

# Footprints

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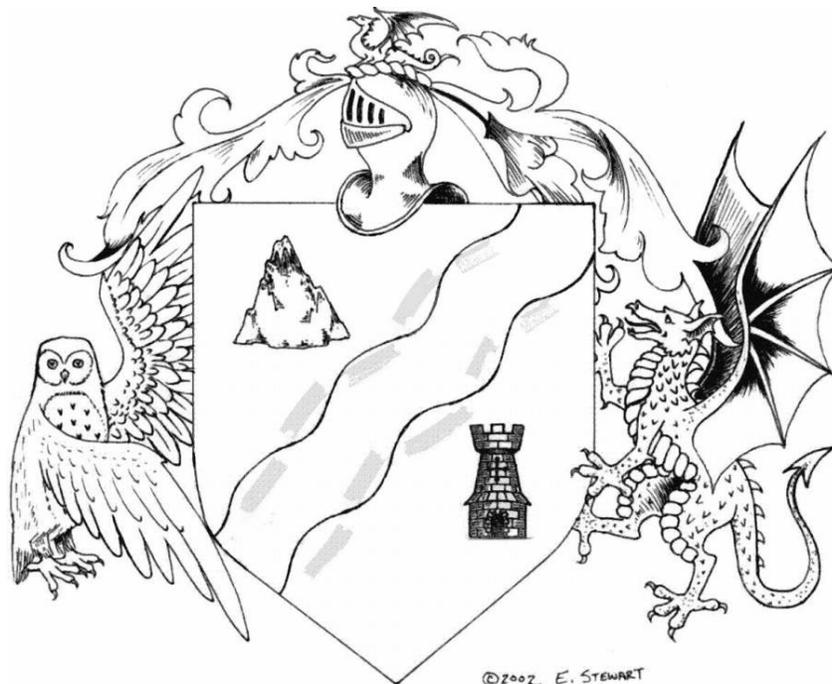
## % in Lair:

Well, here we are again with another issue of Footprints! This one is a bit lighter than some recent issues, but we're still packed with old-school goodness from the likes of **Jim Ward** (who provides our mini-module this issue) and **Len Lakofka** (who submitted two articles for this issue)! Ability score improvement rules by Joe Maccarone, an excellent Swords & Sorcery fiction piece by C. Wesley Clough, a couple of undead nasties by John A. Turcotte, and food for gamers collected by Jonathon Fletcher round out the issue.

Footprints wouldn't exist if it weren't for the efforts of our readers. Send us your classic AD&D game materials, be they spells, monsters, house rules, or even mini-modules. And hey, if you have an AD&D module but it's just a bit too big for Footprints, don't forget that the Dragonsfoot team would love to publish it for you!

Best wishes for the new year, and as one Dragonsfoot member likes to say, "may your zombies remain intact!"

*Chris Gommerman*



# The Ebony Tower

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## An RPGA AD&D adventure!

To begin this adventure, have an NPC patron of the player characters call them in and tell them the following story:

Hundreds of years ago the Ebony Tower was created overnight by a wizard of immense power. Everything about the tower is said to be deadly. Over the years, invited guests have left to tell of animated assassin statues and floating weapons made out of black stone. Even the lowest commoner knows the tower must also be filled with wondrous treasures. In the course of time the wizard who built the tower died of old age. He had no relatives to inherit it, so now the city has sold the tower. You have been chosen to investigate its chambers, and all the treasure you can find is your reward. Lots of luck.

After any preparations have been made, and the journey to the tower completed, describe the approach to the tower as follows:

You come upon the Ebony Tower. It's a thick spire, three stories tall. There's only one set of double doors, with a huge statue on either side. The statues are in the form of female warriors and they are armed with huge stone maces. There are no windows in the structure, and the top of the tower rises in a cone shape, to a sharp point.

### 1: Statue Guarded Portal

The statues can't be good for you... there's dried blood on the stone mace heads. As you look things over you notice the large double doors. They appear to be made out of the same black stone as the rest of the tower. There's a huge bell above the door, but there appears to be no way to ring it. The brass bell is heavily dented on its right and left side.

DM's Notes: Naturally, these are Caryatid Columns. If the characters make some effort to ring the bell, the two Caryatids ring the bell once for every character and the portal opens. If characters do anything else to the door, the two Caryatids attack. The Caryatids don't leave the area and never give chase. The portal is *wizard locked* at the 12<sup>th</sup> level of magic use and otherwise requires 75 points of damage to open it.

### Caryatid Column (2)

AC 5, HD 5, hp 22, #AT 1, Dmg 2d4. 25% chance a weapon shatters when striking the Column, -5% to that chance for each magical plus of a weapon. The Column receives +4 on all its saving throws. Magical weapons inflict only half damage on the Column, which, when killed, crumbles to dust. Stone-altering spells kill it.

## FIRST FLOOR

### 2: Food Preparation

You discover what appears to be a normal kitchen. There are tables, pots, pans, cabinets filled with empty jars and sacks, a cold oven, stacks of fire wood, and cabinets filled with dishes, cups, and cutlery. All the food is gone and everything is in order, waiting for the next cook.

### 3: Guardians at the Gates

This open area has 11 different life-like statues of human warriors, all animated in some way. They are either turning round and round on stands, or their weapons are swishing through the air, or they are walking back and forth in front of a very large door made of stone.

DM's Notes: The two statues walking in front of the door have strict magical orders that no

one is to enter that chamber. They fight to the death to make sure that happens.

### Stone Guardian (2)

AC 2, HD 4+4, hp 24, #AT 2, Dmg 1d8 +1/1d8 +1, suffers ¼ damage from edged weapons, takes ½ damage from cold, fire, or electrical attacks. Normal missiles do no damage. Stone spells kill it.

### 4: Stone Storage

This room contains thirty or so large blocks of stone. These stones are various types, mainly marble, granite, sandstone and quartz. There's also a great deal of stone cutting and moving equipment around the area, from many different types of hammers and spikes to large rolling carts. As you look at this equipment you notice a pulley system on the ceiling rigged to move stones.

### 5: Carving Chamber

Opening the door you discover a chamber with over an inch of stone dust on the floor. There seem to be two unfinished carvings at the center of the chamber. As you crowd the doorway, one of the statues turns slightly and speaks to you: "Oh do come in. I've been waiting so long for someone to appear." The speaking statue is a carving of a young human warrior.

The speaking warrior wants nothing more than to have its heel chipped away from the large piece of marble at its side. When this is done the animated creature will be free. For this service it vows to help the group while they are in the tower.

There are a set of magical stone tools here that make cutting through rock ten times easier than normal. The tools have to be charged with each full moon by leaving them in the moonlight all night. Their use makes an incredible amount of noise, attracting all sorts of nearby creatures. That's why the wizard only used them in this sound proof chamber.

The other statue is of a young human female warrior. Her feet need a lot of work to free,

and she says nothing to the group, but once in a while turns her head to stare at them. If freed she takes the male carving and they leave the tower forever and his promise will be broken.

Hidden under the chalk dust is a trap door to the wizard's chambers under the tower. The dust on the floor will be magically smoothed after each trapdoor opening. There is no ladder, but anyone entering the trap door will be levitated down. Likewise, anyone wishing to come back up needs only to stand beneath the trap door to be levitated up.

### 6: Talking Stairs

You discover wide stairs going up. On each step, on the riser facing you, is a carved gargoyle face.

The referee is meant to have great fun with the intelligence of this staircase. The staircase has a happy-go-lucky personality. It's more than willing to talk to the characters while they aren't walking on it. When they do walk on it, the stair screams in pain. Then it gets nasty with sayings like:

"My, you are a heavy one."

"From where I am you don't look so good. I predict really bad things in your future.

Those feet have been in some really nasty places lately."

If the characters treat the stairs with respect they can learn all about the first floor and rooms 2, 3, and 4.

The stairs from level two up to level three are very much the same with a slightly sadder personality. Those stairs will talk about all the chambers on the second level.

## SECOND FLOOR

### 7: Servants Work Area

Walking the halls in this level you see all sorts of work areas. There are benches for candle and lantern making, benches for

polishing stone, several looms for rug making, and in a larger area you discover a forge for working iron. There's a large supply of coal by the forge.

### **8: Lesser Servant's Quarters**

This dust-filled chamber is filled with cheap cots and empty chests. It doesn't look as if anyone's lived in it for a long time.

### **9: Greater Servant's Quarters**

As you open the door you find a well-lit chamber. The magical glow of the area shows three finely crafted beds, three large cabinets, three large chests, and three different styles of writing desks.

This is the area for the skilled artisans. Everything has been cleared out long ago. A simple spell lights up the room every time the door is opened. The light fades after a few minutes.

### **10: Presentation Chamber**

As you open this door, gentle flute music begins playing. Looking in, you see a round chamber with four wondrous statues. At the center of the chamber are a table and two chairs. On the table are several bottles and chalices of stone.

These statues are of females: an elf, a dwarf, a human, and a dryad. If a person sits in one of the chairs the statues animate and dance gracefully around the chamber. If the statues leave the chamber they will never animate again.

The bottles of wine are expensive. The four chalices have carvings of females on them and the chalices talk when filled and picked up. The chalices are very intelligent and very sarcastic. They have the dwarven abilities to note sloping passages and new stone work. If taken, they will constantly criticize their masters.

### **11: Alchemy Storage**

You discover some sort of storage chamber. There are many shelves containing large clay vessels of many different types.

There are hundreds of different types of stored dust and earths in the jars. There's nothing of value here. Some of the jars have glowing types of earth; these are curiosities and nothing more, as the glow isn't bright enough to help in a dungeon.

## **THIRD FLOOR**

### **12: Outer Carving Corridors**

The corridors between the rooms are filled with high quality statues. Each of the statues moves in some way, being supported by almost invisible wires or set into gliding trenches. This causes the statues to sway and move as people walk by. All of the statues have been made by creatures with STONE TO FLESH abilities.

### **13: Elite Carving Corridors**

The other half of the third floor is filled with stone weapons of many types. These weapons are all suspended on pulley systems and sway and move as people walk by. Stone maces, axes, spears, spikes, clubs, hammers, and many sizes of stone spheres swing back and forth all over these corridor sections.

### **14: Warrior Statues**

These three chambers each have ten animated dwarven statues. If the characters have taken any of the tools from level one or two, they can command these dwarves and the statues will obey simple orders. The statues are obviously magical, but turn to dust if they leave the tower. These simple constructs can only do one point of damage with their stone hammers as they move very slowly.

## 15: Monster Statues

As you open this door you hear sucking noises and the soft sigh of a woman. Looking in, you see only darkness.

Both of these chambers have an animated statue of a vampire apparently sucking the blood of a lovely female elf. The statues are painted to look real. If bothered they both attack.

### Stone Guardian (2)

AC 2, HD 4+4, hp 24, #AT 2, Dmg 1d8+1/1d8+1, suffers ¼ damage from edged weapons, takes ½ damage from cold, fire, or electrical attacks. Normal missiles do no damage. Stone-altering spells destroy them.

## 16: Imprisoned Medusa

This chamber is filled with mirrors, reflecting whatever light you shine into the area. At the center of the chamber is a large stone bed. Chained to the bed is a live Medusa. The creature doesn't rise as your lights shine on it.

The Medusa is almost starved to death and completely helpless. She has been trained not to look at the faces of those who enter the area and constantly keeps her head down. She will talk with the characters if they address her. The Ebony Wizard used her power to turn enemies into stone. All she wants to do is leave, and she will beg for mercy.

## 17: Cockatrice Cages

As you open this door you hear the clucking of chickens. In the chamber are two large cages. At the center of each cage is a huge, rooster-like creature. They've eaten all their food and water and appear to be starving to death. Neither one moves much as your lights shine on them.

These are two helpless Cockatrices. If the birds die they lose the power to turn things to stone with a touch.

## 18: Medusa Portrait

At the center of this chamber is a covered frame of some kind. There are several statues of surprised-looking men dressed as merchants in this room.

The frame is a highly magical portrait of a Medusa. The picture is six feet tall by four feet wide. If the characters do not take precautions in uncovering it, they must save or be turned to stone. The picture won't transport well and certainly can't be used adventuring, as the first rip or tear will destroy the magical effect.

## 19: Guardian's Den

From the trap door you can see a large, well-lit chamber below. There's a great deal of stone dust and sand on the floor. You can't see any doors. There are quite a few worm-like things moving in the sand, but you can't tell what they are.

The magic of the trap doors forces the characters to gently float down if they enter it. They cannot go down any other way as the magic of the trap door will actively resist ropes, ladders, etc. from being used. As soon as any characters touch the sand they will be attacked by the Sandling.

### Sandling

AC 3, HD 4, hp 16, #AT 1, Dmg 2d8, appearing as a pile of sand. Characters are surprised on 1-4 on 1d6. The parent is ten feet long, and there are hundreds of 4 inch long non-combatant young flowing all over the area.

The secret door is *wizard locked* at the 12<sup>th</sup> level, and opens only when something made of stone touches it.

## 20: Wizard's Quarters

The wizard lived simply, but well. The bed and other furniture in the area are well made and of marble. A large stone closet is filled with wizard's robes. A set of 12<sup>th</sup> level spell books are on the stone writing desk. He was an expert in Alteration magic, and there are

three Alteration spells per level in his tomes (DM's discretion as to which ones).

### 21: Treasure Area

There are five pedestals in this area and a large carved tub. The tub holds a Black Pudding. This pudding has been trained to rest in the tub until vibrations awaken it, at which point it begins attacking the largest mass in the character party.

### Black Pudding

AC 6, HD 10, hp 50, #AT 1, Dmg 3d8; as the pudding engulfs a victim its corrosive nature destroys most metal in a round and plate mail

in two rounds. *Lightning* and blows divide them into smaller versions (see the Monster Manual for details).

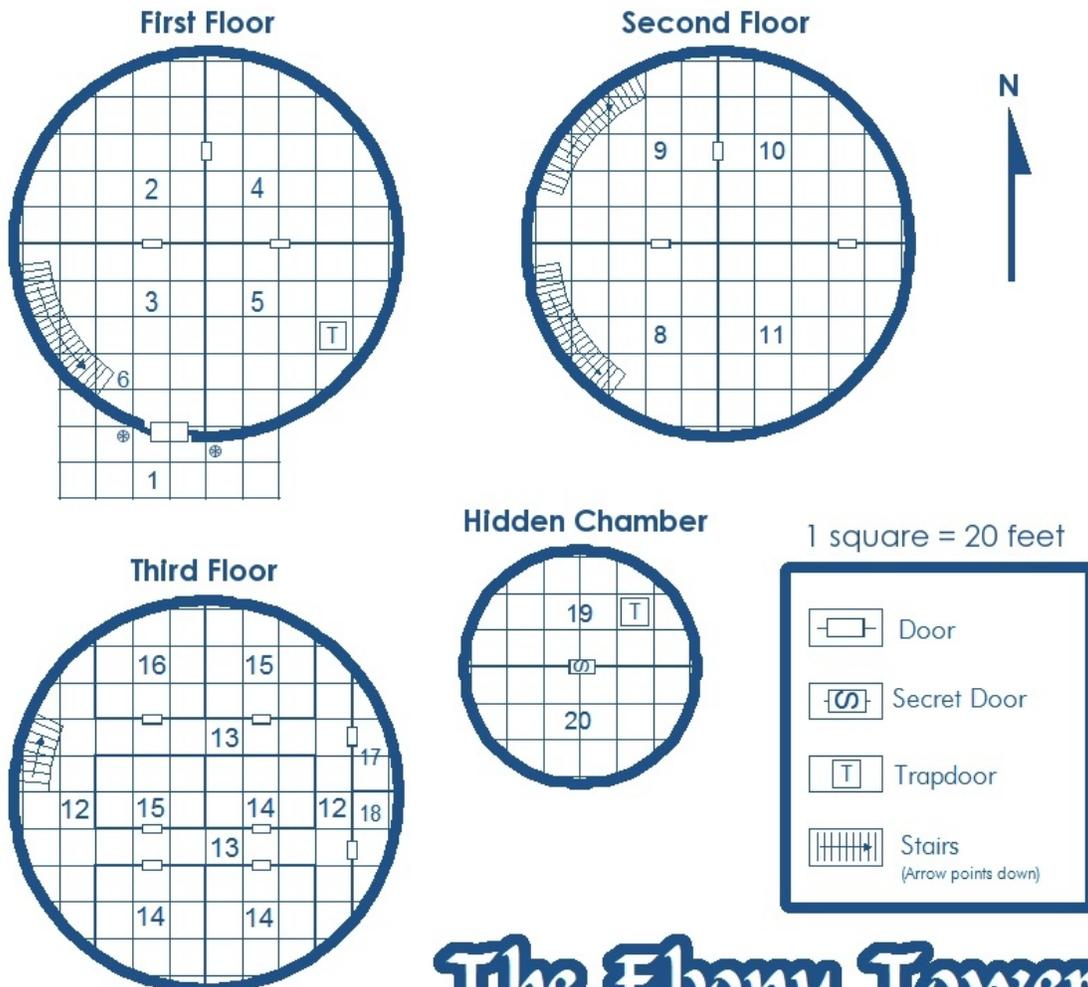
*Pedestal One:* A small stone coffer on this pedestal holds 1,000 gp.

*Pedestal Two:* A small stone chalice holds ten blue-white diamonds, each worth 5,000 gp.

*Pedestal Three:* An alabaster urn holds a perfect emerald worth 1,000 gp.

*Pedestal Four:* A magical Ebony Fly rests here.

*Pedestal Five:* A human skull, magically turned to stone, rests on this stand.



# The Ebony Tower

## The Clergy of Phaulkon

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When a young man or woman presents his or herself at the temple of Phaulkon seeking to become an acolyte, the priest takes a measure of the person.

The priest is seeking someone whose minimum wisdom is 12 and who has a reasonable dexterity (12+), as well a presence (charisma 10+), and the ability to speak with intelligence (10+). Of course, the applicant must be of Good Alignment. Lawfulness is usually frowned upon if it is too rigid and the person is too stubborn about it. A series of questions and tests are given to the 13 year- old (or older) applicant over a two-week period to determine whether these minimum standards are met and to prepare a trainee for the eventual role of Acolyte.

Studies for the applicant are rigorous and last a minimum of one full year with those of greater potential adding one, two, or even three more years to their training. Of course the acolyte must be able to read and write at least one language. He or she is also taught a secret hand gesture language that will be augmented as he or she progresses from level to level.

All of Phaulkon's clergy are taught the use of the bow and arrow as well as the ability to fight hand to hand with a dagger. Those clerics who have a dexterity and strength score of 13 or more may use the FIGHTER ATTACK MATRIX with these weapons. Further, all clergy, regardless of characteristic scores, at 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> level gain a 50% greater chance for an extra arrow on each combat round, i.e., 50% at 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> level, one extra arrow between 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> level and one extra arrow plus a 50% for one more after 12<sup>th</sup> level. Phaulkon's clerics fire two arrows per round normally.

At later levels he or she will also learn how to use the long sword but uses the CLERIC ATTACK MATRIX when so armed. The cleric gains proficiency with a throwing dagger by his or her 2<sup>nd</sup> level of achievement.

It is rare for a cleric of Phaulkon to employ a hammer, mace or flail but these weapons are not forbidden to him or her. The students are not usually taught by the other clergy, but a fighter companion of similar alignment and of at least the same level as the cleric may teach him or her the use of one of these weapons.

Phaulkon's clergy may wear leather, studded leather or chain mail and may employ a circular small shield. They never wear splint or plate mail.

The lower clergy wear a very light blue tunic during day-to-day work and travel (first to third level). At fourth level through sixth, the cleric wears a medium blue tunic. The color becomes dark blue at seventh level and remains dark blue through eighth level. Upon becoming a High Priest, the tunic changes to a multi color blue garment that depicts clouds and some flying bird.

The majority of clergy wear jewelry (such as a talisman, brooch or ear ring) that is shaped like a bird in flight or even a group of arrows. Real feathers are also common adornment, worn in the hair or pinned to the garment he or she is wearing.

During ceremonies these color codes give way to pure white for all levels but those above 4<sup>th</sup> level add a blue scarf of medium or dark blue to show their rank. Headdresses of hawk and eagle feathers are worn during major ceremonies. A cleric is expected to gain these feathers on his or her own but never from slaying a hawk or eagle. At a high level the cleric simply asks the bird for a feather and the bird will usually comply.

Clergy of 5<sup>th</sup> level can speak with ordinary birds of any type. At 8<sup>th</sup> level this ability will increase to include all feathered creatures of the material plane including those with magical ability such as a cockatrice. Speaking with a feathered creature does not

include control but there is a influence in the ability to do so.

Eighth level clergy can fly as the magic user spell. At 11<sup>th</sup> level a High Priest may *control winds* once per day as an 11<sup>th</sup> level druid. At 16<sup>th</sup> level a High Priest can summon an eight hit die Air Elemental or a minor Djinni who will serve for a full day. This summoning may occur once per week.

Some of Phaulkon's clergy, those with scores of 15 or greater for both Intelligence and Wisdom may forgo a promotion above 9<sup>th</sup> level to gain Sage abilities. He or she must be supported by a collection of works ( books, tomes and scrolls) on one or two topics as well as items on the general knowledge of the world as it is known. Such a High Priest/Sage will often study in the areas of Flora, Fauna or Supernatural and Unusual. Like their god they may also seek knowledge about specific Artifacts that are known to exist in the Prime Material.

Neutral Good clergy of Phaulkon may study limited druidical powers and abilities. In exchange for a promotion above 7<sup>th</sup> level they may learn to *polymorph* into a bird or mammal once per day for a period of 1d4+4 hours. The polymorph grants them 1-8 hit points of curing. This knowledge is taught by a friendly druid who is at least one full level of experience above the cleric.

If a cleric has given up the experience points he or she needed for either sage or polymorph ability then he or she must regain that number or experience points a second time to gain his or her next level of experience. Phaulkon's clergy may marry freely and have children. Both sexes can progress to any level that they can earn through their labors. Both sexes dress in full length garments though the arms are often bare. The male clerics do not appear in public bare-chested or without footwear. Boots are worn more often than any other footwear.

Some of Phaulkon's clergy have the abilities of a Fletcher and Bowyer. At least one such artisan-cleric exists in each major temple.

Phaulkon's temples (and often lower clergy living quarters) are exposed to the outside air either due to low or non existent ceilings, walls or windows. During heavy adverse weather, precaution can be taken to protect the temple or the living quarters of the cleric.

Phaulkon's clergy who reside in a large temple are often responsible for keeping the calendar. This is typically done by using a series of sixteen obelisks that surround the temple. Each obelisk represents a calendar month or a major festival. The calendar months have seven openings on each side of the obelisk in which a marker token can be placed. These marker tokens are often made of precious metals and often are adorned with gems. The festival obelisks have seven openings, one for each day of the festival.

An enemy who robs or desecrates a blessed temple of Phaulkon is subject to retribution by agents of that deity. Typically one or more Cloud Giants and/or Giant Eagles will be summoned to perform this function. Retribution is without mercy and is both swift and complete.

Phaulkon's clergy has Major (1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> level spells) access to spells of Astral, Combat, Divination and the Healing spheres. They have Intermediate access (1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> level spells) to the spheres of Necromancy and Protection. They have Minor access (1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> level spells) in the spheres of All, Animal, Elemental and Guardian. Phaulkon's holy symbol is an arrow or a feather of a hunting bird. The arrow is often small and made of a precious metal.

Many of Phaulkon's clerics wear a cap made of feathers during everyday travel and even during ceremonies. His holy days are the First day of Spring. His temples are on hills 90% of the time. Phaulkon is worshiped by many in Keoland, Ulek, the Yeomanry, Celene and on Lendore Isle.

## Recipe for a Devil

### Devils and Mating with Humans, Demihumans and Humanoids

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Arch-devils occasionally seek to take a mate. This is never done due to lust or accident but rather is always done with a specific purpose. An Arch-devil is 95% likely to send a minion to bring the lucky partner to himself/herself in Hell. Dukes of Hell send a minion 66% of the time. Greater devils always come themselves. A greater devil does not take a mate except at the command and by the leave of an Arch-devil or Duke of Hell.

Male devils will always know the time that they should appear for the act of mating. Female devils can will the appropriate time as they choose. For the purpose of specifically taking a mate all devils, whether they have this ability normally, can take the form of the race they are seeking to mate with. The form taken will always have a Charisma and Comeliness score of 16 or higher as measured for the race in question. Invariably the devil will use his/her power of *suggestion* on the particular mate he or she has chosen. Once the sexual act as been performed the devil will vanish back to Hell. The non-devil mate is often implanted with a powerful *forget* spell so that he or she cannot remember the act of coupling at all.

Given below are the parameters of the offspring that might be produced. There is a 13% chance that the offspring might be twins. If the twins are identical (33% likely) their powers and appearance will be 100% identical. If not, then the two will be rolled up separately and may be radically different from one another.

The offspring will always know the identity of his or her devil parent, but the devil may mask this knowledge until the child's thirteenth birthday. See the tables and discussion below for rolling up a half-devil offspring.

#### Which Devils can possibly mate?

Arch-devils, all Dukes of Hell and all Greater devils can potentially impregnate a human,



humanoid or demihuman. If the devil in question is female, impregnation is one hundred percent certain if she takes a mate. For male devils, use the chart below. Lesser devils cannot successfully couple with a male or female of another species and produce an offspring.

#### Which races can carry a devil's child to term?

Roll percentile dice to determine if the female will carry the child to term, as shown on the table below. If NO then 71% of the time the pregnancy just terminates, while 29% of the time the mother will become very ill and Exorcism must be performed or she will not survive.

Next, if it goes to term roll percentiles again to see if the offspring looks like its non-devil parent. If that roll is made then the offspring has NO physical features of the devil. If higher than that, then roll again to see if it has one, two or three physical features of its devil parent.

Thus, if the mother is an orc, 57% of the time the offspring will actually be born alive. If the roll is 58% the child is not born; stop here. If

the child is born then roll to see if it looks like an orc. On 23% or less it does look exactly like an orc, and you can stop rolling. On 24 or higher the offspring will have 1 to 3 traits that are non-orc like.

A separate table is provided to determine the (eventual) height and weight of the offspring; use that table regardless of the results of the "appearance" roll(s).

**Table 1: Initial Generation of Half-Devil Offspring**

	Likelihood of birth	Looks like the non-devil?	Devil appearance trait		
			For 1	For 2	For 3
Human	90%	88%	1-60	61-93	94-00
Elf	1%	14%	1-90	91-99	00
Dwarf	10%	70%	1-80	81-94	95-00
Gnome	7%	81%	1-00		
Halfling	3%	55%	1-40	41-88	89-00
Half Elf	11%	74%	1-50	51-84	85-00
Quarter Elf	23%	83%	1-55	56-90	91-00
Orcs	57%	23%	1-50	51-76	77-00
Half Orc	71%	51%	1-40	41-93	94-00
Ogre	2%	71%	1-80	81-94	95-00
Hill Giant	7%	31%	1-40	41-77	78-00
Gnoll	8%	55%	1-20	21-88	89-00
Goblin	41%	10%	1-11	12-72	73-00
Hobgoblin	66%	17%	1-22	23-84	85-00
Kobold	33%	0%	1-40	41-93	94-00
Werewolf	4%	80%	1-95	96-98	99-00
Wererat	33%	70%	1-23	24-90	91-00

**Table 2: Physical Features**

01-41	Horn(s)
41-57	Pointed ear
58-71	Hooked Nose
72-80	Reddish Skin tone
81-88	Scale or barbs on torso
89-94	Scale or barbs on hands or feet
95-97	Pronounced canine teeth
98	Red eyes
99	Scale or barbs on face
00	Tail

**Table 3: Abilities common to Devils given to offspring**

	<i>Once/day</i>	<i>Once/turn</i>	<i>Once/round</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Charm Person	1-40	41-54	55-58	59-00
Suggestion	1-25	26-28	29-30	31-00
Illusion*	1-15	16-18	19-20	21-00
Infravision	constant, no roll required			
Teleport with error	1-9	10-11	12-13	
Teleport without error	14-16	17	18	19-00
Know Alignment by touch	1-47	48-54	55-58	
Know Alignment 20' range	59-63	64-65	66	67-00
Cause Fear by Touch	1-64	65-70	71-73	
Cause Fear range 100 feet	74-78	79-80	81	82-00
Animate Dead Skeletons	1-33	34-51	52-63	
Animate Dead Skel & Zomb	64-74	75-77	78-94	95-00

Table 3, above, lists the various powers given to the offspring of Devils. Roll once for each category (note that Infravision is always free).

\* Illusion is about equal to the 3<sup>rd</sup> level magic-user spell Phantasmal Force. It has definite limits as to what can be portrayed. "Illusion" should not be considered a "blank check." See the following sidebar for details.

### The rules of creating an Illusion:

Rule 1: The caster must have SEEN or EXPERIENCED the effect himself.

Rule 2: Nothing that really exists is altered by an illusion.

Rule 3: The beholder has to understand the illusion to be affected by it (someone who has never seen a Fire Ball cannot be burned by it).

Rule 4: An illusion has a primary and perhaps one or two secondary effects. For example, you can't appear to throw a Fire Ball without something appearing to start burning due to the explosion. However, an aroma of something burning could be acceptable if the caster has memory of the smell he wants to create the illusion of.

Rule 5: An illusion that has a spell level limit cannot produce an effect of a greater level spell with any degree of accuracy.

Rule 6: Quantity can produce telltale signs. If you produce the illusion of an orc (which you have seen) the effect can be quite good, including his odor. If you try for two orcs they will be close in size and appearance. If you try for three or more orcs they will be identical and move alike. A spell greater than Phantasmal Force may do better with quantity and differentiation. Increasing the complexity of the illusion adds PLUSES to the victim's saving throw.

Rule 7: If there are multiple viewers, each gets a save vs the illusion. If one or more see through it as a fake they can verbally say what they think is wrong. This allows believers a second saving throw.

### Summoning

Half Devils have a 25% chance to have the ability to Summon an Abishai. If they have the ability they may attempt the summoning three times a day with a 33% chance of success.

### Footprints

Roll percentiles for type of Abishai (Monster Manual II, page 45)

1-50	Red
51-75	Blue
76-90	Green
91-97	White
98-00	Black

The Abishai will do their bidding for 13d12 rounds or until wounded to 13 or fewer hit points. At that time the Abishai will teleport back to Hell. Abishai so summoned will NOT attempt to summon one more of its own kind.

Each Half Devil can say the name of its Devil Parent three separate times (which must be separated by more than 666 days) in its lifetime. The Arch Devil or Greater Devil will hear his or her name spoken. There is a 50% chance he will then listen for three full minutes.

An Arch Devil parent will never appear but might send a Greater or Lesser Devil. A Greater Devil parent is 30% likely to appear himself/herself; otherwise a lesser devil or two will be dispatched for 13d12 rounds of service or until the lesser devil is reduced to 13 or fewer hit points. Lesser devils so dispatched are permitted to summon other lesser devils if they normally can do so.

### Height and Weight and Traits

If the offspring looks like its non-devil parent, do not use the table below. Otherwise roll for each characteristic given below separately. If all eight items (hair color, eye color, height, weight, facial features, body proportion, completeness and additions) are as the non-devil parent, then roll all over again until at least one of the traits is abnormal relative to the race of the non-devil parent.

**Completeness** refers to fingers and toes, hands and feet, ears and nose, eyebrows and lips. It is not a look at internal organs, that's just too much detail.

**Telltale** means the variation is radically different from a normal child of the non-devil race, like Green Hair, Purple Eyes etc. Note that since devils are usually red, red brown or

brown in color do NOT limit the possible variation to those colors. Something outlandish could well appear and it would be a radical BIRTHMARK on the child.

**Table 4: Height and Weight and Traits**

Hair Color	01-80	as the non devil
	81-97	a different but logical substitute
	98-00	telltale
Eye Color	01-75	as the non devil
	76-95	a different but logical substitute
	96-00	telltale
Height	01-50	stature of parent
	51-90	within 1-6 inches of parent
	91-00	7-12 inches variation
Weight	01-60	build of parent
	61-94	21-60 lbs difference
	95-00	61-120 lbs difference
Facial Features	01-55	resemblance
	56-90	few similarities
	91-00	radical difference
Body Proportion and Shape	01-70	as non devil
	71-92	disproportionate
	93-00	misshapen
Completeness*	01-80	all physical attributes correct
	81-93	deformity
	94-00	missing part(s)
Additions	01-88	none
	89-93	added finger or toe
	94	two more arms
	95	hooves
	96	claws
	97	extra eye
	98	sense of smell like a canine
	99	can breathe water
	00	wings

## Statistics and Alignment

Roll 4d6 and take the best three limited by the characteristic limit of the Devil parent. Thus if a Horned Devil has an offspring its intelligence cannot exceed 15 (limit for High intelligence) but it certainly can be lower. Look at Strength, Constitution and Dexterity based on the abilities of the two parents. The DM may have to rule on this. Charisma is affected by appearance, at the DM's discretion. Wisdom will always be 9 or better. All offspring are LAWFUL EVIL, with no variation!

## Magic resistance

**Table 5: Magic Resistance**

01-65	none
66-85	5% absolute
86-89	10% absolute
90-92	15% absolute
94-95	20% absolute
96	5% sliding scale
97	10% sliding scale
98	15% sliding scale
99	20% sliding scale
00	as devil parent

**Notes:** Magic Resistance cannot EXCEED that of the devil. Absolute means that regardless of level of the level of the caster of the spell

aimed at the offspring the roll is as given. *Sliding Scale* refers to the resistance based on the level of the caster (See Magic Resistance based on an 11<sup>th</sup> level caster. Monster Manual I page 5. After any magic resistance is checked the normal saving throw, if any, still applies.

## Armor class of body

The Armor Class must fall between and include the armor class of the parent. So a human is AC10 and a horned devil (Melebranche) has AC -5 (see chart in the back of DMG page 199).

The armor class of humanoids and demihumans is open to comment. All demihumans without armor should be AC 10. Humanoids, however, may vary. I would rule that an unarmored "monster" would be as shown on **Table 6** below. A shield of appropriate size always improves armor class by one factor.

Roll on **Table 7** to determine how much to adjust the offspring's Armor Class from the base rating. The range is limited as follows: Determine the difference between the two extremes and exclude the high and low. Therefore a Hobgoblin (AC 8) and a Devil (AC -5) will have an AC of 7 to -4. Dexterity, if better than 16, does apply to armor class of course.

**Table 6: Humanoid Armor Classes**

Armor Class	No armor	Fur/Pad Leather	Studded leather	Scale	Chain
Orc	9	7	6	4	3
Goblin	9	7	6	4	3
Hobgoblin	8	6	5	4	3
Ogre	5	4	3	NA	NA
Hill Giant	4	3	2	NA	NA
Kobold	9	7	6	4	NA
Gnoll	8	6	5	4	3

**Table 7: Armor Class Adjustment**

Roll %	Better than non-devil parent
1-35	One class
36-53	Two classes
54-65	Three classes
66-73	Four classes
74-80	Five classes
81-86	Six classes
87-91	Seven classes
92-96	Eight classes
97-00	Nine classes

### Movement Rate

The offspring's movement is equal to that of the non-devil parent 90% of the time. If a roll of 91 to 100, improve the rate if there is a difference between the parents.

### Hit Dice and Hit Points

The offspring can take up professions like fighter, cleric, magic-user and thief if the non-devil form is allowed those professions. In addition, the offspring gets a minimum number of hit dice that cannot be better than its devil parent but could be within two hit dice of its devil parent with a top of 8 hit dice in any case. So a Horned Devil (5+5 Hit Dice) mates with any humanoid (except a hill giant or ogre) the Hit Dice will top out at 3+3. With an ogre the HD should be 4 and with a hill giant 8+3.

Determining the hit points of the offspring would be a function of rolling hit dice and modifying that number if profession warrants it. So an half-orc/horned devil offspring would have, at best 3+3 base hit dice (hit point rage of 6 to 27). The offspring becomes a fighter and achieves 4<sup>th</sup> level. The sum of 4 ten-sided dice might be better than 3d8 +3. Award the higher of the two numbers. The DM will rule on which professions can be chosen.

### Number of Attacks

Always give the offspring two attacks a round with a hand held, non-hafted weapon.

### Damage per Attack

Damage is always by weapon type. If the offspring has talons, claws or canine teeth there might be modification. Physical strength applies to "to hit" and "to damage" if applicable.

### Intelligence

A clear function of the devil parent's limit. All Greater and higher devils are 13 are better intelligence. Offspring cannot exceed 18 in any case.

### Spell-like Powers

The inherent common powers, if any, are given above. They are *charm person, suggestion, illusion, infravision, teleportation, know alignment, cause fear and animate dead*. Every offspring is guaranteed only *infravision*. It is likely to have one or more from the rest of the list provided above.

Each devil, if known, has certain abilities and powers that are akin to or equal known magic-user or clerical spells. No offspring will ever be granted a 6<sup>th</sup> or higher level spell like power. Period.

Take or make a list of the devil's spell like powers (if not known generate one in cases of Arch Devils and Dukes of Hell) and then roll for each ability with the exception of all of those that are a 6<sup>th</sup> or higher level ability.

**Table 8: Spell-Like Power Adjustment**

1-13	Equal to Devil parent
14-66	<b>Diminished</b> from Devil parent
67-00	<b>Radically different</b>

Diminishing a power or ability will affect things like range, area of effect, hit dice of damage, duration, dimensions of the effect, etc. So if the devil can produce a Fire Ball as a 16<sup>th</sup> level magic user, for example the offspring could not do better than a Fire Ball produced

by a 16<sup>th</sup> level magic user. But the Fire Ball could be less effective.

**Diminished** would take one or two attributes (like dice of damage or range) and reduce them by 25% to 50%. So the maximum Hit Dice might be 12 to 8 HD instead of 16. But range could also be reduced or the Fire Ball's diameter might be less. The save allowed the target could be enhanced by +1, +2 or even +3.

If **Radically different** is rolled then 2 or more attributes would be reduced by 60 to 90%. There might even be a backfire problem on the roll of 00.

However, keep the overall spell intent or affect. It is wise of the DM to craft the

difference(s), if any, at the beginning, before the offspring casts the spell like power for the first time.

### **Gestation, Growth and Aging**

The child will always take an accelerated path to being born and to becoming a young adult. Typical gestation is cut by a minimum of 50% and by as much as 80%.

Once born the child matures very rapidly. Roll percentiles on Table 9, below, to determine the rate of maturation. Also, the aging process, once young adulthood is achieved, is very slow. Roll on Table 10, below, for this.

**Table 9: Maturation Rate**

01-20	double rate	speaks at age 2
21-40	triple rate	cast minor spell at age 3
41-60	quadruple	cast protective spells at age 3
61-80	pentuple	cast any spell at age 4
81-90	hextuple	cast any spell at age 3
91+	octuple	cast any spell at age 2

**Table 10: Offspring Lifespan**

01-15	double
16-30	triple
31-45	quadruple
46-60	pentuple
61-75	hextuple
76-90	octuple
91+	permanently killed only on astral or lower plane, effectively immortal!

### A Half-Devil's Possible Offspring

Quarter-devils are greatly limited compared to the half-devil parent. Hit Dice range from 3+6 to 6+6, but not to exceed the half-devil parent. Armor Class is always two or more classes inferior to the half-devil parent. Statistics rolled one by one can have the higher number of either parent as a maximum. Quarter-devils will learn a profession of either parent but no other. Quarter-devils are always Lawful Evil.

Male half-devils are only 40% likely to be fertile themselves. Female half-devils are 100% likely to be fertile. They can ONLY successfully mate with a member of the same race as their human/demi-human/humanoid parent (The only exception being a half-devil who mated with a half-elf or half-orc. That half-devil can mate with either of it's parent's races).

The quarter devil produced may have some limited spell like powers. Any powers it does have will be diminished forms of a power(s) of the half-devil.

Roll d% for each of the half-devil parent's powers and spell-like abilities and the Basic Devil powers, if and only if the half-devil parent has that ability/power.

Charm Person, Suggestion, Illusion, Teleportation and Animate Dead **33%**

Infravision **100%**  
Know Alignment **66%**  
Cause Fear **88%**

Quarter-Devils can never summon any devil from the Nine Hells.

With respect to spell-like powers inherited from the Arch-devil or Greater devil grandparent, the quarter-devil has 13% chance to have these abilities for each power that the half-devil parent might have.

Quarter-Devils are never fertile themselves.

### Crafting a Half-Devil

Crafting a devil offspring is not only an exercise in die rolling but also an art form for the Dungeon Master. The DM can use a few of the many rolls above to get a feel for the limits and powers of the offspring. But the DM can change the rolls at any time. Once something is established, like the diminished effect of the offspring's *fireball* then that effect should be permanent for that offspring unless altered by magical means.

The child is ALWAYS lawful and evil regardless of the alignment of the non-devil parent. The child will mature more rapidly as noted above. Its alignment will unfold as it ages. Its devil parent can identify itself to the offspring who will instantly understand that his father or mother stands before him. He will obey that devil parent with 85% likelihood. High intelligence or wisdom could alter that percent.



# WANDERING MONSTERS

## Hand of Incabulos

by John A. Turcotte

FREQUENCY:	Very Rare (at best)
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	4
MOVE:	6"
HIT DICE:	7+1
% IN LAIR:	50%
TREASURE TYPE:	E
NO. ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-4 plus special
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Disease
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Standard
INTELLIGENCE:	Average
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral Evil
SIZE:	M
PSIONIC ABILITY:	Nil
Attack/Defense Modes:	Nil/Nil
X.P. VALUE:	1,000 + 8/hp

The Hands of Incabulos are a special form of undead created to serve the God of Disease. It is unknown how many of these creatures exist. They are birthed through an unholy process imparted to Incabulos' clerics directly by the deity himself.

The Hands appear as cloaked figures wearing filthy robes of black trimmed with green. They travel alone and will always be found in populous areas where they obey the will of their dark master, spreading plague and illness in their wake. If their hoods are thrown back, they will be revealed to be cadaverous, deformed figures with sickly blue peeling skin and jaundiced eyes.

The Hands cannot bear the light of the sun, although it will not destroy them. They emerge from their lairs only at night. The touch of a Hand is chilling, but more fearful is that their touch causes *disease* as the spell (victims are allowed a saving throw against spells). All Hands radiate a *circle of disease* in a 1" radius. All living creatures within the circle have a 3% cumulative chance per round of exposure within the circle to contract an acute, terminal respiratory disease.

Hands are a type of undead. These abominations regenerate 1 hit point per round. This regeneration may only be halted by fire or holy water or by *blessing* the foul thing's remains once it has been brought below 0 hit points. They are immune to *charm*, *hold*, and other mind-affecting spells, as well as *sleep*, *poison*, and *cold*. Holy water inflicts 2-8 hit points on a direct hit, 1-4 hit points from a splash (and such lost hit points may not be regenerated). They are turned as vampires. A successful *cure disease* cast on a Hand inflicts 1-4 hit points per level of the caster upon the creature (though the Hand is permitted a saving throw to avoid the spell's effects). A successful *raise dead* spell will destroy one of the Hands utterly.

The Hands move from area to populated area, spreading their illness by touch, tainting water supplies, and weakening the populace by their very presence.

## Those Who Crawl Below

by John A. Turcotte

FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	0
MOVE:	9" (1")
HIT DICE:	7+3
% IN LAIR:	25%
TREASURE TYPE:	F
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	5-8/5-8/1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	See below
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic Evil
SIZE:	S (4' tall)
PSIONIC ABILITY:	Nil
Attack/Defense Modes:	Nil/Nil
X.P. VALUE:	1,725 + 10/hp

Of all those dwarves who descend into the Cold Forges, the dwarven underworld, these are the worst. They are the shades of dwarves who have broken their vows. These ghastly things are referred to as "Those Who Crawl Below" in dwarven mythology. In the underworld, they are forced to crawl through the abandoned, freezing, night-black bowels of the dwarven hell, perpetually pursued by demons.

Very rarely, a Crawler escapes to this world, where they enact their vengeance upon the living. They are awful to behold. They appear as naked, pallid, and skeletal dwarves with shorn beards and dead black eyes. Their teeth and nails are as hard as adamantite.

These creatures have strong ties to the Negative Material Plane. They radiate *fear* (as the spell) in a 30' radius. Dwarves save against the fear at -2. Their gaze causes *weakness* in those who fail their saving throws against spells. Those weakened by the gaze lose 50% of their strength, ignoring percentiles over 18. Crawlers attack with both claws and a vicious bite. The bite of these monsters drains 2 energy levels from its victim.

Magic weapons are required to harm a Crawler. They are immune to *sleep*, mind-affecting spells, poison, paralysis, petrification, and polymorph. They take only one-half damage from electricity and cold attacks. They suffer 2d4+2 hit points from a direct hit of holy water and 2-5 from a splash. A successful *raise dead* spell will destroy a Crawler. These horrible things turn as vampires.

In addition to being able to carve their way through solid stone, a Crawler has the ability to cast a special form of *passwall* that allows travel for itself only. It may use this ability thrice per day.

When destroyed, these things dissolve into a pile of glittering black beetles that scatter into the darkness.

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE ABILITY SCORES IN AD&D

by Joe Maccarrone

With the advent of the cavalier class in *Dragon 72* and later in *Unearthed Arcana*, Gary introduced the idea of training to improve a character's ability scores. Cavaliers (and the cavalier's sub-class, the paladin) roll percentile dice at 1st level for their strength, constitution, and dexterity scores, and add 2D10 to each percentile with every level gained. Quite interestingly, the rules note that "ability scores can be raised as high as 18/00 in this manner, even if doing so violates limitations based on race or sex."

These training rules became both wildly popular and controversial among AD&D players. They allowed characters to improve their abilities with rigorous training, which adds an element of realism to the game. (With a lifetime of physical training under my belt, I am indeed stronger, quicker, and tougher at thirty-five than I was at eighteen.) The rules allowed for elven cavaliers to become truly potent champions of their race, strong enough to give pause to any invader. Most important, in my opinion, they enabled characters with middling ability scores to make needed improvements by the time they reached high levels, thus ensuring their viability in a long-term campaign.

Critics charged that cavaliers and paladins became overly powerful, with too many eventually attaining 18/00 strength through training. It was true that a character with a starting ability of 17, with a high percentile roll and average training rolls, had a good chance to eventually reach 18/00—and a character starting with exceptional strength almost certainly would. It could be argued that the speed of percentile advancement needed to be toned down, and I will address this in greater detail below.

With the popularity of training for the cavalier came the call to extend this benefit to other character classes as well, and it makes sense to do so. House rules proliferated around the idea, and the training system as published in

Hackmaster has been explained to me, though I don't own the book.

I agree unequivocally that all character classes should have the chance to improve ability scores through training—with provisions. The cavalier should continue to have the best training rolls. The training regimen of the knightly classes is unique in its severity. Servants, armies, and others support the knights' lifestyle to allow time for this, and it is no less than their duty to develop and maintain great physical conditioning. If training is extended to all classes, the abilities each class is permitted to train—and the anticipated speed of improvement based upon the training dice rolled—must be given very careful consideration.

After much thought, I decided to allow characters to train all their abilities! I disliked the idea that fighters shouldn't be able to improve their learning and reasoning skills or magic-users, their physical conditioning. However, gains for such non-class abilities should come very slowly because dedication to a profession does not allow much time for training in these areas.

I understand that the currently published edition of the game allows an increase every 4 levels. This is a clean and simple rule, but it lacks variation and excitement. Some people—and some fantasy game characters—are simply more capable than others and will progress more quickly. Others will progress more slowly. (Don't get me started on the sterility of point-buy systems for character creation!)

For these reasons, I like the cavalier's system: a percentile roll at character creation for each ability score, representing how close the character is to the next higher value, and training points rolled at every level after 1st. Using this as a model, I saw two primary tasks:

- Establish training priorities for each character class by rating the abilities in their order of importance for that class
- Determine which dice to assign for training points, for each priority slot

The first task was easy; Gary had already done it – under character generation method V, on page 74 of *Unearthed Arcana*. I see very little to quibble with, as regards his ranking of abilities for each class (paraphrased on the table below).

Note that comeliness is not on this chart, though it is included in method V; I do use comeliness in my games—for entertainment value—but it is not a quality that can be trained. Note also that assassins and monks are not on my chart—because they don't exist as PCs in my games. Assassins are NPCs only, and monastic martial artists may or may not exist, on the opposite side of the world from my unabashedly “Euro-flavored” campaign!

	Priority					
Class	1	2	3	4	5	6
Cavalier	CON	STR	DEX	INT	WIS	CHA
Paladin	CHA	WIS	STR	CON	INT	DEX
Cleric	WIS	CON	STR	CHA	DEX	INT
Druid	CHA	WIS	STR	CON	DEX	INT
Fighter	STR	CON	DEX	CHA	WIS	INT
Barbarian	STR	CON	DEX	CHA	WIS	INT
Ranger	CON	WIS	STR	INT	DEX	CHA
Magic-User	INT	DEX	WIS	CON	CHA	STR
Illusionist	DEX	INT	WIS	CHA	CON	STR
Thief	DEX	CON	STR	INT	CHA	WIS

With this prioritization in hand, I set to the laborious process of number crunching to select training dice that would allow for long-term improvement without overly swift advancement.

I created a list of possible training dice, with their average gain per level in training points, and the level at which an increase to the ability score might typically occur (bearing in mind the average starting percentile of 50.5). The marked levels 8\* and 15\* would average 99.5% at those levels, which I have rounded up.

Dice	Average Points per Level	Average Level of Increase
2D10	11	6
1D20	10.5	6
2D8	9	7
2D6	7	8*
1D12	6.5	9
1D10	5.5	10
1D8	4.5	12
1D6	3.5	15*
1D4	2.5	21
1D3	2	26
1D2	1.5	34

Armed with this information, I considered several sequences of dice for the 6 ability score priorities. I ultimately decided on this sequence:

Priority	Roll
1	2D10
2	1D10
3	1D8
4	1D6
5	1D4
6	1D2

This combination would typically result in a gain to the first-priority ability at level 6, the second at level 10, the third at level 12, and subsequent abilities at levels 15, 21, and 34. Again, these are just averages, and every character will be different, depending upon how hot or cold the dice are. Mine being a rather traditional AD&D game, few characters are likely to see 15th level, so two or three ability increases will be the extent of increase for most PCs, unless very good percentile scores are rolled at 1st level. Still, two or three increases should be enough to improve lagging ability scores by the time the character faces high-level challenges. You might prefer a different sequence of training dice, based on the nature of your game.

As I mentioned above, I intend to maintain the superiority of the cavalier training regimen and use this sequence for cavaliers and paladins:

Priority	Roll
1	2D10
2	2D10
3	2D10
4	1D6
5	1D4
6	1D2

Thus, the physical stats remain "by the book," and the rest follow the same pattern as other character classes.

Those 2D10 gains in training points have engendered concern for critics of the training rules, and I took a hard look at how quickly the gains come with average rolls. I discovered that a character with a starting score of 18/01 could expect to reach 18/00 by level 10; 18/25 should reach 18/00 by level 8; 18/50 by level 6; and 18/75 by level 4. Even starting scores in the high 17 range could be expected to reach 18/00 in the course of a full adventuring career.

This may be a bit much. A score of 18 represents 1 in 216 people; 18/00 represents 1 in 21,645—a much more heroic and unusual level of ability. 18/00 is a lofty plateau that requires not only years of training but strong genetic potential to begin with. Therefore, I decided to slow the speed of advancement above 18: training points translate 1 for 1 to ability percentile points only up to 18/50; between 18/51 and 18/90, 2 training points are required to gain 1 percentile point, and between 18/91 and 18/00, 5 training points are required to gain 1 percentile point. The total number of points thus required to train from a flat 18 to 18/00 is 180.

With this system in place, scores in the high 18 range will remain rare and noteworthy. Unless a PC's starting score is better than 18/50 and the ability in question gains 2D10 training points per level, that character is very unlikely to ever train to 18/00—but he *will* make useful gains.

Although Strength is the only ability with quantified differences in the 18/+ range, a percentile added to 18 in other abilities does add much distinction and interest to the character. Any hamlet along the road can boast of a person with a flat 18 for any given ability—but a cleric with an 18/97 wisdom, for example, would be the wisest person in an entire city.

A few points of clarification:

- Requiring a 2-for-1 exchange between 18/51 and 18/90, and 5 for 1 between 18/91 and 18/00 will often result in left-over training

points or not enough points for a gain; these may be saved and used at the next level.

- Characters other than fighter types should remain ineligible for exceptional strength—because it is not feasible for them to expend so much time developing their strength and because strength is unique in having additional bonuses in that range.
- Multi-classed demi-humans should gain only one roll for training points with each dual-level gained (2/2, 3/3, etc.) until they are no longer able to progress in one of their classes, after which they earn training points with each level gained in the remaining class.
- I do not recommend using this system in conjunction with the aging rules on page 13 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*; I plan to develop an alternate aging system, based on random loss of percentile points per year for aging characters.

If a character does reach 18/00 through hard work and good fortune, what comes next? The precedent was set that elven cavaliers can exceed normal racial limitations (in strength) and train to 18/00. I propose that human characters be allowed to train to 19 in any ability—representing a level of prowess that is beyond the human norm, both literally and figuratively. Scores of 19 are normally the province of demi-humans: a sturdy dwarf's constitution, or a nimble elf's dexterity. Humanity being the most versatile of races, rare individuals should exist who are able to train to this level.

To ensure that a score of 19 is indeed a rare event, I think characters should remain at

18/00 until they accumulate 100 additional training points, at which time 19 may be awarded. In practice, characters will need a starting score greater than 18/90 at 1st level, better than average training rolls (on 2D10), and many levels of experience (more than 10), to have a reasonable chance of reaching 19. The truly exceptional character who does train to 19 will be renowned as one of the ablest characters for that ability in the nation in which they live. Scores beyond 19 are impossible without very potent magical or divine aid.

I intend to adopt this system as one of my house rules for AD&D. It has evolved through several phases and many hours of careful thought, but it's hardly graven in stone. I'd love to hear any comments or suggestions for improvement.

*My thanks for the assistance of the inestimable Gary Gygax, without whom my thoughts on these matters would not have crystallized into this article.*



## DEAD OF WINTER

Fiction by C. Wesley Clough

A cold as deep and soulless as a daemon's heart descended upon the land that winter so many seasons ago. Only a hard man with a harder heart could brave the bite of the frigid whip-winds. The chill of the night air caused the unfortunate rider to shudder beneath the heavy scarlet cloak that hung upon his shoulders like the frigid mantle of a dozen bloody campaigns. As he closed the collar of the cloak tighter with his free hand, the metallic jangling of the warrior's battered chain mail carried in the cold still air.

"Thrice cursed winter..." Khevian Tor spat as he spurred his horse up to a lethargic trot.

He would have liked to force the beast go faster, but the snow lay thickly on the road as it wound through the trees of the forest. The grizzled warrior knew better than to flaunt false bravado in the face of fate. Khevian hated midnight treks through haunted forests and was within his rights in that. Of late the Slaughterwood had been earning its name; a dozen people had vanished within the woods over the past couple of weeks. When they were found, they were never in one piece. Rumors of ghouls and goblins abounded in the taverns and inns of nearby towns, but Khevian was not so much afraid as uneasy. He had served his lord with great faithfulness for more than a score of years. Though no longer a young man, Khevian Tor was still regarded as the finest swordsman within ten leagues of Lord Durenelle's Hold. The warrior had seen horror enough on the battlefields of war to know that whatever hunted these woods by night was nothing compared to the terror of men.

"Probably just wolves..." he muttered beneath the tinkling of the wind through the endless phalanx of icicles.

Winter had come early, after all, and been the harshest in a dozen years. He knew that he could easily handle wolves if need be. His thick chain armor would protect him from

their jaws, and the great sword that hung from the saddle would make short work of them.

The half moon broke through the cloud cover spilling its silvery light over the frozen forest below. The horse's hooves crunched through the frozen surface of the snow on the winding road that led through the wood. Khevian looked around at the forest through the mist of his own breath, then he hawked and spit down into the snow. It was frozen before it hit the ground. The dark, he knew, played tricks on the mind, especially when one was already afraid. A barren tree by day could seem by the depth of night a gnarled ogre reaching out to crush away your last breath. But not tonight. The frost on the leafless trees and the crust upon the snow glimmered like a billion diamonds in the pale moonlight. The evergreen trees, clumped here and there, seemed to support more than their share of the fallen snow on their still green branches. Khevian Tor cursed to himself again and shook his head.

It was too peaceful here.

If he closed his eyes he could almost see it. A moment of peace, and a depth of quiet, then a roar that seemed to swallow the world. Overturned wagons, dying horses, screaming women, bewildered children, and the sinking hearts of a thousand warriors who would never again see home. As his trot continued he steered his mount clear of the rotten, worm-eaten wagon wheel of decades passed. There was, after all, a time when the wood had a different name, Hunter's Wood, a name that would be forgotten to history because of the events of one wet day in early spring.

Khevian let his mind wander back through the past, while his horse plodded on through the snow of the present. Lord Laodesse had surprised everybody, moving his army from the winter camp as soon as the first thaw of

spring was well underway. A sound strategy too, if a scout of Lord Durenelle's had not been hunting that day. The old warrior still remembered the scout's breathless report, a thousand men more or less, along with their women and camp followers. Lord Laodesse was obviously moving to a summer camp with a better position, one better suited for raids into the heart of the vale. But Laodesse was not expecting trouble... several more hastily dispatched scouts had returned with reports of the army strewn out as a column nearly a mile long. The women and baggage wagons were mixed in with the troops. Lord Durenelle wasted no time, and soon the lord of Arrow Vale's eight hundred strong cavalry was charging through the muddy forest at the army train's flank, with Khevian in the lead. The Slaughterwood had earned its name.

As the grizzled warrior rounded a bend in the road where it wound around a small copse of dark fir trees, he quickly reined his horse to a stop. Coming down the snow-covered road toward him were a group of men, nearly two dozen from the look of it. Thoughts of bandits flashed through his mind, and Khevian's hand started to drop toward the great sword hilt. Gazing through the moonlight, the rider realized that these were not bandits. Shabby brown cloaks covered rough brown robes; the men approaching him appeared to be monks of some sort. Khevian shook his head in dismay... acolytes on a pilgrimage like as not. What a dismal time to go on a foot journey. Shaking his head at the thought, Khevian began to spur his steed forward. The monks appeared unarmed, and to the warrior's trained eye posed little in the way of threat. The horse balked and refused to move forward. Cursing under his breath the rider once again attempted to get the mount started toward the monks and on down the road.

The scream of the horse as Khevian came down hard onto the snowy road preceded by several moments the realization that he had been thrown. The horse circled and

bolted back the way they had come as if the forks of the devil waited behind him.

"Hell and damnation." The warrior cursed as he rose to his feet.

The beast had been willful, but a spirited companion through suicidal charge or perilous swim. He was at a loss to understand its behavior, and his heart sank to think of the task of chasing down the wretch.

He noticed that the monks had stopped in the road and were standing there silently. They were still too distant to make out the faces in the shadows of their cowed hoods. Khevian waved absently at the monks as he started to take a few steps after the fleeing horse. After a few moments it was apparent to the warrior that his horse was long gone, taking with it the great sword he had hanging from the saddle horn. Khevian was happy that at least he still had the small, flanged mace that hung from his belt. Still, the mace had always been nothing but a weapon to use when all else failed.

"Should serve well enough to handle the wolves," he said to himself as he looked to it.

Khevian stopped in the center of the frosty road; it was three leagues back to Willowbend, where his horse was undoubtedly heading. Less than five miles were left until he reached Lord Durenelle's hold in Arrow Vale. He thought of his mission also. Khevian reached into his belt pouch to make sure that the small packet of papers was still inside. He turned again in the road and started toward the vale once more. The horse would have to fend for himself, for the cold was too deep to give chase. As the warrior came back around the corner he noticed that the monks were still standing where he had last seen them.

"Well met." The warrior said as he started toward them. When Khevian was less than ten yards from them the double row of monks separated, each row moving to the side of the road so that the warrior could pass between them.

They merely nodded.

"My thanks," he said as he nodded at the first pair of monks.

Only ominous silence greeted him. For the barest of instants he wished that the horse had not run off with his sword, but then he felt the reassuring weight of the mace on his belt. He had gotten halfway between the two rows of monks when he heard the crunching of the snow behind him. Glancing back he saw that the monks had closed ranks and stood facing him. Khevian's head whipped back around to the front where he saw the remaining monks close off his escape from that direction.

The warrior was surrounded.

Khevian's hand found the cold handle of the mace at his side. One of the monks in front of the warrior reached up to remove his cowl, and Khevian found the hand's pallor odd in the half light of the moon. An instant later the warrior understood why. The monk's hood fell away revealing a skull, yellowed with age, with smoldering coals of malevolent light in its eye sockets. One by one, each other monk did the same, each revealing similar death heads. He pulled the mace from his belt as the skeletal horrors surged toward him and smashed the skull of the first one to get within arms reach. It collapsed in a heap at his feet, with naught but dry bones rattling inside those somber robes. Khevian circled warily with his mace held out before of him, trying to keep the skeletal monks at bay. One came in from his right and the warrior spun toward it, only to feel a sharp burning pain shoot through his back as skeletal claws rent mail and flesh alike. Both the feinter and the attacker melted back out of reach and into the crowd as Khevian spun to ward the new adversary.

Khevian had been wounded many times in his service to Lord Durenelle, but the

scratches across his broad shoulders felt different, they felt wrong. The scratches burned like they were on fire. Almost immediately he felt lightheaded.

Poison then, on the claws. If Khevian were to die this night, he swore to every god that he would take several of these abominations with him. He charged into the crowd of deathless monks laying about himself with the mace. Crushed bones and tattered robes fell to the ground, but so did torn mail, and fresh blood poured down to stain the snow like the sanguinary rains of Hell.

"To the Lich-Queen's halls, all of you!" The warrior cried with a shout that sounded through the frozen forest like a trumpet blast. "You're nothing! Scavengers! Bottom feeders! Only cowards to attack in a pack!"

Icy cold numbed the warrior's limbs and the heavy mace tumbled from his nerveless grasp, Khevian's vision swam before his eyes as he struggled to rise from his knees. All around him were strewn the skeletal remains, and more still on their feet crowded about. Through the trees they poured. Warrior and woman, short and tall, eyes aglow like two thousand points of malevolent light. To his chattering lips came the words he had spoken a generation ago.

"No ... prisoners."

His ice-rimmed eyes focused for a moment on the thing in front of him, saw it raise its ancient ivory claws in the moonlight. As if in slow motion, a single drop of blood, the honored blood of a noble family that had protected the land for uncounted generations, fell from the talon to the bone-white snow. Through the wood sounded the single baying

"Only wolves..."

*Then the claws descended, bringing with them the darkness of one soulless winter day.*

# Create Food and Drink

by Jonathon Fletcher

With the season becoming cold and miserable, it's time for a little fusion cooking to warm up the gaming table. The first offering is Mediterranean pizza spiced with *baharat*, a spice blend used from Turkey to Morocco. Baharat is aromatic yet zesty. Its heat, from black pepper and paprika rather than chilies, is pleasant on the tongue, and surprising aromatics like cardamom, nutmeg, cinnamon, and clove weave a magic carpet ride for your taste buds.

## Mediterranean Fusion Pizza

### Ingredients

- One 14-inch pizza crust
- 1 can (5.5 oz.) tomato paste
- 2 large tomatoes, sliced thinly
- 1 fresh yellow pepper, thinly sliced, OR 3 yellow peppers roasted
- 1/2 bunch parsley, chopped fine
- 6–8 stalks fresh mint, chopped (approx 2 tbsp. or 30 ml)
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) garlic, minced
- 5.3 oz. (150 g) feta cheese
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) sliced green Sicilian olives
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) sliced black olives
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) water
- 1 tbsp. (15 ml) olive oil
- 2–3 tsp. (10–15 ml) Arabian baharat

### Method

Preheat oven to 275° F. Slice the tomatoes thinly and place on oiled cookie sheet. Slide into the oven and bake 30–45 minutes until the tomatoes lose a little bit of their juice.

In a small bowl, combine the tomato paste, the baharat, 2 tbsp. water, and 1 tbsp. olive oil. Mix well. To add a bit of sweetness, at this point 1/2 tsp. granulated sugar may be added if desired.

Spread the tomato paste mixture evenly over the crust. With a spatula, carefully remove the tomato slices from the sheet and transfer to the tomato sauce in an artful manner, covering the entire pizza area. Sprinkle the minced garlic on top.

Place the peppers (either fresh rings or roasted halves) over the tomatoes and garlic, following with an even sprinkling of parsley and feta cheese.

Arrange the green and black olives over top, alternating colors, and finish with a final sprinkle of fresh mint.

Place in a 375° F oven and bake 30–40 minutes until bubbling and ready to eat. Cool slightly before serving.

To make this as a vegan dish, substitute vegan feta cheese.

## Vegan "Feta Cheese" Substitute

### Ingredients

- 3/4 cup (180 ml) crumbled firm tofu (Mori-Nu brand is good for this)
- 1 tsp. (5 ml) agar powder (a gelatin-like thickener available at natural food stores)
- 2 tbsp. (30 ml) water
- 1/2 tbsp. (2.5 ml) sugar
- 1 tbsp. (15 ml) olive or canola oil
- 1 1/4 tsp. (6 ml) salt
- 1/2 tbsp. (7.5 ml) soy sauce
- 3 tbsp. (45 ml) lemon juice

### Method

Puree tofu, agar, water, sugar, oil, and salt in a food processor or blender until very smooth. Transfer the mixture to a medium saucepan and cook over a medium flame until it bubbles and thickens, about 3–5 minutes. Whisk the soy sauce and lemon juice into the mixture, then pour it into a baking dish. Cover and chill until firm, about 2 hours. Cut into squares or crumble to serve. Makes about 1 1/2 cups (375 ml).

## Tomato Cucumber Raita

The next offering is a traditional salad of India.

Raitas are yogurt salads, which are served with Indian meals as a cooling balance to the other, spicier dishes. They can be made using many vegetable combinations, but this is my favorite.

### Ingredients

- 2 cups (500 ml) plain whole yogurt
- 2 medium tomatoes cut into small cubes (1/2 inch)
- 1/2 English cucumber peeled and chopped in small cubes
- 2 green onions finely chopped
- 1 tsp. (5 ml) lemon or lime juice
- 2 tsp. (10 ml) chat masala
- salt to taste
- 8 sprigs cilantro (chop 6 and reserve 2 for garnish)

### Method

Combine lemon, salt, and chat masala in a bowl and toss the vegetables until coated. Pour in the yogurt and stir together. Top with cilantro sprigs and serve. This raita is also delicious if you substitute garam masala for the chat masala. Makes 4–6 servings.



# Pseudo Dragon

