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Advanced Combat

Mounted Combat

A knight charging into battle on a warhorse, a wizard casting spells from the back of a griffon, or a cleric soaring through the sky on a pegasus all enjoy the benefits of speed and mobility that a mount can provide.

A willing creature that is at least one size larger than you and that has an appropriate anatomy can serve as a mount, using the following rules.

Mounting and Dismounting

You can mount a creature that is within 5 feet of you or dismount. Doing so is a standard action.

If an effect moves your mount against its will while you're on it, you travel with it. If an effect moves you against your will while mounted, you can choose whether it is moved as well, or whether you fall off it and are moved.

If your mount is knocked prone, you are dismounted and land in a space within 1 square.

If you are knocked prone while mounted, immediately make a saving throw. If you fail, you fall prone in a space of your choice within 1 square. If you succeed, you are not knocked prone.

Controlling a Mount

While you're mounted, you have two options. You can either control the mount or allow it to act independently. Intelligent creatures, such as dragons, act independently.

You can control a mount only if it has been trained to accept a rider. Domesticated horses, donkeys, and similar creatures are assumed to have such training. The initiative of a controlled mount changes to match yours when you mount it. You must share your one standard, move and swift action with the mount (e.g. if it takes a standard action, you can only take a move and a swift action).

An independent mount retains its place in the initiative order. Bearing a rider puts no restrictions on the actions the mount can take, and it moves and acts as it wishes. It might flee from combat, rush to attack and devour a badly injured foe, or otherwise act against your wishes.

In either case, if the mount provokes an opportunity attack while you're on it, the attacker can target you or the mount.

Underwater Combat

When adventurers pursue sahuagin back to their undersea homes, fight off sharks in an ancient shipwreck, or find themselves in a flooded dungeon room, they must fight in a challenging environment. Underwater the following rules apply.

When making a **weapon attack**, a creature has -2 on the attack roll unless the weapon is in the spear or crossbow groups.

Powers with the fire tag have -2 attack.

Creatures with the aquatic tag get +2 attack against creatures without the aquatic tag.

Objects

When characters need to saw through ropes, shatter a window, or smash a vampire's coffin, the only hard and fast rule is this: given enough time and the right tools, characters can destroy any destructible object. Use common sense when determining a character's success at damaging an object. Can a fighter cut through a section of a stone wall with a sword? No, the sword is likely to break before the wall does.

For the purpose of these rules, an object is a discrete, inanimate item like a window, door, sword, book, table, chair, or stone, not a building or a vehicle that is composed of many other objects.

Statistics for Objects

When time is a factor, you can assign an Armor Class and hit points to a destructible object. You can also give it immunities, resistances, and vulnerabilities to specific types of damage.

Armor Class. An object's Armor Class is a measure of how difficult it is to deal damage to the object when striking it (because the object has no chance of dodging out of the way). The Object Armor Class table provides suggested AC values for various substances.

Table - Substance's HP Multipliers

| Substance | HP Multiplier |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Cloth, paper, rope | x 0.1 |
| Crystal, glass, ice / Very delicate | x 0.25 |
| Leather / Delicate | x 0.5 |
| Wood, bone | 1 |
| Sturdy | x 1.5 |
| Stone | x 2 |
| Iron, steel | x 3 |
| Adamantine | x 5 |

Hit Points. An object's hit points measure how much damage it can take before losing its structural integrity. Large objects also tend to have more hit points than small ones, unless breaking a small part of the object is just as effective as breaking the whole thing.

Objects are immune to poison, psychic and necrotic damage. Will attacks against them automatically fail.

Table - Object's Hit Points

| Size | AC / Reflex | Fortitude | HP |
|---|-------------|-----------|-----|
| Tiny (bottle, lock) | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Small (chest, lute) | 8 | 8 | 10 |
| Medium (barrel, chandelier) | 5 | 10 | 20 |
| Large (cart, 10-ft-by-10-ft window) | 4 | 12 | 40 |
| Huge (tapestry) | 3 | 15 | 100 |
| Gargantuan (colossal statue, column of stone) | 2 | 20 | 200 |

Backgrounds

Backgrounds describe training or environments your character experienced before becoming an adventurer.

Backgrounds allow you to customize your character based on their life before adventuring.

Your character's background can help you learn or portray more about their personality while also suggesting what sorts of things they're likely to know. Consider what events set your character on their path to the life of an adventurer and how those circumstances relate to their background.

When you select a background, you can select **one** of the following benefits (unless another option is specified in the background):

1. You learn a new language that the GM agrees seems related to that background.
2. You add one of the skills associated with the background to your list of class skills.
3. You get a +2 bonus to one of the skills associated with the background.

Table - Example Backgrounds

| Name | Associated Skills |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Acolyte | Heal, Religion |
| Acrobat | Acrobatics, Stealth |
| Animal Catcher | Dungeoneering, Nature |
| Animal Whisperer | Insight, Nature |
| Arcane Merchant | Arcana, Diplomacy |
| Artisan | Diplomacy, Streetsmarts |
| Artist | History, Religion |
| Athlete | Acrobatics, Athletics |
| Bandit | Intimidate, Nature |
| Barkeep | Endure, Streetsmarts |
| Barrister | Bluff, Diplomacy |
| Beggar | Stealth, Streetsmarts |
| Bounty Hunter | Endure, Perception |
| Charlatan | Bluff, Insight |
| Courier | Athletics, Diplomacy |
| Courtier | Diplomacy, Perception |
| Criminal | Bluff, Sleight of Hand |
| Detective | Insight, Streetsmarts |
| Emissary | Diplomacy, History |
| Entertainer | Insight, Perception |
| Farmhand | Endure, Nature |
| Field Medic | Athletics, Heal |
| Fisher | Acrobatics, Nature |
| Fortune Teller | Arcana, Bluff |
| Gambler | Bluff, Perception |
| Gladiator | History, Perception |
| Guard | Intimidate, Perception |
| Herbalist | Heal, Nature |
| Hermit | Endure, Religion |
| Hunter | Nature, Stealth |
| Laborer | Athletics, Endure |

| Name | Associated Skills |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Martial Disciple | Acrobatics, Insight |
| Merchant | Diplomacy, Insight |
| Miner | Dungeoneering, Endure |
| Noble | Diplomacy, Intimidate |
| Nomad | Endure, History |
| Pirate | Athletics, Intimidate |
| Prisoner | Sleight of Hand, Stealth |
| Sailor | Athletics, Nature |
| Scholar | Arcana, History |
| Scout | Nature, Perception |
| Scribe | Arcana, Religion |
| Servant | History, Insight |
| Street Urchin | Sleight of Hand, Streetsmarts |
| Tinker | Arcana, Sleight of Hand |
| Warrior | Endure, Intimidate |

Incantations

An incantation is like an esoteric and complex spell that anyone can cast, a ritual. It takes much longer to cast an incantation than a normal spell, but incantations can have more powerful effects. Incantations can be cast by characters who are not spellcasters. Characters who know the correct gestures and phrases for an incantation can achieve powerful magic effects.

Incantations have drawbacks: They're time-consuming to cast, and success isn't assured. They are often expensive, and some incantations work only under certain specific conditions, such as during a full moon.

Most important among the drawbacks, an incantation rarely fades away quietly if the caster fails to perform it correctly. Instead it reverses itself on the caster, explodes with a cascade of magical energy, or weakens the barrier between worlds, enabling hostile outsiders to emerge onto the Material Plane.

This variant gives a measure of magical power to nonspellcasters, but the incantations themselves are usually too specific in effect to increase a character's power in the general sense. Because many incantations require academic skills such as Arcana, the characters best equipped to cast them are often spellcasters anyway.

Incantations provide a useful way to introduce powerful magical effects in a lower-level game under controlled conditions. PCs will still use spells rather than expensive, risky incantations whenever they can. Incantations are also more specific than spells, so the GM can introduce them into the game without worrying that they'll spread beyond the immediate situation.

If you want characters in your low-level game to take a brief sojourn to Asgard, you can introduce the incantation Hrothgar's journey. Because it requires the construction of a thatched hut in the middle of a forest and works only during the winter solstice, you don't have to worry about the characters exploring the Outer Planes whenever they get the urge. If you gave low-level PCs easy access to the plane shift spell, on the other hand, they could wander the planes until they ran afoul of the first outsider more powerful than they are (which is almost any outsider).

Discovering Incantations

Obscure tomes and spellbooks filled with mystical ramblings, descriptions of magic theory, ordinary arcane spells, and utterly useless or incomprehensible magical writing often hide the instructions for performing incantations. In those dusty volumes, diligent readers can find incantations with real power—magical recipes that provide step-by-step instructions for achieving a powerful effect.

Incantations can be recorded in a spellbook, even if the user does not normally use a spellbook. A spellbook fits one level of incantation per page (so a level 9 incantation takes up 9 pages). Copying an incantation from one book to another costs the same amount as buying the incantation, and takes eight to 24 hours (for adventurer-tier, prestige-tier and epic-tier incantations respectively).

Casting an Incantation

You can only cast an incantation if you have the Incantation Caster feat. The first time you cast an incantation, you must have spent eight hours beforehand studying it.

At its simplest, casting an incantation is akin to preparing and cooking something according to a recipe. You must have the ingredients in hand, then use your skill in cooking to perform each step in order. In game terms, this means having the required incantation components, then succeeding on a skill check during the incantation's casting time.

Interrupting Incantations

Incantations take a long time to cast, but they aren't as delicate and exacting as traditional spells. If the incantation is interrupted, you have to start again but none of the components are used up.

Taking 10

You cannot take 10 on the skill check.

Level

You must be the same or higher level than an incantation to cast it.

Incantation Components

Most incantations require material components, which cost a certain amount.

Secondary Casters

Incantations allow four additional participants, unless otherwise mentioned. They must be physically present at the incantation, but do not have to have the Incantation Caster feat. They can pay the recovery cost of an incantation, if any. Secondary casters can also help the primary caster succeed on skill checks (if any are required) by means of the aid another action.

Incantation Scrolls

For the same cost as acquiring an incantation, a character can purchase a scroll that contains an abbreviated version of the incantation. It can be cast in half the time, and does not require the Incantation Caster feat to cast. You still need to pay any of the costs involved, including the components, and make the check. Secondary casters can still participate.

Failed Incantations

For one reason or another, a GM may decide that an incantation has failed or backfired. Some ideas for how it could backfire are given below:

Attack

A creature is called from elsewhere to battle the caster (and often any bystanders and secondary casters).

Augment

The incantation was supposed to weaken or destroy its target, but it makes the target more powerful instead. An incantation that deals damage might heal its target or cause it to grow in power, for example.

Betrayal

The incantation seemingly succeeds, but the subject of the incantation (or, in rare cases, the caster) undergoes a dramatic alignment change. Over the next 1d6 minutes, the subject's alignment becomes the extreme opposite of what it was previously (for instance, lawful good becomes chaotic evil; an unaligned subject randomly becomes lawful good, evil, good, or chaotic evil). The subject generally tries to keep its new outlook a secret.

Damage

Either the caster or the target takes damage as the consequence of failure.

Death

Someone—usually the caster or the target—dies. Some incantations allow a saving throw to avoid this consequence of failure.

Delusion

The caster believes the incantation had the desired effect, but in fact it had no effect or a very different one.

Falsehood

The incantation (typically a divination) delivers false results to the caster, but the caster believes the results are true.

Mirrorcast

The incantation has the opposite effect of what was intended.

Reversal

The incantation affects the caster rather than the intended target.

Types of Incantation

- Abjuration
- Curative
- Illusion
- Divination
- Practical
- Transportation
- Crafting
- Conjuraction
- Scrying

Sample Incantations

Alarm

1st-level Abjuration

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A tiny bell and a piece of fine silver wire (10gp)

Cost: 50 gp

Duration: 8 hours

You set an alarm against unwanted intrusion. Choose a door, a window, or an area within range that is no larger than a 4-space cube. Until the spell ends, an alarm alerts you whenever a Tiny or larger creature touches or enters the warded area. When you cast the spell, you can designate creatures that won't set off the alarm. You also choose whether the alarm is mental or audible.

A mental alarm alerts you with a ping in your mind if you are within 1 mile of the warded area. This ping awakens you if you are sleeping.

An audible alarm produces the sound of a hand bell for 10 seconds within 60 feet.

Animal Message

3rd-level Conjuratation

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A morsel of food (20 gp)

Duration: Special

By means of this incantation, you use an animal to deliver a message. Choose a Tiny beast you can see within range, such as a squirrel, a blue jay, or a bat. You specify a location, which you must have visited, and a recipient who matches a general description, such as "a man or woman dressed in the uniform of the town guard" or "a red-haired dwarf wearing a pointed hat." You also speak a message of up to twenty-five words. The target beast travels for the duration of the spell toward the specified location, covering about 50 miles per 24 hours for a flying messenger, or 25 miles for other animals.

When the messenger arrives, it delivers your message to the creature that you described, replicating the sound of your voice. The messenger speaks only to a creature matching the description you gave. If the messenger doesn't reach its destination before the spell ends, the message is lost, and the beast makes its way back to where you cast this spell.

Nature Check. The duration of the incantation is your Nature check result in hours.

Augury

3rd-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Specially marked sticks, bones, or similar tokens (25 gp)

Duration: Instantaneous

By casting gem-inlaid sticks, rolling dragon bones, laying out ornate cards, or employing some other divining tool, you receive an omen from an otherworldly entity about the results of a specific course of action that you plan to take within the next 30 minutes. The GM chooses from the following possible omens:

- *Weal*, for good results
- *Woe*, for bad results
- *Weal and woe*, for both good and bad results
- *Nothing*, for results that aren't especially good or bad

The incantation doesn't take into account any possible circumstances that might change the outcome, such as the casting of additional spells or the loss or gain of a companion.

If you cast the incantation two or more times before completing your next long rest, there is a cumulative 25 percent chance for each casting after the first that you get a random reading. The GM makes this roll in secret.

Bonded Companion

5th-level Practical

Casting Time: 8 hours

Components: An item with special significance to both participants

Cost: 500 gp

Duration: Instantaneous

You perform this incantation over two participants: the master and the companion. You may include yourself in the incantation as the master, if desired.

The companion obeys the following rules:

Actions

- If the master takes a move action, the companion can take a move action as well.
- The master can give up actions to command the companion, in which case it gets to take the same actions. The master can also use an immediate action in order for the companion to make an opportunity attack (if eligible to do so).
- If the master is incapacitated or not present, the companion gets its full complement of actions without needing to be "commanded".

Stats and Combat

- The companion's level is equal to the master's, unless it was already higher.
- The companion's maximum HP are equal to the master's staggered value.
- The companion has no recoveries of its own, but can use its master's.
- Whenever the master has the chance to spend a recovery to heal, they can spend a second recovery to heal the companion the master's recovery value.
- The companion can contribute to a flank.

Other

- The companion is an ally of the master's, and of the master's allies.
- Either participant in the incantation can end its effects as a swift action.

Commune

9th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Incense and a vial of holy or unholy water (500 gp)

Duration: 1 minute

You contact your deity or a divine proxy and ask up to three questions that can be answered with a yes or no. You must ask your questions before the incantation ends. You receive a correct answer for each question.

Divine beings aren't necessarily omniscient, so you might receive "unclear" as an answer if a question pertains to information that lies beyond the deity's knowledge. In a case where a one-word answer could be misleading or contrary to the deity's interests, the GM might offer a short phrase as an answer instead.

If you cast the incantation two or more times before finishing your next long rest, there is a cumulative 25 percent chance for each casting after the first that you get no answer. The GM makes this roll in secret.

Consult Nature

9th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 500 gp

Duration: Instantaneous

You briefly become one with nature and gain knowledge of the surrounding territory. In the outdoors, the spell gives you knowledge of the land within 3 miles of you. In caves and other natural underground settings, the radius is limited to 300 feet. The spell doesn't function where nature has been replaced by construction, such as in dungeons and towns.

You instantly gain knowledge of up to three facts of your choice about any of the following subjects as they relate to the area:

- terrain and bodies of water

- prevalent plants, minerals, animals, or peoples
- powerful celestials, fey, fiends, elementals, or undead
- influence from other planes of existence
- buildings

For example, you could determine the location of powerful undead in the area, the location of major sources of safe drinking water, and the location of any nearby towns.

Contact Other Plane

9th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 500 gp

Duration: 1 minute

You mentally contact a demigod, the spirit of a long-dead sage, or some other mysterious entity from another plane. Contacting this extraplanar intelligence can strain or even break your mind. When you cast this spell, make a DC 25 Arcana check. On a failure, you take 6d6 psychic damage and are insane until you finish a long rest. While insane, you can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speak only in gibberish. A *greater restoration* incantation cast on you ends this effect.

On a successful check, you can ask the entity up to five questions. You must ask your questions before the incantation ends. The GM answers each question with one word, such as "yes," "no," "maybe," "never," "irrelevant," or "unclear" (if the entity doesn't know the answer to the question). If a one-word answer would be misleading, the GM might instead offer a short phrase as an answer.

Continual Flame

5th-level Crafting

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Ruby dust (50 gp)

Duration: Permanent

A flame, equivalent in brightness to a torch, springs forth from an object that you touch. The effect looks like a regular flame, but it creates no heat and doesn't use oxygen. A *continual flame* can be covered and hidden but not smothered or quenched.

Detect Magic

1st-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 10 gp

Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

For the duration, you sense the presence of magic within 30 feet of you. If you sense magic in this way, you can use your action to see a faint aura around any visible creature or object in the area that bears magic, and you learn its school of magic, if any.

The incantation can penetrate most barriers, but it is blocked by 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt.

Detect Poison and Disease

1st-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A yew leaf (10 gp)

Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

For the duration, you can sense the presence and location of poisons, poisonous creatures, and diseases within 30 feet of you. You also identify the kind of poison, poisonous creature, or disease in each case.

The incantation can penetrate most barriers, but it is blocked by 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt.

Divination

9th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Incense and a sacrificial offering appropriate to your religion (250 gp)

Duration: Instantaneous

Your magic and an offering put you in contact with a god or a god's servants. You ask a single question concerning a specific goal, event, or activity to occur within 7 days. The GM offers a truthful reply. The reply might be a short phrase, a cryptic rhyme, or an omen.

The incantation doesn't take into account any possible circumstances that might change the outcome, such as the casting of additional spells or the loss or gain of a companion.

If you cast the incantation two or more times before finishing your next long rest, there is a cumulative 25 percent chance for each casting after the first that you get a random reading. The GM makes this roll in secret.

Call Forth the Dweller

11th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Forty-two mystic symbols inscribed around the perimeter of the focus doorway (requiring materials costing 500 gp).

Duration: 8 hours

This incantation contacts the enigmatic, extradimensional being known as the Dweller on the Threshold, an entity that imparts knowledge about its specific obsession: doors and other entrances.

To cast call forth the Dweller, the caster must inscribe forty-two mystic symbols around an open doorway (the "focus"), then begin the chants and supplications required for the incantation.

If the incantation succeeds, an image of the Dweller—an inky mass of tentacles and mouths—appears on the other side of the doorway. The Dweller on the Threshold truthfully answers any questions it is asked about a particular door. For example, the Dweller can provide a magical password that unlocks a door, indicate how to disarm a trap on a door, reveal the weaknesses of a door's guardian, or describe the room that lies beyond the door. Its answers are clear and fairly specific, if somewhat terse. The caster may well appreciate such concise answers, because one of the forty-two symbols inscribed around the doorway during the casting of the incantation fades away with each word the Dweller on the Threshold speaks—and when all the symbols are gone, the Dweller disappears.

If the caster asks the Dweller on the Threshold a question that doesn't involve doors, the Dweller responds with a cutting insult, often about something the caster thought was secret. Each word of the insult likewise makes a symbol disappear from the perimeter of the doorway.

The exact nature of the Dweller on the Threshold is shrouded in mystery. Some contend that it is somehow connected to the god of secrets, although no one has ever found conclusive evidence that the Dweller on the Threshold is evil.

Find Familiar

1st-level Conjunction

Casting Time: 8 hours

Range: 10 feet

Components: 1,000 gp worth of charcoal, incense, and herbs that must be consumed by fire in a brass brazier

Duration: Instantaneous

You gain the service of a familiar, a spirit that takes an animal form you choose: bat, cat, crab, frog (toad), hawk, lizard, octopus, owl, poisonous snake, fish (quipper), rat, raven, sea horse, spider, or weasel. Appearing in an unoccupied space within range, the familiar has the statistics of the chosen form, though it is outsider or fey instead of natural.

Your familiar acts independently of you, but it always obeys your commands. In combat, it rolls its own initiative and acts on its own turn. A familiar can't attack, but it can take other actions as normal.

When the familiar drops to 0 hit points, it disappears, leaving behind no physical form. It reappears after you cast this incantation again.

While your familiar is within 20 squares of you, you can communicate with it telepathically. Additionally, as a standard action, you can see through your familiar's eyes and hear what it hears until the start of your next turn, gaining the benefits of any special senses that the familiar has. During this time, you are deaf and blind with regard to your own senses.

As a standard action, you can temporarily dismiss your familiar. It disappears into a pocket dimension where it awaits your summons. Alternatively, you can dismiss it forever. As an action while it is temporarily dismissed, you can cause it to reappear in any unoccupied space within 30 feet of you.

You can't have more than one familiar at a time. If you cast this incantation while you already have a familiar, you instead cause it to adopt a new form. Choose one of the forms from the above list. Your familiar transforms into the chosen creature.

Finally, when you cast an incantation with a range of 1, your familiar can deliver the spell as if it had cast the spell. Your familiar must be within 100 feet of you, and it must use its reaction to deliver the spell when you cast it. If the spell requires an attack roll, you use your attack modifier for the roll.

Fires of Hell

11th-level Conjunction

Casting Time: 2 hours

Components: Rare unguents and dark alchemical concoctions worth 5,000 gp.

Duration: 8 hours

This incantation, dreamed up by insane cultists, opens a fell rift between the Material Plane and the fiery second layer of Hell. This rift brings about a massive conflagration that destroys almost everything in the immediate area, then releases a powerful devil who capers over the smoldering ruins and begins to rampage across the countryside. The fires of Hell ignite everything they touch—except for the caster, who is knocked unconscious and transported to the second layer of Hell.

When the incantation is complete, the fires of Hell fill a 16-square-radius spread around the caster's former location, dealing 18d6 points of fire damage to all creatures and objects. Additionally, everything flammable in that radius is now on fire.

In the following round, a pit fiend comes through the rift, which then closes. The creature begins to destroy everything in sight.

Floating Disk

1st-level Crafting

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A drop of mercury (10 gp)

Duration: 1 hour

This spell creates a circular, horizontal plane of force, 3 feet in diameter and 1 inch thick, that floats 3 feet above the ground in an unoccupied space of your choice that you can see within range. The disk remains for the duration, and can hold up to 500 pounds. If more weight is placed on it, the spell ends, and everything on the disk falls to the ground.

The disk is immobile while you are within 20 feet of it. If you move more than 20 feet away from it, the disk follows you so that it remains within 20 feet of you. It can move across uneven terrain, up or down stairs, slopes and the like, but it can't cross an elevation change of 10 feet or more. For example, the disk can't move across a 10-foot deep pit, nor could it leave such a pit if it was created at the bottom.

If you move more than 100 feet from the disk (typically because it can't move around an obstacle to follow you), the spell ends.

Forbid Intrusion

11th-level Abjuration

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A sprinkling of holy water, rare incense, and powdered ruby (1,000 gp)

Duration: 1 day

You create a ward against magical travel that protects up to 40,000 square feet of floor space to a height of 30 feet above the floor. For the duration, creatures can't teleport into the area or use portals, such as those created by the *gate* incantation, to enter the area. The spell proofs the area against planar travel, and therefore prevents creatures from accessing the area by way of the Astral Plane, Ethereal Plane, Plane of Faerie, Plane of Shadow, or the *plane shift* spell.

In addition, the incantation damages types of creatures that you choose when you cast it. Choose one or more of the following: celestials, elementals, fey, fiends, and undead. When a chosen creature enters the spell's area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, the creature takes 5d10 radiant or necrotic damage (your choice when you cast this spell).

When you cast this spell, you can designate a password. A creature that speaks the password as it enters the area takes no damage from the spell.

The spell's area can't overlap with the area of another *forbiddance* spell. If you cast *forbiddance* every day for 30 days in the same location, the spell lasts until it is dispelled, and the material components are consumed on the last casting.

Hrothgar's Journey

11th-level Transportation

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A windowless, thatched hut in a forest (1,000 gp).

Duration: Instantaneous

Hrothgar's journey is an incantation based on the tale of Hrothgar, a powerful barbarian hero from ages past. When the poetic epic of Hrothgar is recited in the stifling heat of a sweat lodge during the winter solstice, the orator and his listeners receive the same final reward that Hrothgar did: a one-way trip to Asgard's Valhalla, where they can drink and make merry with the greatest warriors of myth.

To cast the incantation, the caster must construct a small, windowless hut in the middle of the forest, then build a bonfire in the hut's center. At least four and up to twelve others accompany the caster into the hut. Other participants must provide the dialogue for other characters in the epic of Hrothgar. Then the flames are lit and the telling of the tale of Hrothgar begins.

Because the bonfire is large and the hut is small, the atmosphere inside quickly gets stiflingly hot. Any creature inside the hut must make an Endure check (DC 20) every 10 minutes or suffer the effects of severe heat.

Just as the tale of Hrothgar approaches its conclusion (near the end of the casting time), the bonfire's flames light the hut on fire, which creates a great deal of smoke but no additional heat or damage. The flames consume the hut's roof and walls, revealing Valhalla on the plane of Asgard.

Identify

1st-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A pearl worth at least 100 gp and an owl feather)

Duration: Instantaneous

You choose one object that you must touch throughout the casting of the spell. If it is a magic item or some other magic-imbued object, you learn its properties and how to use them, whether it requires attunement to use, and how many charges it has, if any. You learn whether any spells are affecting the item and what they are. If the item was created by a spell or incantation, you learn which spell or incantation created it.

If you instead touch a creature throughout the casting, you learn what spells, if any, are currently affecting it.

Illusory Script

1st-level Illusion

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A lead-based ink worth at least 10 gp

Duration: 10 days

You write on parchment, paper, or some other suitable writing material and imbue it with a potent illusion that lasts for the duration.

To you and any creatures you designate when you cast the spell, the writing appears normal, written in your hand, and conveys whatever meaning you intended when you wrote the text. To all others, the writing appears as if it were written in an unknown or magical script that is unintelligible. Alternatively, you can cause the writing to appear to be an entirely different message, written in a different hand and

language, though the language must be one you know.

Should the incantation be dispelled, the original script and the illusion both disappear.

A creature with truesight can read the hidden message.

Liquid Tread

5th-level Transportation

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A piece of cork (50 gp)

Duration: 8 hours

This incantation grants the ability to move across any liquid surface-such as water, acid, mud, snow, quicksand, or lava-as if it were harmless solid ground (creatures crossing molten lava can still take damage from the heat). Up to ten willing creatures you can see within range gain this ability for the duration.

If you target a creature submerged in a liquid, the incantation carries the target to the surface of the liquid at a rate of 12 squares per round.

Locate Animals or Plants

3rd-level Scrying

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A bit of fur from a bloodhound (100 gp)

Duration: Instantaneous

Describe or name a specific kind of beast or plant. Concentrating on the voice of nature in your surroundings, you learn the direction and distance to the closest creature or plant of that kind within 5 miles, if any are present.

Meld into Stone

5th-level Practical

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 100 gp

Duration: 8 hours

You step into a stone object or surface large enough to fully contain your body, melding yourself and all the equipment you carry with the stone for the duration. Using your movement, you step into the stone at a point you can touch. Nothing of your presence remains visible or otherwise detectable by nonmagical senses.

While merged with the stone, you can't see what occurs outside it, and any Perception checks you make to hear sounds outside it are made with disadvantage. You remain aware of the passage of time and can cast spells on yourself while merged in the stone. You can use your movement to leave the stone where you entered it, which ends the spell. You otherwise can't move.

Minor physical damage to the stone doesn't harm you, but its partial destruction or a change in its shape (to the extent that you no longer fit within it) expels you and deals 6d6 bludgeoning damage to you. The stone's complete destruction (or transmutation into a different substance) expels you and deals 50 bludgeoning damage to you. If expelled, you fall prone in an unoccupied space closest to where you first entered.

Moving Castle

21st-level Practical

Casting Time: 24 hours

Components: 10,000 gp

Duration: Permanent

Select a dwelling of size somewhere between a hut and a small castle. The dwelling lifts itself off the ground and grows one of the following means of transport:

- **Levitation:** The dwelling floats over the ground and over water, giving it fly 6 (hover, maximum altitude 2).
- **Chicken Legs:** The dwelling runs along the ground, giving it speed 12.
- **Rollers:** The dwelling moves on treads on the ground, giving it speed 8 - but it ignores difficult, obstructing and other terrain.

The dwelling follows your spoken instructions if they are given from within or just outside the dwelling, about as faithfully as a dim but well-meaning dog might.

Perpetual Message

3rd-level Illusion

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A small bit of honeycomb and jade dust worth at least 10 gp, which the spell consumes

Duration: Until dispelled

You implant a message within an object within 30 feet, a message that is uttered when a trigger condition is met. Choose an object that you can see and that isn't being worn or carried by another creature. Then speak the message, which must be 25 words or less, though it can be delivered over as long as 10 minutes. Finally, determine the circumstance that will trigger the incantation to deliver your message.

When that circumstance occurs, a magical mouth appears on the object and recites the message in your voice and at the same volume you spoke. If the object you chose has a mouth or something that looks like a mouth (for example, the mouth of a statue), the magical mouth appears there so that the words appear to come from the object's mouth. When you cast this incantation, you can have the incantation end after it delivers its message, or it can remain and repeat its message whenever the trigger occurs.

The triggering circumstance can be as general or as detailed as you like, though it must be based on visual or audible conditions that occur within 30 feet of the object. For example, you could instruct the mouth to speak when any creature moves within 30 feet of the object or when a silver bell rings within 30 feet of it.

Plane Walk

13th-level Transportation

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A forked, metal rod worth at least 1,000 gp, attuned to a particular plane of existence

Duration: Instantaneous

You and up to eight willing creatures who link hands in a circle are transported to a different plane of existence. You can specify a target destination in general terms, such as the City of Brass on the Elemental Plane of Fire, and you appear in or near that destination.

Alternatively, if you know the sigil sequence of a teleportation circle on another plane of existence, this spell can take you to that circle. If the teleportation circle is too small to hold all the creatures you transported, they appear in the closest unoccupied spaces next to the circle.

Preserve Corpse

3rd-level Curative

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A pinch of salt and one copper piece placed on each of the corpse's eyes, which must remain there for the duration (10 gp)

Duration: 10 days

You touch a corpse or other remains. For the duration, the target is protected from decay and can't become undead.

The spell also effectively extends the time limit on raising the target from the dead, since days spent under the influence of this spell don't count against the time limit of spells such as *raise dead*.

Purify Food and Drink

1st-level Practical

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 10 gp

Duration: Instantaneous

All nonmagical food and drink within a 5-foot radius sphere centered on a point of your choice within range is purified and rendered free of poison and disease.

Sorcerous Gills

5th-level Practical

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A short reed or piece of straw (50 gp per target)

Duration: 24 hours

This spell grants up to ten willing creatures you can see within range the ability to breathe underwater until the incantation ends. Affected creatures also retain their normal mode of respiration.

Sphere of Silence

3rd-level Illusion

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 10 gp

Duration: 8 hours

For the duration, no sound can be created within or pass through a 20-foot radius sphere centered on a point you choose within range. Any creature or object entirely inside the sphere is immune to thunder damage, and creatures are deafened while entirely inside it. Casting a spell that includes a verbal component is impossible there.

Speak with Animals

1st-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 10 gp

Duration: 10 minutes

You gain the ability to comprehend and verbally communicate with beasts for the duration. The knowledge and awareness of many beasts is limited by their intelligence, but at minimum, beasts can give you information about nearby locations and monsters, including whatever they can perceive or have perceived within the past day. You might be able to persuade a beast to perform a small favor for you, at the GM's discretion.

Speak with the Departed

5th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Burning incense (500 gp)

Duration: 10 minutes

You grant the semblance of life and intelligence to a corpse of your choice within range, allowing it to answer the questions you pose. The corpse must still have a mouth and can't be undead. The incantation fails if the corpse was the target of this spell within the last 10 days.

Until the spell ends, you can ask the corpse up to five questions. The corpse knows only what it knew in life, including the languages it knew. Answers are usually brief, cryptic, or repetitive, and the corpse is under no compulsion to offer a truthful answer if you are hostile to it or it recognizes you as an enemy. This spell doesn't return the creature's soul to its body, only its animating spirit. Thus, the corpse can't learn new information, doesn't comprehend anything that has happened since it died, and can't speculate about future events.

Speak with Plants

5th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 500 gp

Duration: 8 hours

You imbue plants within 30 feet of you with limited sentience and animation, giving them the ability to communicate with you and follow your simple commands. You can question plants about events within 30 feet within the past day, gaining information about creatures that have passed, weather, and other circumstances.

You can also turn difficult terrain caused by plant growth (such as thickets and undergrowth) into ordinary terrain that lasts for the duration. Or you can turn ordinary terrain where plants are present into difficult terrain that lasts for the duration, causing vines and branches to hinder pursuers, for example.

Plants might be able to perform other tasks on your behalf, at the GM's discretion. The spell doesn't enable plants to uproot themselves and move about, but they can freely move branches, tendrils, and stalks.

If a plant creature is in the area, you can communicate with it as if you shared a common language, but you gain no magical ability to influence it.

This spell can cause the plants created by the *entangle* spell to release a restrained creature.

Spectral Steed

5th-level Crafting

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 25 gp

Duration: 8 hours

A Large quasi-real, horselike creature appears on the ground in an unoccupied space of your choice within range. You decide the creature's appearance, but it is equipped with a saddle, bit, and bridle. Any of the equipment created by the spell vanishes in a puff of smoke if it is carried more than 10 feet away from the steed.

For the duration, you or a creature you choose can ride the steed. The creature uses the statistics for a riding horse, except it has a speed of 20 squares and can travel 10 miles in an hour, or 13 miles at a fast pace. When the spell ends, the steed gradually fades, giving the rider 1 minute to dismount. The spell ends if you use an action to dismiss it or if the steed takes any damage.

Summon Item

11th-level Conjuraton

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A sapphire worth 1,000 gp

Duration: Until dispelled

You touch an object weighing 10 pounds or less whose longest dimension is 6 feet or less. The spell leaves an invisible mark on its surface and invisibly inscribes the name of the item on the sapphire you use as the material component. Each time you cast this incantation, you must use a different sapphire.

At any time thereafter, you can use your standard action to speak the item's name and crush the sapphire. The item instantly appears in your hand regardless of physical or planar distances, and the spell ends.

If another creature is holding or carrying the item, crushing the sapphire doesn't transport the item to you, but instead you learn who the creature possessing the object is and roughly where that creature is located at that moment.

Dispel magic or a similar effect successfully applied to the sapphire ends this spell's effect.

Remove Curse

5th-level Curative

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: 100 gp

Duration: Instantaneous

At your touch, all curses affecting one creature or object end. If the object is a cursed magic item, its curse remains, but the incantation breaks its owner's attunement to the object so it can be removed or discarded.

Telepathic Bond

11th-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: Pieces of eggshell from two different kinds of creatures (100 gp)

Duration: 8 hours

You forge a telepathic link among up to eight willing creatures of your choice in the area, psychically linking each creature to all the others for the duration. Creatures with Intelligence scores of 2 or less aren't affected by this spell.

Until the spell ends, the targets can communicate telepathically through the bond whether or not they have a common language. The communication is possible over any distance, though it can't extend to other planes of existence.

Tiny Hut

5th-level Crafting

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A small crystal bead (25 gp)

Duration: 8 hours

A 10-foot radius immobile dome of force springs into existence around and above you and remains stationary for the duration. The spell ends if you leave its area.

Nine creatures of Medium size or smaller can fit inside the dome with you. The spell fails if its area includes a larger creature or more than nine creatures. Creatures and objects within the dome when you cast this spell can move through it freely. All other creatures and objects are barred from passing through it. Spells and other magical effects can't extend through the dome or be cast through it. The atmosphere inside the space is comfortable and dry, regardless of the weather outside.

Until the spell ends, you can command the interior to become dimly lit or dark. The dome is opaque from the outside, of any color you choose, but it is transparent from the inside.

Understand Languages

1st-level Divination

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A pinch of soot and salt (100 gp)

Duration: 1 hour

For the duration, you understand the literal meaning of any spoken language that you hear. You also understand any written language that you see, but you must be touching the surface on which the words are written. It takes about 1 minute to read one page of text.

This spell doesn't decode secret messages in a text or a glyph, such as an arcane sigil, that isn't part of a written language.

Unseen Servant

1st-level Conjuraton

Casting Time: 1 hour

Components: A piece of string and a bit of wood (10 gp)

Duration: 8 hours

This spell creates an invisible, mindless, shapeless, Medium force that performs simple tasks at your command until the spell ends. The servant springs into existence in an unoccupied space on the ground within range. It has AC 10, 1 hit point, and a Strength of 2, and it can't attack. If it drops to 0 hit points, the spell ends.

Once on each of your turns as a bonus action, you can mentally command the servant to move up to 3 squares and interact with an object. The servant can perform simple tasks that a human servant could do, such as fetching things, cleaning, mending, folding clothes, lighting fires, serving food, and pouring wine. Once you give the command, the servant performs the task to the best of its ability until it completes the task, then waits for your next command.

If you command the servant to perform a task that would move it more than 12 squares away from you, the spell ends.

Example Extended Challenges

Wake the Forest Watcher

Around the forest they tell a local legend, where a girl lost in the forest at night sang and danced to keep away fear. The forest watcher, entranced by her voice and movements, came and showed her the way out. To this day, children who grow up near the forest learn this story and its accompanying song and dance. Outsiders think it a quaint tradition, but the local children know if they are ever lost in the forest, the Forest Watcher may be their only salvation.

Use this extended challenge to reflect player characters calling on the mysterious spirit known as the Forest Watcher for assistance.

Setup: The PCs are within the bounds of the forest during night.

The Forest Watcher may be entreated for directions to anything within or on the edge of the forest, always revealing the shortest path. The Forest Watcher may also be asked questions about what is currently within the forest, although it cannot reveal more than what an observer could discover.

Level: Equal to the average level of the PCs - the Forest Watcher expects better performances from those able to give them.

Check Successes Required: 3 before 3 failures.

Primary Skills: Acrobatics, Diplomacy, Nature.

Acrobatics (moderate DCs): You dance elegantly and expertly, impressing the Forest Watcher

Nature (easy DCs): You recognize the best part of the forest to make your entreaty from, to be most easily heard by the Forest Watcher.

Diplomacy (moderate DCs): You phrase your request to the Forest Watcher in a polite and humble manner.

Failure: All participants are exhausted, losing a recovery. A particularly poor effort may anger the Forest Watcher, leading it to direct creatures of the forest against the PCs.

The Lacy Portal

A series of old, rusty contraptions decorate the Lacy manor home's tallest tower, with no evidence of their use or function. However, if one should find Sir Lacy's old notebooks detailing their use, and if that one should activate the machine during a storm, that one might just find themselves facing what Sir Lacy spent his whole life trying to find: the gateway to Heaven.

This incantation is found in Sir Lacy's notes, and details the workings of the machine in the highest tower of his manor. This machine harnesses power from lightning and, with the aid of a focusing diamond, opens a portal to the Outer Plane of Heaven.

Setup: The PCs are examining the machine in the Lacy manor during an electrical storm.

Level: 15.

Check Successes Required: 6 before 3 failures.

Primary Skills: Religion, Sleight of Hand, Arcana, History, Nature.

Sleight of Hand (easy DCs): Your talent at working with traps and other devices allows you to delicately adjust the machinery.

Nature (moderate DCs): You have a good weather-eye, and you can time the contraption's use to exactly when lightning strikes the manor.

History (hard DCs): You remember an obscure detail of Sir Lacy's life, which gives you a clue about how the contraption is meant to operate.

Lightning powers: An encounter or daily power with the lightning tag can provide assistance at the nick of time. Once during the challenge, one of these powers can be used to cancel out a failure (it does not turn into a success, however).

Focusing diamond: If the focusing diamond cannot be found, another gem can be used as a substitute but it is destroyed in the process.

Success: The PCs travel to Heaven, appearing at an unpredictable place on the plane.

While this machine can be used to travel to Heaven, alternate means (or an assistant to open the portal again from the Material Plane side) must be employed to return.

Failure: The machine backfires, flooding the area with radiant energy. All creatures within 100 squares of the machine take 5d10 radiant damage and are blinded for 24 hours.

Bonds

Over time, player characters will ingratiate themselves with and derive power from different patrons, powerful magical artifacts, secret societies, and so on. These relationships are often ephemeral, lasting over two or three adventures. In some cases they last longer, particularly if the player character is prepared to keep investing in them.

When a character forms one of these bonds, they start with a Favor of 5, which corresponds to a "Neutral" attitude.

| Favor | Attitude |
|-----------|------------|
| 0 or less | Hostile |
| 1-4 | Unfriendly |
| 5-11 | Neutral |
| 12-15 | Friendly |
| 16-20 | Helpful |

If the player character serves the bond, it strengthens and Favor increases. If they defy the bond or neglect it, Favor decreases.

Some example bonds are shown below.

Ancient Priesthood

Prestige-tier bond

The player character joins a secretive priesthood with its own language. Red in tooth and claw but with a soft spot for mistletoe, these priests worship ancient gods.

Favor

Example ways a character may gain or lose Ancient Priesthood Favor:

- *Character gains a level in a divine class +1d10*
- *Character uses a metal weapon or wears metal armour -1 per day*
- *Character has an alignment other than Unaligned -1 per month*
- *Character performs an ancient incantation for another +1*
- *Character defeats another in the ancient priesthood +1*
- *Character is defeated by another in the ancient priesthood -2*

Properties

Sacred Grove. You are given a grove, circle of dolmens or other sacred place to tend. Those who seek to join the priesthood will seek out a priest in their sacred place and try to kill them, so as to take their place.

Learn Incantation. Upon joining the ancient priesthood, you are taught an incantation. You do not get to choose the incantation. Those with a Friendly bond are taught a second, and Helpful a third. You still need the Incantation Caster feat in order to cast the incantation.

Hostile

Spiritual Duties. You must make a blood sacrifice at every incantation you perform.

Obsessed with the Unnatural. You suffer a -2 penalty on any attack that does not include an undead, construct or aberration as a target.

Unfriendly

Spiritual Duties.

Forest Grace. Ignore difficult terrain that results from plants and vegetation.

You leave no trail in natural surroundings and cannot be tracked. You may choose to leave a trail if so desired.

Neutral

Sacred Incantations. Incantations you perform at your sacred site, or at others that you find, have their component cost halved.

Forest Grace.

Nature Sense +2. +2 item bonus to Nature checks.

Friendly

Sacred Incantations

Enduring Incantation. Incantations you perform that include a blood sacrifice (chosen by the GM, but not necessarily involving the death of a sentient being) have their duration extended to "until you begin casting another incantation".

Forest Grace.

Nature Sense +5.

Resist Poison 5.

Helpful

Even if your Favor is high enough, you only reach this rank if you defeat an ancient priest already at this rank.

Sacred Incantations.

Enduring Incantation.

Forest Grace.

Nature Sense +5.

Timeless Body. You no longer age, and cannot be aged magically.

Resist Poison 10.

Tongue of the Sun and Moon. You can speak with any living creature.

Moving On

A player character may give up the Ancient Priesthood, or have it stripped from them if they lose a fight against a fellow initiate. If they are separated from their sacred site, or if it is destroyed, they may lose their connection to the land.

Knighthood

Adventurer-tier bond

The player character is knighted, giving them a feudal lord to whom they owe loyalty as well as retainers who owe them loyalty. They belong to the nobility while they retain their rank and title.

Favor

Example ways a character may gain or lose Knighthood Favor:

- *Character gains a level* +1d10
- *A retainer dies* -1
- *Character breaches an oath* -2
- *Character disobeys their liege lord* -2
- *Character completes a quest from their liege lord* +1
- *Character tithes 10,000 gp to their liege lord* +1
- *Character marries someone of their station or higher* +1
- *Character goes to war for their liege lord* +2 for player character, +1 for every other player character of same or higher level who joins

Properties

Retainers. The knight is able to call upon 1d6 retainers to accompany the player characters on any particular adventure. These retainers do not fight, but they can help with keeping watch, setting up camp, cooking, carrying treasure, tending to animals, and so on.

Well Supplied. Before each adventure, select one consumable item of your level or lower. You receive it for free - perhaps it was made by your retainers, or gifted to you by your liege lord.

Hostile

Powerful Enemies. Once every month or so, you face an attack, sabotage or arson from one of your enemies. This might take the form of an encounter of your level, or an extended challenge as you try to undo the damage they have done.

Render Unto Caesar. Your liege lord demands 1,000 gp a month in additional tithes - or for you to go on a quest of your lord's choosing every six months.

Unfriendly

Render Unto Caesar.

Knightly Expectations +2. You receive an item bonus to Will defences against fear.

Neutral

Binding Oath. You can swear and witness oaths that are enforced by the gods themselves. If you witness a creature swear an oath by your god, and they breach that oath, they take persistent radiant damage (save ends). *Level 1:* 5 damage. *Level 11:* 10 damage. *Level 21:* 15 damage.

If you breach an oath, you suffer the same effect.

Aristocratic Mien +1. You receive an item bonus to Diplomacy and History checks.

Knightly Expectations +2.

Friendly

The knight is granted lands of their own for which they are responsible.

Binding Oath.

Man-at-Arms. You are accompanied on adventures by a man-at-arms, a blocker whose level equals yours -5 (if you are not yet 6th-level, you do not get this feature). The man-at-arms does not get their own actions; you can spend an action to "command" the man-at-arms, who takes the same action. For example, you may spend your standard action and move action to get the man-at-arms to walk adjacent to an enemy and make a basic attack.

The man-at-arms has one recovery (levels 1-10), two recoveries (levels 11-20) or three recoveries (levels 21-30).

Aristocratic Mien +2.

Look Out, Sir. If you are a target of an attack, an adjacent ally who is not a target of the attack can choose to replace you as a target as an immediate (counter) action.

Knightly Expectations +5.

Helpful

The knight gains a "license to crenellate", entitling them to build a castle (or to fortify their existing residence).

Binding Oath.

Aristocratic Mien +3.

Squire. You are accompanied on adventures by a squire, a blocker whose level equals yours -2 (if you are not yet 3rd-level, you do not get this feature). The squire does not get their own actions; you can spend an action to "command" the squire, who takes the same action. For example, you may spend your standard action and move action to get the squire to walk adjacent to an enemy and make a basic attack.

The squire has one recovery (levels 1-10), two recoveries (levels 11-20) or three recoveries (levels 21-30).

Rally the Troops. Once per encounter, as a swift action, allow a creature within near burst 5 to take the Rally action as a swift action (if they are eligible).

Look Out, Sir.

Knightly Expectations +5.

Moving On

While a player character may well remain a knight for the rest of their life, they may still give up this bond by travelling far away from their lands, by rising to a higher rank with different duties, by leaving their domain in the care of a spouse or regent, and so on.

Alternatively, they may actually be stripped of their knighthood - perhaps they lied about their pedigree, they were falsely (or fairly) accused of unchivalrous behaviour or there has been a revolution.

Tyrfing

Prestige-tier bond

The player character receives the great and terrible sword Tyrfing, which demands to kill each time it is drawn.

Favor

Example ways a character may gain or lose Tyrfing Favor:

- *Character gains a level* +1d10
- *Character sheathes the sword without having killed any sentient being* -2
- *Character goes a week without killing* -1
- *Character kills 10 or more sentient beings in a day* +1
- *Character has killed 100 or more sentient beings with Tyrfing, and has kept count* +2
- *Character kills a blood relative* +1

Properties

Enchantment. Tyrfing is a +1 *giant-slayer longsword* by default. As your level increases, its bonus does as well.

Level 7: +2 giant-slayer longsword. Level 12: +3 giant-slayer longsword. Level 17: +4 giant-slayer longsword. Level 22: +5 giant-slayer longsword. Level 27: +6 giant-slayer longsword.

Devastating Coup. You can perform a coup de grace as a swift action (still choosing a standard action for the attack).

The True Death. A creature killed by an attack from Tyrfing cannot be brought back from the dead by any means, or become an undead creature.

Hostile

Mysterious Whispers. Once per day, Tyrfing whispers a name to you. You have already or will soon meet this person. You suffer a -2 penalty on any attack that does not include them as a target. If you take a long rest without having killed them, the penalty ends but you start the next day with one fewer recoveries.

Obsessive.

Unfriendly

Obsessive. You suffer a -2 penalty on any skill check that takes more than one round.

Neutral

Guided Attack. Any attack vs AC, you can choose to make against Reflex instead.

The Twin (5 damage): Once per day, you can summon a sword, which appears in an empty space within range 10. It is a conjuration. You can move it up to 6 as a move action. At the end of your turn, creatures adjacent to the sword take 5 persistent damage (save ends). *Maintain* swift.

Friendly

Guided Attack.

Bloodlore. Each time you damage a target, Tyrfing whispers one of the target's secrets to you.

The Twin (10 damage).

Helpful

Guided Attack.

Bloodlore.

The Twin (10 damage).

Shield of Souls. You begin each day with 5 temporary HP (*Level 11: 10; Level 21: 15*). Each time you kill a creature, your temporary HP are restored.

Moving On

Only when the player character has exhausted their capability for bloodletting, or when Tyrting senses the opportunity for even greater slaughter in other hands, will Tyrting move on willingly.

If a creature could deliver a killing blow to the player character but shows them mercy instead, the player character can cast aside Tyrting of their own free will.

Traps

Traps can be found almost anywhere. One wrong step in an ancient tomb might trigger a series of scything blades, which cleave through armor and bone. The seemingly innocuous vines that hang over a cave entrance might grasp and choke anyone who pushes through them. A net hidden among the trees might drop on travelers who pass underneath. In a fantasy game, unwary adventurers can fall to their deaths, be burned alive, or fall under a fusillade of poisoned darts.

A trap can be either mechanical or magical in nature. **Mechanical traps** include pits, arrow traps, falling blocks, water-filled rooms, whirling blades, and anything else that depends on a mechanism to operate.

Magic traps are either magical device traps or spell traps. Magical device traps initiate spell effects when activated. Spell traps are spells such as *glyph of warding* and *symbol* that function as traps.

Traps in Play

When adventurers come across a trap, you need to know how the trap is triggered and what it does, as well as the possibility for the characters to detect the trap and to disable or avoid it.

Triggering a Trap

Most traps are triggered when a creature goes somewhere or touches something that the trap's creator wanted to protect. Common triggers include stepping on a pressure plate or a false section of floor, pulling a trip wire, turning a doorknob, and using the wrong key in a lock. Magic traps are often set to go off when a creature enters an area or touches an object. Some magic traps (such as the *glyph of warding* spell) have more complicated trigger conditions, including a password that prevents the trap from activating.

Detecting and Disabling a Trap

Usually, some element of a trap is visible to careful inspection. Characters might notice an uneven flagstone that conceals a pressure plate, spot the gleam of light off a trip wire, notice small holes in the walls from which jets of flame will erupt, or otherwise detect something that points to a trap's presence.

A trap's description specifies the checks and DCs needed to detect it, disable it, or both. A character actively looking for a trap can attempt a Perception check against the trap's DC. You can also compare the DC to detect the trap with each character's passive Perception score to determine whether anyone in the party notices the trap in passing. If the adventurers detect a trap before triggering it, they might be able to pause or disarm it.

Paused: The trap stops functioning until the end of the next turn of the player character that succeeded on the check. Then, flip a coin each round to see if it starts functioning again.

Disarmed: The trap stops functioning until someone deliberately resets it.

In most cases, a trap's description is clear enough that you can adjudicate whether a character's actions locate or foil the trap. As with many situations, you shouldn't allow die rolling to override clever play and good planning. Use your common sense, drawing on the trap's description to determine what happens. No trap's design can anticipate every possible action that the characters might attempt.

You should allow a character to discover a trap without making an ability check if an action would clearly reveal the trap's presence. For example, if a character lifts a rug that conceals a pressure plate, the character has found the trigger and no check is required.

Foiling traps can be a little more complicated. Consider a trapped treasure chest. If the chest is opened without first pulling on the two handles set in its sides, a mechanism inside fires a hail of poison needles toward anyone in front of it. After inspecting the chest and making a few checks, the characters are still unsure if it's trapped. Rather than simply open the chest, they prop a shield in front of it and push the

chest open at a distance with an iron rod. In this case, the trap still triggers, but the hail of needles fires harmlessly into the shield.

Traps are often designed with mechanisms that allow them to be disarmed or bypassed. Intelligent monsters that place traps in or around their lairs need ways to get past those traps without harming themselves. Such traps might have hidden levers that disable their triggers, or a secret door might conceal a passage that goes around the trap.

Types of Trap

- **Shooter:** Multiple attacks or areas of effect.
- **Assassin:** The trap alternates between triggering and retracting.
- **Blocker:** The trap serves as an impediment, or punishes movement through a particular area.
- **Alarm:** The trap makes a ruckus or otherwise alerts other enemies. Typically it also has negative effects to those who trigger it.

Traps in Encounters

Traps come with a level and an XP value. Add them to encounters just as you would monsters.

Sample Traps

Whistling Staircase

Level 1 Alarm (100 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the cords running beneath the stairs.

Trigger: The trap triggers when a Medium or larger creature steps onto the stairs.

Immediate (Reaction) Action; the trapped stairs make a terrible racket, alerting those nearby.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the Nightingale Stairs trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check. A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

Simple Spear Trap

Level 1 Alarm (100 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the mechanism that fires the spear.

Trigger: Trigger: The trap attacks when a character opens the drawer.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee
Target: The creature that opens the drawer
Attack: +4 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8+3 damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the spear trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check. A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

Cinder Trap

Level 1 Alarm (100 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices that slow-burning torch and mechanism the flings it on the other side of the bridge.

Trigger: The trap is triggered automatically if the bridge trap is triggered. In addition, there is a trip wire the far end of the bridge that will trigger the trap.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee
Target: None, or the creature that trips the tripwire.
Attack: +4 vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d6+1 fire damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

If the trap is triggered, an adjacent character can throw himself in front of the trap to prevent the torch from being flung into the air with a successful DC 15 Acrobatics or Athletics check. However, if the character is successful, he suffers 7 points of fire damage.

Snare Trap

Level 1 Alarm (100 XP Trap)

Perception DC 12: The character notices coiled rope.

DC 15: The character spots the noose.

Trigger: The trap attacks immediately when a character enters the square containing the noose. It must be reset before it functions again.

Immediate (Reaction) Action
Melee Attack
Target: Creature in trigger square.
Attack: +4 vs. Ref
Hit: Target is immobilized, suspended upside-down 10 feet in the air, and loses a recovery.

Countermeasures:

A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 5 or DC 10 without a running start) can jump over the noose.

An adjacent character can trigger the trap with a DC 14 Sleight of Hand check (standard action).

An adjacent character can destroy the trap by cutting the rope

Quicksand

Level 1 Blocker (100 XP Trap)

Nature DC 23: Character notices that the ground ahead is quicksand.

Trigger: The hazard attacks immediately when a character enters one of its four squares.

Immediate (Reaction) Action
Melee
Target: Creature in trigger square.
Attack: +4 vs. Ref
Hit: Target falls into pit, sinks 1 square down, sinking targets grant combat advantage. Miss: Target returns to last square it occupied and its move action ends immediately; Effect: Entire pit becomes plain to see.
Sustain Standard: Atk +4 vs. Fort; target sinks 1 square to a maximum depth of 3 squares, targets in over their head begin to suffocate.

Countermeasures:

A character in the pit can rise 1 square as a move action by making a special escape attempt, using their Athletics (only) vs. Fort 13.

A character adjacent to the pit using a long item (like a ten-foot pole, rope, polearm haft, or snake) to help the target escape grants the target a +2 bonus to their escape attempt.

A character with a rope around their body can easily dive in and retrieve a drowning target.

Stinking Trench

Level 1 Blocker (100 XP Trap)

Perception DC 5: The character notices the horrific smell coming from the trench

Trigger: When a hero passes through, or begins his turn in the trench.

Stench Cloud aura 1
Target: Creature passing through (or in) the trench
Attack +4 vs. Fort
Hit: Target is dazed (save ends).

Countermeasures:

A character who makes a successful Athletics check (DC 6 or DC 11 without a running start) can jump over the trench.

Arrow Trap in Chest

Level 2 Alarm (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 25: The character notices the small hole on the chest through which the arrow is fired.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character opens the chest.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee
Target: The creature that opens the chest
Attack; +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d10+3 damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the poison arrow trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

Concealed Pit Trap

Level 2 Alarm (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 25: The character notices that the squares hiding the pit trap bow in slightly.

Trigger: The trap triggers when a character enters one of its squares.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee

Target: The creature that entered one of the trap's squares

Attack: +6 vs. Reflex

Hit: The target falls into the pit, takes 1d10+3 damage, and falls prone.

Miss: The target returns to the last square it occupied and its move action ends immediately.

Effect: The pit trap opens and the trap is no longer hidden.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can trigger the trap with a DC 15 Sleight of Hand check.

An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

Scythe Trap

Level 2 Alarm (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the scythe blade housing in the drawer

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character opens the drawer.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee

Target: The creature that opens the drawer

Attack: +5 vs. AC

Hit: 1d10+3 damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the scythe blade trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap

Gate Spikes

Level 2 Assassin (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the hidden mechanism that fires the spears.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character attempts to climb over the gate.

Opportunity Action Melee

Target: The creature climbing over the gate

Attack: +7 vs. AC

Hit: 1d8+3 damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the spears with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A character that makes a DC 20 Athletics check to vault over the gate is outside of the spike's reach.

Floor Spears

Level 2 Blocker (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the five trigger squares

Perception DC 25: The character notices the controls.

Trigger: When a lever is flicked.

Opportunity Action
Melee
Target: All creatures in burst.
Attack: Near Burst 3; +8 vs. AC Hit: 1d8+3 damage.

Countermeasures:

A character adjacent to the control panel can disable one of the traps with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A successful Athletics check (DC 6, or DC 11 without a running start) leaps a pressure plate.

An adjacent character can disable a trigger plate with a DC 25 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

A character can ready an action to attack the spears (AC 13, others 10; hp 10). When the spears in one square are destroyed, that trigger plate becomes useless.

Zombie Breakout

Level 2 Blocker (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 25 notices the zombie's head and shoulders poking out of the muck

Religion: DC 15 recognizes the creature as a zombie

Trigger: A living creature that passes through, or begins its turn in a buried zombie's square is attacked

Standard
Melee
Target: The creature in the zombie's square.
Attack: +4 vs. AC
Hit: 2d6+2 damage and falls prone.

Countermeasures:

A character can make a DC 15 (or 25 without an running start) Athletics check to leap over the zombie without provoking an attack

Killing the zombie removes the hazard.

Fusilade of Javelins Trap

Level 2 Shooter (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the small holes in the coffer.

Trigger: When a character opens the coffer, the trap rolls initiative.

Standard Action Ranged 10
Target: 2d4 targets in range
Attack: +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d4+3 damage

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 25 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

A character that moves more than 1 square on a turn gains a +5 bonus to AC against the trap's needle attack.

Rain of Darts Trap

Level 2 Shooter (125 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the small holes in the coffer.

Trigger: When a character opens the coffer, the trap rolls initiative.

Standard Action Ranged 10
Target: 1d6 targets in range
Attack: +8 vs. AC
Hit: 1d6+3 damage

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 25 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

A character that moves more than 1 square on a turn gains a +5 bonus to AC against the trap's dart attack.

Double-Pike Trap

Level 3 Alarm (150 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the mechanism that fires the spears.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character attempts to open the secret door.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee
Target: The creature that attempts to open the secret door
Attack: the trap fires two spears; +6 vs. AC
Hit: 1d8+3 damage. If both spears hit the same target, the target takes an additional 1d8 damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the twin-spear trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

Noxious Leak

Level 3 Shooter (150 XP Trap)

Perception DC 25: The character notices the controls and the five total spigots.

Trigger: When a lever is flicked.

Standard Action
Ranged 5
Target: Each of the six spigots attack one intruder.
Attack: +6 vs. AC
Hit: 2d8+3 necrotic damage.

Countermeasures:

A character adjacent to the fountain can attack a spigot (AC 16, other 13; hp 38), destroying it.

A character can engage in a skill test to deactivate the control panel. DC 20 Sleight of Hand; (6 successes before 3 failures). Success disables the trap, failure causes it to explode (close blast 3, 2d6+3 necro damage to all in blast) and trap remains active.

The trap functions for 10 rounds, then it cannot reset for 24 hours.

Acid Spear

Level 5 Alarm (200 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the disguised holes in the ceiling through which the spears are fired.

DC 25: The character notices the acid burn marks in the square targeted by the trap.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character enters the square before the chest.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee
Target: The creature entering the target square
Attack; the trap fires a trio of spears; +8 vs. AC
Hit: 2d6+5 damage, and the target is immobilized and takes persistent 5 acid damage (save ends both).

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the caustic spear trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

An adjacent character can assist an ally immobilized by the trap as a standard action with a DC 15 Strength check, granting the victim a +2 bonus to his saving throw against the trap.

Rusty Water Tower

Level 5 Assassin (200 XP Trap)

Perception DC 14: The hero notices that the water tower is damaged.

DC 19: The hero realizes that a sharp blow will bring most of it down.

Trigger: Any attack directly against the scaffolding, any movement (forced or otherwise) into the scaffolding, or any burst or blast that encompasses the scaffolding's supports.

Attack
Immediate (Reaction) Action
Melee
Targets: Creatures in five-square-radius
Attack: +8 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8+4 damage, and the target is knocked prone.
Miss: Half damage.
Aftereffect: All squares in radius become difficult terrain.

Countermeasures:

A hero can trigger the scaffolding from far away by attacking it (AC 15, other defenses 12).

A hero who is aware that the scaffolding may collapse, may make a DC 19 Dungeoneering roll to know which squares will be affected by its collapse.

Phase Spider Venom Needle Trap

Level 6 Alarm (250 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the needle mechanism inside the lock.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character opens the drawer.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee

Target: The creature that opens the drawer

Attack: +4 vs. AC

Hit: 1d4 damage, and the trap makes a secondary attack against the target

Secondary Attack: +8 vs. Fortitude; 5 persistent poison damage, and the target is slowed (save ends both).

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the needle trap with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A DC 20 Dungeoneering check grants the party a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to delay or disable the trap.

Screaming Sarcophagus

Level 7 Elite Alarm (600 XP Trap)

Perception DC 30: The character notices a small glyph carved into the lid of the sarcophagus, barely distinguishable from the other decorations.

Arcana DC 26: The character notices the glyph.

Trigger: A character removed the lid of the sarcophagus.

Immediate (Reaction) Action

Ranged 1

Target: The creature that opened the sarcophagus.

Attack: +10 vs. Will

Hit: 4d6+4 psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). Aftereffect: 4d6+4 psychic damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the glyph with a DC 30 Sleight of Hand check.

Plume of Flame

Level 8 Elite Shooter (700 XP Trap)

Perception DC 26: The character notices 6 small, recessed nozzles.

Trigger: A character moves the body of the dark elf.

Initiative +5
Immediate (Reaction) Action
Near blast 6
Target: All creatures in blast
Attack: +11 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8+4 fire damage, and persistent 5 fire damage (save ends).

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable a single nozzle with a DC 26 Sleight of Hand check, reducing the blast radius by 1 for each nozzle disabled.

Bolt from the Blue

Level 8 Elite Shooter (700 XP Trap)

Perception DC 26: The character notices 3 short metal rods inset in small holes on the door. The rods extend and generate bolts of lightning when the trap is triggered.

Trigger: When a creature touches or moves the levers in the incorrect order, the trap attacks as an immediate reaction. It then rolls initiative, and attacks each round.

Initiative +5
Immediate (Reaction) Action or Standard Action
Near blast 5
Target: All creatures in blast.
Attack: +11 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8+4 lightning damage and persistent 5 lightning damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, no persistent damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable one lightning rod with a DC 26 Sleight of Hand check

Mosaic Trap

Level 8 Shooter (400 XP Trap)

Perception DC 24: The character notices that the shards seem conspicuously loose.

Trigger: A character presses an incorrect sequence of mosaics.

Initiative +5
Immediate (Reaction) Action
Near burst 5
Target: All creatures in burst.
Attack: +11 vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8+4 damage, and persistent 5 damage (save ends).

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 24 Sleight of Hand check.

Shadow Bite Trap

Level 9 Alarm (400 XP Trap)

Perception DC 20: The character notices the hinges that bring the jaws slamming shut.

Trigger: The trap attacks when a character places a limb inside the maw and attempts to pick the lock unsuccessfully.

Immediate (Reaction) Action Melee

Target: The creature that placed a limb inside the maw

Attack: +5 vs. AC; Hit: 1d8+2 damage, and the target is grappled (until escape or 4 rounds have passed). In addition, the trap makes a secondary attack against the target.

Secondary Attack: +10 vs. Fortitude; the target is injected with shadowstuff toxin. Miss: Half damage, and the target is still grabbed, but no poison is injected.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the maw with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check.

A character making a DC 25 Strength check can pry open the maw, or hold it open so that it cannot slam shut.

Acid Slime Patch

Level 10 Assassin (500 XP Trap)

Perception DC 16: The character notices the green slime on the ceiling.

Trigger: The green slime rolls initiative when a character enters the square directly beneath it.

Initiative +0

Standard Action Melee

Target: The creature beneath the patch of green slime.

Attack: +13 vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d12+6 acid damage, and the green slime makes a secondary attack against the same target. Secondary Attack: +11 vs. Fortitude; persistent 5 acid damage (save ends). Special: The green slime attacks every round a target is beneath it.

Countermeasures:

Green slime can simply be avoided if detected early enough.

A character can attack an acid slime patch (AC 5, all others 10) with fire-based attacks. A patch is destroyed if 10 points of fire damage are inflicted upon it.

Dwarf-Ward Rune

Level 10 Elite Alarm (1000 XP Trap)

Perception DC 24: The hero notices the faint rune.

Arcana DC 22: The hero notices the rune (arcane source) and provides a +2 bonus to Thievery checks to disable the trap.

Trigger: When a non-dwarf tries to open the northeast entrance.

Attack
Immediate (Reaction) Action Near burst 5
Targets: Creatures in the burst
Attack: +13 vs. Reflex
Hit: 4d8+5 force damage.
Aftereffect: 4d8+5 force damage.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent hero can disable the trap with a DC 26 Sleight of Hand (disable) check.

Rickety Old Bridge

Level 10 Elite Blocker (1000 XP Trap)

Perception DC 26: The character notices that the wooden planks in the center of the bridge are loose.

Trigger: When a creature enters one of the trap's squares.

Target: All creatures on the bridge.
Attack: Can't miss
Hit: The target(s) fall into the ravine, take 7d10 falling damage, and are knocked prone.
Effect: The bridge is destroyed.

Countermeasures:

An adjacent character can disable the trap with a DC 26 Sleight of Hand check.

A character can attempt to leap over the trapped squares, requiring a DC 20 Athletics check with a running start, or a DC 40 Athletics check without a running start.

There is a narrow path around the trapped squares of the bridge that can be negotiated with a DC 20 Acrobatics check. A character failing this check by 5 or less triggers the trap, a character failing by 5 or more falls from the bridge into the ravine below (7d10 falling damage).

Poisons

A poison applied to a weapon is transmitted to the target the next time an attack with that weapon hits, provided there is such a hit within 5 minutes of application.

Shadowstuff Toxin

Level 7

Cost: 104 gp

Attack: +10 vs Fortitude, target must make an immediate saving throw or suffer the effects listed below under first failed save. The target must then make a saving throw every hour or suffer additional effects with each failed save, as listed below. High elves and wood elves are somewhat resistant, and if successfully attacked, do not suffer the progressive symptoms listed below; instead they take 5 persistent poison damage (save ends).

First Failed Save: Victim's skin and eyes turn grey.

Second Failed Save: Shadows cling to the victim; +2 to Stealth.

Third Failed Save: Victim can no longer be healed beyond Bloodied.

Fourth Failed Save: Victim begins to flicker from existence; +2 AC.

Fifth Failed Save: The character ceases to exist and can only be returned to life by powerful magic.

Special: A successful saving throw halts the victim's progress towards a shadowy doom; however, the victim retains any advantages or disadvantages gained from the venom until an antidote is administered.

Diseases

A plague ravages the kingdom, setting the adventurers on a quest to find a cure. An adventurer emerges from an ancient tomb, unopened for centuries, and soon finds herself suffering from a wasting illness. A warlock offends some dark power and contracts a strange affliction that spreads whenever he casts spells.

A simple outbreak might amount to little more than a small drain on party resources, curable by a casting of *lesser restoration*. A more complicated outbreak can form the basis of one or more adventures as characters search for a cure, stop the spread of the disease, and deal with the consequences.

A disease that does more than infect a few party members is primarily a plot device. The rules help describe the effects of the disease and how it can be cured, but the specifics of how a disease works aren't bound by a common set of rules. Diseases can affect any creature, and a given illness might or might not pass from one race or kind of creature to another. A plague might affect only constructs or undead, or sweep through a halfling neighborhood but leave other races untouched. What matters is the story you want to tell.

Sample Diseases

The diseases here illustrate the variety of ways disease can work in the game. Feel free to alter the saving throw DCs, incubation times, symptoms, and other characteristics of these diseases to suit your campaign.

Curse of Lycanthropy

Level X (this disease is of the same level as the creature that inflicted it).

Lycanthropes are humanoids who can transform themselves into animals. In its natural form, a lycanthrope looks like any other members of its kind, though natural lycanthropes and those who have been afflicted for a long time tend to have or acquire features reminiscent of their animal forms. In animal form, a lycanthrope resembles a powerful version of the normal animal, but on close inspection, its eyes (which often glow red in the dark) show a faint spark of unnatural intelligence.

Lycanthropy can be spread like a disease, typically from the bites of lycanthropes.

Infection: One day after a humanoid creature is bitten by a lycanthrope, the creature must succeed on a saving throw or become infected.

Progression: It takes until the next full moon for lycanthropy's symptoms to manifest in an infected creature. Symptoms include heavy hair growth, irritability and a taste for raw meat.

Each time there is a full moon, an infected creature must make an Endure check: DC 14 + the level of the disease to avoid getting any worse, DC 19 + the level of the disease to get one stage better. If the infected creature reaches stage 3, the condition is permanent until specially treated.

- *Stage 0:* The infected creature is cured.
- *Stage 1:* If the infected creature is adjacent to an enemy, the creature cannot willingly move away from that enemy.
- *Stage 2:* If the infected creature is adjacent to an enemy, the creature cannot willingly move away from that enemy. The infected creature cannot use powers that target allies.
- *Stage 3:* The infected creature becomes a lycanthrope. If they have a kit, replace it with Takes Bestial Form. Whenever they use *wild shape* during the night, they cannot willingly end the effect until sunrise.

Sewer Plague

Level 3

Sewer plague is a generic term for a broad category of illnesses that incubate in sewers, refuse heaps, and stagnant swamps, and which are sometimes transmitted by creatures that dwell in those areas, such as rats and otyughs.

Infection: Five minutes after a humanoid creature is bitten by a creature that carries the disease, or comes into contact with filth or offal contaminated by the disease, the creature must succeed on a saving throw or become infected.

Progression: It takes 1d4 days for sewer plague's symptoms to manifest in an infected creature. Symptoms include fatigue and cramps. The creature begins on stage 1.

At the end of each long rest, an infected creature must make an Endure check: DC 16 to avoid getting any worse, DC 21 to get one stage better. If an infected creature reaches stage 3, the condition is permanent until specially treated.

- *Stage 0:* The infected creature is cured.
- *Stage 1:* The infected creature does not recover spent recoveries.
- *Stage 2:* The infected creature does not recover spent recoveries, cannot heal above its Staggered threshold.
- *Stage 3:* The infected creature does not recover spent recoveries and cannot heal by any means.

Cackle Fever

Level 12

This disease targets humanoids, although gnomes are strangely immune. While in the grips of this disease, victims frequently succumb to fits of hysterical laughter, giving the disease its common name and its morbid nickname: "the shrieks."

Infection: Any humanoid creature that starts its turn within 2 squares of an infected creature in the throes of hysterical laughter (see stage 1) suffers a +16 attack vs Fortitude. On a hit, it is infected with the disease. On a miss, it is immune to the hysterical laughter of that particular infected creature for 24 hours.

Progression: Symptoms manifest 1d4 hours after infection and include fever and disorientation. The infected creature gains one level of exhaustion that can't be removed until the disease is cured. The creature begins on stage 1.

At the end of each long rest, an infected creature must make an Endure check: DC 25 to avoid getting any worse, DC 28 to get one stage better. If an infected creature reaches stage 3, the condition is permanent until specially treated.

- *Stage 0:* The infected creature is cured.
- *Stage 1:* Any event that causes the infected creature great stress - including entering combat, taking damage, experiencing fear, or having a nightmare - forces the creature to make a saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 1d10 psychic damage and becomes incapacitated with hysterical laughter (save ends).
- *Stage 2:* As stage 1.
- *Stage 3:* The infected creature is affected long-term.

Sight Rot

Level 9

This painful infection causes bleeding from the eyes and eventually blinds the victim.

Infection: A beast or humanoid that drinks water tainted by sight rot suffers a +12 attack vs Fortitude. On a hit, it is infected with the disease.

Progression: One day after infection, the creature's vision starts to become blurry.

- *Stage 0:* The infected creature is cured.
- *Stage 1:* -2 penalty to attack rolls and Perception.
- *Stage 2:* -4 penalty to attack rolls and Perception.
- *Stage 3:* Blinded.

Treatment: Sight rot can be cured using a rare flower called Eyebright, which grows in some swamps. Given an hour, a character trained in Nature can turn the flower into one dose of ointment. Applied to the eyes before a long rest, one dose of it prevents the disease from worsening after that rest. After three doses, the ointment cures the disease entirely.

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