE DUDINACK WITH GAVIN NORMAN

ASSEDH

The Rich God

God of gold and precious metals, patron deity of bankers, miners, and treasure-seekers. Assedh favours individuals with the strength and cunning to claim the hidden treasures of the earth.

Depiction: A smiling dwarf with silver or golden skin, eyes that glow like molten bronze, and a great beard braided with gold and jewels. Assedh wears a golden helmet topped with a burning candle, and wields a gilded mining pick.

Domain: Krysoqlarm, a glittering grotto deep underground, where rivers flow with liquid gold.

Alignment: Neutral, favours non-reversed spells.

Worshippers

Cults of Assedh goad their members to unearth forgotten treasures from deep within the earth and hoard them in their great vault-temples as gifts to their god. These cults sometimes operate as bankers and money-changers, offering their services in exchange for a small donation.

Alignment: Any.

Holy symbol: A gold coin stamped with Assedh's face.

Holy garb: Yellow robes or cloak with embroidered golden runes and a dozen small pockets (100gp). Upon gaining the ability to cast 1st level spells, a worshipper may wear a tiny chest made of fine wood and platinum on a chain around their neck (50gp). Upon gaining the ability to cast 3rd level spells, a worshipper may wear a golden helmet topped with a candle (500gp).

Prayer: Worshippers of Assedh must sacrifice 1gp to pray for spells. The coin disappears, magically transported to Assedh's vaults.

Strictures: Worshippers of Assedh must tithe 10% of their wealth to a temple of Assedh.

Alternative Spells

Bless pick: 1st level, replaces *resist cold*.

Vaultpockets: 2nd level, replaces *snake charm*.

Locate precious metals: 3rd level, replaces *growth of animal*.

Secret chest: 5th level, replaces *insect plague*.

Marks of Servitude

When a worshipper of Assedh gains the ability to cast spells of a certain level, they also gain an associated trait:

1st level spells: Golden tooth.

2nd level spells: Golden irises.

3rd level spells: Gold or silver hair.

4th level spells: Patches of skin turn gold.

5th level spells: Blood turns silver.