

Special Actions negative energy burst 1/day (5d4 damage, Will DC 18 half), rebuke undead 9/day (+8, 2d6+11, 5th)

Dread Necromancer Spells Thavik can cast all the 1st- (9/day), 2nd- (8/day), 3rd- (7/day), 4th- (7/day), 5th- (7/day), 6th- (7/day), and 7th- (4/day) level spells listed on page 87, plus *death watch* (as a 2nd-level spell)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th, 1d20+15 to overcome SR):
3/day—*blur*, *daze* (DC 16), *dimension door*, *mage hand*, *telekinesis* (DC 21)
1/day—*contact other plane* (outré lore), *limited wish* (heretical lore), *plane shift* (DC 23)

Abilities Str 10, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 22

Corruption 33 (severe), **Depravity** 29 (severe)

SQ lore (+12, +39 for forbidden subjects), aberrant lore, identify taint, stanch (automatically stabilize below 0 hp), forbidden arcana (bonus 1st-level spell), corruption symptoms (palsy, paralyzed face, lich eyes), depravity symptoms (mild phobia [oozes and vermin], hallucinating, paranoid)

Feats Debilitating Spell*, Empower Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Spell Penetration, Surge of Malevolence*
*New feats described in Chapter 5.

Skills Bluff +15, Concentration +21, Decipher Script +20, Diplomacy +7, Hide +5, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7

Possessions *amulet of natural armor* +3, *bracers of armor* +6, *cloak of Charisma* +4, *gloves of Dexterity* +2, *pink rhomboid ioun stone*, *ring of protection* +3

New Feats

In a horror-oriented campaign, feat selection is a vital part of establishing the mood of the experience. Feats designed to ward off the effects of taint can prove more valuable than those intended to deal a bit of extra damage, and feats that help fuel the evil magic and horrific powers that crop up in horror stories could suit monsters, villains, or even evil-leaning PCs. The feats presented in this section provide new options for characters of all classes, although some might be more suited to villains and NPCs than to those who would claim a hero's mantle.

Tainted Feats

Tainted feats can only be taken by those who have taint, as described in Chapter 4. Certain feats require more taint than others, or a specific type of taint (corruption or depravity). Anyone with a tainted feat who reduces her taint score to below the feat's prerequisites loses access to the feat. She does not, however, lose the feat itself; she has no empty slot to fill with something else, and she instantly regains use of the feat should she once more raise her taint score to the appropriate level.

These feats represent a manifestation of the fundamental corruption in both body and soul of the character who possesses them. Those who use these feats are literally drawing upon the mystical malevolence growing within like a cancer, an attitude that is not conducive to efforts to cleanse themselves of the taint.

A character who makes use of a tainted feat appears as evil to all alignment-detecting spells and abilities for 2d4 rounds thereafter, even if she is not of evil alignment. During this period, she is also subject to abilities that normally function only against evil beings, such as *magic*

circle against evil or a paladin's smite evil ability. Tainted feats are supernatural abilities (though they do not require any extra time to use, unless stated otherwise in their individual descriptions) and do not function within the area of an antimagic field.

VILE FEATS

Some of the feats presented in this book are vile feats. First introduced in *Book of Vile Darkness*, feats with the vile feats are available only to intelligent creatures of evil alignment.

This chapter contains a new subset of vile feats known as deformity feats. Deformity feats represent an intentional act of will by a character, changing him in some horrific way. The prerequisite feat for every other deformity feat is a feat called Willing Deformity; the version presented here updates and supersedes the one introduced in *Book of Vile Darkness*.

FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

The following feats either enable heroic characters to resist taint and battle the forces of darkness, or provide tainted characters with new means of benefiting from their corruption and depravity.

ARCHIVIST OF NATURE

In addition to your studies of the darkness, you have spent time studying giants and fey.

Prerequisite: Dark knowledge.

Benefit: You can use your dark knowledge on giants and fey. You use Knowledge (nature) for dark knowledge checks regarding these two creature types.

Normal: Without this feat, a character with dark knowledge can only use that class feature on aberrations, elementals, magical beasts, outsiders, and undead.

BANE MAGIC

Your spells deal extra damage to a particular type of creature.

Benefit: When you cast a spell that deals damage against a specific creature type, you deal an extra 2d6 points of damage. For example, a giant bane *lightning bolt* cast by an 8th-level caster would deal the usual 8d6 points of damage to any nongiant in its path but would deal 10d6 points of damage against giants. This feat has no effect on spells that do not deal hit point damage, and the source and type of the damage remains the same. This feat cannot be used to increase the amount of healing dealt to undead by *inflict light wounds* and similar spells, but it can add to the damage dealt by casting *cure light wounds* on an undead creature.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, you must apply its effects to a different type of creature: aberrations, animals, constructs, dragons, elementals, fey, giants, humanoids, magical beasts, monstrous humanoids, oozes, outsiders, plants, undead, or vermin. If you choose humanoids, you must select a particular type of humanoid, such as dwarf or orc.

An aberration-specific version of this feat first appeared in *Lords of Madness: The Book of Aberrations*.

TABLE 5-9: NEW FEATS

General Feats	Prerequisites	Benefit
Archivist of Nature	Dark knowledge class feature	Dark knowledge works on giants and fey
Bane Magic	—	Spells deal 2d6 extra damage to specific creature type
Blood Calls to Blood	Spontaneous arcane caster, fiend ancestor	+2 save bonus against attacks from fiends
Corrupt Spell Focus	Nongood alignment	+1 to save DC for all corrupt spells you cast
Greater Corrupt Spell Focus	Corrupt Spell Focus, nongood alignment	+2 to save DC for all corrupt spells you cast
Disease Immunity	Constitution 13	Immune to one disease, +2 bonus on saves against contracting all other diseases
Draconic Archivist	Dark knowledge class feature	Dark knowledge works on constructs and dragons
Dreamtelling	—	Interpret the symbolism of a dream
Oneiromancy	Dreamtelling, spellcaster	Avoid casting mishaps in nightmare realms, gain Spell Focus (enchantment and illusion) in dreamscape, spells cast at dream selves deal nonlethal damage
Improved Oneiromancy	Oneiromancy, Dreamtelling, spellcaster	Gain access to new dream-related spells
Font of Life	Living creature	Gain an extra save to avoid energy drain
Haunting Melody	Bardic music class feature, Perform 9 ranks	Bardic music inspires fear
Master of Knowledge	—	+1 bonus on Knowledge skill checks
Pure Soul	Non-evil alignment, no taint	Gain immunity to taint
Spirit Sense	Wis 12, near-death experience	See and speak with the recently dead
Unnatural Will	Cha 12, Iron Will	Add Cha modifier to Will saves against fear effects

BLOOD CALLS TO BLOOD

Exploring the latent potential in your blood due to your fiendish descent, you learn how to better adapt to the mystical attacks of your forebears.

Prerequisites: Spontaneous arcane caster, must be descended from a fiend.

Benefit: Against the attacks, spells, and spell-like abilities of fiends (evil outsiders) and half-fiends, you gain a +2 bonus on your saving throws. This bonus does not apply against the assaults of opponents of any other kind.

CORRUPT ARCANA [TAINTED]

You can prepare and cast corrupt spells.

Prerequisites: Spontaneous arcane or divine caster, mild depravity.

Benefit: If you have access to a corrupt spell in written form—on a scroll, in a spellbook, or in a tome of forbidden lore—you can prepare it in the same way that a wizard or cleric would. The prepared corrupt spell remains in your mind and occupies one of your daily spell slots until you cast it or change it. A prepared corrupt spell uses a spell slot of the spell's normal level, and you must pay corruption costs as normal for casting the spell.

Any corrupt spells you prepare by using this feat do not count against your total spells known, just your spells per day.

CORRUPT SPELL FOCUS

All spells you cast that have a corrupt component (such as *call forth the beast**, *master's lament**, or *chain of sorrow**) are more potent than normal.

*New spells described later in this chapter.

Prerequisite: Any nongood alignment.

Benefit: You add +1 to the DC for all saving throws against any spells you cast that have a corrupt component.

DEBILITATING SPELL [TAINTED]

By calling upon the taint within, you add a malign power to your offensive spells.

Prerequisites: Surge of Malevolence, moderate taint.

Benefit: This feat adds the evil descriptor to a spell. Furthermore, if the spell deals any physical damage to a subject, the target also takes either 2 points of Constitution damage (if your corruption is higher than your depravity) or 4 points of Wisdom damage (if your depravity is higher than your corruption). If you have an equal level of corruption and depravity, choose which sort of damage you wish to deal. The spell deals this ability damage only to a single target, even if the spell itself affects an area or more than one subject (in which case, you choose the target affected by your taint).

You can use this ability twice per day if you have moderate taint and four times per day if you have severe taint.

Special: You must declare whether you are using this feat before casting the spell. If you use this feat on a creature immune to the ability damage, that daily use of the feat is still expended.

You cannot combine this feat with Debilitating Strike on a single attack (for example, with a touch attack spell). If you have both feats, you must elect to use one or the other on a given attack.

DEBILITATING STRIKE [TAINTED]

By calling upon the taint within, you add a malign power to your melee attacks.

Prerequisites: Surge of Malevolence, moderate taint.

Benefit: This feat makes your unarmed or melee attacks evil for purposes of overcoming damage reduction. Furthermore, if you successfully attack and deal physical damage to a creature, the target also takes either 2 points of Constitution damage (if your corruption is higher than your

Monstrous Feats	Prerequisites	Benefit
Touch of Taint	Natural attack dealing ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain	Deal taint to target

Tainted Feats*	Prerequisites	Benefit
Corrupt Arcana	Spontaneous caster, mild depravity	Prepare corrupt spell not among your spells known
Eldritch Corruption	Metamagic feat, moderate depravity	Enlarge, extend, heighten, or widen a spell at the cost of your ally's Con damage
Forbidden Lore	Bardic knowledge or lore class feature, mild depravity	+2, +4, or +6 bonus on bardic knowledge or lore checks regarding sinister topics
Lunatic Insight	Mild depravity	+2 initiative bonus, treat all Knowledge skills as if they were trained skills
Mad Faith	Divine spellcaster, mild depravity	Your depravity grants you bonus spells
Surge of Malevolence	Mild taint	+3, +6, or +9 bonus on a single attack, save, or check
Debilitating Spell	Surge of Malevolence, moderate taint	Spells become evil, deal Con or Wis damage
Debilitating Strike	Surge of Malevolence, moderate taint	Melee attacks become evil, deal Con or Wis damage
Tainted Fury	Con 13, moderate corruption	Gain bonus hit points and a tainted smite attack while in a tainted fury

*Only nongood creatures suffering from taint can acquire tainted feats.

Vile Feats*	Prerequisites	Benefit
Willing Deformity	Evil alignment	+3 bonus on Intimidate checks
Deformity (Skin)	Evil alignment, Willing Deformity	+1 natural armor bonus
Deformity (Tall)	Evil alignment, Willing Deformity, Medium size	Gain reach as if Large, take -1 penalty to AC
Deformity (Teeth)	Evil alignment, Willing Deformity	Gain bite attack, +1 bonus on Intimidate checks
Deformity (Tongue)	Evil alignment, Willing Deformity	Gain blindsense 30 ft.

*Only intelligent creatures of evil alignment can acquire vile feats.

depravity) or 4 points of Wisdom damage (if your depravity is higher than your corruption). If you have an equal level of corruption and depravity, choose which sort of damage you wish to deal.

You can use this ability twice per day if you have moderate taint and four times per day if you have severe taint.

Special: You must declare whether you are using this feat before making your attack. If you use this feat on a creature immune to the ability damage, that daily use of the feat is still expended.

You cannot combine this feat with Debilitating Spell on a single attack (for example, with a touch attack spell). If you have both feats, you must elect to use one or the other on a given attack.

DEFORMITY (SKIN) [VILE]

Due to a regimen of deliberate abuse, you have roughened your skin until it has grown as coarse and tough as rhino hide.

Prerequisites: Evil alignment, Willing Deformity.

Benefit: You gain a +1 natural armor bonus.

Special: You can take this feat more than once. Its effects stack.

DEFORMITY (TALL) [VILE]

Through long and painful stints on the rack, bolstered by the surgical implantation of various splints and struts, you have stretched yourself to well over 7 feet in height.

Prerequisites: Evil alignment, Willing Deformity, Medium size.

Benefit: Even though you are still technically a Medium creature, your improved height and lanky limbs grant you an additional 5 feet to your reach, thereby allowing you to strike nonadjacent squares with nonreach weapons.

Special: You are a larger and clumsier target than you were before undergoing the height extension, giving you -1 to your AC. You also take a -2 penalty on Hide checks.

DEFORMITY (TEETH) [VILE]

By filing your teeth to points and brutalizing your gums, you gain a hideous smile full of razor-sharp teeth that enable you to make a grisly bite attack.

Prerequisites: Evil alignment, Willing Deformity.

Benefit: You gain a bite attack that can be used as a natural weapon to deal damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier. If you attack with other weapons, you can use your bite as a secondary attack (taking a -5 penalty on your attack roll) for 1d4 + half Strength modifier damage. In addition, you gain a +1 bonus on Intimidate checks.

DEFORMITY (TONGUE) [VILE]

Through protracted self-mutilation that involves frequently piercing your tongue and dipping it in acid, your tongue becomes hideous to behold but oddly sensitive to the environment.

Prerequisites: Evil alignment, Willing Deformity.

Benefit: You gain the ability to sense your surroundings by taste, much as a serpent can. You gain the blindsense ability out to a range of 30 feet.

DISEASE IMMUNITY

Whether due to prolonged exposure or natural hardiness, you have grown immune to some diseases and resistant to all others.

Prerequisite: Constitution 13.

Benefit: You are immune to one specific type of disease, such as the red ache or mummy rot. In addition, you gain

a +2 circumstance bonus on saving throws against other diseases (including magical diseases). You recover points lost to ability damage from disease at double the normal rate (2 points per day, rather than 1). If someone with the Heal skill (including yourself) uses your blood to help someone with the disease to which you are immune, the diseased character automatically makes his saving throw to recover. If your blood is used to aid in the healing of someone with any other disease, it provides a +4 bonus on the Heal check.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you take it, you become immune to a new disease. The +2 circumstance bonus against other diseases does not stack with itself, since the circumstances of each disease immunity are essentially the same.

DRACONIC ARCHIVIST

In addition to your studies of the darkness, you have spent time studying dragons and constructs.

Prerequisite: Dark knowledge.

Benefit: You can use your dark knowledge ability on dragons and constructs. You use Knowledge (arcana) for dark knowledge checks regarding these two creature types.

Normal: Without this feat, a character with dark knowledge can use that class feature only on aberrations, elementals, magical beasts, outsiders, and undead.

DREAMTELLING

You can use your Knowledge (the planes) skill to interpret your dreams or the dreams of others, thus glean useful information and insights.

Benefit: You can interpret the basic symbolism of a dream to figure out what sorts of concerns or fears are likely to have inspired it.

	Knowledge (the planes)
Dream Being Interpreted . . .	DC
Features obvious symbolism	10
Involves cultural details or concepts with which you are not very familiar	15
Represents memories of past events with which you are not familiar	20
Both the previous conditions are true	25

Attempting to garner insight into future events, or events occurring elsewhere, by reading the prophetic images of a dream adds +10 to +20 to the base DC, depending on how obscure the omens are.

The DM must decide if a dream contains prophetic imagery; a sufficiently high roll might glean some information even if the dream was not overtly oracular. Making the DC required to interpret a dream grants information comparable to an *augury* spell (see page 202 of the *Player's Handbook*). Exceeding the required check by 10 or more offers information comparable to a *divination* spell (see page 224 of the *Player's Handbook*). Exceeding the required check by 20 or more offers information comparable to a *commune* spell (see page 211 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Even if your result was not high enough to enable you to read prophetic images, the result might be sufficient to

interpret basic symbols and events. Thus, a check result of 18 is insufficient to foretell the future but still grants some information about cultural details or concepts.

You can use this feat to determine what effect injuries received in a dreamscape are likely to have on you once you return (DC 15), or whether an item or location was created by the dreamer or brought in from outside (DC 20); see Chapter 3 for information on adventuring within dreamscapes.

Finally, this feat allows Knowledge (the planes) to function in place of Survival when used within a dreamscape. This skill can be used to retrace your steps and return to a known person's dream, or to attempt to track a creature across the dreamscape.

Action: Dreamtelling requires careful analysis of bizarre images and events. If you are trying to interpret your own dream, you must cogitate on it for a number of minutes equal to 30 minus your Intelligence modifier. If you wish to analyze someone else's dream, that person must first describe it to you in great detail, adding an additional 10+1d10 minutes to the process.

Try Again: No. The check represents your ability to interpret that particular dream. You can attempt to interpret other dreams the same individual has later, but you get only one attempt per dream. Similarly, you have only one attempt to determine whether an item is native to a particular dream.

Special: Most campaigns are not set up to interact with the dream world. Hence, this feat is only available if the DM specifically states that he or she has decided to allow it in his or her campaign.

ELDRITCH CORRUPTION [TAINTED]

You can add power to your spells or spell-like abilities at the expense of your companions' health.

Prerequisites: Any one metamagic feat, moderate depravity.

Benefit: You can enlarge, extend, heighten, or widen a spell, as though you had the appropriate metamagic feat, without increasing the spell level or, for spontaneous casters, casting time. You can apply any number of these metamagic effects to a spell in this way; if you choose heighten, then that spell's level is heightened by up to two levels.

For each level of metamagic you apply, one of your allies takes 2 points of Constitution damage. In this case, "ally" is defined as someone who knowingly and willingly fights alongside you against a common foe, or who otherwise considers you a trusted companion. You decide, when casting the spell, which ally takes the Constitution damage. You cannot select an ally immune to Constitution damage or an ally without a Constitution score. For purposes of this spell, you cannot designate a summoned or charmed being as your ally.

You can use this feat three times per day.

Special: You can select this feat more than once. Each time you do, you gain an additional three uses per day.

FONT OF LIFE

Your life-force is strong enough to make you highly resistant to all forms of energy drain and level loss.

Prerequisite: Must be a living creature.

Benefit: Whenever you are struck by an attack that drains energy or bestows negative levels, you gain an immediate saving throw to resist the effect at the standard Difficulty Class of the attack. If this initial save is successful, you avoid any negative levels but you still suffer any other effects of the attack or spell. If this save fails, the attack proceeds as if this roll had never been made (meaning you still receive whatever save to which you're normally entitled).

FORBIDDEN LORE [TAINTED]

You gain hideous insights into subjects not meant to be understood by mortal minds.

Prerequisites: Bardic knowledge or lore, mild depravity.

Benefit: When you make a bardic knowledge or lore check, you add a bonus to the check if the question touches on supernatural, horrific, tainted, or otherwise forbidden subjects (at the DM's discretion). Add a +2 bonus if you are mildly tainted, a +4 bonus if you are moderately tainted, and a +6 bonus if you are severely tainted.

GREATER CORRUPT SPELL FOCUS

Your corrupt spells are now even more potent than they were before.

Prerequisites: Corrupt Spell Focus, nongood alignment.

Benefit: You gain an additional +1 to the DC of all spells you cast that contain a corrupt component. This stacks with the bonus gained from the Corrupt Spell Focus feat, for a total of +2.

HAUNTING MELODY

You can use your music to inspire fear.

Prerequisites: Bardic music, Perform 9 ranks.

Benefit: When you sing or use some other Perform skill, you can inspire fear in enemies within 30 feet of you. Any opponent in range must succeed on a Will saving throw (DC 10 + 1/2 your bard level + your Cha modifier) or become shaken for a number of rounds equal to your ranks in the Perform skill. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Special: Using this ability counts as one of your daily uses of bardic music.

IMPROVED ONEIROMANCY

With the Improved Oneiromancy feat, you gain additional dream-related spellcasting abilities.

Prerequisites: Dreamcasting, Oneiromancy, spellcaster.

Benefit: Your spell list expands to include a number of dream-related spells (all described later in this chapter), regardless of what sort of caster you might be. You must still learn or prepare these spells normally; they are added to your class list, not necessarily to the list of spells you personally know.

1st Level: *restful slumber*

4th Level: *dream walk*, *manifest desire*, *manifest nightmare*

5th Level: *dreaming puppet*

7th Level: *dream sight*

LUNATIC INSIGHT [TAINTED]

Your madness grants you insight and knowledge.

Prerequisite: Mild depravity.

Benefit: Due to unpredictable flashes of insight, you are considered trained in all Knowledge skills, even if you have no ranks in them. You also gain a +2 morale bonus on initiative rolls and to resist mind-affecting spells and abilities.

Normal: Knowledge skills cannot be used untrained.

MAD FAITH [TAINTED]

Your depravity has twisted the connection between you and your patron deity. You suffer flashes of insight interrupted by flashes of madness.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast 1st-level divine spells, mild depravity.

Benefit: You gain a bonus 1st-level divine spell per day. If you have moderate depravity, then you also gain a 2nd-level divine spell per day. If you have severe depravity, then you also gain a 3rd-level divine spell per day. However, it takes twice as long for you to pray for your spells each day.

MASTER OF KNOWLEDGE

You have spent most of your life in study, and it comes naturally to you now.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to all Knowledge skill checks.



With the Font of Life feat, Eberk stands strong against the undead

ONEIROMANCY

You gain a number of abilities and advantages related to dreams and magic.

Prerequisites: Dreamtelling, ability to cast spells of any sort.

Benefit: Oneiromancy grants you a number of interrelated bonuses. First, when casting spells in a nightmare realm, your spells always work as normal; you do not risk the same mishaps that other casters experience.

Second, while in the dreamscape, you are considered to have Spell Focus (enchantment) and Spell Focus (illusion), due to your ability to manipulate the thoughts of dreamers and the stuff of dreams. If you already have Spell Focus in one or both of these schools, the DC bonus to saves stacks so long as you remain within the dreamscape.

Third, you can target your offensive spells at a target's dream self, rather than his physical form. Because this deals mental damage only, it transforms all damage dealt by that spell into nonlethal damage. This effect functions only on creatures that both sleep and dream: Constructs, plants, undead, and elves are immune to this effect. Only spells that target a single creature or specific number of creatures benefit from this effect; you cannot apply it to spells that target an area.

Special: Because you are more tightly connected to the world of dreams, you are more susceptible to certain types of mental manipulation. You take a -1 penalty on saves against enchantment and illusion spells and effects when in the physical realm. If you are slain while mentally traveling the dreamscape, your physical body dies, whether or not this is the case for most travelers.

Normal: Casters in nightmare realms have a chance of mishap when casting spells. In some instances, those who die in the dreamscape experience effects other than death in the real world. See *Adventuring in Nightmare Realms* in Chapter 3.

PURE SOUL

Your faith or purity of mind overrides the evils within you. You are immune to taint.

Prerequisites: Any non-evil alignment, no taint.

Benefit: You do not gain taint.

SPIRIT SENSE

You can see and communicate with the souls of the recently departed.

Prerequisites: Wisdom 12, must have had a near-death experience (that is, must have fallen below 0 hit points).

Benefit: You can see the spirits of creatures who have died within a number of minutes equal to your Wisdom bonus. For instance, if your Wisdom is 17 (+3 bonus), you can see the spirits of creatures that have died within the past 3 minutes. You can speak with these spirits, but you gain no special ability to command them or to communicate with them if you do not share a language. These spirits are not creatures per se and cannot be harmed or affected in any way, magical or otherwise.

In addition, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus on Listen or Spot checks made to detect incorporeal creatures.

SURGE OF MALEVOLENCE [TAINTED]

You empower yourself by drawing on the taint within.

Prerequisite: Mild taint.

Benefit: Once per day, you can add a bonus on any single attack roll, saving throw, or check. You must make the decision to add the bonus before you roll the die. The amount that you add varies, based on your corruption. If you have mild corruption, then the bonus is equal to +3. If you have moderate corruption, then the bonus is equal

to +6. If you have severe corruption, then the bonus is equal to +9.

TAINTED FURY [TAINTED]

You can channel your physical corruption into a state of fury.

Prerequisites: Constitution 13, moderate corruption.

Benefit: Embracing the corruption within your body, you can enter a state of tainted fury. In this state, you gain a number of hit points equal to your corruption score. These hit points are not lost first like temporary hit points; when your tainted fury ends, you must subtract this number from your hit point total.

During your tainted fury, you can declare one melee attack to be a tainted smite and add half your corruption score to the damage dealt by that attack. If you strike a creature immune to the effects of taint (such as an undead creature or a creature with the Evil subtype), that tainted smite is expended but deals no additional damage.

Your tainted fury lasts for a number of rounds equal to your corruption score. When it ends, you must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + your corruption score). If you fail this save, you take 1d6 points of Constitution damage and are sickened for 1 minute.

TOUCH OF TAINT [MONSTROUS]

One of your attack forms that normally deals ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain can also deal corruption or depravity.

Prerequisites: Natural attack that deals ability damage (including poison), ability drain, or energy drain.

Benefit: Choose one of your natural attacks that deals ability damage or ability drain or bestows negative levels. That attack now increases the target's corruption or depravity score by 1 point along with the ability damage or drain it deals. If your attack deals ability damage or drain to a physical ability score (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution), it now also increases the target's corruption score. If the attack deals ability damage or drain to a mental ability score (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma), it now also increases the target's depravity score. If the attack bestows negative levels, you can choose whether it increases a specific target's corruption or depravity score.

If the attack you choose bestows more than one negative level, it now increases the target's taint score by 2 points. You can choose to have it increase a target's corruption by 2 points, increase a target's depravity by 2 points, or increase each score by 1 point.

UNNATURAL WILL

You have learned to focus your force of personality and inner strength to stand against fearful circumstances.

Prerequisites: Charisma 12, Iron Will.

Benefit: Add your Charisma modifier to all Will saves against fear effects. This bonus stacks with any Wisdom bonus you might have to Will saves.

Special: This feat is used by dread witches to resist the negative effects of fear while still empowering their mystical abilities.

WILLING DEFORMITY [VILE]

Through scarification, self-mutilation, or supplication to dark powers, you intentionally mar your own body.

Prerequisite: Evil alignment.

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Dread Magic

Power-crazed sorcerers conjure demons from the nether pits of the Abyss. Mad wizards spill their own blood to give strength to their spells and bindings. Necromancers make the dead walk, and sap the life from the living. The stuff of horror already informs the magic of the D&D game. This section includes new spells and artifacts for characters and (especially) villains in a horror game.

VARIANT: EVIL SPELLS AND TAINT

Under this variant, casting evil spells causes the caster to acquire taint. Each time a character casts a spell with the evil descriptor, she must make a Will save (DC 10 + spell level) or increase her depravity score by 1.

The tainted scholar prestige class uses this rule by default, as specified in the class description (see Tainted Spellcasting, page 115). As a variant, the Dungeon Master can impose this penalty on characters of any class who cast evil spells.

CORRUPT SPELLS

Those who delve into black magic have learned of exceedingly evil spells that take an appalling toll on the caster in exchange for their powerful but foul effects. These vile applications of magic are known as corrupt spells. They are thankfully few in number.

Spellcasters prepare corrupt spells just as they do regular spells, but corrupt spells are available only to spellcasters who prepare spells. Wizards and clerics, for example, can use corrupt magic, but sorcerers and bards cannot normally do so. A sorcerer or bard could, however, cast a corrupt spell from a scroll. In addition, the Corrupt Arcana feat presented on page 120 allows spontaneous spellcasters to prepare and cast corrupt spells.

A corrupt spell has no material component, but it does have a corruption cost. Casting a corrupt spell draws power from the mental or physical well-being of the caster in the form of ability damage or ability drain. The ability damage or drain occurs when the spell's duration expires. No corrupt spells have a permanent duration.

If a corrupt spell is made into a potion, scroll, wand, or other magic item, the user of the item takes the ability damage or ability drain, not the creator. This corruption cost, mentioned in the spell's descriptive text, is paid each time the item is used.

Corrupt spells are not specific to any character class. Furthermore, they aren't inherently divine or arcane spells; a divine caster casting a corrupt spell casts it as a divine spell, and an arcane caster casts it as an arcane spell.

Book of Vile Darkness includes additional spells beyond the ones contained in this chapter.

SPELL LISTS

Following are the lists for all standard classes of new spells and domains presented in this book.

BARD SPELLS

5th Level

Cloak of Hate: Target provokes hostile reactions, takes -10 penalty on Diplomacy checks.

6th Level

Familial Geas: Commands subject to undertake a task, which passes to his nearest kin if he dies.

BLACKGUARD SPELLS

1st Level

Summon Undead I^F: Summons undead to fight for you.

2nd Level

Summon Undead II^F: Summons undead to fight for you.

3rd Level

Summon Undead III^F: Summons undead to fight for you.

4th Level

Summon Undead IV^F: Summons undead to fight for you.

CLERIC SPELLS

1st Level

Detect Taint: Reveals creatures or objects with taint.

Summon Undead I^{DF}: Summons undead to fight for you.

2nd Level

Summon Undead II^{DF}: Summons undead to fight for you.

3rd Level

Resist Taint: Bestows +4 bonus on saves against taint.

Rigor Mortis: Suspends all vital functions; target appears dead.

Summon Undead III^{DF}: Summons undead to fight for you.

4th Level

Pronouncement of Fate: Imposes a -4 penalty on an offender's attacks, damage, saves, and checks; target loses actions.

Summon Undead IV^{DF}: Summons undead to fight for you.

5th Level

Fire in the Blood*: Your blood becomes a potent corrosive that burns attackers.

Oath of Blood: Extends a *geas* beyond death that compels the target to animate and continue her quest as undead.

Summon Undead V^{DF}: Summons undead to fight for you.

6th Level

Cloak of Hate: Target provokes hostile reactions, takes -10 penalty on Diplomacy checks.